BERNT NOTKE

The Research and Conservation of the
Retable of the Church of the Holy Spirit

2019 – 2025

The retable of the high altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Tallinn

The late medieval retable of the high altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Tallinn, is an outstanding masterpiece of woodcarving and painting of international renown, completed in 1483 in the workshop of Bernt Notke, a prominent master of Lübeck. The retable of the Church of the Holy Spirit is one of the few works of art that has been attributed to Bernt Notke's workshop on the basis of written sources. Among the work that has been attributed to Notke on the basis of written records, are the triumphal arch group and rood screen in Lübeck Cathedral and the retable of the high altar in Aarhus Cathedral. In addition, on the basis of critical analysis, he has also been attributed the paintings of "Danse macabre" in Lübeck (destroyed) and in St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn, "Saint George and the Dragon" in Storkyrka in Stockholm, a painting depicting the Mass of Saint Gregory (destroyed) and a couple of other sculptures and paintings.

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Objectives

The main objective of the project is to conduct the research of Bernt Notke's retable of the Church of the Holy Spirit, one of Estonia's most prominent works of art, thereby broadening the knowledge of the context, use of materials and techniques in the process of its creation as well as subsequent alterations. The retable will be compared to other works attributed to Notke. The general state and the damage will be documented and this will form the basis for the conservation of the retable. The innovative presentation of the collected information will contribute to a wider acknowledgement of this work of art in Estonia and abroad.

✦ The research of creative practices and techniques and use of materials in the Baltic area in the late medieval era with the joint efforts of various (research) institutions in the name of a common goal – the appreciation of cultural heritage;

✦ The presentation of Bernt Notke's retable in the local as well as in the international context through scientific practices, web developments and popularisation;

✦ Integration of conservation and research practices into the curriculum of the Department of Cultural Heritage and Conservation of the Estonian Academy of Arts (organisation of international workshops; involvement of students in the process of documentation, research and popularisation);

✦ Broadening of the context of the retable by comparative analyses with other works attributed to Notke.

✦ Audience programmes for the wider general public. The development of a public science network to collect and present the outcomes of research and conservation.

Works by Bernt Notke

Works attributed to Bernt Notke on the basis of documentary evidence:

Triumphal cross and rood screen of the Lübeck Cathedral, 1470–77 *(photo 1)*

Reredos of the high altar of the Århus Cathedral, 1478–79 *(photo 2, 3, 4)*

Reredos of the high altar of the Holy Spirit, Tallinn, 1483

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

Works attributed to Bernt Notke:

Danse macabre in St Mary's, Lübeck, 1463(?) *(photo 5)*, destroyed

Danse macabre in St Nicholas', Tallinn, late 15th c *(photo 6)*

Altarpiece of the Schonenfahrer, St Mary's, Lübeck, ca 1475 *(photo 7, 8)*

The lay altarpiece of the Lübeck Cathedral, 1470s *(photo 9)*

St George group in the Stockholm Cathedral, 1489 *(photo 10)*

The Mass of St Gregory in St Mary's, Lübeck, ca 1500 *(photo 11)*, destroyed

Photo 5

Photo 6

Photo 7

Photo 8

Photo 9

Photo 10

Photo 11

Description of the object

Object: The Retable of the high altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Tallinn
Registry number of the monument: 1290
Attribution: Bernt Notke's workshop in Lübeck
Date: 1483
Material: wood (oak, pine), tempera paint and oil paint, metal, sheet gold
Technique: woodcarving, polychrome, gilding

Dimensions of the shrine: Height 360 cm (incl. tabernacle); width with open wings 364 cm; width of the central cabinet 182 cm; depth 90 cm.
Dimensions of the figures: Standing figures in the wings: ca 90 cm, half figures ca 32-34 cm; kneeling and sitting figures of the centre cabinet ca 70 cm, standing figures ca 90 cm; side figures ca 40 cm.
Tiivamaalide mõõdud: light size ca 90x78.5-79 cm

The winged altarpiece – the retable of the high altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Tallinn, was completed in 1483 in the workshop of Bernt Notke, the most prominent North European artist of the late fifteenth century. The retable was commissioned by Tallinn City Council as an initiative of burgermeister Diderick Hagenbecke, the warden of the Church of the Holy Spirit. Notke's letter to Tallinn City Council, about late payment for the altarpiece, makes for its safe attribution to Notke.

The central panel of the retable is a sculptural composition, depicting the descent of the Holy Spirit or the Miracle of the Pentecost. The retable comprises two pairs of folding wings. The inner sides of the inner wings contain sculptures in alcoves, the outer sides are covered with paintings, the inner and outer sides of the outer wings are painted. The choice of the central composition has obviously been prompted by the church's consecration to the Holy Spirit, the flanking saints on the wings – Saint Olaf and Saint Victor from Marseilles refer to Tallinn, whereas Saint Elisabeth of Thuringia refers to the Holy Spirit Hospital. The scenes from the life of Saint Elisabeth and the Passion of Christ that have been painted on the inner wings and of Christ as Man of Sorrows and Saint Elisabeth on the outer wings are dedicated to the activities of the hospital. The scenes depicting physical suffering, at the same time promising the grace of God, associated with caring for the ailing and for Christ were highly appropriate for the

church of a hospital. The tabernacle with the scene of the coronation of Virgin Mary at the top of the retable fortifies the role of Mary in the Miracle of the Pentecost.

The retable of the Church of the Holy Spirit is a couple of years younger and smaller than the retable of the high altar of Saint Nicholas' Church which was completed in the workshop of another prominent artist from Lübeck, Hermen Rode, in 1481. The main differences between Notke's retable and Rode's retable, as well as Notke's other earlier work, are the structure and the realisation of their central compositions. It constitutes an integrated multi-figure scene which has been positioned in a particular spatial context whereas the positioning of figures and their interconnectivity creates a dynamic unity.

Notke's retable was on the high altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit until 1902 when it was replaced by a modern altarpiece. The winged altarpiece was first transferred to Saint Anthony's Chapel in Saint Nicholas' Church, then to Tallinn Estonian Museum's exposition in Kadriorg Palace in 1922 and finally, to Saint Mary's Cathedral in 1930. The retable was returned to the Church of the Holy Spirit in 1941, soon to be evacuated from the war to the Manor of Järlepa. The retable was returned to its original position in the church in 1953.

To the best of our knowledge, the retable has been restored six times: in 1625, in 1815, in 1964–1986, in 2001, in 2007 and in 2009. The first two restorations probably involved repainting and construction improvement jobs. In 1964–1986 the retable was restored by restorers from Moscow: the painted wings of the retable were restored by Vyacheslav Titov from the Grabar Art Conservation Centre of the Russian Federation, the polychrome sculptures and the shrine were restored under Nicolay Bregman's supervision by experts from the Department of the Restoration of Polychromy of Moscow Research Institute of Restoration. The sculptures were conserved in Moscow, the shrine and wings in Tallinn. Due to the lack of final documentation, we have no knowledge of the full methodology, implementation and collateral research practised. The work mostly involved the removal of previous coats of repainting, the consolidation of the original paint layer, as well as partial retouching, stabilisation of the construction and fastening of the architectonic details. The restoration was not completed.

In 2001, the Conservation Centre Kanut conducted an emergency conservation of the retable: loose details were fastened, coats of paint and gilding were consolidated and the wings were supported for better mobility. Maintenance and preparation for conservation followed, in 2007 the dry surface cleaning of the tabernacle was conducted under Malle-Reet Heidelberg's supervision and in 2009 the tabernacle was conserved at the Conservation Centre Kanut.

Planned activities

✦ Documentation and research work aiming at the most accurate, graphic and photographic recording of the present state and technical structure of the retable, incl. measurement with contemporary methods (laser scanning and photogrammetry). High quality digital (2D, 3D) documentation will form the basis for the research and conservation work as well as making the piece of art accessible to the local and international general public and researchers.

✦ The planned material research (dendrochronology, X-ray, IR, UV, pigment and binder analyses, cross sections) will provide the basic material for researchers and will also make it possible to reveal the hidden layers of the retable to a wider circle of enthusiasts. Investigation (IR-reflectography, pigment and binder analyses) has been carried out during the previous conservation works, most thoroughly in the 1960s but this documentation is not available.

✦ The planned research work will provide us new information on the technological structure of the retable, including the materials used and the technologies applied and it will also open up an art historical interpretation and context.

✦ The comparative analyses of other works attributed to Notke using the same investigation methods or earlier relevant research data for the study of the wider context of Notke's workshop's and era's creative practices. The formation of an international working group of the Notke experts is planned to jointly conduct comparative analyses of Notke's oeuvre. As results of this comparative study an exhibition, a webpage, publications, etc. for the wider public as well as more specific research articles could be compiled.

✦ The detailed documentation of the type, amount and location of the damage of the retable will make it possible to assess more precisely its need for conservation, it would make for a solid foundation for conducting conservation work and design the most detailed plan of conservation.

✦ The methodology and the detailed plan of activities will be worked out on the basis of the general state of the retable, the documentation of earlier research and the outcomes of the conducted research.

✦ Thorough dry surface cleaning of the retable will be conducted in accordance with the conservation plan, in addition, surface cleaning pre-tests will be carried out with appropriate working solutions. Architectural details and sculptures must be removed in the process of cleaning and conservation. After cleaning the areas of larger losses of polychromy, these will be treated in order to reduce the excessive contrast with the surface of the original painting.

✦ With the help of the documentation and the research conducted it will be possible to assess whether the altar retable needs structural carpentry repairs or other technical support after cleaning.

Schedule

2019 / Preparation

Preparatory stage of the project – the assessment of the general state of the retable, the pre-conservation 2D and 3D documentation and research

2020 – 2024 / Investigation

Extensive documentation and material investigation, developing the methodology and the schedule of conservation work

2020 – 2025 / Conservation

Conservation and restoration work

2022 – 2025 / Outcomes

Drawing up and presenting the research-based conclusions

Planned outcomes

The most important outcomes of conservation and research are the preservation of historical art works and their display in their original context.

The retable that was made in Bernt Notke's workshop is a significant work of art in the Estonian as well as in the international context. Its documentation with contemporary means and the art historical, material and technical research data will help to introduce the art work to professional circles as well as to the general public in Estonia and to position it in the context of local and international art history. As a joint research project involving various Estonian research institutions and experts, it will provide an excellent opportunity to introduce Estonia's scientific and ICT capacity and administration through the presentation of its cultural heritage to wider international audiences.

A thorough and detailed 3D documentation of the retable will secure the preservation of the data of this art work in case of possible changes or, at worst, its destruction.

All the data collected during the documentation and the research will be collected on one web platform, and backed up in associated institutions making it possible to present them in a visually comprehensible and attractive way to international researchers as well as to the general public.

After the analysis of this thorough research, one of Estonia's most unique historical art works can be conserved and preserved for the future generations.

Research methods and presentation of results

Documentation

High-resolution photographing of the retable
High-resolution photography of the whole retable and its details makes it possible to map its state and to create the basis for the public presentation of the retable.
Team: Archaeovision LLC, Peeter Säre

3D documentation with laserscanner
Laser scanning allows researchers to document objects swiftly and in a detailed and precise manner. This process results in a high resolution, three dimensional point cloud consisting of millions of co-ordinated single points. The point cloud allows researchers to design drawings, patterns, various 3D models if necessary (a surface model or an information model: HBIM model).
Team: Archaeovision LLC

Photogrammetric measurement
Photogrammetry is a photography-based measuring technique that uses photographs as the medium for creating three dimensional models, producing far more precise final results in presenting colours than laser scanning. Hence, photogrammetric measurement should be conducted after the completion of conservation work. In addition to standard photography, the higher parts of the retable will be photographed by drones. The resulting measurement will be integrated into the coordinate system of laser scanning results.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, Archaeovision LLC

Building 3D models of the retable sculptures
During the project, precise photogrammetric 3D models will be built from ten retable figures. It will be possible to present the models separately and to use them in art historical studies.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, Archaeovision LLC

Digital mapping of the state of the retable
The digital mapping of the state of the retable by the Estonian Academy of Arts and the Conservation Centre Kanut Graphic Documentation programme allows researchers to describe the damage in a more detailed manner and forms the basis for planning the further conservation work.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut

Mapping of the construction of the retable and of the joints of wooden parts
Making drawings of the construction of the retable and of the joints of wooden parts if required by the conservation needs.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut

Imaging technological research

Imaging technological research allows researchers to find and visualise the general construction details of the altar that are invisible to the human eye.

Ultraviolet examination
Ultraviolet examination is the study of the coating (varnish) and the surface of a painting and it is based on the fluorescence effect caused by the impact of electromagnetic light (UVA wavelength range 360-400 nm). It allows researchers to detect traces of previous conservation/restoration work.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, Archeovision LLC

Infrared examination
Infrared examination is used for detecting underdrawings and pentimenti using electromagnetic radiation, penetrating and reflecting from coats of paint by a sensitive device, e.g. an infrared reflectograph (wavelength range 700-2200 nm). It allows researchers to identify and visualise the underdrawings and the alterations made by the artist.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, Archeovision LLC

X-Ray examination
X-ray examination allows researchers to detect the structures of the sculptures and the painting's support (sculpture joining techniques, canvas used on the wooden support, etc.)
Team: The Estonian Tax and Customs Board, Tallinn University

Instrumental analyses

Instrumental analyses allow to define / specify the materials which were used for making the retable and to distinguish them from later additions.

Portative XRF (X-Ray fluorescence) – mapping of elements
Portative XRF detects by X-ray radiation, i.e. in a non-destructive manner, the composition of materials that helps to map the pigments used and any metallic compounds on the surface of the retable.
Team: Estonian Environmental Research Centre

Microscopic instrumental analyses (SEM-EDS; ATR-FT-IR)
The examination aims at detecting with the help of sample pieces the materials used, pigments, fillers and binders by both spectroscopic (ATR-FT-IR) and element methods (SEM-EDS).
Team: The University of Tartu, the Chair of Analytical Chemistry

Dendrochronological examination and identification of wood species
This examination aims to identify the species, age and origin of wood.
Team: The University of Tartu, Department of Geography; the Estonian Academy of Arts

Local light and climate examination
Monitoring of the lighting and indoor climate conditions aims to determine the long-term environmental condition of the retable and if applicable, make suggestions for improving those conditions. (Possibly also a full examination of the building)
Team: Heritagest LLC; EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut; (Tallinn Technical University)

(Art) Historical research

Overview of the previous conservation work
The analysis of the previous conservation methods and the assessment of the current state of the object (the adequacy of the previous methods and damage caused).
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts; EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut; the Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn University

(Art) historical research
The iconographic analysis of the retable (incl. Linking it to the cult of Saint Elisabeth and its depiction in the late Middle Ages); research in the archives regarding the personality of Notke, his family ties with Tallinn and the Church of the Holy Spirit's wardens' ties with Lübeck.
Team: Tallinn University

Contextualisation of material and technical research
The interpretation of material and technical research and its setting in a broader context of Notke's work and the creative practices of the 15th century.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut; the Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn University

Presentation of the research results

Display, presentation and interpretation of research results on the web
The development of a web-based presentation platform where all retable-related research results will be collected and visualised: historical-documentary, iconographic, technical, information and imaging technological. The development of the web platform will be based on the previous experience of the research group and the software solutions that have been created within previous projects (see below). The objective of the research web, available to the public, is to make the research results accessible to experts as well as the general public in a visually graspable and attractive manner.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts; Archaeovision LLC; Vatson LLC

Publishing the research results as scientific articles and /or monographs
The publishing of the research results in scientific articles and a popular monograph, catering primarily for international professionals.
Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts; EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut; the Art Museum of Estonia; Tallinn University; Archaeovision LLC.

Presentation of the research in the form of tours, previews, conference presentations and other public ventures

The whole process of research will be accompanied by public programmes, the involvement of general public and experts, the organisation of workshops and media coverage.

Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut

The creation of presentation materials in the Church of the Holy Spirit

Presentation materials will be developed in the church, opening the background of the retable to visitors.

Team: The Estonian Academy of Arts, Archaeovision LLC; Vatson LLC

The presentation of the conservation results

Development and co-ordination of the schedule of conservation work

The methodology of conservation will be worked out according to the general state of the retable and it will rely on the protocols of previous conservation work of the altar. The state of the altar will become clear after the completion of research and documentation work. The conservation methodology for the whole altar will be developed in accordance with the collected data.

Team: EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut, the Estonian Academy of Arts

The conservation of the retable

Conservation work will be conducted in accordance with an agreed schedule and the process of conservation will be partly open to the general public, introducing the stages of the process.

Team: EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut, the Estonian Academy of Arts

Drawing up the report of conservation work

Team: EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut; the Estonian Academy of Arts

The team

Principle investigators and coordinators:

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Dr Anneli Randla (Estonian Academy of Arts)
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Ingrid Pihelgas (EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut)
Martin Sermat (EOAM Foundation Conservation and Digitisation Centre Kanut)

Partners

Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, Church of the Holy Spirit in Tallinn
Tallinn City Planning Board, the Department of Heritage Protection
National Heritage Board
Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tax and Customs Board
University of Tartu, Chair of Analytical Chemistry
University of Tartu, Department of Geography
Tallinn University
Estonian Environmental Research Centre
Archaeovision LLC
Heritagest LLC
Vatson LLC

Previous research and conseravtion experience of the team

The Estonian Academy of Arts

”Tracing Bosch and Bruegel: Four Paintings Magnified“ (2009-2011)

An extensive multidisciplinary research project “Bosch & Bruegel. Four Paintings Magnified“ conducted in 2009-2011, involved parallel complex material-technical examination (dendrochronology, infrared, X-ray, microscopy, pigment examination) of four similar paintings in Bosch-Bruegel style, located in different European collections (including one in the Art Museum of Estonia). The technical examination was accompanied by historic research (the story of their provenance, reception and origin in the then social and economic context) and the iconography of the paintings. The international team comprised experts from Great Britain, Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The results of this international research project are covered in a science publication, in a thematic multimedia exhibition and on an interactive website, all connected by the notion of ” technical art history“ in the spectrum of scientific to popular approaches.

Partners: Dr Emma Hermens (art historian and conservator, specialist in technical art history research, Glasgow University), Dr Jörgen Wadum (specialist in technical art history, National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen); Greta Koppel (art historian, Art Museum of Estonia); Alar Nurkse (conservator, Art Museum of Estonia).

bosch-bruegel.ekm.ee

Rode Altarpiece in Close-Up (2013-2016)

The project "Rode Altarpiece in Close-Up" of the Museum of Niguliste of the Art Museum of Estonia, focused on the technical examination and conservation of the retable of the High Altar (1478-1481) of Saint Nicholas' Church in Tallinn which was made in the workshop of Hermen Rode, a master from Lübeck. The implementation of imagining and IT, as well as materials research, a thorough Infrared (IR) documentation and the mapping of the information made for significant elements of the project. The involvement of the public was considered important and it was successfully performed by educational programmes, workshops and research results-related multimedia solutions (a website, a blog, an interactive multimedia programme, a science blog etc.). The public could experience the conservation and research work on-site in the Museum of Niguliste, visiting the pop-up studio and its gradually growing exhibition.

The visual and scientific research results of the project "Rode Altarpiece in Close-Up" are collected and presented at the web-based multimedia exhibition of the retables of Tallinn and Lübeck. The most prominent work of the Lübeck master Hermen Rode are the retable of the High Altar of Saint Nicholas' Church in Tallinn (1478-1481) and the winged altar of the guild of the painters of Lübeck (1480-1490). The web solution presents picture programmes of the two works with detailed high resolution (HR) photographs. Infrared (IR) photographs allow to distinguish coats of paint and they make the base drawings visible - comparing the photos makes it possible to observe the differences in original and final compositions.
The project has won the Europa Nostra Award, the Museums of Estonia Annual Award, the Estonian Research Council Estonian Science Popularisation Award and the Institute for Conservation Keck Award.

rode.ekm.ee

Christian Ackermann – the Phidias of Tallinn, arrogant and talented (2016-2020)

The project aims at bringing out of oblivion Christian Ackermann, the most scandalous and most gifted sculptor of the Baroque age in Estonia. Ackermann is a master who deserves attention not only in the context of Estonia but in the whole of the Baltic region, since he developed a link between the local art and culture and Western Europe. In his lifetime, Ackermann was awarded the title of the Phidias of Tallinn – named after an antique Greek sculptor, breaking through the centuries old rigid system of guilds. In 1680-1710, the North Estonia's most beautiful altar walls, pulpits and epitaphs with coats of arms, crucifixes and church interior elements came from his workshop.

The web-based platform ackermann.ee comprises the research results : 3D models of Ackermann's woodcarved sculptures, allowing an excellent opportunity for close-up study and comparison of the sculptures; the X-ray pictures made in co-operation with the experts from the Tax and Customs Board, allowing viewers to look inside the sculptures and analyse the working methods of the master; the materials research conducted in co-operation with the scientists of the University of Tartu and the Estonian Environmental Research Centre, opening the baroque brightness of colours, well hidden under the previous coats of paint. It helps to describe the historic art practices and draw more solid conclusions on Ackermann's authorship.

The project began in 2016 on the scaffolding in Saint Mary's Cathedral in Tallinn with the research of the sculptor's materpiece - the Swedish rule era royal Cathedral's altar wall, followed by the research of Ackermann's work in other churches where the works of art attributed to Ackermann are to be found.

This interdisciplinary research project culminated in 2020 with a monograph and an exhibition in Niguliste Museum of the Art Museum of Estonia and in 2021 with pop-up exhibitions in the churches comprising Ackermann's work.

ackermann.ee

EOAM Foundation Conservation And Digitisation Centre Kanut

The then Conservation Centre Kanut has twice participated in the conservation of the High Altar retable of the Church of the Holy Spirit (2001 and 2009, see before).

Extensive Conservation Work of the Iconostasis of the Church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, Tallinn (2000-2010)

Conservation work began in 2000 and it lasted for 10 years. The conservation work, initiated by the Church of the Transfiguration of our Lord (Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church) and Tallinn Cultural Office, was conducted by the conservators of the then Conservation Centre Kanut and of AS KAR-Group. The conservation aimed at reducing the damage caused by detached fragments of the gilt and at tidying up the icons. The work was complex because the unique piece of art was also meant to keep its functionality.

The Primary Research of the Altar of Rõuge Church and the Partial Opening of the Paintings (2017, 2018)

As a result of the work by the Conservation Centre Kanut conservators, it is possible to see the previous polychromatic wall of the altar in Saint Mary's Church in Rõuge. Extensive research was carried out on the altar wall and the surfaces of the painting, bordering the saw cut altar wall, were fully opened. According to the research findings, the altar wall has been covered in a wide variety of colours and in the very first layer a lot of surfaces were covered in marbling. The altar wall has been brushed up five times in total. Digital reconstructions were made from polychromatic solutions and they are available for the public to view in the church.

Conservation Work in Ridala Church (2017, 2018)

The triumphal arch group and the chancel screen made by B.Lorenz in 1678, is the only letner that has survived in this form in Estonia. The pre-conservation state of the art monument was poor. The surface was badly blackened and had been damaged by dampness. Visual examination was performed on the seriously damaged bottom part of the right- hand plinth of the southern chancel screen after which the mascaron was removed from its base and the skirting board was removed from the left-hand plinth in order to use it as a model for making the missing skirting boards. The assessment of the state of the coat of paint followed both on the polychromy that had been opened earlier and on the later added coat of paint. Cleaning tests were done on the front and back sides of the chancel screen. The secondary coat of paint's bond with its base was good but the open surfaces showed traces of missing paint and poor paint bonding. In the second stage of conservation the plinth of the southern chancel screen was restored, new skirting boards were installed and it was stained. Wet cleaned surfaces were first covered with a provisional coat of varnish in order to see a year later whether any changes had taken place in the protective coat of varnish. As the decorative details remained stable in the climate chamber after varnishing, they were returned to their original locations. Further work on this monument of art will be continued next year.

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