

Conservation of Bernhard von Mohrenschildt's Epitaph Coat of Arms

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Object

Bernhard von Mohrenschildt's Epitaph Coat of Arms, about 1657.
Estonian Art Museum. EKM 56519 N135

The von Mohrenschildts were matriculated into nobility in September, 1650 by Queen Christina and the coat of arms in question was commissioned to be placed in the church in commemoration of the event. The restoration was financed by the von Mohrenschildts' foundation. In 2015 365 years had passed from the matriculation and in September of the same year the restored coat of arms was presented in St Nicholas' Church. Several members of the von Mohrenschildt family attended the presentation.

Methods used

Cautious cleaning of the surface was carried out simultaneously with fixing the paint- and priming layers. The missing crosspiece that had connected the upper and lower parts of the shield was replaced with a new one. Loose details were glued onto the initial places. From among the several missing carved details only the figure of a deer was made anew on the basis of an historical drawing. The figure was set up with dowels as it had been on the original piece. Losses of paint on the original grounding that had become visible were restored according to the topmost layer. As the target had been to display the coat of arms, the preserved paint surfaces were evened using minimal lazure colouring technique.



Fig.1 Loose details of the epitaph coat of arms before conservation.



Fig.2 The epitaph coat of arms after having been conserved.



Fig.3 The restored helmet-decoration – figure of a deer – was set at its initial place.



Fig. 5 - 7 From among all the missing carved details only the helmet-decorating figure of the deer was restored to achieve the heraldic whole.



Condition of the object before conservation

The epitaph coat of arms was in a disintegrated condition. The wooden structure had deformed and several carved details were loose. A bigger part of acanthus leaves framing the coat of arms, was marred by missing details and a third of the text-plate was gone. The figure of a deer that had decorated the cover of the helmet was lost. The coat of arms had been seriously damaged in the fire of St Nicholas Church in the 1944 air raid. The surface was covered with soot and several heat damages like bubbling and flaking in the paint layer were discovered.



Fig.4 Heat damage in the paint layer on the figure of St Maurice in upper field of the shield.



Fig. 8 Conservator Viljar Talimaa carving the figure of the deer.



Fig. 9 Cleaning of the golden stars on the lower part of the shield.

Technical explication

The epitaph coat of arms with its finely carved details was made of lime-wood (*Tilia europaea*). The wooden surface has been finished in white glue-and-chalk mixture and beneath gilding and silvering is bolus. To achieve the polychrome oil paints and gold and silver leaf were used. The colours of the epitaph coat of arms follow the heraldic regulations.

Conservation – restoration

Aim of conservation

The target was to stabilise the condition and then restore the heraldic whole according to the rules foreseen for displaying the coat of arms at the permanent exhibition in St Nicholas' Church museum.

Materials used

tri-Ammonium citrate, glue Tite Bond (Franklin Hyde Glue, Kremer Pigmente), Acronal 500D (Kremer Pigmente), sturgeon glue, rust-converter Kurust (Hammerite), MAIMER ready-made colours, Mica gold and silver powders (Sepp Leaf Products, Inc.), Satin picture varnish (Lefranc&Bourgeois), extra-fine picture varnish, anti-UV(Lefranc&Bourgeois).



Fig. 10 The von Mohrenschildt family was matriculated into nobility in 1650 by Queen Christina. The epitaph coat of arms was made after the drawing in the almanac of the nobility (Photo from the von Mohrenschildts' archive).



Fig. 11 Representatives of the von Mohrenschildt family were at the presentation of the conserved epitaph coat of arms in St Nicholas' Church in 2015.

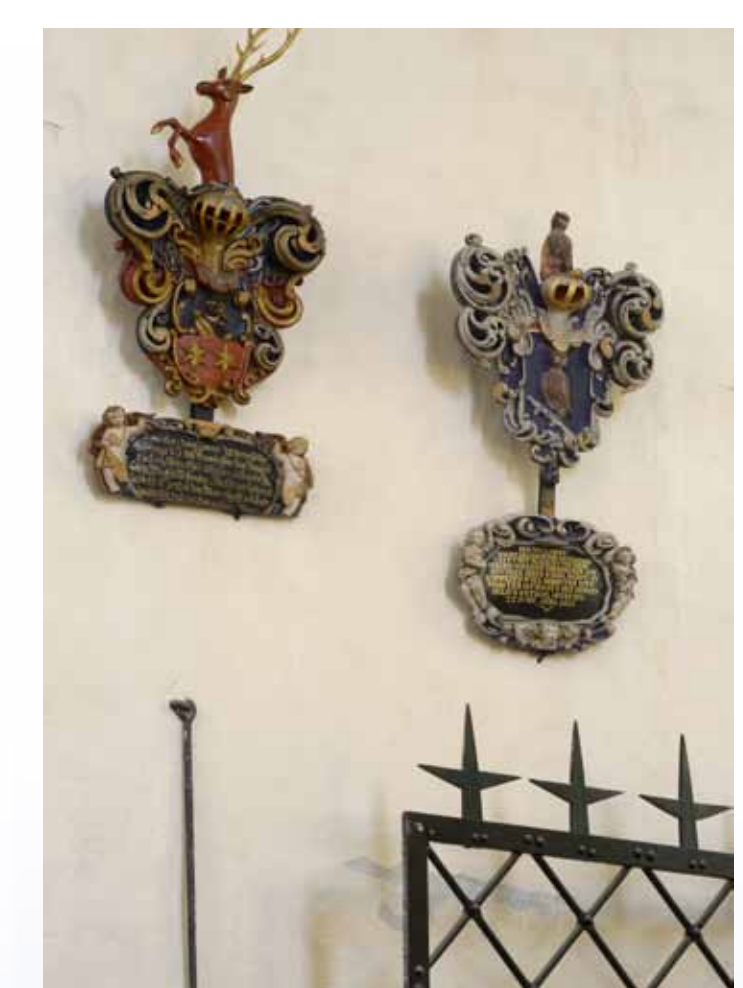


Fig. 12 The epitaph coat of arms of Bernhard von Koch Mohrenschildt is displayed on the wall of St Anthony's Chapel in St Nicholas' Church.

