

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Terra Sancta Museum
Art and History



St. Saviour's Monastery
Jerusalem





Fr. Stéphane Milovitch ofm with Bashar Ibrahim, foreman of the project, who assisted Shawkat Mansour, the Palestinian contractor who carried out the structural work this year.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM ART & HISTORY

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“TRYING TO MOVE FORWARD IN TIME OF WAR”



Fr. Stéphane Milovitch ofm with Eng. Leonardo di Marco, Director of the Technical Office of the Custody of the Holy Land and executive supervisor of the museum site.

©Damaris Vayne/Terra Sancta Museum

It has been a difficult year. Even the ceasefire declared in January 2025 has already been broken several times, despite pleas from the international community. The ongoing conflict has had repercussions in the project for the Terra Sancta Museum in the heart of Jerusalem's Old City. We are impeded on many different fronts. Potential patrons of this precious project have had to cancel their visits. On-site structural work was repeatedly interrupted due to both lack of permits and closure of checkpoints for Palestinian workers. The difficulty with transfer of funds between Palestinian and Israeli accounts has complicated payments and salaries. The war has also disrupted the supply chain, causing prices to rise as certain materials become scarce.

In joint discernment with our main financial backers the French Development Agency (AFD), NGO Development Center (NDC) and the ALIPH Foundation, we chose to focus on the only variable in which we really had any control: the timeline of the project. I would like to thank them for their understanding of our reality. I'd like to also thank our Technical Office of the Custody of the Holy Land and Mr. Shawkat Mansour's skilled workers for their flexibility and professionalism. Our project and our ambitions in 2024 may have fallen behind schedule, but we are very proud of the work we have accomplished and our ethical priorities.

We have to acknowledge that our day-to-day management team has been impeded and the Scientific Committee has been unable to meet. Nevertheless, architects and scenographers under the excellent supervision of Perrot & Richard Architects were able to continue working on the final design from Paris. Thanks to their progress, we are already in a position to show you what the future Terra Sancta Museum Art & History will look like.

To help us get through these and the following months, we need to remind ourselves what this project is all about: **to build a first-class cultural space where people will meet, people who at one time might not have trusted each other even to the point of hatred.** I would like to recall the words of Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, who himself initiated the Terra Sancta Museum, when he spoke on Vatican News last September: *"Peace remains possible, however, because it is a choice. If the institutions are currently paralyzed and diplomacy is unable to exert a decisive influence on the conflict, let us remember that society is not only made up of institutions, but also of other realities."* With humility and with your help, we will continue the work of the Terra Sancta Museum in the service of God, Man and Peace.

Fr. Stéphane Milovitch ofm

Chairman of the Board of Directors
Terra Sancta Museum Art & History

WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT NOTHING WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE

The progress made in 2024, as presented in this report, has been made possible thanks to the **institutional support** of the French Development Agency (AFD), NGO Development Center (NDC) and the ALIPH Foundation. Find out more about the actions they have enabled on page 8.



©Giovanni De Stefano 3D Sign

Mr. Bertrand du Vignaud organized several sponsorship events in Italy during 2024. Here, at the opening of the exhibition at the Museo Marino Marini, alongside Fr. Matteo Brena ofm, Commissariat of the Holy Land for Tuscany.



©Terra Sancta Museum

Fr. Francesco Patton ofm, Custos emeritus of the Holy Land, with Tiago Teles de Abreu during one of his visits to Jerusalem.

At the same time, although far from Jerusalem, friends of the museum have spared no effort in continuing to promote our project to **private benefactors in Europe and beyond**. I would like to thank them all on behalf of myself and the friars of the Custody of the Holy Land. Your words of support, communications, sponsorship evenings and other strategic meetings have been immensely encouraging, both psychologically and financially.

We'd like to mention by name the president of the French Fondation Mansart, Mr. Albéric de Montgolfier, and his team. As well as Mr. Bertrand du Vignaud, executive counsel of the Fondation Evergète in Geneva, and Prof. Tiago Teles de Abreu, ambassador of the museum in Portugal. Nor can we forget Fr. John-Luke Gregory ofm, who is involved in the United Kingdom with our Franciscan NGO Pro Terra Sancta UK. A special mention also to French lawyer Loup Bommier, who provides invaluable support from Paris for the legal and financial monitoring of the Amici Terrae Sanctae Endowment Fund.



©Terra Sancta Museum

The Fondation Mansart and its president, Albéric de Montgolfier, introduced the museum team to Perrot & Richard Architects.



مركز تطوير المؤسسات الأهلية الفلسطينية
NGO Development Center

SUPPORTERS IN 2024

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

Mr. & Mrs. Marcus BILLAM
Mr. Gonzague CHASTENET
Mr. Fabio FILZI
Mr. Ricardo GOUVEIA
Mr. André MARTINS
Mr. Alain REMY
Mr. Joaquim ROSADO
Mr. Gonalo TELES DE ABREU

INSTITUTIONS

French Development Agency (AFD)
ALIPH Foundation
NGO Development Center (NDC)
Fondation Mansart
Turf Club (Portugal)



© Terra Sancta Museum

“Stolen photo” on the building site, the workers hung up this image of the Virgin Mary.
May she protect this project and the people of this land.

THE MUSEUM AT A GLANCE

The Terra Sancta Museum Art & History aspires to offer those who live in the Holy Land, as well as tourists and pilgrims from all over the world, the opportunity to discover, understand and experience the Christian dimension of Jerusalem. This initiative is of crucial importance in a place where Christians represent only 1-2% of the total population in Israel and in Palestine.

OUR MISSIONS

The project of the museum is anchored in the long Franciscan tradition of protecting the Holy Places and supporting the Christian communities of the Holy Land. Hence, the museum has the following priorities:

- 1 - To promote the **historical importance of the Christian presence** in the Holy Land and the **universality of Jerusalem**.
- 2 - To propose a **new cultural offering** contributing to the **development of the economic and social framework** of the Old City.
- 3 - To build a **friendly learning space open for all to meet**, through educational, recreational and outreach activities, with priority given to **younger generations** (schools and universities).
- 4 - To take part in **training local collaborators** and to help them **reappropriate the rich historical and artistic Christian heritage** that will enable them to continue the **museum's networking activities**.

OUR TEAM

New: on 7 December 2024, the government of the Custody of the Holy Land, aware of the scale of the project, formalized the **creation of a Board of Directors for the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History**. Fr. Stéphane Milovitch ofm has been appointed Chairman of this new body, which includes the following members: Fr. Alberto Joan Pari ofm, Fr. Alessandro Coniglio ofm, Fr. Rodrigo Machado Soares ofm, Fr. John Luke Gregory ofm, Leonardo di Marco, Béatrix Saule and Émilie Rey. While this Board defines and works on the major orientations of the museum (legal, financial, and diplomatic), a "Coordination team" works on the day-to-day realization of the museum. This team is the interface with the museum's various experts: architects, scenographers, Scientific Committee, etc. The Technical Office of the Custody of the Holy Land is supervising the work on site, within the convent. The architectural firm of Perrot & Richard Architects was entrusted with the project, and the Cabinet Beauclair with the scenography.

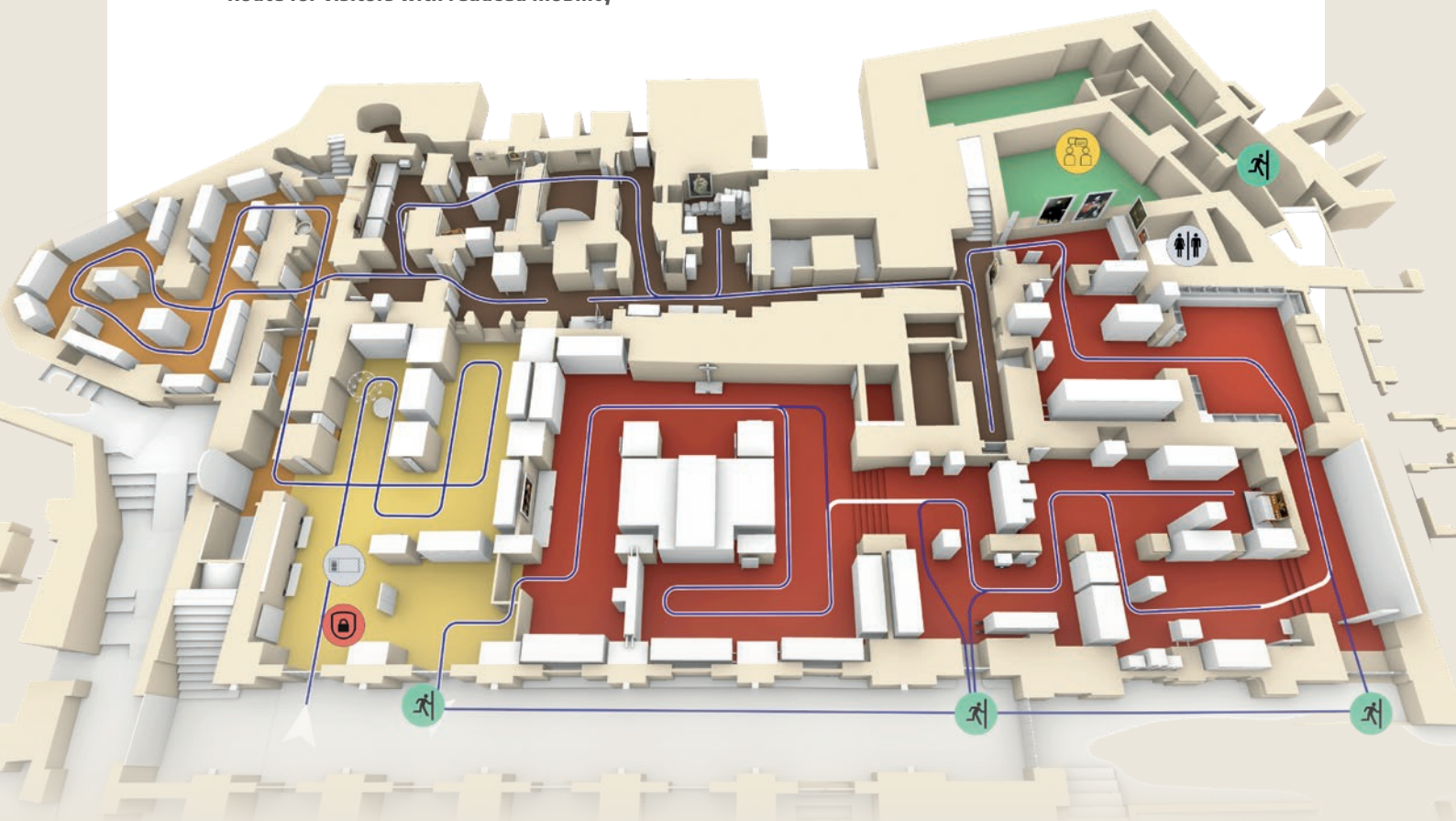
Part of the team in front of the museum construction site in Jerusalem.



GENERAL MAP

- The Birth of the Church
- Icons and Palestinian Christian art
- Missions of the Custody of the Holy Land
- The treasure of the Holy Sepulchre
- Room dedicated to educational outreach
- Route for visitors with reduced mobility

-  Cultural and educational outreach space
-  Ticket office
-  Emergency exit
-  Toilets
-  Security check



1,000 m²
surface area

80
showcases

4
sections

18
permanent
exhibition rooms

1
room dedicated to
educational outreach

90%
of museum tour accessible to people
with reduced mobility

1,000
works of art
on display

2024 AT THE MUSEUM

• March 11

Work resumes on the museum worksite, shut down since October 7, 2023.

• June 8

Visit by a delegation to assess progress (European Union in Palestine, Consulate General of France, Consulate General of Italy, Consulate General of Spain, Institut français de Jérusalem).

• June 3

Marie Vergnès (former museum volunteer) defends her **art history thesis** at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, **based on the museum's collections**. Title: *"Usages, expositions et conservations des objets catholiques dans la basilique du Saint Sépulcre de Jérusalem depuis 1847"* (Study of the art objects present or passing through the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre).

• March 14

Mariangela Corbetta and Denis Kleiser's third volunteer restoration mission on wood frames.



@Terra Sancta Museum



@Marie Vergnès

• March 21

Inauguration of the **exhibition** *"Tesoros reales, obras maestras del Terra Sancta Museum"* at the City of Culture of Galicia, **Santiago de Compostela**. Loan of 74 works.



@Terra Sancta Museum

• April 17

Visit to the museum by Fr. Massino Fusarelli ofm, **Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor**.

"We're not just guardians of a past history, but of a treasure, a heritage that wants to continue generating culture."



@Terra Sancta Museum



giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

July 6

Photographic campaign of 25 works by Guillaume Benoit, photographer for the Parisian Gallery Kugel, for the publication of **goldsmith's and silversmith's catalogs**.



© Terra Sancta Museum

December 2

Antonio Marques Rodrigues (former museum volunteer) defends his **Master's degree** in History and Heritage at the University of Porto. "*Esmola do sereníssimo Rei e de seus vassallos*" Portugal e a Custódia da Terra Santa (séc. XVII-XVIII") - Relations between Portugal and the Custody (17th-18th centuries).

December 12

At the St. Saviour's Monastery in Jerusalem, participation in the **seminar** "*Until the white smoke appears*" by Israeli lecturer and historian Yisca Harani. Exhibition and presentation of 10 pontifical gifts.



© Terra Sancta Museum

"Some of the papal gifts were taken from the storerooms and presented specially for us. It was a rare and spectacular display. 120 Israelis were given a unique opportunity and warm hospitality."

August 24

Volunteer goldsmith restoration mission by Pedro Escudero Díez of the Complutense University, Madrid. Cleaning and maintenance of 40 works.



© Terra Sancta Museum

November 22

At the St. Saviour's Monastery in Jerusalem, closing ceremony for the "*Lux Tenebrae*" **exhibition** by Vincenzo Zuppardo, **commemorating the centenary of the Basilicas of Tabor and Gethsemane**. Loan of 7 works.

September 12

Inauguration of the "*Il tesoro di Terrasanta*" **exhibition** at the Museo Marino Marini, **Florence**, in partnership with the Tuscan Commissariat for the Holy Land. Loan of 85 works and restoration of the Medici altar and 8 other works.



© Giovanni De Stefano 3D Sign

December 21

Submission of the Architectural and Scenographic Preliminary Design (APS) by the architectural firm Perrot & Richard Architects.



January 15, 2025

End of structural work.

COMPLETING THE STRUCTURAL WORK

The year 2024 was marked by an important milestone in the museum's construction project: the completion of structural work. As a reminder, the museum is being built in the heart of a vast convent beneath the splendid church of St. Saviour. Our planning must, therefore, take into account issues much greater than simply the exhibition space itself.



“For six long months, access to the construction site was completely prevented. Without the Custody's intervention, as a leading church institution, we would not have been able to obtain the necessary permits for the workers of our Palestinian contractor. The deal would have fallen apart and all the pricing, initially based on a completely different context, would have had to be renegotiated. The war also disrupted logistics, causing prices to spike and availability to decrease. Companies were forced to source from multiple places, and delivery times lengthened significantly. Thus, the work gradually became increasingly delayed, but there was absolutely nothing we could do about it! I would like to thank the NDC and ALIPH team for their helpfulness and understanding, but first of all our contractor, Mr. Shawkat Mansour, for his patience, flexibility and day-to-day adaptation.”

Ing. Leonardo di Marco,

Director of the Technical Office of the Custody of the Holy Land

Photo taken on the museum worksite with the Palestinian team of workers led by Mr. Shawkat Mansour, and the Technical Office of the Custody of the Holy Land, represented by Leonardo di Marco.



8 to 13

Palestinian workers

17

months of work

6

months of complete shutdown

DONORS



مركز تطوير المؤسسات الأهلية الفلسطينية
NGO Development Center



Each funding source (French Development Agency (AFD), NGO Development Center (NDC) and ALIPH Fondation) had a specific work program and well-defined areas of intervention. The public tenders held in 2023, resulted in both contracts being awarded to the same contractor, Mr. Fix. Here, we present an overview of the work we've undertaken, emphasizing its diversity and complexity.

WALL CONSOLIDATION

No fewer than four centuries passed from the monastery's Georgian era to the Ottoman period. Thanks to the R-struct Engineering, an Italian based company, videoscope inspection, flat jack and sonic tests provided insights into the behavior of the bedrock towards assessing its stability and load-bearing capacity. Through their studies, foundation consolidation and deep masonry rehabilitation have been carried out in all the rooms of the future Terra Sancta Museum Art & History.

A lime mortar injection technique was used to fill voids created over time in the masonry itself. For the injection, holes 20 to 30 mm in diameter at 45° angles were drilled to a depth of 90% of the wall thickness. Then, approximately 19 tons of lime mortar (759 25-kilogram sacks) were injected in the oldest walls.



©Terra Sancta Museum



©Perrot & Richard Architects

An estimated
18,000 tons
of downward load on the
museum's foundations

19 tons
of lime mortar



BEFORE



AFTER

©Terra Sancta Museum

SIMPLIFICATION OF FLOOR LEVELS

Before this phase of structural work, the spaces dedicated to the museum had different heights, with more than ten different floor levels throughout the route designed by our scenographers. A **general restructuring of the floor levels** with connecting ramps (between 10% and 15%) has made **almost all areas of the museum accessible to people with reduced mobility**.

It will also allow for the installation of ventilated floors in the near future.

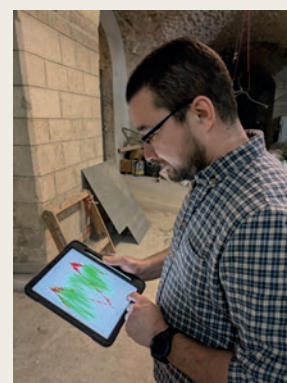


RAINWATER MANAGEMENT



©Terra Sancta Museum

In order to manage rainwater from various terraces and courtyards, a **new drainage system** was installed, **simplifying the entire drainage and water collection system**. Channels running through the exhibition halls were modified or redirected, to be rendered more accessible for maintenance. Hence, about 45 meters of pipes were installed to divert water drainage from the exhibition area. In this way, all water accumulation and drainage that could have created humidity problems or risk of infiltration have been eliminated. In order to constantly **monitor the environmental conditions**, we have installed nearly twenty humidity sensors at strategic points on the site and in the museum's storage rooms.



©Terra Sancta Museum

20
humidity sensors

45 metres
of sewage pipes

Luis Riera, engineer at the Custody's Technical Office, installing and testing humidity sensors.

HISTORIC CISTERNS

Preliminary studies have revealed the presence of several historic cisterns (used from the Georgian era to modern times) in the vicinity or within the museum tour. The Old City of Jerusalem is known to have more than 7,300 such rock cisterns! Given the importance of water in the Middle East, there is little doubt that these large rock reservoirs had enabled the Franciscan friars to meet their needs in previous centuries. For the sake of the museum project, the water in four cisterns was drained, together with sedimentary deposits accumulated over the years. The cisterns were then washed with high-pressure water and dried. They **no longer pose a threat to humidity management in the museum**. These historical cisterns certainly deserve to be preserved, and even if physical access to them will not be possible on the museum tour, a reminder of their historic role will enrich the museum's future museography.

4
cisterns



© Terra Sancta Museum

REHABILITATION OF COURTYARDS

Interior courtyards are a stylistic feature of convent architecture. At the heart of the museum space, our scenographers have seized the opportunity to use one of the convent's historic courtyards at the heart of the museum to offer future visitors a "breathing space". To achieve this, a **paving work** was carried out on the interior courtyard floors, covering a total of 146 m². **Facades were also restored**. First, high-pressure cleaning removed stains, moss and lichen. The cement joints were eliminated and the joints deeply repointed with a pre-mixed lime-based mortar with suitable characteristics. A solvent-free water repellent and protector material for stone and masonry was finally applied.



© Terra Sancta Museum

146 m²
of floors



© Terra Sancta Museum

PROGRESS OF ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

Between weekly meetings in Paris and videoconferences from Jerusalem and Italy, the **cross-disciplinary work methodology** implemented by Perrot & Richard Architects has enabled us to **finalize the preliminary design phase** (due in December 2024) in response to the Custody's expectations and the site's possibilities. They have drawn up a general timetable for the project up to the date of its **opening, which is scheduled for autumn 2028**, and a precise budget.



“The preliminary design phase allows us to establish all the basic elements, to tackle all the issues that will need to be addressed in the project. It allows us to raise any sticking points or limitations, and start working on them as early as possible.”

Arch. Lorraine Abu Azizeh
Project architect, Perrot & Richard Architects

AN UNPRECEDENTED MOBILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS

An overview of the list of experts involved in this preliminary design phase provides an insight into the **various aspects tackled during three months of work** (October to December 2024). The same team is mobilized again in 2025 to continue the in-depth studies up to the drafting of the tender documents, enabling the project to enter its final phase.

Project management

Florent Richard, Lorraine Abu Azizeh and Mahaut Leray
PERROT & RICHARD Architects, Historical Monuments and Cultural heritage architects



Structural engineering

Marco Mocellini
R-STRUCT



Fire safety – Accessibility

Pierre-Henri Causin
KAIRN ARCHITECTURE



Electricity

Vincent Frichot
ILAO



Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Plumbing

Agnès Adde
FLUENCIE



Lighting

Olivier Francisco
FEERICK



Acoustics

Federico Cruz-Barney
STUDIO DAP



Multimedia Production

Pierluigi Fontanesi
STUDIO BASE 2



Construction Economist

Stéphane Pilté and Maxime Macker
CABINET PILTÉ



Local consultant

Jawad Sleibi
JAWA DESIGN



Security

Benito García Caramés, Antonio Maroño Cal and Álvaro Prego García
CIDADE DA CULTURA DE GALICIA



6

members of the
Perrot & Richard Architects
team involved in the project

12

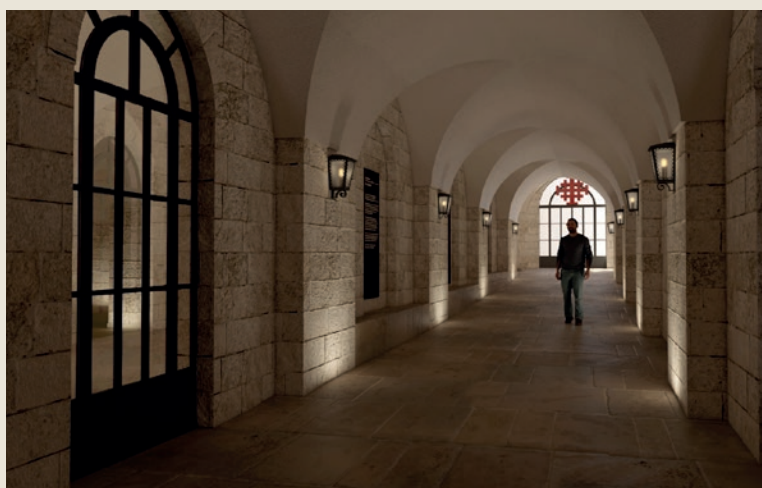
consultants

17

technical notices
& diagnostics
delivered

14

workshops
from October to
December 2024



©Perrot & Richard Architects

A VALUABLE WORKING TOOL: THE 3D MODELING

Perrot & Richard Architects carries out virtual visits on all its projects with a 360° camera. This tool enables them to have a real vision of the site at all times from a computer or a smartphone. These technological tools have allowed to continue the studies despite the political context and the difficulties to access the site.

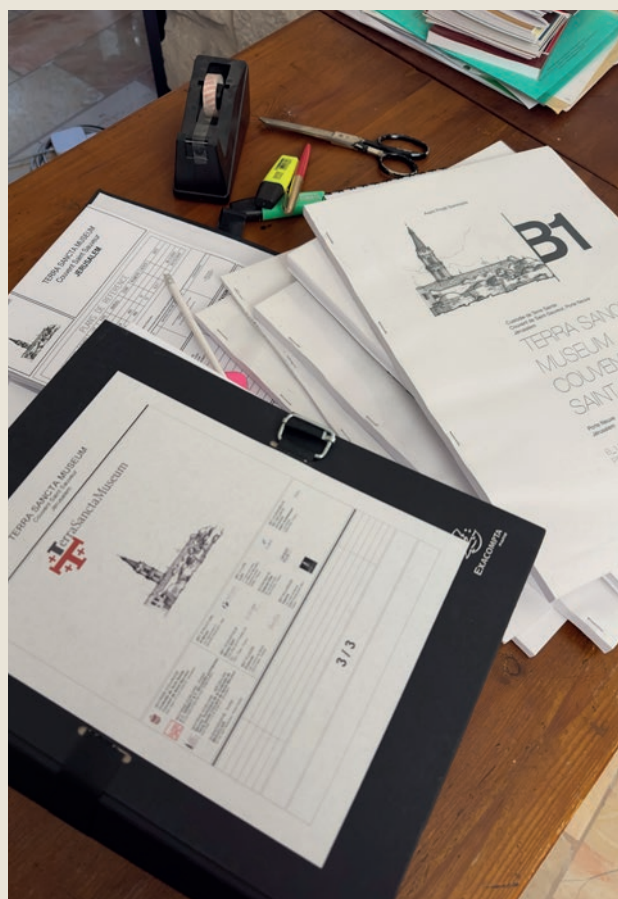
In addition, the Technical Office of the Custody carried out a 3D scan of the museum's spaces allowing Perrot & Richard Architects to work on the reconstruction of a 3D model of the museum, to create views that are close to reality, integrating the textures of the materials, the lighting planned for the spaces and all the elements of the project.

FOCUS: THE CHALLENGE OF AIR TREATMENT IN MUSEUM SPACES



The surface area of the museum accessible to the public is approximately 1,000 m² and for safety reasons a maximum of 200 people is allowed at the same time. At the request of the Custody, on the recommendation of the experts on the Scientific Committee, and out of concern for environmental issues, the project provides only for air renewal by an air handling unit equipped with a filtration system to ensure the comfort of visitors, as apposed to air conditioning throughout the museum. This equipment makes it possible to comply with current regulations, while limiting the size of the technical premises and the associated maintenance tasks. The studies carried out by FLUENCIE forecast sufficient air flow to meet demand and compensate for the spatial complexities of the museum's spaces. The positioning of all the grilles has already been discussed with the scenographers to ensure the best possible integration into the scenography project.

The question of how to treat the museum's ambient air is particularly relevant in the case of smoke extraction, as this requires bulky equipment: buried and overhead networks in the rooms, as well as equipment on the convent roof.



A BRIEF PREVIEW OF THE SCENIC DESIGN PROJECT

In 2024, Jérôme Dumoux handed over his responsibility to a **new team of scenographers: Frédéric and Thomas Beauclair**. In the last 35 years, **Frédéric Beauclair** has designed and produced **more than 300 temporary and permanent exhibitions** in 119 different locations, including France, Canada, Hong Kong and now Jerusalem. Thomas Beauclair, for his part, is a freelance industrial designer. He is involved in the design of the museum's display cases. They have explained for us the main principles of their scenography while offering a preview of the first displays of the future museum.



The father and son duo has been working tirelessly all year, together with Béatrix Saule, museographer and President of the Scientific Committee.

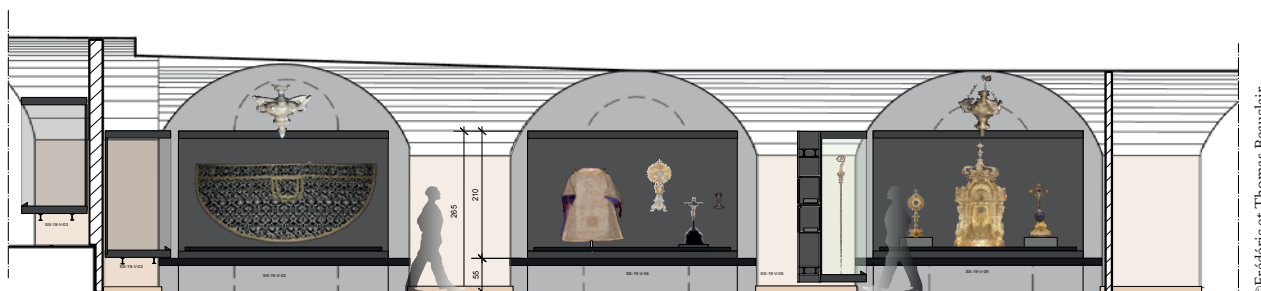
“The scenography we propose for the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History is an answer to an important question: How can we offer a real encounter between culture and visitors in a 1,000 m² crypt without natural light, while being subjected to multiple technical constraints? We decided not to set architecture and scenography in opposition to each other because in the Terra Sancta Museum, you will be visiting **not only a collection but also a place with a high heritage value**. To achieve this, our intuition is to base our entire scenography on light.”

Frédéric Beauclair
Scenographer of the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History



“The main challenge is to bring the museum to life through the exhibits themselves, without ever giving the impression that they are **simply illuminated**. The result will be magnificent!”

Olivier Francisco
Lighting designer for 30 years, Studio FEERICK



The display cases will “float” on a metal framework attached to the walls or flooring.



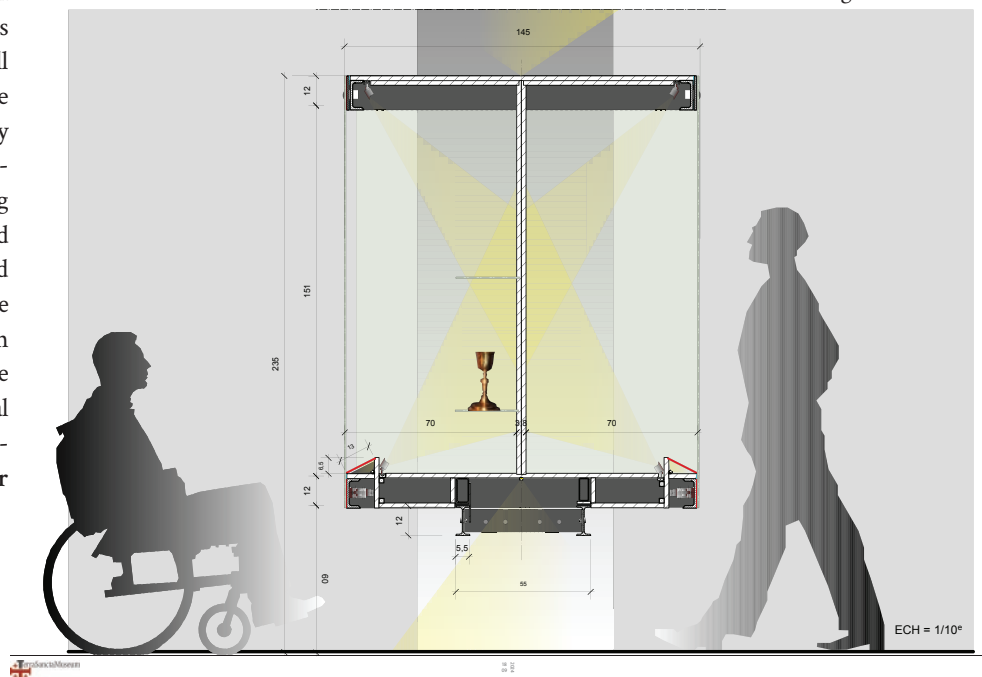
© Terra Sancta Museum

The scenographers in the future museum, in the presence of Scientific Committee President Béatrix Saule, and friars Stéphane Milovitch ofm and Rodrigo Machado Soares ofm.

AN AERIAL AND BRIGHT SCENOGRAPHY FOR THE MUSEUM

Frédéric and Thomas Beauclair have made the **deliberate choice to render the display cases free-standing, detached from the walls, floors and ceilings**. The reason for this decision is primarily the optimal conservation of the collections (for example, avoiding contact with humidity in the walls and surfaces) but above all to **render the exhibitions themselves the actual sources of light within the museum**.

Therefore, the display cases will “float” on a metal framework attached to the walls or flooring. This metal framework will in turn equalize the irregularities of the museum’s space and more importantly enable the design of a hidden illumination system, casting light on the flooring and arches and establishing visual and aerial dialogue between the works and the heritage space. Most significantly, the lighting design will give the impression that the light emanates directly from the works, reinforcing not only their visual impact but also their spiritual dimension, in perfect resonance with their religious nature.



© Frédéric et Thomas Beauclair

80
display cases

MODULAR DISPLAY CASES TO LOWER THEIR PRODUCTION COST

These innovative display cases will be made of steel in a sober and contemporary design reminiscent of that of the Terra Sancta Museum – SBF Archaeological Museum. At the request of the Terra Sancta Museum team, the scenographers also had to take into consideration the **economic cost of producing and maintaining such demanding display cases** (maximum watertightness, shielding with shock detectors to prevent theft). There are **80 display cases**, which can be broken down into 12 large types. Work is still in progress to allow for **easy opening** for cleaning and any possible change of work in the case of temporary exhibitions, rotation of collections or liturgical use.

Innovative display cases will be made of steel in a sober and contemporary design reminiscent of that of the Terra Sancta Museum – SBF Archaeological Museum.





1. The entrance to the future museum with this curtain-raiser: the bas-relief of the Resurrection and its 200 kilos of solid silver, a Neapolitan masterpiece.

2. An unique hall, in the heart of a specially preserved cloister with skylight (funded by ENABEL, the development agency of the Belgian Federal Government) to exhibit the oldest known organ in Christendom (11th century) and its carillon of bells that were in the Basilica of the Nativity.

3. The Icons and Palestinian Christian Art Section will be one of the few collections of Palestinian icons visible to the general public in the region.

4. This group of seven altar panels from South Tyrol forming an altarpiece, dating from the third quarter of the 15th century and painted by Friedrich Pacher, depicts episodes from the life of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, i.e., the birth of the Church.

5. This exhibition commemorates the mission and the importance of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Until the re-establishment of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 1847, the Franciscans, who represented the Pope in the Holy Land, would dub the Knights and Dames of the Order.

6. A major hall that reaffirms the Foundation of the Custody linked to the presence of the Franciscans at the Cenacle, from where they were expelled by the Turks in 1551.

7. The exhibition of the Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre will begin with the prestigious donations from the Kingdom of Spain. The Spanish presence in the Holy Land dates back to the 13th century, and the donations from the sovereigns bear witness to a devotion and loyalty to the Holy Sepulchre.

8. The visit to the museum ends in the Italian States room (Venice, Florence, Genoa, Milan, Naples and Sicily, which were then Spanish) and in particular the reproduction of a liturgical procession at the Holy Sepulchre, to reiterate that the works of the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History are living works, still in use.

FOCUS ON OUR COLLECTIONS: ICONS

At the start of the museum's tour, a 90 m² area will be dedicated to Oriental art, featuring a selection of icons from the collections of the Custody of the Holy Land and the private collection of George Al'Ama, a member of the Terra Sancta Museum's Scientific Committee. Following the **rediscovery of the Jerusalem Icon School** in 2022, by the Scientific Committee, this section is appropriately curated by Raphaëlle Ziadé, head of the Department of Byzantine Art at the Petit Palais. On Ziadé's initiative, a **restoration program was launched in 2024**, with the collaboration of a young art restorer from the prestigious Institut National du Patrimoine in Paris, Maylis de Chevigny. Flashbacks on the major stages of this project.

1 SHARING A MAJOR SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY

Thanks to the museum and its collaborators, Raphaëlle Ziadé and George Al'ama, knowledge of the Jerusalem Icon School is growing. Although the school was already mentioned in scientific literature, the corpus is now being expanded and inventories are underway, enabling us to better describe it. Thematic workshop "Icons of the Middle East" at the *Symposium Syriacum and Congress of Christian Arab Studies* (Paris, INALCO, **July 8, 2022**).



Raphaëlle Ziadé and George Al'ama met when they joined the Scientific Committee of the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History.



2 A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE INSTITUT NATIONAL DU PATRIMOINE (INP – FRANCE)

on the initiative of Raphaëlle Ziadé and Charles Personnaz, director of the Institute. Maylis de Chevigny, then a student restorer in the art of icon painting, was offered the opportunity to devote her **end-of-study dissertation** to one of the jewels of the Custody's collections: the Russian icon of the Virgin of Tikhvin – 18th century. The icon arrived in Paris in the summer of 2023, Maylis got acquainted with it on **September 7, 2023** in the presence of Fr. Stéphane Milovitch ofm who made the trip.

inp Institut national
du patrimoine

3 A DEMANDING RESTORATION AND STUDY PROJECT

Maylis de Chevigny, has counted the hours she has devoted to the restoration of the Virgin of Tikhvin, no less than 110 hours between **March and July 2024**, due to the considerable size of the icon (85 x 65 cm). That's without counting the historical study carried out in parallel with the restoration!



© Terra Sancta Museum



© Terra Sancta Museum

Photo taken at the end of Maylis de Chevigny's thesis defense in the company of Charles Personnaz, director of the INP, Rosaria Motta (senior restorer), Fr. Stéphane Milovitch ofm and Raphaëlle Ziadé.

4 THE CREATION OF AN "ICONS" WORKING GROUP FOR THE TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM ART & HISTORY

After a successful defense at the INP on **September 6, 2024**, and on the advice of Raphaëlle Ziadé, the museum team decided to continue its collaboration with Maylis de Chevigny. A working trio was thus formed: Maylis de Chevigny, Rosaria Motta (senior restorer) and Raphaëlle Ziadé.

5 THE ASSESSMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONDITION REPORT ON THE TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM'S COLLECTION OF ICONS

Maylis de Chevigny traveled to Jerusalem from **November 19 to December 5, 2024**, and was able to study 98 icons identified by Raphaëlle Ziadé as part of the design of the museum tour of the eastern section. She was able to make an **initial diagnosis** (urgent restoration, icons to be monitored due to old infestations, fundamental restoration, minimal restoration) and provide **preventive conservation measures** (hygrometric conditions) for the storage of the icons.



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6 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION MEASURES

The whole process has led to a review of the **organization of the museum's collection storage** and the identification of a place dedicated to the icons, **during the month of December 2024**. **At the end of 2024**, a specific, custom-made "map cabinet", for horizontal storage of the works, was designed and produced locally. With the help of Alix Pras and Claudio Dona Domeneghetti, museum volunteers, all the icons studied (the most interesting for the permanent exhibition) are now stored in this piece of furniture in a room itself **monitored by testers**.

RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

Far from the ongoing construction work, after several years of meticulous study, **Michèle Bimbenet-Privat**, Honorary Curator General at the Musée du Louvre (France), who throughout her career has supervised the writing of some 30 books on goldsmith's and silversmith's art and numerous exhibition catalogs, has submitted the definitive text of the first goldsmith's and silversmith's catalog from the Terra Sancta Art & History museum collection, to be published in 2025.



“We’ve been working with 11 international art experts, 4 technical collaborators and 1 art photographer on this catalog for over 5 years now. Each author has determined the length of the records according to the perceived value of the object studied. To give you an idea, some would like to write detailed six-page records! So over the years, a great deal of revision work has been necessary to bring the texts up to date and to optimize the catalog as a whole so that it is **accessible to researchers, exhibition designers and the general public alike**. Our authors work on a voluntary basis, and I really want to underline their commitment, which bears witness to real passion and deep conviction. We work for the Franciscans because we want to support them, because we want to see the museum open and succeed. We’re not giving money, but our time, our know-how and our passion, because we deeply believe in the importance of this museum and what it represents.”

Michèle Bimbenet-Privat

Honorary Curator General at the Musée du Louvre (France) and member of the Terra Sancta Museum’s Scientific Committee

AN OUTSTANDING PHOTOGRAPHER



Guillaume Benoit has been one of the collaborators of the Galerie Kugel in Paris since 2010. He is a freelance photographer specializing in the enhancement of works of art and antiques. His expertise has led him to work with major cultural institutions around the world, including the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. As part of the Terra Sancta Museum, he spent **three months, between 2023 and 2025**, taking

high-definition photographs of the gold and silverware collections, thus contributing to their documentation (enriching our database), enhancement and dissemination.

Faton

A RENOWNED PUBLISHER OF ART AND HERITAGE

The French *Éditions Faton* has specialized for over fifty years in the publication of cultural and educational magazines as well as in the publication of coffee-table books and catalogues for a large number of cultural establishments (Condé Museum at the Château de Chantilly, the Villa du Temps retrouvé in Cabourg, the Musée de Cluny – the National Museum of the Middle Ages, the Jean-Jacques Henner Museum, the Château de Fontainebleau, etc.).

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CATALOG

Catalog title

Terra Sancta Museum - *Catalogue de l'Orfèvrerie - XVI^e, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*

Publication date

Autumn 2025

Publisher

Éditions Faton

Scientific director of publication

Michèle Bimbenet-Privat

Scientific contributors

Michèle Bimbenet-Privat (*honorary curator general at the Musée du Louvre*), Giovanni Boraccesi (*restorer and goldsmith historian*), Jacques Charles-Gaffiot (*art historian*), Benoît Constensoux (*art historian*), José Manuel Cruz Valdovinos (*professor at the Complutense University of Madrid*), Charlotte Maury (*in charge of the Ottoman collections at the Musée du Louvre*), Przemysław Mrozowski (*Honorary Director of the Royal Castle in Warsaw*), Paulus Rainer (*Curator at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna*), Antonello Ricco (*Researcher at the University of Salerno*), Teresa Vale (*Professor at the Faculty of Letters, University of Lisbon*), Danièle Véron-Denise (*Honorary Curator at the Musée du Château de Fontainebleau*)

Technical collaborators

Guillaume Benoit (*art photography*), Florence Denise and Geneviève Rérolle-Pouffier (*translators*), Julie Gérard (*director of the art book department at Éditions Faton*), Bernard Huchet (*heraldry and proofreading*) and Marie des Neiges de l'Éprevier (*documentation work*).

Number of chapters

9

Number of pages

496

Number of works

214

Number of illustrations and photographs

300

Languages of publication

first edition in French, then
translated into Italian and English



MUCH MORE THAN OFF SITE EXHIBITIONS

Prior to the museum's anticipated opening in autumn 2028, the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History collections will be displayed in prestigious museums. This initiative began in 2023, at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon and continued in 2024, at the City of Culture in Galicia, Santiago de Compostela and the Museo Marino Marini in Florence.

In addition to the growing reputation of our collections, these collaborations are an opportunity to harness the expertise of other museum institutions for the benefit of the Terra Sancta Museum.

In this regard, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to Prof. António Filipe Pimentel, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, who made part of his team available to help with the installation and dismantling of the Compostela and Florence exhibitions, ensuring that our collections were handled correctly. We would also like to thank Ana Isabel Vázquez Reboredo, Managing Director of the City of Culture of Galicia, for allowing her experts to help us reflect on the major issue of our museum's security.

In 2024

LOAN OF
106 WORKS

APPROX.
30,000 VISITORS
IN COMPOSTELA



“During the previous exhibition in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, it was inherently my job and responsibility to guarantee the environmental conditions and the display of the objects in the room. Later, I returned to Jerusalem with the task of rechecking each of the works, writing a condition report and supervising the packaging carried out by the technicians from the Sonigo company. With our director's permission, Fr. Stéphane then asked André Afonso and myself to act as “couriers” for the Compostela and Florence exhibitions. We're getting to know the Custody's collections very well, which makes our work easier. We are able to recommend measures and verify their application, so that the works would not be damaged by being displayed.”

Rui Xavier

Head of Preventive Conservation at the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum and new member of the Scientific Committee of the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History

© André Afonso



©Terra Sancta Museum

The works are carefully packed in St. Saviour's Monastery in Jerusalem.



©André Afonso

Rui Xavier and André Afonso of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum provided invaluable assistance with the installation and dismantling of the Compostela and Florence exhibitions.



©Rocio Clibes

White pontifical vestments with the coat of arms of Ferdinand VI of Spain, 1758.



©Rocio Clibes

Ana Isabel Vázquez Reboredo, Director General of the City of Culture of Galicia, during the opening speech of the exhibition in Compostela.



©Rocio Clibes

Large sanctuary lamp with the arms of the Kingdom of Spain, 1786.



©Manuel G. Vicente

International exhibitions are an opportunity to highlight the uniqueness and excellence of Palestinian Christian art. Here a mother-of-pearl cross.

LOOKING BACK...

The year 2024 was marked by the end of the structural work, which will be celebrated on May 12, 2025 in the presence of the main donors in Jerusalem.

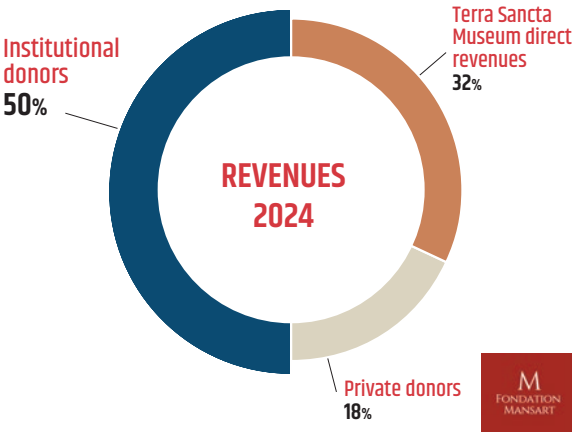
2024 INCOME STATEMENT*

| Revenues | € |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Private donors | 134,567 |
| Institutional donors | 376,880 |
| Terra Sancta Museum direct revenues | 242,368 |
| Total revenues | €753,815 |

* For the year ending 31 December



مركز تطوير المؤسسات الأهلية
NGO Development Center



| Expenses | € |
|--|-----------------|
| Structural work (Phase II) | 650,782 |
| Architectural Audit | 97,482 |
| HR | 24 267 |
| Project management | 8,543 |
| Communication & Fundraising | 31,754 |
| Collections (restauration, transportation for exhibitions) | 24,405 |
| Operating costs | 1,900 |
| Multimedia | 1,611 |
| Curator | 30,529 |
| Total expenses | €871,273 |
| Operation balance year | (117,458) |

2024 BALANCE

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Opening balance | 348,584 |
| Operation balance | (117,458) |
| Virtual Currency Variances | 56,963 |
| Balance Year | €288,091 |



BEHIND THE FINANCIAL REPORTS

Elias Basseer has been working on the museum project since 2021, creating the accounting system and consolidating daily operations.

He is responsible for financial relations with donors as he is familiar with the tender review, procurement, donor compliance (EU, AICS, OCHA, GIZ).

A graduate of Bethlehem University (BA in Accounting and Business Administration) and Florence University, he worked for many years for the Italian cooperation organization COOPI, the NGO Pro Terra Sancta and the YMCA. Since 2022, he has been certified as a senior accountant by the Institute of Tax Consultants in Israel.

... AND LOOKING AHEAD

The year 2025 will be mainly devoted to finalizing the studies with a view to launching the finishing work and the production of the display cases in 2026. However, **one stage of the museum roofing will be completed in 2025**, as there are still three open courtyards in the museum route. This will make it possible to achieve two major objectives. In the short term, **to ensure** that the museum's actual climatic conditions are in place, and in the medium term, **to prevent access to the museum** via the roofs. As a reminder, the museum spaces are an integral part of the convent spaces.

In 2025

€ 1,495,400
EXPENDITURE

€ 444,706
STILL TO BE FUNDED

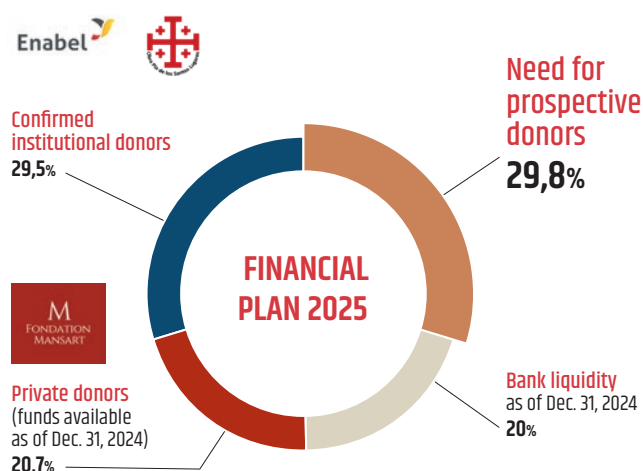
2025 PROVISIONAL BUDGET

| Provisonal expenses | € |
|---|--------------------|
| Work Phase II (last payments) | 301,063 |
| Work Phase III (skylights & slab) | 450,000 |
| Architectural studies Phase III | 496,537 |
| Scenography Phase III | 81,500 |
| Security audit | 15,000 |
| Publications | 30,000 |
| Human resources | 45,300 |
| Project management | 36,000 |
| Communication & Fundrasing (new website) | 35,000 |
| Operating costs | 5,000 |
| Total TTC | € 1,495,400 |

PROVISIONAL CALENDAR



- **January – December 2025**
Completion of architectural studies and the scenography project
- **August – October 2025**
Roofing work on the museum
- **First quarter of 2026**
Call for tenders and bidding analysis
- **Mid-2026**
Start of finishing work if necessary funds are available
- **Mid-2027**
Production of display cases
- **1st quarter of 2028**
Coating drying period
- **2nd quarter 2028**
Installation of the display cases and works
- **Fall 2028**
Opening of the Terra Sancta Museum Art & History





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www.terrasanctamuseum.org



For any questions:
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