

Art Conservation and Restoration



She is hung on the northwest wall of the Salle des Etats behind a two-inch-thick pane of protective Plexiglas.

- The Da Vinci Code

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Definitions

- **Art Conservation:** the process of controlling the conditions in which artwork is kept. Some examples of this include, putting the painting behind a thick panel of glass, controlling the temperature around the piece, or placing the art in an inert atmosphere.

Definitions

- Art Restoration: The Process of restoring a piece of Art to its original Appearance.



Erminia and the Shepherds- 1648
Restored- 2004



What is a painting?

Paintings actually have 6 layers.

- Varnish and Retouching
- Paint Layer
- Primer or Ground Layer
- Primary support
- Lining Fabric
- Auxiliary Support



How Restoration Works:

- The first step is Pigment Analysis.
- Pigment Analysis can be done using several techniques.
- These techniques can be destructive or non-destructive.
- Destructive- Mass spectrometry & gas chromatography
- Non-destructive- X-ray fluorescence spectrometry & Raman spectrometry

Treatment:

1. The painting is examined and photographed. The treatments are proposed.
2. Treatment begins with the removal of dirt, grime, and other accretions from the varnish layer by means of aqueous solutions.
3. The back of the painting is cleaned and re-tacked down if needed.

Treatment Continued:

4. A non-yellowing, stable synthetic resin varnish is applied to the painting.
5. Losses in the paint and ground layers are filled and textured to match the surrounding original paint layers. Losses are in-painted with a stable, non-yellowing, non-discoloring synthetic medium.
6. A protective backing is placed on the painting and it is reframed.

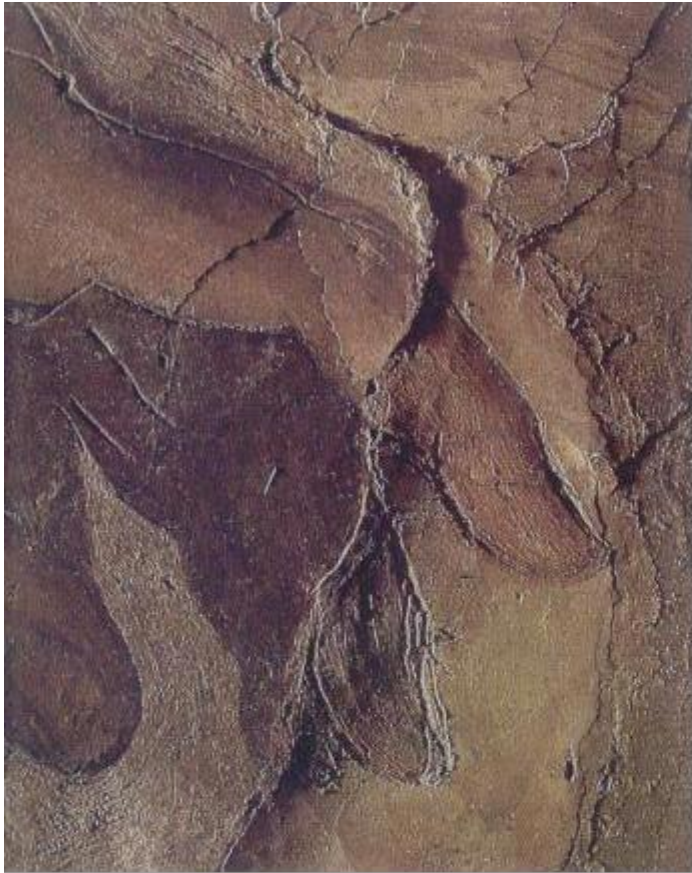
The Sistine Chapel

- Painted 1508-1512
- Restoration announced by Vatican in 1980.
- This intensive civic project cost the Vatican millions of dollars and twelve years.
- Restoration still debated today.



Previous Restorations:

- Scientists identified two major restorations that had occurred: the 1570 Carnevali and the 1710 Mazzuoli. Carnevali's restoration was carried out in almost all fresco while Mazzuoli's was executed in tempera.
- A shift in the foundation caused parts of the fresco to crack.



Restorers filled the crack in with a special type of acid free wax and then proceeded to clean the fresco.



The Creation of Adam

Why is this important?

- Art Restoration combines art and science.
 - It allows art to be preserved for future generations.
- It allows us to look at cultures of the past.



Sources:

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- http://www.economist.com/science/displaystory.cfm?story_id=1429361
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