

**“Vandalized Monet Painting Receives Radical Restoration,”** *Fine Art Today*, 07/03/2014

Almost exactly two years after a visitor to its galleries punched a hole through a prized Monet, the National Gallery of Ireland unveiled the restored painting.

In late June 2012, the National Gallery of Ireland was in the headlines under unfortunate circumstances. A visitor to the museum’s galleries attacked Claude Monet’s “Argenteuil Basin with

alter his work via the “nuclear option,” blowing it up as a final performance piece - a logical conclusion to this broad depiction of futuristic feudal warring states. “The work would still exist,” said the artist, “but as rubble.”

However, in response to a mockup of a conserved single panel, Burden instead agreed to consider the alternative option of an extensive conservation campaign. Over the course of several months, the installation was cleaned, repaired, re-fabricated, and remounted on lightweight, interlocking sheets of honey-comb aluminum panel.

Following conservation, *A Tale of Two Cities* was loaded into 16 custom-made crates and shipped across the country, where it occupied a major place in the artist’s one-man survey *Chris Burden: Extreme Measures* at the New Museum in New York last year. The work is currently scheduled for exhibit at the Orange County Museum of Art in the fall.

**Mi Vida: The Saving of a Mural on Dry Wall**

Anne Zanikos

In 1972, San Antonio artist Jesse Trevino returned from service in the Viet Nam war to recover from the loss of his right arm. As he healed and taught himself to paint with his non-dominant left hand, he painted his first mural on the wall of his bedroom. In 2005, the house was sold, and the biographical mural was slated for destruction. The deinstallation, relocation, and treatment of the mural will be discussed with emphasis on the treatment decisions associated with the fragile dry wall support.

a Single Sailboat” (1874) as it hung on the wall, reportedly putting his hand through the canvas. Shortly afterward, the museum launched the Claude Monet Research and Conservation Project to mend a three-branch tear in the canvas and restore it to its original condition.

The National Gallery’s website details the various stages of the extensive project, which included stabilizing the painting, testing materials, repairing the tear, lining and restretching the canvas, restoring and replacing paint fragments, and filling in the paint.

One of only three Monet paintings in Ireland, “Argenteuil Basin with a Single Sailboat” is back on view at the National Gallery in Dublin. The painting now hangs behind a thin layer of protective glass.

**“Gothic Church’s Frescoes Destroyed during Restoration,”** *The Art Newspaper*, 08/26/2014

German heritage advocates have accused the Russian Orthodox Church of causing irreversible damage to the 14th-century Brick Gothic church of St Catherine at Arnau near Kaliningrad, especially to its frescoes.

“The... iconography of the painting[s] in St Catherine’s Church in Arnau from the 14th century had not yet been thoroughly researched [and they] are irretrievably lost,” wrote Nicole Riedl, an expert in Medieval wall paintings at Hawk University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Hildesheim, Germany in her report, after she visited the church in July with a group of activists from the German-based Kuratorium Arnau.

Just three patches of fresco remain in St Catherine’s, following restoration work carried out after the church was handed over to the Russian Orthodox Church by local legislators in 2010. The frescoes were created when St Catherine’s was a Catholic church. It became a Lutheran church after the Reformation and the frescoes were whitewashed for centuries, then uncovered in the early 20th century.

Riedl wrote that, from a conservation point of view, the Russian church’s actions in restoring the Arnau church have violated both the Charter of Venice as well as Russian culture laws. Following the German delegation’s visit, the news website Newkaliningrad.ru

reported that the Kaliningrad Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church was cutting off relations with Kuratorium Arnau.

**“Cheltenham Banksy ‘Mural to Cost £26,000 to Restore,’”** *BBC News*, 08/22/2014

A graffiti-damaged mural in Cheltenham by street artist Banksy can be restored at a cost of almost £26,000, a professional art conservator has said.

The ‘Spy Booth’ artwork, which depicts three spies “snooping” on a telephone box, appeared in Hewlett Road in April. It was badly damaged with spray paint earlier this month. Robin Barton, from London’s Bankrobber gallery, who asked Tom Organ to assess the damage, said the six-week project would return it “to its former glory”. Mr. Barton said it had been “established beyond doubt” that the mural could be successfully restored whilst keeping the structural integrity of the Grade II listed building intact.

The artwork was daubed with white paint just days after it appeared in April but it was saved by drinkers who rushed from a nearby pub to wash off the paint before it dried. In August, silver and red graffiti was sprayed over the mural and, less than two weeks later, protective hoardings were removed and holes made at the four corners.

After the holes appeared, businessman Hekmat Kaveh - who has offered funds to buy the house to ensure the mural stays in the town - said he thought an attempt was being made to remove it.

**“Clyfford Still Touch-up Exhibit shows Art sans Makeup,”** *The Denver Post*, 09/02/2014

Time hasn’t been kind to Clyfford Still’s 1942 abstract masterpiece, PH-126. Paint is separating along its left edge, and its whole surface appears to be randomly flaking.

So it goes in the world of oil-coated canvases, and a good percentage of the 825 paintings in the Clyfford Still Museum’s collection are showing signs of age. Fortunately, Chief Conservator James Squires and his team are there to perform cosmetic surgery.

Their touch-ups are delicate and tedious. The museum’s new exhibit,

“The Art of Conservation: Understanding Clyfford Still” takes a lot of the mystery out of the process. Using raw canvases, some worse for wear, the show explains how paintings are inspected and mended when a fix is in order.

It’s a bold move for the museum; really, stapling a sampling of Still’s more worthy pieces to the wall and letting us stare at the blemishes. The exhibit shows us a huge work table where a damaged canvas is stretched wide and push-pinned on its sides, holding it tight so the repair work can be done.

For those of us who have gotten to know Still on a surface level, this exhibit offers a chance to go deeper, to see the things before they’re made perfect for public consumption. But it’s refreshingly honest and goes long way toward making Still, who can seem remote, look a lot more human.

**“Massive Dürer Print Undergoing Painstaking Restoration,”** *ArtNet News*, 09/04/2014

This fall, visitors to the National Gallery of Denmark can see conservators at work on Albrecht Dürer’s The Arch of Honor of Maximilian I, the largest woodcut print made during the Renaissance.

The delicate artwork, over 9 feet wide and 11 feet tall, is made from 36 separate sheets of paper, printed from no less than 195 wooden blocks. It is being repaired in anticipation of a spring exhibition organized by Denmark’s Royal Collection of Graphic Art. Commissioned by Maximilian I, the Holy Roman Emperor, to honor his family, and created by Dürer and his workshop between 1512 and 1515, pages of The Arch were initially stored individually in a binder.

In the mid-19th century, however, they were glued together on a single canvas by the Royal Collection of Graphic Art. In the 16th century, such multi-sheet prints were usually used to decorate walls, and were often hand-colored.

Over the years, the piece had deteriorated due to exposure to light and changing climate conditions. Eventually, the museum had to remove the massive artwork from view, and it has been in storage ever since. Restoring the work to its former glory is no easy task, but

conservators have opened the process to the public, allowing visitors to observe and ask questions as they painstakingly separate the individual pages, carefully cleaning each one, mending tears and repairing other damage.

**“The Fall of Rome? Italy’s Fears that Corporate-Sponsored Restoration Projects Will Lead to the Disneyfication of its Cultural Heritage,”** *The Independent*, 09/07/2014

As Italy courts private cash to rescue some of the globe’s best-known relics of the ancient world, a debate is raging over the commercialisation of history. The Italians have been careful to avoid, say, the kind of US-style rebranding that could lead to Prada’s Pompeii or the Leaning Tower of Gucci. But critics are already fretting about corporate exploitation of Italy’s national patrimony.

Yet something, everyone agrees, needs to be done. Fearing the Disneyfication of its landmarks, the Italian government has largely eschewed private donations and sponsorships for upkeep and renovations. But in the face of Italy’s multi-year economic malaise and the gravity of deterioration at some sites, the Italians have done an about-face. Portraying themselves now as merely caretakers of some of humanity’s most important artifacts, they are rallying billionaires, companies and even foreign governments to their cause.

As the Italians peddle their monuments like so many troubled children in need of sponsors, the dandies of Italian fashion have come to the rescue. They are throwing millions of euros toward desperately needed restorations in exchange for various sponsorship rights, helping spur one of the single-largest periods of archaeological and artistic renewal in modern Italian history.

**“John Kerry Blasts ISIS’s Cultural Destruction in Met Speech,”** *Artnet.org*, 09/23/2014

The US Secretary of State spoke to an audience in the Met’s Temple of Dendur wing Monday night, laying out the justification for military intervention in the interest of protecting cultural heritage sites in Iraq and Syria just hours before the US and its allies commenced

airstrikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, or ISIS) near Raqqa.

“ISIL is not only beheading individuals; it is tearing at the fabric of whole civilizations,” Kerry told the audience. “Far from hiding their destruction of churches and mosques, they broadcast these, purposefully and with pride, for all the world to see their act of depravity and for all of us to be intimidated and to perhaps back off from our values. For the proud people of Iraq and Syria—ancient civilizations, civilizations of great beauty, great accomplishment, of extraordinary history and intellectual achievement—the destruction of their heritage is a purposeful final insult, and another example of ISIL’s implacable evil. ISIL is stealing lives, yes, but it’s also stealing the soul of millions.”

Kerry is in town this week for the UN Climate Summit and was joined at the museum by UNESCO’s Director General Irina Bokova and professor Michael Danti of Boston University, who provided historical context for the audience with a presentation on the region’s archaeology.

**“Hidden Monuments Under Stonehenge Revealed by High-Tech Mapping,”** *National Geographic*, 09/13/2014

An astonishing complex of ancient monuments, buildings, and barrows has lain hidden and unsuspected beneath the Stonehenge area for thousands of years.

Scientists discovered the site using sophisticated techniques to see underground, announcing the finds this week. Among the discoveries announced Wednesday are 17 ritual monuments, including the remains of a massive “house of the dead,” hundreds of burial mounds, and evidence of a possible processional route around Stonehenge itself.

There’s also evidence of a nearby mile-long “superhenge” at Durrington Walls that was once flanked by as many as 60 gigantic stone or timber columns, some of which may still lie under the soil. The discoveries result from the Stonehenge Hidden Landscape Project, a four-year effort to create a high-resolution, 3-D underground map of

the landscape surrounding Stonehenge.

The project team, led by researchers from the U.K.'s University of Birmingham and Austria's Ludwig Boltzmann Institute, mapped the area down to a depth of about ten feet (three meters) using ground-penetrating radar, high-resolution magnetometers, and other state-of-the-art remote-sensing equipment.

In all, nearly 3,000 acres have been excavated virtually, making this the largest and most ambitious project of its kind ever undertaken anywhere in the world.

**“Science to the Rescue of Art,”** *Rappler.com*, 09/14/2014

Some of our most treasured paintings are fading, warn experts who would like more money for the use of sophisticated technology to capture the masters' original palettes before the works are unrecognizably blighted.

“Our cultural heritage is suffering from a disease,” Robert van Langh, director of conservation and restoration at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, told Agence France-Presse (AFP) in Paris this week. Van Langh was speaking on the sidelines of a conference on the use of synchrotron radiation technology in art conservation at the molecular level. Much more science is needed to understand the chemical reactions that cause color changes in canvases, in order to stop them, said Jennifer Mass, an art conservationist from Winterthur Museum in Delaware, who also attended the meeting.

Understanding the degenerative process would allow museums to display the precious works in the appropriate light, atmosphere and humidity. According to Belgian chemist Koen Janssens of the University of Antwerp, a further role of science could be to beat the drum for art conservation. “As researchers, we are working on a simulation that will allow us to show what certain artworks will look like in 50 years,” if nothing is done, he said.

**“Lincoln Conservation Consultants Battle to Save Rare Historic Paintings,”** *Lincolnshire Echo*, 09/10/2014

A team of historic conservation consultants based in Lincoln are battling

to save a number of rare wall paintings.

The artwork was discovered inside a Georgian townhouse in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, which was at risk of demolition due to structural problems. But experts at Crick Smith, who are based at the University of Lincoln, have now stepped in to help.

The paintings date from the 16th century and were recently found hidden behind 1970s plasterboard. The property has been purchased with a view to renovation by the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust, which engaged Crick Smith to restore the works of art to their former glory.

The Lincoln-based staff will spend three weeks stabilising and cleaning the historic artwork. “This is a real piece of art – once you clean it you realise that every brushstroke is deliberate. We are consolidating all of the edges that are lifting away, anything that's proud, anything that's fragile,” said Crick Smith's Debs Russell.

“After trying different adhesives, we have gone with lime water and that's ideal for conservation because the paintings are already on a lime base, so we are conserving with the original materials.”

**“Dallas Museum of Art Announces 2014 Art Conservation Project Grant from Bank of America,”** *Artfix Daily*, 09/04/2014

The Dallas Museum of Art today announced that they have received funding from Bank of America to restore the Wittgenstein silver display case, or vitrine, through the bank's 2014 global Art Conservation Project.

The silver and gem-studded vitrine is the most lavish piece of silverwork known from the Wiener Werkstätte (or Vienna Workshops), a guild of artists and craftsmen practicing in Austria in the early 20th century. Designed by Carl Otto Czeschka and presented at the 1908 Vienna Art Show, this vitrine marks a crucial time in the evolution of modern design. Acquired by the Dallas Museum of Art last year, it is one of their most important pieces.

Fran Baas, associate conservator of objects, working in close collaboration with Kevin W. Tucker, the Margot B. Perot senior curator of decorative arts and design at the Dallas

Museum of Art and Mark Leonard, chief conservator, is currently carrying out the restoration and technical study of this unique masterpiece of decorative design and craftsmanship.

The grant from Bank of America is fully funding the restoration of the piece, which is the centerpiece of the upcoming Modern Opulence in Vienna: The Wittgenstein Vitrine exhibition. The exhibition is scheduled to open on November 15 in the DMA's Conservation Gallery, after a special media preview on November 13.

**“Egypt Says Restoration of Oldest Pyramid on Track,”** *Al Arabiya*, 09/16/2014

Egypt's antiquities minister took journalists inside a 4,600-year-old pyramid on Tuesday to reject recent accusations of mismanagement at the site as false and “without evidence.”

At a press conference at the Saqqara pyramid complex, some 30 kilometers south of Cairo, Minister of Antiquities Mamdouh el-Damaty decried recent media reports alleging that the Djoser pyramid might collapse.

Criticism of the project centers on the government's choice of a contractor, the Shurbagy construction company, which has no antiquities experience. Critics point to a new brick wall built on top of the pyramid's base, which they say risks damaging the ancient structure.

Monica Hanna, an Egyptian archaeologist, advocates the formation of an independent committee of Egyptian conservationists to oversee the restoration of all the country's historical sites, including Saqqara. “Looking at archival images of Saqqara over the past 100 years, the pyramid actually looks new,” Hanna said. “This should never be the case: we have to conserve these monuments in a way that is unnoticeable.”

The government has recently announced a range of programs to revitalize the tourism sector, which fell by nearly 46 percent following the 2011 uprising that toppled longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak. Funded by museum and site ticket sales, the ministry of antiquities is facing bankruptcy as international tourists remain wary of visiting Egypt after three years of turmoil.



**“Heinz History Center Debuts Conservation Center,”** *Pittsburgh Business Times*, 09/18/2014

Pittsburgh’s Sen. John Heinz History Center is opening a new conservation center Saturday, becoming one of the first museums in the United States to provide professional conservation services directly to the public. Located behind the history center’s Strip District building, the new Museum Conservation Center will provide visitors with expert advice on how to preserve heirlooms and connect them with conservators if professional repair is required.

**“Hailstorm does €1.5m Worth of Damage to Florence’s Museums,”** *The Art Newspaper*, 09/22/2014

Freak weather events caused around €1.5m worth of damage to Florence’s institutions last week, including the Uffizi Galleries, which were evacuated and closed for the day.

Refunds were offered to visitors who couldn’t make back it on the weekend, after the city was brought to a standstill by an intense downpour and hailstorm on Friday, 19 September. The façade of the Pitti Palace was damaged by hailstones, which also broke several windows. Part of the Costume Gallery was still closed at the time of writing, due to water leaks.

The Museo Nazionale di San Marco, housed in the 15th-century cathedral that was once home to the Renaissance painter and monk Fra Angelico, also suffered from leaks; four paintings were damaged and are now being restored. The museum is scheduled to reopen on 24 September.

The 14th-century Palazzo Davanzati has now reopened, although the rooms containing its collection of lace are still closed because of significant water damage. Conservators from Florence’s Opificio delle Pietre Dure are already at work to preserve the delicate lace and a small number of paintings that were affected.

**“Leonardo Restoration Sheds Light on Genius as a Young Man,”** *Reuters*, 09/24/2014

If there is any mind an art restorer would die to get into, it would be that of

Leonardo da Vinci. That was the unique opportunity restorers in Florence have relished as they clean the “Adoration of the Magi”, a massive painting that Leonardo started in 1481 at the age of 29 but abandoned a year later, leaving it in various stages of development.

Done on 10 slabs of wood glued together, it has blank areas, areas with under-drawings, and sections in advanced stages. In the late 1500s the painting was acquired by Florence’s Medici family, whose restorers added layers of varnish to give it a homogenous, monochrome look when they put it in their collection.

The current restoration project, which began three years ago, has removed much of the dull, oxidized varnish as well as traces of past restoration attempts. This revealed that Leonardo did all the under drawings freehand.

Experts at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure have ruled out a hypothesis put forward 15 years ago that Leonardo had done only the preliminary work and the paint was added by an unknown artist long after the master’s death in 1519. After the wood backing of the painting is restored, it is due to return to a special room in the Uffizi, where it will be on display with two other Leonardo works.

**“Leonardo Da Vinci ‘Painted Three Ermine Portraits,’”** *BBC News*, 09/24/2014

Engineer Pascal Cotte has spent three years using reflective light technology to analyse The Lady with an Ermine. Until now, it was thought the 500-year-old painting had always included the ceremonial animal. Mr. Cotte has shown the artist painted one portrait without the ermine and two with different versions of the fur.

Mr. Cotte, who is a co-founder of Lumiere Technology in Paris, has pioneered a new technique called Layer Amplification Method (LAM). It works by projecting a series of intense lights on to the painting. A camera then takes measurements of the lights’ reflections and from those measurements, Mr. Cotte is then able to analyse and reconstruct what has happened between the layers of the paint.

Mr. Cotte said: “The LAM technique gives us the capability to peel the painting like an onion, removing the surface to see what’s happening inside

and behind the different layers of paint. “We’ve discovered that Leonardo is always changing his mind. This is someone who hesitates - he erases things, he adds things, he changes his mind again and again.”

The painting belongs to the Czartoryski Foundation and is usually on display at the National Museum in Krakow, Poland.

**“29 Murals from New Deal Era in Rincon Center are being Restored,”** *SFGate*, 09/28/2014

High on a scaffolding in the lobby of the handsome Rincon Center complex on lower Mission Street, Thomas Portue is hard at work most afternoons, preserving a San Francisco treasure. He is working carefully to repair the marks of time and remove a bit of grime from 29 murals that ring the lobby and tell the story of San Francisco as a pageant in rich color.

The murals painted by Anton Refregier were part of a New Deal project and were completed in 1948 when the Rincon Center was San Francisco’s busiest post office. They are revered now as classic works of stylized realism — perhaps even masterpieces of public art. But once, they were denounced in Congress as distortions of history and Communist propaganda.

Times have certainly changed. These days tour groups come through the lobby to see them, and they are on the National Register of Historic Places. Portue, a professional fine arts conservator, restored the murals to their original brilliance in a major effort more than 27 years ago. There has been some deterioration with the murals, he said, chipping of the paint here and there, damage by fly droppings, the wear and tear of the years.

**“Antiquities Lost, Casualties of War,”** *The New York Times*, 10/03/2014

Tracking the cultural treasures of Syria and northern Iraq has become a heartbreaking task for archaeologists and antiquity scholars. And the list of destroyed, damaged or looted works has only grown longer as the Islamic State, also known as ISIS, which seeks to create a caliphate, has pushed into northern Iraq.

Sunni extremists like the

Islamic State and others are deliberately wrecking shrines, statues, mosques, tombs and churches — anything they regard as idolatry. Over the last three years of war, international groups have come up against the limits of their power and ability to intervene in a conflict that has killed tens of thousands. In several cases, the security of many antiquities has largely been left up to nearby residents, many of whom have taken huge risks to defend their cultural patrimony.

The question of what has been destroyed has few complete answers, scholars say. The Islamic State often issues false reports to exaggerate its conquests, while other groups may do so to draw international sympathy. But the State Department, officials in the Syrian government and networks of scholars are trying to document the damage.

As the experts peer at maps, they are concerned about what might be next, but also disagree on how to handle it. The United States-led bombing campaign is a new threat. Major cultural heritage groups have urged that any American military action take account of vulnerable sites. A branch of the Pentagon is training pilots and ground soldiers to protect cultural property during military operations. But many hope that the Islamic State rampage will slow as it comes under pressure.

**“Cleaning Aged Ceiling, High Walls Unearth Rare Finds at Oberlin Museum,”** *The Chronicle-Telegram*, 10/09/2014

One hundred years of dirt concealed hidden treasures, sprawled across the ceiling of the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College.

This summer, the art museum finally embarked on a project leaders have discussed for more than a decade: cleaning the ceiling for the first time since the museum was built in 1917. The museum hired ICA Art Conservation, a nonprofit art conservation organization based in Cleveland, and in 2013 they began testing cleaning methods on small sections of the ceiling.

It wasn't until August that the group started the actual cleaning process, using water with a sequestering agent to wipe away dirt from the upper walls and ceiling which hadn't been cleaned since the building was erected.

The two months of work revealed little square paintings of animals, musical instruments, foliage and boats laid across the ceiling. Other squares contain designs painted in gold leaf and on the walls, quotes from Christopher Pearse's 19th century poem “Stanzas” are scrawled in silver paint.

Conservator Wendy Partridge said the organization plans to spend the rest of the year into early January completing the cleaning and restoring areas damaged by humidity and temperature fluctuations since the early 1900s. After the cleaning is complete, another group will come in early 2015 to touch up the “aged” paint on the ceiling panels.

**“Egypt Completes Restoration of Famed Coptic Hanging Church,”** *Al Arabiya*, 10/12/2014

Egypt's 1,300-year-old Hanging Church has on Saturday opened its doors once again to visitors, after the culmination of an over one-and-a-half decade restoration. The Egyptian prime minister and Pope Tawadros II of Alexandria on Saturday attended the opening ceremony of the Hanging Church - also known as St. Virgin Mary's Coptic Church - marking the end of a \$5.4 million restoration project.

The Hanging Church was established on the ruins of a 2nd century Roman fortress from which it gained its name, the suspended, or al-Moallaqa in Arabic. Egypt's Antiquities Minister Mamdouh Eldamaty told Al Arabiya News that due to the church's significance, its meticulous restoration process had to be “studied very well” to ensure it was true to its historic roots.

The restoration process took around 16 years, where it was carried out on several phases to reduce water leakage and reinforce the church's foundations. It also included the restoration of the church's decorations and icons. The church has a unique Byzantine architectural style and features a wooden roof in the shape of Noah's ark.

**“Ricerca: ‘Biologi Indiana Jones’ per Salvare Beni Culturali, 30% Risparmi per Restauri,”** *Panorama*, 10/17/2014

From the test tubes and microscopes of the laboratory to paintings and archaeological remains, the biologist

is the guardian of cultural heritage, a sort of “Indiana Jones” without whip and hat.

When called upon in the preservation of cultural treasures, “he could help save 30% of funds that are spent today on restoration: because it is the biologist who can determine, for example, whether a lichen that covers a monument is aggressive or instead helps to preserve the surface”, explains Ermanno Calcatelli, president of the National Order of Biologists (ONB) that today in Rome opened the second national conference on cultural heritage.

The order has recently promoted three scholarships to work in the excavations in Pompeii. Matteo Montanari, biologist and part of the Commission for cultural heritage of the ONB, occupies himself with saving reliquaries and works of art from attack by mold and micro-organisms.

His firm has carried out non-invasive microbiological analysis to determine the condition of the Constitution in the Central State Archives in Rome. He is currently working on anti-vegetative mortars for archaeological sites as well as a new stream of research to develop innovative products for the maintenance of the headstones.

**“Laser technology Gives Priceless Vatican Artworks a Face-lift,”** *Euronews*, 10/11/2014

The restoration laboratory of the Vatican Museums is home to one of the largest collections of paintings and sculptures in the world. This is where ancient and priceless pieces of art come for a face-lift.

Art restoration requires the use of highly non-invasive tools to minimise the impact on the work. Laser technology answers these criteria and can be used in conjunction with traditional cleaning techniques.

“This new technology is really fantastic,” says Guy Devreux, director of the marble laboratory. “But it's not a miracle cure. We're obviously continuing to use the other methods we've been using up to now. The laser gives us that bit extra in the sense that it allows us to hone the cleaning process, it allows us to clean in a way we never could have done with another system.”

Strictly controlled tests are carried out before the cleaning process

starts to make sure the pulses of light bombarding the object in question do not penetrate it. Many of the artefacts at the Vatican Museums' ethnological department contain feathers, which are particularly difficult to restore.

**“Art Conservators to Speak about WIU Work Oct. 28,”** *Western Illinois University News*, 10/22/2014

As work begins next week on the conservation of two wall murals in the third floor auditorium of Western Illinois University's Sherman Hall, two talks have been scheduled with those completing the work.

Conservators Amber Smith and Kendra Fuller will speak Tuesday, Oct. 28 at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. about “What Do Art Conservators Do? A Treatment Plan for the History of Illinois Murals in Sherman Hall.” Both women work for Chicago's The Conservation Center, which has previously done extensive work on the University's Works Progress Administration (WPA) collection.

Smith and Fuller will be on campus next week to complete restoration work on two of the four Sherman Hall wall murals, “Fort Dearborn 1820” and “Mormon Temple Ruins – Nauvoo, IL.” During the Oct. 28 event, Smith and Fuller will speak about the purpose of art conservation and what art conservators do, as well as some of the more interesting and unusual projects The Conservation Center has handled. They will also discuss the specific treatment planned for the Sherman Hall project.

**“How Science Saved a Priceless Work of Art,”** *Popular Mechanics*, 10/24/2014

You hear Harvard University and think: Smart people there. They ought to know how to preserve great art. So it was baffling and a little tragic when, in the 1960s and '70s, the university allowed the irreversible damage of five murals by the American Abstract Expressionist painter Mark Rothko.

Commissioned in 1962 and hung in a student-center dining room, the paintings were faded by sunlight, dinged by furniture, and even marred by graffiti. Finally, under a cloud of shame, Harvard placed the canvases in storage in late 1979.

On Nov. 16 the murals will

go back on display at the Harvard Art Museums, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. They will look as if they were freshly painted, but that will be an illusion, because the original colors will appear via light beamed onto the surfaces from ceiling-mounted projectors.

The current restoration effort began with Kodak Ektachrome color transparencies of the murals, taken in 1964. The transparencies themselves were faded, so conservation scientists from Harvard worked with experts from the University of Basel to digitally restore the original colors.

Rothko's son, Christopher, then provided the crucial piece of reference: a sixth mural that his father had painted for the installation but stashed away. Using the Ektachromes and the sixth mural as references, MIT's Ramesh Raskar, a pioneer in computational photography, coded an algorithm that allowed him to fine-tune the color, pixel by pixel, so that the projections compensated for fading and damage rather than simply covering it up. The painting and the light work in concert to create the image of the mural as new.

**“Mosaics Revealed at Ancient Greek City of Zeugma in Turkey,”** *Greek Reporter*, 11/11/2014

The ancient city of Zeugma was originally founded as a Greek settlement by Seleucus I Nicator, one of the generals of Alexander the Great, in 300 BC. The population of the city at its peak was approximately 80,000 inhabitants. Zeugma is 80 percent underwater, after it was flooded with the waters of a nearby artificial lake. The mosaics, which were recovered in excellent condition, belong to the 2nd century B.C.

**“New Course for Engineers in Heritage Conservation,”** *The Hindu*, 10/24/2014

The State (India) government has decided to conduct a six-week course on conservation and restoration of monuments for the present set of engineers, who lack the requisite skills.

Need for such a course was felt as a large number of restoration and conservation projects had been undertaken by various government departments, especially the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments

(HR&CE) department, in the last three years. In all, restoration and renovation works are over in respect of 5,400 temples so far.

To be run by the State Archaeology Department, the course, in two batches, will be compulsory to those engineers working with the HR&CE Department. Also, those who are in the Public Works and Highways Departments can participate in the course.

The syllabus for the course has been framed with the help of the HR&CE, the Archaeological Survey of India, IIT, Madras University and the State Archaeology and Museums Departments. An official explains that the course covers all heritage monuments, both temples and secular. He adds that such a course is the first of its kind in the country.

**“Vatican Sistine Chapel gets New Lighting and AC System,”** *BBC News*, 10/29/2014

The Vatican has unveiled a high-tech lighting and air-conditioning system to better preserve and display the famous frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. The new air-conditioning aims to reduce the damage to the frescoes from dust, and from the breath, sweat and heat of some six million annual visitors.

The new LED lighting saves energy and highlights neglected features. The new illumination system comprises 7,000 LED lights. Some of these lights aim to show off the deep blue background of another Michelangelo fresco, The Last Judgement. Others highlight frescoes by artists such as Botticelli, Perugino and Domenico Ghirlandaio, whose Sistine Chapel work has been overshadowed by Michelangelo's.

The new lighting is expected to cut the Vatican's energy bills by more than 80%, the Associated Press news agency reports. The new air-conditioning will move air slowly through the vast chamber, so as not to damage the frescoes. The flow, humidity and temperature of the air will be adjusted using data from 70 sensors in the chapel walls, as well as from TV cameras that monitor the number of visitors.

Dust, body sweat and carbon dioxide are regarded as major threats to the fragile frescoes. The existing air-conditioning was installed 20 years ago, when the Sistine Chapel received only 1.5 million visitors every year.