

The restoration of the *Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci

An example of intervention

"Il restauro è uno strumento di conoscenza, un'esperienza che deve basarsi sul riconoscimento del manufatto come opera d'arte nella sua consistenza fisica e nella duplice polarità estetica e storica, in vista della sua trasmissione al futuro."

-Teoria del restauro- Cesare Brandi

Restoration is understood to be an integral part of the life of a work, and an area in which the Italians have acknowledged mastery. This is the assumption from which comes the idea of developing the story of one of the most innovative examples of intervention and the most recent to be undertaken on one of the masterpieces, the *Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci, performed by the *Central Restoration Institute of Rome (ISCR)* under the direction of Dr. Giuseppe Basile in 1999.

This workshop, aimed at a specialist audience (university students, those working in the industry), was conceived as a collateral activity of the exhibition dedicated to Leonardo at the *Kunstkraftwerk* in Leipzig. It will begin with the delineation of the conservation history of a work which is unique in the history of art for showing such early degradation as was documented immediately following its creation, and will propose deeper investigation of the issues related to:

- Investigations and research on the environment and on the artefact to understand the origin of degradation and find solutions to confront it;
- The process of setting up the project and the intervention methodology and action taken on the environment;
- The conservation and restoration intervention on Leonardo's celebrated and fragile work.

The material used will be from the collection, the texts and images of *The International Archive for History and the Actuality of Restoration - for Cesare Brandi (AISAR)*. The AISAR will draw on the documentation in its archive and in the library of Giuseppe Basile, director of the last restoration work on the Cenacle, maintained at its headquarters (www.aisarweb.com).