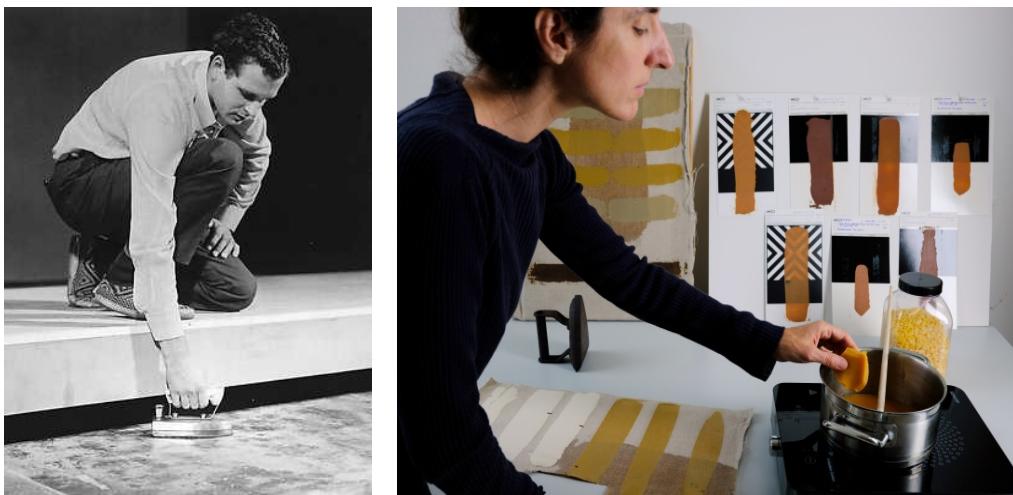


Conserving Canvas Initiative Masterclass on Wax-Resin Linings

University of Amsterdam
June 29 – July 10, 2020

With support from the Getty Foundation as part of its Conserving Canvas initiative, the University of Amsterdam (UvA) is pleased to announce the *Dutch Method Unfolded*, a two-week masterclass to provide knowledge and hands-on experience on wax-resin linings: history, impact on paintings' condition, and consequences for conservation practice.



Left Wax-resin lining of *The Night Watch* by Rembrandt in 1975, photo: courtesy Rijksmuseum; **Right** Paintings conservator is investigating the effect of wax-resin linings on the colour of ground reconstructions, photo: J. schliomoff.

Background information

The wax-resin lining of canvas paintings is a remedial conservation technique invented in the Netherlands in the first half of the 19th century. For that reason, it is commonly called “the Dutch method.” The technique lies on basic principles which include the adhesion of a secondary canvas to the back of the original one and the impregnation of the painting with an adhesive composed of natural resin and beeswax. This is achieved using heat and pressure generated by a hot hand-held iron or a heated vacuum lining table.

Wax-resin linings have been extensively used by paintings conservators in Europe and abroad until the end of the 1970's. It is general knowledge that a large amount of the paintings on canvas preserved today in the Netherlands have been subjected to this treatment amongst which some very important ones including the *Night Watch*, 1642, by Rembrandt (1606-1669).

In the 1970's, critical opinions arose on wax-resin lining as it was no longer considered to agree with modern attitudes towards conservation. Since then the use of wax-resin linings declined. Although wax-resin linings is nowadays a nearly extinct treatment, present paintings conservators world-wide are confronted with the conservation of paintings that have been lined in the past. One of the tasks of paintings conservators is to identify the impact of past restorations on paintings materials and physical characteristics. In this purpose, since 1995 research projects in the Netherlands examined the history of wax-resin linings and the effects of the technique on paintings' appearance. Other research in color change was carried out in the 1980s in England, and research in the mechanical behaviour of lined paintings has been carried out since the 1990s in Canada, UK, and Denmark.

Goals of the masterclass

The masterclass provides a platform to share expertise and reflect on the consequences of wax-resin linings for today's conservation of lined paintings. In doing so the masterclass aims at helping professionals in the fields of art history and conservation to understand the physical condition of wax-resin lined paintings and therefore to contribute to the conservation of paintings that subjected the treatment.

During the masterclass, the participants will gain knowledge in the history of wax-resin lining and in the impact of the technique on the material and physical characteristics of canvas paintings as well as on their mechanical behavior. The program will also consider the consequences of the treatment for today's conservation that applies to wax-resin lined paintings. It specifically does not teach how to perform wax-resin lining.

Program

The programme of the two-week masterclass combines various complementary types of learning activities including lectures, brainstorming assemblies, peer sessions, physical examination of wax-resin lined paintings in Dutch museums, practical experiments on reconstructions, and the study of instruments and materials used in the past for lining as well as of archival documents in conservation files.

Venue

The masterclass mainly takes place in the paintings conservation studio of the UvA that is situated in the *Ateliergebouw* and located on the museum square in the center of Amsterdam. The *Ateliergebouw* is the national expert center of restoration and conservation, research, and training where Dutch cultural heritage is preserved and administered under the very best conditions. In the *Ateliergebouw*, the Rijksmuseum, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) and the UvA unite their knowledge of restoration and conservation. With this combination of research, teaching and practical application under one roof, this evolving center of expertise is unique, not only in the Netherlands, but worldwide.



The *Ateliergebouw* on museum square in Amsterdam,
photo: Cruz y Ortiz architects.



View of the paintings conservation studio of the University of
Amsterdam in the *Ateliergebouw*, photo: J. Schломoff.

Who may apply?

The masterclass is offered to a group of maximum 14 mid-career professionals in conservation including conservators of cultural heritage, art historians, curators, collection manager, and conservation scientists. The selection is open to professionals working in museum/institutes that preserve wax-resin lined paintings and to other professionals active in researching into this subject. All applicants should have a good command of spoken English. Participants are expected to attend the whole program. The selected participants will receive funding for economy travel and accommodation.

Application procedure

Applicants should register using the address <https://www.uva.nl/the-dutch-method-unfolded>.

The documents to be submitted include:

- name, contact details and affiliated institution;
- a detailed CV;
- a letter of motivation (350 words maximum);
- a letter of recommendation that includes support of their home institution;
- a document that presents a painting (or a group of paintings) that underwent wax-resin lining and demonstrates why this case is worth sharing with others participants and lecturers, and what you expect as feedbacks. The document includes a text (500 words maximum) and images.

The selection of participants takes place via an open call issued in October 2019.

Application deadline is **14 December 2019 (postponed until the 25th of January 2020)**.

Applications will be reviewed by a commission. A short list of selected participants will be approved by the Getty Foundation. Successful trainees will be informed by 30 January 2020. We aim for a global representation.

Contact: wax-resin-fgw@uva.nl.



UNIVERSITY
OF AMSTERDAM



The Getty Foundation



SRAL

Restauratie, onderzoek en advies



FRANS HALS
MUSEUM



Mauritshuis



Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam



The Royal Dutch Academy of Fine Arts,
Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation



THE WARBURG
INSTITUTE

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



Cultural Heritage Agency
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science