

THE CROATIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE (Hrvatski restauratorski zavod) is an independent (public) national institution for the conservation and restoration activity within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia.

The assignments of the Institute comprise the conservation and restoration of movable and immovable cultural properties, and the development of the activity of restoration as a whole. In addition to its actual conservation-restoration operations, the Institute organises and carries out conservation-restoration research, documents monuments and works, organises seminars and conferences, promotes international collaboration, and takes part in the education and further training of conservators-restorers. In addition, the Institute directly collaborates with conservators of the Ministry of Culture and with private restoration workshops.

Alongside the Director, who is appointed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia at the recommendation of the Minister of Culture, the Institute is governed by an Administrative Council appointed by the Minister.

The Institute is mostly funded directly out of the national budget.

The Institute has been in operation since 1997, when pursuant to a decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the work of several conservation-restoration institutions and workshops, the first of which was founded in 1948, were brought together into a single body.

Some three hundred employees are encompassed by the Institute's organisational network, divided according to kinds of objects or materials as well territorially according to the Croatian regions. They are charged with the accomplishment of the programme assignments of the Institute, the objects of which range from the immovable cultural properties of the architectural heritage, wall paintings, mosaics, sculpting in stone and stucco work to works of art and other moveable cultural properties including paintings, wooden polychrome sculptures, archaeological finds, furniture, items of paper, textile, leather, metal and other objects of cultural, historical and technical significance.

We provide at least something of an insight into our conservation-restoration works with a presentation of four of our important projects.



... del Navegar Pitoresco

The programme "The Conservation and Restoration of Painting Works of the 17th and 18th century in Istria" was devised and accomplished within the framework of the regular activities of the Croatian Conservation Institute in Zagreb, in collaboration with the Directorate for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia. The programme is divided into two parallel segments. The first comprises the registration of the condition of preservation of the overall painting heritage of the region, preventive conservation and conservation works that are carried out *in situ*. The most highly endangered works of art are then directed to integral conservation and restoration operations, accompanied with archival and art history investigations, and interpretation of the painting techniques of these masters. In the 1995-2002 period, more than 120 individual works were covered by the primary conservation programme, and conservation and restoration operations were carried out on 37 paintings, among which the most important are works of Venetian painters or foreign masters who were at work in Venice presented in the exhibition "... del Navegar Pitoresco. Works of Venetian Painters of the 17th century in Istria conserved-restored in the Croatian Conservation Institute". The exhibition was held in 2003 in the Local Museum in Rovinj.



The Peristyle

The Peristyle is the central square of the monumental residence of the abdicated Roman Emperor Diocletian, around which today's city of Split formed and grew. Diocletian's palace, the construction of which lasted from 295 to 305, is today inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Croatian Conservation Institute started out conservation and restoration operations on the Peristyle in May 2004; the first phase of the operations, to the north east corner (about a quarter of the overall works anticipated) was completed in October 2005. Repair and conservation operations to this showpiece building were preceded by many years of investigation and documentation of the existing state of affairs. Within the operations carried out, the traces of earlier interventions were removed, biological and inorganic deposits and dirt were removed, some minor reconstruction operations were executed, and the stone was consolidated and protected against further dilapidation. In the years to come, it is planned to complete the works that have been started.



The Crucifix of Rab

This wooden crucifix with the image of the Weeping Christ from Holy Cross Chapel in the southern apse of the Romanesque Cathedral of the Assumption in Rab has been dated according to historical documents to the second half of the 16th century. Active woodworm and microclimatic conditions led to fracturing of the structural parts; in addition, the crucifix was severely damaged when it fell to the floor of the chapel a few years ago. During integrated conservation and restoration operations carried out in the Croatian Conservation Institute in Zagreb during 2005, the crucifix was consolidated and recomposed. With the removal of the dark brown coatings of the 19th century which had covered the original paint layer, it was possible to discern a first-rate work of sculpture, wood-carving and painting, probably created in one of the leading Venetian workshops in the last decades of the 16th century.

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HRVATSKI RESTAURATORSKI ZAVOD

Nike Grškovića 23, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia
tel: +385 1 468 45 99, fax: +385 1 468 32 89
email: uprava@h-r-z.hr
www.h-r-z.hr



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Office of the Director
Office for Education, Technical Training and International Co-operation

Division for Immovable Heritage
Department of Architecture
Department of Wall Painting and Mosaics
Department of Stone Sculpture
Department of Stucco

Division for Movable Heritage
Department of Wooden Polychrome Sculpture, consisting of 5 Sections
Department of Easel Painting, consisting of 4 Sections
Department of Textile
Laboratory for Conservation of Furniture
Laboratory for Metal
Laboratory for Paper and Leather
Laboratory for Joinery

Division for Archaeological Heritage
Department of Underwater Archaeology
Department of Land Archaeology
Section for Conservation of Archaeological Findings
Conservation Department in Zadar

Division for Regional Departments
Conservation Department in Dubrovnik
Section for Paper Conservation
Conservation Department in Split
Section for Stone Sculpture
Section for Wall Paintings, Mosaics and Stucco Conservation
Conservation Department in Osijek
Section for Stone Sculpture
Ludbreg Conservation Centre
Section for Textile
Conservation Department in Vodnjan-Jursici
Conservation Department in Rijeka
Conservation Department in Sibenik (founding procedure in progress)

General Professional Administrations
Information-Documentation Department
Section for Immovable Heritage Documentation
Section for Movable Heritage Documentation
Archives
Library
Photo-laboratory
Scientific laboratory

Administration of Finance, Accounting and Legal-Administrative Affairs
Department of Legal, Administrative, and General Affairs
Section for Technical and Auxiliary Affairs
Section for Administrative Affairs
Department of Finance and Accounting
Section for Financial Operations
Section for Accounting



Apoxyomenos

The antique bronze statue of an athlete cleaning his strigil was found on the seabed off the island of Lošinj in Croatia in April, 1999.

Several-year-long conservation and restoration works involving desalination, the mechanical removal of incrustations, the construction of an internal support structure, accompanying investigations and the elaboration of documentation were carried out under the leadership of the Croatian Conservation Institute in Zagreb.

This celebrated statue of an athlete and the results of the conservation and restoration operations and investigations will be on view in an exhibition in the Archaeology Museum, Zagreb, from May 18, 2006, and to mark the great contribution to the work made by the Opificio delle Pietre Dure will also be on show at an exhibition to be opened in Florence at the end of September 2006.



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