



Dear Colleagues and friends,

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Preamble:

The Malta Association of Professional Conservator-Restorers (MAPCo-Re) was founded in 2006 and became a registered member of the Malta Federation of Professional Associations on the 31st October 2007.

The MAPCo-Re Committee would like to wish everyone a prosperous new year 2022.

2021 was a rather restrictive year, for all, due to the development of the pandemic (COVID 19), which did not permit the association to hold its annual social events, in order to protect our members and their loved ones. Positively though the pandemic generated further online opportunities for our members to attend online conferences, podcasts, webinars and lectures.

MAPCo-Re's educational officers together (Ms Maria Borg and Ms Sarah Portelli) with the PR officer (Ms Analise Bonnici), provided our members a great opportunity to participate in a four-lecture webinar, entitled 'The Conservation Think tank – Series 1', which covered a variety of topics. Certificates of participation were provided. Three of the sessions were offered freely to the community at large but the final talk was restricted to only members. The topics covered were:

- *The Three C's: Curators, Conservators and Collaboration* (17th June 2021; 1 hour) by Ms Audrey Mizzi
- *The Restoration of a 19th Century Beha Cuckoo Clock* (22nd June 2021; 1 hour) by Mr Sam Matthews
- *Storage and Display Solutions/ The Book Shelter* (24th June 2021; 1 hour) by Ms Bridget Mitchell
- Practising Laboratory Safety (1st July 2021; 2 hours) by Ms Stephanie Sammut

The MAPCo-Re Treasurer (Ms Raquel Gutierrez Parera) and our VO Officer (Ms Nathalie Debono) worked hard to secure various funds. We were successful to obtain the Civil Society Funds for 2020 and 2021. MAPCo-Re will continue to investigate further funding.

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We must all be thankful for the local and foreign conservator-restorers working in Malta who have reached great achievements, which contribute extensively to our professional community. We thank you all for promoting the profession and keeping the standards of ethical undertakings. Kindly never lose sight of these ethics which distinguishes us from craftsmen or skilled personnel, a status we are constantly striving to not be associated with.

We hope that this year will bring us satisfaction and professional fulfillment in our profession as well as in our community. As was done in previous years, MAPCo-Re aims to fulfill its duties towards the conservation-restoration profession and towards nurturing the community of conservator-restorers in Malta, despite these challenging times. **We encourage our members to participate in our online activities, as well as communicate with us their achievements or events, so as to reach the community at large.**

We thank the European Confederation of Conservation-restoration Organisations [E.C.C.O.] and the Malta Federation of Professional Associations [M.F.P.A.] for their support. We are pleased that following the approval of the amendments to the Cultural Heritage (March 2019), two batches of conservators-restorers have been awarded their warrants (adding up to around 30 warranted professionals in various fields of practice).

Currently (2021), we have thirty (30) full members of which seventeen (17) have received their warrant (30). The rest have been encouraged to submit their application. In December 2021-January 2021, MAPCo-Re will be accepting memberships from only certified warrant holders, as full-members. It is understandable that there is a transition within the coming months, but we believe almost all members will receive their warrant. Our statute permits, non-voting 'Associate Members' and 'Student Members', but this should not affect our request to be endorsed.

The committee of MAPCo-Re has requested to be endorsed as the official Professional Conservator-Restorers' Association in Malta (based on Article 42, within the Cultural Heritage Act 2019). We are officially registered as the only Voluntary Organization (No. VO/0825) within the cultural heritage sector. We are also approved by the Commissioner of Voluntary Organizations, the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer Organization (E.C.C.O.) and the Malta Federation of Professional Associations. We have also officially registered MAPCo-Re as a cultural related Voluntary Organization, and we have been endorsed (February 2022). The President has written to the International Institute of Conservation, to seek guidance on MAPCo-Re joining and an affiliated member organization, but as yet no positive response was achieved.

We are aware of the obligatory Continuous Professional Development (CPD: 20 hours per year), which MAPCo-Re is striving to inform its members of online opportunities/ events and will try to continue to plan our own CPD program with your contributions. The MAPCo-Re committee has also been pro-active and drafted a draft framework for the Continuous Professional Development (based on other documents provided by other professions within the Malta Federation of Professional Associations (MFPA), which we have submitted to the Warrant Board. MAPCo-Re has also formally nominated warranted Conservator-Restorers on the Warranting Board, in order to represent the

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profession (based on Article 35, Clause 1 [d]). One of our members, Ms Chanelle Briffa, represented the professionals within the Warrant Board 2021-2022. We must encourage you all to continue to publish your projects as well as delivering outreach presentations as these may also contribute to your CPD. We must especially thank all the participating members and helpers for supporting our activities, as well as their families in the background who support them.

We have had several meetings with the Minister of Culture and proposed that MAPCo-Re should nominate various members within the various cultural heritage boards. As stated in Article 12, Clause 1 [k], three persons are to be appointed by the Minister from amongst persons working in the field of cultural heritage and in non-Government organizations dedicated to cultural heritage, and another person active in the commercial sector. Since the profession of 'Conservator-Restorer' is the only profession legally regulated within the Cultural Heritage Act, we recommended the consideration of us nominating one or two members from MAPCo-Re onto the Committee of Guarantee. We will await to approach the newly elected minister following the General Elections, March 2022.

MAPCo-Re has also recommended that the profession of 'Conservator-Restorer' is represented by a warrant holder on the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee (CHAC). Based on the amendments done within the Cultural Heritage Act, in which the Malta Centre for Restoration [MCR] merged within Heritage Malta (Article 8, Clause 4 [a, i, l]), it is recommended that a permanent position within the Heritage Malta Board is created/ held for a representative from the warranted conservators-restorers. This is suggested, as many of the Heritage Malta permanent staff are conservation professionals, who should have an administration voice, especially since Heritage Malta should be the executive government agency within this profession. In the latter cases, we will bring up these suggestions again with the newly elected minister following the General Elections, March 2022.

We also pointed out the need for an academically qualified conservator-restorer, warranted in stone and metal practice, be employed within the Restoration Directorate, as there is no such post filled at present. A position had been announced in 2021, and it is believed that a conservator-restorer will be employed in 2022. MAPCo-Re reiterated their concern that within the Biblioteka there is nobody academically qualified within the conservation laboratory. We are aware that most are book-binders, with great experience but are not formally trained on ethical practice and decision taking. We encourage the post of 'Principal' or 'Senior' conservator-restorer to be issued to oversee the work within this laboratory. Once again this will be brought forward to with the newly elected minister following the General Elections, March 2022.

We appreciate all the support MAPCo-Re received towards the Profession. We encourage all to continue to support this cause and promote the law that will establish the protection and responsibly of our profession.

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Achievements of 2021:

-Attending the monthly council meetings of the **Malta Federation of Professional Associations** [MFPA]. The President of MAPCo-Re (James Licari) actively participates within the Federation Council proceedings and discussions.

- Outreach and Publications

The MAPCo-Re committee would like to thank all our members who constantly contribute articles and public presentation on projects undertaken, as this serves as outreach for our professional within the local communities. MAPCo-Re is also drafting various informative articles/ social media posts to be published, to help promote the scientific approach undertaken by our members.

- **Advising various NGOs** on conservation-restoration projects.

- Attending other public consultation meetings and fora on cultural heritage.

Proposed achievements for 2022:

- Consolidating the agreements and discussions with the various local authorities, and NGOs
- Representative attending the monthly meetings of the Warrant Board
- Attending the monthly council meetings of the Malta Federation of Professional Associations [MFPA]
- Keeping an open communication with the ECCO committee and possibly collaborating with them on various projects.
- Undertaking an academic conference on conservation-restoration. Dates and call for papers will be issued soon.
- Work on establishing various CPD opportunities for our members (such as health and safety, First-Aid, legal advice and more).
- MAPCo-Re will hopefully also discuss the possibility of collaborating with the Department of Conservation, at the Faculty of Built Environment, within the University of Malta, especially with regards to CPD courses and hopefully possible analytical resources.
- Acknowledging the achievements of our members and colleagues.
- Keeping updated our public relations via our Facebook page and other outreach programs.

The Committee would like to thank all and we hope to contribute towards the conservation of our collective past for the present and future generations.

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James Licari
o.b.o

The MAPCo-Re Committee 2021- 22

James Licari (President)

Chanelle Briffa (Secretary General)

Raquel Gutierrez Parera (Treasurer)

Analise Bonnici (Public Relations Officer)

Maria Borg (CPD/ Education Officer)

Sarah Portelli (Events Organiser)

Nathalie Debono (V.O. Officer)

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