
Jobs

The Asian Art Museum

San Francisco

Assistant Conservator, Works on Paper

Under general supervision by Head of Conservation, the Assistant Conservator, Works on Paper will assist the conservation staff in the conservation duties related to the examination, preservation, conservation treatment, exhibition, and storage of the Asian Art Museum's collection as well as art objects on loan. The works of art on paper and silk include, but are not limited to, East Asian screens and scrolls, South and Southeast Asian paintings, prints, drawings, albums, books, photographs, and contemporary artworks from over 40 countries in Asia. The incumbent prepares a variety of reports to document conservation activities; performs research; publishes articles, and gives oral presentations related to conservation needs of the museum. The nature of this highly skilled work requires manual dexterity, intense concentration, and aesthetic sensibility in addition to excellent organizational skills. The incumbent must have the ability to prioritize work, coordinate and consult with exhibition team members, and sequence projects in order to meet agreed upon deadlines.

Examples of duties

Under the direction of the Head of Conservation, the Conservator will: Writes condition reports on new acquisitions, art installed in in-house exhibitions, outgoing loans, and traveling exhibitions; conducts surveys of art works in storage and on exhibit to determine stability as needed; insures that completed documentation complies with the American Institute for Conservation Code of Ethics. Determines the materials of fabrication and assesses the stability of the art object; prepares treatment proposals; performs conservation treatments including consolidating, cleaning, and repairing; writes treatment reports and provides photographic documentation. Conducts scientific tests when applicable that aid in the authentication and treatment of art; arranges consultancy resources for additional scientific analysis or treatment as needed. Prepares works of art for exhibition; consults with curators, designers, preparation staff, and external contractors (i.e. framers) to insure that art is appropriately matted, framed, and otherwise prepared for exhibition; assists in designing installation methods in consultation with

mountmakers and exhibition designers for the proper display, storage, and treatment of works of art on paper and silk. Improves storage and installation methods; investigates and researches materials used in contact with works of art on paper and silk such as packing materials, display mounts and storage cases; recommends environmental control conditions for storage and display; advises the building engineers on the physical requirements of the collection; monitors environmental conditions to ensure appropriate conditions are maintained. Assist with purchasing and maintaining supplies for treatment and display. Advises on conservation issues related to preventative conservation, including but not limited to storage fixtures, conservation studio designs and equipment, and gallery installation methods. Advises non-conservation staff on the preservation of the collections; acts as resource person concerning works of art on paper and silk to the museum, collectors, and the public. Publishes articles describing conservation research and techniques; prepares written and oral presentations for general public, connoisseurs, museum staff, and other conservators. May be assigned to act as agent for the museum by couriering works of art, including: traveling with the art; unpacking at destination; writing condition reports and performing emergency treatments as necessary and as approved; repacking and condition reporting at the close of the exhibition.

Minimum qualifications

Masters Degree in Art Conservation specializing in Paper Conservation from a recognized college or university. Verifiable minimum 3 years of conservation experience with the techniques, materials and equipment used in the conservation of Asian works on paper and silk, prints and drawings, in museum environments. Knowledge of the technology and materials of Asian works on paper and silk, prints and drawings, and of the chemical and physical processes of their deterioration. Knowledge of the procedures relating to the examination and the preventative and corrective treatment of Asian works on paper and silk, prints and drawings. Knowledge of the environmental requirements and of controls for handling, storage, exhibition, and travel of Asian works on paper and silk, prints and drawings. Ability to write technical reports in an understandable, clear, and concise manner, utilizing appropriate punctuation and grammar.

Articles You May

“Visitors Enjoy Canterbury Cathedral’s Celebrated Stained Glass at Ground Level,” *The Guardian*, 05/17/2015

Some of the oldest stained glass windows in the world have temporarily come to ground level at Canterbury cathedral, while the massive window that is their normal home is rebuilt.

The style of one of the anonymous medieval artists who worked on the glass is so distinctive that he is known as the Master of Methuselah, and his work has been identified in several windows on the continent.

The glass could have been lost forever if the great south window had collapsed. The first warning came in 2009, when a large piece of carved stone fell from the window surround. Although it has been repaired many times – with the mixture of types of stone and mortars adding to its problems – the huge window dates back to the 1420’s. It was at the edge of what was technically possible when built, 16.8m tall and 7.6m wide.

Over the centuries the entire building has moved slightly, tipping the window forward and sideways. Iron cramps and bars intended to strengthen it were also corroding and fracturing the stone. At a cost of £2.25m almost all the stonework is being replaced, with tonnes of stone brought from France like the original.

Ability to provide sound advice and recommendations regarding the design of facilities to ensure the proper display, storage and treatment of Asian works on paper and silk, prints and drawings. Ability to make clear oral presentations to the general public as well as to technical specialists. Ability to maintain ongoing effective working relationships with museum staff, colleagues in the field, and the public; demonstrate good judgment, flexibility and resourcefulness. Ability to use various computer software including Microsoft Office, Photoshop, Lightroom, and The Museum System.

Compensation

\$25.27- \$30.35 per hour with benefits package.

Please note: This position is represented by SEIU 1021. Apply online at www.asianart.org. The Asian Art Museum embraces diversity in its mission, programs, and staff.

“Sword of Damocles Restored,” *Pune Mirror*, 05/30/2015

Last week, after a gap of nearly 10 years, one of the most important paintings at Mumbai’s Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) — Sword of Damocles by 19th century French artist Antoine Dubost — went up on display.

The iconic 228 x 258 cm canvas has been undergoing restoration for seven years. As Anupam Sah, who heads the museum’s conservation department, says, “It took that long because this project was also used to create a document of a good practice case study. Every detail was documented. The notes will eventually lead to a book.”

In November 2011, *Mumbai Mirror* had reported how the museum had discovered the existence of Dubost’s work amongst its collection while restoring many of the works it owned. The signature of the artist, concealed by several coats of varnish, was revealed when these layers were removed.

“Historic Deerfield Awarded \$3000 for Needlework Conservation,” *Antique Digest*, 06/08/2015

Historic Deerfield, Deerfield, Massachusetts, has been awarded \$3000 by the Felicia Fund to conserve two important needlework pictures acquired by the museum in 2013. The pictures, examples of “schoolgirl” art, have connections to the Connecticut River valley.

The earlier example, wrought around 1755 by Springfield native Lois Breck (1738-1789), depicts the Biblical scene “The Death of Absalom” (or hanging of Absalom), from the second book of Samuel, chapter 18. The second is a pastoral scene known as “The Apiary.” Wrought in 1804 by Betsy Knox (b. 1791), it depicts a woman tending to a beehive.

When they entered the Deerfield collection, both pieces exhibited similar condition problems. Each piece needed stabilization of the ground fabric, cleaning, and reframing.

Following conservation, these pieces will be on display in the Helen Geier Flynt Textile Gallery at the Flynt Center of Early New England Life in 2016.

“Disputed Painting is Declared an Authentic Rembrandt after Decades,” *The New York Times*, 06/09/2015

The painting was sliced down the middle and straight through its center in the 19th century, probably to be sold as two Rembrandt portraits. At some point in the next 40 years, it was sutured back together and layered with paint to cover up its scars.

In 1898, the director of the Mauritshuis Royal Picture Gallery proudly displayed it in the museum as “Saul and David,” one of Rembrandt’s most important biblical works. Then in 1969, a top Rembrandt authority discredited the painting.

Now, after eight years of examination and restoration by the museum’s own conservators — with support from researchers from various outside institutions -- the Mauritshuis has reclaimed the painting as an authentic Rembrandt, saying it was painted in two stages by the master’s own hand.

Scientific data gleaned from paint sample analysis and a new X-ray technique allowed restorers to look beneath the overpainted surface and gain fresh perspective on aspects of the painting that had been obscured by damage and previous restorations. Macro X-ray fluorescence analysis isolated individual elements in pigments used to make the paint, allowing researchers to differentiate original pigments from those that were added later.

Rather than taking the step of stripping the painting back to its most raw state, they chose to make the work “presentable” but not to hide its complex history.

“The Demolished Buddhas of Bamiyan are Reborn as 3D Projections,” *Hyperallergic*, 06/16/2015

This month the two sixth-century Buddhas of Bamiyan demolished in Afghanistan were temporarily returned to their towering places in the Bamiyan cliffs through 3D projection.

The project by Chinese couple Janson Yu and Liyan Huboth was reported on June 7 by the Khaama Press of the Afghan News Agency Network. With the clearance of both the country’s government and UNESCO, the temporary revival was the most recent consideration of how to honor the memory of the statues

destroyed by the Taliban in 2001, while respecting the gaping void left by their demolition.

The project follows last year’s controversy when brick stabilization work was halted at one of the empty sites out of a suspicion the construction was aimed at “secretly trying to rebuild one of the statue’s feet.” Whether or not the Buddhas should be rebuilt has been of debate for over a decade since their loss.

“Macclesfield Art Restoration: Virgin Mary gets a Make-over, ends up being Saint Catherine,” *Mancunian Matters*, 06/17/2015

A 500-year-old painting will go on display in Macclesfield this November after research by a University of Manchester student led to a full restoration of the work of art.

The painting, titled ‘The Virgin Mary Releasing a Soul from Purgatory at the Intercession of King David’, originally went on display at the West Park Museum in Macclesfield following its opening in 1898 and was initially thought to depict the Virgin Mary. But research by Anna Rhodes, who works for the Macclesfield museum as part of her Masters Degree in Art, History and Visual Studies, revealed that the painting was misunderstood and had remained mis-labelled until she decided to take a closer look.

“It became apparent that the panel was very unusual and deserved to be conserved and put back on display at West Park Museum,” she said. The 15th century painting shows Saint Catherine of the Wheel, who was tortured and executed by the Roman Emperor Maxentius for her Christian beliefs. However, it is said that the spiked wheel he intended to use in torture broke when Saint Catherine touched it, leading to her beheading. The torture device was later known as a Catherine Wheel, and also lent its name to the popular firework.

“First Look: Schreckengost Mammoth and Mastodon Sculptures Moving to Cleveland Museum of Natural History,” *cleveland.com*, 06/18/2015

The huge and popular Viktor Schreckengost sculptures of a mammoth and mastodon that once graced the Pachyderm Building at the Cleveland

Metroparks Zoo will soon start a new life on the grounds of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Schreckengost, who died in 2008 at age 101, was one of America's leading midcentury modern industrial designers. Schreckengost originally created the sculptures for the exterior of the zoo's Pachyderm Building in 1956. Cleveland Metroparks, which took over the zoo in the 1970s, deinstalled the sculptures in 2008 when the agency demolished the Pachyderm Building to make way for its new African Elephant Crossing.

The nonprofit Cleveland Zoological Society raised \$100,000 to pay ICA Art Conservation of Cleveland to remove the sculptures. The sculptures were originally produced in 87 segments, each weighing roughly 600 pounds, or roughly 26 tons altogether.

ICA Art Conservation will collaborate with Fentress Architects of Denver and with AECOM of Cleveland, the architects of the museum's expansion and renovation, on the reinstallation of the Schreckengost sculptures.

“Treasure Lost in Iraq: The Story of Mar Behnam Monastery,” *Hyperallergic*, 06/23/2015

Among the most tragic losses of the many antiquities destroyed in Iraq by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has been the destruction of Iraq's seriously understudied medieval architecture.

The demolition of the mausoleum of Imam Yahya ibn al-Qasim and the tomb of Imam Ibn Hassan Aoun al-Din wiped out two of Mosul's prominent medieval landmarks. When another explosion obliterated the Imam Dur mausoleum in Samarra, it wiped out the earliest example of a muqarnas dome in the world.

While the destruction of medieval sites has received far less media attention than attacks on better known ancient sites such as Nimrud or Hatra, the loss of Iraq's medieval sites is perhaps even more tragic due to the relative lack of scholarly documentation.

On March 19, 2015 ISIS fighters rigged the tomb of Mar Behnam and Mart Sarah with explosives and blew it up, completely leveling the structure. Gone is the unique architecture blending Muslim and Christian art, along with one of the Middle East's few inscriptions in Uighur. The destruction of the site fits both ISIS'

targeting of Christians and Yezidis as well as the destruction of graves revered as shrines. It has also made Iraq and the world that much poorer.

“Restoration of Tutankhamun's Funerary Mask to Start in August,” *Ahram Online*, 06/23/2015

Beginning in August, visitors of Tutankhamun's galleries at the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir will not be able to admire the king's distinguished gold funerary mask which will leave its original display for intensive restoration to repair the improper restoration carried out recently.

Minister of Antiquities Mamdouh Eldamaty told *Ahram Online* that Tutankhamun's gold funerary mask will go for restoration after scientific studies identify the materials used in its restoration and establish how to remove them without causing harm. Eldamaty said that German restorer Christian Eckmann assisted him in such studies because he is an expert in metal restoration. Eckmann will travel to Germany with the results, where he will create a gypsum replica of the mask.

An international conference is to be held in August in Cairo to explain to the public and scholars the method selected to restore the beard through state-of-the-art technology. Then, the restoration itself is to start and all the work will be documented. In January 2015, it was reported that the blue and gold beard of the mask was broken during a cleaning process at the Egyptian Museum and that conservators hurriedly glued the beard back on with epoxy resin, damaging the artefact.

“State-Of-The-Art Conservation on View at Formal Dedication of Cultural Heritage Laboratory,” *Yale News*, 06/23/2015

Over 100 members of the Yale community gathered June 19 for the formal dedication of a state-of-the-art conservation laboratory shared by all collections at Yale.

The IPCH Conservation Laboratory covers over 8000 square feet and comprises a large open-plan workspace offering free-flowing collaboration across a wide range of projects and media — paper and textiles, paintings, natural history specimens and

other objects. Many of the collections in the laboratory have their own conservation space within the same building, providing direct access to the new facility, which also houses rooms for formatting and framing, a structural workshop for sculptures, and a lead-walled imaging room equipped with a 300 kilovolt X-ray.

Among the institute's priorities are sustainable and preventive conservation, materials aging diagnostics, technical and technological studies on cultural artifacts, and mechanical and non-destructive testing in the built heritage field.

Led by inaugural director Stefan Simon, it engages in research and teaching in a multidisciplinary setting, working closely with the Yale University Art Gallery, the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, the Yale Center for British Art, and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, among others.

“Sleuth Work Leads to Discovery of Art Beloved by Hitler,” *The New York Times*, 06/25/2015

The recent startling recovery of long-lost artworks made for Adolf Hitler and his chief architect, Albert Speer, began with a telephone call to a Berlin art dealer.

Two large and imposing bronze horses by Josef Thorak — missing from a Soviet military base outside Berlin since some point in communism's collapse — were available. Was the dealer, Traude Sauer, interested? Ms. Sauer, 76, who by her own estimation is a dealer of distinction, has long been a police informant. Realizing that the Nazi-era sculptures might be classified as stolen state property, she turned to René Allonge, a chief investigator with the Berlin police.

That was in September 2013. Last month, those tips culminated in one of the more sensational police raids in recent memory in Germany. The authorities descended on 10 properties nationwide, uncovering dozens of missing pieces of Nazi art and throwing rare light on the secretive market where such works are traded. It is legal to possess art commissioned by the Nazis, but it can remain in private hands only if the state has no direct claim on it. That is almost certainly not the case with several of the recovered works.

“The Great Wall of China Is Falling Apart,” *Hyperallergic*, 07/01/2015

The Great Wall was once China’s most fearsome defense. Construction began as early as 300 BC, and by the time the Ming Dynasty finished it, more than 1,000 years later, it had grown to span 13,000 miles.

Sadly, according to the Beijing Times, the once-mighty wall that shielded the country from northern invaders is now in serious need of protection itself. The Great Wall of China Society claims that more than 30% of the original structure has disappeared. The news comes after a 2012 study found that only 8.2% of the wall is in good condition.

Humans are big contributors to the wall’s destruction. More than 10 million tourists flock to the structure every year. It’s become popular to visit the less-frequented stretches, and people often camp out for the night, driving tent stakes into the delicate stones and leaving garbage behind.

Poor local villagers loot the wall’s gray bricks to build their own houses or peddle the stones to tourists.

Nature has also played a role. Trees grow in its cracks, breaking the structure apart and making it even more vulnerable to the elements. Local governments tasked with caring for it lack the necessary funding to do so and often don’t have enough staff members to monitor it regularly. And though China passed the “Great Wall Protection Ordinance” in 2006, obligating citizens to help protect it, no organization exists to enforce the rule.

“Workers Restore Majesty of Jefferson’s Rotunda in Virginia,” *Columbus Dispatch*, 07/04/2015

Thomas Jefferson’s Rotunda at the University of Virginia is the focus of a \$58.3 million renovation of the World Heritage Site. The Rotunda face-lift is part construction zone, part art restoration.

To ensure all this work doesn’t stress the nearly 200-year-old structure, a \$500,000 laser-monitoring system targets 130 points to detect any movement in the brick walls. If the lasers sense a shift of a quarter inch, “the project shuts down and we figure out what’s going wrong,” said Jody Lahendro, a historic-preservation architect who is overseeing the work for the university.

The centerpiece of U.Va.’s historic grounds, the Rotunda was the largest construction project of its day. Jefferson modeled the Rotunda on the Pantheon in Rome. The Rotunda’s connection to Italy doesn’t end there. The capitals were mined and carved in Italy. The original capitals also were from Carrara, Italy, but they were replaced with domestic marble after a fire in 1895. They failed to withstand the weather and are being replaced.

The work also has revealed secrets: A hearth used in chemical experiments and dating to Jefferson’s era was found behind a brick wall. A cistern, 16 feet deep, was discovered in the east courtyard. The signatures of workers who built it in 1853 also were found, and they were preserved for future display.

“Ipswich Museum Jug Smash Boy’s Family ‘Thrilled,’” *BBC News*, 07/05/2015

The mother of a little boy who accidentally smashed an 18th Century jug has said the family is “thrilled” it has been repaired.

Staff at Ipswich’s Christchurch Mansion appealed for him to get in touch, so they could tell him the jug he knocked off a window ledge was now fixed. The boy’s mother, who wishes to remain anonymous, contacted the museum after reading about the appeal online.

The Delftware puzzle jug had broken into 65 pieces. Each of the 65 pieces of the jug was logged and photographed as part of the repair project. It took about 65 hours of work to repair the 221-year-old jug. The boy was thought to be about five when the accident happened last summer.

The restored jug has been moved from Christchurch Mansion and is on display at the Ipswich Art Museum in the High Street.

“Restoration Work on Timbuktu’s Historic Tombs to Finish this Month,” *The Art Newspaper*, 07/06/2015

A project to restore 14 historic mausoleums destroyed in Timbuktu three years ago by hardline Islamists is due to finish at the end of July.

The news was announced in Bonn, Germany, at the 39th session of Unesco’s World Heritage Committee.

Extremist groups targeted the tombs of Muslim saints as well as the city’s vast libraries when rebels occupied northern Mali following a military coup in March 2012.

Located at the crossroads of several Trans-Saharan trade routes, Timbuktu grew to become a major centre of Koranic culture in the 15th century. Known as “the city of 333 saints”, it has 16 mausoleums inscribed on Unesco’s World Heritage List.

Unesco, the Malian government as well as various international organisations are behind the effort to restore the mud-brick shrines, the earliest of which dates back to the 13th century. Local craftsmen used traditional materials and techniques in the reconstruction process, which contributed to the local economy by creating around 140 jobs.

“The Dirty Business of Protecting Precious Paintings,” *Philly Voice*, 07/08/2015

When the Museum of the American Revolution opens in 2017, guests will be able to explore a life-size recreation of Boston’s Liberty Tree and see what Independence Hall looked like under siege. They’ll also find George Washington’s original headquarters tent and a range of artwork depicting the Revolutionary War.

Two of the paintings in the Museum’s collection were created by local artist Harrington Fitzgerald, who studied under Thomas Eakins. Fitzgerald was also an editor and later business manager of the Philadelphia Item, a newspaper started by his father Thomas.

But before Fitzgerald’s late 19th century paintings, “Washington Crossing the Delaware” and “Valley Forge Winter, the Return of the Foraging Party,” can be displayed at MAR, they need a bit of a makeover. MAR has enlisted University of Delaware Art Conservation Assistant Professor Brian Baade, fellow conservator Kristin deGhetaldi and a group of undergraduates to bring them back to life.

“Rome is on the Verge of Collapse and needs Urgent Repair, Leaders Warn,” *The Telegraph*, 07/16/2015

The Eternal City is facing crisis, with its administration engulfed in corruption scandals and debt, its

roads scarred by pot-holes, the main airport partially closed and a growing immigration crisis.

For generations, the Italian capital has rested on past glories rather than built on them but now its multiple problems have come to a head. A survey by the European Commission two years ago placed Rome last out of 28 EU capitals in a ranking for the efficiency of city services.

Despite great food, superb coffee and an enviable climate, on an index of quality of life, the capital came second to last, with Athens at the bottom.

“Conservator Channels Caravaggio to Freshen a Cleveland Museum of Art Masterpiece,” *cleveland.com*, 07/21/2015

The cleaning and repair of one of the most important paintings in the Cleveland Museum of Art has reached the point where conservator Dean Yoder needs to channel his inner Caravaggio.

After having spent eight months cleaning away yellowed varnish and fixing earlier repairs on the painting, Yoder is touching up areas of damage on the surface of the 1607 “Crucifixion of Saint Andrew. Yoder, who is 56 and who joined the museum six years ago after having run his own paintings conservation firm in Cleveland since 1985, said he prepared himself in part by traveling to Italy to study other works by Caravaggio. It has also helped that several vintage copies of the Caravaggio exist, enabling Yoder to compare his work to that of the early copyists.

Working on the Caravaggio for many months had made Yoder think about the man whose brushstrokes he is following. Hot-tempered and combative, Caravaggio killed a man in Rome in 1606, reportedly in a fight over a prostitute, and died on the run four years later while seeking a papal pardon.

But channeling the artist hasn’t meant taking on his inner turbulence. Instead, Yoder said he’s more impressed than ever by Caravaggio as an artist after having spent what already amounts to a significant chunk of his own career working on the “Saint Andrew.”

“Master Forger Librarian Swaps 143 Artworks with His Own,” *ArtNet News*,

07/21/2015

Art theft and forgery appears to be a major problem at China’s Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, where former chief librarian Xiao Yuan has admitted to replacing 143 artworks with fakes he created himself. He claims that several of his fakes were subsequently replaced with even poorer quality copies.

His defense for his crime? Everyone else was doing it. Xiao claimed that he noticed fake artworks beginning his very first day on the job. Apparently, the academy library treated paintings like books, allowing students and staff to check artworks out and remove them from the premises, making it shockingly easy to swap the originals out for forgeries.

Beginning in 2004, Xiao began substituting landscape paintings, calligraphy, and other famous artworks from the school’s collection with his forged copies. Xiao confessed to stealing works from 20th-century Chinese artists Qi Baishi and Zhang Daqian, as well as Zhu Da’s 17th-century ink masterpiece *Rock and Birds*.

But then his own fake works suffered a similar consequence. “I realized someone else had replaced my paintings with their own,” Xiao told the court, “because I could clearly discern that their works were terribly bad.” (Which seems like a convenient way to defend his own artistic ability, if not his actions.)

“Bid to Preserve Armstrong Moon suit,” *BBC News*, 07/21/2015

The US National Air and Space Museum has turned to crowdfunding to conserve the spacesuit Neil Armstrong wore on the Moon. The museum aims to raise \$500,000 on Kickstarter to help safeguard the suit and build a climate-controlled display case.

Conservators say the suits were built for short-term use with materials that break down over time. They also plan to digitise the suit using 3D scanning.

The suit used by Armstrong on the Moon during the Apollo 11 mission in 1969 is deteriorating and hasn’t been displayed for nine years. “In 2006, we decided to give it a rest, to take it off display and put it in our state-of-the-art storage, which is at a low temperature

and low humidity, to preserve it and figure out how to get those climate-controlled conditions from storage into a display case,” said Cathy Lewis, spacesuit curator at the Washington DC-based museum.

She added: “The suit itself is a very complex machine. It’s made of many different materials - about 12 different types of textiles and fabrics that have been combined together in one. “To preserve or conserve any single one of those textiles would be very easy, but then we would have to take the suit apart and we’re not going to do that.”

“Restoration of Alamo Painting Completed,” *Houston Chronicle*, 07/24/2015

Art conservator Anne Zanikos has nearly finished saving a 114-year-old painting from the Alamo that depicts a key moment in the Texas independence struggle. After four months of conservation work, “Ben Milam Calling for Volunteers,” painted in 1901 by Texas artist Harry Arthur McArdle, could return next month to the shrine.

Zanikos estimates that she and her lab assistant have spent close to 100 hours cleaning, repairing and remounting the work. Details of the painting are now emerging from the damage left by previous unsympathetic conservation efforts, she said.

McArdle’s painting shows Milam, at 47 about twice the age of the average Texan soldier, rallying the troops to renew their long-stalled assault on the Mexican forces holding the village of Béxar in December 1835, when the rebels were considering whether to keep fighting for Texas independence or go home for the winter.

“IFA Conservation Center Launches first ever MFA/MA Dual Degree Program,” *NYU press release*, 07/31/2015

In recognition of the substantial role that science plays in educating and training students of art conservation, the NYU Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) has been accredited by the New York State Board of Education to award students in its conservation program the degree of Master of Science in Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works.

Conservation Center students,

who receive full scholarships and are required to concurrently pursue a Master of Arts degree in art history, previously earned an Advanced Certificate. The new dual degree program is the first of its kind in the United States. The MS and MA dual degree will be effective for the fall 2015 incoming class.

“Italy Earmarks €80M for 12 Cultural Projects, Including Rebuilding Colosseum Floor,” *Hyperallergic*, 08/05/2015

On Tuesday Dario Franceschini, Italy’s Minister of Heritage, Culture, and Tourism, announced that the superior council for cultural assets and landscape has committed €80 million to 12 major cultural projects.

Foremost among the projects are an €18.5 million plan to rebuild the floor of Rome’s Colosseum — which was removed during excavations toward the end of the 19th century — so that the ancient amphitheater might be used for reenactments of Roman spectacles and other events, and €18 million for the so-called “Great Uffizi” project to renovate and expand the most-visited art museum in Italy.

Italy’s cultural and archaeological sectors have long suffered from chronic underfunding, as illustrated most poignantly by the deterioration of the ancient site of Pompeii. Recently the country has turned to private and corporate funding for major restoration projects, from Fendi bankrolling the \$4 million cleaning of Rome’s Trevi Fountain to Bulgari putting \$2 million toward tidying up the Spanish Steps.

The Colosseum is already in the midst of a €25-million renovation funded by leather goods billionaire Diego Della Valle and due to be complete next year.

“Thumbs down! Why it’s a Disaster to Restore the Colosseum,” *The Guardian*, 08/06/2015

Rome is giving the Colosseum a new floor at a cost of more than €18m. Italy’s Culture Minister Dario Franceschini calls the reflooring “a promise kept”. I call it a history betrayed.

It is totally barbarous to spank up this noble mass of stone with a brand new floor. That floor will cover up what visitors today see when they look down:

a warren of cavernous exposed tunnels where gladiators and animals once awaited their entrance into the arena.

By covering it with a fake cinematic arena, the Italian state proposes to turn the Colosseum into a film set. The beauty of ruins is precisely that they leave space to imagine what they were once like. To restore is to wreck. Step beyond simple preservation and you replace history with cheap fantasy.

Renewing the Colosseum’s arena is not the kind of necessary restoration that raises the odd fallen stone or keeps a structure safe — it’s a gross intervention for the sake of modern bad taste.

If Rome feels the need for a new-looking Colosseum to keep the most superficial visitors happy it should build a replica elsewhere in the city, and stage fake games there. And why not? In fact, what this monument most needs is a lot less visitors. The task of restoration is to preserve the past — not replace it.

“Hidden Dimensions: 3D Scanner Reveals the Inner Secrets of Artworks,” *Euronews*, 08/18/2015

Researchers at the University of Oviedo in northern Spain think they have found a way of looking below the surface of works of art without damaging them: a scanner using the highly versatile material, graphene.

Samuel Ver Hoeye, a telecommunications engineer involved in the research explained its advantages: “Graphene acts as a frequency multiplier. It is able to generate higher frequency signals out of lower frequencies. Graphene also allows us to go deeper into the work of art, and to identify the chemical composition of its materials.”

The pictures obtained with the graphene scanner are then combined with image processing techniques and 3D high-performance scanning to generate images of sealed 3D objects, whose hidden secrets can then be studied more easily.

The scanner has a versatility much needed in the world of art conservation and restoration, as existing scanners for works of art are currently very expensive. The new technology has been designed to be much cheaper, resulting in a compact, lighter scanner that can easily be transported to museums or laboratories to study objects.

“Infamous Jesus Painting Restoration Inspires Opera about the Woman who Botched it,” *Independent*, 08/21/2015

Preparations are underway for a comic opera about a Spanish artist who tried, hugely unsuccessfully, to restore a faded 1930 oil painting of Jesus Christ.

Cecilia Gimenez skyrocketed to viral fame after attempting to repair “Ecce Homo (Behold the Man)” by Elias Garcia Martinez and failing dismally. Her 2012 effort was soon branded “the worst restoration in history” and described as a “crayon sketch of a very hairy monkey in an ill-fitting tunic”.

Gimenez’s “miraculous” story is now the basis for an upcoming production, which does not intend to mock her but instead “honour her faith that she could overcome this”. Andrew Flack, who has written the libretto, told the Guardian that the internet will play a key part in the opera. “It was really the internet that caused the sensation,” he said, adding that Gimenez, now 83, struggled to cope when she became famous for all the wrong reasons. “She was devastated when it first happened. She was in depression, she was on medication, she felt so terrible. But then it kind of turned around.”

Gimenez’s artwork attracted more than 130,000 tourists to the local church in Borja, helping it economically in the midst of the Eurozone crisis and turning her into a local legend.

“Earthquake? No Damage. But What About Loud Music?” *The Washington Post*, 08/22/2015

Vibrations, although little understood in the art conservation field, can pose grave risks to art. Organizers of PEACOCKalypse at the Freer and Sackler galleries in June promised that the party would have the courtyard buzzing with danceable hits. And so it did. Nearly 1,000 visitors donned peacock-style feathers, sipped colorful cocktails and danced to live music until midnight.

But the courtyard wasn’t the only thing buzzing that night: The galleries were also were shaking from the amplified music. As museums are increasingly hosting events to increase foot traffic and court younger visitors, those concerns are weighing on conservationists.

With vibrations, sometimes you can have a cumulative effect that you cannot see,” says Terry Drayman-Weisser, who recently retired from Baltimore’s Walters Art Museum, where she directed conservation and technical research for nearly 40 years. More research is needed on acceptable decibel limits for musical performances in museums and on the role played by such factors as object material and architectural structure.

“A 12-year-old trips and Puts his Hand Through a Painting at an Art Exhibition in Taiwan,” *The Guardian*, 08/25/2015

A 12-year-old Taiwanese boy lived out a slapstick nightmare at the weekend when he tripped at a museum and broke his fall with a painting, smashing a hole in it.

Footage released by the organisers of the Face of Leonardo: Images of a Genius exhibition in Taipei shows the boy – in shorts, trainers, a blue Puma T-shirt and holding a drink – walk past the still life, catching his foot and stumbling over. He looks up at the canvas, shown later to have a fist-sized gash at the bottom, and freezes, looking around at other people in the room.

The organisers will not ask the boy’s family to pay for the restoration costs, according to Focus Taiwan news. It said the exhibition organiser, Sun Chih-suan, said the boy was very nervous but should not be blamed and the painting, part of a private collection, was insured.

Porpora was a leading still life artist who produced baroque-style paintings, often of fruit and flowers. The damaged work, 200cm tall, depicts flowers in a vase. Tsai Shun-Jen, the chief conservator, said the painting was very fragile due to its age. “When we start working on the painting’s restoration, the priority is to strengthen its structure, not retouching the paint on the damaged area,” he said.

“Theater’s Hidden Murals to Undergo Restoration,” *Laguna Beach Indy*, 09/06/2015

In 1918, the artist Edgar Payne made his home in Laguna Beach where he founded the Laguna Beach Art Association, which later became the

Laguna Art Museum, one of the county’s earliest cultural institutions.

Self-taught, the artist is best known as a plein-air painter, who supported his family in part by painting murals on commission. Yet, his murals have received relatively scant recognition in scholarly works. The four that he painted for the now closed Laguna South Coast Cinemas hardly received any recognition at all.

Even so, a local historian expressed concern over the state of the Payne murals commissioned by the Aufdenkamp family, the theater’s founders. “They have been hidden from view and been allowed to deteriorate after it had been remodeled into a double-screen facility in 1976,” Laguna Beach historian Jane Janz said this week.

The theater’s owner, Leslie Blumberg, recently engaged a conservator to assess the damage and determine if restoration is possible.

“L.A. to Spend \$750,000 to Conserve Public Murals and Paint New Ones,” *Los Angeles Times*, 09/15/2015

Los Angeles will announce a new Citywide Mural Program on Tuesday that calls for \$750,000 to be spent on the restoration and preservation of historic fine art murals as well as the development of new ones.

The Department of Cultural Affairs program, which will run through June 2016, is an outgrowth of the city’s 2013 ordinance allowing new murals after a nearly 10-year ban, said Danielle Brazell, the department’s general manager of cultural affairs. “Once it passed and murals were no longer illegal, we had a new set of guidelines in which the city could get behind murals once

again,” Brazell said.

“For close to a decade, there were no resources to restore fine art murals or commission new ones. This is something the mayor put in the budget last year and the City Council supported it.” The funds include \$400,000 that will go to the Social and Public Art Resource Center, or SPARC, and the Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles. The two nonprofit groups will conserve 11 murals that have been damaged. The work will include applying an anti-graffiti coating to protect the artwork from vandals.

“Restoring the Value of Damaged Art,” *Wall Street Journal*, 09/20/2015

Insurers of fine art hear lots of excuses in their line of work. The movers dropped it. A pipe broke and sprayed water all over it. But when it comes to protecting the value of one’s art, the manner in which a piece was damaged doesn’t matter. What matters a thousand—perhaps a million—times more is how the owner can go about restoring the piece’s value—or recouping it if the piece is deemed a total loss.

Protecting art’s financial value isn’t as simple as it might seem. There is a “book” value to your car, which helps insurance companies decide if the cost of repairs will be higher than the overall value of the vehicle. The worth of damaged art, decorative arts and antiques is more elastic and may lead to disputes between owners and insurance companies.

This article takes a look at what every art owner should know about damage and restoration in the world of private art collecting, and how owners can best protect their pieces—and pocketbooks.

At the top of Black Hill they stopped to catch breath. They tightened up their race helmets. It was 1989. It was before safety had been invented. But Greg LeMond had just won the Tour de France in a futuristic streamlined hat - it had been on the television news - so she and Adam had made aerodynamic helmets out of chicken wire, paste, and newspaper. The newspaper was the Daily Telegraph, which their mother took. Under the paste of Zoe's helmet you could see three-quarters of the photo of the man in Tiananmen Square, standing in front of the tanks. The tank man was famous for being slow. Four tanks bearing down on him, every nerve of his body screaming at him to run, and somehow he stood his ground. It was the only kind of race you could win without moving.

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