

MARIA JOÃO NETO  
(EDITOR)

# MONSERRATE REVISITED

THE COOK COLLECTION IN PORTUGAL

200 YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF SIR FRANCIS COOK  
PATRON AND ART COLLECTOR – 1817-2017





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## TITLE

Monsserrate Revisited The Cook Collection in Portugal

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## GENERAL PROJECT MANAGER

António Nunes Pereira

## EDITOR

Maria João Neto

## EDITORIAL REVIEWING

Teresa Neto

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

José Dias Design, Lda.

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Gregorio di Lorenzo, *Virgem e o Menino*, c. 1470

© PSML, João Krull, 2017

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2605-756 Casal de Cambra, Lisboa, Portugal

Telef.: (+351) 21 981 79 60 | Fax: (+351) 21 981 79 55

caleidoscopio@caleidoscopio.pt | www.caleidoscopio.pt

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Parques de Sintra  
Monte da Lua

200 ANOS NASCIMENTO 200 ANOS  
FRANCIS COOK



Palácio de Monserrate, Music Room,  
ceiling detail.  
© PSML, João Krull, 2017.



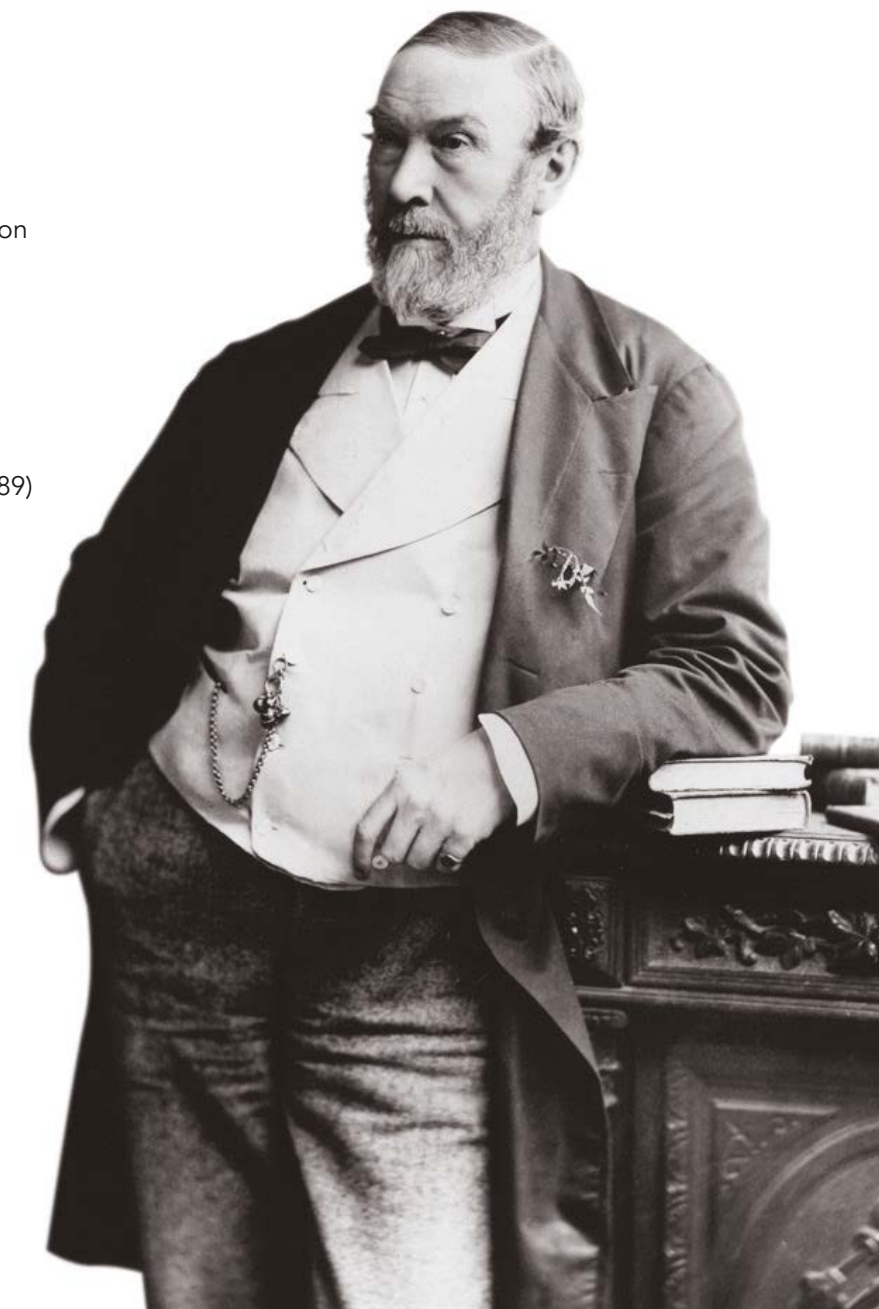


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Palácio de Monserate, Sacred Art Room, stained glass.  
© PSML, João Krull, 2017.

Portrait of Sir Francis Cook (c. 1890),  
album belonging to Brenda's collection, Lady Cook.  
© Robin Briault | National Gallery of Art de Washington.





Holy Water Font, cat. 32, detail.  
© PSML, João Krull, 2017

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Silver Salver, cat. 35, detail.  
© PSML, João Krull, 2017





## RESTORATION OF WORKS ON DISPLAY

Luis Soares

Museology, a complex practice, is becoming increasingly recognised by the wider general public. Disclosures by museums of their behind-the-scenes activities, especially the task of preservation, conservation and restoration, have been enthusiastically received. An increasingly discerning general public, thirsty for knowledge, appreciates each and every moment in which interventions made on movable and immovable cultural goods can be observed and monitored. Recognising this from early on, PSML has always sought to show visitors the various interventions and projects it undertakes to preserve and enhance the heritage of the sites under its management. This text is thus written in this spirit: since the public has been unable to witness the process of conserving and restoring some of the pieces now on display, the work is described in the following paragraphs in the form of a descriptive technical report.

Working closely with the executive producer of the exhibition, Arch. Teresa Neto, we initiated a survey of the selected objects' state of conservation to determine the project's priorities and strategies for intervention.

Given that many of the objects that had previously belonged to the Cook family's collection were now dispersed in different public and private collections, a series of technical visits were required from the outset to get acquainted with the selected pieces. For movable goods that were not already under PSML's safekeeping, we collaborated with the various proprietors who provided us with useful information on their pieces, enabling us to gain a better understanding of their history and material composition.

Intervention in the china porcelain Vase (Cat. 39).  
© Inês Feliciano, 2017.



Reflecting an eclectic collection of high quality objects, in keeping with nineteenth century tastes and the Cook family's standards, the pieces that were subject to intervention covered a wide range of materials and typologies, from stone sculptures to a panoply of European and Oriental arms. After the information was gathered, we prepared a brief analysis of the pieces, which allowed us to define general guidelines for handling and transporting them, as well as lines of action to consider when enhancing material stability and aesthetic cohesion.

While some of the objects were found to require only superficial cleaning (no different than what their proprietors had been doing on a periodic basis), especially those on display in museological institutions, others were found to be in need of conservation and restoration.

After securing the right authorisations, we concluded that it would be necessary to contract conservation-restoration services in various areas: Textiles, Furniture, Polychrome Wood Sculpture, Stone Sculpture, Metals, Armoury and Ceramics. In keeping with best practices in public contracting, we elicited proposals from conservators-restorers in the market whose professional experience ensured a level of quality that would enable us to achieve our initial objectives.

Technical visits were scheduled, after which proposals for intervention and their respective budgets were received. After the documents were analysed in detail, we selected the most attractive proposals based on price but, more importantly, the technical details and methodologies proposed.

With the winning proposals selected, the process of transporting the objects to various ateliers got underway. Whilst some of the deliveries were relatively simple from a technical standpoint, with conservators-restorers carrying out the preparation, packing and transport themselves, others were particularly challenging. Due to the physical characteristics of the objects and the locales in which they were stored, we needed to work with specialists in the field to guarantee the level of security required.

Some of the stone sculptures, as well as a large desk now displayed in the library of the Palace of Monserrate, required more careful handling in terms of packing and transport.



Desk modules (Cat. 26) being removed through a window of Casa-Museu Medeiros e Almeida on a platform lift.

All of the interventions were carried out in keeping with the principle of minimal intervention, the primary objective being to maintain or restore stability and material cohesion in the objects. In certain cases, measures were implemented in order to improve the objects' perception, while respecting their materiality and maintaining coherence within the required parameters.

All of the work was carried out in accordance with the code of ethics of the E.C.C.O. – European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers Organisations.<sup>1</sup>

Reaffirming the essentially descriptive, concise technical aspects of this text, we present the following descriptions of the interventions undertaken.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ecco-eu.org>

<sup>2</sup> The descriptions are based on PSML's survey of the objects' state of conservation and the conservation/restoration reports presented by the various conservators-restorers involved.

## TEXTILES

**NAME:** Carpet (Cat. 43)

### INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Various earlier interventions (areas rewoven, interruptions and deformations in the design, areas with chromatic integration using dyes);
- Dirt and various stains;
- Loose warp threads in danger of breaking;
- Partial gaps in the warp, weft and knots;
- Fringes and borders discoloured and shredded, with gaps.

### INTERVENTION:

- Mechanical and chemical cleaning (washing);
- Consolidation of weakened areas;
- Correction of warp and weft with dyed cotton threads;
- Filling in the gaps with wool threads (dyed in the same colours as surrounding tones);
- Reconstruction of borders;
- Reinforcement of borders on the back.



Correction of cotton threads.  
© Luís Filipe Pedro, 2017.

**INTERVENTION:** Luís Filipe Pedro

## FURNITURE

NAME: Desk (Cat. 26)



Desk disassembly process.  
© Portal de S. Domingos, 2017.

View of the intervention in the atelier.  
© Portal de S. Domingos, 2017.

## INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Warping;
- Gaps;
- Gaps, marks and stains on the veneer;
- Leather elements becoming detached;
- Oxidation of metallic elements;
- Several metallic elements missing;
- Dirt.

## INTERVENTION:

- Preventive disinfection;
- Structural review;
- Mechanical cleaning;
- Volumetric reconstruction;
- Chemical cleaning;
- Reintegration of gaps in the veneer;
- Cleaning of metallic elements;
- Placement of missing metallic elements;
- Fastening of leather elements;
- Hydration of interiors;
- Polishing with pad.

INTERVENTION: Portal de S. Domingos – Conservação, Restauro e Alta Marcenaria

## POLYCHROME WOOD SCULPTURE

NAME: Crucified Christ (Cat. 17)



Crucified Christ, details of elements before intervention.  
© Inês Florindo Lopes, 2017.



Crucified Christ, details of elements of the cross after intervention.  
© Inês Florindo Lopes, 2017.

## INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Cracks and fissures;
- Gaps;
- Dirt;
- Gaps in surface layers;
- Detachment of polychrome;
- Repainting;
- Corrosion of metallic elements (nails).

## INTERVENTION:

- Curative and preventive disinfection;
- Structural review;
- Removal of repainted layers;
- Mechanical and chemical cleaning;
- Cleaning of metallic elements;
- Application of protective coating on metallic elements;
- General reinforcement;
- Application of protective coating.

INTERVENTION: Inês Florindo Lopes

## STONE SCULPTURE

NAME: Saint Anthony and the Child (Cat. 4)

## INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Previous interventions (fillings, reconstitutions and repainting);
- Detached element (head of St Anthony)
- Gaps;
- Fractures and cracks;
- Dirt.

## INTERVENTION:

- Mechanical and chemical cleaning;
- Removal of previous interventions (fillings, reconstitutions and repainting);
- Reinforcement;
- Gluing (head and right hand of St Anthony and fingers of right hand of the Christ Child);
- Filling in of cracks;
- Partial reintegration (middle finger of the left hand of the Child);
- Chromatic reintegration;
- Review of fastening elements;
- Application of protective coating.



Sculpture of Saint Anthony and the Child,  
- detail before intervention;  
- removal of mortar from sleeve;  
- detail of earlier intervention with alabaster;  
- detail after intervention.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.

INTERVENTION: Archeofactu, Arqueologia e Arte, Lda.



**NAME:** The Infant Hercules Strangling Serpents (Cat. 9)



**INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:**

- Gaps;
- Dirt;
- Biological colonisation;
- Erosion.

**INTERVENTION:**

- Cleaning;
- Removal of biological colonisation.



Sculpture of *The Infant Hercules Strangling Serpents*,  
 - isolation of the piece prior to applying Biocide.;  
 - before and after intervention.  
 © Archeofactu, 2017.

**INTERVENTION:** Archeofactu, Arqueologia e Arte, Lda.

**NAME:** Bust of emperor (Cat. 8)



**INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:**

- Bust attached to the plinth with mortar and spike;
- Erosion;
- Dirt.

**INTERVENTION:**

- Separation of the bust from the plinth;
- Removal of mortar(adhesive cement);
- Mechanical and chemical cleaning.



Detail of the bust before cleaning.  
 © Arterestauro, 2017

Detail of the bust base's spine after being separated from the plinth.  
 © Arterestauro, 2017

**INTERVENTION:** Arterestauro – Conservação de Bens Culturais, Lda.

**METALS**

**NAME:** Vase (Cat. 40)

**INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:**

- Dirt;
- Corrosion;
- Chipped enamel;
- Elements in danger of detaching (handles)
- Previous interventions (reconstitution of volume and repainting);
- Paper label in fragile state.

**INTERVENTION:**

- Mechanical and chemical cleaning;
- Neutralisation of corrosion;
- Review of system for attaching the handles;
- Application of protective coating;
- Consolidation of paper label.



Copper and enamel vase, details before restoration.



Copper and enamel vase, details after restoration.  
 © PSML, João Krull, 2017.

**INTERVENTION:** ERA Arqueologia, S.A.



ARMOURY

NAME: Panoply, comprised of 31 objects (Cat. 36)



Detail of a pistol, before and after intervention.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.



Detail of an element of an armour, before and after removal of corrosion and stabilisation of the metal.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.



Detail of axe blade, before and after intervention.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.



Detail of jade sword grip, before and after gluing and replacement of silver base.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.



Detail of dagger grip, before and after intervention.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.

INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Metallic elements with corrosion;
- Gaps and several elements missing (wood and metal);
- Lack of stability and cohesion between elements;
- Previous interventions (gluing and fillings);
- Deformations and warping;
- Various scratches and marks;
- Elements with fractures and cracks;
- Dirt;
- Gaps in the decoration;
- Textiles and leather elements containing dirt and in risk of detaching;
- Mechanical elements incomplete or not operational (firearms).

INTERVENTION:

- Structural review;
- Fastening of detaching elements;
- Gluing;
- Mechanical and chemical cleaning;
- Removal of products of corrosion;
- Stabilisation of metallic surfaces;
- Selective polishing;
- Selective chromatic reintegration;
- Application of protective coating.

INTERVENTION: Archeofactu, Arqueologia e Arte, Lda.

CERAMICS

NAME: Vase (Cat. 39)

INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Previous interventions (fillings are detaching, glue has yellowed and discolouration of repainting);
- Dirt;
- Gaps.

INTERVENTION:

- Removal of elements from previous interventions (fillings, gluing and repainting);
- Cleaning;
- Selective reinforcements;
- Gluing (fragment belonging to the bow);
- Filling in of gaps;
- Chromatic reintegration;
- Application of protective coating.

INTERVENTION: Inês Feliciano



Vase "Boy with Bow", mimetic chromatic reintegration, filling in of gaps.  
© Inês Feliciano, 2017.



Vase "Boy with Bow", detail of intervention on bow.  
© Inês Feliciano, 2017.



Vase "Boy with Bow", detail after intervention.  
© Inês Feliciano, 2017.



## NAME: Urns with lid (pair) (Cat. 37)



## INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Dirt;
- Gaps;
- Cracks.

## INTERVENTION:

- Cleaning;
- Selective reinforcements;
- Filling in of gaps;
- Chromatic reintegration;
- Application of protective coating.

Filling in the gap on the edge, before and after the intervention.  
© Inês Feliciano, 2017

INTERVENTION: Inês Feliciano

## NAME: Etruscan Fountain (Cat. 45)



## INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Dirt and concretions;
- Gaps;
- Erosion;
- Previous interventions (placement of a marble plaque fastened with metallic elements and adhesive cement).

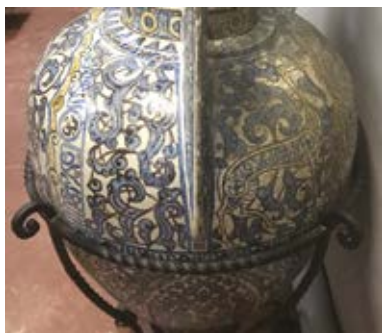
## INTERVENTION:

- Limpeza mecânica;
- Mechanical cleaning;
- Removal of marble plaque and metallic fastening elements;
- Chemical cleaning.

Etruscan fountain, before and after intervention. The most difficult aspect of this intervention was the removal of the marble plaque and the existing mortar.  
© Archeofactu, 2017.

INTERVENTION: Archeofactu, Arqueologia e Arte, Lda.

## NAME: Alhambra Vase (Cat. 47)



## INITIAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

- Previous interventions (uneven gluing and irregular fillings, discolouration of repainting);
- Dirt.

## INTERVENTION:

- Mechanical and chemical cleaning;
- Rectification of previous fillings;
- Removal of repainted layers;
- Chromatic reintegration;
- Application of protective coating;
- Cleaning of metallic support structure;
- Application of protective coating on metallic support structure;

Alhambra Vase during cleaning. The left side is clean, while the right side still contains dirt that has accumulated on the glazed surface.  
© Maria Monsalve, 2017

INTERVENTION: Maria Monsalve

After the interventions were completed, the objects were transported to the Palace of Monserrate to be assessed and prepared for photographic documentation.

They were then placed in the spaces selected for their display, always monitored, handled and moved in accordance with the museological requirements and best practices of Preventive Conservation.

Preventive Conservation can be defined simply as a set of essentially indirect actions aimed at identifying, reducing and eradicating potential threats to cultural goods. This practice has been continuously developed in the various sites under PSML's management, including the Palace of Monserrate, where issues relating to environmental conditions (humidity and temperature) and lighting comprise some of the PSML staff's concerns, as well as questions related to the general maintenance of the building and its collections. With this exhibition, the implementation of these measures was expanded to ensure that the state of conservation of the various objects on display could be monitored and fully preserved.