



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

Original: French

## CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fifth session  
Nairobi, Kenya  
November 2010

**NOMINATION FILE NO. 00438**  
**FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST**  
**OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN 2010**

<p><b>A. STATE(S) PARTY(IES)</b></p> <p><i>For multi-national nominations, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.</i></p>
<p>France</p>
<p><b>B. NAME OF THE ELEMENT</b></p>
<p><b>B.1. Name of the element in English or French</b></p> <p><i>This is the official name of the element that will appear in published material about the Representative List. It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters, including spaces and punctuation. The name should be transcribed in Latin Unicode characters (Basic Latin, Latin-1 Supplement, Latin Extended-A or Latin Extended Additional).</i></p>
<p>The craftsmanship of Alençon needle lace-making</p>
<p><b>B.2. Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned, if applicable</b></p> <p><i>This is the official name of the element in the vernacular language corresponding to the official name in English or French (point B.1.). It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters in Unicode (Latin or others), including spaces and punctuation.</i></p>
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**B.3. Other name(s) of the element, if any**

*In addition to the official name(s) of the element (B.1.) please mention alternate name(s), if any, by which the element is known, in Unicode characters (Latin or others).*

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**C. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ELEMENT****C.1. Identification of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned**

*According to the 2003 Convention, intangible heritage can only be identified with reference to communities, groups or individuals that recognize it as part of their cultural heritage. Thus it is important to identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the nominated element. The information provided should allow the Committee to identify the communities, groups or individuals concerned with an element, and should be mutually coherent with the information in sections 1 to 5 below.*

- The lace-makers of the Atelier conservatoire national du Point d'Alençon (National Alençon Lace Workshop), holders of the craftsmanship.
- The National Alençon Lace Workshop, which is attached to the Administration Générale du Mobilier national et des Manufactures des Gobelins, de Beauvais et de la Savonnerie (the General Administrative Unit for the Mobilier National and the Gobelins, Beauvais and Savonnerie Factories), which is a national body of the Ministry of Culture and Communication.
- The town of Alençon and its Fine Art and Lace Museum.

**C.2. Geographic location and range of the element and location of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned**

*This section should identify the range of distribution of the element, indicating if possible the geographic locations in which it is centred. If related elements are practiced in neighbouring areas, please so indicate.*

The town of Alençon  
(Department of Orne, Lower Normandy region)

**C.3. Domain(s) represented by the element**

*Identify concisely the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. (This information will be used primarily for visibility, if the element is inscribed.)*

The craftsmanship of needle lace-making

**D. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENT**

*The brief description of the element will be particularly helpful in allowing the Committee to know at a glance what element is being proposed for inscription, and, in the event of inscription, will be used for purposes of visibility. It should be a summary of the description provided in point 1 below but is not an introduction to that longer description.*

Created in the 17th century, Alençon lace is a type of needle lace-making made of pieces of

openwork fabric, which are used for decorative purposes in everyday and religious life.

Each piece is made up of small elements held together by invisible stitching, a process that comprises ten successive key stages.

The simplicity of the tools – linen thread and a needle – contrasts with the prestigious and unique nature of the pieces that are produced.

Alençon lace is also unusual because of the high level of craftsmanship required and the very long time that it takes to produce (seven hours per cm<sup>2</sup>).

Until the 19th century, each of the thousand or so lace-makers specialized in one part of the production process. Despite this division of labour, their lace-making technique has been continually transmitted, right up today's generation of lace-makers.

Today, there are fewer than ten lace-makers. They are specialists in all of the different stages of the process, having undertaken an apprenticeship of about ten years.

## 1. IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF THE ELEMENT (CF. CRITERION R.1)

*This is the key section of the nomination to satisfy criterion R.1: “The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention”. A clear and complete explanation is essential to demonstrate that the nominated element meets the Convention’s definition of intangible heritage. This section should address all the significant features of the element as it exists at present, and should include:*

- a. an explanation of its social and cultural functions and meanings today, within and for its community,*
- b. the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners of the element,*
- c. any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element,*
- d. the current modes of transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element.*

*The Committee should receive sufficient information to determine:*

- a. that the element is among the “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith —”;*
- b. “that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize [it] as part of their cultural heritage”;*
- c. that it is being “transmitted from generation to generation, [and] is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history”;*
- d. that it provides communities and groups involved with “a sense of identity and continuity”; and*
- e. that it is not incompatible with “existing international human rights instruments as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development”.*

*Overly technical descriptions should be avoided and submitting States should keep in mind that this section must explain the element to readers who have no prior knowledge or direct experience of it. Nomination files need not address in detail the history of the element, or its origin or antiquity.*

Lace is an openwork textile that is created from one or more threads. It is different from embroidery, which is the decoration of a pre-existing material.

Worldwide, there are two types of handmade lace: bobbin lace and needle lace. The first is the most widespread and is mostly made in Europe, in particular in several regions of France, such as Auvergne, Normandy, Lorraine and Flandres. The second form, needle lace, is rare and the lace that has been developed in the Alençon region is its quintessential variety.

There are only ten or so specialists in the unique craftsmanship of Alençon lace in the world, and most of them work for the National Alençon Lace Workshop.

### – A special technique

Made by hand using only a needle and a single thread, Alençon lace is made up of small elements held together by invisible stitching. The process of making each element comprises the following ten successive key stages:

- 1 – Artistic design: a white ink drawing is done of the final design, then a technical drawing is done in red ink on tracing paper cut to fit the design.
- 2 – Pricking: even perforation of the parchment on the outline of the design.
- 3 – Outline: basic design (framework of the lace) on the pricked parchment.
- 4 – Net: even and transparent stitching behind the decorative areas.
- 5 – Filling stitches: specific parts of the design made by stitches that are spaced to varying degrees in order to create shading.
- 6 – Style: various decorative designs are added to the basic design: snow crystals, combs, Venetian designs, the *O à nez* (a circular pattern), the Holy Spirit, mosaics, etc.

7 – Embroidery: raised work on the outline.

8 – Lifting: the lace is removed from the parchment using a razor blade.

9 – Trimming: fragments of thread are removed from the back of the lace that has been detached from the parchment with meticulous care, using a small pin.

10 – Polishing: the filling stitches are cold-pressed with a lobster claw.

#### – A unique craftsmanship

Until the 20th century, each of these stages in the production process was part of a method of specialization that was created by an inhabitant of Alençon, Marthe La Perrière (1605-1677). This historical division of labour has not had a negative effect on either the transmission or the development of Alençon lace. Today, each Alençon lace-maker knows how to complete all the stages of the process. This knowledge can only be transmitted through a practical apprenticeship. To fully master Alençon needle lace-making requires seven to ten years of training.

This craft is also unique because the lace takes an exceptional length of time to produce. On average, seven hours are needed to make one cm<sup>2</sup> of this precious textile.

Currently, it is the lace-makers of the National Alençon Lace Workshop who ensure that this knowledge is conserved and transmitted. Aside from their historical research, which strengthens their technical skills, the lace-makers are constantly involved in the creative development of their craft.

#### – Historical background

Needlework has existed in Alençon and the surrounding area since the 16th century. The establishment of royal lace factories in France in 1665 encouraged the rapid development of lace-making and several thousand workers were employed in the Alençon area. This political encouragement meant that, very early on, Alençon lace gained a reputation as a prestigious product and was mostly produced for the royal courts of Europe.

Its increasing delicacy and sophistication reached new heights in the second half of the 19th century. Alençon lace was described as “the lace of queens and the queen of lace” during the 1851 Great Exhibition in London. However, its popularity declined sharply with changes in fashions and the emergence of machine lace production. Paradoxically, handmade Alençon lace owes its enduring popularity to the impossibility of reproducing its delicacy and quality with a machine.

#### – Alençon lace lives on

The production of Alençon lace, however limited, was encouraged by several public and private initiatives throughout the 20th century. Such initiatives ensured that the craftsmanship of Alençon lace-making was transmitted. It is now held only by the lace-makers of the National Alençon Lace Workshop, which was created at the initiative of the French President in 1976 and is attached to the General Administrative Unit for the Mobilier National and the Gobelins, Beavais and Savonnerie Factories.

This exceptional longevity is part of the cultural heritage of Alençon, and the town has an important museum collection of several hundred pieces of needle lace that keeps being enriched. The collection of the Fine Art and Lace Museum illustrates the role of Alençon lace over the past 350 years. This museum, which has the legal status of Museum of France, is now a vitally important point of reference.

Lace is a very important part of the identity of Alençon and this is visible throughout the town. Audio-visual productions and protection of the brand “dentelle d’Alençon” (Alençon lace) are among recent achievements in reinforcing the area’s lace-making identity.

The joint commitment of the lace-makers, the General Administrative Unit for the Mobilier National and the town ensures the future of Alençon lace. Inscription on UNESCO’s Representative List of the intangible heritage would be a new and crucial step in increasing recognition of this rare and prestigious craftsmanship and in continuing this unique protection partnership.

## 2. CONTRIBUTION TO ENSURING VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS AND TO ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE (CF. CRITERION R.2)

*The nomination should demonstrate (Criterion R.2) that "Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity".*

*Please explain how the element's inscription on the Representative List will contribute to ensuring visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and will raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of its importance. This section need not address how inscription will bring greater visibility to the element, but how its inscription will contribute to the visibility of intangible cultural heritage more broadly. Explain how inscription will promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, and will promote mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals.*

*Not to exceed 1,000 words.*

Inscription of the craftsmanship of needle lace-making in Alençon on the Representative List will promote:

### - **Respect for cultural diversity:**

A unique craftsmanship that is part of lace-making and textile arts in general.

Alençon needle lace, as it exists today, is the result of experience accumulated by generations of lace-makers and of craftsmanship that has been continually passed down. The learning method relies on a close relationship between the specialized lace-maker and the apprentice and is exclusively based on oral transmission and practical teaching. It is not possible to learn and master this technique through reading written texts, which in essence makes transmission a delicate task. The craftsmanship of Alençon lace therefore sits firmly among other elements of intangible cultural heritage.

From its earliest days, the development of Alençon needle lace-making was strongly encouraged by the political and religious authorities. Although its economic and social importance has declined to the point of disappearance, the transmission of this craftsmanship will continue thanks to early intervention by different local and national institutions. These institutions have acted to safeguard the craftsmanship, for example through the establishment of a dedicated lace-making school, the only one of its kind, and the accumulation of the reference collections that now belong to the museum. As a result, since the beginning of the 20th century, the craftsmanship of Alençon lace has been recognized as a true cultural heritage, in the same way as other lace-making practices, such as those in Croatia or in Lefkara.

### - **Human creativity:**

This heritage is well and truly alive today and is reinforced by all the initiatives led both by the State and Alençon itself. The establishment of the National Alençon Lace Workshop has led to the establishment of an active community of lace-makers who are involved in the loyal transmission of the technique, while at the same time opening it up to contemporary creations. Using their technical skills, the lace-makers analyse and interpret a suggested model before starting a piece, making each piece a unique joint creation. Similarly, the local authority and the museum have since long been conserving examples of evidence of lace production and undertaking awareness-raising educational and promotional work on the craft.

A unique and original cooperation has been implemented between the State, which is the guarantor for the transmission of the craftsmanship within the National Alençon Lace Workshop, and the local community, which houses the Workshop within the municipal museum. This model, which has allowed the craftsmanship of Alençon needle lace-making to remain well alive today, provides an example that may be transposed to other elements of intangible cultural heritage.

### - **Mutual respect between communities, groups and individuals:**

The inscription of the craftsmanship of Alençon lace on the UNESCO Representative List of the intangible cultural heritage will reinforce its place alongside other lace-making practices at the national and international level. It will also encourage the inhabitants of the region to increasingly embrace this element of their identity. Raising awareness of this craft among more people would

be mutually enriching for the communities concerned and would increase recognition of heritage as a part of human development.

Apart from the prestige, inscription would promote recognition by the general public of the complexity of the technique and of the difficulty of mastering their different crafts. It would help identify technical, human and cultural challenges within different crafts in order to create favourable conditions for new perspectives to emerge in a context of sharing.

Openness and dialogue, while respecting the community that holds the craftsmanship, are essential not only to maintain, but also to develop it. Such heritage cannot survive without the capacity to increase the number of its holders and to receive different creative input.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES (CF. CRITERION R.3)**

*Items 3.a. to 3.c. request the elaboration of a coherent set of safeguarding measures as called for in Criterion R.3: "Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element". Such measures should reflect the broadest possible participation of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned, both in their formulation and in their implementation.*

#### **3.a. Current and recent efforts to safeguard the element**

*Please describe the current and recent efforts of the concerned communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals to ensure the viability of the element. Describe efforts of the concerned State(s) Party(ies) to safeguard the element, taking note of external or internal constraints, such as limited resources.*

Efforts to safeguard the element fall under three main categories:

**- Ensuring the durability of the craftsmanship of needle lace-making:**

The National Alençon Lace Workshop was established in 1976 with the aim of preserving the technique of Alençon lace production, which was in danger of disappearing. The role of the lace-makers who work at the Workshop is to maintain, even to rediscover, and to transmit their knowledge. In order to do so, they reproduce designs, carry out research on forgotten techniques and use their skills in a modern context by adapting the designs of contemporary artists.

**- Protection of lace-making heritage:**

Lace-making craftsmanship has existed for almost 350 years and the community has a duty to conserve and protect examples of it. Important collections of needle lace have been created in the Fine Art and Lace Museum. On behalf of its museum, the town of Alençon carries out an ongoing and established policy that deliberately aims at enriching the collection by acquiring different pieces representative of needle lace.

Recent efforts have allowed the museum to begin inventorying and digitizing these reference materials to make it easier to study them from a historical, technical or stylistic perspective. This protection and conservation work complements the work done by the lace-makers themselves, thereby strengthening the relationship between the National Alençon Lace Workshop and the municipal museum.

**- Development, dissemination, promotion:**

In the past several years, the relevant parties have been developing activities to popularize and increase the dissemination of lace-making craftsmanship in order to strengthen local people's relationship with it and emphasize its importance as part of the local identity. These activities have included the organization of biennial exhibitions by the museum; the regular publication of catalogues aimed at the general public; the production of films; guided tours of the collections; demonstrations by lace-makers from the National Alençon Lace Workshop; the creation of a toolkit for schools; the design of urban features inspired by lace (such as motorway services, crossroads and signposts); and also the involvement of cultural bodies such as the National Theatre of Alençon, which organizes events on the theme of lace.

It has been possible to launch some of these activities recently thanks to one-off European and national grants.

### **3.b. Safeguarding measures proposed**

*For the Representative List, the safeguarding measures are those that may help to solidify the element's current viability and to ensure that its viability is not jeopardized in the future, especially as an unintended result of inscription and the resulting visibility and public attention.*

*Identify and describe the various safeguarding measures that are elaborated that may, if implemented, protect and promote the element, and provide brief information concerning, for example, their priority, scope, approaches, timetables, responsible persons or bodies, and costs..*

Some of the activities carried out before now have been experimental, and some have not been developed beyond the initial stages. The following proposed measures aim to further those initial experiments, while being better coordinated and more sustainable in the long term:

- First: **The recruitment of lace-makers** to ensure the future of the craftsmanship

Ensuring the future of a highly technical production within the National Alençon Lace Workshop through maintaining and replenishing the number of lace-makers, as a reduction in their numbers would threaten the very existence of the craftsmanship of lace-making. This will involve the regular training of new apprentices to guarantee the transmission of the craftsmanship.

The State is planning to recruit one or two apprentices between now and 2012; this will cost between €20,000 and €24,000.

- Second: **The regular acquisition of artists' works**

These works will be models for lace production. This acquisition is about using every opportunity to promote this highly technical production as a contemporary art form in order to carry the craftsmanship of lace-making into the future and maintain its appeal using different forms. Between €10,000 and €15,000 will be needed per year to acquire such works.

The State organizes a purchasing committee every year.

- Third: **The establishment of a training plan**

This is related to establishing a training centre, which will increase the number of holders of the craftsmanship of lace-making by attracting both members of the public who are interested in the craft and experts in other, similar techniques. It will be carried out in close collaboration with the lace-makers from the National Alençon Lace Workshop and will encourage people to take up the vocation, develop lace-making as a pastime for enthusiasts and increase awareness-raising activities, in particular in schools. This centre, which will develop a training scheme that covers all stages from introduction to specialization, will have a local, national and international appeal. It can be the driver for using technical and artistic practices to enrich and promote the craftsmanship of lace-making. It will cost €30,000 to €35,000 annually.

Between now and 2013, the town of Alençon will establish a working group that will bring together all stakeholders.

- Fourth: **The digitization and inventory of the collections**

The heritage of lace-making is a key element of knowledge of the techniques and of the development of the craftsmanship. Collections will therefore be prepared, inventories will be made of them and they will be put online as part of the regional database of the museums of the Lower Normandy region and the national database of the Museums of France. This dissemination and awareness-raising tool is one way of limiting the negative effects that inscription on the Representative List may bring about, such as the counterfeiting or trafficking of historic pieces. The cost of this project over the next few years has been estimated at approximately €15,000 per year.

- Fifth: **Museum redevelopment**

In 2009, the local community began redeveloping dedicated exhibition spaces in order to give the public an insight into the craftsmanship of lace-making. This will come with activities and educational resources will be offered that will be aimed at school children in particular. Particular



attention will be given to the development of adapted learning resources that would allow people with sensory disabilities to discover the craftsmanship.

The digitization process of lace-making heritage will lead to a specialized virtual resource that will popularize and disseminate the technique of lace-making using the Internet.

The cost of these new developments within museums (exhibition and conservation spaces) has been initially estimated at €1.5 million (including air-conditioning).

### **3.c. Commitment of communities, groups or individuals concerned**

*The feasibility of safeguarding depends in large part on the aspirations and commitment of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned. This section should provide evidence that the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned have the will and commitment to safeguard the element if conditions are favourable. The best evidence will often be an explanation of their involvement in past and ongoing safeguarding measures and of their participation in the formulation and implementation of future safeguarding measures, rather than simple pledges or affirmations of their support or commitment.*

**The lace-makers of Alençon** have been committed to the conservation, development and transmission of their craftsmanship for the last 40 years. They have been major contributors to the compilation of this dossier and, as part of their ongoing commitment, the lace-makers from the National Alençon Lace Workshop support all of the proposed measures, in particular:

- Transmitting their craftsmanship by training new apprentices.
- Participating in the training of trainers who will teach members of the public and school children.
- Continuing research on ancient needle lace as well as on technical adjustments that can be made for contemporary creations.
- Contributing to scientific and professional meetings.

The town of Alençon, on behalf of its citizens and in close association with the lace-makers, is committed to:

- Strengthening the presence of the National Alençon Lace Workshop in the town.
- Continuing to acquire reference collections of lace, including contemporary creations, and ensuring that those collections are well conserved and available for study.
- Renovating the permanent exhibition space for lace-making craftsmanship and heritage.
- Setting up events to promote the craftsmanship among the local inhabitants – who are its natural ambassadors – and visitors, and make them known internationally.
- Supporting the development of a training centre for both members of the public who are interested in the craft and professionals in other techniques.
- Increasing educational initiatives young people to encourage interest in the vocation.
- Creating a website to promote and disseminate the craftsmanship of needle lace-making.
- Facilitating professional and scientific meetings.

The process of working together and the knowledge acquired during that process will be used to formalize the cooperation that has been demonstrated by the submission of this candidature: the actors will form a permanent coordination group for activities that support needle lace-making heritage.

### **3.d. Commitment of State(s) Party(ies)**

*The feasibility of safeguarding also depends on the support and cooperation of the concerned State(s) Party(ies). This section should provide evidence that the State Party concerned has the commitment to support the safeguarding effort by creating favourable conditions for its implementation and should describe how the State Party has previously and will in the future demonstrate such commitment. Declarations or pledges of support are less informative than explanations and demonstrations.*

France, the State party, will continue its commitment to the craftsmanship of needle lace-making in Alençon, in particular through the General Administrative Unit for the Mobilier National and the Gobelins, Beavais and Savonnerie Factories, which oversees the National Alençon Lace Workshop, by:

- Maintaining the numbers of lace-makers within the National Alençon Lace Workshop, in particular through the regular recruitment of new apprentices.
- Supporting lace-making by commissioning pieces.
- Facilitating the union of contemporary artistry and lace-making craftsmanship.
- Supporting the collection of examples of lace through financial aid to museums.

## **4. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT IN THE NOMINATION PROCESS (CF. CRITERION R.4)**

*This section asks the submitting State Party to establish that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.4: 'The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.*

### **4.a. Participation of communities, groups and individuals in the nomination process**

*Describe how and in what ways the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated actively in the nomination process at all stages, as required by Criterion R.4. States Parties are further encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of other concerned parties, including where appropriate local and regional governments, neighbouring communities, NGOs, research institutes, centres of expertise and other interested parties. The participation of communities in the practice and transmission of the element should be addressed in point 1 above, and their participation in safeguarding should be addressed in point 3; here the submitting State should describe the widest possible participation of communities in the nomination process.*

On behalf of and with the lace-making community, the partners, who are today submitting the candidature of the craftsmanship of lace-making for consideration by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage, remain aware of and committed to opportunities to promote recognition and dissemination of the craft and its exceptional technique.

They worked together, from 2002 to 2007, as part of the European EQUAL Initiative on safeguarding traditional knowledge, on a project called "New perspectives on Alençon's lace-making heritage to strengthen the socio-cultural fabric of the town". The project and its partners helped to promote the unique nature and the high quality of Alençon lace through activities that trained unemployed people in the skills required to practice lace-making in order to help them re-enter the job market.

The project opened up new possibilities for viewing and interpreting Alençon needle lace. In particular, roundabouts were designed that were inspired by this craftsmanship. They provided an opportunity to inscribe lace-making in its native land. A film was also made to show how lace is made today in the National Alençon Lace Workshop. The film is shown regularly at the Fine Art and Lace Museum.

The project's positive results encouraged the partners to step up efforts to safeguard and promote Alençon needle lace-making. A letter was sent to the Director-General of UNESCO on 20 November 2006 asking for further information on the procedure for inscription of Alençon

needle lace as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity recognized by UNESCO.

Following the entry into force of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, no more Proclamations of masterpieces will be made, but the partners remain aware of developments in the procedures and that action can be taken under articles 16 and 17 of the Convention.

A letter from the ministry responsible for culture (the Directorate of Architecture and Heritage) on the procedure for inscription of intangible heritage on the UNESCO Representative List encouraged the partners to make a joint submission of the candidature of the craftsmanship of needle lace-making in Alençon.

Their intention to do so was announced on 27 June 2008, at the inauguration of the exhibition "Alençon lace... made with only a needle!", shown at the Fine Art and Lace Museum thanks to the strong involvement of the lace-makers of the National Alençon Lace Workshop.

After an initial meeting between technicians from the Ministry of Culture and the lace-makers and representatives from the town, a steering committee was created. On 22 January 2009, this steering committee adopted its working methods, including the creation of a technical committee responsible for drafting and collecting of the essential elements of the candidature dossier. The lace-makers and, in particular, the head of the National Alençon Lace Workshop played an active part in the work of these committees:

The technical committee met on:

- 20 February 2009: discussions on the issues at stake between the lace-making community, other partners and the Ministry of Culture.
- 7 and 29 April, 6 and 29 May and 10 July 2009: compiling the dossier.

Following six meetings between themselves at the Workshop, the lace-makers all signed a letter on 11 May 2009 that attested to their wish to see their craftsmanship inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the intangible cultural heritage.

The steering committee met again on 14 May 2009 to consider the draft dossier and identify additional information or amendments that were required.

The enthusiasm and shared will of the partners to establish, by different means, the identity of the craftsmanship of Alençon needle lace-making remains strong and consistent and are demonstrated by the commitment of the different partners involved.

The municipal council of Alençon confirmed its support on 22 June 2009.

#### **4.b. Free, prior and informed consent to the nomination**

*The free, prior and informed consent to the nomination of the element from the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent in preference to standard or uniform declarations..*

*Please attach supporting evidence demonstrating such consent and indicate below what evidence you are providing and what form it takes.*

Attached documents:

- Letter from the lace-makers dated 11 May 2009.
- Decision of the town of Alençon dated 22 June 2009.
- Letter from the Mobilier National.

#### 4.c. Respect for customary practices governing access

*Access to certain specific aspects of intangible cultural heritage is sometimes restricted by customary practices governing, for example, its transmission or performance or maintaining the secrecy of certain knowledge. Please indicate if such practices exist and, if they do, demonstrate that inscription of the element and implementation of the safeguarding measures would fully respect such customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage (cf. Article 13 of the Convention). Describe any specific measures that might need to be taken to ensure such respect.*

There are no customary practices within the community that govern access to the craftsmanship of needle lace-making in Alençon. Access to the knowledge and practice of Alençon lace-making is open to everyone. Inscription on the UNESCO Representative List does not raise any legal or customary issues.

#### 5. INCLUSION OF THE ELEMENT IN AN INVENTORY (CF. CRITERION R.5)

*This section is where the State Party establishes that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.5: “The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) as defined in Articles 11 and 12”.*

*Identify the inventory in which the element has been included and the office, agency, organization or body responsible for maintaining that inventory. Demonstrate that the inventory has been drawn up in conformity with Articles 11 and 12, in particular Article 11(b) that stipulates that intangible cultural heritage shall be identified and defined “with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations” and Article 12 requiring that inventories be regularly updated.*

*The nominated element's inclusion in an inventory should not in any way imply or require that the inventory(ies) should have been completed prior to nomination. Rather, a submitting State Party may be in the process of completing or updating one or more inventories, but has already duly included the nominated element on an inventory-in-progress.*

In France, the “Ethnology Mission” of the Ministry of Culture (Directorate of Architecture and Heritage/ Division of Archaeology, Ethnology, Inventories and Information Systems) is responsible for coordinating the inventories, in collaboration with other directorates whose work comes under the scope of the Convention. There are currently two inventories in progress. The first, launched in August 2007, has taken the form of an “inventory of inventories”, established according to a documentary principle of inventorying existing inventories, published works and completed databases, whether or not available on the Internet.. The results of this work are available on the website of the Ministry of Culture, under “documentation thématique/ethnologie/inventaire des inventaires du patrimoine culturel immatériel”: [http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno\\_spci/invent\\_invent.htm](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno_spci/invent_invent.htm)

The second inventory aims to catalogue living practices, alongside and with the support of communities, groups and individuals. It was started in March 2008, and the first results were published in the last quarter of 2009. Members of the relevant communities were invited to fill out forms (see below). This form was trialled during 2008 and underwent some minor amendments. The form provided below was drafted in 2009. The aim of this inventory, besides meeting the requirements of the Convention, is to be a learning tool that is available to everyone. For that reason, it has been available on the website of the Ministry of Culture since the end of 2009. As well as the forms, the inventory includes photographs and audio extracts relating to the practices it contains.

The element “the craftsmanship of needle lace-making in Alençon” is included in the inventory of intangible cultural heritage launched by the Ministry of Culture (Directorate of Architecture and Heritage). The survey was done during meetings with the lace-makers, who provided all the information necessary to understand their craft. This information is also available at [http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno\\_spci/invent\\_invent.htm](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dp/ethno_spci/invent_invent.htm)

## Inventory form

### Overview

Name

Basic details

Person(s) interviewed

Location (region, department, municipality)

Category

#### (A) Details and location

(1) Name and role and/or position of the person(s) interviewed

(2) Details of the person(s) interviewed

Address:

Town:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email address:

Website:

(3) Details of the place of work

Area:

Address:

Town:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email address:

Website:

#### (B) Description

(1) Description

(2) Place of work

Description of locations and facilities:

Type of place:

(3) Apprenticeship

Type of apprenticeship:

Place of apprenticeship:

Length of apprenticeship:

Description of apprenticeship:

(4) Transmission

Description of transmission:

Place of transmission:

#### (C) History

(1) General history

(2) Individual history of the enterprise, person or body, type of expression or cultural space being examined

(3) Updating the technique, place or craftsmanship

#### (D) Cultural interest and development

(1) Methods of development

Development actions:

Dissemination:

Activities related to tourism:

(2) Methods of public recognition (local, national and international levels):

(3) Documentation/bibliographical details/existing inventories:

- (E) Safeguarding measures
- (F) Information techniques

Date and place(s) of interview  
Date of inventory form  
Name of interviewer(s)  
Name of the person who drafted the form  
Audio resources  
Video resources  
Photographs  
Comments

## DOCUMENTATION

### a. Required and supplementary documentation

- Dix photos :
  - 1 – Les dentellières d'Alençon : la communauté
  - 2 – Les dentellières à l'ouvrage
  - 3 – Une technique d'exception : réalisation d'une maille de réseau, 4<sup>ème</sup> étape
  - 4 – Une technique d'exception : réalisation d'un rempli, 5<sup>ème</sup> étape
  - 5 – Une technique d'exception : réalisation d'un picot, d'un élément d'ornementation, 6<sup>ème</sup> étape
  - 6 – Nécessaire de dentellière d'Alençon
  - 7 – Une création contemporaine : dessin de Corinne Santou, 2009
  - 8 – Un volant moderne (1998-2006) : technique de l'assemblage
  - 9 – Un volant ancien (XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle) : volant aux iris
  - 10 – Un volant ancien (XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle) : grand volant aux glycines
- Vidéo  
Le Point d'Alençon, documentaire, réalisation : Dino Gambini, production : ACCAAN
- Livres  
DESPIERRES Gerasime, Histoire du Point d'Alençon, Alençon, 1886, Réédition en 1988  
MONTUPET Janine, La dentellière d'Alençon, Roman, Paris, éd. Robert Laffont, 1984, Réédition en 2004  
Catalogue d'exposition, La dentelle d'Alençon... un Point c'est tout !, Alençon, musée des Beaux-arts et de la Dentelle, 2008

### b. Cession of rights including registry of items

Required cession of rights provided.

### c. List of additional resources

#### **Ouvrages de référence :**

*BOULARD Félix*, La dentelle d'Alençon, ses origines, ses développements techniques et industriels, artistiques et historiques, *Alençon, imp. Alençonnaise, 1924.*

*DELESQUE-DEPALLE Brigitte*, La dentelle à l'aiguille, *Nonette, éditions Créer, 1994.*

*DESPIERRES Gerasime*, Histoire du Point d'Alençon, *Alençon, 1886. Réédition par l'association La Dentelle au Point d'Alençon, Alençon, 1988.*

*MILLION Gérard*, La dentelle d'Alençon (XVII<sup>e</sup>-XX<sup>e</sup> siècles) *Recueil de textes, Service éducatif des Archives Départementales de l'Orne, Alençon, éditions Conseil général de l'Orne, 2001.*

La dentelle d'Alençon... un Point c'est tout ! *Catalogue d'exposition, Alençon, musée des Beaux-arts et de la Dentelle, 2008.*

#### **Articles :**

*BOULARD Félix*, « La dentelle et Marguerite d'Angoulême », *bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne, Alençon, 1918.*

*BOULARD Félix*, « Nouvelles méthodes applicables à l'industrie dentellière alençonnaise », *bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne, Alençon, 1925.*

*DARGAUD Marius*, « La dentelle d'Alençon à la cour de Russie », *Le mois à Caen et en Basse-Normandie, avril 1967.*

*DUVAL Louis*, « Le Point d'Alençon avant Colbert », *bulletin de la Société historique et*

archéologique de l'Orne, Alençon, 1883.

DUVAL Louis, « Le Point d'Alençon après Colbert », *bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne, Alençon, 1883.*

LE VAVASSEUR Gustave, « Origine du Point d'Alençon », *bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne, Alençon.*

ODOLANT-DESNOS Joseph, «De la fabrication du Point d'Alençon », *Journal d'Alençon, 10 juillet 1842.*

PESSEY-LUX Aude et RAUDE Solène, « Le Point d'Alençon : techniques et problèmes historiques », *actes du colloque Dentelles 2001, Le Puy-en-Velay, 2004.*

**Roman :**

MONTUPET Janine, *La dentellière d'Alençon, Paris, éditions Robert Laffont, 1984. Réédité en 2004.*

**Ouvrages généraux**

BRUGGEMAN Martine, *L'Europe de la Dentelle, Bruges, éditions Stichting, Kunstbock, 1997.*

BURY-PALISSER Fanny, *Histoire de la Dentelle, Paris, éditions Firmin Didot, 1892.*

KRAATZ Anne, *Modes en dentelles XVIè-XXè siècles, catalogue d'exposition, éditions du musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle de Calais, 1984.*

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**C. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)**

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Centre régional de culture ethnologique et technique de Basse-Normandie : 161 rue Basse 14000 CAEN, téléphone : 02 31 53 15 45 ; courriel : pierre.schmit@crecet.org



**SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY**

Name: Catherine Colonna

Title: Ambassadrice, Déléguée permanente de la France auprès de l'UNESCO

Date: 28 August 2009

Signature: <signed>