

\*\*\*\* Faculty of Architecture Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava

International Scientific Colloquium

## ***Banská Štiavnica Calvary – Seven years of intensive conservation and perspectives of revitalisation***

Banská Štiavnica, May 19 – 20, 2014



### ***Context of the colloquium:***

The Banská Štiavnica Calvary is a remarkable baroque landscape landmark situated on a steep hill of volcanic origin behind the historic town. The architectural complex consisting of 17 chapels, three churches (The Lower Church, The Holy Stairs, and the Upper Church), Christ's Prison and the Holy Sepulchre displays numerous architectural and artistic values. The complex includes many valuable historic structures which were still classed as endangered just seven years ago. That situation reflected a lack of public interest in the fate of one of the most beautiful Calvaries in Slovakia and Europe.

The Faculty of Architecture at Slovak University of Technology reacted by creating an Educational and Scientific Research Centre in Banská Štiavnica. In 2007, the Centre organized an International Interdisciplinary student workshop and International Scientific colloquium called *The Banská Štiavnica Calvary - perspectives of revitalization* intended to map the monument's state and document needs required for the conservation of such a spacious architectural sacral complex. Both the students' workshop and the colloquium (offered for the scientific and general public) addressed the pressing social call that the Calvary conservation had become. These events also addressed a very real need for students' training in interdisciplinary teamwork, as well as an interdisciplinary understanding of the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage.

The conclusions and recommendations of the scientific colloquium were summarised in the *Memorandum Concerning Cooperation*. Thanks to this local activists, together with the Calvary site's owners could establish a NGO - the Calvary Fund – dedicated to its rescue and revitalisation.

The international colloquium articulated a wide range of challenges from different scientific disciplines concerned with the landscape-architectural complex of the Calvary. In 2008 the VÚB Fund, as part of its educational budget, further enabled a systematic scientific approach to the monument's conservation and restoration. The interdisciplinary research financed by the VUB Fund was invaluable; the restoration project would have been impossible without it. This research led in turn to further study, recording, documentation and additional architectural and interpretive projects.

The Educational and Scientific Research Centre of the Faculty of Architecture in Banská Štiavnica closely follows the process of further conservation and restoration and knowledge-gathering about the Calvary and participates in activities and projects focused on its conservation and restoration.

### ***Intents and targets:***

After almost 7 years of intensive conservation and restoration initiatives, it is now time to reflect, to evaluate existing activities, processes, and work methods, to summarize achieved results based on an objective evaluation of the process and results and to make any necessary adjustments or corrections.

The meeting of invited specialists in landscape engineering, urbanism, architecture, history of art, monument restoration, theology etc. at the International scientific colloquium will have three main objectives:

1. To summarise the present state of knowledge about the monument, to analyse the latest knowledge about its history, architectural details, and iconography and to make an assessment of monument interpretation in comparison with the state of knowledge in years 2007 – 2008, before this conservation and restoration phase began.
2. To analyze results in the realization of conservation and restoration in the last 6 – 7 years – comparing set targets and expectations from 2007 and achieved results so that we can on one hand identify potential problems-and solutions, and on the other hand be inspired by our successes. Among the event's aims are the evaluation of the state, intervention quality, processes and methods used within the restoration and comparison of results (comparison of the present state and the initial situation in 2007 – 2008).
3. To re-evaluate in the spirit of the above points other processes of revitalisation and formulate further conservation perspectives and plans of revitalization and management with regard to sustainability, and to put forward other possibilities for the high-quality continuation of the Calvary's conservation and restoration.

***Preliminary program:***

**May 19 – 20, 2014 – International scientific colloquium with the participation of widely specialized experts.**

**1<sup>st</sup> theme:** New knowledge related to the Banská Štiavnica Calvary – a comparison between the present state and the state in 2007

**2<sup>nd</sup> theme:** Foreign experiences with Calvary conservation and site management

**3<sup>rd</sup> theme:** Realisation of the conservation 2008 – 2013

**4<sup>th</sup> theme:** Results and perspectives, vision

We expect participation not only of experts from Slovakia but also from other European countries, mainly those where the cult of the Holy Mounts and Calvarias was widespread. Selected parts of the programme are meant not just for the scientific public, but also for local and state institutions and interested persons the general public.

A printed publication about the colloquium will be produced.