

CONFERENCES

Technology and Technique in Research on the Works of Art
Ars Sine Scientia Nihil Est.
Torun (Poland) 25-26 November 2010



On 25th and 26th November 2010, an inter-national scientific conference took place in Collegium Maximum, at the University Museum of the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń organized by the Department of Painting Technologies and Techniques of the Institute for the Study, Conservation, and Restoration at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the same university. The conference focused on issues regarding the techniques applied in research and conservation of works of art. The aim of the conference was to highlight the significance of the interdisciplinary technological investigations, central to the process of conservation of works of art, as well as to establish their authorship and authenticity. In total there were delivered 33 papers dealing with the significance of the research methods used and the contribution of science to the development of conservation technology of easel and wall paintings, stone antiques, wooden polychromed sculptures, textiles and also the research problems of archival and library collections and of archaeological buildings. Issues were raised regarding the history of conservation and technological investigations at the end of the 19th and in the 20th centuries and the innovative character of Toruń's school of conservation, the modern chemical imaging techniques applied to the characterization of paint cross-sections (the ATR-FTIR method, the Raman mapping technique), new tools for non-invasive and non-contact examination of works of art (optical coherence tomography), complementary and improvement tools for examination indispensable for sustainable conservation (glass sensors and thermovision method) and preventive conservation (the FBG sensor, the fibre Bragg grating sensor), condition monitoring of antiques in museums (in case of tapestries using optical fibre sensors), application of petrological analysis using scanning electron microscopy (SEM-EDX) and instrumental neutron activation analysis (INAA) in the study of icon paintings and of recognition of artists' painting techniques (Jan Matejko, Leon Wyczółkowski, Konrad Krzyżanowski, and selected Portuguese painters), the painting techniques of the ancient Egypt (among others, in the mortuary temple of Ramses III), of the medieval and modern periods and also the research of Tibetan editions from the Wanli Kanjur collection from Berlin. There were also discussed ways in which dendrochronological examination is used for identifying wooden painting supports. Apart from this, the need was emphasized to integrate conservation practices from various disciplines, the significance of drawn measurements and strong engagement of knowledge about art as well as the impact of materials, techniques, and technology on the formal, ideological, and functional meaning of the artefacts.

The papers were delivered by conservators of paintings, wooden polychrome sculptures, stone antiques, paper and leather as well as geologists, physicists, chemists, and art historians. The participants of the conference represented many Polish and foreign universities, museums, and research institutes, such as: three schools of conservation from Poland, including the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, the Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw, and the Jagiellonian University, Kraków, the Catholic University of Portugal, the University of Istanbul, the Cornell University in Ithaca NY, USA, the Cairo University, Fayoum University and the Sohag University in Egypt, the Institute of Nuclear Chemistry and Technology in Warsaw, the Polish Geological Institute, the MPA Bremen Institute for Materials Testing in Germany, the National Academy of Fine Arts in Lvov, Ukraine, the University of Science and Technology in Kraków, the National Museum in Kraków, the Centre of Contemporary Art in Toruń, the Łańcut Castle Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Art Gallery in New South Wales, Australia, and the Private Conservation Studio in Wiązowna, Poland.

The conference was accompanied by an exhibition opened on 26th November in the rooms of the University Museum and was entitled *Ars Sine Scientia Nihil Est*. The exhibition was held to mark the end of the celebrations of the 65th anniversary of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń and the 5th anniversary of the University Museum and it showed the scientific and artistic achievements of the staff and students of the Department of Fine Arts, the Artistic Institute and the Institute for the Study, Conservation, and Restoration of Cultural Heritage. It encompassed all the aspects of artistic practice: painting, sculpture and reliefs, printmaking, art medals, small artistic forms and copies of paintings. The exhibition will remain open until 4th February 2011.

The head of the Scientific Committee was professor Józef Flik, PhD, artist in conservation; Chairman of the Organizing Committee was Justyna Olszewska-Świetlik, PhD, NCU professor (e-mail: justolsz@uni.torun.pl). The conference materials will be published.

More information available at:

www.art.umk.pl/planystudiow/Program%20konferencji-technologie.pdf