Arts and Crafts from the Middle Ages to Modern Times (Zadar, 15-17 May 25)

University of Zadar, Croatia, May 15–17, 2025
Deadline: Dec 31, 2024

Barbara Španjol-Pandelo

We are honoured to announce that the 1st international conference "Precious Metals and Masterful Hands: Arts and Crafts from the Middle Ages to Modern Times" is dedicated to the memory of the late assistant professor Marijana Kovačević (1977-2015), whose profound contributions to the field of art history, primarily her research of goldsmithing, continue to inspire scholars and researchers.

The craftsmanship of precious metals, closely tied to the field of applied arts, has often fluctuated between routine craftwork and artistic quality. The excellence of the work depended on the skill of the master (craftsman/artist), who could elevate the nature of the precious metal to the level of an artwork or keep it at the level of technically sound craftsmanship. Although initially closely associated with sacred spaces, where the importance of consecrated objects was emphasized in line with their purpose, precious metals eventually became integral to everyday life, leading to a significant increase in the production of secular items. Accordingly, from liturgical objects such as reliquaries, crosses, chalices, candlesticks, busts, and other sacred artifacts, to secular expressions in the form of jewellery and utilitarian objects—whether preserved or recorded in archival documents or depicted in paintings—we trace the changes in the treatment of precious metals from the Middle Ages to modern times.

Precious metals have raised and continue to raise many research questions, so the conference seeks to explore and discuss the artistic, cultural, and technological significance of precious metal craftsmanship across different periods and regions, as well as evolving the role in both sacred and secular context. It aims to present original research in this field as well as to establish productive dialogue between scholars with a particular research interest. We welcome academic papers that will approach this subject in an interdisciplinary and methodologically diverse way.

Acceptable topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- The production of precious metals in their various forms and characteristics
- Creations in precious metals that have achieved an artistic impression
- The iconography of works of art made of precious metals
- The demands of patrons and the influence of the master's personal expression on objects made of precious metals
- The influence of major European centres on smaller regions
- The functions of precious metal objects and their roles in everyday life
- Donations for the creation of precious metal objects

- The display of status through the possession of valuable items
- The restoration of precious metal objects in both historical and modern times.

We welcome papers (20 minutes) and poster presentations. The working languages of the conference are Croatian, English and Italian.

Proposals (in Croatian, English or Italian) should include the title and abstract (300 words maximum). Each proposal should be accompanied by full contact information (name, home and/or office mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number) and a short CV (200 words maximum).

Poster proposal (250 words maximum), should include the title of the poster and full contact information along with a short CV (200 words maximum). Each poster in form of roll up must fit within a 200 cm × 100 cm area; with main points visible from ca. 2 m away. The presenter is responsible for printing the poster, and it should be printed in full colour in advance.

Paper proposals should be submitted electronically by December 31st, 2024 to amiskovi@unizd.hr.

The scientific committee will review all submissions and notify authors of their decision by February 28th, 2025.

The proceedings are scheduled for publication in the Ars Adriatica series in 2026 (for previous volumes visit Ars_Adriatica i/ili Ars_Adriatica_eng). All papers will undergo a thorough double peer review process conducted by an international panel of experts.

The conference will be held at the University of Zadar and will feature keynote lectures (details to be announced), along with a guided tour of Zadar's medieval churches, museums, and art collections. Following the conference a half-day excursion to Nin is scheduled for Saturday (transport costs are not included in the registration fee). The registration fee is 100 EUR (70 EUR for doctoral students and independent researchers). Travel expenses and accommodation ARE NOT COVERED. Alternative accommodation for a limited number of participants will be available at the University campus.

We are looking forward to your participation!

Conference is organized by:

University of Zadar - Department of History of Art University of Rijeka – Department of History of Art University of Rijeka – Medieval Adriatic Heritage Centre Rijeka

University of Cambridge – Department of History of Art

University of Padua – Department of Cultural Heritage: Archaeology, Art history, Cinema and Music

The Permanent Exhibition of Religious Art, Zadar

Please contact us for any additional information.

Contact person: Ana Mišković
Department of Art History
University of Zadar
Obala Petra Krešimira IV
e-mail: amiskovi@unizd.hr

Reference:

CFP: Arts and Crafts from the Middle Ages to Modern Times (Zadar, 15-17 May 25). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 25, 2024 (accessed Nov 22, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/43025>.