

Zagreb Cathedral Treasury's exceptional holdings have been collected since the Zagreb Diocese was established in 1094. The oldest items, such as the well-known ivory plenarium and the illuminated *Evangeliarium*, originated in the 11th century. Along with the renowned collection of church precious metal artefacts (reliquaries, chalices, ciboria, monstrances, pastorals), the Treasury also holds collections of liturgical books and musical notations and instruments, medals, devotional objects, and ex-votos, as well as a numismatic collection. The Treasury also holds the oldest documents and illuminated manuscripts that are now kept at the Metropolitan Library and the Archives of the Archdiocese of Zagreb. A separate collection contains archival documents and architectural documentation of Bollé's renovation of the Zagreb Cathedral.

Collection of liturgical vestments is exceptionally rich, consisting of almost a thousand items and fragments of historical textiles. Bell-shaped chasuble, tailored from the mantle of Saint Ladislaus, the King of Hungary and Croatia (11th century) and founder of the Diocese of Zagreb, is one of the most prominent exhibits of the Treasury. Furthermore, the humeral of Blessed Augustin Kažotić (around year 1300), the mitre of Bishop Wolfgang Gyulay, and the *Holy Sepulchre* (1659) from the embroidery workshop of Bishop Petar are accentuated by the quality of its embroidery. A group of tapestries with allegorical depictions of months of the year, a gift from the Empress Maria Theresa to Bishop Franjo Thauszy, is an exceptional ensemble rarely exhibited since the 1880 earthquake.

In the mid-19th century, canon curator Juraj Križanić (1772 – 1885) established on Kaptol's orders a museum in a space above the Cathedral sacristy, where the most valuable artefacts from the Treasury went on display. By opening it to the public, precious objects and relics that had been stored for centuries became accessible.

Due to delicate materials they were made from, objects from the collection of historical textiles are particularly fragile and rarely exhibited. Continuing cooperation between the Croatian Conservation Institute and the Archdiocese of Zagreb on the preservation of the artistic heritage of the Zagreb Cathedral has been focused on the protection of historic textiles – from preventive conservation and proper storage of objects to challenging restoration of most-at-risk items.

Exhibition *Golden Threads. Conserved Textiles from the Zagreb Cathedral Treasury* presents some of these restored objects and their restoration processes.

Conservation of historical textiles from the Treasury began in 2005 at the Department for Textiles, Paper, and Leather. The project started with the conservation of a 14th-century bishop's mitre, which was refurbished in 1549 for the inauguration of the Bishop of Zagreb Wolfgang Gyulay. During that time, the opulent mitre was decorated with gold plates and reliefs depicting the Crucifixion, Annunciation, saints, and the symbols of the Four Evangelists. It was also adorned with precious stones and pearls. The conservation was induced by the exhibition *Sigismundus Rex et Imperator* held in Budapest in 2006.

After reviewing and analysing the state of preservation of the collection, the project was continued with the conservation of severely damaged laces from the 17th and early 18th century. The oldest lace decorated the lower part of a luxurious bishop's alb and was produced in the famous Lepoglava workshop. Its history is visible from the five-part bishop's coat-of-arms with year 1687 and the heraldic insignia of the Bishop of Zagreb Martin Borković (1667 – 1687), as well as his successor, Bishop Aleksandar Ignacije Mikulić (1688 – 1694). Lace bands frame the gold embroidery on a fine linen cloth. The conservation was preceded by a careful analysis of damage and identification of materials. Particular attention was given to cleaning and straightening of fragile threads, as well as reconstruction of the missing parts and consolidation of weakened threads of gold embroidery and lace. A precious Flemish lace from 1720 was also conserved, as well as the altar cloth from 1727, a gift to the Bishop of Zagreb Juraj Branjug (1723 – 1748).

Since 2013, an assortment of liturgical vestments, that belonged to Bishops of Zagreb, was restored. Four dalmatics of Aleksandar Ignacije Mikulić were probably made in the Zagreb embroidery workshop between 1688 and 1694. They are decorated with embossed gold and silver embroidery with motifs of leaf wreaths and flowers, and gilded strasses on an ivory silk satin. Representations of the Four Evangelists in central cartouches on the back sides of dalmatics are embroidered with silk, gold, and silver threads by using a sophisticated technique of needle-painting (*acupictura*). The most severe damage was to the silk satin, rendering visible the rough interlining linen fabric. Gold and silver embroidery exhibited less damage, while strasses were mostly missing. After the technological and laboratory analysis of materials, dalmatics were cleaned, followed by reconstruction of missing parts and conservation of the embroidery.

The chasuble of Bishop Stjepan Selisčević (1694 – 1703) was produced in an accomplished embroidery workshop from the Habsburg Monarchy. Bishop's coat-of-arms was embroi-

dered near the bottom of the back side of the chasuble. Embossed gold and silver embroidery cover the surface of an ivory silk satin, its weight causing significant damage to the main fabric. After a detailed graphical documentation of the condition of materials and their laboratory analysis, the lining was separated and cleaned, and previous inappropriate past interventions were removed from the original fabric. The chasuble was then lined with silk satin in the matching colour and embroidery was consolidated with silk threads that also filled damaged areas of the main fabric.

In 1710, a group of tapestries with allegorical depictions of months of the year from the Zagreb Cathedral Treasury was created in the workshop of Charles Mité, a court weaver to the Dukes of Lotharingia in Nancy. Tapestry cartoons with central motifs of architectural perspectives are attributed to the Bologna architect, painter and scenographer Francesco Galli Bibiena (1659–1739) who, after serving at the Viennese Court, accepted an invitation by Leopold I, Duke of Lotharingia.

Conservation of the tapestry series began in 2014 with analysis of its state of preservation and conditions for storing and exhibiting. Tapestry *July – August* was restored from 2015 to 2017, while in 2017 work commenced on the tapestry *March – April*. Tapestries had a weakened weaving structure and worn-down weft yarn that was especially pronounced in bright parts of the surface. Multiple folds were created because of the uneven mechanical strain, while numerous past stitching and patching interventions also impaired the original weaving. Work on both tapestries began with a detailed recording of all types of damage and their graphic representation. Laboratory and technological analysis of materials were conducted, and appropriate methods, procedures, and materials were chosen based on those results. Due to the large size of the tapestries, it was necessary to build a special working construction.

Tapestry *July – August* was dry cleaned and partially wet cleaned and was lined with a new fabric. The most demanding and the longest procedure was the mending of the weaving using multi coloured cotton and silk threads. The tapestry was returned to the Archbishop's Palace in Zagreb and mounted on a specially designed frame that provides a unison tension and weight distribution of the weaving.





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GOLDEN THREADS



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