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MEDIA CONTACT
Julie Jaskol
Getty Communications
1 (310) 440-7607
jjaskol@getty.edu

**GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM -
ABU DHABI BEGIN MONTH-LONG COURSE ON THE CONSERVATION OF EARTHEN
ARCHITECTURE**

International Course on the Conservation of Earthen Architecture

October 28–November 22, 2018
Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



Left: Al Jahili Fort, a rehabilitation project in Al Ain carried out by DCT – Abu Dhabi. Photo: Benjamin Marcus
Right: GCI workshop on analysis of earthen materials at Kasbah Taourirt, Ouarzazate, Morocco. Photo: Emilio Roldan Zamarron

LOS ANGELES – On October 28, the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), in partnership with the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi), will begin a month-long course on the conservation of earthen architecture in the World Heritage City of Al Ain in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The course will be attended by 20 mid-career conservation professionals working with earthen architecture from the North Africa, Middle East and South Asia regions. This area of the world is known for its exceptional earthen heritage sites, many of which face the threat of deterioration and abandonment without proper conservation efforts in place. The course will train architects, engineers, conservators, and archaeologists to develop sustainable conservation methods for these important sites, as well as provide the technical skills necessary to conserve similar building types in their home countries.

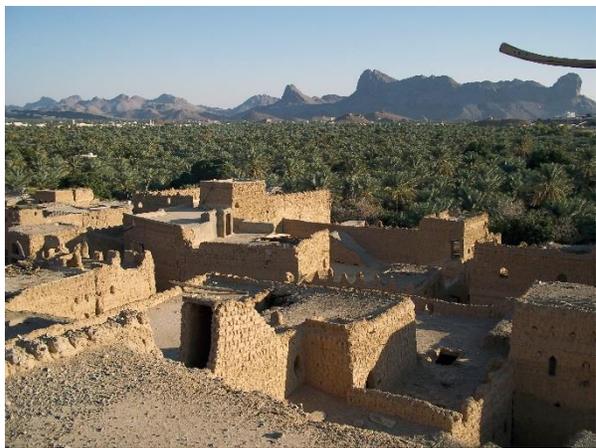
Al Ain is home to hundreds of earthen buildings and archaeological sites, many of which form part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The tradition of earthen building in the region can be traced as far back as the Bronze Age, and sites of note include the Hili Archaeological Park, Jahili Fort, and Muwajji Fort, among others. Several of these buildings have been conserved through adaptive reuse, and there is an active team of experts at DCT Abu Dhabi working to protect them.

"The GCI works to bring courses like this to the region and to provide participants with a toolkit of resources for preserving earthen architecture. This is a rare opportunity for professionals to spend four weeks immersed in this subject," says Benjamin Marcus, project specialist at the GCI and a course manager. "As part of its continued mission to advance conservation practice around the world, the GCI has partnered with DCT Abu Dhabi to offer this course in a region known for the pride it takes in its built heritage, and which has the expertise and local support required to make this event a reality."

Throughout the four week course, participants will use Al Ain as an open-air laboratory to learn practical, hands-on methods for preserving earthen buildings and archaeological sites. Participants will be led by local and international experts who specialize in conservation strategies for earthen sites and will work both in the laboratory and field learning critical assessment, analysis and intervention methods. The course will also include site visits and field work case-studies that



Conservation technicians repairing basal erosion in an earthen site in Al Ain, UAE. Photo: Benjamin Marcus



Earthen buildings in Al Hamra, Oman. Photo: Benjamin Marcus



Bayt Bin Boddowah, one of many earthen structures in the World Heritage site of Al Ain, UAE. Photo: Benjamin Marcus

provide hands-on conservation experience for participants. A number of case studies will be used to demonstrate the conservation process, including a one-week visit to the ancient city of Manah, Oman, to study conservation and management planning for earthen architecture in an urban context.

In 2017, representatives from DCT Abu Dhabi and the GCI signed a Memorandum of Understanding acknowledging common goals and areas of common interest for joint collaboration in the fields of preservation and conservation, and specifically for offering training in the conservation of earthen architecture. This course is an outgrowth of the initial agreement.

"We are delighted that the GCI chose our emirate for the location of this globally important course, as this supports DCT Abu Dhabi's efforts for building capacity in heritage conservation for the region," said Amel Chabbi, conservation section manager at DCT Abu Dhabi. "Several of our local experts will be involved in teaching the course which demonstrates the expertise and reputation that Abu Dhabi has built up over the years in this field."

The GCI brings to the course more than three decades of work with earthen architecture, a summary of which can be found here:

http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/newsletters/30_2/earthen_architecture.html.

For more information about the course and a list of current GCI projects in Earthen Architecture, visit:

http://www.getty.edu/conservation/our_projects/field_projects/earthen/index.html

The course is also generously supported by the Oman Ministry of Heritage and Culture, the Oman Ministry of Tourism, and the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH).

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The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) works internationally to advance conservation practice in the visual arts—broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. The Institute serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, field projects, and the dissemination of information. In all its endeavors, the GCI creates and delivers knowledge that contributes to the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.

About The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi

The Department of Culture and Tourism conserves and promotes the heritage and culture of Abu Dhabi emirate and leverages them in the development of a world-class, sustainable destination of distinction that enriches the lives of visitors and residents alike. The Department manages the emirate's tourism sector and markets the destination internationally through a wide range of activities aimed at attracting visitors and investment. Its policies, plans and programmes relate to the preservation of heritage and culture, including protecting archaeological and historical sites and to developing museums, including the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Zayed National Museum and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. The Department of Culture and Tourism supports intellectual and artistic activities and cultural events to nurture a rich cultural environment and honour the emirate's heritage. A key role played by the Department is to create synergy in the destination's development through close co-ordination with its wide-ranging stakeholder base.