

# ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES  
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES  
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref. GB/TA/1473/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 20 December 2023

H. E. Ms Simona Mirela Miculescu  
Ambassador Extraordinary and  
Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate  
Permanent Delegation of Romania to  
UNESCO  
Maison de l'UNESCO  
1, rue Miollis,  
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## **World Heritage List 2024**

### **Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble of Târgu Jiu (Romania) – Interim report and additional information request**

Dear Ambassador,

As prescribed by the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies are requested to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2024. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation procedure.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to the “Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble of Târgu Jiu” was carried out by Mr. Leo Schmidt (Germany) in July 2023. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organisation and implementation of the mission.

On 17 October 2023, an additional information letter was sent by ICOMOS to request further information regarding documentation on the historical development of the nominated property and its protection. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 10 November 2023 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

At the end of November 2023, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2024. The additional information provided by the State Party, together with mission and desk review reports, were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2024.

We thank you and your Delegation for your availability and your participation in the meeting held on 23 November 2023 with some representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. The exchanges during this meeting were of great help for the third part of the ICOMOS Panel meeting. During this last part of the meeting, the Panel has identified areas where it considers that further information is needed.

### **General considerations**

ICOMOS welcomes the thoroughly revised approach adopted in the nomination dossier in presenting this nominated property, and the considerable improvement of the comparative analysis since the earlier nomination dossier evaluated by ICOMOS in 2014-2015.

The revised nomination has clarified that Târgu Jiu is to be understood as a monumental ensemble with an urban/territorial scope, rather than a collection of artworks as it was presented in the previous nomination dossier.

ICOMOS considers that the artistic and symbolic merits of Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble of Târgu Jiu prevail over its memorial dimensions. Following careful analysis and discussion on the historic development of the nominated property and its characteristics and in the light of the *Guiding Principles for the Preparation of Nominations concerning Sites of Memory related to Recent Conflicts* adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 18<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session in January 2023, ICOMOS does not consider that the nominated property can be seen as a 'site of memory' for the purpose of the World Heritage Convention. The nominated property does not appear explicitly linked to the specific historic event that triggered the creation of this monumental artwork, which, on the other hand, inspires an emotional, reflective and commemorative response more general in nature and not connected to the memorialisation of a conflict-related event.

ICOMOS is thankful for the additional information received which has been helpful to clarify several points. However, some aspects need further clarifications.

### **Documentation of the Brâncuși and Endless Column Parks**

The nomination dossier briefly explains that the two parks in which the Endless Column on the eastern end of the monumental artwork and the Gate of the Kiss, the Alley of Stools and the Table of Silence on the western end are located were realised in the framework of the urban works undertaken to accommodate the project of Brâncuși. However, not much detail is provided in the nomination dossier or in the additional information sent in November 2023 about the sequence in the development of the artwork and the parks, and on the possible interactions between the artist and the landscape architect responsible for the design of the parks.

In this regard, ICOMOS would be grateful if further detailed information and explanations could be shared on the design process of the parks, the arrangements of the vegetation at the time Brâncuși conceived and implemented his monumental ensemble and whether their design was influenced by the need to accommodate the artwork of Brâncuși.

ICOMOS would equally appreciate if further information and documentation on the structure of the vegetation (e.g., type and distribution of trees, shrubs, soft plantings, etc.) of the two parks could be provided. If surveys have been already conducted on the two parks, it would be useful to receive a summary of their outcomes with some excerpts (e.g., maps, survey fiches).

Finally, it would be useful to better understand the procedures in place to manage these parks to ensure their contribution to sustain the integrity and authenticity of the nominated property.

### **Protection measures through planning**

The additional information received in November 2023 clarified that the revision of the Zonal Urban Plan (ZUP), which was expected to be completed in 2023, had to be delayed due to contractual issues with the company in charge of drafting the plan. Hence, the validity of the ZUP 2014 is to be extended until 2026. Since the nomination dossier and the additional information suggest that the revision of the ZUP

2014 was needed due to some shortcomings in this plan, ICOMOS would be interested in learning if establishing interim safeguarding measures during the period the ZUP is being revised have been considered to ensure that effective forms of protection and regulation are put in place to address the identified shortcomings.

### **Rehabilitation projects**

The nomination dossier and the technical evaluation mission inform that some urban rehabilitation projects to enhance the settings of the nominated property have been, are being and will be carried out. The attention given to improving the settings of the nominated property is welcome and to be commended. However, given the sensitivity of the nominated monumental ensemble to potential changes to its immediate and wider setting, ICOMOS would be grateful to receive details on how the briefs for the project proposals have been conceived. It would also be desirable to know whether and how research and understanding of the Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble and its conceptual and creative drivers have informed these briefs and the design proposals in order to respect the integrity and authenticity of the nominated property and enhance its understanding and appreciation.

The Strategic Plan for Târgu Jiu includes plans for large-scale projects dedicated to the rehabilitation of the immediate setting of the monumental ensemble, with already significant funds planned. It would be important to know whether there are already design schemes at an advanced stage of development and, if this is the case, whether Heritage Impact Assessments have been carried out or are planned to ensure that the projects do not have negative impact on the nominated property. ICOMOS would like to receive documentation about these projects, and the Heritage Impact Assessment reports if available.

### **Involvement of local communities**

ICOMOS would appreciate further information on how local communities have been involved in the nomination process and how they will be participating in the management of the nominated property. It appears particularly important to learn how owners and residents along the Avenue of Heroes have been engaged in relation to the rehabilitation projects being and to be implemented in the future to improve the settings of the avenue.

We look forward to your responses to these points, which will be of great help in our evaluation procedure.

We would be grateful if you could provide **ICOMOS** and the **World Heritage Centre** with the above-requested information by **28 February 2024 at the latest**, the deadline set out in paragraph 148 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* concerning additional information on nominations to be received. Please note that any information submitted after this statutory deadline will not be considered by ICOMOS in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while ICOMOS will carefully consider any additional information submitted within the statutory deadline, it will not be possible to properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or a large amount of new information submitted at the last minute. ICOMOS would, therefore, be grateful if the State Party could keep its response concise and respond only to the above requests.

We thank you for your support of the World Heritage Convention and the evaluation procedure.

Yours faithfully,



Gwenaëlle Bourdin  
Director  
ICOMOS Evaluation Unit

Copy to           Ministry of Culture and National Identity  
                      National Institute of Heritage (INP)  
                      UNESCO World Heritage Centre