

GABINETE TÉCNICO LOCAL DA CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DE GUIMARÃES

Europa Nostra Awards 2004
CATEGORY 3 dedicated service to heritage conservation





European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage



Europa Nostra Awards 2004

ENTRY FORM for CATEGORY 3 DEDICATED SERVICE TO HERITAGE CONSERVATION

To be completed and returned by 15 September 2004 to:

Heritage Awards Co-ordinator, Mrs Laurie Neale

Europa Nostra, Lange Voorhout 35, NL - 2514 EC The Hague, The Netherlands

Please type or print clearly in CAPITAL LETTERS throughout.

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Short description of the nominee's dedicated service to heritage conservation (max. 200 words)

GUIMARÃES' HISTORICAL CENTRE IS AN AREA OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT WHERE SOME REMARKABLE EXAMPLES OF BUILDINGS OF A PARTICULAR TYPE ARE GATHERED. THE HARMONY OF THE TOWN, THE TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES OF CONSTRUCTION, THE ARCHITECTURAL PARTICULARITIES, THE VARIETY OF TYPES ILLUSTRATING THE EVOLUTION OF THE TOWN ALONG TIMES AND THE INTEGRATION WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE BESTOW SOME EXCEPTIONAL UNIVERSAL VALUES UPON GUIMARÃES.

THE AREA THAT IS PROPOSED FOR LISTING IS AN URBAN FABRIC OF MEDIEVAL ORIGINS, A SUCCESSION OF PLACES (ESSENTIALLY FROM THE 12TH CENTURY), WITH A GREAT FORMAL MEANING, WHOSE STRUCTURE (DESPITE REPRESENTING A HUGE VARIETY OF TYPES), SHOWS QUITE WELL THE TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES HALF-TIMBERING AND COB (LATH AND PLASTER) IN WHICH WOOD PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE.

THE AUTHENTICITY AND INTEGRITY OF THE TRADITIONAL BUILDING METHODS ARE AN EVERPRESENT FEATURE OF THE TOWN FOR THEY ARE STILL LARGELY USED IN THE URBAN AREA; BESIDES, THEY ARE AN IMPORTANT CULTURAL HERITAGE TO BE PRESERVED.

THE AUTHENTICITY AND THE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE HISTORICAL CENTRE ARE THE OUTCOME OF SOME CONSISTENT PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES USED BY THE LOCAL TECHNICAL OFFICE (GTL) OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUIMARÃES. THE POLICIES OF URBAN PRESERVATION BASED UPON THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE URBAN HERITAGE, THE MAINTENANCE IN-LOCO OF THE INHABITANTS, THE PROTECTION AND UPKEEPING OF HISTORICAL STRUCTURES WHILE RESPECTING THE TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES TRANSFORM GUIMARÃES INTO A CASE-STUDY THAT DISTINGUISHES THIS TOWN FROM ANY OTHER IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY. (ICOMOS, MARCH 2001)

Declaration

I enclose this completed entry form and the required documentation for Category 3 of the **European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards 2004** (back of page). I confirm my agreement to the conditions set up by the Scheme. I also agree to provide Europa Nostra with any publicity material that may be required, free of copyright.

Signature:

Date:

SUMMARY

The historical centre of Guimarães, with its history intrinsically linked to the formation of Portugal's national identity, maintains a group of historical buildings showing the evolution of different types of construction from the Middle Ages up to the 21st century.

Until the mid eighties of the last century, this ensemble of recognized formal value was rapidly deteriorating both physically and socially, a situation that seemed impossible to be brought to a halt.

Therefore, in 1985, the Municipality created a local office (GTL) in charge of the management of a process of restoration of the historical centre.

The main objective of the project was to avoid the resident population to abandon the city centre by improving the dwellings as well as by preserving/re-establishing the authenticity of the interventions in the town's patrimony.

As far as these interventions are concerned, the aim was for the GTL to set an example and pedagogically inspire other interventions, thus inciting the private sector to participate in the rehabilitation of the historical centre.

Within this context, in 1985, the recuperation of the house located in the street called Rua Nova was launched, actually the first intervention of the GTL. The Europa Nostra award in recognition of the quality of the intervention carried out in this building, underlined the criteria of the chosen means of restoration and was an important incentive and an example for the remaining activities in the historical centre.

The restoration of the historical ensemble of houses promotes the maintenance of the construction systems - granite, different sorts of cob. It is the reason for using local workforce, traditional materials and techniques both in order to obtain a construction unit and a formal environmental one.

During the last 14 years 314 buildings were intervened, out of which 103 (20,8%) were financed by the central and local administration and 225 (45,6%) through private investments, with no public contribution towards costs. The interventions can basically be classified into two types: substantial works (structural ones, including the rearrangement of interior spaces) and beneficial ones (repairing of roofs, eaves and window frames, painting of the façades as well as - whenever necessary - building bathroom facilities according to the owners' investment capacities).

The GTL, using internal funds as well as money provided by the central government, set up a series of activities that, apart from the buildings, also included public areas, thus trying to incite the interest of private investments in buildings neighbouring these public places.

Though maintaining the specific characteristics of different eras of the town, visible in the architectural variety, in the cadastres and in the new layout and design of the public spaces, these were dignified by the interventions but also through improvements of existing but rather deficient infrastructures, or the creation of non-existent ones (sewer system, electricity cables, water and gas mains, telephone and cable TV networks, etc.) but also street lights, equipments and urban furniture (wastebaskets, kiosks, road signs, etc.).

The town, its people and visitors benefited from the rehabilitation of the public places, rediscovering squares, piazzas and streets, areas that through the continuous increase of the town had ended in chaos and were mainly used for car parking.

Currently, almost 90% of the public spaces of the area intramural are recovered; especially noteworthy are the pedestrian precincts (squares and streets were made into pedestrianized areas), the circulation in the streets of the historical centre has been conditioned (being accessible to residents only) and lateral parking was provided in some streets of the historical core.

These performances are a valuable contribution to the authenticity they have managed to maintain and/or restore. The historical centre thus refurbished has become a place where people can meet, a place of identity and of culture in the NEW TOWN.

LOCAL TECHNICAL OFFICE OF GUIMARÃES

Structure, Mission, Activities, Performances

Based on the previous structure created in 1983 – Office of the Historical Centre – the Local Technical Office (GTL) appeared in 1985, within the framework of Regulation 4 SEHU 85. Its action plan was conceived as follows:

- . To start the gradual adaptation of the historical urban core to the current life styles and their more rigorous demands (safety, comfort, etc.) by preserving its identity; for this purpose - besides any architectural issues - it was important to keep the resident population in place while the thorough refurbishment and improvement to the houses could begin in this area.
- . To invest - by rehabilitating - in the restoration of public spaces as well as in equipment and infrastructures, as a lever for mobilizing private interests.
- . To present the historical centre as a reference due to the high level of its architecture and its urban spaces, the modesty of its scale, its capacity of hosting activities that usually foster human encounters, starting off with a formal and functional rehabilitation of the whole “urban continuous”, by establishing closer connections between the historical centre and the periphery, interconnecting complementary potentialities and functionalities.

Thus, the GTL is a municipal project with the mission of preserving, recovering and revitalizing Guimarães’ Historical Centre. Hierarchically, the Office depends on the Municipality and is located right in the centre to be recovered. Its functions are:

- . Elaborating projects of refurbishment of common spaces and the restoration of buildings.
- . Promoting and supervising the works.
- . Suggesting to the municipality, whenever necessary, the temporary lodging of residents of the buildings to be restored and provide these residents with a definite housing.
- . Informing and supporting owners and tenants in order to encourage them to cooperate in the works to be carried out in their buildings as well as assisting them in obtaining financial help.
- . Issuing reports about the utilization of restored buildings and spaces.
- . Issuing reports about the licensing of works within its area of intervention.
- . Submitting to the autarchy, once a year, the budget and the triennial program for approval, as well as a report of activities.

The GTL depends directly on the Mayor of the Municipality of Guimarães. The activities are coordinated by a Project Director – Alexandra Gesta, architect (since 1985 until today, with an interruption of three years during which period the Office was managed by Teresa Costa, architect).

During all these years, technicians of many different areas joined the Office: architects, engineers, designers, economists, social workers, archaeologists, inspectors and topographers; any other specialized services are provided by the municipal staff (lawyers, etc.).

At the present time the Office consists of a project director, four architects, two engineers, an archaeologist, a topographer, two technical designers, an inspector and two office clerks.

With an unusual technical and ethical rigor, re-instating traditional technologies, supporting the orientation and training of workers specialized in the ancient skills of building, taking and encouraging multiple initiatives in the social and cultural areas, the GTL managed to conclude several projects and works of refurbishment.

Within the framework of the interventions carried out by the GTL, four issues should be emphasized; out of the many interventions achieved during the last twenty five years only some will be mentioned hereafter (see additional material of the dossier):

- . Interventions in municipality-owned buildings – Some 36 projects and works of restoration and refurbishment carried out (House at Egas Moniz street, Municipal Library Raul Brandão, Tourist Offices, Municipal Archives, Guimarães' County Courthouse, among many others).
- . Interventions in public spaces - Approximately 26 projects of refurbishment (Cónego José Maria Gomes square, Santiago square, Laranjais square, Alberto Sampaio avenue, among many others).
- . Supporting private initiatives and providing technical assistance to restoration works in private buildings (About 75 projects and works – rehabilitation of several private buildings, replacement of window frames, etc.).

The theory of “intervention-by-practice” adopted by the GTL has become a matter of studies for various bodies, mainly Portuguese universities, and it is being used as an “in loco” apprenticeship in terms of urban rehabilitation.

The many outstanding results achieved, the meaning of their referential and pedagogical value – mainly at times many Portuguese towns are developing interventions of a similar type – have served to justify the award of various national and international prizes.

The list of these awards and prizes is remarkable indeed. After the Europa Nostra Prize awarded, in 1985, to Fernando Távora for the restoration and adaptation of the building that houses the GTL, in 1993, and for the first time in the History of the Association of Architects (that, by tradition, solely used to reward individual authors), a group of people of a municipal project - the team of Guimarães' GTL – was awarded the National Prize of Architecture for the best achievement in refurbishment.

Other rewards were still to come, namely: in 1996, the Award of the Royal Foundation of Toledo as well as the National Prize “Image of a Town”; in 1999, after the rehabilitation of the houses with arcades, a Honourable Mention by the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Development; in 2001 the RECRIA Prize for the high standard of rehabilitation of a building located at avenue D. Afonso Henriques and Vila Flor street.

Guimarães' GTL project and day to day management of the town's Historical Centre have earned a general recognition for the achievements at every level, as evidenced by its being listed Cultural Heritage of Mankind, the constantly growing quantity of articles and references published on the subject, the invitations to address meetings and congresses on its experience - in Portugal (even in Guimarães) and other countries (France, Spain, Germany, Morocco, Uruguay, Macao, Cap Verde) – and by the continuous showing of the achievements to visitors coming from universities or foreign excellence centres.



CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Methodology

The refurbishment and restoration work carried out by the GTL of Guimarães is the outcome of a methodology which can be deemed - both nationally and internationally - as a very important contribution in its field. This work is being achieved as follows:

- by intertwining know-how;
- by using municipal financial resources and funds allocated by the central government and the European programmes;
- by planning the municipal interventions as well as those of any responsible entities in the area;
- by inducing and encouraging private investments.

This process (participation at many different levels: public, technical and political) does not become exhausted in the single method but it shows that the work is more solid, is better performed - both in its details and as a whole - when based upon a paedagogic intervention, a collection of information, the seduction of all those who intervene in the (re)construction process. Case by case, house by house, with no support whatsoever from any repressive ruling but rather by supporting a theory on the daily practice.

The efficiency of such a process, however, is also based upon the way in which:

- the municipal interventions are exemplary in the areas of their competence;
- a timely, efficient and low-cost technical response is given to the needs of the private sector;
- the management of the area to be refurbished is coordinated with the management of the surrounding areas and, whenever necessary, of other sectors in the municipality.

When speaking about the GTL's work it is mandatory to mention the technical and ethical rigour which is a feature of their performance; the preservation criteria with which they are granting a new identity and authenticity to this heritage; the seductive way in which they conquer the many different intervenients in the construction of the town.

We believe, however, that one of the most important contributions of Guimarães' GTL to the cultural heritage is the way they show that it is possible, in Portugal, to advocate a town model where, in a first phase, they propose to recover the historical centre by using its spatial, formal and historical potentialities in order to:

- grant the town a reference centre and a collective and cultural identity;
- grant the town a spirit of peaceful and natural conviviality between old and new, both having a contemporary function well adapted to the operability of the TOWN;
- plan and conceive refurbishment and restoration programmes duly adapted to the existing town; these are designed to prove the actual capacity of adaptation/re-utilization of those heritage values that, submitted to another sort of intervention, could enter into a decaying or replacement process;
- to cross opportunities and attract the different agents, in order to keep, conquer and promote new inhabitants and investments in a vast number of buildings which, considered as a whole, are a very rich cultural heritage.

Sharing Know-how and Experience

The drafting of documents and papers to be presented in seminars and conferences, both in Portugal and abroad, is one of the ways in which the GTL promotes the debate on these subjects, by explaining the work done, the lessons drawn, the doubts felt.

The refurbishment of the heritage is, in our opinion, a necessary cultural base to any society. Therefore the seminars, discussions and debates in which they participate are aimed at three different targets:

- to explain the experience in a debate among peers, both in Portugal and abroad;
- to explain the experience in a learning environment: universities, primary and secondary schools;
- to explain the experience to the general public: associations of neighbours, associations for the defense of the architectural and archaeological heritage, etc.

Outcomes

This is the prevailing attitude in the refurbishment of the historical centre in Guimarães; therefrom results a project methodology for the town which is permanently assessed and designed.

Different experiences are attempted in the slow pace of those who aim at correcting any failure but who also aim at trying new rigorously conceived and vigorously debated solutions; only the result, once achieved, will manage to dissipate the everpresent doubts.

In 1983 Guimarães presented a “normal” situation of an average town in the North of Portugal: a derelict public space, the functions of which were often deviated; an obsolete basic infrastructure; the progressive decay of the buildings followed by the usual symptoms of depreciation of their inhabitants.

A rather dense population used to live within the walls; this people were becoming old but they helped keeping the vitality of this part of the town by means of some practices that it was important to preserve and to potentiate. By itself, this was a justification enough for an urban refurbishment programme which would find its framework and content in the social and architectural treasures of this town.

The intervention upon the public spaces and basic infrastructures as a whole aimed at (and succeed in) returning the town to the public esteem and, simultaneously, at launching the refurbishment process of the dwellings.

These renovations, together with a set of exemplary interventions on some municipality-owned buildings, had the desired effect of mobilising the private initiative and funds. Up to this date about 25% of private buildings have been physically and functionally refurbished thanks to a sound management and design and a continuous encouragement of initiatives of this kind.

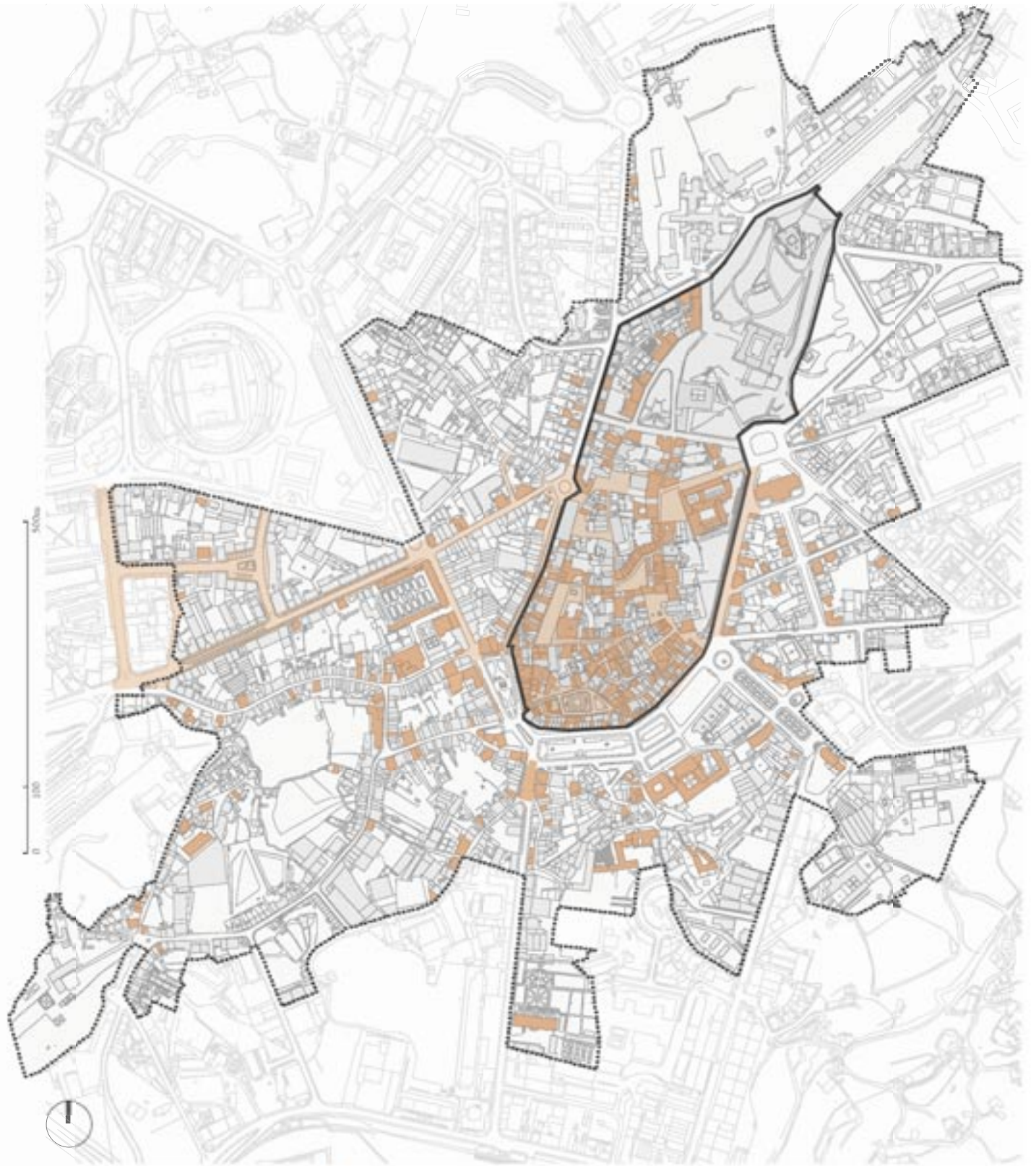
These timely interventions as well as their location in the urban fabric managed to invert the trend to decay by opposing it with a “process of infection of initiatives” that has progressively awakened the interest and self-esteem of the whole population.

Twenty years later, actually, the historical centre of Guimarães is there to be seen: a revitalised core keeping its identity and adapted to the contemporary way of life – a reference core able to induce similar processes in the whole of the territory.

“For Guimarães we want a historical centre in continuity with the town, a functionally integrated urban unit, even when morphologically apart and having a formal specificity. A place recommended for its specific quality that does not exhaust these functions which must be balanced and rationally distributed – a place to live in, to be contemplated and to walk around, to inhabit and to work in.” (Alexandra Gesta)

This process of refurbishment has been an example (and aims at continuing to be so); it intervenes in the process of construction of new areas as a means of (re)apprenticeship of the town and it contributes to overcome the current impossibility of finding an answer to the lack of quality of the public life.





RECOVERED PUBLIC SPACE
 RECOVERED BUILDINGS
 unesco's classified area
 intervention area

Vau, August 19th, 2004

In September 1986, during my first “Presidência Aberta” - in Guimarães – I visited the town’s Historical Centre to unveil the Europa Nostra commemorative plaque fixed to the wall of the restored building located in the street called Rua Nova, the seat of the Local Technical Office (GTL).

The (technical) team of the GTL gave me details of the philosophy of the intervention and the criteria of the project that had been used for this building.

Plans existed to use the same sort of criteria for the remaining parts of the town in a sense of spread out.

Back in Lisbon, I remember addressing a letter to the GTL, praising the rigour of the techniques as well as the commitment of the town, though this was only the beginning of the project.

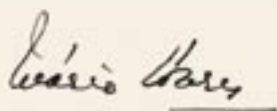
An almost laboratory-like experience took place in view of changing Guimarães’ fragile urban fabric and thus to try to enlarge and tighten the links between the local population and the pioneer team of the project.

When all these efforts were crowned by a strong and clear political determination capable of converting projects and words into work, the process turned irreversible: the city was save. And nowadays the work is visible.

The experience carried out in Guimarães shows that it is possible for a city to refurbish its historical centre, to re-qualify its more recent areas and to design new ones always respecting the differences of each area. The quality of these areas grants the city its unity. There is a lot of evidence here that the quality, be it in urban planning or in an architecture based upon the respect of Mankind, is not incompatible with the normal concerns of economy; quite the contrary.

Thus I feel that the Historical Centre of Guimarães should justly win the Europa Nostra Award.

It is well-deserved. It surely is.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mário Soares', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Lanzarote, 31st August 2004

As a portuguese and as a traveller on this land that is my own, I am very much gratefull to recognise the excellency of the preserving and re-establishing which the Guimarães' historical centre has been object.

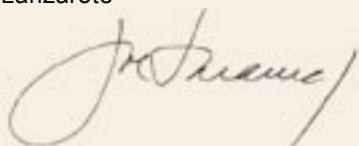
In my book *VIAGEM A PORTUGAL*, written more than 20 years ago, some of its more emotionally pages were felt and lived on those ancient and old streets, discoursing between those monuments, visiting those museums.

Since then, Guimarães has not failed in any given moment to respect the heritage that time has left her, and, at the very same time, the city was modernising, growing inside her the perception and conscience of continuous integration of its historical past on the present moving life.

Authentic outdoors museum, the Guimarães' historical centre is the pratical demonstration that the livings faithful love is the only form to give perpetuity to those that otherwise would merely be dead stones.

In Guimarães, time allows you to breath it. In Guimarães, history is not a pattern put on the present to be seen at a glance by some hurried tourists. It is the own life of a city that has not lost her last sense of its roots: that of being, more than a biological continuum, a spirit, the spirit of a place.

José Saramago
Lanzarote

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'José Saramago', written in a cursive style.

To the Europa Nostra secretariat

The Local Technical Office of the Municipality of Guimarães wishes to come forward with an application for the European Union Cultural Patrimony Award (Europa Nostra 2004), based upon the restoration of the town's Historical Centre.

The project and the restoration started in 1985 and its results already are highly significant. We believe that it may have been for this reason that in 2001 the Historical Centre of Guimarães has been listed as a Cultural Heritage of Mankind.

The work developed by, and under the supervision of the GTL, has been an example of a rigorously based procedure and shared by all the specialists such a project obviously requires. Historians, archaeologists, architects, engineers, specialists in restoration and in traditional techniques carried out politically sustained actions added to the ability of involving the town's population.

In fairness it must be said that Guimarães' Historical Centre had not suffered (as it often occurs) prior interventions showing an insensitivity to certain situations or a peculiar idea of progress. In a good or not so good condition, some monuments and an urban fabric still existed, well articulated in a precious relationship.

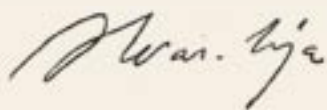
On the basis of such a rich patrimony, an exemplary intervention began on some public spaces of the town as well as in the restoration of its urban fabric in general terms, starting off by a few experimental units.

The attention given to these works favoured the indispensable cooperation of the citizens as well as the effort to avoid desertification or the change of users (both residents and activities) that very often go hand in hand.

The operation has also been complemented by the creation of new equipments and infrastructures to answer the demands of a truly modern town.

I am, therefore fully convinced that the recognition of the high quality of the work carried out by the GTL of Guimarães would be entirely deserved.

Álvaro Siza
Porto, 30 July 2004



Guimarães, the 25th of August 2004

To Europa Nostra

The invitation made by the GTL of the Municipality of Guimarães asking us to state our opinion on the work this team is carrying out mirrors, in itself, the sound and respectful relationship existing between this public entity in charge of the management of Guimarães' architectural heritage and the companies working in this area and on these subjects.

Indeed, during these last decades, our building company is mostly working in the area managed by the GTL since 1983. Our activity is mainly carried out in the refurbishment and preservation of buildings in the so-called "Historical Centre" of Guimarães.

We are responsible for a large majority of the interventions on private buildings in this part of the town. We must recognize that this is largely due to the fact that we have been engaged in the refurbishment of the House in Rua Nova upon a plan by Architect Fernando Távora and under the supervision of the GTL. The quality of this work was acknowledged by an Europa Nostra award.

This "experience" has enabled the GTL to design an intervention method that greatly helped us in the improvement of our ancient building techniques. As a matter of fact, ours is a family-owned company where know-how has always been conveyed from generation to generation (four generations at least), always on the basis of the so-called traditional techniques.

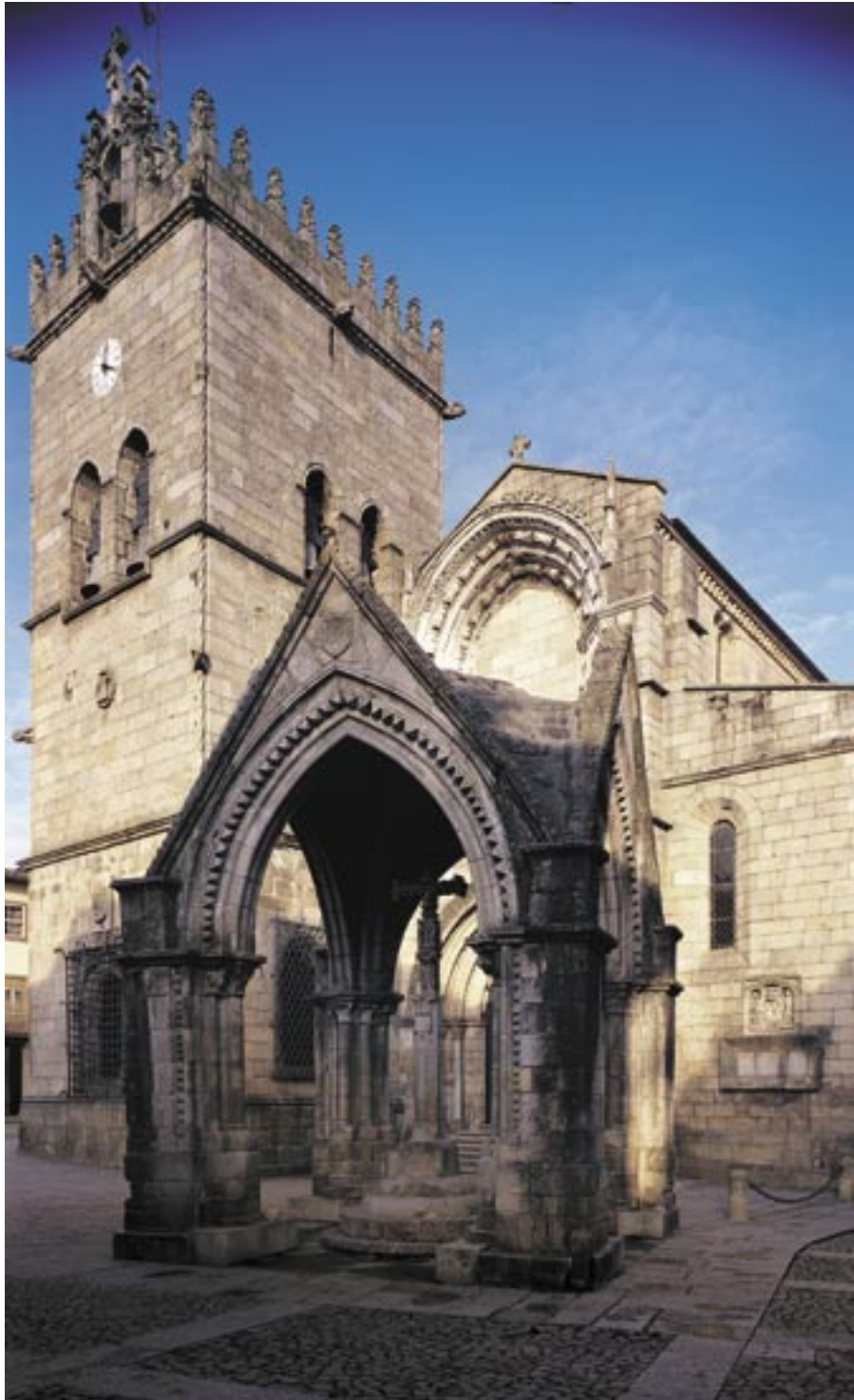
The fact that the GTL is deeply engaged in appealing to the building owners and dwellers in the historical centre in order to make them resort to these techniques and materials when intervening upon their buildings has, on one hand, contributed towards the preservation of the traditional know-how as well as of the "specialized" labour; on the other hand, and as a consequence of the above, with each completed work, the GTL is at the head of a process that is granting to Guimarães a new image and a greater self-esteem, by developing the most specific and true values of the town – people, arts and crafts, architecture, culture and sense of belonging.

For all this – and, certainly, for many other reasons – we would like to thank the GTL for the opportunity they granted us of stating our conviction that– as far as the refurbishment of an heritage is concerned - this entity, the GTL of Guimarães is a great and a rather rare example that should be fairly assessed, known and followed.

Best regards


José Tereza Pereira (Sócio Gerente)


Francisco Tereza Pereira (Sócio Gerente)



If God is removed from the temple and if God abandons my people, my intelligence will serve no purpose.

You may ponder on the display of the stones in the temple but this will not enable you to touch the essential: the knowledge of the stones, the clay and the most rigorous metric of the cubits have no meaning whatsoever for they lack the Divine ribbon that binds everything together.

Whenever I am founding a City, I am founding Love for Human Kind.

(Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, "Citadelle")



The waving surfaces of the roofs, a result of the caving in of the wooden structures, show the burden of the years. They enable a homogeneous reading when seen from the air, reminding one of a patchwork, patiently sewn by wise hands during long, long evenings.

Stuccoed whitewashed façades cover the poor quality mortars prepared to respond to the movements caused by the wooden structures within the walls; the window frames and other visible wood elements painted in laurel green, deep red or other colours are prepared to cope with the hard winters, thanks to the linseed oil, turpentine and drying stuff. In this mixture of hues, materials and ways of doing, **the city is returned to the city.**

(Alexandra Gesta, "Sentimientos Nativos" – 1995)



I am grateful to my soldiers, to the carpenters and to the shepherd
when I feel they are at peace, each one of them engaged in his
own work, for this will be reflected upon the face of the city.

(Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, "Citadelle")



ad vos homines qui venistis populare in Vimaranes et ad illos qui ibi habitare volerint

to the men who came to populate Guimarães and to those who decided to establish their homes in this city.

(Foral do Conde D. Henrique – 1096)

A political statement written in Count Henry's Charter (1096) and carved in this same Santiago Square at the moment of its refurbishment.

In the city, a thousand years equal zero when Men and their Will are at stake.



112 HECTARES
GTL's intervention area

16 HECTARES
UNESCO's classified area

66.4% | 327 BUILDINGS | 65.400 SQUARE METERS
Refurbished dwellings

29.600 SQUARE METERS
Equipments - refurbished area

11.870 METERS
Networks



- 1850 Inhabitants Surrounding area
- 1048 Inhabitants Classified area
- 22000 Tourists per year
- 40 Barber shops
- 25 Shoe shops
- 83 Garden benches
- 18 Banks
- 11 Homes and Daycare Centres
- 1503 Children attending kindergartens



In the beginning of the 14th century, close to the ancient monastery of St. Torcato, there was a huge olive tree that produced olive oil for the lamp of this Saint Martyr. Later on it was pulled up and brought to Guimarães where it was planted again, in front of the main door of the chapter of the church. It dried up, however; and the trunk was left there, in this very place, up to 1342 when Pero Esteves placed - close to the tree - the cross that can still be seen there beneath the shrine of Our Lady of the Victory.

The cross was put there on the 8th September of the above mentioned year and three days later the olive tree became green again and was covered in buds and in a luxuriant foliage. The news of this event attracted many people who came to admire this wonder of nature and to honour the Virgin Mary who, from this moment on, was called Our Lady of the Olive Tree.

(Father António Caldas – “Guimarães – Apontamentos para a sua História” – 1881)

This olive tree - and many others that replaced it - stood for centuries in this square that took its name from it (...) till the moment when it was felled by unknown hands, during the night of the 9th February 1870; after the dispute that opposed the municipality and the chapter of the cathedral about the removal of the polygon and of the mutilated trunk, the Chapter was dispossessed of all assets for public use.

The olive tree stood for more than five hundred years in the square that bears its name and it became such an important symbol of the town that it the Chapter of the Church took its name from it and it is a feature of the town's coat of arms.

Therefore, the Municipality decided to plant a new olive tree close to the shrine of Our Lady of the Victory, in the same place where it could be seen in ancient times. By renewing an image with a highly historic and symbolic value, this olive tree will also contribute to the enjoyment of this public space, this privileged meeting point. The Municipality believe they are giving voice to the will of all the inhabitants and are, therefore, certain that everybody will understand and respect the initiative.

show me your faith without works and I will show you the faith through my works.

(Tgo 2, 18.)





GTL_GROUP_01.JPG



GTL_GROUP_02.JPG



GTL_GROUP_03.JPG



GTL_02.JPG



GTL_01.JPG



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GTL_04.JPG



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