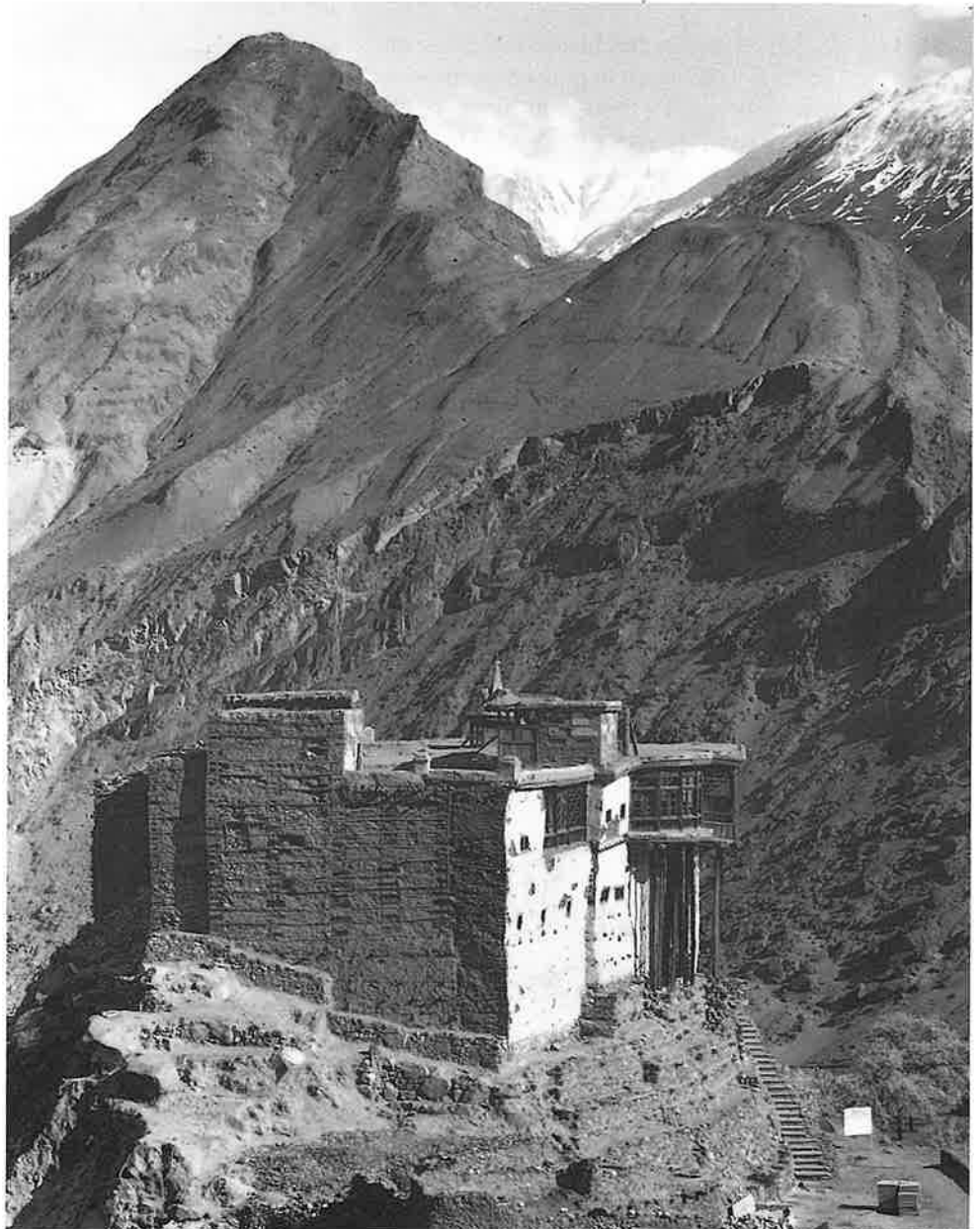


## Architectural Conservation and The Getty Grant Program

*Timothy P. Whalen*

*The Getty Grant Program is one of seven programmes operated by the J. Paul Getty Trust, a Los Angeles-based private operation foundation dedicated to the visual arts and humanities. The Grant Program funds activities that complement the Getty Trust's own activities and supports a broad, worldwide range of projects that promote research in the history of art, advancement of the understanding of art, and the conservation of art and architecture.*

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In 1988, the Grant Program established its architectural conservation category after consultation with international architectural conservators and preservationists. These meetings confirmed that tremendous needs existed in the field of architectural conservation. The first and primary need was funding -- international support on an open and competitive basis for building conservation. Funding for the planning necessary to undertake a fully informed intervention programme was almost non-existent and determined to be a primary need. The second need was related to the practice of architectural conservation. With a number of important exceptions, a systematic and multi-disciplinary approach to the conservation of historic buildings was not widely practiced. While the principles and practices related to conservation of individual works of art in museums is relatively well-established and its academic curriculum fairly well-defined, the practice of architectural conservation lags behind. By funding exemplary projects which could serve as models in the field it was hoped that practice could be strengthened and advanced.

To date, the Grant Program has funded more than one hundred architectural conservation projects worldwide. Successful grant projects incorporate analyses of the buildings' history and physical condition with an understanding of issues related to their future use, management, and preservation. Ideally, such projects are

*Fig. 1. Grant Program support is enabling an international team of specialists and local craftsmen to stabilize the seven-hundred-year-old Baltit Fort along the ancient Silk Route in Northern Pakistan, in many instances using original building techniques for the wood-and-earthen complex.*

able to serve as models of informed conservation practice within their particular region. Successful applications propose work that is governed by a philosophy of respect for the historic, aesthetic, and physical integrity of the building. Furthermore, a project must seek to retain the cultural significance of the building and to provide for its physical protection, maintenance, and future.

### Types of Architectural Conservation Grants

Grant Program funding is available for both conservation planning and implementation activities. Planning projects research available historical and archival evidence, record the physical evidence of the site and structure through architectural drawings, photogrammetry and archaeology, analyze the building's physical, structural historical, and material evidence, and develop comprehensive conservation plans based on this information. Intervention projects must be based on the planning process described above and demonstrate a commitment to safeguard the building's integrity by undertaking minimal and reversible interventions.

### Planning Grants

The Grant Program offers two types of funding for architectural conservation planning projects. The first type — Project Identification — supports projects in their most preliminary stage.

*Fig. 2. A grant to the Landmark Trust has assisted in the conservation of the historic fabric of the villa. Villa Saraceno e Finale, Agugliaro, Vicenza, Italy, c. 1545 (2); plan from Andrea Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura*, 1581.*



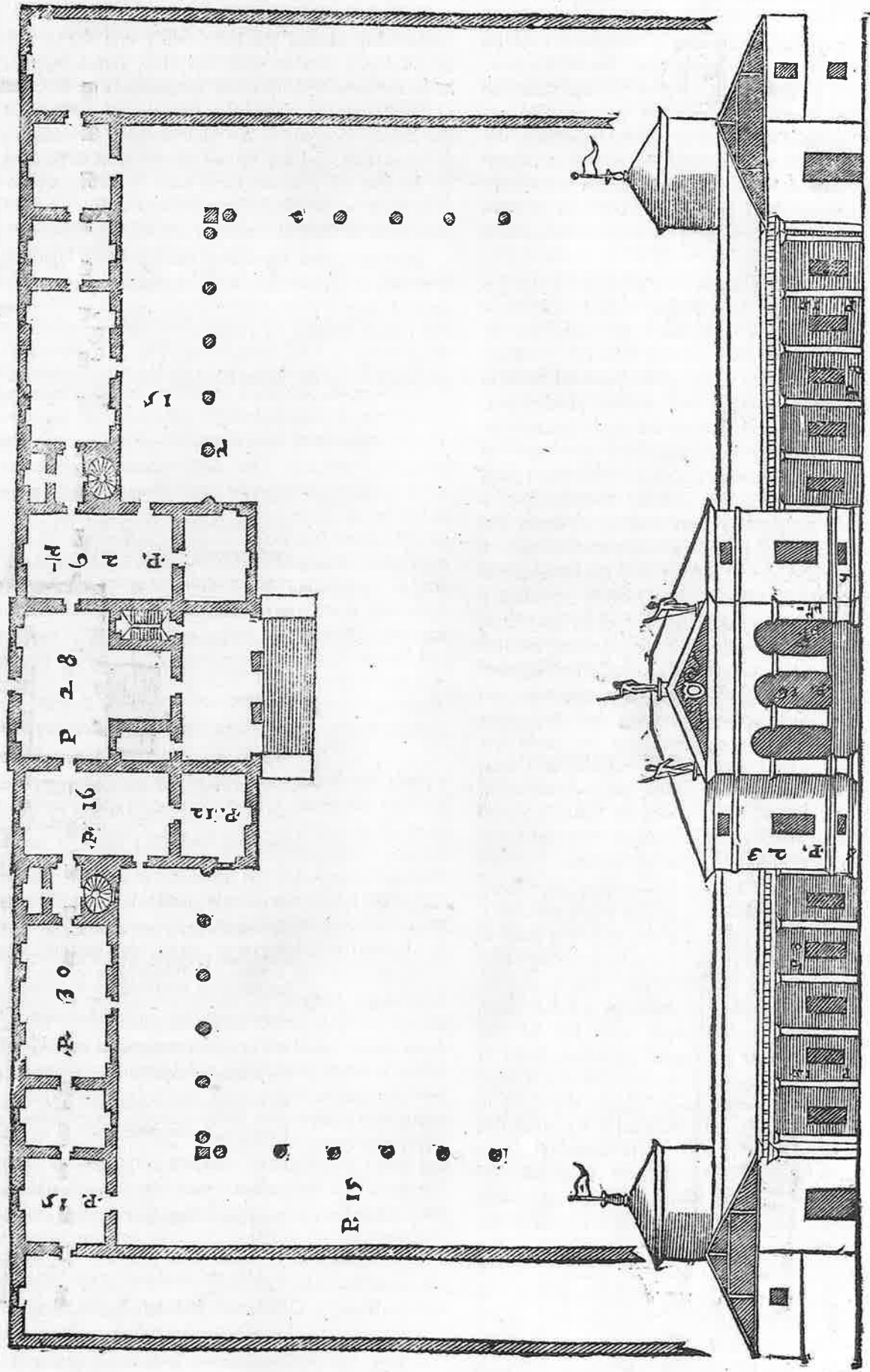


Fig. 3. This sixteenth-century villa is one of the few examples of Palladio's work to have survived with its original agricultural estate intact.

Grants provide funds to hire consultants who will conduct an initial evaluation and analysis of a historic building. Essentially, this funding is intended to establish the basic outline for a comprehensive conservation plan. Projects usually result in the creation of basic measured drawings and completion of initial photographic and structural surveys. The maximum amount awarded at this level is \$ 20,000. In some parts of the world, this amount of funding does not permit more than the most basic documentation. In others, however, \$ 20,000 can go much further toward developing detailed documentation of a building.

Recent identification grants have supported projects at the Citadel and Square of the Temple of the Tooth Relic at Polonaruwa, a World Heritage site in Sri Lanka, and the Sal6n de Profundis, Convento de San Francisco, Cordoba, Argentina. In both cases, Getty grants provided funds to prepare measured drawings and detailed photographic records of the sites, and to carry out initial research for conservation planning. The Postepowa Synagogue in Cracow, Poland was also the focus of an identification grant. Funds in this instance helped with the development of a conservation plan to stabilize the building's exterior and also to document the Synagogue's interior decoration.

The second category of support — Project Preparation — is intended to fund a more detailed analysis of a building and the completion of a comprehensive conservation plan. To this end, preparation grants have supported detailed structural and building surveys, archaeological investigation, the hiring of architectural conservators, engineer and materials specialists, photogrammetry and any other architectural documentation necessary to guide the conservation of a building. Often Grant Program funds assist in the synthesis of this information into a conservation master plan or Historic Structure Report. Up to \$ 50,000 can be requested at the project preparation level, and a one-to-one matching contribution is usually required.

The majority of architectural conservation grants made by the Grant Program are at the project preparation level. Examples of recent preparation grants include a grant to develop a detailed conservation, use, and maintenance plan for the Bishop's Palace in Dubrovnik, Croatia, and the development of comprehensive drawings, a conservation plan, and emergency stabilization work for the Ahi Chatragarh-Nagour Fort in Nagour, Rajasthan, India. A preparation grant to support the development of a Historic Structure Report for Monticello in Virginia was made to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation. An exhaustive five-volume report on every aspect of the house: its original construction methods, its current physical status, and a 10-year conservation plan was completed. This report now serves as the cornerstone of the foundation's conservation planning efforts.

Planning grants have had unexpected results as well. A preparation grant awarded to the National Museum of Decorative Arts in Buenos Aires, Argentina was such a grant. The building in which the Museum is housed, the Palacio Errázuriz, was designed by René Sergent, a French academic architect, for an Argentinean industrialist. The

Museum's planning approach aimed to conserve and stabilize the historic fabric while simultaneously modernizing parts of the 19th-century structure to better accommodate museum functions. Many similar buildings in the European style have been demolished over the course of this century, but the attention focused on the building by this conservation project has stimulated a re-evaluation of its importance, and that of two other Argentine buildings by Sergent. As a result, these three buildings are now recognized by the greater community for their important position in the built environment and are now protected.

In certain cases, because of the size or the high costs involved, an organization may be unable to take on the detailed analysis of an entire built complex at one time and may request funding for a particular project component. At Stowe House — a fine English country house whose gardens are inscribed on the World Heritage list — a conservation

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), one of the Getty Grant Program's sister programs, is engaged internationally in advancing the practice of conservation and working to increase public awareness of conservation's importance. Through field work, research, training, and the exchange of information, the GCI addresses the conservation needs of objects and collections, archaeological monuments and sites, and historic buildings and cities. While the Grant Program and GCI share a similar conservation philosophy, they operate in entirely different modes. Through its fieldwork activities, the GCI identifies projects which can make a far-reaching contribution to a field or region and then, in collaboration with other organizations, uses its own staff, expertise, and state-of-the-art facilities to manage those projects. The Grant Program, on the other hand, as a purely grant making organization funds projects developed by institutions unaffiliated with the Getty Trust. It does not seek out projects, nor does it provide technical assistance. As a grant-making organization, its role is to provide financial assistance to qualified organizations undertaking projects with their own staff and consultants.

master plan was already in place and preliminary analyses of the building had been completed before Grant Program funding was requested for the House's monumental colonnades. Given the importance of the project, as well as the importance of the colonnades themselves to the house's overall aesthetic integrity, the project was considered a priority. Preparation funding in this case supported the survey and recording of the colonnades, as well as a site specific archeological survey, material analysis of the colonnades' stone, mortars, renders, plasters, and historic finishes, and integration of this detailed information into Stowe's overall conservation plan.

### **Implementation Grants**

The third architectural conservation category -- Project Implementation -- funds actual intervention; in other words, 'bricks and mortar.' For a project implementation grant, an organization can request up to \$ 250,000. At minimum, a one-to-one match of funds for the project is required and in some cases, a two-to-one match must be provided.

Only organizations that have completed adequate research and documentation and have demonstrated that a fully researched conservation project exists are invited to apply for implementation grants. Success at the one or even both of the Grant Program's other architectural conservation funding levels does not ensure eligibility at the implementation level. An eligible project at this stage promises to have a lasting impact on a building's physical integrity and condition, advance a technical practice and serve as a model internationally of conservation practice. The solid commitment of the building's owner to guarantee its long term care and maintenance is also a critical funding criteria.

An essential element of every implementation grant is the inclusion of a training component. Depending upon the nature of the project, the training component might be as elaborate as a site-specific course dealing with the analysis of historic finishes or something as basic as providing funds for an architectural student to work as a project intern. The intention is to encourage organizations to develop training opportunities that take appropriate advantage of opportunities presented by the project.

Save Venice Inc., a private preservation organization received an implementation grant to reverse the detrimental effects of an earlier restoration at the Renaissance church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Venice, Italy. Portland cement inserted behind the building's remarkable marble revetment as a stabilization measure in the 19th century had caused salt damage to the marble. The application proposed a unique process to remove the cement, then stabilize, clean, and reinstall the marble. The project was a model in two respects: first, the sophisticated technical conservation process could be applied to other structures suffering similar problems; and, second, the extensive collaboration between the non-government conservation organization and state authorities was an excellent model of the kind of partnership often necessary to protect buildings.

Previous detrimental restoration measures were also removed with an implementation grant for the Octagon

House, an 18th-century structure in Washington, D.C., headquarters for the American Architectural Foundation of the American Institute of Architects. In the 1950s, original timber beams were replaced with steel, which subsequently stressed the structural system and cracked the masonry.

The Octagon project, which involved replacing the steel with wood, stands as a model for a number of other important American structures suffering from similar interventions. The project also included an important didactic element: the house remained open during the renovation project so that the public could view the work and special exhibits which interpreted the various aspects of the building conservation and archaeology. A travelling version of the exhibition toured AIA chapters across the United States as well. The extensive documentation completed during the course of this project will be housed in the Library of Congress for use by future conservation researchers.

Another example of an implementation grant is one awarded for the conservation of the 18th-century baroque basilica of La Merced in Quito, Ecuador, damaged during a strong earthquake in 1987. A detailed conservation plan for the entire church complex was included in the project proposal. Every component of the building's fabric including its structural integrity its exterior enclosure the window systems, and the interior decorations of the building was considered; site issues were also addressed. The potential for this project to serve as a model for similar structures in the region was an important consideration in the decision to fund this project.

### **Project Eligibility and The Application and Review Process**

Organizations interested in applying for architectural conservation grant support are first asked to submit a preliminary letter describing the planning or intervention activities for which they are requesting funding. Information about how the funds would be used and what would be accomplished with these funds should also be included. Based on this information, the Grant Program staff is able to assess whether the project is eligible for architectural conservation grant consideration and whether a full application might be appropriate. In general, projects focused on the repair and conservation of the historic fabric of the building are considered eligible, while projects consisting primarily of architectural replacement, interior restoration, commercial adaptive reuse, maintenance, or system modernization are not considered eligible. Support is not available for work already completed.

Potential applicants are also asked to provide information confirming their non-profit, charitable status and information about the architectural significance of the building to be conserved. In most cases, the building should have the highest national listing available in the country. In addition, the building must be owned by a non-profit, charitable, or government organization committed to its long-term preservation and maintenance, and be accessible to the public or used for the benefit of the community.

Information about the proposed project is also used to gauge whether it will be competitive when reviewed by



Fig 4. Poplar Forest, Forest, Virginia, c. 1806-1810, an octagonal Palladian-style villa, was designed and built by Thomas Jefferson as a private residence. A project implementation grant is

supporting the conservation of the house and related structures on the site.

experts in the field and when compared with other projects requesting funding during the Grant Program's extensive peer review process. Projects that incorporate a comprehensive approach to a building's preservation are generally the most competitive, while projects focused on the repair of isolated problems are generally not competitive. Application forms are forwarded only after the Grants Program staff have determined the project to be eligible.

The Grant Program is committed to an extensive review process that relies upon an international range of experts in appropriate fields -- spanning architectural history and architectural conservation practice -- to review eligible applications. Reviewers are asked to assess the architectural, historical, and cultural significance of the building, the project's organization and feasibility, as well as its potential to serve as a model for other conservation projects in the region. Reviewers contribute a great deal to the process, often providing a broad regional perspective and direct knowledge of the building, organizations, and communities

involved. Their comments address the complex process of conserving a historic structure. Both the applications and the reviews receive further consideration from a standing advisory committee composed of experts in related fields from around the world. Final decisions are based on the committee's extensive discussions and specific recommendations. The review process -- from application submission to the notification of an application's status -- takes approximately six months.

Organizations interested in applying for support from the Getty Grant Program should request the detailed guidelines for the architectural conservation grants. The guidelines outline the procedure for submitting a preliminary letter of inquiry. Current application deadlines are April 10 and October 10 of each year. The Grant Program staff is available to answer any questions regarding architectural conservation grants. Inquiries and preliminary letters should be directed to:

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