

EPOCH presented at international events

During the first months of its life, one of the goals of EPOCH was to make the Network known to researchers, cultural professionals and institutions. For this reason EPOCH representatives have attended several meetings presenting the Network program and activity plan.

The very first event attended by EPOCH was **EuroIndia** in New Delhi, where EPOCH managed a stand upon invitation of the European Commission. All other FP6 projects were similarly present and they were presented to the Indian audience during a special session. Another early presence was at **EVA Florence** in late March. EPOCH's lecture raised a considerable interest among the audience here and joint actions were established among FP6 Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, EPOCH being the only one on tangible heritage. During EVA Florence EPOCH was also presented to the MINERVA meeting.

In June, EPOCH has been presented at the Berlin meeting of the **European Heritage Network**. The European Heritage Network (formerly also known as HEREIN), is a permanent information system gathering governmental services in charge of heritage protection within the Council of Europe. The European Heritage Network focus is on cultural heritage, particularly on architectural and on archaeological heritage in the context of the activities under several international Charters concerning Cultural Heritage. Widely accessible (to conservation professionals, heritage mediators, research workers, members of associations, young people, etc), the Network exists to encourage and facilitate the starting of projects and partnerships. It is an international catalyst for initiatives and an ideal "meeting place" for the heritage family and a number of professions and persons active in this sphere and awaiting ways of improving their co-operation. As such, it has been considered as an ideal place to meet culture professionals and government representatives. **EVA London**, at the end of July, was attended by an EPOCH delegate who lectured on the Network to the UK audience. Another short presentation was given at the **International Museology Conference** in Mytilene, at the end of June.

In September, EPOCH attended the **EAA** (European Association of Archaeologists) yearly Conference in Lyon, managing a stand where EPOCH panels showed for the first time. These panels are part of movable equipment that has been prepared to facilitate participation in Conferences, exhibitions and any kind of events. Leaflets concerning the ongoing preparation of EPOCH showcases were distributed to participants. An EPOCH presentation was also lectured at EAA.

In the same period, EPOCH representatives attended the

EAHTR (European Association of Historic Towns and Regions) meeting at Norwich, where EPOCH's coordinator David Arnold gave an invited lecture on the project. The EPOCH stand could not be permanently on display here for space reasons, and it proved the effectiveness of being easily movable. It was mounted (and unmounted) to be successfully displayed where social events took place – an experience showing that sometimes it is easier to communicate with participants when they are relaxed and more willing to listen.

October saw EPOCH crossing the Mediterranean Sea to participate in **EVA Jerusalem**. Here EPOCH had an entire session, which however was hardly sufficient to reply to the numerous questions raised by people attending it.

This year's most important European Information Society Technologies (IST) event was the **2004 IST EVENT**, organised under the EU's Dutch Presidency in The Hague, NL, on 15-17 November 2004 by the European Commission in partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. The event included a conference, an exhibition of research results and networking facilities for the about 4000 participants. EPOCH attended the Networking sessions and presented the Network's goals and activities.

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Virtual humans used in showcase *Avatar-Based Interactive Storytelling*

Evaluating the first six months of EPOCH presence at international events, we may conclude that it allowed us to reach some 2000 stakeholders. Apart from contractual obligations – we agreed in the contract to spread EPOCH's excellence on the international scene – many of the contacts established during these events may enable the Network to achieve a greater impact in establishing policies and good practice. They may also be the starting point of new initiatives, implementing EPOCH results or developing new projects with EPOCH partners.