

über den etwa 200 Mitarbeitern einer vergleichbaren westdeutschen Behörde hoffnungslos unterbesetzt. Die Erfassung von Denkmälern fällt in die Zuständigkeit der fünf Kunstwissenschaftler des Hauses, von denen allerdings nur einer ständig für diese Aufgabe zur Verfügung steht. Alle anderen sind durch die täglichen Erfordernisse der praktischen Denkmalpflege so stark in Anspruch genommen, daß sie sich nur gelegentlich an dem Erfassungsprojekt beteiligen können. Schließlich ist die Denkmalerfassung nur eine von vielen zusätzlichen Aufgaben, die in diesen Monaten auf die sächsischen Denkmalpfleger anstürmen. Angesichts des wachsenden Investitionsdrucks und einer verstärkten Bautätigkeit verlangt auch die laufende Betreuung der einzelnen Landkreise immer größeren Einsatz. Jedes der mit Bundesmitteln neu begonnenen restauratorischen Projekte erfordert die laufende Präsenz des Landesamts. Unter solchen Bedingungen gerät die Denkmalerfassung zum Wettlauf gegen die Zeit, den die mit der Bewältigung ihrer Tagesaufgaben kämpfende Denkmalpflege nur verlieren kann. Ohne vollständige Listen ist aber die Landesbehörde nur begrenzt handlungsfähig, denn alle nicht erfaßten Denkmale entziehen sich ihrem Zugriff und bleiben so den Zufällen des Baumarkts ausgeliefert. Allein eine handlungsstarke Denkmalpflege könnte für den Fortbestand der Denkmallandschaft Dresden Sorge tragen.

Um die Denkmalerfassung in Dresden beschleunigt fortzusetzen, benötigt das Sächsische Landesamt für Denkmalpflege dringend Hilfsmittel zur Einstellung zusätzlicher Honorarkräfte. Erforderlich wären mindestens zwei weitere wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiter. Aufgrund des zur Zeit noch niedrigen Lohnniveaus in den Ländern der ehemaligen DDR ließe sich bereits mit nach westlichen Maßstäben geringen Geldmengen viel bewirken. Wichtig wäre vor allem, daß die Hilfsmittel möglichst schnell zum Einsatz kommen. Gerade jetzt werden die Weichen gestellt für das Baugeschehen der kommenden Jahre, gerade jetzt ist die Mitsprache der Denkmalpflege am wenigsten entbehrlich. Und Dresden ist nur die Spitze eines großen Eisbergs.

Jörg Stabenow

Tagungen

STUDIES IN ITALIAN ART II.

ART IN THE MAKING — PANEL PAINTING BEFORE 1400

Colloque, London (National Gallery, Courtauld Institute), 2nd-3rd February 1990.
(with three illustrations)

During the winter of 1989–90, the National Gallery in London staged a memorable exhibition — *Art in the making — Italian painting before 1400*. Formally the second in a series (the first addressed itself to the painting of Rembrandt, the third will be about Impressionist painting), this exhibition was a major event in its own right for all students of early Italian art. Interest in it was considerable (over 168000 people attended it); and it was accompanied by a catalogue which will for a long time to come be a major work of reference. (It was written by David Bomford, Jill Dunkerton, Dillian Gordon and Ashok Roy.) It was a curiously English exhibition — in the sense that it is difficult to

imagine an exhibition adopting quite this tone in any other European capital. There is an English propensity at an early age for enjoying conjuring tricks coupled with a tendency to take toys to pieces to find out how they work. The exhibition well illustrated this twin determination simultaneously to be mightily impressed and to find out how it was done. The catalogue is a model of clear and calm exposition of a very complicated and — in terms of time — remote technology. It demonstrates — in so far as I understand it — the 'state of the art' in the matter of applying science to the study and conservation of medieval paintings; and it makes frequent contributions to the often difficult problems which face scholars — for instance, on the manner in which trecento paintings were varnished and hence on the quality of their 'finish' when they were finally completed.

Exhibitions increasingly attract conferences, symposia, *colloques*. It is not always clear that they get the symposia they deserve; but in this instance an interesting exhibition was accompanied by a stimulating two-day event (2nd-3rd February 1990) organised from the *Burlington Magazine* (Dr Caroline Elam), the *Courtauld Institute of Art* (Dr Joanna Cannon) and the *National Gallery* itself (Dr Dillian Gordon). It took place on the first day at the National Gallery and on the second day at the new premises of the Courtauld Institute of Art in Somerset House, and was attended over the two days by about 150 people. A list of speakers is appended at the end — from which it will be clear that whatever the local characteristics of the exhibition, the symposium was an international one.

Many of the papers complemented the exhibition in a very satisfying way. Thus Dr Ames-Lewis' work on early Italian drawing techniques sat well alongside the increasing evidence of underdrawing on panels revealed by infra-red photography and (especially) reflectography. Norman Muller's paper on carpentry and framing addressed itself to several issues covered in the catalogue. When was the woodwork of an altarpiece finally and irrevocably assembled? How were the supporting battens constructed? When were they finally and immovably fixed to the panels? To the surprise of at least one person in the audience, it had apparently been discovered by the second half of the 14th century that it was possible near the completion of the work to nail the battens onto the back of an altarpiece without damaging the painting on the front. Hammering behind did not apparently disturb the paint layers. This automatically postponed the moment when the altar had to be assembled in its final form; and, as was pointed out from the audience, it conjured up the spectre of different sections of a polyptych being brought in from different workshops and fitted together on site.

Alongside this type of complementary observation were supplementary contributions reminding the audience of the 'history' behind the paintings — of patronage, symbolism and iconography. Here Dr Christa Gardner's paper on the development of the polyptych form in the 14th century was particularly rich in suggestions about the relationship between new churches and new altarpieces, about the migration of patronage from high altars to side altars, about the ways in which a great altarpiece (such as that of S. Pier Maggiore) was perceived as a model, about the relationships and rivalries in terms of patronage between and within religious orders. Dr Gert Kreytenberg's analysis of Orcagna's Strozzi altarpiece offered a case study involving allied issues relating to framing, iconography and, ultimately, the overall context of the chapel.

The range of papers was wide. Many of them will naturally find their way into print: and, rather than give an imperfect account of the entire proceedings, I shall here (with some difficulty) select three for particular mention, each of special interest though for entirely different reasons. Dr Joanna Cannon and Ms Viola Pemberton-Pigott offered a model joint-presentation on the enigmatic triptych in the Royal Collection commonly attributed to (*Abb. 1*) Duccio. The technical details of its preparation and underdrawing were clearly expounded, demonstrating this to be a 'text-book' example of Cennino Cennini principles and practice. Variations of quality (including those of the punchmarks) were discussed and explained (not always to the satisfaction of the audience); but the most stimulating suggestion concerned the curious perspective used in the wings. Here Dr Cannon proposed that the admitted distortions were intended to take into account the oblique angle at which the wings would normally be seen when the little altar was standing open on a horizontal surface. This suggestion drew some hostile fire from the audience; and the extremely imprecise and variable relationship between triptych and worshipper must always have militated against any sort of scientific exactitude. However certain mural paintings are clearly designed to take into account the position of the viewer — as in the basilica of S. Francesco, Assisi. It is not unknown for ideas to be generated on a large scale and to percolate through to a smaller scale; and the idea that the Royal Collection triptych represents an interesting experiment of this sort seems to me entirely plausible. The paper is shortly to be published in the *Burlington Magazine*.

There was a fascinating paper from Ms Lisa Monnas on the relationship between the silk fabrics painted in Trecento altarpieces and their reality as far as this is known from surviving fragments. Whereas the survival rate of trecento carpets is effectively zero, silk textiles in fragmentary form are far more common than I had realised. Simone Martini's 'silks' turn out to be very lifelike indeed; and his tartan material really did exist as a smart 14th century lining material. Gentile da Fabriano's textured materials correspond to the textured quality of many 15th century fabrics. In between, there was a long period in which the imitation of reality tended to be severely attenuated, when patterns in paintings tend to be repetitive and often unrelated to the size of the original. These findings, the fruits of a London university Ph.D, couple the native curiosity of Ms Monnas with the enormous resources of the Victoria and Albert Museum; and it is to be hoped that they will get into print.

Finally the company was treated to a paper by Dr Olga Pujmanova from the National Gallery, Prague. It must in honesty be said that it had very little to do with the theme of either exhibition or symposium. Dr Pujmanova apologised that the political upheavals in Prague had hindered in severely practical terms the preparation of the lecture and the production of slides. The excuses were impeccable but entirely unnecessary; for the material which she had brought was the usual fascinating assortment of little-known or unknown objects drawn mainly from the immense resources of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. These works of art — statues and paintings — had all been worked up into fictitious units by the addition of (mostly) 19th century framing material — hence the 'pseudo-polyptychs' of her title. Particularly surprising were the statues from the workshop of Mino da Fiesole which, originally part of the ciborium of S. Maria

Maggiore, Rome, are now set in a gothic-revival tabernacle on the high altar of Olomouc cathedral (*Abb. 2*). A further example of this type of composite presentation was the 'pseudo-polyptych' of Žebv in which a relief from the Embriachi workshop had been combined with two painted Bohemian wings of c.1400 (*Abb. 3*). The Olomouc figures are still in position but the Žebv triptych was dismantled c.1960 and the parts are now exhibited separately. These curiously mongrel assemblages of 'art' are not without their own historical interest. Dr Pujmanova regretted the passing of the triptych from Žebv; and her paper raised in particular form a further set of issues which were given a brief airing.

One of these was, simply, how to present to the public medieval works of art which have come to us laden with the accretions of subsequent centuries. This is not, of course, a problem peculiar to the figurative arts — it is regularly faced by architect-restorers. In the great public collections of the world, however, there are many examples of dismantled altarpieces which have been re-assembled or re-presented in more or less factitious/fictitious ensembles (mainly in the 19th and early 20th centuries) designed primarily and originally to enhance their financial value on the art market or in the private collection. They might perhaps be termed gazumped *Kunstwerke*. The National Gallery has a number of notable examples. The present framing of the S. Pier Maggiore altar panels is a case in point. Probably the most splendid example is the so-called Demidoff altar of Carlo Crivelli. These accretions cannot be wished away, though, paradoxically, they can be destroyed; they can also be stored. As Dr Pujmanova somewhat wryly remarked, the pseudo-polyptychs have the positive advantage of presenting a large number of panels in a compact space — a practical asset which should endear them to curatorial staff. But whether these panels look better or worse accompanied by these accretions is a matter of lively debate; and one does not have to travel very widely in Europe at least to see that there is deep curatorial disagreement on the solution to what is, certainly, an intractable problem.

Finally, and perhaps not surprisingly in view of the company and the exhibiton, contrasted approaches to conservation were also aired. One context was Sig. del Serra's account of the cleaning of Duccio's Rucellai Madonna; the other was the exhibition itself which, in a sense, had as its subtext the present conservation policy of the National Gallery laboratories. The public divisions on this, if brief, were also sharp. The differences of approach are deeply felt by some; and non-combattants may occasionally be reminded of the poem by Elizabeth Wordsworth, one couplet of which runs 'for the good are so harsh to the clever, and the clever so rude to good'. It is not always easy to distinguish between the good and the clever. In this instance, the 'good' are probably those conservators who see themselves as guided by empathy and intuition and whose goal is to re-present a masterpiece as a masterpiece in sympathy with the spirit of the original master. The 'clever' would be the technicians, the laboratory experts guided not by empathy but by pragmatism and scientific observation. They make no claims to intuition; but they will turn out the best job that science, scholarship and common sense can manage. Different approaches promote different working methods, different types of decision-making and probably different sorts of record-keeping; but, to the extent that both must, at their best, be dominated by sensitivity, integrity and experience, perhaps

the effects on the 'patients' are less diverse than might be commonly supposed. We were left wondering, in the case of the Rucellai Madonna, whether, if the 'patient' had metaphorically been moved from Harley Street to one of the great London teaching hospitals, the results would have been dramatically different.

List of Speakers (in order of appearance).

Dr. Francis Ames-Lewis (Birkbeck College, London University): *The roll of drawings in trecento panel paintings*. — Norman Muller (The Art Museum, Princeton University): *The carpentry and assembly of Siense trecento altarpieces: some recent observations*. — Dr Gert Kreytenberg (University of Bochum): *Frame and image: Orcagna's Strozzi altarpiece*. — Dr Christa Gardner von Teuffel: *The Florentine high altarpieces after the Black Death*. — Ms Lisa Monnas: *Silk fabrics in Italian panel paintings 1300—1430*. — Dr Erling Skaug (Conservation Department, Norsk Folkenmuseum, Oslo): *Punchwork in Florence in the 1360s: the Cione brothers and Giovanni da Milano*. — Dr Olga Pujmanova (National Gallery, Prague): *Italian pseudo-polyptychs in Czechoslovakia*. — Dr Joanna Cannon (Courtauld Institute of Art, London University) and Ms Viola Pemberton-Pigott (conservator, the Royal Collection): *The Triptych attributed to Duccio in the Royal Collection*. — Professor Miklós Boskovits (Corpus of Florentine Painting, Florence): *Three hypotheses of reconstruction: a Romagnole tabernacle, a Lombard altarpiece and a Siense predella*. — Sig. Alfio del Serra (Conservator, Florence): *The cleaning of Duccio's Rucellai Madonna*. — Dr Giorgio Bonsanti (Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence): *Remarks on recently restored works by Giotto and his workshop*. — Dr Carl Strehlke (The Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art): *The Johnson Collection's Niccolo di Pietro Gerini and Florentine trecento paintings made for pilasters*.

Andrew Martindale

Rezensionen

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(con sei illustrazioni)

Sebbene sempre riconosciuto da contemporanei e posteri figura di grandissimo spicco nella storia della pittura, la bibliografia di Simone non è ampissima né particolarmente brillante. Non esiste un volume che esamini la sua produzione con il rigore e la sistematicità degli studi dell'Offner su Bernardo Daddi o sull'Orcagna, né che ne indaghi i moventi e il sottofondo culturale con una completezza simile alla classica monografia ghibertiana del Krautheimer; e manca sul maestro senese un libro paragonabile all'effervescente vivacità intellettuale del *Giotto e la sua bottega* di Giovanni Previtali. Sarebbe interessante ricercare il perchè della qualità scialba, del carattere spesso puramente compilativo o celebrativo della letteratura relativa al grande pittore di Siena. Ma oggi possiamo dare il benvenuto ad un impegnato libro che si propone di