

Il contributo di Roberto Carità all'evoluzione delle metodologie di intervento sui supporti lignei

Roberto Carità's contribution to the development of methods for working with wooden supports

Roberto Carità's exceptional ability in dealing with problems of a 'mechanical' nature, together with his strong interest in restoration and his background as an art historian, became the ideal combination of skills to create new support systems for controlling the warping movements of panels, and the tension of canvases and wall paintings transferred on a new canvas support. He was an inspector at the Central Institute for Restoration from 1954 to 1960, and became an expert on the practical application of Cesare Brandi's theoretical principles. His work represented a complete break with the traditional methods of craftsmanship and marked the start of a new approach to restoration based on attempting to recreate the 'potential unity' of artworks. His scientific studies enabled him to demonstrate the inadequacy, from the physical point of view, of the methods used at that time to deal with problems relating to wooden supports. He came to the conclusion that it was absolutely essential to use sliding cross-pieces in order to reduce the coefficient of friction to a minimum, especially at the moment of 'detachment', in other words when the warping movement of the panel begins, caused by changes in temperature and humidity. In this field, he developed systems of cross-pieces based on the principle of 'grazing friction' using materials such as Plexiglas which were innovative at the time, and introducing methods, which are still in use today, based on the concept of 'rolling friction'.

Tecniche diagnostiche non distruttive per la caratterizzazione di una maschera *taotie*

Non-destructive diagnostic techniques for determining the composition of a taotie mask

A finely-made bronze item in the form of a *taotie* mask was analyzed as part of a project for conducting diagnostic surveys and preservation work on East-Asian artworks at the National Museum of Oriental Art (MNAOr) in Rome. Radiographic examination followed by restoration work showed that the object was made up of several pieces joined together with tin/lead solder. In order to investigate the composition and homogeneity, as well as the origin, the following tests were carried out: semi-quantitative analysis using dispersed energy X-ray fluorescence, magnetic conductivity IACS and metallographic tests. The tests showed the object to be made up of more than thirteen pieces with varying composition; this would suggest that some parts of it are the result of adapting material from older artworks. The IACS and EDXRF analyses revealed several pieces in ternary alloy all of which were homogeneous and therefore probably original, as well as other pieces of heterogeneous composition which were probably extraneous.

Ricette per la colorazione dei legni impiegati nelle tarsie rinascimentali

Recipes for colouring the wood used in inlays of the Renaissance period

A previously unknown recipe for colouring the wood used in inlays was recently discovered in a 16th century manuscript kept at the Marciana National Library in Venice. The discovery was the starting point for an examination of Renaissance recipes in this field, many of which are still in use today. The survey revealed a very meagre corpus within which the Venetian recipe stands out for its detail and completeness; however, a general description of the various techniques used for colouring and treating wood is contained in the short chapter on wooden inlays forming part of the preamble to Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*. In the case of red colouring for wood, the recipe in the Venetian manuscript suggests using *cimatura di grana*, a colouring agent obtained from red-dyed fabric with *kermes*, and also used to make a red lacquer for painting. The ingredients and procedures described in this and other recipes show that there was a close link with contemporary techniques for dyeing yarns and fabrics.

ABSTRACT

I dipinti di Carlo Levi: procedimenti, materiali, problemi conservativi

Carlo Levi's paintings: procedures, materials and questions of preservation

The aim of the study was to examine Carlo Levi's artistic development and technical procedures in order to investigate problems relating to preservation. The study covered his whole career from the early 1920s up to the time of his death in 1975. A hundred works kept at the Carlo Levi Foundation were examined, and additional information was provided by technical manuals and other sources from the first half of the 20th century. The works in question had all been produced using traditional techniques (oil paint, tempera and wax) on semi-rigid supports (plywood and cardboard), as well as oil and acrylic paint on canvas. The large number of paintings involved in the study made it possible to draw some general conclusions on the main types of damage and the causes. And these findings can be extended to the whole collection.

Il restauro dei dipinti di Carlo Levi su tavola, tela e cartone

Restoring Carlo Levi's paintings on panels, canvas and cardboard

Several of the works are on plywood which had been badly damaged by water infiltration causing the layers to separate and peel away, so restoration was aimed at recreating the complete shape and content of the work. Once the plywood support had been cleaned and consolidated, the widespread lacunae were repaired using non-aqueous adhesives. Great care was taken in choosing the adhesive for fixing the inserts in place, and in replacing the missing layers of plywood. The main damage to the oil paintings on cardboard was the support itself which was frayed at the edges and slightly deformed, with several small lacunae. Once the detached parts had been consolidated with a mixture of methyl-cellulose and an acrylic-metacrylic co-polymer, the lacunae on the cardboard supports (which had no preparatory layer) were repaired with a compound made of cotton fibre. Then the cardboard supports were pressed to flatten them, and restoration was completed by reintegrating the painted surface with watercolours.

Il montaggio con bande magnetiche dei disegni architettonici di Paolo Soleri

Magnetic strips for mounting architectural drawings by Paolo Soleri

Displaying works on large-size paper supports creates significant problems of conservation, especially in the case of contemporary works, often produced with industrial techniques and materials which can be extremely sensitive to the application of extraneous material, however temporary. This article deals with an approach used for mounting and displaying a selection of architectural drawings by Paolo Soleri. The drawings had been carried out with mixed techniques and materials on sketching paper and tracing paper, some in the form of scrolls. The temporary nature of the exhibition and the particular features of the scrolls (some were up to 60 metres long) gave rise to an original mounting system using magnetic strips cut from plastic-ferrite sheets (anisotropic orientated) which are commercially available in different thicknesses. This material is both flexible and easy to cut to the required size, and can be attached to walls which have been prepared with metal panels covered with cardboard suitable for preservation purposes. This mounting system with magnetic strips is completely reversible, and meets the requirement of minimum intervention. It also avoids the need to apply extraneous material, such as adhesives, even though reversible.