

Heritage Conservation Procedure: A Comprehensive Approach to the Survey of Stucco Artworks

The heritage conservation procedure was designed as part of the project of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic: Renaissance and Mannerist Stucco in Bohemia and Moravia (id. no. DG18P02OVV005) within the framework of the NAKI II program to support applied research and experimental development of national cultural identity for the years 2018-2022.

Abstract:

Surveying plays a vital role in the planning and execution of conservation and restoration efforts for artworks, including monuments featuring stucco decoration. Using the example of the stucco decorations in the Church of St. John the Baptist in Dešná, Czech Republic, this certified conservation procedure presents a structured and methodologically wide-ranging approach to conducting expert surveys of stucco artworks and decorative stucco craftsmanship. It aligns with contemporary standards and requirements in the field of heritage conservation.

The conservation procedure offers a multidisciplinary perspective, integrating art historical research, technological analyses, and restoration surveys. The comprehensive survey of this specific monument serves as a model case, demonstrating how interdisciplinary collaboration among restorers, art historians, and natural scientists can yield in-depth insights. This collaborative approach facilitated a thorough reconstruction of the artwork's historical context, detailed documentation of the specific stucco techniques and materials employed, and ultimately, a holistic understanding of a previously undocumented heritage asset.

The selected case study exemplifies how interconnected partial surveys can collectively contribute to a nuanced understanding of a monument, thereby forming a solid foundation for the planning of high-quality and responsible restoration interventions. The methodology includes a clear, detailed framework for conducting comprehensive stucco surveys, emphasizing the value of interdisciplinary research in informing effective conservation, restoration, and preventive strategies. Furthermore, it aims to support economically sustainable restoration efforts, extend the intervals between restoration cycles, and ensure the long-term preservation of stucco artworks through qualified, evidence-based practices.