



PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2020 INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



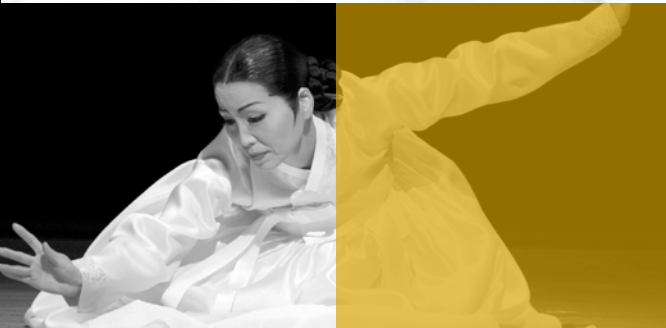
Burkina Faso
Chile
Flanders
France
Japan
Quebec
United States

LIVING HUMAN TREASURES

SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD



Edited by
Antoine Gauthier



Conseil québécois du
**patrimoine
vivant**

Editing, and Moderation
Antoine Gauthier

Coordination
Gilles Pitre

Technical Support
Philippe Dubois
Claire Dumoulin
Christine Bricault

Simultaneous Interpretation
Andrée Lanoix
Olivier Lepage
Bernard Hervieux

Translation
Sophie-Hélène Cimon
Ron Ross

Transcription
Caroline Lalo Malec
Charlotte Kelly

English Revision
Patti Ryan

Assistance
Patricia Durán Cotrina

Accounting
Francine Chabot
Daniel Burns

Graphic Design
Isabelle Jobin

Cover photographs
Helen Hughes
Emmanuelle Roberge
Claudio Pérez R.
Michael G. Stewart
Tom Pich

The CQPV wishes to thank the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec for its support of the Masters of Living Traditions program, which made it possible to hold this symposium. It is also grateful to its partners, Télé-Québec's La Fabrique Culturelle, Québecor, and the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins, as well as to Roda Muse, of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and Tim Curtis, of the Secretariat of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, for their respective speeches at the CQPV's Rassemblement patrimoine vivant and unveiling of the Masters of Living Traditions—second cohort, in 2021.

Québec 

ISBN 978-2-922180-37-4
Legal Deposit - 4th quarter 2021
© CQPV

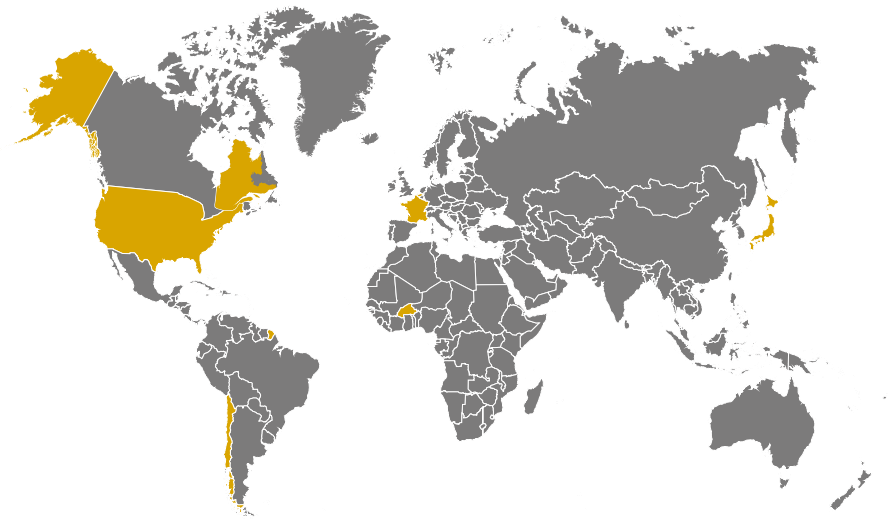


TABLE OF CONTENT

2 A word
from the
minister

3 A word from
the chief of
the AFNQL

4 A word
from the
chairman

5 Foreword by
the executive
director

11 Japan

17 United States

25 Chile

37 Burkina Faso

43 France

49 Flanders
[Belgium]

57 Quebec
[Canada]

A WORD FROM THE MINISTER



The safeguarding of intangible heritage is founded on the men and women who perpetuate the traditions and give them life—in groups, in communities, and with the help of impassioned scholars who strive to showcase age-old practices and skills.

I am happy to join in this conference, which takes place under the aegis of the safeguarding practices advocated by UNESCO. The presence and role of Québec in this event demonstrates a desire to carefully tend to the heritage that defines us and makes us proud. Our government's support for the Masters of living traditions program, launched in conjunction with this event, testifies to this desire.

I sincerely hope all participants profit from these exchanges and I heartedly congratulate them for the major role they play, on an international scale, in the transmission of expertise in the field of intangible heritage.

I wish you all a splendid symposium!

Nathalie Roy
Minister of Culture and Communications

Votre 
gouvernement

Québec 

A WORD FROM THE CHIEF OF THE AFNQL



Tshipushukatnau nutim etashiek. Tshimishtanashkumitnau ne peshtinemek apishiss apun tshetshi naushtaiek eshitshissentamaht tante uetnimaht atusseuna eshipukutaiat ntshiss kashikat.

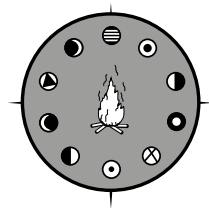
Listen! First of all, I would like to thank the Conseil québécois du patrimoine vivant, on behalf of all First Nations; the Conseil devotes a significant, and I would even say indispensable, place to First Nations and the Inuit in its actions. I obviously want to thank and congratulate the

five laureates whose work we are highlighting and who have successfully perpetuated traditions cherished by their people, in particular Ms. Vollant and Mr. Jerome, whose work with tradition reflects what we have always striven to convey. We have always tried to promote the close connection between our people and their environment: in Vollant's case, in the animal world, and in Jerome's, through the plant world. I think it is important to point this out.

To conclude, what a beautiful opportunity today for our people to assume their place, as just a few hours from now, we will begin the month of June—*uapukunpishum*—the month of flowers in Innu, which also coincides with the month of the history of Indigenous peoples throughout the country!

Tshimistanashkumitnau kassinu etashiek!
Thanks very much to all of you!

Ghislain Picard
Chief of the Assembly of
First Nations Quebec-Labrador



A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CQPV



Dear friends from here and overseas,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Conseil québécois du patrimoine québécois (CQPV), I am pleased to welcome you to this international symposium on Living Human Treasures systems around the world. Despite the strange times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CQPV was determined to put its resources at the service of an event that brings peoples together while honouring the older generation, which

has undergone so many hardships in recent months. Seven countries, from four continents, are represented, here to share the successes and pitfalls of their respective national systems.

A special thank you to the international delegates who, despite their busy schedules, responded quickly and positively to our invitation and agreed to embark on the adventure of a videoconferenced symposium. Thanks also to the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec for its financial support. Finally, huge kudos to the CQPV's small yet proud office team that did absolutely everything in its power to make this unique event possible.

Enjoy the symposium!

Carl-Éric Guertin
Chairman of the CQPV &
Executive Director of the
ECONOMUSEUM Network Society



FOREWORD BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CQPV



Welcome to the symposium on Living Human Treasures systems throughout the world! From the moment we sent out rough drafts of the event, we felt great interest from authorities across the planet for meeting and discussing their respective experiences. Because, to date, few events of this kind have taken place. This discussion forum, held on May 30, 2020, was rich in information and in contacts for the future.

Several years ago already, we at the Conseil Québécois du Patrimoine Vivant (CQPV) were already nurturing the idea of creating a national program along the lines of the Living Human Treasures systems inspired by the UNESCO directives. We wanted to take advantage of the prestige conferred by such an approach to highlight and transmit the varied productions of oral and gestural traditions in Quebec, through designated ambassadors well-versed in their field. This was one of among a range of interventions desired by the cultural actors involved.

With this international conference, we hope to learn more about the various ways of implementing national strategies for recognizing the exemplary bearers of traditions. The CQPV has a dual objective: to draw inspiration from others for developing our own program, and to allow everyone to benefit from the exchanges thus generated.

Due to the pandemic, the talks have been held online. A French-English simultaneous translation service facilitated access to the content of the presentations and discussions, particularly for international participants. Moreover, the conference proceedings you have before you will allow for sharing the information more widely.

Different ways of taking action—of even transforming adverse situations into opportunities—have been proposed and tested by the international community with respect to cultural traditions, with the aim of renewing transmission from generation to generation.

The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage proposes that State Parties produce inventories. When done in a creative way, this requirement can make it possible to identify the active cultural elements within a given territory, even if some may view this as modelled on strategies related to movable or immovable heritage, or on the protection of intellectual property.

A series of 12 ethical principles have been endorsed as part of the Convention, which states that bearer groups and communities must play the main role in actions undertaken around living heritage.

More recently, the Convention proposed an Overall results framework that enables State Parties to guide their intervention with regard to the safeguarding and to gauge its value. It is the entire range of public intervention that is scrutinized, from educational activities to the grants allocated to the sector and including promotional actions and gestures of recognition. These multiple public interventions, of course, are not always realized in view of a notion of intangible cultural heritage (or living heritage), but many of them contribute to its safeguard.

Another type of initiative that concerns us here is Living Human Treasures.

Living Human Treasures are persons who possess to a very high degree the knowledge and skills required for performing or re-creating specific elements of the intangible cultural heritage. Each Member State should choose an appropriate title to designate the bearers of knowledge and skills, the title of “Living Human Treasures” proposed by UNESCO being indicative. Among the systems in existence, there are already a variety of titles: Master of Art (France), Bearer of Popular Craft Tradition (Czech Republic), National Living Treasure (Republic of Korea), Holder of an Important Intangible Cultural Property (Japan and Republic of Korea)¹.

We don't even know if the UNESCO 1992 directive on Living Human Treasures systems is still in force or not—UNESCO no longer actively promotes it—but the relevance of such an approach appears to be revitalized, judging by its progression across the globe.

Living Human Treasures systems can be understood in the light of UNESCO's work on safeguarding living heritage. But they can also be more simply understood as programs to help meritorious artists or craftsmen in their efforts to disseminate or to educate.

The rationale of such national programs often rests on values that underly the concepts of living heritage or cultural tradition.

The Government of Quebec's Sustainable Development Act (2006) invites us to take into account the "intrinsic rarity and fragility" of traditions in the State's interventions. In its cultural policy, the City of Montreal (2005) speaks, for instance, of the "values of testimony and historical memory." Other values, such as general support for culture as a vector for social progress or, more broadly, "both monetary and non-monetary²" values are often mentioned. The Convention of 2003, like many national laws, refers to the sense of continuity and identity associated with this type of heritage. The idea of equity through public support was later introduced in the Overall results framework for the 2003 Convention (2018).

But one of the foundations of the work that we are doing around living heritage lies in the notion of diversity, which is echoed by reflection in the Convention's preamble where it urges us to resist the homogenization of the world.

This response by living heritage to globalized standardization challenges the growing industrialization that is occurring in many spheres of life. In this respect, this heritage advances an economic proposition that is quite distinct from most other multilateral instruments—including that of 2005 on the Protection

1. UNESCO. *Guidelines for the Establishment of National "Living Human Treasures" Systems*, article I.2.(i).

2. UNESCO. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, directive 184.

and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. We are not done, I think, assessing the merits of this proposition as an alternative to mass production and consumption in many sectors, such as entertainment, agriculture, health, transportation, and so on; as a critical force that drives us to examine our way of life; as an ideal for the future, both personal and social, to complement green sciences and technologies.

Highlighted in this way, craft-scale endeavour represents a way of apprehending existence. It promotes a social economy and favours the democratization of action (making and teaching how to make, and to repair when applicable, instead of having things made on a large scale). Living Human Treasures place another building block on this edifice, which really represents a circle.

In the end, it isn't living heritage that embodies the most important message advanced by UNESCO's 2003 Convention or by the various national regulations and programs. It is the safeguarding. Or, to put it differently, sustainable development, assisted by cultural practices that have proven their worth in this respect. The rationale is no longer merely that institutions must strive to safeguard traditions, but that constantly evolving traditions are themselves indispensable for saving the world.

These conference proceedings testify to the richness of the supportive actions taken in the countries participating in this venture, particularly through Living Human Treasures systems, a facet that deserves to be better known.

Each participating country has adapted this support system to take their own situation into account. The symposium brought to light the various forms that such a mechanism can take within participating States—sometimes borne by a public institution, sometimes by a mandated NGO—by insisting both on the successes and on the failures of the experience.

From the outset, Naoko Sato, representing Japan, explained the mechanism of the first country to implement the Living National Treasures system in the early 1950s, a mechanism based on transmission. This historic advance inspired several other initiatives, including UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In the United States of America, through various regulations supporting the arts, the National Endowment for the Arts began awarding yearly grants in 1982 to living traditions artists, as evinced by Cheryl Schiele and Clifford R. Murphy.

In Chile, it is individuals, communities of tradition bearers, and groups of practitioners that have been organized through a system of recognition in the last ten years, as explained by Ariel Patricio Führer Führer, who heads the program within the Ministry of culture, arts and heritage.

The Living Human Treasures system in Burkina Faso, presented by Tinga Aboubacar Konombo, enables action by bearers of tradition on several levels and is supported by the State.

Pierre Reverdy, a blacksmith and delegate from the Association des Maîtres d'art, explains the mechanism advocated in France, the Masters of Art, who strive to transmit their ancestral skills to an apprentice.

The region of Flanders (Belgium) launched its program in 2019. It opted for a flexible version of the Living Human Treasures system that provides grants to educators selected by people wanting to benefit from their knowledge and skill through a call for applications, as laid out by Sophie Muyllaert, of the department of culture, youth and media.

As for the CQPV's national program Maîtres de traditions vivantes (Québec, Canada), it seeks to promote and transmit artistic techniques and handicrafts by way of jury-selected cultural ambassadors. Under the direction of project head Gilles Pitre, and his successor Philippe Dubois, five bearers of tradition, including an Innu and a Mi'kmaq, have been invited in the first year to participate in structural projects for their respective communities.

To conclude, I hope we can meet face to face at our next conference, engage in lengthier discussion, and get to know each other better.

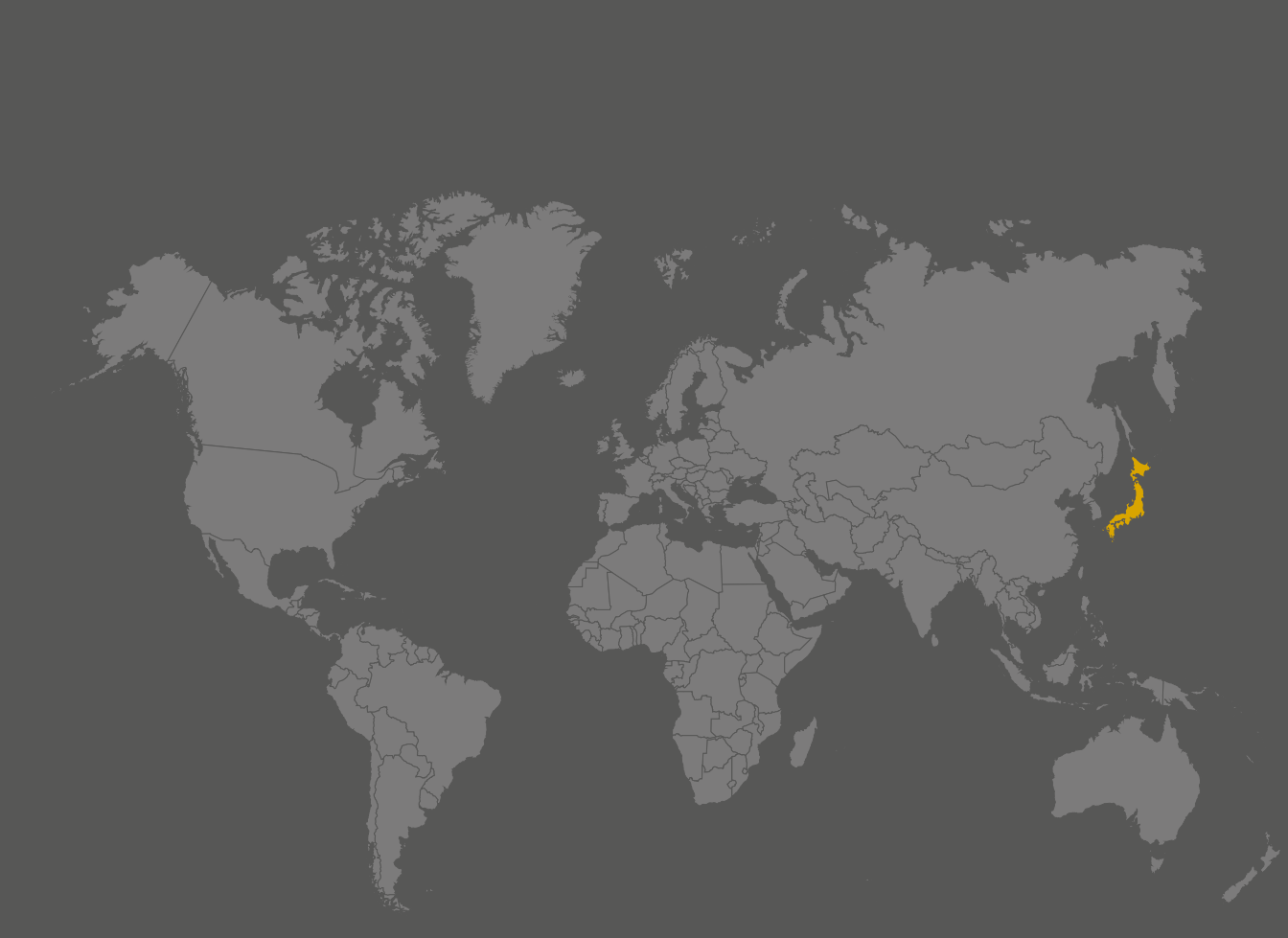
Other countries have also implemented official Living Human Treasures systems. Perhaps that will be an opportunity for a second symposium!

We are grateful to the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec, which believed in the project and provided financial support, without which we could not have met today.

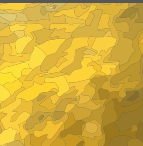
Happy reading to all of you, along with health for yourselves and your loved ones and, especially, the opportunity to practice enriching traditional practices in your own lands.

Antoine Gauthier
Executive Director





JAPAN



THE EXAMPLE OF THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN



Naoko Sato

Senior Specialist for Cultural Properties,
Traditional Culture Division,
Cultural Properties Department,
Agency for Cultural Affairs,
Government of Japan

Good morning, everyone.

Thank you for coming today. My name is Naoko Sato, and I work with the Agency for Cultural Affairs in Japan. I oversee the craft technique division.

The Japanese government designates Important Intangible Cultural Properties. By that, I mean the techniques used in creating arts, music, crafts and other intangible cultural assets that have high historic or artistic value for our country. We also formally recognize the individuals and groups who have mastered the technical artistry needed to perform or produce these assets and ensure the transmission of traditional Japanese skills to the next generation.

Today, I am going to talk about the Japanese system of “Living National Treasures.” Our agency doesn’t use that expression, by the way, but the media do, and it’s easy to remember, so I may also use it today.

Despite how it sounds, it’s important to understand that the system wasn’t created to honour artists or their works. Its goal is to ensure that the techniques involved in creating them are passed along to future generations. That is our main objective in designating Important Intangible Cultural Properties and their holders.

DEFINITION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL PROPERTY

“ Theatre, music, craft techniques and other cultural products that possess high historical or artistic value for Japan. ”

The first time the term “Intangible Cultural Properties” appeared in a Japanese public document was in 1950, when the law was established. It refers to the artistry and skills involved in creating intangible cultural assets that possess high historic and artistic value for Japan, such as theatre or music, as well as crafting techniques.

I personally specialize in craft techniques, so from here on, I will focus on those in my presentation.

Japan’s system to designate Important Intangible Cultural Properties protects these assets by recognizing the persons or groups who embody the relevant skills and crafts to an outstanding degree and promotes the transmission of traditional skills.

A technique is valued first; the holder is recognized after that. This means that designation would not be possible without the excellent craftspeople who realize the techniques. Designation and recognition are, in effect, mutual.

DESIGNATION OF IMPORTANT INTANGIBLE CULTURAL PROPERTIES

The system of designating Intangible Cultural Properties is based on the law. It aims to preserve and utilize artistically and historically important craft techniques by designating them as “Important Intangible Cultural Properties.”

Designation Criteria

- Evidence of especially high artistic value.
- Occupation of an especially important place in the history of craft techniques.
- Evidence of high artistic value or occupation of an especially important place in the history of craft techniques, and clear signs of the unique features of a region.

The system designates Important Intangible Cultural Property as an embodiment of a concept. It recognizes a person or group that embodies a high level of skill.

RECOGNITION OF HOLDERS OR GROUP HOLDERS OF IMPORTANT INTANGIBLE CULTURAL PROPERTIES

Recognition is based on three criteria.

Recognition Criteria

- Possession of an advanced degree of skill in the craft techniques designated as Important Intangible Cultural Properties.
- Competence in and thorough familiarity with the practice of the craft techniques.
- Membership in a group of persons who possess a craft technique with shared characteristics where at least two people have a high degree of skill.

Currently, recognition is divided into two categories: Individual Recognition and Group Recognition. As I mentioned earlier, individuals who are recognized are popularly known as “Living National Treasures.”

As of May 2020, there were 58 Living National Treasures associated with 39 designated items; there were 16 groups with collective recognition for 16 designated items; and there were 16 group holders recognized for 16 designated items.

Next, I will cover conditions for cancelling a recognition. What are the conditions that could lead to a designation or recognition being annulled?

In cases where Important Intangible Cultural Properties have lost their value, or where holders have died or a group of holders have broken up, or in other special cases, the Important Intangible Cultural Properties designation may be annulled. That is because the system recognizes that Important

Intangible Cultural Properties are the intangible techniques themselves, and their holders (or groups of holders) are just the vehicles that embody them.

Measures for the Protection of Important Intangible Cultural Properties

- A special subsidy of 2 million yen per year for further development of their skills or art and for training successors.
- Partial funding to cover the cost of projects carried out by Group Holders.
- Film documentation.
- Collecting works produced by Holders and Group Holders.

To protect and encourage intangible cultural property, Japan grants individual holders a special subsidy of 2 million yen per year. These funds are meant to help holders further develop their skills or art and train successors. Partial funding is provided to pay for the cost of training successors or for public performances by group holders, groups that have received collective recognition, or local governments.

How do holders spend this money?

Holders who receive these funds are obliged to submit a plan describing the activity that they hope to undertake with help from the subsidy. The plan must document how they will spend their money at the beginning of the Japanese fiscal year in April. March is the end of Japan's fiscal year. At that point, subsidized holders must submit a report that describes their activities over the past year, including receipts for any purchases.

Subsidies are most often used for things like:

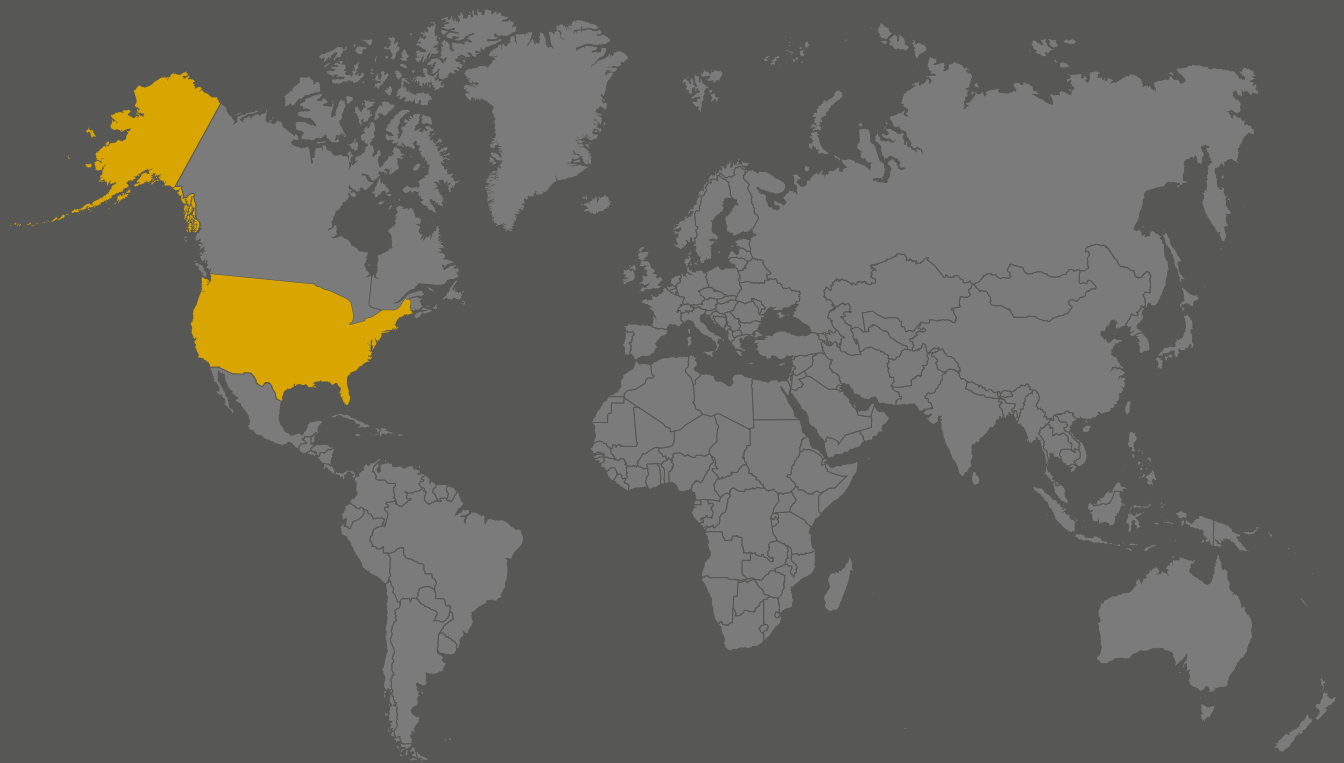
- Buying raw materials.
- Organizing training seminars.
- Collecting old applied arts for future reference.
- Training apprentices.

IMPACTS AND RESULTS

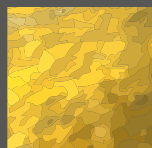
The system I have been describing was launched in 1955. That was the first time the Japanese people saw the concept of Intangible Cultural Property embodied. Until then, specifically since the 1950 law, the concept had been too ambiguous to understand. But as the system started, we began to better understand the meaning of Intangible Cultural Property.

Intangible Cultural Property has given Japanese people a new way of seeing their culture. As a result, people have begun to notice that we have a wealth of unique Intangible Cultural Properties. They have come to think of this property as symbolic of their cultural identity. And in fact, the best and the most important role of the whole system is to feed that sense of cultural identity and ensure that it continues.

In Japan, conserving Intangible Cultural Property means ensuring that recognized skills and techniques are transmitted to the next generation. Today, people are much more conscious of this form of heritage. This awareness has come about because people have learned what the Japanese government is doing with its designation and recognition system. Over the last 70 years, the concept of Intangible Cultural Property has spread widely throughout Japanese society. We have achieved widespread recognition of the fact that the only way to conserve Intangible Cultural Property is to ensure that it is transmitted to the next generation.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS AND NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIPS



Clifford R. Murphy
Director of Folk & Traditional
Arts at the National
Endowment for the Arts



Cheryl Schiele
Folk & Traditional Arts
Specialist at the National
Endowment for the Arts

Cheryl Schiele

Thank you, Gilles and Antoine. It's lovely to be with you all this morning. I'll begin with a little background and then go into the implementation of the National Heritage Fellowships before I hand it over to Cliff.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

The National Endowment for the Arts is an independent federal agency that serves as the United States cultural ministry. It primarily funds project-based grants to nonprofit arts organizations, enabling people across the country to participate in or experience the arts. At the federal level, we conduct research on the nation's arts ecology; we support partnerships with state-government and regional arts agencies, and we carry out national initiatives like the National Heritage Fellowships.



Photo: Michael G. Stewart

FOLK & TRADITIONAL ARTS

Since its founding in 1965, the Arts Endowment has supported living cultural heritage under its folk & traditional arts division and programs. In particular, we support a network of state-wide and jurisdictional folklife programs, whose public folklore specialists conduct extensive fieldwork across the nation, document and manage apprenticeship programs, and support heritage arts of underserved communities; this includes working-class, rural, inner-city, mountain, Maritime, immigrant, Native American, Native Alaskan, and Native Hawaiian communities. Since 1974, this state and regional network has been vital in supporting communities' efforts to sustain their traditional arts and cultural life, focusing on communities who share a common ethnic heritage, cultural mores, language, religion, occupation, or geographic region. This work has also been integral to seeding the pool of artists, then and now, into the National Heritage Fellowships program, which was launched in 1982.



Photo: Michael G. Stewart

NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIPS

Program Design

Inspired by Japan's Living National Treasures, the National Heritage Fellowships was established to honor and celebrate master traditional artists, in a way that recognizes the United States' cultural diversity as a strength of its national character.

The program presents each master artist (which could also be a group) with a one-time monetary award. In the early years, the one-time award began at 5,000 USD and then increased three times to its current level at \$25,000 per Fellowship: \$10,000 (1993-2002), \$20,000 (2003-2008), and \$25,000 (2009-present).

The monetary award is accompanied by a combination of celebratory public and private events, including an awards ceremony held on Capitol Hill or at the White House, embassy receptions, a formal banquet, and the Fellows perform or demonstrate their craft in a public concert. Over the years, the programming and festivities have been held in partnership with non-profit organizations like the National Council for the Traditional Arts and with federal partners such as the Library of Congress and its American Folklife Center and the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.



In its implementation, we select a yearly class of Fellows through a nomination process. We accept nominations from the general public; but do not accept self-nominations. One does not need to be a folklorist or have a graduate degree, nor does one need to be affiliated with an institution or personally affiliated with a nominee to make a submission.

The Arts Endowment staff assembles a review panel of cultural experts—folklorists, cultural anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, traditional artists (including past Heritage Fellows), and one layperson—to review the nominations. These experts review biographical information, letters of support, and work samples.



Photo: Michael G. Stewart

They must evaluate nominations according to the criteria: artistic excellence, significance within a particular artistic tradition, and contributions to living cultural heritage. Together, the panelists recommend up to nine Fellowships, to be reviewed by our National Council on the Arts (our agency's governing board), and the Chairman. In the first decade, there were as many as 17 Fellowships awarded in a single year, but the number has hovered between nine and 12 in the last two decades.

Facts & Figures

Since 1982, the Arts Endowment has awarded 440 Fellowships. We also informally count the number of unique cultural traditions honored at around 225. We have awarded Fellowships in all 50 states, Washington, DC, and four U.S. territories (Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands).

Each yearly class of Fellows represents a range of cultural traditions and we strive for diversity by gender, genre, and geography.

I'll now turn it over to my colleague Cliff to talk about the program's impact, its challenges and the future.

Clifford R. Murphy

Thank you, Cheryl.

Historically the United States has taken a multicultural approach to supporting living traditions. If you review the 440 recipients recognized in the near-forty years of National Heritage Fellowships, you'll find Indigenous practitioners carrying forward traditions that are unbroken—in form and in geographic location—for millennia. You will also find recipients from diasporic communities—whether they be Quebecois fiddlers practicing in the New England States, a Peruvian retablo artist practicing in Utah, or Japanese taiko musicians in California. You will also find numerous traditions that have emerged from the American experience over the past century and have become synonymous with American identity abroad—blues, jazz, gospel, bluegrass, rockabilly. In other words, if the National Heritage Fellowships is a portrait of the culture of the United States, it is a culture defined by what is *in* the USA, rather than a forum for debate about what is *of* the United States.



Photo: Michael G. Stewart



Photo: Tom Pich

Fundamental to achieving this portrait of living traditions in the United States is the public nomination process. Coupled with the citizen panels that review nominations, the entire National Heritage Fellowships process is ruled by a dynamic in which there is an elastic view of what traditions *are*, and what *is* traditional.

The National Heritage Fellowships are the most publicly visible way in which the National Endowment for the Arts supports living traditions. However, we are now 50 years into supporting living traditions through state folklife programs, and 40 years into supporting Apprenticeships that fortify the transmission of tradition across generations. And we are 40 years into the National Heritage Fellowships program. We make grants to support projects in every state, region, and territory to fortify living traditions at the grass-roots level, placing a high priority on the transmission of tradition. Much of this work is mapped out and analyzed in our 2019 publication, *Living Traditions: A Portfolio Analysis of the National Endowment for the Arts' Folk & Traditional Arts Portfolio*.

Grant support for folk and traditional arts apprenticeships is likely the most significant way that our agency helps to steward living traditions.

Each year, we support over forty apprenticeship programs nationwide, with each apprenticeship program featuring 5-10 teams of master artists teaching intermediate/beginner artists. Meaning, annually, we support between 200-400 teams of traditional artists, working in mediums ranging from quilting to blues to Cambodian dance, who are deliberately engaged in a process to hand living traditions on to the next generation. We have a great deal of anecdotal evidence that these programs are deeply impactful and have recently put out a call for research that can analyze the impact of Apprenticeships and National Heritage Fellowships on living traditions in the United States.

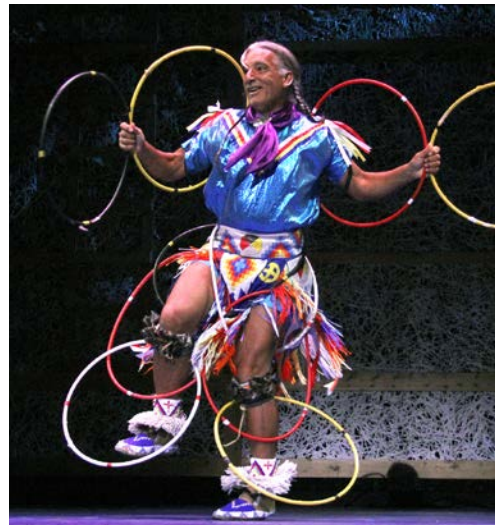
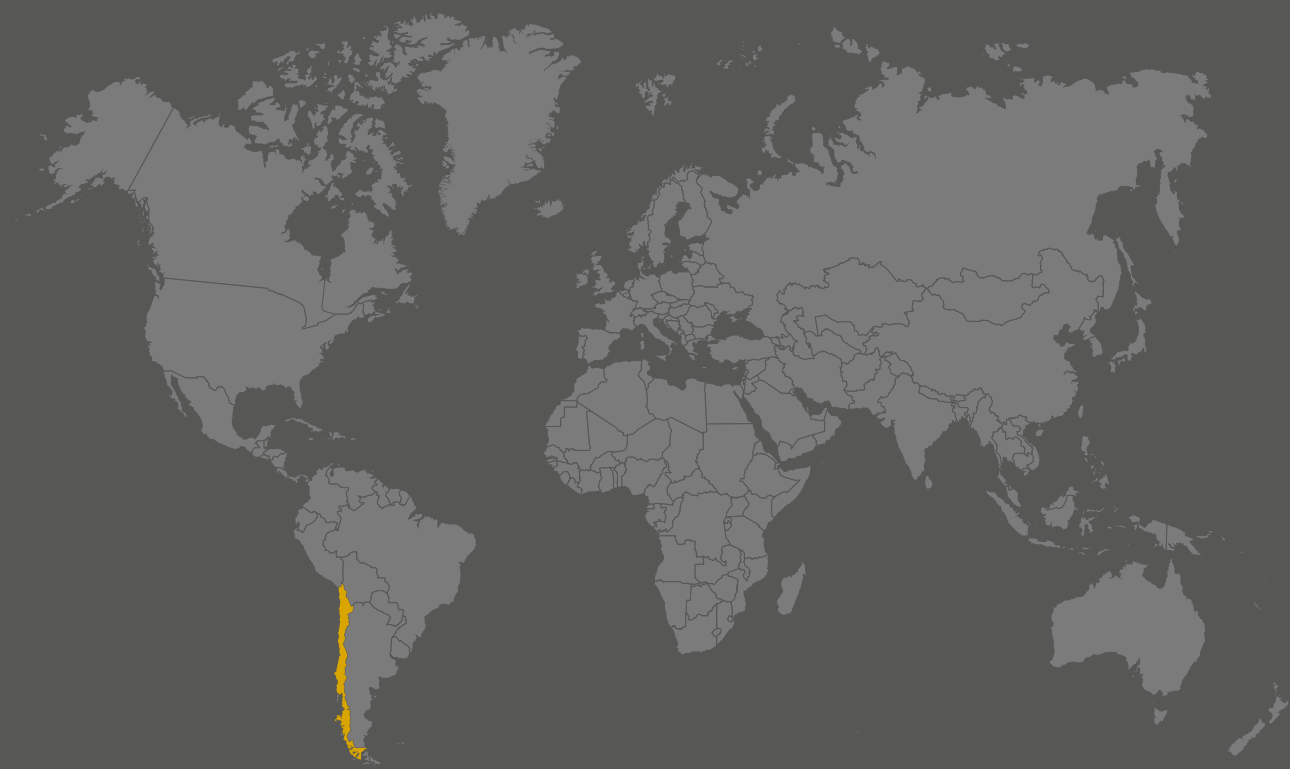


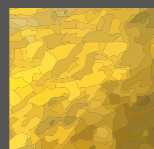
Photo: Michael G. Stewart



Photo: Michael G. Stewart



CHILE



RECOGNITION OF LIVING HUMAN TREASURES IN CHILE



Ariel Patricio Führer Führer

Anthropologist
National officer for Living Human Treasures
Cultural Heritage Subsecretariat
Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage, Chile

OPERATION OF THE LIVING HUMAN TREASURES SYSTEM IN CHILE

Living Human Treasures is the public recognition awarded by the Government of Chile, through the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage¹ (“the Ministry”) (*Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio*), to prominent individuals, groups, and communities of cultural practitioners who have been recognized by their peers for their significant contributions to safeguarding and promoting expressions of intangible cultural heritage (“ICH”) which, in turn, are included in the Chilean ICH Inventory.

The aim of recognizing Living Human Treasures is to encourage the public to appreciate the contributions and strategic role played by certain individuals, groups, and communities in maintaining and creating an expression of ICH. In this way, the system seeks to strengthen the local identity of the communities, groups, and individuals involved and to contribute to recognizing and publicizing the ICH and the country’s cultural diversity.

1. According to Article 3(26) of Law 21.045, which “Creates the *Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio* (Ministry of Cultures, Arts, and Heritage),” the Ministry is responsible for declaring the official recognition of representative expressions of the country’s intangible heritage and of the individuals, groups, and communities that are Living Human Treasures.



Photo: Marcelo Díaz E.

Any individuals, groups, or communities that are cultural practitioners of Elements included in the Chilean ICH Inventory, and that are identified in the respective entry, may be nominated for recognition as Living Human Treasures. The list and description of the Elements registered in the Inventory can be found on the website of the Information System for the Management of Intangible Cultural Heritage (*Sistema de Información para la Gestión del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial—SIGPA*). The current categories for recognition are: individual practitioner, community cultural practitioner, and group of practitioners.

The request for recognition must arise from the agreement and consensus of the members of the Element's community of cultural practitioners. Therefore, the request for recognition must be supported by documents showing the participatory actions carried out for the nomination.

Applications are made through the Recognition Request Form, which will be permanently available at the SIGPA and on the Institution's official websites. This form should describe and explain the reasons why the cultural figures are being nominated for recognition.

The Ministry awards a maximum of four Living Human Treasures recognitions each year, consisting of a public certificate that accredits the recipients as such and certifies their inclusion in a national registry.

Each recognized practitioner is awarded a one-time economic incentive, the amount of which is defined each year for individuals, groups, or communities according to the available budget.

In addition, the recognition also includes research and documentation work, consisting of a series of ethnographic, audiovisual, and photographic materials to produce publications and documentaries that seek to disseminate the practices and knowledge for which they were recognized.

The ICH Advisory Committee (*Comité Asesor en PCI*) is responsible for reviewing applications for recognition and for preparing the proposed list of Living Human Treasures recognitions. This proposal is then submitted for approval by the National Council of Cultures, Arts, and Heritage (*Consejo Nacional de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio*), which is headed by the highest level of authority in the Ministry.

The ICH Advisory Committee is an advisory body that seeks to contribute to and guide the Ministry's decisions regarding the identification, registration, investigation, and recognition of expressions of ICH, as well as their proper management in areas of public policy.

The ICH Advisory Committee uses the following criteria to evaluate applications:

- ❶ **Strategic role:** the cultural practitioners are currently recognized by their peers, and the application clearly expresses their past or current contribution to transmitting and strengthening the ICH Element.
- ❷ **Representativeness:** the motivations for submitting the request for recognition arise from the cultural community. The way in which the individual or group has been defined respects cultural and social processes for decision-making and agreements.
- ❸ **Contribution to safeguarding:** the recognition contributes to safeguarding the ICH Element and does not cause conflicts and/or undermine its viability.

RESULTS ACHIEVED SO FAR

As a pioneer in Latin America, Chile has implemented the recognition of Living Human Treasures since 2009, following the Operational Guidelines prepared by UNESCO for its implementation around the world.

In its decade of existence, 24 individual awards, 25 community awards, and one group award have been given to cultural practitioners. The recipients are present in every region of the country. In addition, nearly half of those recognized are members of indigenous peoples or are Afro-descendants.

If we compare individual and group cultural practitioners in terms of gender, there is an equal number of recognized male and female. However, the largest group of practitioners is a community of craftswomen made up of more than 115 women.

In general, we can lay out two major periods in the history of Living Human Treasures recognition. The first period was from 2009 to 2017, and the second was from 2018 to the present.



Photo: Claudio Pérez R.

The System was created in 2009 in the former National Council of Cultures and the Arts (*Consejo Nacional de las Culturas y las Artes—CNCA*), as a public policy program seeking to encourage citizens to appreciate cultural diversity and preserve traditional cultural expressions in danger of disappearing (CNCA, 2012). It had its strongest activity in the first five years of the 2010s. From 2009 to 2017, 1,000 applications were received, of which 758 were for individual cultural practitioners and 242 were for group cultural practitioners.



Photo: Helen Hughes



Photo: Claudio Pérez R.

During this period, Living Human Treasures was implemented through an open call for citizens to nominate individuals or groups that create, recreate, and transmit knowledge and techniques that have been handed down to them. The purpose of the recognition was to search for individuals or groups that strengthen their communities' identity and enrich the country's cultural diversity.

The recognition process was organized in several stages: call for nominations, admissibility, evaluation committee, official approval, ceremony, registration, and dissemination. The process focused on nationally publicizing the call for nominations and establishing channels of communication with the sponsors of the nominations.

The role of the expert committees was to analyze, evaluate, pre-select, and establish the list of recognized individuals. The first pre-selection was carried out by four macro-zonal expert committees (north, centre, south, far south). A national expert committee then established the list of practitioners recognized as Living Human Treasures.

The final stage of the process was the official public recognition ceremony, which has been held at the Palacio de la Moneda since 2014, headed by the President of the Republic, Ministry officials, and local government authorities. This was a communications milestone, with extensive press and television coverage.

In this second period, which began in 2018, there was a major shift in the conception of the Living Human Treasures recognition, as well as in the public management of ICH in Chile.

First, Living Human Treasures was redesigned and was changed from a public call for nominations to a recognition among peers, i.e., an evaluation carried out among the practitioners of an ICH element.

Secondly, the call for applications was limited to practitioners associated with heritage expressions registered in the Chilean ICH Inventory. This led the dissemination of the call to focus on a small number of communities that are part of this Inventory. In 2018, there were only six elements listed in this Inventory, which increased to 18 in 2019.

As mentioned above, this period saw a change in the public management of ICH in Chile, as a result of the implementation of the process for safeguarding ICH. This is defined as the management of measures seeking to ensure the viability and sustainability of ICH. It is organized in the following stages: Citizen Requests, ICH Registry, Participatory Research, Inventory, and Safeguard Plans and/or Measures.



Photo: Marcelo Díaz E.

In quantitative terms, from 2018 to 2019, 10 applications for recognition were received, far fewer than in 2017, when 98 were received. This significant decrease in the number of received applications was the result of the conditions implemented in the redesign. Now, in order to participate in the call, the persons or groups must belong to elements that: are in the Registry³; come with participatory research that has been validated by the community of practitioners and by the ICH Advisory Committee; and that have subsequently entered the Inventory.



Photo: Javier Godoy F.

In general, this change sought to obtain sufficient background information through participatory research, to carry out participatory processes to award recognitions endorsed by the cultural practitioner community, and to avoid potential subsequent community conflicts associated with the recognition.



Photo: Javier Godoy F.

During this decade of implementation of Living Human Treasures recognition in Chile, a series of programs, projects, and initiatives were carried out by public agencies to highlight those who were recognized.

Bearers of Tradition: since 2011, people recognized as Living Human Treasures can carry out various forms of cultural mediation workshops in formal and non-formal education settings across the country. In these spaces for community/

3. There are currently forty-two (42) elements registered in the Registry.



Photo: Sebastián Moreno M.

school cultural mediation and education, children interact directly with recognized cultural figures in their local contexts with the support and participation of the educational team and their community.

Pedagogical Notebooks: a complementary publication for the Bearers of Tradition workshops, as support materials that can be implemented in classrooms to broadly transmit and promote traditional knowledge.

Information System for Heritage Management (SIGPA): website providing information, photographs, and audiovisual materials on everyone recognized as Living Human Treasures.

Master Gatherings: an initiative carried out jointly with the Schools of Rock (*Ministry's Escuelas de Rock*) program. This involved a cultural gathering and exchange between musicians from different generations, which was recorded in audiovisual form (2013 and 2014) and was disseminated as an example of a creative process.

Inter-Institutional Roundtable: an initiative that connects and coordinates institutional efforts to strengthen intersectoral actions in favour of individual and group cultural practitioners, in the areas of safeguarding and human welfare.

In addition, a series of initiatives have been carried out in coordination with other public institutions:

- Seal of Origin: support from the National Intellectual Property Institute (INAPI) for designation of origin applications.
- Artisan Villages: Rari was recognized as an “Artisan City of the World” by the World Crafts Council, a UN-affiliated organization dedicated to supporting and preserving handicrafts worldwide.
- Cultural Heritage Day: various activities are held each year in the last weekend in May. This year the #DíaDelPatrimonioEnCasa is taking place on the Internet.
- Rural World Expo: participation in an exhibit to highlight the importance of users and communities of the Agricultural Development Institute (*Instituto de Desarrollo Agropecuario—INDAP*) that have been officially recognized as ICH Elements.
- Screening of Living Human Treasures documentaries.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

The main problems and challenges faced by the recognition of Living Human Treasures in Chile are presented below.

In the first years after it was implemented, problems arose within certain tradition bearer communities, due to the specific recognition given to groups or individuals belonging to ICH elements in broader communities, with significant territorial and historical diversity. In this sense, patrimonialization increased the differences and internal conflicts within these communities, generating new positions of power.

The Living Human Treasures recognition process was structured under the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) perspective. Smith (2006) argues that the consequences of the AHD are that it defines who becomes a legitimate spokespersons for the past. She also shows that the communities of experts having authority to define cultural heritage, and that they attempt to exclude and reduce participation by cultural communities.



Photo: Javier Godoy F.



Photo: Claudio Pérez R.

The romantic notion of identifying cultural practitioners as “Living Human Treasures,” that is, valuable individuals who are essential to the transmission and creation of expressions of ICH, cannot mean that their memory and legacy should be preserved in a museum or a website as a precious object. Rather, she points out a responsibility—of both practitioners and institutions—in the promotion and sustainability of cultural practices.

In the first period of recognition, efforts were focused on recognizing individuals and groups of indigenous peoples who created expressions that were “in danger of disappearing.” The arguments justifying their recognition included identifying them as the “last” members of these peoples, and reference was made to the “supposed racial ‘purity’ of their roots” (MINCAP, 2018:9). According to Bendix (1997), this search for authenticity in cultural analysis leads to the revival of nationalistic feelings of preservation, in contrast with the processes of ethnogenesis of native peoples who live in and create dynamic, constantly changing culture.

In line with the notion of cultural heritage as a social construction (Prats, 1997), it is important that processes of recognition/patrimonialization emerge as an agreement by the cultural figure community itself.

Recognition of Living Human Treasures must incorporate aspects of social well-being for the recognized individuals and groups. Currently, these individuals and groups live in conditions of extreme social and economic vulnerability. There are major challenges in managing ongoing economic and social support for those recognized. The safeguarding of ICH expressions must be based on the well-being of their bearers.

Crespial (2019) emphasizes that in the Latin American case, intersectoral coordination is a major challenge in ICH management. In Chile, with the operation of the Inter-Institutional Roundtable (*Mesa Interinstitucional*) (2016-2017), some progress was made in “identifying the various actors and determining their competencies, expertise, and potential” (*ibid.*, 2019:46-47) for safeguarding and supporting those recognized as Living Human Treasures. However, the challenge remains to strengthen these as permanent or temporary arenas for joint work.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bendix, R. (1997). “From Fakelore to the Politics of Culture. The Changing Contours of American Folkloristics,” in *Search of Authenticity. The Formation of Folklore Studies*, pp. 188-218, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

CNCA (2018). *Tesoros Humanos Vivos. Informe general 2008-2018*. Departamento de Patrimonio Cultural, Consejo Nacional de las Culturas y las Artes, Valparaíso.

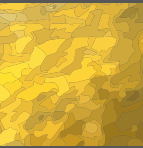
CRESPIAL (2019). *Miradas a la gestión del PCI de América Latina: avances y perspectivas. Estados del arte sobre las políticas públicas para la salvaguardia del PCI de los países miembro del CRESPIAL*, Centro Regional para la Salvaguardia del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de América Latina, Cusco, Perú.

MINCAP (2018). *Recomendaciones para nombrar y escribir sobre pueblos indígenas y sus lenguas*, Departamento de Pueblos Originarios, Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio, Santiago, Chile.

Prats, Ll. (1997). *Antropología y patrimonio*, Barcelona, Spain: Ariel Antropología.

Smith, L. (2006). *Uses of heritage*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York.

BURKINA FASO



OPERATION OF BURKINA FASO'S LIVING HUMAN TREASURES SYSTEM: ASSESSMENT, ISSUES, AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE



Konombo Tinga Aboubacar

Department Head
Directorate of Conservation and Promotion
of Cultural Heritage (DCPPC)
Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Tourism,
Burkina Faso

INTRODUCTION

Burkina Faso, still called “the land of honest men,” is located in the heart of Western Africa. With an area of 274,200 km², it is limited in the east by Niger, in the north by Mali, and in the south by the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Benin, and Togo. The country is composed of around sixty ethnic groups abounding in diversity and a rich cultural profusion. Burkina Faso is a party to nearly all the UNESCO conventions on culture in view of helping to better protect this sphere on a national level, while also sharing its experience internationally with other countries. Burkina Faso consequently ratified the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage on July 21, 2006.

INCEPTION OF THE LIVING HUMAN TREASURES SYSTEM IN BURKINA FASO

The established cultural policies have always promoted culture’s fundamental role in building the nation through peace and social integration as well as creating a strong national identity. Since 2004, Burkina Faso has undertaken to

follow up on the UNESCO recommendation to States to create national systems of “Living Human Treasures” (LHT). An information seminar on LHT systems was organized from July 19 to 21, 2004. However, due to a lack of financial resources, it was not until September 2013 that Decree No. 2013-993/PRES/PM/MCT, of October 30, 2013, on the creation of the Burkina Faso Living Human Treasures System, was adopted.

OPERATION OF THE LHT SYSTEM

Implementation of the LHT system required the mobilization of human, financial, and material resources along with the creation of an effective organizational structure. Two bodies were thus created to implement the system: the Steering Committee (*Comité de pilotage*) and the Technical Commission (*Commission technique*).

Steering Committee

Created: Decree No. 2014-051/MCT/DGPC, May 6, 2014, on the creation, powers, composition, and operation of the Steering Committee of the Burkina Faso LHT system.;

Composition: Chairperon (Minister of culture); Rapporteur (Secretary General of the Ministry of culture); members (eight eminent personalities from the world of culture).

Mandate: four years, renewable once;

Missions: to define the general orientation, strategy, selection criteria of the Burkina Faso LHTs; to establish a code of honour; to deliberate the results of the selection of LHT laureate titles; to maintain the list of LHTs and follow up with distinguished LHT individuals and groups in Burkina Faso; to implement measures for promoting and valorizing Burkina Faso LHTs.

Technical Commission

Created: Decree No. 2014-078/MCT/SG/DGPC, of June 24, 2014, on the creation, powers, composition, and operation of the Technical Commission for the Burkina Faso LHT system;

Composition: Chairperson (Director in charge of cultural heritage); Rapporteur (Director in charge of the promotion of cultural heritage); members (23 representatives from the Ministry of culture and partner technical departments); associations and organizations from cultural civil society;

Mandate: four years, renewable once;

Missions: to receive candidate applications for LHT titles; to examine and study technical qualities of the candidate applications; to emit opinions on the applications and to transmit them to the Steering Committee; to comment and make observations; to carry out any other mission entrusted to it by the Steering Committee.

RESULTS OBTAINED

The results obtained are:

- Proclamation in December 2015 of the first list of 17 LHTs in two fields (performing arts and knowledge related to traditional handicrafts);
- Adult education training for the LHTs in the transmission of specialized knowledge;
- Yearly training of two disciples for each LHT in his or her field of intervention;
- Official installation of the LHTs in their regions of origin;
- Development of projects to promote LHT knowledge and know-how;
- Organization of handicraft days ("journées des métiers," one-day events) for the LHTs;
- Development of monographs on the LHTs;
- Drafting of documents governing LHT status;
- Publication of a promotional postal stamp with the image of an LHT;
- Renewed interest on the part of youth for traditional knowledge and skills;
- Burkina Faso's LHT system becomes a centre of interest for students from such educational institutes as the École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistature (ENAM).

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

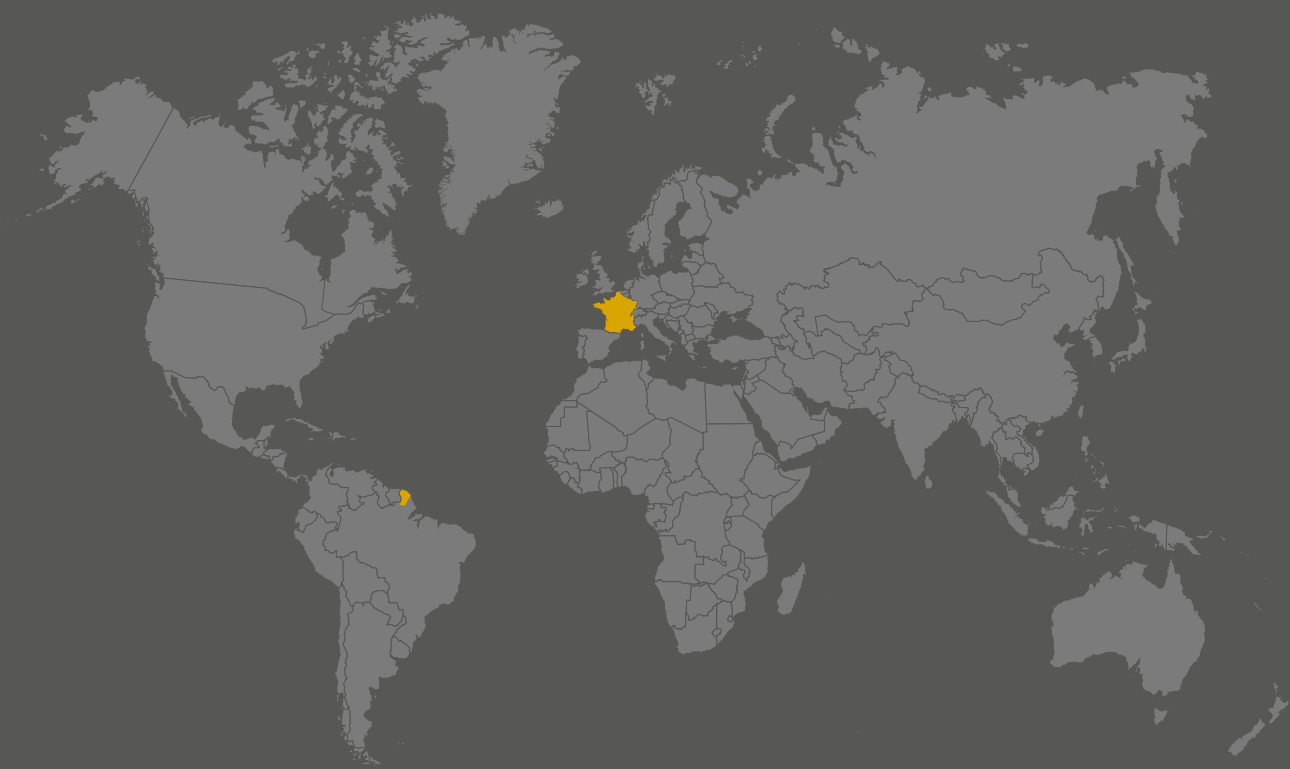
One of the major challenges connected with the LHT system in Burkina Faso is to provide lasting support for the generational transmission of knowledge and skills already carried out by the LHTs and potential LHTs in their respective fields. A failure of the system in meeting its objectives would be one less tool at the State's disposal for supporting the efforts of bearers of traditional knowledge in the transmission of our intangible cultural heritage (ICH).

Some means for accomplishing this may be listed:

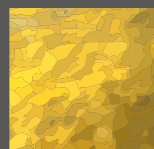
- Continuing the proclamation of LHTs in all fields of ICH;
- Mobilizing and diversifying the sources of financing that would allow the acquisition of specific equipment, on the one hand, and the allocation of meaningful financial means to the LHTs, on the other;
- Reinforcing strategies for action between the LHTs and other actors in the promotion of the arts and culture in the educational system and other fields (health, agriculture, etc.) in order to better harmonize their interventions and generate greater impact;
- Finding frameworks of transmission adapted to each LHT;
- Having continuous financing devoted to the Burkina Faso LHT system;
- Creating an independent managerial structure for the LHT system in Burkina Faso;
- Promoting the achievements of the Burkina Faso LHT system among the people and in research centres;
- Involving local communities that could take the various LHT activities into account in their development program.

CONCLUSION

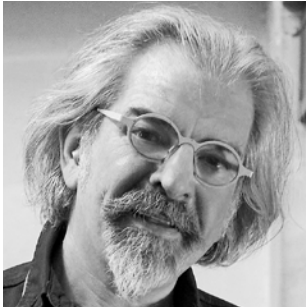
Burkina Faso implemented the UNESCO directive by creating its own LHT system. This represents a heavy responsibility for the department in charge of culture. The challenges to be met are enormous and require the assiduous support of public authorities in the form of human and financial resources, the commitment of the LHTs themselves to work effectively to transmit their knowledge and know-how, and the promotion of the products of this knowledge.



FRANCE



MASTERS OF ART IN FRANCE



Pierre Reverdy

Master of Art

Vice-president, international relations,
Les Ateliers des Maîtres d'Art et leurs élèves
Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres

To begin with, I want to thank the Quebec Council for Living Heritage for organizing such a conference and to say what a pleasure it is for the Association des Maîtres d'Art et leurs élèves to be participating.

Please allow me to introduce myself very briefly: my name is Pierre Reverdy, I am a French Master of Art, a master knifsmith in Damascus steel—that is my official title—and my personal presentation is “Poetic Damascus Sculptor.” My wife Nicole and I have been working together for 30 years.

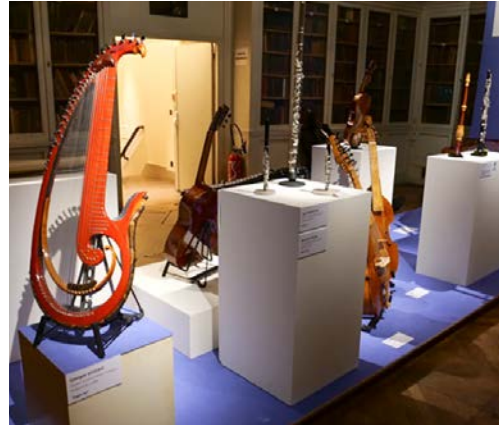
I must say that I have been waiting a long time for moments such as we are experiencing now; I am speaking of this conference, naturally. It is a kind of consecration of our endeavours. It was obvious to me that these encounters would take place, because I sensed the potentiality in the culture of traditional crafts, its important, primordial, and essential values. They have spanned years; I would gladly pay the first tribute to the Ancients! We owe everything to them, including having brought traditional craftsmanship to the highest cultural level, and those who practice these crafts are expressing their gratitude every day.

Let me present the Master of Art (or Craft Master) system.

Last December (2019) we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the system in Paris. The system did not start from nothing! What has to be remembered, and



Photo:



it is essential, is that we belong to the culture as much as we do to the crafts, we don't dissociate crafts from culture. We are very grateful that the title is given broadly by the Minister of Culture; generally, all that touches crafts is instead managed by the Ministry of crafts and industry.

The workings of the Master of Art system is somewhat similar to the one in Japan. There is a call for applications, committees meet to select the candidates, and the appointments are made every two years, the number of which depends on the quality of the applications, sometimes between five and nine. To date, 141 Masters of Art have been appointed, of which 80 are still active.

When I went to Japan last year, I was extremely fortunate to be invited to a talk by Master Sen Sojitsu, Living National Treasure, 15th generation Master of the tea ceremony. I introduced myself as a Master of Art and someone told me: "You're pretty young!" So yes, among appointees, there are masters who are 50-55 years old.

To be appointed Master of Art is also a commitment to transmit one's craft. A kind of contract to train a student to mastery. We don't train a disciple, we train a future Master. Some students—it's rare, but altogether possible—once their training completed, after years of experience, have applied for the title of Master of Art and have obtained the title.

How is it organized? The Ministry of culture leads the project; it delegates management of the appointment process and of the three-year Master-student training follow-up to the Institut National des Métiers d'Art (INMA). During this period, the Master teaches the student, under his sole responsibility and using his own pedagogy—this is very important; that is, there is no pre-defined pedagogy, anything is possible. The Master must propose what he or she intends to do with the student during these three years. Once the program is validated, there are meetings at six-month intervals to assess the situation and make sure the process is running smoothly. The Master's teaching may be supplemented, if need be, in regards to managerial and commercial aspects, by other training received in tandem.

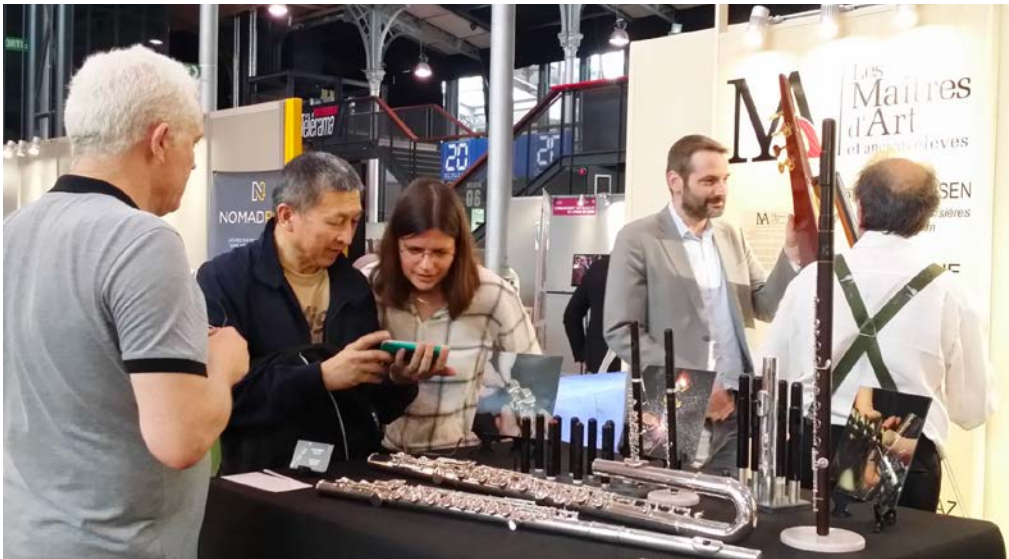
The Ministry of culture mandates the association "Les Ateliers des Maîtres d'Art et leurs élèves" (workshops of the Masters of Art and their students) to provide facilitation and promotion for the Masters of Art and their students.

We never forget the students. You were just talking about little issues, well, here's one! Not during training, but afterward... Being 50 years old, with a very active professional career, and to still be called "former student of"—something better certainly should be found (and not because we haven't been searching for years). So we have to be very careful with the terms we choose to use from the get-go, at the inception of these programs.



So, what I wanted to say, is that we have an association, the “Ateliers des Maîtres d’Art et leurs élèves”, that is responsible for sustaining and promoting workshops for the Masters and their established students. That is why we are organizing a one-week exhibition in Japan next year; we’ll be able to show our work and to meet collectors. We run kiosks at major national and international exhibitions to go out and meet the public and to sustain the title, but also the Masters of Art themselves and their students through better visibility, so that they can sell during these salons, for we can’t lose sight of the economic aspect and the fact that the workshops have to monetize their works in order to sustain themselves.

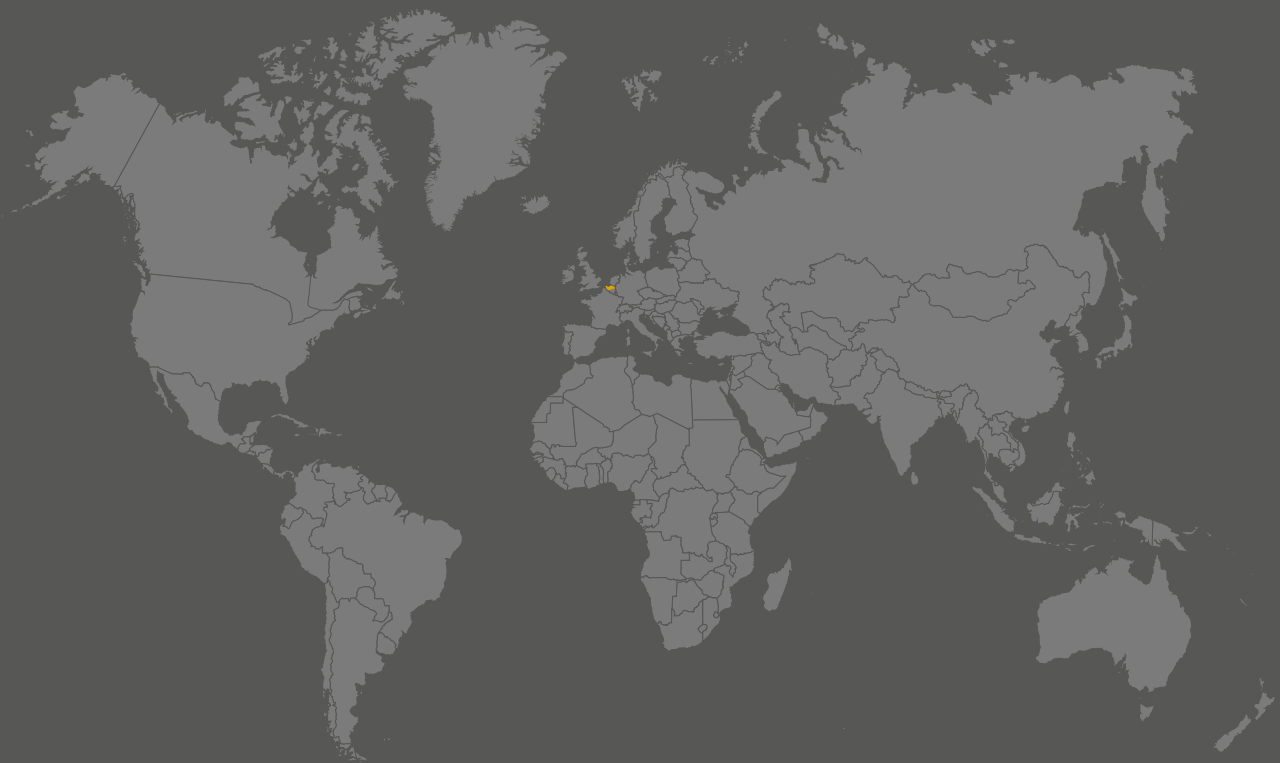
I wanted to present some numbers regarding this mechanism, but it isn’t for the numbers that we work all day! We work because the spirit that inhabits us is a profound, essential spirit. We don’t know how we learn this idea of the spirit of the beautiful, or how we teach it. What we do know, is that if this spirit of the beautiful does not exist, working and transmitting our skills becomes unthinkable; it’s a whole. The Master of Art’s teaching must comprise not only the technique but also this complex notion of beauty, of awareness, and—why not—of soul. It comes from our guts! The transmission is done from Master to student; it must also be done from human to human. More broadly, it even takes in society, and humanity. That is the stone we bring to the edifice.





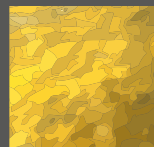
In fact, this conference today is extremely important because we shall look at several mechanisms, even if some are not represented today, but that's not the most important. What we must look at is, of course, the particularities, the differences between each mechanism, but we must especially recognize the values that bring us together. These values of culture, beauty, transmission—since transmission is one of the major vectors of all these devices—these values are the ones that get us out of bed every morning and to do what we do, despite the difficulties we meet, as anybody would. That is what drives us: beauty, desire, passion.

I wanted to speak to you about an experience (I tell you about it because I am a Master of Art) that touches on the resolution of certain paradoxes. What's at stake isn't to be competent or highly proficient. Excellence, of course, must be had. But for a Master of Art excellence isn't an end, it's the start! And once we've seen the entire range of a craft, we can begin to teach it freely. Technique must not be conceived and taught as something difficult, technique must give us the means to create, it must be the means to be free. That is what masters are going to explain and teach to their students, at their own pace, in their own way. That is also what we do when we have exhibitions, when we meet visitors, as we convey these values.



FLANDERS

[BELGIUM]



GRANTS FOR THE TRANSMISSION OF CRAFTSMANSHIP IN MASTER — PUPIL TRAJECTORIES



Sophie Muyllaert

Policy Advisor on Intangible Cultural Heritage
Department of Culture, Youth and Media
Flanders/Belgium

HOW IT WORKS

In 2018, as part of its policy on intangible cultural heritage, the Flemish government initiated a grant program to support the transmission of craftsmanship. The policy was created to recognize that intangible historical knowledge involved in crafting works of art or monuments is just as valuable—and deserves the same focus—as the actual historical pieces themselves.

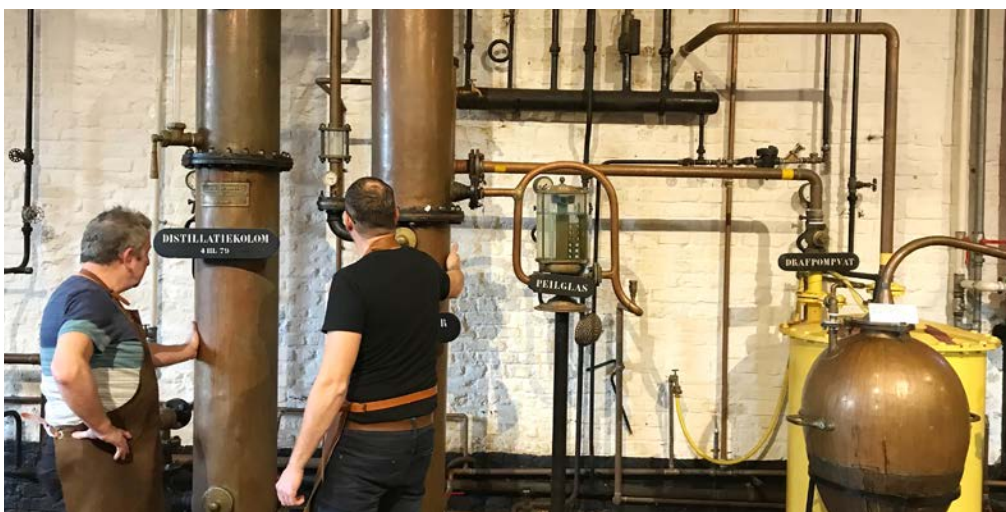
The basis for this experimental subsidy regulation was derived from a report titled “Virtuoos Vlaanderen.” The non-governmental organization (NGO) Tapis Plein (now called *Workshop Intangible Heritage*), in partnership with other Flanders-based heritage partners, decided to explore the benefit of launching a Living Human Treasures (LHT) program for the region.

Initiated by UNESCO in 1993, LHT stands for (among other things) the valorization of craftsmanship, support for individual talents, and the transmission of knowledge and skills related to craftsmanship. Since then, states and regions across the globe have developed systems to implement this unique program.

Unlike tangible objects, such as artworks or buildings, craftsmanship and knowledge require long-term sustainability to “stay alive” and be transmitted from one generation to another—from practitioner to pupil. In many cases, this intense process requires a significant commitment on the parts of both tradition-bearers and apprentices. Through its grant program, the Flemish LHT aims to remove some of the obstacles involved by providing financial support. This support can last from a couple of months to up to two years.

Grant applications are submitted through partnerships between a master and one or more pupil(s), who jointly apply for a common project. Both master and pupil(s) are eligible for part of the grant. Projects can last for up to 24 months, and an amount of up to 48,000 euros can be applied for and divided among the group. It is up to the applicants themselves to indicate how they would like the sum to be divided.

Given the time required to prepare lessons and workshops as well as the costs associated with renting the space to conduct the project, the largest part of the grant usually goes to the master. The grants for the pupil(s) tend to be lower, and are typically used to buy materials and/or make up for any income lost when pupils reduce their regular paid work hours to focus on the project.



In this subsidy regulation, all domains within the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage are implied. This means that the grants are not restricted to the domain of traditional craftsmanship (artisan forging, weaving). They can be allocated to the transmission of performing arts (music, dance), to knowledge and practices related to nature (food culture, agricultural techniques), and others.

RESULTS

The 2018 and 2019 calls saw considerable enthusiasm from craftsmen and students: for each call, there were approximately 100 applications. In total, more than 500 individuals were involved over the two calls. This high number of applications far exceeded our expectations. We had assumed it would be challenging for masters to find pupils (or vice versa), but this did not seem to be the case. Applicants used their networks, advertised on social media and asked professional heritage organizations, such as NGOs accredited under the UNESCO 2003 convention and others, for help. As a result, many applications arrived, and a large proportion were of remarkably high quality.

Although the Flemish Department of Culture, Youth and Media had allocated substantial budgets for the grants—about a million euros for each call—demand was much higher than the budget allowed. This meant that the selection criteria (for example, the master's track record, the quality of the pedagogical project, the sharing of the project results, partners' motivations and so on) had to be applied quite strictly to select the best projects. In total, approximately 60 projects were selected between the two calls.

To present the grants to the broader public, the department created an online publication exhibiting about a third of the projects. Although it is only available in Dutch, the publication and images offer viewers a sense of what the grants are about and of the broad variety of topics involved.

One of the most interesting results is how, in many cases, the projects led to more than just the transmission of skills and knowledge from master to pupil. Often, the pupil(s) applied the "old" skills and knowledge they learned from their master partner to create something innovative, resulting in "old" meeting "new." For instance, a young fashion designer might learn traditional embroidery from



an older experienced partner and transform it to apply to today's environment, or a contemporary dancer might learn ancient martial arts to incorporate some of practices into their choreographies. Conversely, some masters learned new techniques and applications from their students and were able to apply them to their own bodies of work.

Sustainability seemed to be a popular theme among the grant recipients. Many championed ecological solutions and the use of sustainable materials and urged people to buy locally made, hand-crafted products. It was also interesting how, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability to physically meet during some months, masters and pupils found innovative ways to continue their projects, often using online formats. This showed resilience and the determination to make the most of their time together.



ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Given that this subsidy regulation was still in the experimental stage, the Flemish government asked the Department of Culture, Youth and Media for an evaluation. Throughout 2020, about 20 projects were assessed, and many stakeholders (such as heritage organizations and others involved in employment and education) were interviewed to gain valuable feedback on the program.

One issue that emerged concerned personal relationships. Craftspeople are known to be passionate about their work. At times, having two or more people working closely together for long stretches of time led to interpersonal problems or disagreements. Discussions about the location and time of the lessons, copyrights, lesson contents or personality differences also resulted in some friction. Unfortunately, in a few cases, this led to partners wanting to end projects. However, the subsidy regulation was designed as a partnership between master and pupil(s). This meant that if one of the partners quit, the project came to an end, and all parties were required to return their grants. This resulted in some personal distress and a few administrative issues.

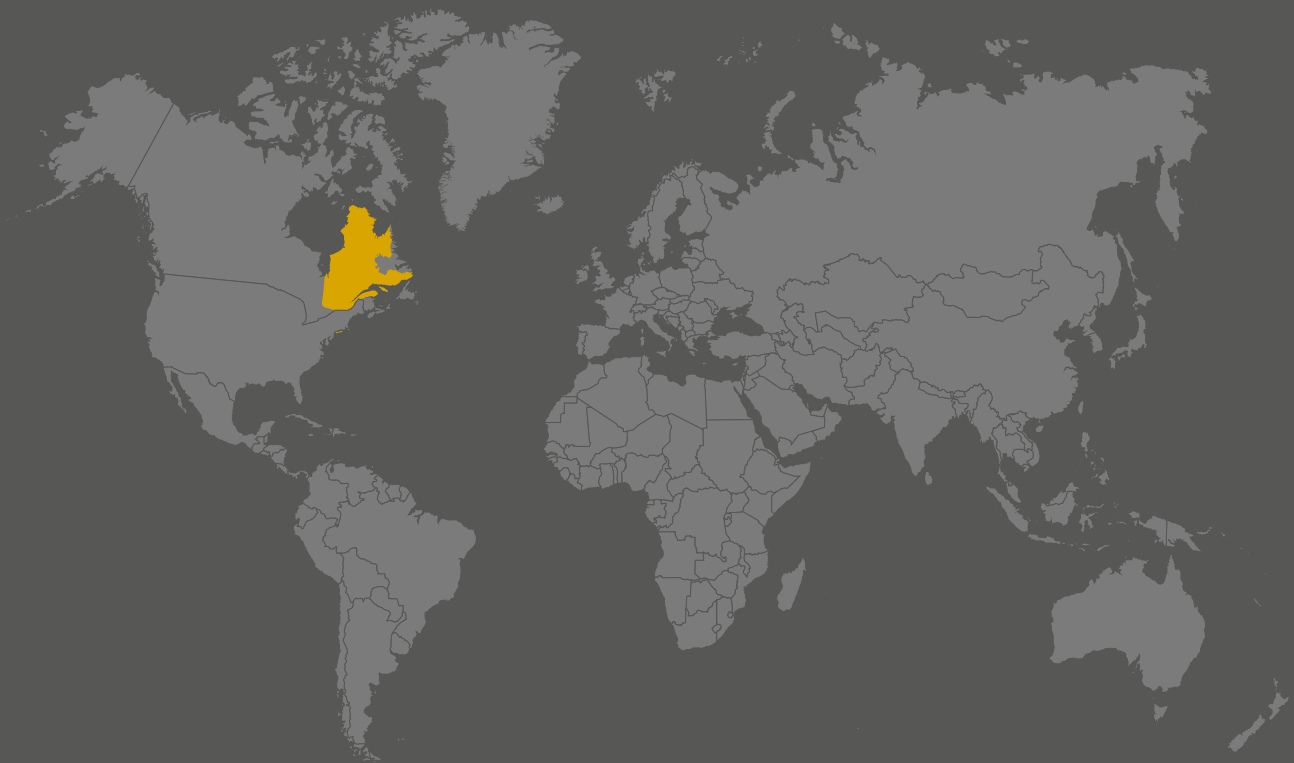
Another issue for some participants was the difficulty of combining the grants with other state benefits, such as unemployment support. The master-pupil projects are not official internships, so they don't have official status. This caused administrative problems in some cases.

Throughout the evaluation process, it also became clear that not every pupil is equally motivated. Some were determined to develop themselves further after the project and aimed to become masters themselves, with the intent of transmitting the skills and knowledge they had acquired to future generations. However, others saw the project as something temporary and used it as an opportunity to practice their craftsmanship as a hobby. This has raised questions about whether all projects should focus on today's pupils becoming tomorrow's masters, and whether a more thorough screening of applicants' motivations is needed during the selection phase.

In many cases, professional organizations (such as UNESCO-accredited NGOs, other NGOs, museums and local heritage organisations) were involved in both preparing the application and communicating and sharing the results. The involvement of professional support seemed to result in remarkably high-quality submissions, and a gap was evident between projects supported by professional organisations versus those proposed by independent applicants.

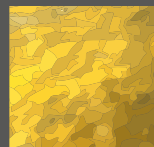
Finally, the grants proved to be a big success in terms of the number of applications received, the variety of themes, and the quality of the projects. The question now is: how can the Flemish government implement this experimental subsidy regulation on a long-term basis and connect it with the other instruments of the policy on intangible cultural heritage, such as the inventory on intangible cultural heritage, the platform www.immaterieelerfgoed.be, and so on? While a new call will be launched in spring 2021, the Department of Culture, Youth and Media—together with heritage partners in Flanders—needs to think about a more permanent system to support the transmission of craftsmanship. The lessons learned have shown that craftsmanship in Flanders is very much alive, and that a support system integrated within the policy on intangible cultural heritage is indeed the way forward.

Given that LHT systems are being developed across the globe, the ability to share experiences and best practices through a larger international forum would benefit the program greatly, as would enabling masters and pupils to work internationally, thus transmitting knowledge and skills across borders and continents.



QUEBEC

[CANADA]



THE MASTERS OF LIVING TRADITIONS PROGRAM



Antoine Gauthier
Executive Director,
Conseil québécois
du patrimoine vivant



Gilles Pitre
Project leader,
Conseil québécois
du patrimoine vivant

With the
collaboration of
Philippe Dubois

I remember the day very well, in 2011, when we were invited to a parliamentary committee to discuss the Quebec cultural heritage bill, the chairman, the treasurer, and I, as executive director of the Quebec Council for Intangible Heritage (*Conseil québécois du patrimoine vivant*—CQPV). In that great gilded red hall, we presented our paper, wanting to make a few amendments to the legislative text, which included the concept of intangible heritage for the first time a legislation in Canada¹. In the end, some of the requested amendments were adopted.

At the time, however, among the questions fielded by MPs of the main parties at the National Assembly, the current Minister of Culture queried us by asking: “What do you think of the Living Human Treasures system? Should we implement it?” One of us answered (I don’t remember who, but we all had the same view on the issue) that it wasn’t a short-term priority for us and that, moreover, we feared that such a mechanism might establish an unfortunate hierarchy among the bearers of tradition: those that were recognized, and the rest. We thought—wrongly,

1. Canada has not ratified the 2003 UNESCO Convention to date, but Quebec has incorporated the notion of intangible heritage, inspired by UNESCO, into law.

for the most part—that adopting such a law would immediately mean substantial grants for the living heritage communities in Quebec, and that we would have the opportunity to set up a host of initiatives for the transmission and promotion of oral and cultural traditions throughout the territory thanks to the work of the various organizations thus supported.

With these initial reservations in mind, the CQPV board of directors resolved to build an incentive program a few years later, in 2016, to move forward with a system inspired by Living Human Treasures as formulated by UNESCO and implemented in several countries. Receiving more than 80 letters of support from all sectors of culture and research—unprecedented, we were told—our umbrella organization was able to obtain funding in 2019 from the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec (MCC) to the amount of \$100,000 CAD per year for three years, which we hope is renewable. Added to this was funding from private sponsors, such as Québecor and Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins.

But we had to find a way of mitigating the hierarchal effect while still benefiting from the prestige associated with such recognition, which was useful for opening doors outside the circles in which the bearers of the given traditions usually practiced. For, beyond the mere distinction or prize, we aimed to promote a technique or a group of bearers of tradition through a catalyzing individual, a cultural ambassador. We needed a flexible program that would offer a form of yearly rotation among participants.

Thus, the independent jury that selects the candidates prioritized people capable of implementing structuring projects, qualified people with extensive experience who are interested in transmitting their knowledge through the program and who are a source of pride. The jury also deliberated about considerations of diversity in terms of cultural and regional background, as well as gender.

The message the CQPV wants to send is then not “here are the best in their category,” but “here are outstanding conveyers of experience who will help us for a year or two to showcase their discipline and their peers.” That is why saying “thank you!” is even more appropriate than saying “congratulations!” That is also why we use the term “cultural ambassador” for the selected individuals, in addition to “Master of a Living Tradition.”

The program, financed through the heritage department of the MCC, transcends the rigid separation between professional and amateur (leisure) status that prevails in most cultural interventions in Quebec, due to laws governing the status of the artists, as well as other general administrative provisions. This separation seems quite artificial in many areas of oral tradition, and it prevents certain types of activities or restricts possible public financing. The Masters of Living Traditions program operates in the manner, for instance, of the new provisions of the Canada Council of the Arts in regard to Indigenous arts and culture and broadens categories that are sometime too narrow. It allows us to find people who do not necessarily earn a living with their cultural practice and to strive for transmission to others, whether or not they are officially recognized as professional artists or artisan.

The selected bearers of traditions may or may not work in a cultural field legally designated by the Minister for Intangible Heritage, under the Cultural Heritage Law.

Project leader Philippe Dubois, who replaced Gilles Pitre this year, is responsible for implementation of the program.

THE 2020 COHORT

Five ambassadors of the Masters of Living Traditions program were unveiled in conjunction with the conference; present for the occasion were the Minister of Culture and Communications, Nathalie Roy, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, Ghislain Picard, and Chairman of the CQPV, Carl-Éric Guertin. The ceremony, held online, was hosted by Fred Savard, well-known in the cultural and television community.



2. At the time of publication (2021), the following elements appear in Quebec's cultural heritage inventory: Inuit throat singing (*katajjaniq*), ice canoeing, arrow sash (*fléché*), textile skills passed down through the Cercles de Fermières, traditional dance evenings, sugar bush traditions, and the making and playing of the diatonic accordion.

They are:



Hélène Blouin

Traditional arrow sash
technique



Jean-Paul Guimond

Traditional song



Stephen Jerome

Traditional Mi'kmaq
wickerwork



Raynald Ouellet

Traditional music
on diatonic accordion



Yvonne Vollant

Traditional Innu handicrafts,
artisanry & storytelling,
and legends



Obviously, the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic greatly reduced the scope of activity, starting with a simple photo session to launch the promotion. But the Masters managed to carry out various initiatives in 2020-21 nonetheless, such as a talk, a webinar, and a master class on the arrow sash (Hélène Blouin); participation in 12 hours of song (Jean-Paul Guimond); a training workshop on Mi'kmaq wickerwork (Stephen Jerome), as well as appearances in the media by each of them.

Several other projects were begun and then postponed in whole or in part due to the pandemic, such as a podcast on living heritage to be recorded by Fred Savard and in which all the Masters would be participating.

Hélène Blouin is developing an evaluation chart for the arrow sash based on meetings and trial sessions with experienced craftspeople; this will be the subject of a publication.

Jean-Paul Guimond will take part in an artist residency with griot Zal Sissokho, a singer and virtuoso kora player of Senegalese origin. Audio and video content will be produced during this encounter.

Stephen Jerome is collaborating with filmmaker Éli Laliberté in the production of documentary on traditional basketry in Gesgapegiag. Laliberté produced several projects among First Nations and is closely associated with the Jerome's community.

Another short film, on the transmission of diatonic accordion practice, will be directed by documentary filmmaker Renaud De Repentigny. Raynald Ouellet, his collaborators, and his students are organizing a multigenerational concert for the occasion.

Unfortunately, Ms. Yvonne Vollant passed away on January 24, 2021. We extend our sincerest condolences to her family and loved ones. The CQPV is collaborating with La Fabrique Culturelle at Télé-Québec to produce a video in her honour. In line with continuity via transmission, this video will be produced by Ève Ringuette, actress, producer, and Yvonne Vollant's granddaughter.

FOLLOW UP

The second cohort was unveiled online, May 29, 2021, in the presence of Ghislain Picard, Chief of the AFNQL, Roda Muse, Secretary General of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and Carl-Éric Guertin, Chairman of the CQPV. The Minister of Culture and Communications, Nathalie Roy, and the Secretary of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Tim Curtis, also provided pre-recorded presentations for the occasion.

The ambassadors of the second edition are:



Charles-API Bellefleur
Innu traditions and teueikan



Normand Legault
Traditional dance, step dancing, and dance calling



Antoine Pelletier
Artistic carpentry



Grace Ratt
Anishinaabe culture,
arts and crafts, tanning



Liette Remon
Traditional music, fiddle



The CQPV team has stated their wish to have the program focus on one main project for each Master—a kind of legacy—instead of several smaller actions throughout the territory, and thus to target initiatives that would be difficult to produce without the support of the organization. By accepting the (increased) amount of \$5,000 for their participation, each ambassador agrees to contribute to the production of a structuring project, sometimes already included in their application profile. The CQPV then finances the remainder of the implementation of the project.

As a positive side-effect, the title conferred remains useful in the ambassador's regular work in terms of promoting his or her activities.

The Masters of Living Traditions program is part of a bundle of interventions meant to develop traditional cultural practices. Indeed, the CQPV supports a broad training program, including individualized coaching and courses on-line, the Festivals Trad Québec network, the Réseau des veillées de danse au Québec (ceilidh network), various studies and publications, a digital development department, and much more. For the most part, the members of the CQPV, including around a hundred organizations, are actively developing various fields of living heritage on local, national, and international levels. The CQPV also founded the ICH NGO Forum with other accredited NGOs partners as part of the UNESCO 2003 Convention, in order to strengthen the organizations' voice internationally.



ALSO PUBLISHED BY THE CQPV

