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**Konsten att förvalta  
Bevarandets utmaningar och möjligheter – värderingar och  
beslutsprocesser i 1900-talets Sverige rörande offentlig  
byggnadsanknuten konst**

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# Abstract

Title:       Konsten att förvalta. Bevarandets utmaningar och möjligheter – värderingar och beslutsprocesser i 1900-talets Sverige rörande offentlig byggnadsanknuten konst.  
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This thesis aims to improve the prospects for the conservation of building-related art in public places. It takes as its starting point the significant challenges society faces in conserving the considerable number of artworks commissioned since the beginning of the 20th century, in particular in respect of the ability of the cultural heritage sector to identify and prioritise what should be conserved for future generations. The thesis analyses choices and decision-making processes in conservation practice and the consequences of these for long-term management, particularly where they relate to the concept of cultural heritage and to management and monitoring. It discusses what, and whose, knowledge, values and expertise influences, governs or is critical when decisions have to be made, and considers whether there is a need for methods to be developed for the clarification, critical discussion and analysis of the regulatory framework and underlying ethical standpoints.

The theoretical foundation of the thesis comprises a number of concept pairs (conservation and the cultural heritage process, negotiation and power, choices and decisions, heritagisation and canonisation, and anti-canonisation and oblivion), where phenomena are discussed mainly from the point of view of conservation and cultural management theory but also from the perspective of structuration and value theory. The research uses case study methodology, and three cases have been examined using an inductive, descriptive and evaluative approach by means of observations, interviews and document study.

The thesis is composed of 12 chapters, with the first three chapters presenting background, aim, theory and methodology. Chapters 4 and 5 identify and contextualise building-related art commissioned by public bodies during the 20th century from a conceptual, historical and legal perspective. Chapters 6 to 9 form the empirical section of the thesis, featuring case studies in the areas of the church (Växjö Cathedral and the Church of Sweden), housing (the Million Programme area of Lindängen, Malmö) and healthcare (Vrinnevi Hospital, Norrköping). The section analyses the similarities and differences between the cases in respect of commissioning, reception and conservation. Chapters 10 to 12 cover discussion, overall findings, conclusions and proposals for the application of the findings.

The study highlights five problem areas in the conservation of artworks relating to objectives, practice, governance, disparities and deficiencies. Arising from these, there is discussion of stakeholder courses of action, resources, knowledge, expertise, basis of values and decisions. Based on the values expressed in policy documents, professional guidelines and relevant legislation, the findings revealed a series of deficiencies and problems in the conservation of building-related art. These deficiencies and problems are context-dependent but can nonetheless form the basis of the recommendations set out in the text. The thesis points in particular to the need within cultural heritage management practice for clear, shared objectives, documented assessments and a new area of expertise relating to art heritage. Decision-making processes should be clear and firmly grounded – achieved through the use of well-defined concepts, broad-based knowledge and skills sharing – so as to produce robust, legitimate decisions, including decisions that relate specifically to art commissions and their conservation. A review of relevant criteria and legislation is needed. The preservation and maintenance of building-related art should attract public resources and be covered by protective regulations, and its management needs should be understood. Nothing has emerged from the case studies to suggest that new evaluation methods are needed. Existing methods will continue to serve us well, but should be strengthened and developed, and should also be applied consistently and with a long-term perspective.