

ENGLISH

MESSAGE FROM LUIZ HUMBERTO MARCOS, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE
NATIONAL MUSEUM DA IMPRENSA, AND OF PORTOCARTOON.
NOVEMBER 18, 2023

Dear directors/editors/friends

For information and eventual journalistic use, I am sending an Open Letter to the President of the Municipal Chamber of Porto (CMP) about the threats faced by the National Press Museum.

This letter was sent to all the parties that make up the municipal executive.

In fact, it is a big risk for the Museum.

Greetings from

Luis Humberto

.....

Your Excellencies

I send in ANNEX an open letter to the mayor of Porto, considering the need to stop the risk of possible destruction of the National Press Museum, located in the parish of Campanhã, Freixo.

This Letter is sent to all the parties that make up the Municipal Executive, so that their representatives have real knowledge of the facts.

There is a threat to the unique heritage contained and represented by the Museum, inaugurated in 1997 by President Jorge Sampaio.

Closed in August 2022 under the pretext of lack of security (due to the failure of some fire detectors), the Museum remains 'temporarily closed' 15 months later.

Until June 2022, when the presidency of the Municipal Chamber of Porto assumed the direction of the destinies of the AMI-Associação Museu da Imprensa, the MUSEU had 25 years of intense national and international activity behind it, an example of this is the 750 exhibitions, the PortoCartoon - World Festival (23 editions), Manuel António Pina Love Texts Contest (21 editions), Gutenberg Country Project, creation of a unique collection composed of dozens of typographic relics, etc.

This position is taken because it seems to me that the majority of the members of the Executive do not have accurate information about the Museum, as can be seen from the unanimous approval of a decision of July 24. I also suggest that you visit the facilities to understand what has happened since June 2022.

The National Press Museum is a unique cultural asset and belongs to the city of Porto.

Located in an area that has always sparked "real estate gluttony", the city's second national museum is currently under threat.

In fact, I fear that a path is being paved to justify the loss of a cultural institution that cost so much effort to establish in Porto.

With cordial greetings,

Luis Humberto Marcos
(former director of the Museum)

>>> Open letter to the President of
The Porto City Council in defense
from the National Museum of the Press<<<

Mr. president,

Only recently did I learn the justification for the seizure of power by the
Municipal Chamber of Porto CMP of the Press Museum Association (AMI), in June
2022.

And I was amazed.

The official document (resignation record of the
his representative as President of the Board of Directors, Eng. Nuno Lemos,
24.7.23) that such a decision resulted from the fact that "there was no
associative activity that was at the level required for the mission of the
IAM" (sic).

And, we read, there was unanimity from the Executive in this regard.

Now, given the partiality in reality, I fear that it is being
preparing the silent destruction of the National Press Museum.

Let's go in parts.

1. CMP helped found AMI in 1989, when Fernando Cabral was at the helm
in front of the municipality. In fact, 34 years ago the Association
Museum of the Press (AMI), which manages the National Museum of the Press
(MNI).

After long research work throughout the country and the preservation of
many typographic relics, the museum was inaugurated (1997) by the president
Jorge Sampaio as Portugal's first 'living museum'.

Recognized as a Public Service institution (Cavaco Silva government),
AMI also obtained the status of "relevant institution for the
scientific and technological development of the country" and express interest
Cultural. With a small team of technicians, multiple donations and
As a volunteer, the museum grew and became an institution.
strong cultural, in national and international terms.

2. In 25 years, the Museo Nacional da Imprensa has held hundreds of exhibitions (750)
in Portugal and abroad. And it became a 'radiating point of culture' from Porto, for the
entire national territory (from Miño and Trás-os-Montes to the Algarve and autonomous
communities). With documentary exhibitions and, above all, with graphic humor, he
established a unique dynamic that was appreciated by
several ministers and presidents of the Assembly and the Republic who visited the
Museum over the years.

3. In addition to the unique collection, the Museum received special attention from the
creation of the PortoCartoon-World Festival (1998/9), an event that quickly

It became one of the three main emblems of graphic humor in the world. That is why Porto welcomed great artists every year, namely Georges Wolinski (killed at Charlie Hebdo in January 2015), who He chaired the PortoCartoon jury from 2004 to 2014. With Wolinski, the Casa do Cartunista, the only space in the world dedicated to 'artistic residencies' in the mood'.

Every year, Porto becomes the capital of humor and satire cartoons, with cartoon festivals and activities in the streets of PortoCartoon.

With this potential, Porto was proclaimed, in several languages, Capital (International) of Cartoon, in a special ceremony that brought together several international artists, in addition to Wolinski, around the sculpture of Siza Vieira, in Avenida dos Aliados. This act marked the beginning of a roadmap to Humor, in 2008. In an unprecedented way at an international level, they left spreading, year after year, humorous sculptures throughout the city. In other words, we sought to contribute to brightening the atmosphere in the gray city. Paulo Cunha y Silva, the late councilor of culture, he liked that, he liked being caricatured and he even followed PortoCartoon. One of the sculptures, on Rua Sá da Bandeira, was inaugurated by him.

In fact, it was Paulo Cunha e Silva who 'enthroned' Wolinski as a partner honorary award from Porto-Capital do Cartoon, in 2014. Before, Wolinski He pointed to the MNI as an example to follow in France. spoke about him Minister of Culture and said it publicly.

4. Parallel to its exhibition activity, the Museum was creating international links through protocols, with European and Latin American institutions. and also created several virtual museums/galleries (24), in line with the uniqueness of its inauguration: Jorge Sampaio inaugurated the 1st Virtual Museum of World Press.

5. Progress was made in this area in 2001 with the 'Gutenberg Country' project, which he created press centers/museums in different cities. The rich collection associated with the will of several mayors allows the creation of a unique "museum network" that values the existing journalistic heritage in Portugal. The work of the Museum has rescued a lot of history and machinery, relics, whose Conservation was only possible thanks to the large existing warehouse space. A unique property was created, today valued at more than three million euros.

6. It has been public for a long time that the Museum, in installation into a 'riverside pearl', and has provoked the gluttony of many suitors. Will it be because Is this the project that is being planned?

As is known, the Museum facilities are property of the Associação Museu da Print. They 'belong' to him for another 40 years, according to the deed public signed in 1994 with President Fernando Gomes, in the presence of the then minister Luís Marques Mendes. It was about building a museum about the ruins of the old briquette factory, acquired by the municipality. From the ruins A 'utopian project' was born in which few believed. And AMI was able to achieve its mission, despite many obstacles. Who can contradict this truth?

7. The plan that Mr. President will surely stop, as defender of the city. and in memory of Paulo Cunha e Silva - may be linked to the closure “temporary” museum, decided in August 2022, with a pretext singular: failure of some fire detectors!

This closure was assumed by the new AMI management proposed by the presidency of the Municipal Chamber of Porto (CMP), as a founding partner.

15 months have passed and there still hasn't been time... to fix what was said: detectors!!!

No one will believe in other reasons, knowing the urgency of situation. Closed, the museum does not fulfill its mission and is suffocating financially and its assets are degraded.

8. When the CMP presidency took control of the AMI/Museu, the institution continued in its line of more than 30 years of work: it had several exhibitions and projects in development, continued open 365 days and had guaranteed the financial resources necessary for its regular operation, specifically with the contracting of a restaurant with wide screen. The project of this restaurant went through all the stages. techniques and was “retained at the presidential table.” On your desk. Same as him Process presented in Ágora for the creation of PortoCartoon. Everything was peace and there were conditions for institutional life. progressively relieved...

9. With the CMP assuming the presidency of AMI (June 2022), the The results are clear: the museum is closed, without electricity or telephone, and with technicians left without knowing what to do; XXIII PortoCartoon suspended; Also suspended is the XXI Manuel António Pina Love Text Contest; Project Gutenberg Country stopped; technical maintenance of machines suspended, etc. We have a golden service record, ideal for cartoonists who have not yet received adequate information about the suspension by PortoCartoon.

10. After all, what "mission level" was not fulfilled in June 2022 and became satisfied during the following 15 months, under the main responsibility of the presidency of the Municipal Chamber of Porto?

Porto, 18.11.2023

Luis Humberto Marcos

(director of the National Press Museum until May 2022)