

School Superior Institute for Conservation and Restoration

Courses

The School of the Superior Institute for Conservation and Restoration has been in operation since 1944. In 1998, it became the 'School of Advanced Training for Restoration' with degree status (Decree Law 156/2006, art. 29, par. 9)

Courses

The single cycle courses have a four-year duration, although the addition of a fifth year has been proposed. A fixed number of participants attend the courses each year and applicants must pass a public entry competition in order to be admitted. The minimum necessary requirement for entering the school is a High School Diploma. The courses differ in their fields of specialization, and candidates must select the course they prefer when they make their initial application. The areas of specialization of the training programme organized each year are indicated on the public notice announcing the courses. They are selected from among the following types of cultural property:

Area A: stone materials and artefacts: mural paintings, plasterwork, casts, mosaics, inlay work with semi-precious stones and opus sectile, statuary, and decorated architectural surfaces.

Area B: works painted on wood and textile supports; artefacts sculpted in wood, bone, ivory, and wax; worked, assembled and/or painted artefacts in synthetic materials.

Area C: materials and artefacts in natural

fibres, man-made fibres, leather and skins, feathers, clothing, woven textiles and yarns, and furnishings such as carpets, tapestries, vestments, altar-cloths and similar objects.

Area D: ceramic and glass materials and artefacts, terracotta earthenware, porcelain, glassware, stained glass, enamels, and terracotta sculpture; materials and artefacts in metal and metal alloys, sculpture, paintings on metal supports, engraved plates, arms and armour, gold work, glyptography.

Area E: works on parchment, papyrus and paper; paper materials such as wallpapers, papier mâché and globes; photographic and cinematographic material: daguerreotypes, plates, films and prints.

Lessons are held between November and June and training worksites are organized in the summer months.

Entry competition

In order to enter the school, applicants must take part in the annual public entry competition announced by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities in the Official Gazette. The competition consists of two practical/attitudinal tests and an oral examination. The first two tests are intended to check the candidate's sensitivity to colour, his/her ability to draw, to understand forms, and to repair a fabric with a needle, as well as other selected tasks related to the area of specialization chosen.

The oral examination is intended to ascertain the candidate's knowledge in the following fields: art history, execution techniques of works of art, basic scientific principles, and English language.

Training programme

The didactic plan focuses on two fundamental approaches comprising the technical and scientific training of a theoretical nature and practical training through direct contact with

the work of art.

As well as studying techniques of restoration, art history and documentation skills (graphic and photographic), students will be given lessons in physics, chemistry and biology to provide a solid groundwork in all the related disciplines.

Practical activity, This exceeds 50% of the total contact time with a student/teacher ratio of 5:1 and involves practical sessions both in the laboratories in direct contact with the works of art and at the worksites where the student will be able to tackle large-scale restoration works, often the subject of complex interactions with the environment, using an interdisciplinary approach.

At the end of the course, students will be required to prepare and present a thesis for discussion.

Diploma

The "Diploma of Conservator/Restorer of Cultural Heritage" issued by the Superior Institute for Conservation and Restoration is a qualification with degree status (single cycle five-year degree) and entitles the holder to work as a professional restorer of cultural heritage (Decree Law 42/2004 and successive modifications 156/2006, art. 29, par. 9).

diploma

Superior Institute for Conservation and Restoration

The Superior Institute for Conservation and Restoration (the former Central Institute for Restoration) was established on 26 November 2007 with a Presidential Decree (n. 233, ch. III, art. 15, par. 3, ltr g) is a semi-autonomous technical department of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities, specializing in the field of conservation and restoration of cultural heritage. The Institute was founded in 1939 through the endeavours of Giulio Carlo Argan and Cesare Brandi with the aim of establishing a scientific base for conservation/restoration and unifying the methodologies used for treating works of art and archaeological finds. Cesare Brandi became the first director of the Institute.

Tasks

Its tasks involve:

- **Training** restorers through a programme in which the strict requirements, enabling them to practise the profession, are set down
- **Research** into the environmental, natural and accidental factors that lead to the deterioration of works of art and into the means available to anticipate and prevent the effects of this damage
- **Developing** conservation and restoration treatments and activities
- **Planning and implementing** particularly complex restoration works or those carried out for research and didactic purposes
- **Providing** regional ministerial bodies and local authorities with technical and scientific advice on conservation and restoration
- **Updating** technical and scientific staff working in local and national administrative bodies

Organization

In order to fulfil its tasks, the structural organization of the Institute is divided into:

- **five** departments covering conservation/restoration works for historical, artistic and archaeological heritage, works for landscape and architectural heritage, teaching and training activities, data acquisition, and documentation
- **four** scientific laboratories: for tests on materials, chemistry, biology, physics and environmental monitoring
- **twelve** conservation and restoration laboratories for the treatment of mural paintings; panel paintings, canvas paintings; polychrome wood sculpture and wood artefacts; stone artefacts, plasterwork, intonacos and mosaics; objects in metal and metal alloys; ceramics and glassware; leather artefacts; textiles; paintings and drawings on paper and parchment; and contemporary art
- and **a team** for underwater archaeological studies and operations

The institute has a **Specialist library** and **Photographic archive** to store data on restoration works.

Aims

The **principal aim** of the work of the Institute is to integrate scientific research on the causes of deterioration of cultural heritage with the experimentation of new technologies for conservation/restoration on the one hand, and with the training and updating (through refresher courses) of restorers and other technical personnel working in the sector on the other. Among the most recent activities has been the creation of a database known as the Risk Map, in which cultural properties and objects are classified according to their 'deterioration risk' factor.

The Institute is also or has recently been engaged in activities of **restoration and consultancy**, in the following countries - China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kosovo, Malta, Nepal, Peru, Serbia and Syria - at their request.



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