

The team, artists and designers of DiTacta project by Nataša Jovičić:

Maker of drawings: Zrinka Ostović

Glass printing: Nino Bjelan

Sound design: Dubravko Kuhta

English translation: Gregor Pirš

Read by: Gregor Pirš

Project manager: Alenka Černelič Krošelj, Posavje Museum Brežice

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# Francis Carl Remb

(Radovljica, 1675—Vienna, 1718):

**Self-portrait in the Knights' Hall in the  
Brežice Castle (The Posavje Museum Brežice),  
around 1703.**

Tactile exhibition



Dear guests,

The Posavje Museum Brežice, with its dwelling in Brežice Castle since 1949, presents the heritage of the Posavje region from prehistory till modernity. By preparing exhibitions, programmes, events and with cooperation we are trying to introduce heritage to all who are willing to meet it. One of most recognizable parts of the castle is the Knight's Hall, which was painted by a painter Francis Carl Remb (1675—1718), born in Radovljica around 1703. Among various scenes he placed his self-portrait which tells about his talent, knowledge and courage even today. You are kindly invited to discover the self-portrait by use of tactile diagrams, made by Nataša Jovičić. The text is the same as the text for the blind and visually-impaired and it allows us all to identify, at least partially, with their way of experiencing art.

Alenka Černelič Krošelj

It's important to stress that no colour is clear or strong, they are all pastel. There is always a lot of white or grey, blue, orange or other colours.

The fifth diagram is schematic and very simple as it is impossible to input all the shades of colours into it. The classification of the colours is sometimes easier to describe by words than to show by a diagram. We believe that with a description and touch we achieve better understanding of an work of art as different textures give the observer the impression that the fresco is made of many colours that the painter was using to paint the walls and ceiling of the entire hall.

Travel by touch several times through the diagram the purpose of which was to show another possibility for presentation of this painting. It is important to know that every painting is a work in progress that can be explained in many ways. When we observe a painting, we are also a part of it. Because of this a painting always opens different doors to everyone who observes. Paintings also create different emotions, we hope that with the help of the diagrams we have also managed to create special magic.

Thank you for creative experience of the painting that enables every observer to have a complete free and personal experience and this is what makes every work of art great.

We have analysed the 4 diagrams that have brought us to the last one on which we show the composition and we also named the colours that can be found on the fresco. The colour is the element of the shape and the next diagram schematically shows the colours by different structures.

### **Now let's research in detail diagram number 5**

On this diagram there are no more surprises for you. You have met the composition which you were exploring step by step.

The aim of the last diagram is to show the relationship between the composition and the colours on the painting. The colours are shown with different textures inside the fields. Each texture presents one colour.

Architecture is brown-greyish.

Parallel and slightly curved lines present the grey wall. The man is wearing a red suit, marked with dots, however wavy lines at the back of the arch present the green tree that wasn't mentioned in the previous diagrams. Green colour of the leaves is contrasting the red colour of clothes.



### **The Self-portrait**

I am Nataša Jovičić, art historian and the author of this tactile, multisensory exhibit, designed for the blind and visually impaired. With the help of touch and audio I would like to introduce you with an astonishing piece of work by the artist Francis Carl Remb housed at The Knight's Hall of Posavje Museum Brežice.

To enjoy this experience you do not need to have any special art historical knowledge, I however, hope that the guidance through this work of art and/with the explanation will give you the opportunity to experience something new. This experience will also be interesting to the seeing visitors as the interpretation designed for the blind and visually impaired offers a different interpretation to the visual interpretation. I invite you to listen to the audio guide and to touch glass tactile diagrams. As you listen and feel, you will be given the opportunity to experience this work of art as it was adapted and transferred into tactile diagrams for your own feel of the touch.

I hope that this experience of learning will be interesting to you and that you will both encourage your curiosity as well as find new motivation to learn more about works of art.

## Let's begin

The author of the fresco, Francis Carel Remb was born in 1675 in Radovljica and he died in 1718 in Vienna. He painted this self-portrait as part of the great Knight's Hall of Posavje museum which was painted in 1703. The size of the painting which show the self-portrait is 110 x 86 cm.

On the stand in front of you are 5 glass tactile diagrams which measure 30 x 30 cm and present the before mentioned work of art, part of the fresco by Francis Carl Remb.

Detail D1/5 shows male figure standing. This is the author's self portrait.

Detail D2/5 shows the architecture of the room where the male figure is placed.

Detail D3/5 shows joint diagrams 1 and 2.

Detail D4/5 shows the painter's head.

Diagram D5/5 is a reduced reproduction of the entire painting which explains the composition and the colours.

## We are now exploring diagram 4

Diagram four shows the detail - the painter's head. We have taken only a part of his head and chest from the composition.

Slide your fingers through the diagram.

Wavy lines in the upper part of the diagram present the painter's hair. The painter has painted his hair very carefully on the fresco, they are soft and wavy. The head is tilting towards the observer. The face is painted head-on. Two small horizontal lines, under which there is a dot inside the oval of the header, are the eyes of the painter. Under the eyes, the nose is painted which is represented on our diagram by a vertical line. The mouth are rounded and closed.

The clothes are shown as a full shape. The fur collar is marked by dotted shape which on the fresco emits softness of the material.



The arch widens at the bottom half of the painting. It continues into a wide wall. The left side of the diagram, filled with horizontal and parallel lines shows the side part of the building.

The form of the arch immediately recalls into the memory the roman arches that were build to honour the victories.

### Let's research diagram number 3 in detail

Now, let's pause for a moment and join the first two diagrams in one unit by though. When they are mentally bonded an image is created that is shown via tactile diagram number 3.

The painter described in diagram 1 is included into the architecture described in diagram 2.

If you begin reading the diagram from the lower side of the frame of the painting you will notice that the manly figure is placed on a stand - the proof for which is a surface connected with the wall on the right. The character is in the centre of the composition and is surrounded by the architecture - the arc.



### Let's explore diagram 1

It first needs to be noted that you will be introduced to the painting as whole as well as its composition through details, step by step. In the end we will show you the reduced reproduction of the painting that will explain the composition, colour and the complete painting. Step by step we will add pictures to the existing tactile diagrams so that you will be able to put together a puzzle of 5 diagrams in your mind. This is how the observer gets an image of how the painting grows and what are its parts. Gradually the space of the tactile diagrams will be filled in the same way as the fresco is painted on the wall by a painter. We will try to watch as a unit, adding part by part and we eventually the entire painting will be created.

### From one detail of the painting we travel towards the unit. Let's start.

In front of you is diagram 1. Touch it with your fingers so that you will feel the edge lines of the vertical rectangle which marks the frame. This is the frame of the painting into which the painter has placed his self-portrait, himself, who stands in front of us, watching us the observers.

From the edge of the painting go towards the middle of the frame. Under your fingers you will feel a circular shape which presents the artist's head. With fingers find an oval shape. In the middle of the oval are dots which present the eyes. The head is surrounded by long hair which is typical for baroque men's hairstyle. The hair is marked by a full oval shape. Slowly follow the edge from the head down. You are going to note that you are following a silhouette of a male figure standing in front of you. The painter's clothes are marked with a gap, filled with dots. He is wearing an elegant coat with busty collar, probably made of fur. Under the top he is wearing a vest. The male character is painted to appear as he would be leaving the painting. This effect is achieved by putting the right leg in front of the left in astride. We are given an impression that he will dance, not just stand. This popular dance stride is a feature of the time. The painter is also wearing clothes that are consistent with the fashion of the 18th century. The right hand of the painter is leaning against an elegant walking stick, however in his left hand he is holding a palette with paint and brushes.



The stick and the right leg are touching the surface of the stand where the character is placed. Considering that the painting is a self-portrait, let's try to read what is the author's message about himself. The fact that he is holding a palette with paints shows that his profession is an important part of his selfless. A serious expression and looking towards the audience sends a message of strength and determination and this what a master needs when painting a fresco. Frescos demand a sense of determination, special powers and virtuosity. The painter is the most exposed and is the closest to the observer. Behind him is an architecture which will be observed in the next diagram, diagram number 2.

### Let's explore diagram number 2

Diagram number 2 shows in detail, part of the architecture, behind which the painter is standing. This is an arch, most probably the entrance to a palace. In the diagram it is shown as full surface. Pass your fingers through the entire surface so that you will feel its size. Architecture takes up a big portion of the composition.

