

Documentation, Interpretation, and Expanding the Visitor Experience
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New digital tools in combination with scholarship, physical investigations, and conservation provide extraordinary opportunities for describing places, understanding the evolution of sites, and offering myriad channels for interpretation and education. The work of World Monuments Fund in Rome provides a lens through which to understand how important the synthesis of data is to the future stewardship and enjoyment of heritage. WMF's activities in Rome from 1996 to the present have addressed documentation, research, conservation, site presentation, and public interpretation at the Temple of Portunus, Temple of Hercules, Santa Maria Antiqua, the Casina Farnese, and the Farnese Aviaries. The question of how digital documentation advances knowledge and protection of these sites will be explored. There are other projects, such as WMF's work at Babylon in Iraq that have relied heavily on the documentation tools of 20th and 21st century and are essential to the development of the nomination dossier for World Heritage inscription. On numerous occasions during the course of this work the question of lessons learned and applicability of the methodology to other sites has arisen. Exploring the work completed at these sites sets the stage for discussing how the digital future of World Heritage offers the potential for great benefits to scholars, students, visitors, and the interested public.