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A NEW MINISTRY OF ANTIQUITIES INITIATIVE TO PROTECT THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

On February 17th, the Minister of Antiquities, Khaled El Enany, and Swiss Ambassador Markus Leitner, in the presence of Irina Bokova, the Director General of UNESCO will open the fully restored Stoppelaëre House in Luxor, which was built in 1950 by the Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy for the French conservator Alexander Stoppelaëre. The restoration has been realised by the Tarek Waly Centre of Conservation and Heritage with a team of local craftsmen. The restoration of this building is part of the [Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative](#), a collaboration between Egypt's Ministry of Antiquities, Switzerland's University of Basel and Spain's Factum Foundation for Digital Technology in Conservation.

Stoppelaëre House will become a training center, where local people will become specialists in 3D digital technologies and composite photography. These high-resolution recording technologies will be applied to the preservation of heritage and used for the creation of exact facsimiles of tombs that are now either closed to the public for conservation or in need of closure to preserve them for future generations. Stoppelaëre House is located near the [facsimile of the tomb of King Tutankhamun](#) that was installed in 2014 as the first phase of the Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative. The scanning of the tomb of Seti I is currently being carried out.



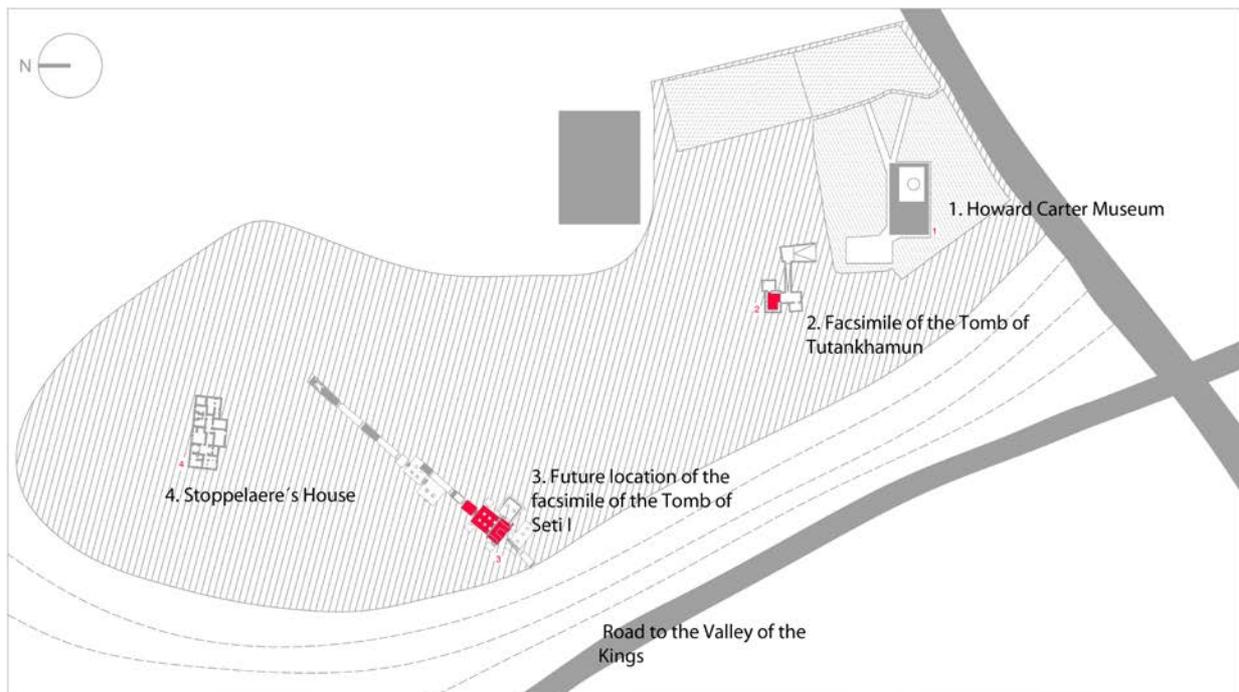


Stoppelaëre House is an example of Hassan Fathy's mature approach to mud brick architecture. It was built in 1950 for Alexander Stoppelaëre after the completion of the village of New Gourna, a visionary housing project of the late 1940's.

The restoration was funded by the [Factum Foundation for Digital Technology in Conservation](#) (Madrid) and the work was carried out by the [Tarek Waly Centre for Architecture and Heritage](#) in Cairo with a team of local craftsmen. Tarek Waly, one of the leading heritage architects working in Egypt, worked with Hassan Fathy for many years and has a deep understanding of his aims and intentions. Great attention has been paid to preserving the building while also making it serve its new function as a state of the art 3D scanning, archiving and training centre.

The new centre at Stoppelaëre House will bring **3D scanning technologies** (including medium and long range survey scanning, close range high-resolution surface scanning, composite photography and high-resolution photogrammetry) to Luxor. High-resolution recording and documentation provides **a cost effective solution for heritage documentation** that will benefit the local community. In 2016, Factum Foundation began training local operators under the supervision of Aliaa Ismail, (a graduate of the American University in Cairo in Architecture and Egyptology) who will run the new centre. The first two local operators have already been fully trained and as the Centre becomes fully equipped, the number of people receiving training in data recording, processing and archiving will increase.

The restoration of Stoppelaëre House and the Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative Training Centre are one of the central elements of the Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative (TNPI), a project initiated in 2008 by the Ministry of Antiquities with the University of Basel and the Factum Foundation. The TNPI gained [prominence](#) in 2014 for installing an exact facsimile of **the tomb of Tutankhamun** on the site near Howard Carter's house.



High-Resolution recording and documentation are transforming the ways in which we protect, monitor, study and communicate the importance of vulnerable cultural heritage sites



like the Valley of the Kings. The collaboration with the University of Basel is focused on **the tomb of Seti I**, discovered 200 years ago by the explorer Giovanni Battista Belzoni. Belzoni's facsimile (made by casting the walls which caused significant damage), started the craze for all things Egyptian, when it was exhibited in London. Belzoni and others also removed sections of the tomb that are now in museums and collections around the world. The aim of the Factum Foundation and the University of Basel is to [scan the entire tomb of Seti I](#) and all the fragments that exist, to [reintegrate them digitally](#). The University of Basel has been gathering and analysing fragments for many years and the link between technology and academic study is at the heart of the TNPI. Stoppelaëre House will become the symbol of this new approach. During 2017 there will be a **significant transfer of skills** and technology in order to facilitate the recording of the sites in and around Luxor.

Additional Information

Read the Tarek Waly Center for Architecture and Heritage's full [report](#) on the rehabilitation and reuse of Stoppelaëre House.

Hassan Fathy (1900–1989) was a pioneering Egyptian architect who re-established the use of adobe and traditional building designs. He designed over 160 projects including the Village of New Gurna. He obtained the Aga Khan Chairman's Award for Architecture in 1980. His book *Architecture for the Poor* was published in 1969 and remains an influential text on architecture and urban planning.

Alexandre Stoppelaëre - A French artist, he was the Chief Restorer of Antiquities at the Department of Antiquities in Egypt. His wife, Léonie Ricou, owned Brancusi's *Bird in Space*, which he sold after her death in 1937.

Tarek Waly Centre for Architecture and Heritage - Founded by **Tarek Waly**, a leading Egyptian architect with 40 years of professional experience designing civic, religious, residential buildings in Egypt and abroad. He has designed visitor centers in Abydos and Aswan and is currently transforming the visitor experience on the Giza Plateau.

Aliaa Ismail - graduated from the American University in Cairo with a degree in Egyptology and Architecture. She underwent an 18-month training in 3D scanning technologies and image processing at Factum Arte in Madrid after which she began training operators in Egypt, including:

Mahmoud Salem, a young talented artist from the heart of Boayrat village. Mahmoud worked under the direction of his father on the restoration of Stoppelaëre House. In addition to being a skilled craftsman with mud brick architecture, he is now fully trained in 3D scanning, photogrammetry and data processing.

Abdel Raheem Ghaba (Abdo) lives in Gurna with his family. He has been working with Factum Foundation since 2008 and is a fully trained scanner operator capable of assembling the equipment, scanning, processing and troubleshooting.

Information can be provided on other members of the local team

Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative - Founded in 2008, the TNPI has been run by the Factum Foundation and the University of Basel under contract with the Ministry of Antiquities. Read the full [report](#) on the work carried out in 2016.



University of Basel Factum Foundation began its collaboration with Prof. Erik Hornung. Currently, we are working with Prof. Antonio Loprieno, a specialist in the History of Institutions and Prof. Susanne Bickel, an Egyptologist.

"The training program is a fantastic idea. It will provide Egyptians with the most up-to-date technologies that will allow them to preserve and document their cultural heritage accurately and completely. I am extremely proud that the team will be headed by someone who came out of the American University in Cairo, was trained by Factum Arte and is now working in full cooperation with the Ministry. This shows how international cooperation can further the preservation of heritage, not just for Egypt, but for the world."

Dr. Salima Ikram, Professor of Egyptology at The American University in Cairo

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