

AP Valletta and international team across Accra and London launches publication on heritage regeneration



Kingsway Store; Jamestown, Accra;
Photo by Paul Addo, 2023

Valletta Accra, a travelling research project led by AP Valletta (Valletta, Malta), David Kojo Derban (Accra, Ghana), and Ann Dingli (London, UK), launched its culminating publication on the subject of heritage innovation surrounding the port cities of Accra, Ghana and Valletta, Malta, this spring.

The publication introduced the full analysis of the research project, tallying with a wider aim to propose versions of heritage regeneration that have been nurtured by close, critical reading of two mercantile, post-colonial built environments.

A travelling research project

Valletta Accra was launched in November 2023 as a travelling research project as part of Art Council Malta's International Cultural Exchange funding stream. The aim was to study two capitals across two continents, each holding memory of colonial presence and its wielding of mercantile potential.

The team of researchers approached heritage fabric as a transcript of the evolving urban, social and economic life of two harbour cities – Accra, the capital of Ghana on the Guinea Coast of West Africa, and Valletta, the capital of Malta, an island in the Mediterranean, both carrying the imprint of their role as adopted trading strongholds.

The comparison of the two cities was positioned as a departure point for a deeper reading of both the colonial and post-colonial experience. In its parallel observation, *Valletta Accra* questioned how heritage might develop in line with authentic permeations of identity and urban ambition, positioning contrast as a methodology for revelation.

Valletta Accra: the publication

The project's resulting publication, launched in April 2024, unfolds in two parts: the first is a collection of four written and photographic essays; the second, a speculative design proposal for a heritage site – the Osu Salem Presbyterian Primary School – in Osu, Accra.

The goal of the speculative proposal is to restore the school's building fabric as a significant heritage site in line with the learnings of the wider research project. In doing so, the design project becomes a methodological tugboat for a transferable, scalable heritage regeneration approach. One based on a hybrid act of looking, learning, and acting directly on what has been jointly discovered. The team is now working to raise funds for the actualisation of the design proposal, promoting the revival of the Osu Salem building as a prototype for the wider project's learnings.

Notes for editors

About AP Valletta

AP Valletta's vision is to create an Architecture that is a place-maker, a container of meaning, a catalyst for the creation of kinship, a fabricator of myth and a producer of narratives.

AP Valletta is a Valletta-based team of architects, designers, and researchers. The practice has operated for over 30 years and has continuously expanded its field of activity. AP Valletta provides a wide range of services including Architecture Design, Urban Design and Master Planning, Restoration Theory and Practice, Sustainable Architecture, Structural and Civil Engineering services, Interior Design, Strategic Real Estate Consultancy, Graphic Design, Education and Publishing.

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