



NATIONAL REPORT 2020

ÖRV, AUSTRIA

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The General Assembly of the ÖRV took place on 12 November 2019 via ZOOM. Two additional new board members were elected.

The current board members are:

President: *Beate Murr* (paper conservator at the Museum of Applied Arts, graduate of the Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

Vice President: *Anke Schänning* (head of department, paintings and sculptures, Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

E.C.C.O. delegate and Secretary, keeper of minutes: *Martina Haselberger* (stone conservators, university assistant Institute of Conservation, University of Applied Arts Vienna)

Vice-Secretary: *Sabine Formánek* (wood conservator in private practise, graduate of the Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

Treasurer: *Michael Formánek* (wood conservator in private practise, graduate of the Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

Sponsorship, Vice-Treasurer: *Beate Sipek* (mural conservator, head of department, wall painting and architectural surfaces, Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and private practise)

Website support: *Irina Huller* (object conservator at the Natural History Museum, graduate University of Applied Arts Vienna)

Homepage: *Andreas Hartl* (paper conservator at *Kuperstichkabinet* Academy of Fine Arts, graduate of the Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

Events: *Susanne Beseler* (stone conservator in private practice, graduate of the University of Applied Arts Potsdam, Germany)

Memberships: *Karin Steiner* (paper and contemporary art conservator, Museum of Modern Arts, Ludwig Collections, graduate Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

Publications: *Catherine Bouvier* (paper conservator in private practise, graduate of the Institute for Conservation-Restoration, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

Recently joined members: *Irina Huller* (former representative of the students / members in training), *Anna Boomgaarden* (freelance conservator)

Representatives of the students / members in training regularly attend the board meetings and contribute to the activities of the board: currently Sabina Simonic (until beginning of 2021) and Andreas Schretthausser from the Academy of Fine Arts as well as Sophie Krachler and Elias Campidell from the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Their involvement is of great value regarding the exchange with the conservators-restorers in training.



EVENTS 2020

At the beginning of the year, prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, the **26th ÖRV Conference** was held on 6 and 7 March in Salzburg in the framework of the MONUMENTO, a trade fair for cultural heritage preservation. The conference was entitled “gestern heute morgen in der Restaurierung” and co-funded by the Austrian Federal Chancellery. It was attended by around 100 participants from all over Austria. 18 lectures dealt with conservation strategies of the past, present and future, new challenges as well as the impact of past conservation on current condition. A panel discussion on tendering and awarding of contracts was further organized. ÖRV was also hosting a fair stand together with the University of Applied Arts Vienna and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Due to pandemic the majority of other events planned for 2020 had to be cancelled or postponed.

At the end of April and beginning of May 2020 the Austrian Conservators-Restorers Association (ÖRV) conducted a **survey among its members to evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the current work of free-lance conservators**; particular emphasis was on the order situation.¹ ÖRV decided to exclude employees from the survey and focus on free-lance professionals, as the latter is severely affected by the crisis because short-time work or home office are not or hardly possible.

Altogether 82 members (almost a third of ÖRV's members) participated in the survey in the period from 19 April to 4 May 2020. The participating conservators-restorers are predominantly active in the following fields (multiple responses of specializations field were possible): paintings / sculptures (17.4%), investigation / survey / management / planning (15.7%), metal (9.9%), paper / parchment / graphics / books / photos (9.1%), objects (9 %), wall paintings (8.3%), contemporary arts (6.6%), stone / stucco (6.6%), textiles (5.8%), wood / furniture (5.8%), archaeological findings (3.3%), musical instruments (1.7%).

Almost 78 % stated to suffer from financial losses; thereby extra expenses for personal health protection hardly had an influence. A considerable number of members (38.8%) indicated that they have currently (May 2020) no revenues; for many the future situation is not predictable. 20.1% stated that there were enough orders and projects, while for the majority (74.1%) orders and projects were postponed and for 27.2% they had been lost. Further 19.5% indicated that they can't make up for the lost work in summer, whereas 42.7% think they can do so. A particular concern is that almost 28% stated that they consider the financial losses a threat to their professional existence and livelihood.

The order situation in spring 2020 differed depending on the field of specialisation: conservators-restorers of musical instruments are least affected by the crisis, whereby it has to be mentioned that in percentage terms their number is lower than those of other specializations. Only among participants working in the field of stone / stucco, investigation / survey / management / planning, wood / furniture and objects 20% stated to have enough work; for all other working in other specializations the projects were largely postponed or cancelled. Most orders and projects had been

¹ The seven questions raised, results illustrated in graphs and detailed breakdown in terms of percentage can be found in the unpublished German summary of the survey, distributed among the members of ÖRV.



lost for conservators-restorers working on archaeological findings, metal, contemporary arts, paper / parchment / graphics / books / photos.

ÖRV will continue to monitor the situation and will conduct another survey at the end of the year to evaluate whether the condition improved or impaired.

In the 13th issue of the ÖRV Journal reports with some perspectives and experiences related to the impact of COVID on the conservation sector were included.

From 1st to 3rd July the **ÖRV seminar “Texte!schreiben”** was organized in presence in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. The interest was high why the seminar will be again held in 2021.

From 5 to 11 October the **European Days of Conservation-Restoration** were celebrated; due to COVID predominantly in the virtual space. Following the suggestion of E.C.C.O. the University of Applied Arts launched an Instagram story with daily new insights into the practice of conservation-restoration; the Academy of Fine Arts offered invited to its online diploma lectures.

New publications

The 13th issue of the ÖRV journal and the proceedings of the 26th ÖRV Conference have been published and send to all members.

Martina Haselberger
(E.C.C.O. delegate ÖRV)
Vienna, December 2020