

Name 1	PIPE FOR THE SUBLIMATION OF CINNABAR
Name 2	/
ID number	002.293.Idrija
Manager / Administrator	Mestni muzej Idrija, Prelovčeva 9, 5280 Idrija
Ownership	Public
Owner	Občina Idrija, Mestni trg 1, 5280 Idrija
Local / Original ID Number	Pipe: 510:IDR;RZ-29, RZ-30, RZ-34–RZ-42, RZ-549, RZ-550; clay tube: 510:IDR;RZ-31, RZ-32, RZ-33, RZ-483, RZ-484; jug: 510:IDR;RZ-482, RZ-485
Type of Object	Mine, Smelting

DESCRIPTION

Short description	The pipes for the sublimation of cinnabar (retorta) consist of three parts, namely a pipe (fajfa), clay tube and a jug. The pipes are round at the top side and have an extended edge. At the bottom, they are narrowed into a nozzle for a quadrilateral shaped tube. On this part, an extension of a pipe or a clay tube was fused, during the time of its use. These are also in a quadrilateral shape, however, they are wider at the top, and then evenly narrowed towards the bottom. The tubes are coated with a glaze from the edge inward. The narrower part of the pipes, had a clay jug installed on it.
Measures	Pipe: length 63.5–157 cm, width 25–27.5 cm, height

26-51cm; tube: length 46.5-57.6 cm, width 13.5-15 cm, height 13-14.5 cm; jug: diameter 14.5 cm, height 17 cm.

Materials	Pottery clay
Dating	1782
Author / Producer	The Cinnabar Factory of the Idrija Mercury Mine.

**Picture
attachments**

Original use

After the stirring process of Hg and sulfur in a wooden barrel, the black mass, “mohr”, was poured from two barrels into a 50-litre cast iron jug. Eight of these jugs were placed over the furnace in such a way that the jugs necks reached over the brick partition and leaned on it with flanges. In the upper part of the furnace, a pipe for the sublimation of cinnabar was placed on the jug’s opening and supported with brick. The retort’s joints were soiled with clay after the initial warming process. The narrower part of the pipe’s extension had a clay vessel mounted on it. HgS sublimated when heated to 400°C. It gathered on the cold walls of the retort, in the form of a highly volatile cinnabar. After eight hours of burning, the furnaces were cooled down for two days. Then, the retorts were removed and the cinnabar was gathered from the jugs. The dry procedure of obtaining cinnabar, was finished with cinnabar grinding, washing, drying, sieving and packaging.

Present use

The described objects are being preserved, secured and presented as important mining heritage of Idrija with exceptional universal values. The items are a part of the mining collection of the Idrija Municipal Museum. In a lesser degree, visitors can view them within the permanent museum exhibition “Five Centuries of the Mercury Mine and the Town of Idrija”. The rest of them are stored in the depot and can be used for temporary museum exhibitions. They can also be used for different types of mercury heritage promotions.

Original location

Idrija Mercury Mine (The Cinnabar Factory, on the left side of the Smelting Plant complex)

Present location

Idrija Municipal Museum, Gewerkenegg Castle (showroom 9);
Idrija Municipal Museum, Prelovčeva 2 depot

STATE OF CONSERVATION

History of conservation:	The objects are properly conserved. Some of them require restoration, since a part of the edge is missing. Security of the premises is taken care of.
Present state	good
Necessary activities:	Regular seasonal maintenance.

DOCUMENTATION

Addresses / collections / links etc. where further in-depth information is accessible:	- Inventory Book of the Idrija Municipal Museum; - Janouš, Alois, senior furnace supervisor (k. k. Oberhüttenverwalter). Geschichtliche Entwicklung der Zinnoberfabrikation in Idria, Ad B. D. Z. 4521 de 1897; - Janouš, Alois, senior furnace supervisor (k. k. Oberhüttenverwalter). Darstellung des Zinnobers in Idria in der Gegenwart, Ad B. D. Z. 4521 de 1897; - Kavčič, Ivica. Živo srebro: Zgodovina idrijskega žgalništva. Založba Bogataj, Idrija, 2008; - Kavčič, Ivica. Proizvodnja živossrebrovih spojin pri idrijskem rudniku skozi stoletja. Idrijski razgledi, 61/2, 2016, p. 60–76.
Submitted	Mestni muzej Idrija
Submitted by	Miha Kosmač
Date Submitted	12. 3. 2018
Date Edited	Never