

Il mosaico parietale del ninfeo sotto il palazzo nuovo della Bibliotheca Hertziana a Roma: le nuove acquisizioni

### *Wall mosaic in the nymphaeum beneath the new palazzo of the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome: new acquisitions*

In the center of Rome near Trinità dei Monti, archaeological investigations related to the renovation of the “Palazzo Nuovo” of the Bibliotheca Hertziana, conducted in the years 2003-2008, led to the discovery of important archaeological remains relevant to the Gardens of Lucullus. The excavations, financed by the Max Planck Society, have helped to investigate a new section of nymphaeum discovered in 1968-70 and to bring to light new luxury fragments of polychrome wall mosaic that decorate the front in the first century AD. For the first time has been investigated also the front terrace, which has a large tub that ran parallel to the front of the monument, which was found defined by an opus reticulatum wall decorated on the inner surface by painted plaster. Were collected important data useful for the reconstitution of this unique monument, the result of several building phases, dating between the late second century BC and the fourth-fifth century AD. Analytical investigations were also carried out on the plasters and the glass tesserae of the wall mosaic, one of the most ancient where was employed gold glass tesserae together with the medallion with Ulysses and Poyphemus in the Domus Aurea.

L'Adorazione dei pastori del Bagnacavallo Junior nella Pinacoteca Civica di Cento

### *The Adorazione dei pastori by Bagnacavallo Junior in the Civic Art Gallery of Cento*

The Adorazione dei pastori (Shepherds' Adoration) by Bagnacavallo Junior is a work whose attribution has been much discussed over the years, even recently. This paper examines the question in detail, together with close scrutiny of the documents recounting the vicissitudes of the altar piece prior to its definitive acquisition by the Civic Art Gallery of Cento. In addition, the task also involved examining all the graphic works relating to the painting, dispersed in various European museums, analysing not only the question of attribution but also the design and composition of the altar piece. The work was restored between 2009 and 2011, but the results can only now be seen, since the gallery was temporarily closed after the earthquake on 29 May 2012. The recent restoration removed the extraneous layers of material on the painted surface which made it difficult to interpret the work; for example, attempts had been made in the past to highlight the outlines of the figures with fine brushstrokes of black paint, and there was a heavy layer of dark patina which dulled the appearance, especially the glistening hues. From the structural point of view, repairs were carried out on the three cross-members of the frame which had lost their rigidity over time, creating unbalanced stresses on the painted surface. In general terms, the variations in outlines shown by infrared reflectography are on a very small scale, in spite of the fact that the underdrawing appears to be extremely simple and legible, as can also be seen in two altar pieces by Bagnacavallo Junior at the Bologna National Art Gallery. The artist does not use primer coats – a fact that is quite rare for a 16th century work – and creates the backgrounds with a minimum number of coats which are slightly reinforced in areas where the pigments have low coverage properties. The most unusual technical solutions, though not completely unknown in 16th century oil paintings, are in parts of the backgrounds where lapis lazuli was used, in some cases applied on a red, lacquer-based background; in other cases, especially the sky, on a clearer coat containing blue enamel paint.

Ceramiche protostoriche orientali. Un'esperienza didattica all'ISCR

*Oriental protohistoric ceramics: an ISCR teaching experience*

A group of ceramic artifacts belonging to the National Museum of Oriental Art, Rome, dating from the early Chalcolithic to the Iron Age, from Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan, was used for a teaching project at the Laboratory ceramic (pottery), glass and enamels of ISCR (Rome). The students tackled personally with a wide range of restoration problems, interacting not only with their teachers, but also with specialists of various analytic fields. The experimental project showed that research and teaching, being inseparable on methodological grounds, are the best guarantee of new scientific results.

Il Moderno come opera «perpetuamente nuova». Il Crematorio di Asplund nel Cimitero del Bosco, Enskede (Stoccolma, 1935-40)

*The «perpetual newness» of modern artworks: the crematorium designed by Asplund in the Woodland Cemetery, Enskede (Stockholm, 1935-40)*

construction cycle that lasted nearly 25 years. The project represents a fundamental stage in the design career of Gunnar Asplund who started by restoring traditional forms and, in the space of a few years, moved on to create a personal approach to Modernism. The hallmarks of this architecture – in which each element seems to have a direct link to features of the landscape – are precision in the use of carefully chosen materials combined with explicit references to traditional construction techniques and language codes of the past. Today, however, the building shows evident signs of deterioration due to prolonged use and the effects of temperature and humidity changes. To deal with this situation, restoration work has been carried out over the last twenty years, aimed mainly at recreating what is thought to be its 'original' appearance, regardless of the constituent materials which have been gradually replaced. This paper examines the reasons for the widespread and deep-rooted refusal to accept the marks of the passage of time on works of modern architecture. Such buildings are expected to take on the appearance of 'perpetually new works', and are gradually deprived of their wealth of stratifications and the possibility of physical change.