

Far ahead of ancient times

■ *T. Bleijenberg*



■ *Stucadoorsbedrijf b.v.*



R E S C U R A

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#### *An age-old tradition*

As early as the seventeenth century, the Dutch regents had the walls and ceilings of their grand mansions embellished with tasteful stucco. Around 1900 the art of stucco decoration culminated in our country in the *Jugendstil* and *Art Déco* styles. For a moment, an age-old tradition was threatened with extinction. In the sixties, the smooth concrete ceilings and the cast concrete systems swept the market. Just in time, however, architects and building contractors are reminded of the valuable characteristics of stucco. A period of rediscovery has begun, and an ancient craft is reinstated.



#### *Craftsmanship in consultation*

During this period of reevaluation, Bleijenberg plasterers has proved its unique craftsmanship in the field of restoration, reconstruction and preservation in many large projects. In addition, the company has a unique collection of originals and moulds of ornaments at its disposal, dating from the period of Louis XIV to *Jugendstil*. Transferring the ceilings from the famous *Van Dishoeck* house in Vlissingen (A.D. 1730) to the Supreme Court building in The Hague is a sign of expertise and daring. These qualities are also evidenced by the restoration of what used to be the private house of the Heineken family in Amsterdam. This building, which now serves as an office, has been restored, reconstructed and preserved both on the outside and within. A surprising effect of the "Heineken building" is the combination of both ancient and modern stuccowork.

#### *Modern stucco*

Besides restoring ornamented stucco dating from ancient times, Bleijenberg plasterers has also specialized in the construction of ceilings designed by contemporary architects. The head office of Mees Pierson in Rotterdam and the Dutch embassy in Rome are evidence of the surprising results to which a combination of modern techniques and the achievements of the ancient craft may lead.





R E S C U R A

*An ancient craft in a new perspective*

Most people picture stuccowork in the form of evenly spread plasterwork on walls and ceilings. Originally, however, more, much more time and effort were spent on plasterwork. The old Egyptians and Mayas already embellished their stuccowork with decorative and religious illustrations. Throughout the centuries, the decoration of plasterwork has been a very common method of embellishing walls and ceilings in the entire world. In Europe, this fine craft passed into disuse in the past century, due to the rising prices of labour and a considerable change in the nature of the work commissioned. Nowadays, the decoration of stucco almost exclusively occurs as an expression of art or as part of the restoration work on an existing ancient monument.

With the aid of the latest (high-tech) tools, Rescura revives this ancient, creative craft.

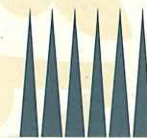


*Precise restoration by means of digitalization*

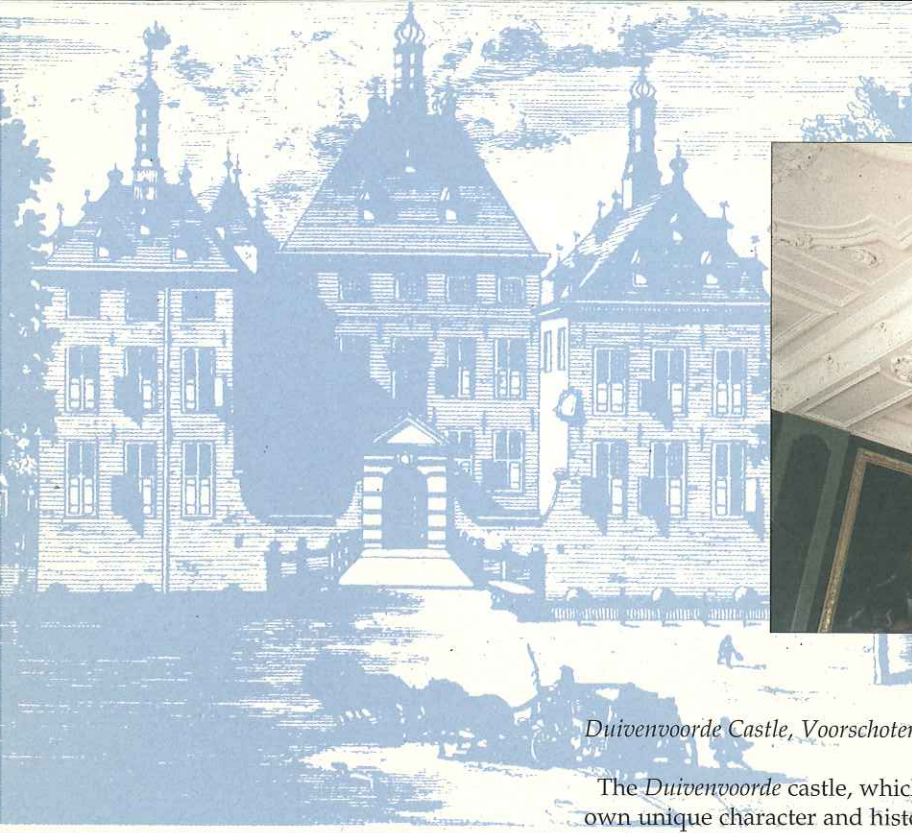
Rescura has developed a unique method for recording and digitalizing existing (model) paintings. After this has been done, minor errors can be smoothed away and missing parts can be replenished with the aid of advanced picture processing techniques. Such picture information is stored in a digital file.

*Fast and uncompetitive restoration*

Based on the above-mentioned digital information, models are made by means of which the original paintings can be applied to the restored stucco. This 'Rescura' method reduces the period required for the restoration considerably (and consequently also the cost), of course without making any concessions to the quality of the work. This is ensured by our craftsmanship and our outstanding references. The 'Rescura' technique is not only relevant to current restoration projects; making an inventory of and keeping a file on the present situation can also result in tremendous savings with respect to future restorations or reconstructions (after a calamity, for instance).







*Duivenvoorde Castle, Voorschoten*

The *Duivenvoorde* castle, which was built in 1250, has its own unique character and history. It is the only castle in the Netherlands that, until now, has only changed owners by inheritance.

In 1631, *Duivenvoorde* was given its present shape. The reception hall was designed by the court architect Daniel Marot in the beginning of the 18th century. Daniel Marot has applied artistic stucco to many palaces and houses of regents and wealthy citizens in The Hague.

The ceiling of the *Duivenvoorde* Castle, which had never been restored before, urgently needed thorough cleaning and redecoration. Bleijenberg plasterers had the honour to take care of this work, also thanks to the experience the company had gained with the restoration of other "Marot ceilings".







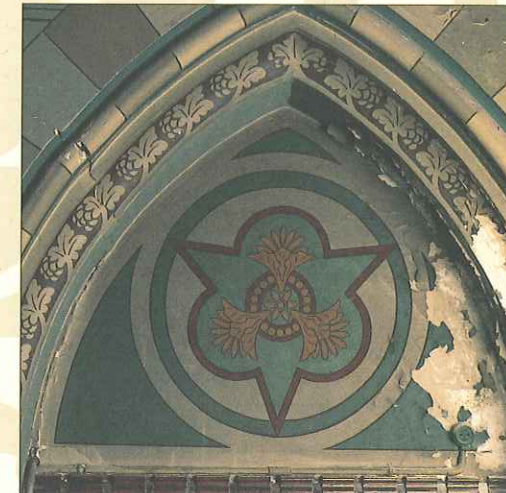
*Onze Lieve Vrouw Onbevleekt Ontoangen Kerk  
(The Church of the Immaculate Conception)*

This church is one of the most beautiful Neo-Gothic buildings of The Hague and was designed by Nicolaas Molenaar, a apprentice of the architect P.J.H. Cuypers. It stands out because of its brick cross ribbed vaults, its authentic decoration and glazing and the polychromy.

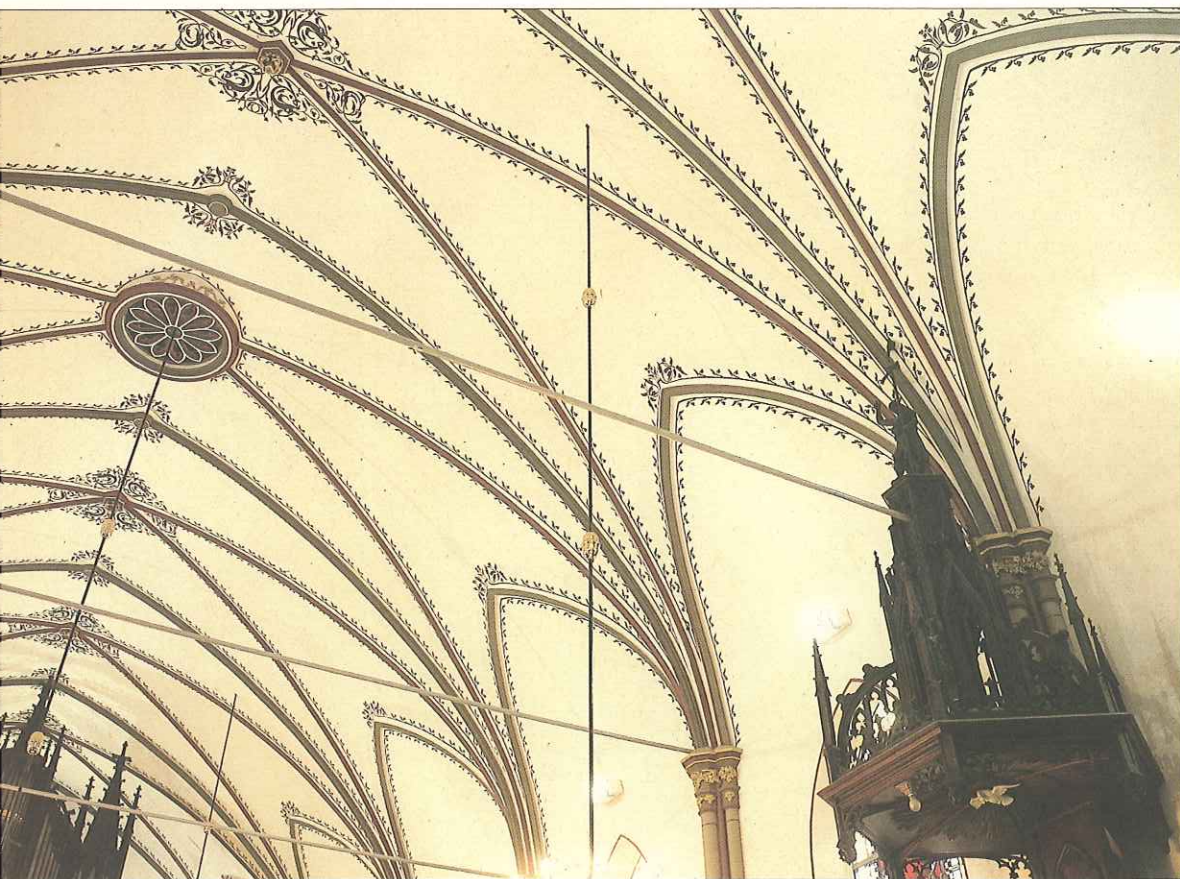
The church has been listed as a historic building since 1974. The restoration was carried out in phases and has now reached its final stage: the restoration of, among other things, the multicoloured paintings, the stained windows and various parts of the interior to their original, glorious state.

Rescura takes care of the cleaning and restoration of the paintings, which have been seriously damaged by soot and moisture, by using both its own method and the traditional techniques.

Our reverence for the ancient design made us strive for a perfect transition from the decorations that had remained intact to the newly applied model paintings.







*Never too early to use new techniques*

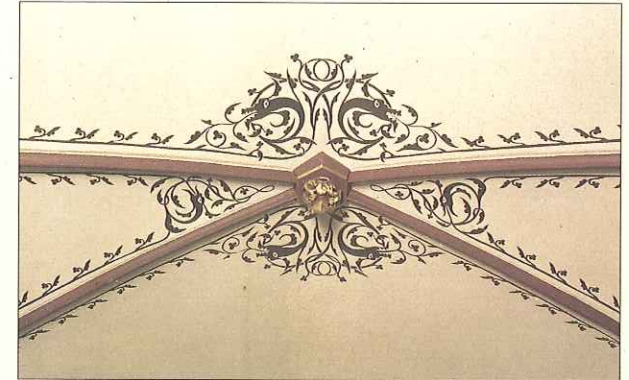
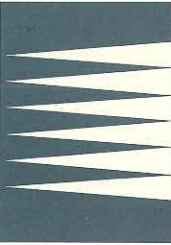
The Church of Saint John the Baptist in Leimuiden, which was completed in 1856, was scheduled to be demolished six years ago. Thanks to the early recognition of the cultural-historical value of the church, the demolition permit was not granted and the building was thoroughly restored. The church is a fine example of a so-called "waterscape church" which was built against the side of a dyke. In particular the foundation and the collapsing tower required our special attention.

When, during the restoration of the Neo-Gothic stucco arches, the original paintings appeared from under the many old layers of paint, the architect and the authority that had commissioned the restoration were faced with a unique challenge. The budget available for the project did not leave much room for a traditional restoration of these model paintings.

In cooperation with Bleijenberg plasterers and Rescura a new draft was presented, which allowed the restoration of the stuccowork and the paintings to be continued thanks to efficient methods and the use of modern techniques.







This successful cooperation showed that innovation has also found a place in the traditional world of restoration. Craftsmanship remains essential in this respect. However, Rescura brings projects within reach which at first seem difficult to realize.



■ *T. Bleijenberg*



■ *Stucadoorsbedrijf b.v.*

Anna Paulownastraat 58  
2518 BG the Hague (Holland)  
phone: (31) 70-365 48 00  
telefax:(31) 70-363 69 02

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R E S C U R A

Zaanstraat 82  
2515 TN the Hague (Holland)  
phone: (31) 70-383 05 85  
telefax:(31) 70-383 75 30

References

Sociëteit de Witte  
Lange Voorhout Palace  
Concertbuilding  
Passage  
City Hall  
Heineken  
Mees Pierson  
Duivenvoorde Castle

*the Hague*  
*the Hague*  
*Amsterdam*  
*the Hague*  
*Amersfoort*  
*Amsterdam*  
*Rotterdam*  
*Voorschoten*

St. Johannes de Doper  
Eglise de la Chapelle  
St. Jan de Doper  
Onze Lieve Vrouw  
Onbevlekt Ontvangen  
Onze Lieve Vrouwekerk

*Leimuiden*  
*Brussel*  
*Oosteind*  
  
*the Hague*  
*Amsterdam*

