

Sull'identità del restauratore e sulla didattica del restauro

The restorer's identity and teaching restoration

Starting a few years ago, new training courses for restorers, based on the recent didactic reform for teaching restoration in Italy, were introduced at the Higher Institute for Conservation and Restoration and in other Italian institutions – an important innovation that was also an occasion for examining not only the training courses, but also the identity and role of this professional figure. The writings of Giulio Carlo Argan and Paul Philippot, published between the 1940s and 1960s, show a new way of considering the work of restorers. Furthermore, the Belgian art historian Philippot clearly illustrated the fundamental role of craftwork in the profession. A recent book by US sociologist Richard Sennett, focusing on people as craft workers, contains an in-depth analysis of the link between thought and practical action in human activities, along the lines of ideas already present in the works of Bertrand Russell, Gilbert Ryle and Michael Polanyi. Sennett acknowledges, albeit critically, his indebtedness to the philosopher Hannah Arendt, with particular reference to the work entitled *The Human Condition (Vita Activa)*. This book includes highly original discussion on elements relating to Heidegger's philosophy. Later, the ISCR director Giovanni Urbani would be strongly influenced by Heidegger's thinking. The paper contained in this volume examines some of the ideas put forward by these thinkers. The purpose is mainly to understand a fundamental aspect of the restorer's current identity – the ability to transmit knowledge to future generations by carrying out training activities on a theoretical and practical basis.

L'identificazione del blu egiziano nelle sezioni stratigrafiche mediante fotoluminescenza

Identifying Egyptian blue in cross-sections by means of photoluminescence

Towards the end of the 1990s, was discovered the peculiar property of Egyptian blue to produce intense luminescence in the infrared range induced by visible electromagnetic radiation. A few years later a technique of the photographic type was devised that exploited this property, making it possible to highlight – in a selective and non-destructive manner – the presence of Egyptian blue on objects of historical and artistic interest. This paper presents a further application of this technique which makes it possible to identify Egyptian blue under an optical microscope, suitably modified, on cross and thin sections. The method has been tested on samples previously examined by means of mineralogical analysis.

Beni culturali e rischio idrogeologico in Italia

Cultural Heritage: hydro-geological risk assessment in Italy

The aim of the study is to estimate the number of architectural, monumental and archaeological heritage exposed to landside and flood risk throughout Italy, with input from ISCR's cultural heritage database (Risk Map for Cultural Heritage), the ISPRA Italian Landslide Inventory (IFFI project), and flood hazard zones. The cultural heritage database now contains 100,258 sites divided into three main categories: architectural, archaeological, and modern containers of artworks. The IFFI project contains 486,000 landslides involving an area of 20,800 square kilometers. Different GIS processings have been carried out, overlaying levels of information from the above-mentioned databases, in order to obtain an estimate of the number and types of cultural heritage at risk. Analysis shows that the number of cultural heritage exposed to the landslide and flood risk are respectively 5,511 (6.6%) and 11,155 (11.1%). The paper also includes two specific case studies: the former, regarding landslide risk for two Italian municipalities, and the latter flood risk in Rome historical centre. Such analysis constitutes a useful tool not only for identifying the heritage most exposed to risk, to be instrumentally monitored, but also for establishing the priorities of conservation policies for the cultural heritage in Italy.

ABSTRACT

SOS Collections: metodo e strumenti per la gestione conservativa delle collezioni museali

SOS Collections: methods and instruments for conservation management of museum collections

The filing system software named “SOS Collections” is designed to provide museums with an effective tool for the conservation management of their collections including documentation and evaluation of items on display as well as those in storage. The system makes use of a unique filing model which can be applied to all types of collections, together with personalised software for data processing, and the possibility of using a program of statistical sampling when required. This makes it possible to acquire in a relatively short space of time – therefore part of ordinary museum activities – all the information required to fully assess the conservation conditions of the collections, however vast and heterogeneous, and to set up a targeted intervention strategy with a time schedule based not only on a scale of priorities but also on the professional figures and economic resources effectively available or recoverable in the specific context. Even though the methodology of SOS Collections was designed and developed to be applied independently, a feasibility study is currently underway to include this filing system in Italian Risk Map for Cultural Heritage, as the link between the environmental record and the individual conservation record for each item.

Tecnica esecutiva e conservazione delle pitture murali di epoca romana. Il dibattito tra fine '800 e prima metà del '900

Techniques of execution and conservation for wall paintings of the roman period: the impassioned discussion that took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

Towards the end of the 19th century, there was further heated discussion on the execution technique for wall paintings dating from the Roman period, which had never really subsided from the time of discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii. The discussion involved opposing factions until the mid-20th century, consisting of artists, restorers and archaeologists, supporters at various times of frescoes, then of encaustic plaster (*encausto*), then of polished stucco (*stucco lustro*); sometimes the discussion became very heated, due not only to political reasons – under fascism, for example, the theory was that the originality of Roman wall painting owed nothing to Greek culture – but also to motives of personal interest: inevitably the “discoverer” of the “true” ancient technique put himself forward immediately as the only person able to halt the deterioration of the paintings. The renewed interest in the technical aspects of Roman paintings would also have repercussions on the applied arts – several schools were set up at that time, with the aim of teaching the presumed ancient techniques, foisting the possibility of economic advantages due to the increased demand for powdered quartz, pigments made with the traditional methods, etc. Only a few voices of independent artists showed a genuine interest in Roman wall paintings for which, rather than explaining the mysterious technique, they made do with reproducing the appearance.