

E.C.C.O.-report of the German association VDR on activities of the year 2013 VDR - Verband der Restauratoren e. V. (Federation of Conservators-Restorers)

Political issues

Initiative of the protection of the professional title:

In reminding the federal situation of Germany where the cultural sovereignty accords to the federal states (Bundesländer, short Länder) all discussions had to be done with each of the 16 ministers of Culture. For issues referring to the whole state, it's discussed at the standing conference of the ministers of Culture (KMK). The issues to discuss or decide about can be presented by the Committee of Culture of the Bundestag. Although the responsibility for cultural activities in Germany has been traditionally at the Länder and the communities, the federal government must provide the appropriate framework and represent the cultural interests of Germany at European or international level.

A delegation of the VDR had meetings with members of the Committee of Culture and media affairs in the German Bundestag (parliament) who were opened about the concerns of the VDR, especially about the legal protection of the professional title as a part of quality assurance.

In a letter of the chair of the Committee of Culture of the Bundestag, M. Grütters, the preservation of cultural heritage was highlighted as an equal obligation of the federation and the federal states. The Committee sees with sorrow that the professionals working in this field cannot be easily identified for public and private clients. From the perspective of the Committee a uniformly high level of skills in the conservation and restoration of art and cultural property should be ensured. Therefore, the Committee evaluates the initiatives of two Länder, which adopted the laws on the professional title of conservator / restorer, as exemplary. The Committee would be grateful if the Minister of Culture of the countries would take up the problem outlined and discuss how to ensure that only those professionals are commissioned who can demonstrate a comprehensive theoretical and practical foundation for the protection and the preservation of our cultural heritage.

With this request the ministries of Culture in the 16 Länder started to question up about the situation and quality assurance in the field of Conservation-Restoration. (Please follow up the following year to see what came out...)

In between the existing law of the protection of the professional title „Restaurator“ (which is equivalent to the English term Conservator-Restorer) in the Land Sachsen-Anhalt was actualised because the expert commission should be excluded of members of the VDR. Beside and in favour of the directive of „recognition of professional qualifications from abroad“ to be compatible with the European directives.

Remuneration of public service: the Association of Restorers (VDR) expresses in a statement a reasonable payment of restorers. The reason therefor is given by vacancies notices whose remuneration is incompatible with the long-standing academic restorers training required for the area of responsibility.

Symposiums & Conferences:

Canvas Paintings: An international Symposium on **“Jacob Jordaens - work's Genesis – modification - Conservation”** took place the 6th-7th May 2013 in cooperation with the Museum Hessen-Kassel. The VDR dedicated in a conference for the first time the comprehensive consideration of the painter's personality and work of Jacob Jordaens whose reception has been in the past in the shadow of the 17th century painter sizes Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony Van Dyck.

http://restauratoren.de/fileadmin/red/FG_Gemaelde/Tagungsbericht_Jordaens_Rapoport-Struchtrup_FERTIG_pb.pdf

Modern Art: Fail Better: VDR-Symposium about Conservation Practice and Decision Making in Modern and Contemporary Art. “Try again / fail again / fail better,” is a quote by Samuel Beckett that inspired an exhibition at the Hamburger Kunsthalle in which artists explored the theme of failure. Custodians and conservators have faced new challenges when artist techniques and practices have moved from traditional towards less durable materials. The symposium examined this practice as it raises questions that challenge a conservator's aspiration to preserve the original material of an artwork. For more information, see the article in the online journal „e-conservation“ Journal 2, 2014, pp. 23-26

<http://www.e-conservation.org/issue-2/31-Fail-Better> and the videos of the symposium <http://www.restauratoren.de/fachgruppen/moderne-kunst-kulturgut-der-moderne/aktuelles/fail-better-symposium.html> The language of the symposium was English.

Publication:

The publication „**Schloss Rochlitz – Restaurierung und Denkmalpflege**“ collects the presentations of the colloquium "20 years of investigation, conservation and restoration of Rochlitz Castle" which was organized by the VDR Section Wallpainting and architectural surfaces in October 2012. This proceeding of the conference provides informations about the activities in renovation and conservation-restoration works carried out since the early 1990s and the related researches and sensational discoveries of the building history. <http://www.restauratoren.de/termine-details/1363-publikation-zu-schloss-rochlitz-erschiene.html>

Trade fairs:

The VDR took part at the Exponatec, the International Trade Fair for Museums, Conservation and Heritage in Cologne from 20th to 22nd November 2013. The association reported on its key concerns - the protection of cultural property and the appropriate conservation-restoration - and led many interesting conversations. "The fair was extremely satisfactory for us!" was the final statement of the crew on the fair. With his first appearance on the European Heritage Fair (EUHEF) from 7th to 9th November 2013 in Wiesbaden, the Association of Conservators (VDR) has further expanded its presence at trade fairs.

Presidium:

The General Assembly of the Association of Restorers (VDR) re-elected Christian Leonhardt after two years in office as President. Also Renate Poggendorf stayed in the VDR Presidium where she is now first Vice-President and the Treasurer. New in the Presidium are Dr. Jan Raue who immediately stepped in as second Vice President, and Susanne Danter and Ricarda Holly both as Presidium members.

Anja Romanowski
E.C.C.O. – Delegate



Symposium “Jacob Jordaens”: Andreas Hoppmann explains the conservation-restoration.



The new elected presidium: (from left to right) Susanne Danter, Presidium member; Renate Poggendorf, 1st Vice President and Treasurer; Ricarda Holly, Presidium member; Dr. Jan Raue, 2nd Vice President; Christian Leonhardt, President.