

Please accept my emotions generated by the joy of being in such honourable company and even more so, here at the Batalha Monastery, a place that is a grandiose landmark from a cultural and historical perspective, at world level, being part of the UNESCO Heritage and with unique resonances in the fibre of the Portuguese people.

It is a privilege for us to have partners, distinguished personalities of Romanian and Portuguese culture like Mrs Florentina Voichi and Mr Joaquim Ruivo.

Regarding the artist Florentina Voichi you can find all the information on the exhibition flyer, in Portuguese and English. I have to mention that Florentina Voichi is one of the most important and valuable artists in Romania. The ICR Lisbon team appreciates her enormously, not only from the point of view of her wonderful work, which you will see for yourself today, but also on a human level we express this appreciation and we are very happy that we had the opportunity to collaborate with you last year at our institute's gallery in Lisbon, and that this year we managed to bring her to Batalha. As a brief aside, we also have these feelings for the sculptor Mircea Roman who also honoured us with his presence and helped us with this opening.

Dr. Joaquim Ruivo, our host, is holder of the title *Amicus Romaniae* in 2018, decorated with the order "Meritul Cultural" in the rank of Knight, conferred by the President of Romania, as director of the Batalha Monastery Museum complex, has intensively promoted Romanian culture. We recall some of the most important collaborations between the Romanian Embassy in the Portuguese Republic, ICR Lisbon and Batalha Monastery: the concert of the chamber music group Iulia, Ștefan & Marin Cazacu String Trio, within the program "Great Romanian artists in the great cathedrals of Portugal", dedicated to the Centenary of the Great Union, the exhibition "Sacrifice" by the sculptor Mircea Roman in the museum complex of the monastery; the conference "The Crown and Modern Romania", held by His Royal Highness Prince Radu of Romania, on the occasion of which was also presented the exhibition "Noble and Royal Romania" by the photographer José Luis Jorge; the exhibition "The Romanian Principalities during the construction of Batalha Monastery", realized in partnership with the National Museum of Romanian History.

Please accept our thanks for the partnership and friendship with which you and the entire team of the institution you represent, honour us.

I would also like to give special thanks to Mrs Florentina Voichi and the team of the ICR Lisbon.