

The restoration trilogy

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“La trilogia del restauro”

“The restoration trilogy”

MATTEO BARISONE

Matteo Barisone, Dottorando in Patrimonio Architettonico / Architectural Heritage, Politecnico di Torino

matteo.barisone@polito.it

Il progetto multimediale vuole unire scientificamente il Politecnico di Torino e il Centro Conservazione e Restauro La Venaria Reale, per esplorare le pratiche di restauro attraverso una trilogia di produzioni video. L'obiettivo primario è l'interscambio culturale e accademico nel campo del restauro, valorizzando la sinergia tra metodologie. Si pone l'accento sulla multidisciplinarietà, un'analisi dettagliata del patrimonio sabauda in Piemonte, del paesaggio vitivinicolo delle Langhe, Roero e Monferrato, e l'archeologia industriale diffusa sul territorio Torinese. Sotto la guida della prof.ssa Carla Bartolozzi, il progetto fonde rigore scientifico e narrazione cinematografica per promuovere una consapevolezza pubblica innovativa nella gestione del patrimonio storico, ambientale e sociale.

The multimedia project aims to scientifically unite the Politecnico di Torino and the Centro Conservazione e Restauro La Venaria Reale to explore restoration practices through a trilogy of video productions. The primary goal is cultural and academic exchange in the field of restoration, emphasizing the synergy between methodologies. The focus is on multidisciplinarity, with a detailed analysis of the properties of the Royal House of Savoy heritage in Piedmont, the vineyard landscape of Langhe, Roero and Monferrato, and the industrial archaeology spread throughout the Turin area. Under the guidance of prof. Carla Bartolozzi, the project combines scientific rigor and cinematic storytelling to promote innovative public awareness in the management of historical, environmental, and social heritage.

The Road of Restoration: Culture and Practice in the Conservation and Enhancement of Heritage is a project made up of a trilogy of video productions, each lasting between 30 to 40 minutes. The initiative aims to strengthen relationships between Chinese institutions and universities that are partners of the Politecnico di Torino. The aim is to pursue cultural, institutional and academic goals, bridging different cultures through the exploration of practices and techniques applicable to the field of restoration in all its forms.

China and Italy share the distinction of having the highest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. However, while China has experienced rapid growth in recent decades, Italy represents a historical continuity that we have chosen to regard as a 'treasure' to be valued and capitalized upon in terms of work and knowledge through a criterion that integrates various disciplines within the field of restoration.

For this reason, from the outset, it was essential to involve and create synergy with the Centro Conservazione e Restauro La Venaria Reale (CCR), in order to highlight the diverse expertise of the two institutions, which, despite addressing seemingly the same subject, do so with different scientific research structures. Through this process, the aim was to highlight the key message of the discipline: the multidisciplinary nature that characterizes the various specializations within the field and practices of restoration.

The Centro Conservazione e Restauro La Venaria Reale and the Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) of the Politecnico di Torino represent two centers of excellence in the field of restoration, each with a specific focus reflecting the different dimensions of cultural heritage conservation.

Comparing the two institutions, the CCR stands out for its methodological approach centered on the conservation of movable works of art: paintings, sculptures, textiles and more. Their interventions are characterized by meticulous attention to detail, with the aim of preserving the material and historical integrity of the artwork. The CCR's approach involves experts in chemistry, physics and biology to analyze

Fig. 1 – Poster presenting the documentary trilogy.





materials and understand degradation processes, thereby ensuring highly specialized and minimally invasive restoration interventions. On the other hand, the Department of Architecture and Design is dedicated to restoration through an integration of specialized skills. It focuses on the conservation, recovery, and enhancement of buildings and architectural structures. The adopted method involves a critical analysis of original construction techniques, a rigorous evaluation of materials and historical stratifications, and the application of advanced methodologies to ensure the preservation of the cultural and architectural integrity of structures.

This practice is guided by the principle of safeguarding the aesthetic, historical and cultural integrity of buildings, while also ensuring their functionality and harmonious integration into contemporary urban or rural contexts. This discipline is grounded in a profound understanding of construction techniques, materials and compositional forms, critically analyzing the transformations and stratifications that the work has undergone over time.

This, albeit paradoxical, analytical divergence often does not coincide with an overlapping of skills and competencies necessary to truly unify knowledge in the sector. The project criterion represents, first and foremost, an attempt to evolve the sector towards greater communication, leveraging the Italian experience accumulated over decades. This active collaboration shows how it is possible to combine diverse skills and methodologies to address the complex needs of heritage conservation in an integrated manner. Both institutions, while maintaining their disciplinary specificity, share a method that emphasizes the importance of scientific research, technological innovation and specialized training. The dialogue between the CCR and the DAD has allowed for the development of knowledge that takes into account the specificities of each field, promoting close collaboration among restorers, architects, engineers, chemists and other specialists.

The composition of the documentary work was characterized by continuous exchange. On one hand, the detailed analysis of materials and restoration techniques used for works of art provided valuable insights for the conservation approach of architectural buildings; on the other, the in-depth knowledge of urban planning and structural aspects enriched preventive conservation strategies, especially in more complex contexts.

The main benefit of this collaboration lies in the possibility of tackling restoration challenges with a broader and more integrated vision. The synergy between the CCR and the DAD has led to a greater awareness

Fig. 2 – Aerial filming activity in the inner courtyard of the CCR La Venaria Reale (Turin).

Fig. 3 – Ground filming activity, main facade of the Racconigi Castle (Turin).

of the interdependencies between the different components of cultural heritage, promoting innovative solutions that respect and enhance the complexity and richness of our heritage. Specifically, the true value of the project lies in the variety of topics covered. The three video productions provide an in-depth analysis of the different areas of restoration, enhancement and conservation of cultural heritage.

The first work analyzes the importance of the heritage inherited from the Royal House of Savoy in the Piedmont region, focusing on the functions and tasks of the various disciplines applied to restoration. The scientific synergy between content and container, the conservation and musealization of the immense Savoy artistic heritage, housed within magnificent Baroque architectures scattered across Piedmont, is explored as an expression of territorial dominance.

The second production aims to delve deeply into the landscape heritage, an expression of culture and tradition: "The Vineyard Landscapes of Piedmont: Langhe, Roero and Monferrato," recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014. The practices, techniques and activities of maintenance and enhancement of the territory are explored, highlighting the age-old interaction between humans and the characteristic landscape. This approach emphasizes how traditional techniques and agricultural practices have shaped the landscape, contributing not only to environmental conservation but also to the economic and cultural promotion of the region.

Finally, the third production addresses an increasingly crucial theme in the contemporary urban context: industrial archaeology. Starting with the UNESCO recognition of Ivrea as an "Industrial City of the 20th Century" in 2018, the production investigates the conservation and recovery of historical testimonies related to the industrial history of the metropolitan city of Turin. This segment emphasizes the importance of industrial memory and its integration into the modern urban fabric, illustrating how the preservation of industrial structures can significantly contribute to urban regeneration and cultural enhancement.

Fig. 4 - Photograph of the entire work group at the Lingotto - Politecnico di Torino. From left: Matteo Barisone, Carla Bartolozzi, Sara Abram, Riccardo Covino, Daniele Dabbene, Marc Zigante, Pietro Merlo.



In this way, the project offers a comprehensive and nuanced overview of the various dimensions of restoration and conservation, emphasizing the importance of a critical foundation adequate to the protection of cultural heritage in all its forms.

In conclusion, the project has represented a significant gesture between different academic and cultural institutions, uniting the CCR and the DAD of the Politecnico di Torino in a profound exploration of the visual arts, architecture and industrial archaeology.

This collaboration has highlighted the technical-scientific importance in addressing the complex challenges of heritage conservation.

Beyond being the key figure as the creator and thinker of the project, Professor Carla Bartolozzi, played an essential role in guiding and coordinating the activities in this endeavor, leading our multimedia team through a rigorous and scientifically valid methodological approach. Simultaneously, from the early stages of coordination, the multimedia technical team expressed a desire to generate a video production that would be an expression of refined cinematographic construction, manifesting a historically and architecturally significant screenplay.

Consequently, through meticulous planning with a complex narrative structure, the Professor succeeded in disseminating and communicating the core message of the project: to spread a culture of heritage conservation, almost transcending mere physical restoration, in favor of an exposition that focuses on cultural enhancement through public awareness. The critical approach adopted has facilitated the understanding of the interconnections between historical, environmental and social heritage, promoting innovative and sustainable solutions for their management.

The academic collaboration developed by Professor Bartolozzi has given rise to processes with various skills' spectrums, underlying the numerous actions of protection, conservation and restoration that concern our heritage. The case around which the different narratives unfold is that of the city of Turin and its territory, analyzing how the past decades have witnessed numerous processes of urban transformation and regeneration. These analyses lead us to verify how the analytical and strategic process is fundamental for careful preservation of memory, which is valued through actions not only of protection but also of planning and maintenance.

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