

**Service tender for the conservation-restoration of eight paintings located withing the Oratory of the Onorati at the Church of the Jesuits in Valletta.**

*Reference number:* **PA5.0103/34**

### **Clarification Nos 1**

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

#### **Question Nos 1:**

On page 22 of the tender document it is mentioned that the paintings are to be re-installed in their original location. Can you please clarify if the contracting authority will take care of installing a fixed scaffolding for the mounting of the paintings?

#### **Reply to Question Nos 1:**

Kindly note that the Contract is responsible to provide the necessary equipment for the paintings to be reinstalled into their original location.

#### **Question Nos 2:**

In the State of Conservation report provided, most paintings lack the whole or parts of their decorative frame;

If there are any decorative frames, could you please forward us their sate of conservation, or if there are no decorative frames present, does it mean that new ones have to be worked new and what finish?

#### **Reply to Question Nos 2:**

The paintings have thin gilt wooden lists that are nailed along their margin. During the on-site inspection, several gilt lists were found missing. Some parts were missing, whilst other were broken. The surviving parts were found in storage and should be made available to the conservators who will be awarded this project. Fractured lists could be re-adhered, whilst the missing ones could be manufactured, following the original dimensions and profile. The conservators will be given the opportunity of choosing the materials and technique necessary for the polychromy of the reconstructed lists (including the gilding lacunae of the original). It is important, however, that the latter polychromy will closely resemble the original. It is equally important to ensure that the materials chosen for the polychromy is stable, reversible, compatible with the original, and approved for conservation practice. Furthermore, as specified in the Tender Document, it is important to ensure that all gilt strips will be re-installed without puncturing or damaging the paintings.

**Question Nos 3:**

Also; In the Organisation and Methodology section in page 7 you ask the tenderer to Propose and Justify scientific analysis, which is a very generic request. Since we presume that a conservator has carried out the sent paintings condition report, and this person has inspected thoroughly the paintings state of conservation and their conservation necessities, I'm gently asking you to specify if the scientific analysis are definitely required (as the paintings seem to be in a relatively stable and fair state of conservation) and which analysis and how many samples for each painting?

**Reply to Question Nos 3:**

The paintings are not in a stable and fair state of conservation. As demonstrated in the State of Conservation Report, the majority of the paintings were punctured, torn, and their paint layer cracked and detached. Past paint losses were noted that were heavily retouched, and overpainted in some parts, during past restoration interventions. More recent paint detachments and losses were also noted which prompted the need of facing with Japanese paper in a bid not to lose further paint. Nevertheless, scientific investigations are necessary, no matter the paintings' state of conservation. Scientific investigations include the non-destructive documentation - that is a must in conservation practice. The paintings, for instance, must be photographed in diffused light, ultraviolet, and with a near-infrared camera. Further non-destructive analysis using XRF, for instance, can give an insight of the artwork's pigments. The taking of minute samples might be also necessary to identify the paint medium and to analyse the paint stratigraphy. Such investigations will be also considered and discussed with the Project Manager - as specified in the Tender Documents - so that the conservators working on this project could make informed decisions and better plan their conservation methodology. The information gathered by such investigations will also shed more light on the artist(s)' manufacturing technique.

**Question Nos 4:**

There are some measurements which do not correspond between the condition report document and the description of the painting on the tender document (page 4). Could you please verify which measurements are the right ones?

**Reply to Question Nos 4:**

The Measurements of the paintings listed on page 4 of the tender document have been revised to correspond to those of the condition report. Thus Article 1.2 of the Instructions to Tenderers on page 4 of the tender document now read as follows:

1.2 The subject of this tender is the Conservation-Restoration Works of eight paintings at the Oratory of the Onorati within the Church of the Jesuits, Valletta, Malta.

- Depiction and measurements of the eight artworks:
  - 1) The Presentation of Our Lady in the Temple (2.36 by 3.32 meters);
  - 2) The Birth of Our Lady (3.30 by 2.34 meters);
  - 3) The Immaculate Conception (3.31 by 2.32 meters);
  - 4) Presentation of Christ in the Temple - The Circumcision (2.36 by 3.38 meters);
  - 5) The Visitation (2.35 by 3.31 meters);
  - 6) The Annunciation (2.34 by 3.28 meters);
  - 7) The Holy Trinity and Coronation of Our Lady (2.08 by 1.55 meters);
  - 8) The Assumption of Our Lady (2.41 by 3.85 meters).

All paintings were painted during the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Stefano Erardi (1630 - 1716) which consist of large-format canvas paintings.