

## MODIFICATION OF AN EXHIBITION MANNEQUIN FOR THE MUSEUM REPRESENTATION OF PALO GOZZE MAN'S SUIT (DUBROVNIK, CROATIA)

For optimum and lasting preservation of textile artworks that simultaneously assures visual and aesthetic appeal, it is extremely important to present them within the context of the rules established in the textile conservation discipline.

In our case, the exhibition mannequin that was made at the end of the 20th century by academy trained sculptor Zvonimir Lončarić had in such a short period of time already caused such obvious damage to the unique Rococo ceremonial suit of a French workshop (Paris, around 1790), once belonging Palo Gozze or Gučetić, a nobleman from a very well known Dubrovnik patrician family.

Taking into account all the adverse circumstances to which the suit had been exposed (the direct contact of the artwork with metal and wooden elements and coarse linen canvas) /1, 2/, an exacerbating circumstance was manifested in the instability of the exhibition mannequin and its inappropriate dimensions (considerably larger than the dimensions of the actual artwork, with the head and the hands being disproportionately large and the legs too short). The necessary alterations to the exhibition mannequin were carried out in the Croatian Conservation Institute Textile Department, in conjunction with the maximum of respect for and retention of the original vision of the artist, as well as authorisation from the owner, the Rector's Palace in Dubrovnik.

This was achieved by partial or total removal of the unsuitable elements, their replacement with compatible materials, imparting stability to the mannequin and a stylised simulation of the missing shirt (a jabots and cuffs) and cravat /13, 14, 15/.

Styrodur constructive layers were partially removed to produce dimensions about two readymade clothing sizes smaller than the artwork dimensions, the head was reduced, the neck shortened, and the wooden layers of the torso and legs were radically reduced /3, 4/.

The wooden laths used for arms were removed entirely, together with the heavy wooden hands, all the metal parts and the coarse linen, and they were replaced with compatible materials used for the making of soft, flexible arms, as well as light and easily removable hands (cotton, silk, polyester wadding, acid free museum cardboard, Reemay, cotton gloves, Velcro and tulle) /11, 12/.

Appropriate additions to the mannequin were performed with layers of polyester wadding at strategic spots and with a final layer of tautened jersey, thus achieving the necessary upper layer smoothness and tautness /7, 8, 9, 10/.

Stability was imparted to the mannequin by fixing the upper part of the mannequin and the legs in the knees area as well as by bringing them closer together /5, 6/.

Since this lovely suit was missing a shirt and a cravat, for the purpose of showing it to effect, a stylised simulation of a jabots, cuffs and a cravat were carried out with fine elastic tulle, silk and a diagonal edging cotton tape /9, 10/.