

# **Sustainable Museums: Heritage Preservation in Sri Lanka**

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**Murray Herrick Center 204**

Faced with a twin crisis—a thirty-year old civil war and a destructive tsunami—archaeologists and heritage managers in Sri Lanka sought alternative strategies to holistically tackle the resurrection of battered heritage sites and the broken psyches of their resident communities. They had to deal with an area with rich pre-Colonial, Colonial and post-Colonial histories while recognizing the reality of its cultural diversity. Their response was to incorporate the nucleus of the museum site, the extended World Heritage site in which it was located and its buffer zone as an organically interlinked platform for the establishment of the Total Museum.

This talk describes the saga of the UNESCO Declared World Heritage site of the 16th Century Dutch Fort in Galle, Sri Lanka (pictured below). The Fort offered a unique opportunity to revive its living heritage and its resident community along with sustainable economic and tourism ventures as a highly commended project for best practice in Heritage Management in South Asia.

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