

La «technica» di Giorgio de Chirico: 1919-1925

The «technica» of Giorgio de Chirico in the period 1919-1925

Just after World War I, and up until his move to Paris in 1925, Giorgio de Chirico concentrate his work on ancient painting studying, first and foremost the materials and techniques used in making them. In terms of the evolution of painting techniques, he reached the conclusion, based on the experience gained while copying renaissance paintings, that there was a clear hierarchy headed unequivocally by 'tempera grassa' (oil-glazed tempera). This technique, exemplified by the perfection of certain renaissance paintings, makes it possible, in his view, to combine the elasticity and resistance (of oil-based binder) with the transparency and luminosity of water-based painting techniques. While the rediscovery of tempera techniques immediately after World War I, was something that many Italian painters became interested in, the theoretical reasoning supporting the superiority of 'tempera grassa' came from the German milieu, especially from Munich where De Chirico had spent his formative years.

I dipinti murali di Santagata e Oppo alla Casa Madre dei Mutilati e Invalidi di Guerra a Roma: due tecniche a confronto in un'unica tradizione

Wall paintings by Santagata and Oppo in the Casa Madre dei Mutilati e Invalidi di Guerra in Rome: the two artists compared

The building, designed by the architect M. Piacentini, stands in an isolated position on Lungotevere Castello between Palazzo di Giustizia (law courts) and Castel Sant'Angelo. The paintings were executed between 1936 and 1938 in the Corte delle Vittorie by Oppo and Santagata, who worked with Sironi and Piacentini to create an architectural and decorative unified project at the Casa Madre. The paintings cover an area of about 600 square metres inside the two porticoes that flank the Corte. They depict World War I battles and scenes from life in the trenches and, from the technical and stylistic point of view, they reflect the renewed interest in the Italian fresco tradition from the 15th century (Santagata) and the 17th century (Oppo) as well as the attempt to find a modern figurative language that would be typically Italian, in which it would be possible to recognise the features of national artistic identity. In the cultural discussion of the period, this subject coincided with growing interest in the 15th century and the works of Piero della Francesca in particular. Critics in the late 1930s rated Santagata as one of the greatest fresco painters, and recent studies have confirmed his use of this technique right up to the 1970s. The paintings of Santagata and Oppo in this building are one of the largest pictorial cycle carried out a fresco a long-standing traditional Italian painting technique. They make up a complete, unified whole, in a space whose original features have hardly changed at all over the years. In this sense, they represent good examples of that style of wall painting which was so much discussed in the 1930s and which was closely observed by critics and experts alike.

Il restauro del Reliquiario del Duomo di Orvieto e i problemi di conservazione degli smalti traslucidi

Restoration of the reliquary from Orvieto Cathedral, and problems relating to conservation of translucent enamel surfaces

The paper reports the state of conservation and the nature of the decay processes affecting the reliquary of the Orvieto Cathedral (Umbria, Italy). It also presents the conservation methods selected after observation of the chemical and physical factors affecting the enamels and the corrosion of the supporting silver sheets. The authors moreover discuss the problem of a correct and efficient fruition of the artefact, taking into account the contrasting requirements of conservation and public cult (the reliquary contains the famous relic of the Corporale), suggesting, finally, a positive solution.

ABSTRACT

Il trittico della bottega di Baldassarre degli Embriachi nella Certosa di Pavia. Tecnologia costruttiva e intervento di restauro
The Triptych by the workshop of Baldassarre degli Embriachi at the Certosa in Pavia; construction techniques and conservation intervention

The restoration of the Triptych at the Charterhouse in Pavia was carried out between 1986 and 1989 by the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro following the recovery of several panels and statuettes forming part of it, which had been stolen in August 1984. The project provided an extraordinary occasion for examining every aspect of the work, and produced interesting information on the construction techniques employed, details of which are still to be studied. During the restoration, the main problem was that of working out how to fix the pieces being put back in position on the main structure. The anchoring system had to take into account the differing chemical and physical behaviour of the materials making up the work: wood, bone and ivory. This led to testing various 'compatible' materials, after which those that best reflected the special conservation needs of the work were used.

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Applicazioni dei gel come supportanti nel restauro

Some application of gels in conservation

This study deals with some properties of the gels employed in the cleaning of painting. General properties of polyacrylic acids, cellulose ethers and waxy emulsions are described. Compatibility with some salts, aqueous and organic solvents has been tested and some procedures to prepare solvent-gels are herein described. Resistance against biodeteriogens has been experimented. Procedures, practical problems and features are discussed.

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Applicazioni dei gel come supportanti nel restauro

Architectural aspects of the illumination for decorated interiors

The complex interaction between artificial illumination and architecture is investigated here in some of its various aspects, such as visual perception and conservation, as well as specifically technological aspects. The paper illustrates the illumination systems installed in four different monuments: the crypt in Anagni Cathedral, Bramante's Tempietto of San Pietro in Montorio, the Nolfi Chapel in Fano Cathedral, and the Chapel of the Crucifixion in Varallo Sacro Monte. The four installations have attempted to respond to the needs of fruition, of minimum obtrusiveness, and of respect for spatial perception, while at the same time experimenting with the harmonisation of the illumination and the overall restoration projects, both from the conceptual and the temporal points of view.

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