

## LOCAL AWARD CEREMONY FOR THE WIELEMANS-CEUPPENS BREWERY

DEC 04

The Local Award Ceremony for the research project for the restoration of the exceptional machines of the Wielemans-Ceuppens brewery, a Grand Prix winner of an EU Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards in 2013, took place at WIELS Contemporary Art Centre in Brussels on the evening of 4 December. **Karel Bartak**, Head of Unit of the DG for Education and Culture of the European Commission, and **Denis de Kergorlay**, Executive President of Europa Nostra, praised the remarkable research study undertaken by BruxellesFabriques. After the ceremony, the 100 guests visited the impressive engine room of the former brewery.

The Wielemans-Ceuppens brewery symbolises the Brussels area, the only place in the world where the craft beer ‘gueuze’ is brewed. Built in 1894 and 1905, these machines have not survived elsewhere in Europe and one of them is unique in the world. The Awards jury found this study, which aimed to evaluate the unique character of the machinery and test the feasibility of restoring it for teaching purposes, particularly interesting. The result is a programme of training leading to a professional qualification anchored within the plan for the restoration of this historic European industrial site.

“We are very dedicated to the protection and promotion of Europe’s heritage, not only through the funding of numerous initiatives but also through policy-making. The European Commission's new ‘Creative Europe’ programme was recently approved by the European Parliament. I hope that the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards, which recognises outstanding achievements in heritage conservation, research, dedicated service, and education, training and awareness-raising, will benefit from increased support under this new programme”, stated Karel Bartak. “The feasibility study for the restoration of the machines of the Wielemans-Ceuppens brewery sets an example in the industrial field. The steam engines of this former brewery are silent today. We hope that this will change in the future and that this will become a jewel of Europe’s industrial heritage”, he added.

“The Wielemans-Ceuppens brewery is an important *lieu de memoire*. Not only was it once the nerve centre of the biggest brewery in Europe, but it was also a social place until production stopped in 1988. After almost two decades, the historic Wielemans brewery opened its doors as a Contemporary Art Centre - the WIELS - accommodating a bookstore, a cinema, an audiovisual lab and a café/restaurant. This is an example of a smart renovation which could inspire other industrial heritage sites across Europe. The restoration of these exceptional machines would return the brewery to its full splendour”, said Denis de Kergorlay.

Other speakers at the ceremony included **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović**, Secretary General of Europa Nostra, and **Jozef Van Waeyenberge**, President of Europa Nostra Belgium. Speaking on behalf of BruxellesFabriques, were its President, **Guido Vanderhulst**, and an expert, **Guy Moerenhout**. **Frédérique Versaen**, Assistant Director of WIELS, **Sven Gatz**,

Director of the Belgian Brewers, and **Charles Spapens**, alderman of the municipality of Forest, also spoke at the event.



After the official ceremony, the 100 guests visited the impressive engine room of the former brewery. Photo: Gilles Durvaux

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