



David Gauci <davidgauci7@gmail.com>

APS CSR 2024 Restawr - Ikona ta San Nikola

David Gauci <davidgauci7@gmail.com>

To: Bugeja Charles Rev <charles.bugeja@maltadiocese.org>

Thu, Jan 2, 2025 at 3:48 PM

Rikors ta Dun David Gauci
Arcipriet Naxxar

3/2025

Lill E.T. Mons Charles J Scicluna
Arcisqof ta Malta

Niddisponi li hemm htiega urgenti li jsir restawr fuq statwa ta San Nikola
li qed nannetti ma dan ir rikors id dokumenti kollha mehtiega;

Nitlob li jinhareg id Digiret halli jkun jista jinbeda ix xoghol

nitlob il Barka tieghek

fr David Gauci
Arcipriet



Qed nibghatlek in-neċessarju biex isir ir-rikors għar-restawr:

1. e-mail t'approvazzjoni tat-talba tagħna
2. e-mail biex isir l-ewwel pagament ta' 50%, it-tieni parti tithallas mat0tmiem tal-proġett
3. Restoration Method Statement
4. Quotation

[Quoted text hidden]

3 attachments

Gmail - APS Funding 2024 - Restoration of Byzantine style icons.pdf
175K

Gmail - APS CSR 2024 - First payment 50%.pdf
210K

St Nicholas_Ghaqda Wirt Kulturali Naxxari_01924 (1).pdf
70K

Prezentat il-Kurja Arċiveskovili
Num 6 ta' Jannar 2025

Charles Bugeja, Kancellier



Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari <ghaqdakulturaliwirtnaxxari@gmail.com>

APS CSR 2024

Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari <ghaqdakulturaliwirtnaxxari@gmail.com>
To: Abdilla Rose-Anne <roseanne.abdilla@maltadiocese.org>
Cc: Paul Catania <paulcatania@gmail.com>

2 January 2025 at 15:03

Dear Ms Abdilla,

Thank you for your e-mail.

Here are our banking coordinates:

Account Name : Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari

Account Number: 40021849912

MT77VALL2201300000004002184991

IBAN : 2

Best Wishes for the New Year 2025.

Regards,

Victor Zammit
Treasurer
Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari

On Thu, 2 Jan 2025 at 13:49, Abdilla Rose-Anne <roseanne.abdilla@maltadiocese.org> wrote:

Dear Mr Catania,

Kindly be informed that we have received the first part of the sponsorship of the Byzantine style icons from APS Bank plc, amounting to €2000. May I kindly ask you to send me an IBAN where we will be able to transfer these funds (net of VAT).

Once the project is completed, please send us a completion report together with invoices and proof of payment. I will also be sending you the agreement in a separate email.

Thanks and regards

Rose-Anne

Rose-Anne Abdilla

Financial Controller (Entities)

Tel +356 25906 402

Email roseanne.abdilla@maltadiocese.org

www.church.mt



Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari <ghaqdakulturaliwirtnaxxari@gmail.com>

APS Funding 2024 - Restoration of Byzantine style icons

5 messages

Abdilla Rose-Anne <roseanne.abdilla@maltadiocese.org>

1 November 2024 at 14:56

To: Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari <ghaqdakulturaliwirtnaxxari@gmail.com>

Dear Mr. Catania,

I am pleased to inform you that the project in caption was approved for a sponsorship by APS Bank plc up to the amount of €4,000. Kindly note that this amount is inclusive of VAT, so you will receive the net amount of €3,389.83.

In the coming weeks an agreement will be drafted, and once signed I will send you a copy for your information.

Kind regards

Rose-Anne

Rose-Anne Abdilla

Financial Controller (Entities)

Tel +356 25906 402

Email roseanne.abdilla@maltadiocese.org

www.church.mt



Kindly read our legal disclaimer [here](#).

Ghaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari <ghaqdakulturaliwirtnaxxari@gmail.com>

1 November 2024 at 17:37

To: Paul Catania <paulcatania@gmail.com>

Cc: davidgauci7@gmail.com

Paul,

Irċevejna l-email t'hawn taħt dwar il-restawr taż-żewg ikoni. L-għotja, li tammonta għal €3,389, ovvjament mhix biżżejjed li nagħmluhon it-tnejn. Pero tista ssir waħda minnhom, u nagħtu prijorita lill-ikona ta' San Nikola.

Hawn taħt qed nuri it-tlett kwotazzjonijiet li għandna f-idejna:

RESTAWR ARTI

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restawrarti@gmail.com

VAT: MT 2316-1310



08/12/2024

Quotation #

019/24

Għaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari

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paulcatania@gmail.com

Conservation and Restoration –St. Nicholas, tempera on panel,
15th Century

DESCRIPTION OF TREATMENTS

PRICE (EURO)

Painting

-Consolidation and adhesions of wood joints and unstable gypsum layers	130.00
-Cleaning and removal of oxidised coatings and previous restoration interventions	1030.00
-Reconstructions and infills	250.00
-Gilding of lost areas (authentic gold leaf)	200.00
-Pictorial re- integration and final protective coating (UV filtered)	400.00

Decorative frame

- Consolidation and adhesions wood and unstable gypsum layers	150.00
- Reconstructions and infills	200.00
- Cleaning and removal of dirt and grime	310.00
- Gilding of lost areas (authentic silver leaf and <i>meccatura</i>)	300.00
- Restoration method statement and final conservation reports	180.00

Subtotal exc. VAT 3150.00

VAT 18% 567.00

Total (Euro) 3717.00

This quotation is valid for 6 months from date of issue.

St Nicholas Icon,
Tempera and gilding on panel, 15th Century
Naxxar Parish Museum

Restoration Method Statement



Semira Gayle Bugeja (M.Sc., B.A. (Hons) (Melit.))

December 2024

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1. Introduction

The following report carried out by Restawr Arti provides a description of the required conservation and restoration treatments for the 15th Century Icon of St. Nicholas and its Baroque style decorative frame at the Naxxar Parish Museum (Figure 1.). All knowledge gathered regarding the present condition of the work of art under study is based on a visual inspection. The proposed required conservation - restoration treatments are based both on professional experience, and published research, and may require slight changes in the process or methodology once the conservator/s carries out a close and thorough visual inspection.

The aim will be to present a conservative methodology for the conservation of the panel painting and wooden gilded frame, and hence preserving the original materials and colours. All conservation materials, and procedures stated will be compatible, reversible and respectful to the original materials in discussion.

2. The Painting- General Information

The work of art in discussion is an 15th Century panel painting representing St. Nicholas (Figure 1.). The structure consists of 3 vertical wood panels, held by 2 cross panels to hold the panels in place (Figure 2.). Over the panels, canvas was exposed due to the damages and losses. These can be mainly seen applied over the joints between the different panels in order to close off the openings between the different panels and also to prepare a flat and homogeneous surface for the artist.

Additionally, a homogenous layer of gypsum is applied as a preparation for the painting and gilt surface. The gilding was carried out with the water gilding technique, while the pictorial surface was carried out using the tempera technique.

Although today the surface is covered with layers of organic coatings, there might still be the original coating, which has also oxidised as the other overlapping layers.

The painting is decorated with a Baroque style Mecca gilt frame.



Figure 1. The icon of St. Nicholas, 15th Century, and Baroque style decorative frame, at Naxxar Parish Museum. Image, Restawr Arti, 2024.



Figure 2. The backside of the panel painting, showing 3 separate panels (green lines mark the joints) and 2 horizontal cross bars to support the structure. Image, Restawr Arti, 2024.

3. Condition Assessment

A visual inspection to understand the present state of conservation was carried out at a close distance from front and back. This could help understand better the original materials, deterioration phenomena, damages, and previous restoration interventions.

3.1 The Painting

Initiating from the panel support, the wood is in a very good condition. No severe losses or expansions were noted. Additionally, no insect damage was identified. The gypsum preparatory layer shows cracks and losses, mostly around the joints of the different panels (Figure 3.). Although, the canvas underneath serves as a support for the climatic movements and changes in the wood support, the different panels react differently to the climatic conditions, and hence these cracks and losses.

Most of the bottom part seems to be previously restored. Some areas are deformed and the retouching and overpaint has discoloured by time (Figure 4.).

Overall, the painting has a dull appearance due to the oxidised coatings, dirt and grime that is present on the painted surface and gilt areas (Figure 5.). This is reducing dimensionality and certain details of the portrait and background.

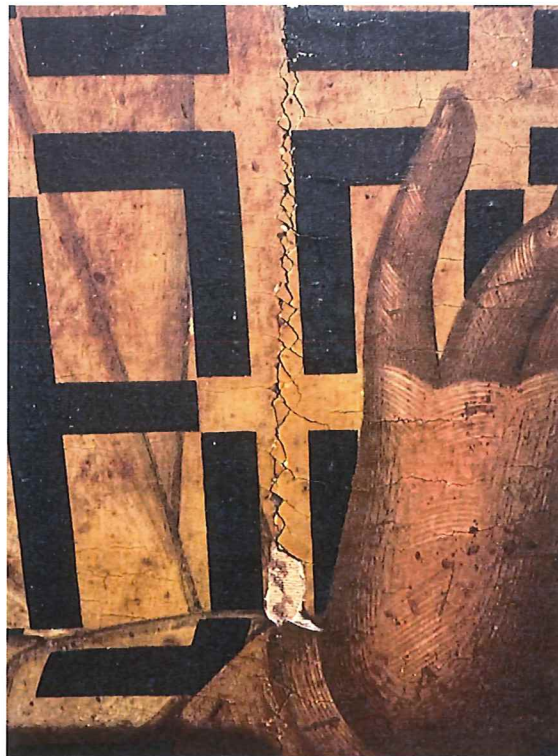


Figure 3. Detail showing the cracked and damaged gypsum and paint layers over the different panels. Image, Restawr Arti, 2024.



Figure 4. Detail showing previous restoration material. Cracked gypsum and discoloured retouching and overpaint. Image, Restawr Arti, 2024.

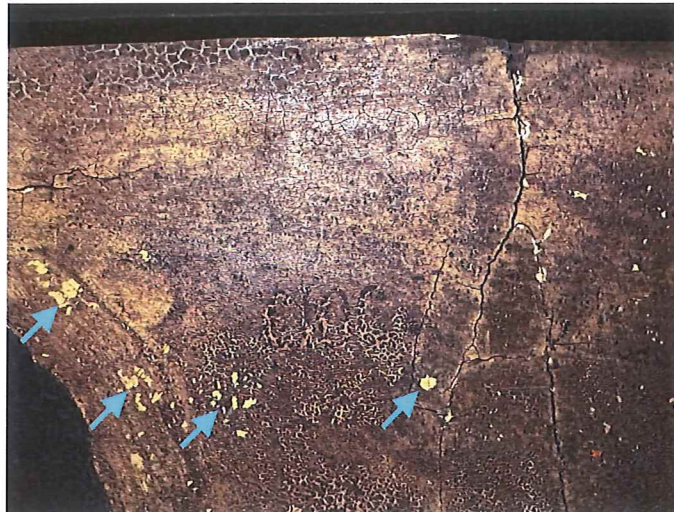


Figure 5. Bright gold spots under the thick layers of oxidised coating. (Image, Restawr Arti, 2024).

3.2 The Decorative Gilded Frame

Overall, structurally, the frame is in a good condition. No major cracks or missing parts were observed. However, it was noted that some areas are missing the gypsum layer, and hence also the bole and gilding (Figure 6.). Around these lacunae, the edges are detached from the wooden support and unstable.

By time, or due to inappropriate handling or dusting, some areas of the gilt surface are abraded. Most of the intricate details of the sculptural motifs and the luminosity is hindered by the dirt deposit attached to the surface (Figure 7.).

After thorough visual observations it was concluded that both the painting and the decorative gilded frame require a conservation and restoration methodology designed specifically for their requirements in order to preserve the original materials, and reduce further damage and deterioration.



Figure 6. Detached, and lost gypsum layers. (Image, Restawr Arti, 2024).

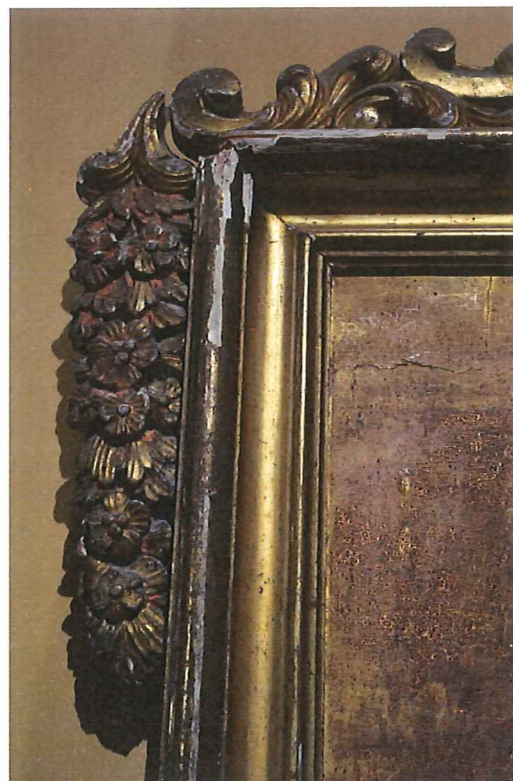


Figure 7. Dull and abraded sculptural motifs. (Image, Restawr Arti, 2024).

4. Proposed Conservation and Restoration Treatments

This section will include the different treatments, processes, and methodologies thought to be required at this point based on visual inspection, knowledge from previous projects, and research of published literature. Prior and throughout the stages of the project, all steps and methodologies will be photographically documented with visible light, and some cases also with ultraviolet light. All the treatments, and methodologies will be documented in a final conservation report for future reference.

The management of the Naxxar Parish Museum and members of Għaqda Kulturali Wirt Naxxari are invited to visit Restawr Arti Studio whenever required and think fit, in order to view and follow the progress of works.

Both painting and frame will be taken down from the walls accordingly, packed properly and safely and transported to Restawr Arti Studio in Naxxar in an enclosed van. Eventually, once the works are finalised, the painting and frame will be repacked properly and safely, and returned back to the church in an enclosed transport van.

4.1 The Painting

The first step is to photographically document the painting from front and back using visible, raking, and ultraviolet light. A thorough inspection will be carried out at close distance in order to evaluate and design a precise methodology for the treatments required.

The focus will move to the lengthy and important treatments including the structural support. A temporary facing using Japanese paper will be applied to the pictorial layer to protect it from the handling that is required in the coming stages. Unstable gypsum layers and detachments will be adhered using a micro- emulsion adhesive diluted in alcohol. The adhesive will be injected under the layers, and eventually re-activated with a heat weave in order to have similar properties as the original. The painting will be re- stretched and tensioned to the original stretcher frame.

The next stage will be to determine the best possible cleaning methodology or methodologies to remove the oxidised varnish, and altered restoration colours without affecting or touching the original paint and gilt surfaces. Various cleaning tests will be carried out to determine the mixture of solvents in liquid or gel state, and the methodology of cleaning. Dirt, grime, and gypsum infills from the previous restoration will be softened and removed by fine scalpel blades. This process will be carried out to expose the artist's original colours once again.

Lacunae and losses in the paint layer, and preparation layer will be infilled with fine quality *gesso di Bologna* and rabbit glue, and eventually levelled to match the rest of the painting's surface. Lacunae in the gilded areas will be prepared with red bolo and gilded with authentic gold leaf 23.75Kt. The new applied gold leaf will be aged in order to match the appearance of the original gold using glazes and stable retouching colours.

Prior to re- integration of the pictorial layer, a low molecular weight retouching varnish will be applied to separate the original colours from the retouching restoration colours while saturating the original colours. Then, the pictorial re- integration of losses of the pictorial layer will be carried out using stable varnish based colours purposely designed for restoration. This phase will unify the appearance of the painting. As a final step, the surface will be given a synthetic coating with a satin finish. A synthetic varnish will be chosen over a natural varnish since it is proven to be more stable to high temperatures and humidity levels, does not discolour by time, and also has an ultraviolet filter

incorporated, hence it protects the tempera colours from the negative effects sunlight may have on the original materials.

4.2 Decorative Gilded Frame

Primarily, the unstable cracked, detached gypsum and gilded surfaces, will be re. adhered back to their support with an acrylic micro emulsion, fine brushes, and needles. Once the structure is in a good state of conservation, the process will move to the cleaning of the gilded surfaces. Various cleaning tests will be carried out to determine the mixture of solvents in liquid or gel state, and the methodology of cleaning the oxidised shellac coating, dirt and grime without affecting the gilt surface.

Any minor lacunae or cracks in the wood support will be reconstructed using a two component resin, purposely designed for art restoration as a substitute for wood and timber. Lacunae in the gypsum layer are to be infilled with a mix of *gesso di Bologna* and animal glue, and levelled to the adjacent surface.

Black and red bole, according to the original, will be applied over the new infilled areas, and other areas of missing original bole. Authentic silver leaf will be used to cover only the areas of missing original silver, and eventually burnished using agate stone. In order to integrate the appearance of the new silver with that of the original silver, layers of shellac will be applied until the same level is reached. Finally, a layer of final protective varnish (UV filtered) will be applied all over the frame to reduce the risk of future abrasions.

5. Conclusion

From the observations carried out on site, Restawr Arti suggests that the Icon of St. Nicholas and its decorative frame at the Naxxar Parish Museum are preserved by following a conservation and restoration programme. All treatments carried out will be based on a methodological, and ethical approach in order to preserve the historical materials. Conservation treatments, and procedures must be carried out using established conservation products and tools.

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