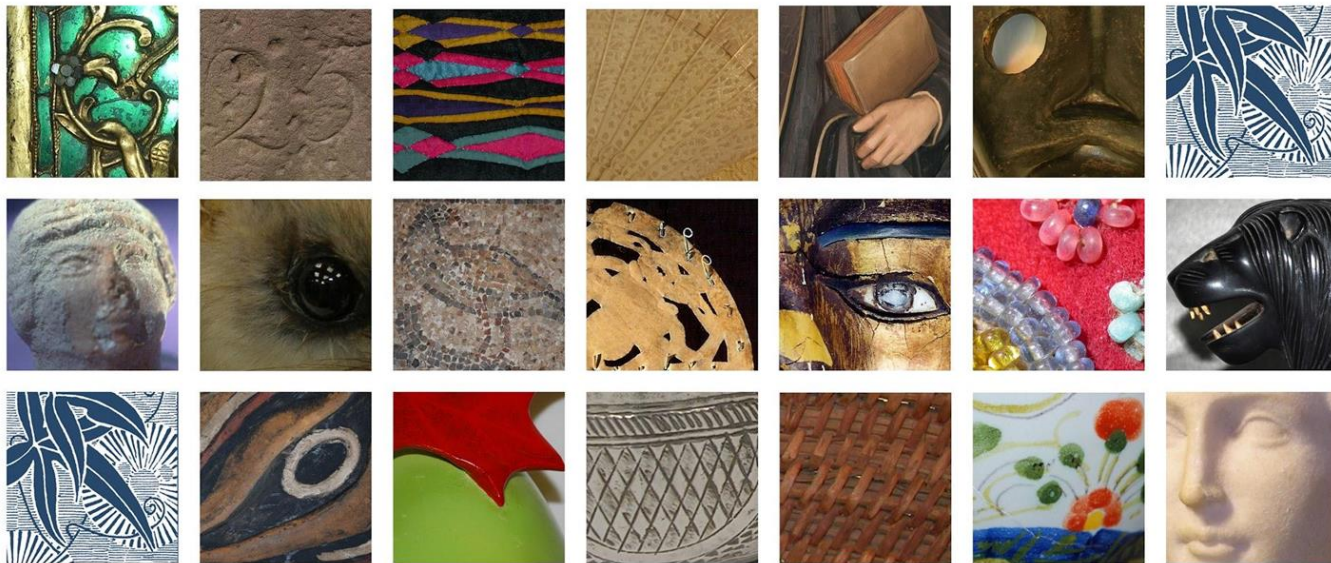




A.M. ART CONSERVATION LLC

Conservation Treatment, Preservation Consulting & Collection Management

www.amartconservation.com



What is Art Conservation?

Eugenie Milroy, Objects Conservator

<https://amartconservation.com>

eugenie@amartconservation.com

Presentation to Haldane High School Art Club, October 2018

Images may not be used or reproduced without permission

- ❖ Art History
- ❖ Chemistry
- ❖ Studio Art



Conservation Studio

Conservators may work with

- ❖ Curators
- ❖ Private Collectors
- ❖ Collections Managers
- ❖ Artists
- ❖ Registrars
- ❖ Exhibit Preparators/Mount makers
- ❖ Architects
- ❖ Art Storage/Shipping Companies
- ❖ Local Governments
- ❖ Appraisers
- ❖ Insurance Companies
- ❖ Art Auction Houses

Conservation Specializations

- **Objects**

- Ceramic
- Metal
- Glass
- Archaeological Site Conservation
- Ethnographic Materials (could be plant based, organic, inorganic)
- Modern Materials (plastics, and non-traditional art materials)

- **Paintings**

- Canvas paintings
- Panel paintings (wood)
- Mural paintings

- **Paper**

- **Textiles**

- Costume, Tapestry, etc

- **Photographs**

- **Conservation Science/RATS**

- Material Science, identification

- **Time Based Media**

- Includes video, audio, technology

- **Technical Art History**

- Artist materials, media, connoisseurship

- **Preservation**

- HVAC, Museum Environment,
- Integrated Pest Management

The Conservation Treatment Process

Examination - Visual, microscopy

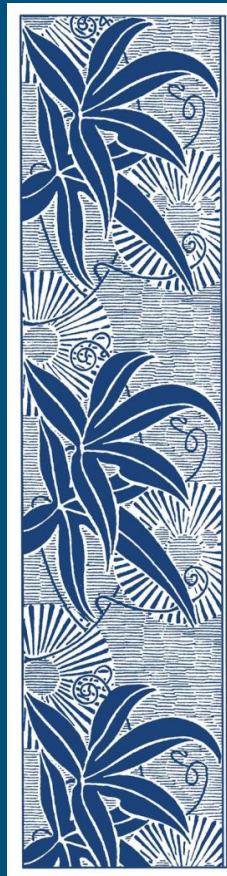
Documentation - Photography before, during and after treatment, can include other Imaging, IR, X-ray

Analysis - Material identification, spot testing, sampling (destructive)

Cleaning Tests/Mockups - To determine treatment protocol. Test for safety

Treatment Proposal - written plan agreed upon with curator or owner before treatment

Treatment Report - information about materials and methods used in treatment, a record of what was done to the artwork



American Museum of Natural History (AMNH)

Anthropology Division Objects Conservation Laboratory



The image at left shows a portable air filtration system that can be used when working with solvents

In the image at right I'm Standing with a carved Native American Mask (Tlingit) from the Northwest Coast. Cedar wood, paint and cedar bark.

Fun Fact: The Anthropology Division labs are historic (old!) hence the low pitched ceilings. Margaret Mead worked in these spaces.



<https://www.amnh.org/research/anthropology/collections/objects-conservation>

American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) Anthropology Division Objects Conservation Laboratory

Hudson Valley Kimchi
from Kimchee Harvest
Sold at Kingston Farmer's
Market.



The image at right is of us reconstructing a large Korean ceramic Kimchi Onggi. I am injecting adhesive into a crack using a syringe and the yellow straps are band clamps to hold the pot together under tension. These vessels were buried to keep the contents cold before refrigeration.

Fun Fact: Kimchi has been fermented in Korea since at least 57 BCE!



<https://www.amnh.org/research/anthropology/collections/objects-conservation>

Other places I have worked include the Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Brooklyn Museum



Kwoma Ceiling Metropolitan Museum of Art

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/310003>

Now, as a Conservator in Private Practice,
I do lots of different types of jobs including....

Preservation Consulting, Assessments & Surveys



Recording Light Levels

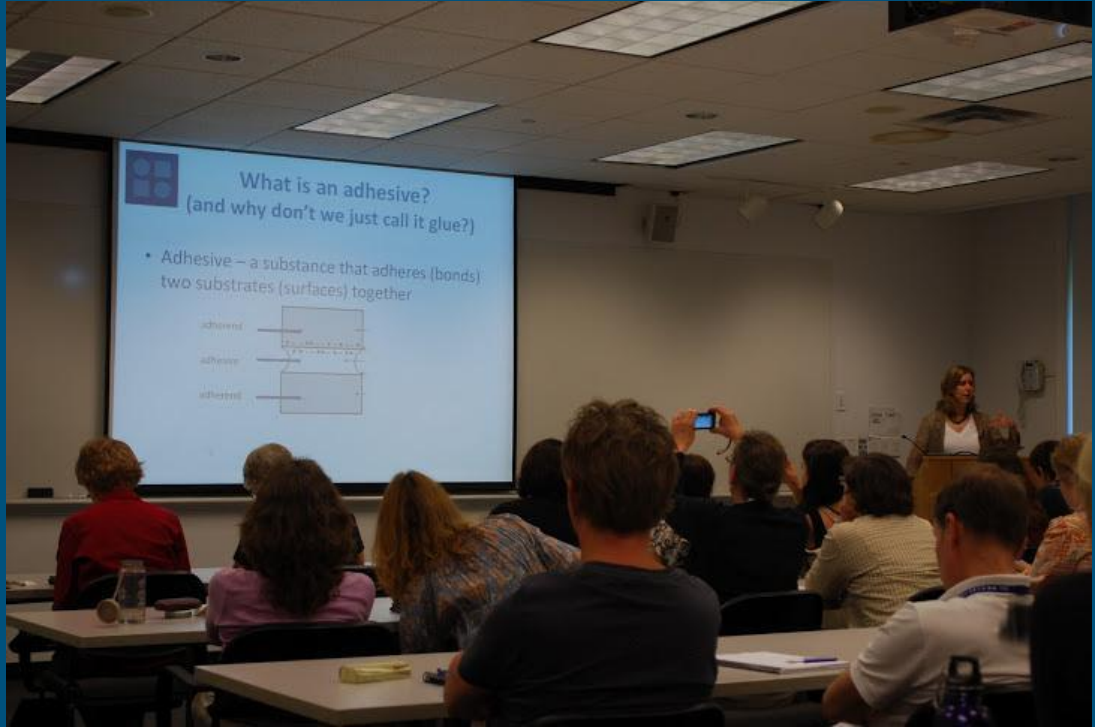


Making storage recommendations at a Historical Society



Compact Storage

Workshops and Training



Emergency Preparedness for Museums, Galleries & Artists

Alliance for Response Heritage Response Team & Board



<http://www.afrnyc.org>

and of course Objects Treatment!



Taxidermy Mount at
Park Avenue Armory NYC



Model of the South Ferry Subway Station
New York City Transit Museum

Outdoor Sculpture

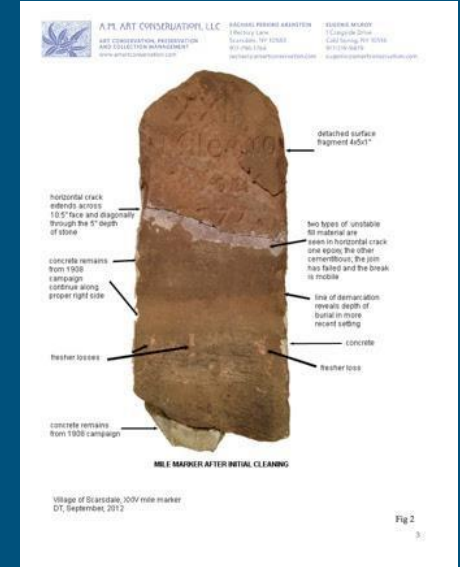


Weathering Steel Sculpture
by artist Greg Johns
At a Private Residence



A Mile Marker on
the Old Albany Post Road, Rye NY

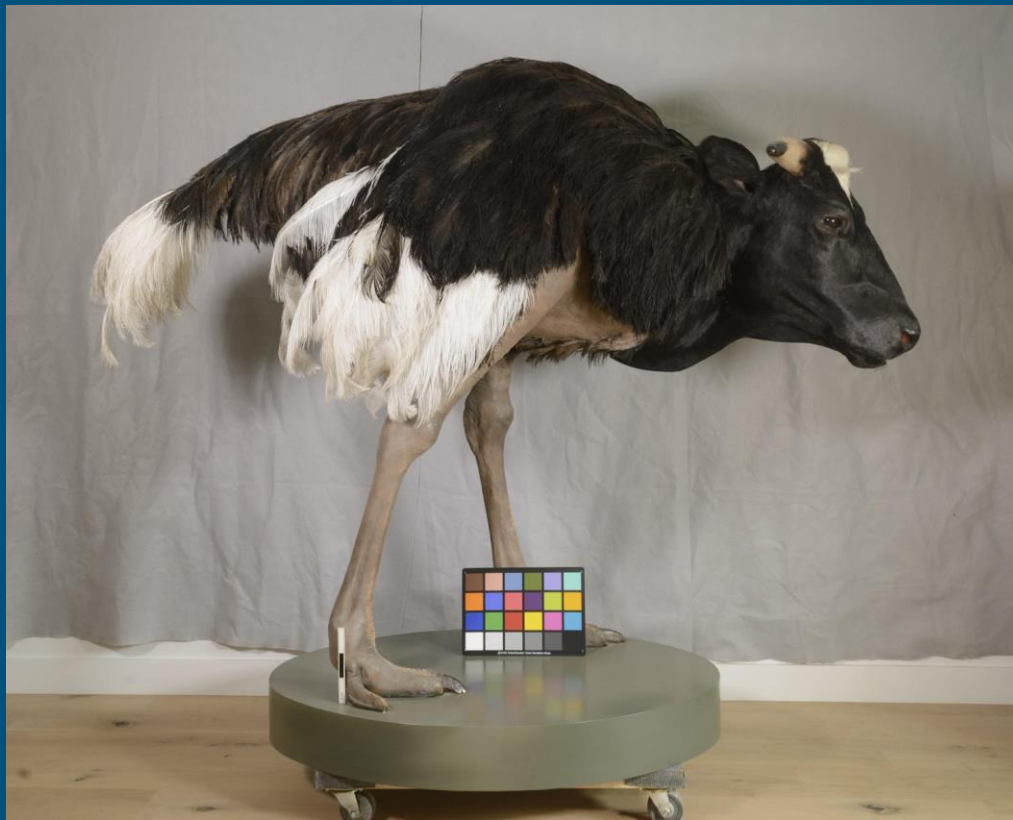
Fun Fact: there is one of these on Route 9 in front of Home Depot in Fishkill - look for it next time you pass by!



Above is a page from a report on one of these mile markers. It is annotated to show specific condition issues present before treatment



Health and Safety - examples of PPE (personal protective equipment) Tyvek suits and respirators. These storage areas were flooded during Hurricane Sandy and had mold and water damage. We also wear gloves most of the time when handling artwork.



Recent item in my Cold Spring studio

Fun fact:
This sculpture
Is in the movie
Black Swan!



Treatment: Fritz Scholder Patinated Bronze Sculpture
“Future Clone” at National Museum of the American Indian in NYC



Our Colleague Brian Howard in PA
Specializes in really big stuff!

<https://www.brhoward.com>



Condition Assessment Project: Carl Akeley's Fighting Elephants at the Chicago Field Museum



Photos ©John Weinstein, 2017

Condition Assessment Project: Carl Akeley's Fighting Elephants at the Chicago Field Museum

Fun Fact?
There is a rumor
That Chicago Bulls
Dennis Rodman “rode”
the elephant on
the right when he
hosted a wild New
Year’s Eve benefit at
at the museum in 1998
There are no surviving
Photos of this incident!



Photo ©John Weinstein, 2017



Photo ©John Weinstein, 2017

Our team included Conservators, Taxidermists, Scientists, Curators and the Collection Care Staff. Here we are photographed with the Director of the Chicago Field Museum.

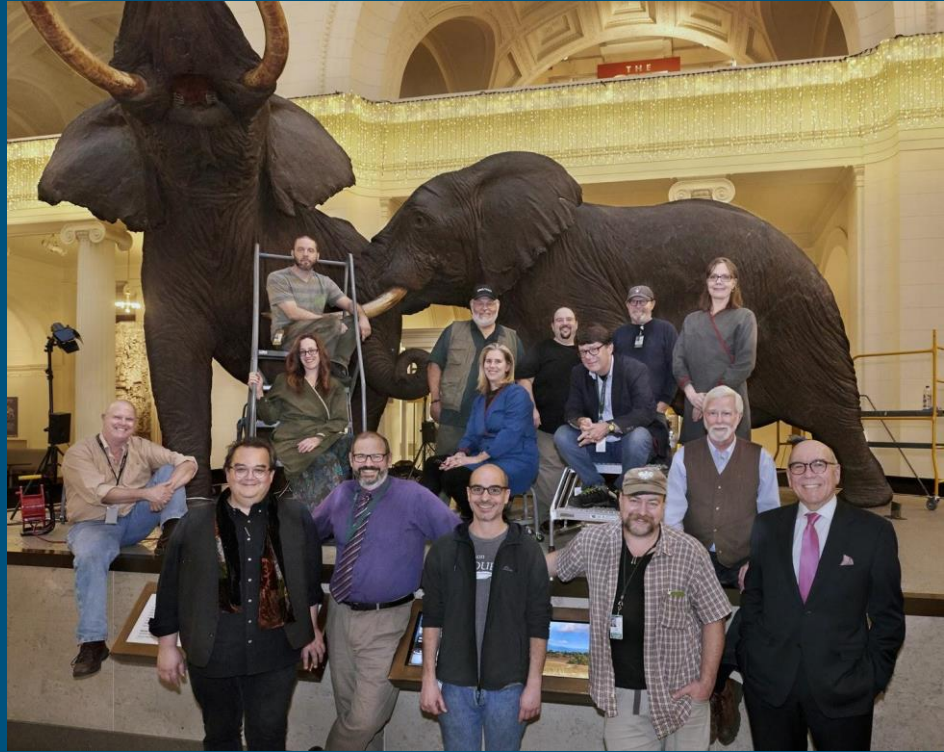


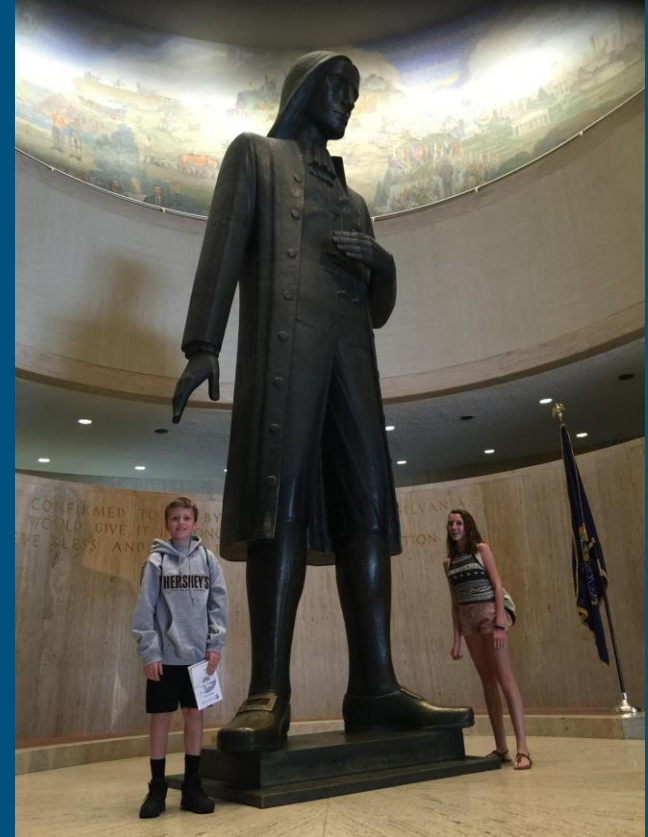
Photo ©John Weinstein, 2017

This is a link to a short video about the project. Our taxidermist colleagues were interviewed by Emily Graslie of “The Brain Scoop” about the importance of these specimens.
<https://www.fieldmuseum.org/blog/sistine-chapel-taxidermy-conserving-akeleys-elephants>

State Museum of Pennsylvania Mammal Hall Dioramas



We restored 13 Dioramas with a team
Of Artists, Conservators and Taxidermists. Half of the hall
was closed to visitors but they could view our work through
the glass walls





Raccoon Diorama - Nighttime scene





Catwalk behind diorama - lighting



During Treatment



After Treatment

Bison Diorama - Forklift with platform





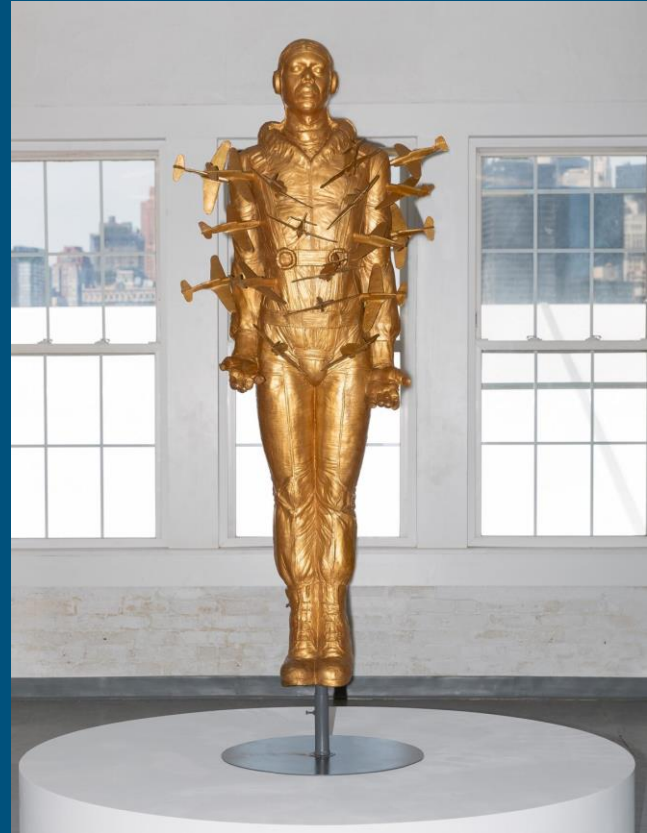
Airbrushing Dye on Deer in Mountain Lion Diorama - in situ

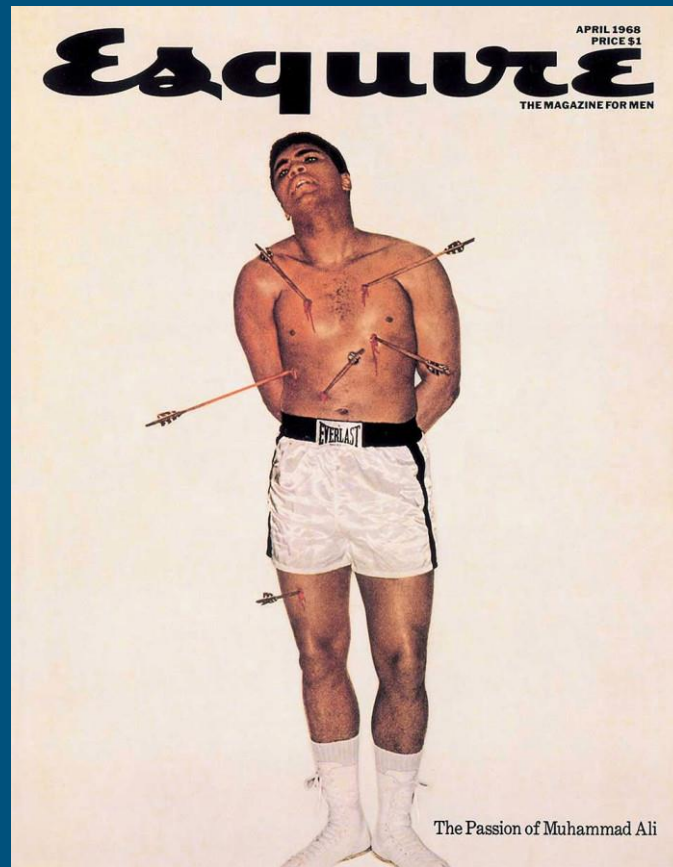
Michael Richards Tar Baby vs St. Sebastian



At left is before treatment
And at right after
Treatment on
Exhibit at
Governor's Island, NYC

Materials are fiberglass,
Paint and resin. The artist
Cast this sculpture using
His own body as the form.





Not so Fun Fact? This work references the iconography of St Sebastian's martyrdom by arrows (here painted by early Renaissance artist Mantegna circa 1490) but also this 1968 Esquire Magazine cover image of Muhammed Ali. The airplanes and flight suit reference the Tuskegee Airmen.



Before Treatment at left with degraded bubble wrap, bird droppings and soot from fire. After treatment at right, cleaned and base stripped and repainted original color



Before Treatment
Treatment



After



Before Treatment
Treatment



After



During Treatment - 17 of the 18 airplanes had broken or missing



Annotated Exhibition image, circa 1990s

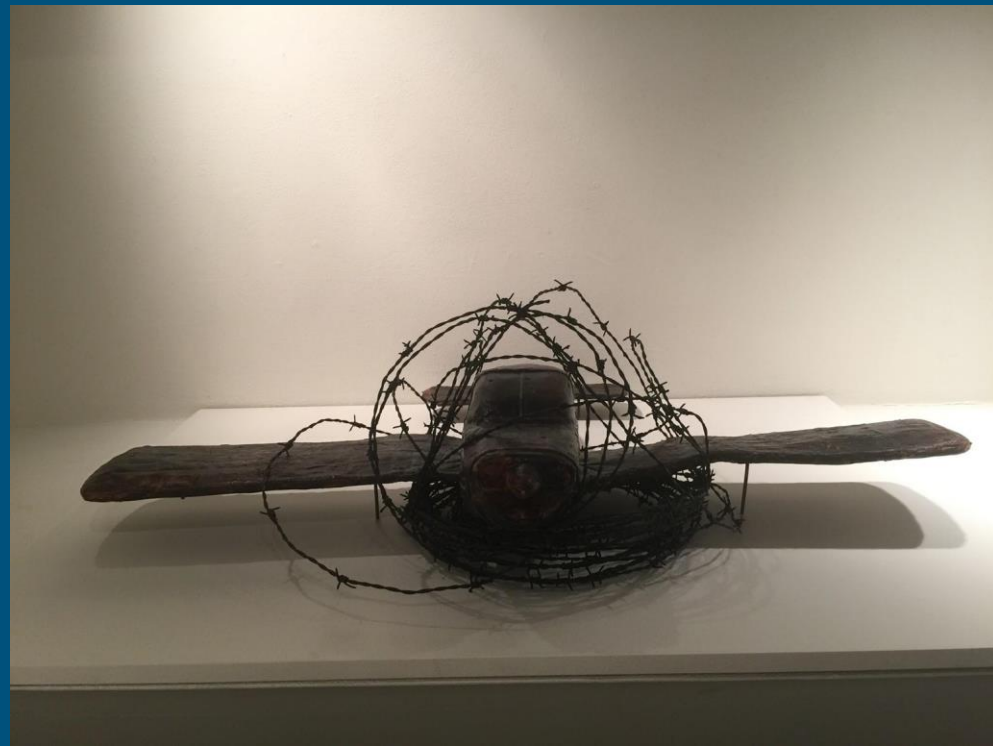


During Treatment

Michael Richards - Escape Plan 76



Before Treatment



After Treatment

Escape Plan 76 - Michael Richards
Materials: Wax, tar, resin, barbed wire

Pearl jewelry suite



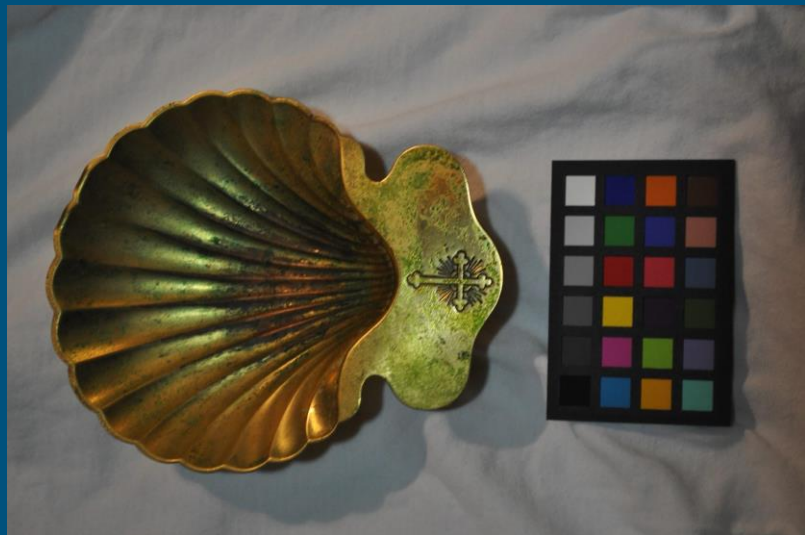
Fun Fact: This famous figure from the 1860's wears a similar seed pearl accessories in several of her portrait sittings. This was a favorite of hers.
Who is she?





Corpus Christi Baptismal Font
Marble Cleaning Project
Morningside Heights, New York

Baptismal Shell BT and AT



Before Treatment



After Treatment

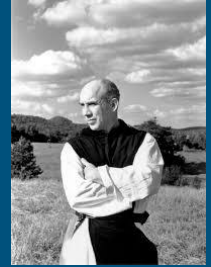
Baptismal Font BT and AT



Before Treatment



After Treatment

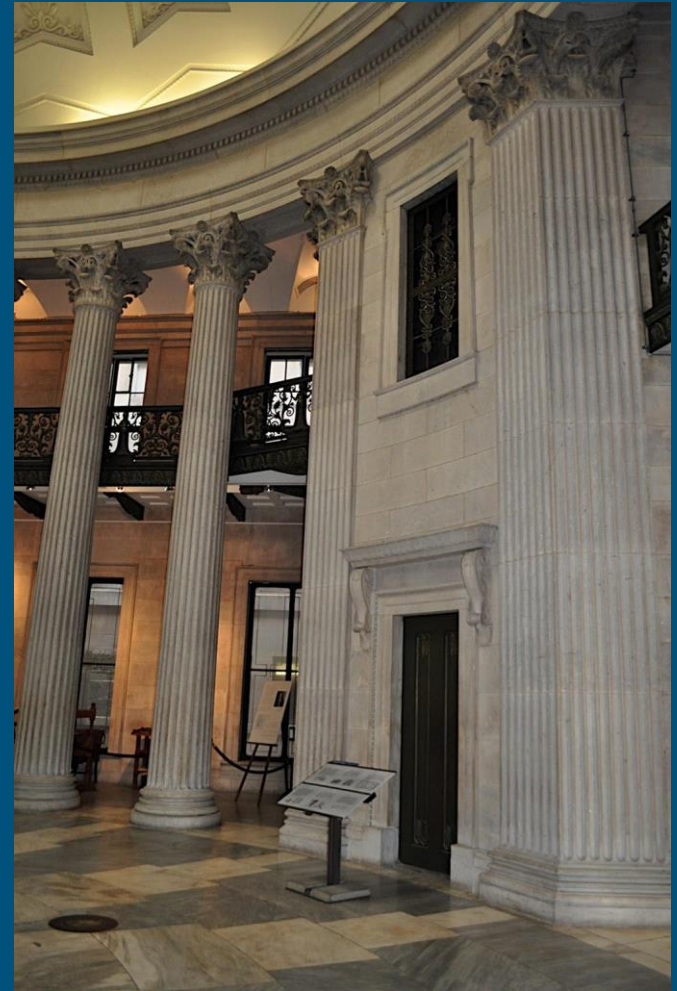
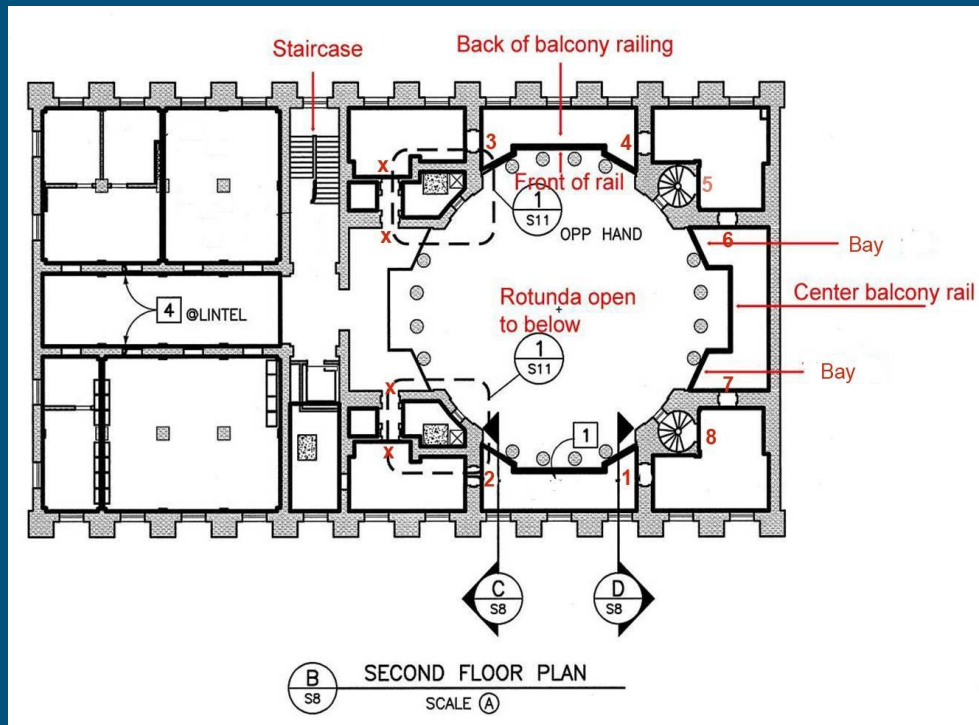


Fun fact for any future theologians or social justice activists in the house... Trappist monk Thomas Merton was baptized in this font. So it is apparently a pilgrimage site among his followers

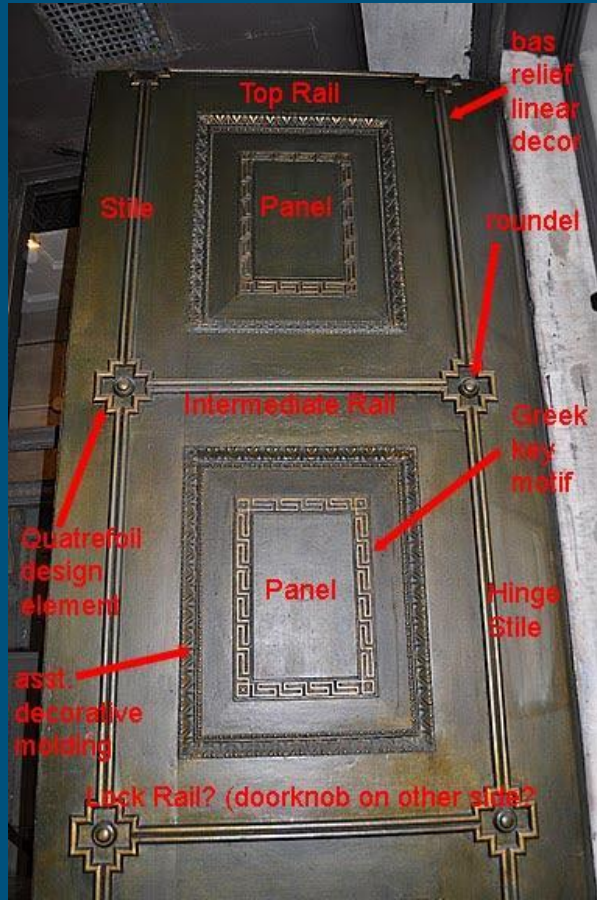
Federal Hall National Monument, 26 Wall Street, Lower Manhattan National Park Service Site, Painted Steel Restoration Project



Federal Hall, “Birthplace of American Government” George Washington took the oath of office as our first President, and this site was home to the first Congress, Supreme Court, and Executive Branch offices <https://www.nps.gov/feha/index.htm>



Site: Federal Hall Annotated floor plan and portion of rotunda interior

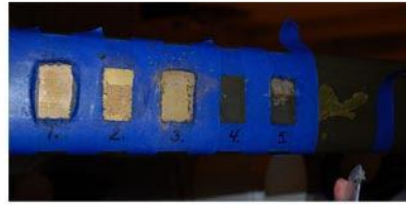


Documentation: annotated images describing The parts of the ironwork. This allows us to document the condition so that the reader can identify the areas and issues

Federal Hall Staircase Flight #6, Paint Stripper Testing



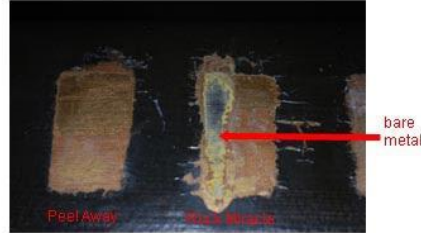
Before Treatment



During Treatment



During Treatment



After Treatment

Testing: exploring various paint strippers
To determine the best material to use on
the stair rails

Paint Stripper Testing

All gels were applied with chip brush, in layers 1/8-1/4" in thickness (depending on viscosity of the gel). Application times varied depending on effectiveness of the stripper



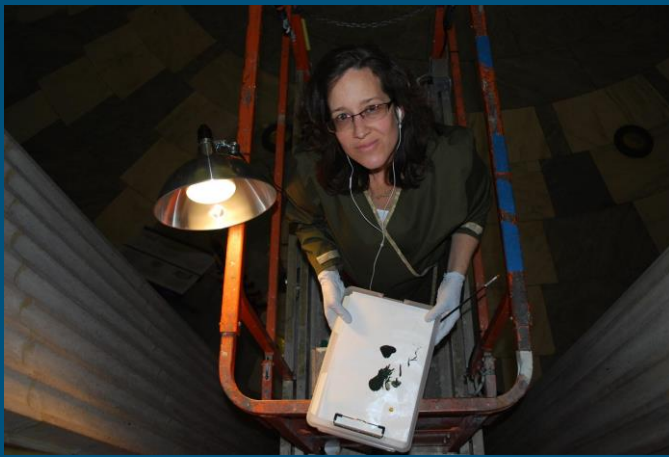
1. Peel Away: This method is very slow and controllable. After 40 mins, the first application was removed. The green had softened and was easily removed, the upper gold layer could then be mechanically removed. This image shows the second layer applied to half of the sample area. This second application removed...

2. Rock Miracle: This acted very fast. After 2 mins, the green layers had been completely solubilized, and the lower gold layer was revealed. The stripper was removed with a scraper then water wetted swabs. A second two minute application revealed the yellow primer layers below. Finally this area was brought down to reveal the bare metal with a third application

3. Zip Strip: This acted extremely fast. After only 1 minute the green paint was bubbling and the stripper had solubilized the paint down to the lower gold layer.

4. Acetone/Water Gel: The green paint was only slightly soluble in this solution. After 3 mins a slight green color was picked up when swabs were rolled over the surface. Not effective.

5. Wolbers Polyurethane Gel "Tea": after 6 1/2 mins the green paint was not moving but slight bit of color was seen on cotton swab. After 2 mins of a second application, the green was softened sufficiently to reveal the upper layer of gold. The upper gold could be mechanically removed at this point with sanding tools.



Much of
This work
Was done
while on a
Scissor lift
20" off the
floor

Treatment: Cleaning and Inpainting



Stripping one of the railings on the upper level balcony

Federal Hall National Monument, West Side, North Bay



Caryatid #2, Before Treatment
November 2010



Caryatid #2, After Treatment
January 2011

**Federal Hall National Monument
Stair Baluster, Flight #6**



Before Treatment, November 2010



After Treatment, January 2010

To learn more check
out these websites...

<https://www.culturalheritage.org>

<https://amartconservation.com>



american
institute for
conservation

**Preserving Cultural
Heritage**

