



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

BANQUETING HOUSE WHITEHALL RUBENS CEILING PAINTINGS TECHNICAL RESEARCH – MOLAB EXPERIENCE

Dr Constantina Vlachou-Mogire

Distributed infrastructure: provision and use in practice

25 January 2023

SPACE TO STIR AND BE STIRRED

TOWER OF LONDON • HAMPTON COURT PALACE • BANQUETING HOUSE
KENSINGTON PALACE • KEW PALACE • HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE AND GARDENS



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

PART TWO

MOLAB ACCESS

PART THREE

RESULTS / IMPACT

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

Our Cause - 'We stir every spirit to inspire and provoke change



BANQUETING HOUSE, WHITEHALL



Designed by Inigo Jones, completed in 1622

The Apotheosis of James I



Sir Peter Paul Rubens received the commission from Charles I in 1621, painted the canvasses in Antwerp, 1630-1634, and installed in March 1636

MAROUFLAGE ON PLYWOOD BOARDS



Damage on plywood joint

1940 – evacuation of the Rubens paintings

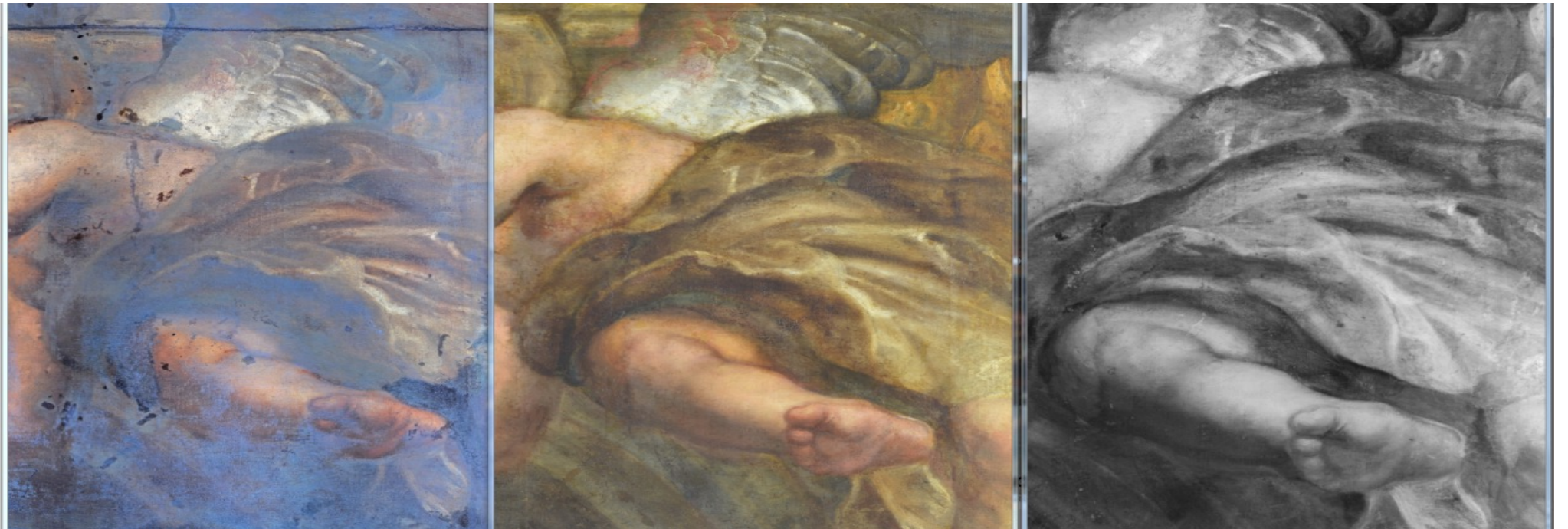


CONSERVATION 1946-52



TECHNICAL SURVEY AIMS

- Rubens technique in creating these nine paintings, and
- record evidence of previous interventions and their impact on the condition of the works today



RESEARCH PLANNING

	Scaffold access	Investigations
Phase 1: Documentation	February – March 2016	Multispectral imaging
		Laser scanning – architectural drawings
		Limited sampling and non-invasive analysis
		Canvas studies
Phase 2: Material analysis	February-March 2018	Non-invasive analysis (Molab)
		Sampling

DOCUMENTATION- MULTISPECTRAL IMAGING



Visible light



Ultraviolet-induced luminescence



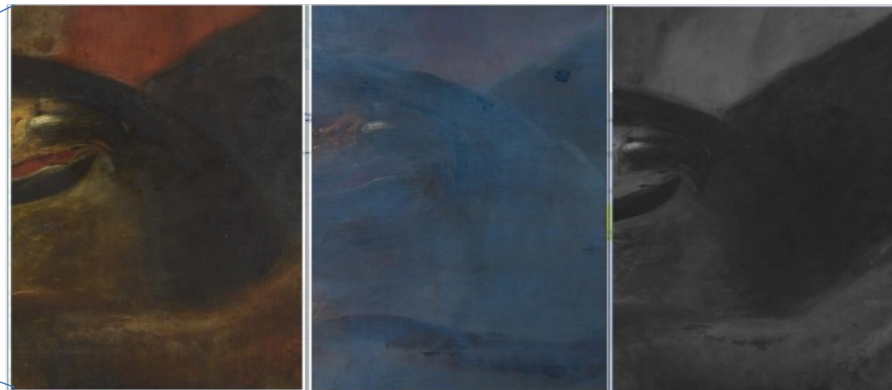
Infrared-reflected

ANALYSIS PLANNING – SAMPLING LOCATIONS



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Total samples	No	Painting	ACCESSIBILITY	Sample CODE	INFORM CLEANING TRIALS	1st batch of analysis	AAR code	Samples received post AAR analysis		
2									cross section	fragment/scriapping	extract
54		11	Pantillon	no							
35											
55		1	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_W3_SV1	✓	20	AAR_Sample19		X(trace)	X(trace)
36											
56		2	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_S7_SP2	✓	21	AAR_Sample20	X		X
37											
57		3	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_T3_SP3	✓	22	AAR_Sample21	X(gold coated, in tube)		X
38											
58		4	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_S3_SP4	✓	23	AAR_Sample22	X		X
39											
59		5	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_S10_SP5	✓?	24	AAR_Sample23	X		X(trace)
40											
60		6	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_U8_SP6	✓?					
61		7	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_U7_SP7	✓	25	AAR_Sample24	X		X
62		8	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_S7_SP8	✓	26	AAR_Sample25	X		X
63											
63		9	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_S8_SP9		27	AAR_Sample26	X		X
64		10	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_VTL_SP10	✓	28	AAR_Sample27	X		X
65		11	Apotheosis		Apotheosis_C_Q10_SP11		29	AAR_Sample28	X		X
46											

Apotheosis sample 1 (thick varnish)



PART TWO

MOLAB ACCESS

MOLAB ACCESS APPLICATION FORM



IPERION CH - Integrated Project for the European Research Infrastructure ON Cultural Heritage

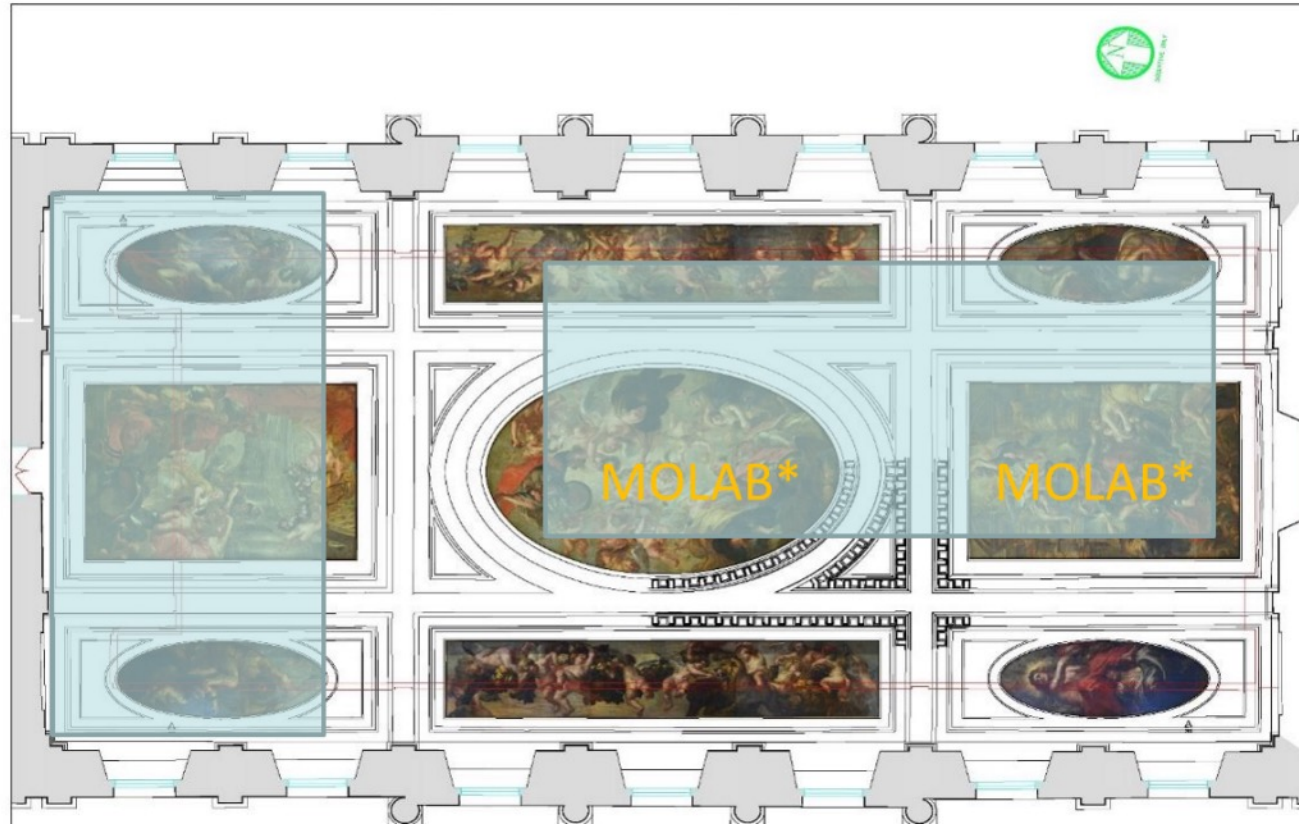
MOLAB TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS APPLICATION FORM

- Project title, Project Leader (CV information) and Team Members
- Description of the project, the artwork under investigation, type of analytical techniques requesting access and duration
- Logistic preparations (scaffolding etc) /training, risks and safety hazards
- Other access proposal to ARCHLAB or FIXLAB requested or allocated under IPERION CH related to this project or Any other EU project related to this proposal

Post-access requirements

- Project Summary/User Report to be sent to the MOLAB TNA Desk no later than 2 months after MOLAB Access
- Publish the results in a renowned refereed international journal (preferably open access)
- The support by the European Community will be acknowledged by the statement *"Financial support by the Access to Research Infrastructures activity in the H2020 Programme of the EU (IPERION CH Grant Agreement n. 654028) is gratefully acknowledged"*.
- An electronic copy of any such paper will be sent to the MOLAB TNA Desk immediately after publication.

SCAFFOLD ACCESS AREAS: MARCH – APRIL 2018



*Supported by the Access to Research Infrastructures activity in the H2020 Programme of the EU via [IPERION CH](#): Integrated Platform for the European Research Infrastructure ON Cultural Heritage, Grant Agreement n. 654028

MOLAB TEAMS

Team / Country	Date	Instrumentation	Team members
Molab France Centre for Research and Restoration of Museums (C2RMF) Paris	5/3/2018 – 9/3/2018	Intergrated XRD /XRF Thermography STIR	Dr Vincent Detalle Dr Elsa Bourguignon Dr Francois Mirambet Dr Kilian Laclavetine
Molab Greece Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH) Crete	5/3/2018 – 9/3/2018	Digital Holographic Speckle Pattern Interferometry (DHSPI)	Dr Tornari Vivi, Dr Andrianakis Michalis
Molab Poland Nicolaus Copernicus University of Poland Toruń	12/3/2018- 16/3/2018	Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT)	Prof Piotr Targowski Dr Magdalena Iwanicka
Molab Italy Institute of Molecular Science and Technologies of CNR (CNR-STM) Perugia	9/4/2018- 13/4/2018	UV-VIS-NIR reflectance and fluorescence Alpha mid-FTIR Bruker “handheld” XRF	Dr Letizia Monico Annalisa Chieli Patricia Moretti

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HRP GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Form RA01

Palace	Banqueting House Whitehall	Dept	CCC CM IM	Assessed by	Constantina Vlachou	Date	05/02/2018
Subject	Use of HYDRA X-ray Fluorescence and X-ray Diffraction combined spectrometer at the Banqueting House for the analysis of the Rubens paintings during the scaffold period access February – April 2018					Reviews	

Paragraph 44 of the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) of IRR99.

Where a radiation employer is required to undertake a prior risk assessment, the following matters need to be considered, where they are relevant:

i) the nature of the sources of ionising radiation to be used, or likely to be present, including accumulation of radon in the working environment;
 HYDRA is equipped with a X-ray tube of 40 kV maximum voltage, 700 μ A maximum intensity, and 30W maximum power. When active, a X ray beam is emitted from the frontal part of the instrument. The instrument is use for short periods of time and there is no accumulation of Radon in the working environment.

ii) estimated radiation dose rates to which anyone can be exposed;

controls have been carried out using a APVL instrument (FH40G-L10 model, SN: 031634) in the following conditions: Beam: 35kV 680 μ A, target material: Al

here are the results for Hydra:

Point of measurement	Dose (μ Sv/h)	
	10-cm distance	1-m distance
Side		0.2
Beam	75	0.75

At a 1m distance, the measured dose of X-rays is 0.75 μ Sv/h when directly exposed to the X-ray generator beam and 0.2 μ Sv/h away from the beam. These values are below those requiring a controlled zone, so a 2-m radius safety area around the source will comply with the health and safety regulation.

The dose rate 10 cm to the aperture is 75 μ Sv/h, with subsequent risk of significant skin dose to the fingers should a small sample be held by hand. Samples must NEVER be held by hand.

iii) the likelihood of contamination arising and being spread;

there is no risk of contamination

iv) the results of any previous personal dosimetry or area monitoring relevant to the proposed work;

not applicable as nobody is allowed to enter the controlled zone. Therefore, no monitoring takes place.



HEALTH AND SAFETY



! WARNING	
	DO NOT ENTER
Construction area. Authorized personnel only. Hard hats REQUIRED beyond this point.	

DANGER

**DO NOT ENTER
X-RAY
IN PROGRESS**

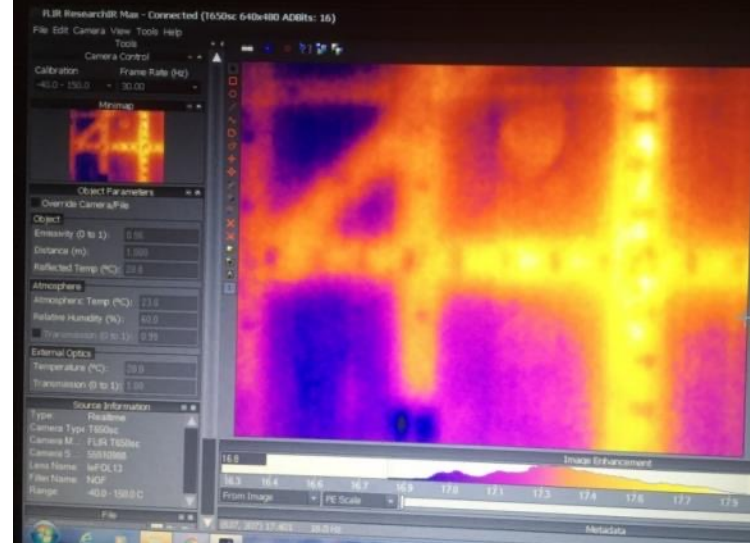
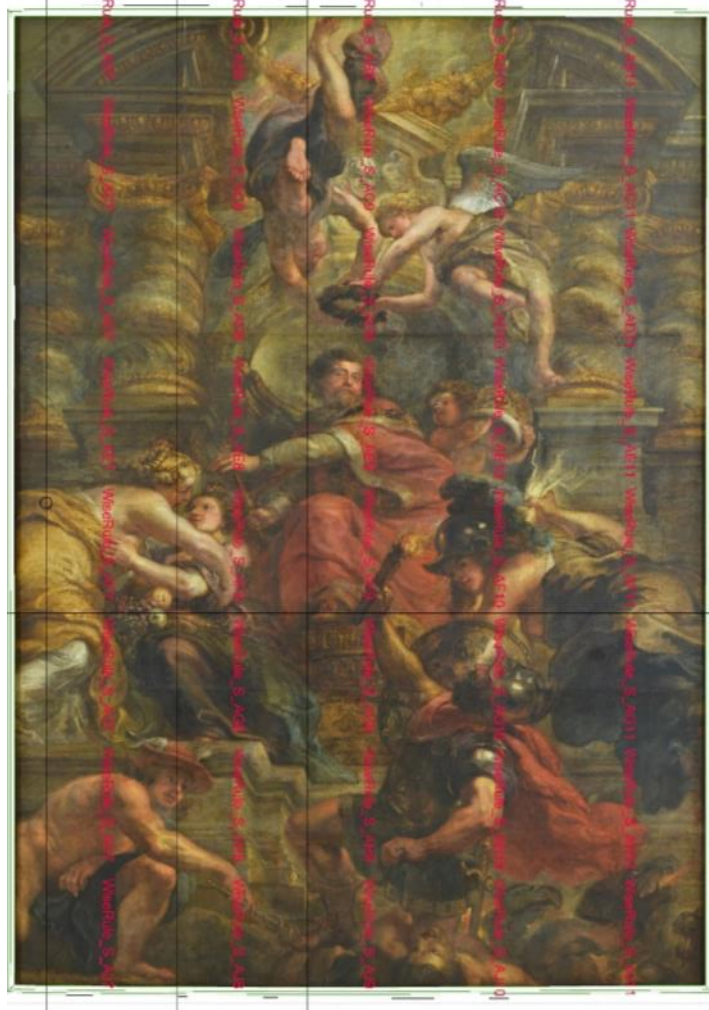
CLIMBING THE SCAFFOLD



FRENCH MOLAB: INTEGRATED XRD/XRF



FRENCH MOLAB: THERMOGRAPHY STIR



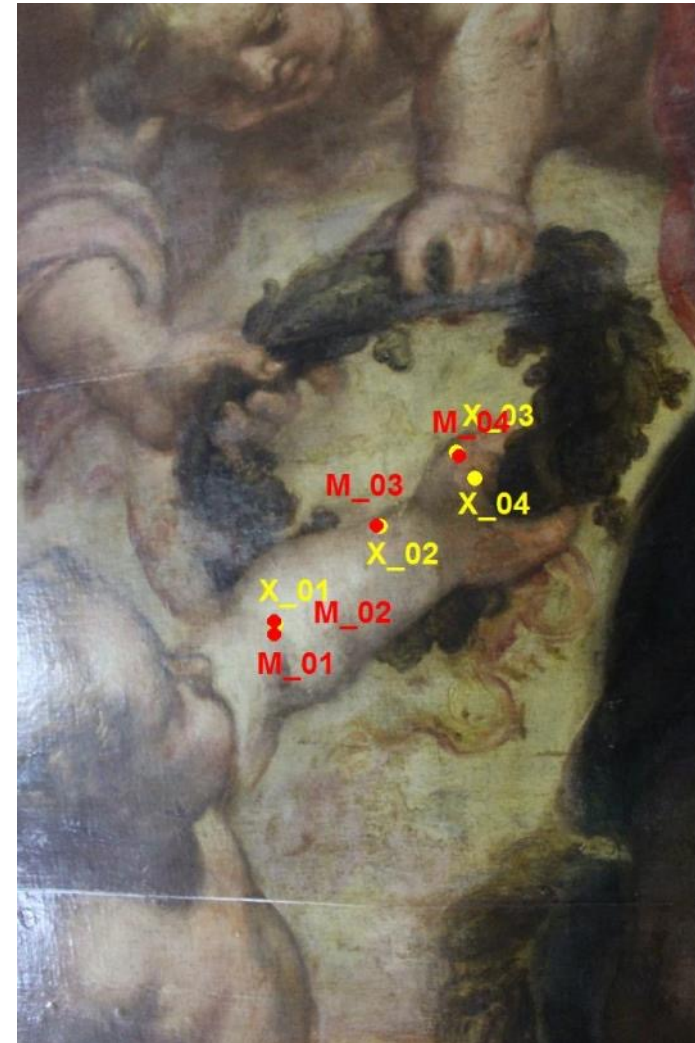
GREEK MOLAB: DIGITAL HOLOGRAPHIC SPECKLE PATTERN INTERFEROMETRY (DHSPi)



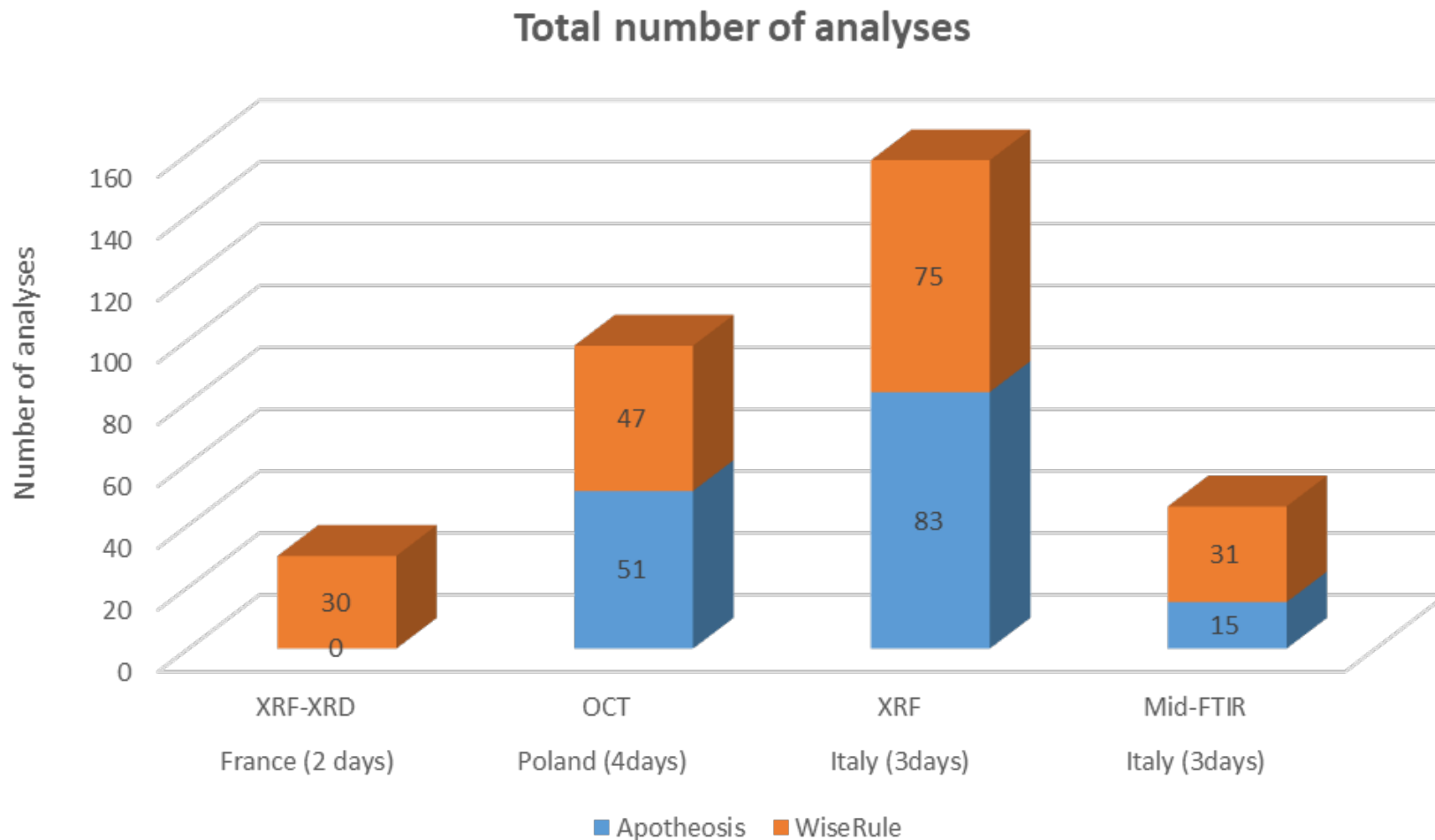
POLISH MOLAB OPTICAL COHERENCE TOMOGRAPHY (OCT)



ITALIAN MOLAB ALPHA MID-FTIR, BRUKER , PXRF



MOLAB NUMBER OF ANALYSES TOTAL 330 IN 9 DAYS



PART THREE

RESULTS / IMPACT

Rubens paint materials

White: lead white

Red: vermilion, cochineal, madder lakes, red ochre, red lead

Yellow: lead-tin yellow (type I), yellow earth, yellow lake

Blue: lapis lazuli ultramarine, azurite, smalt, indigo, verditer (blue-green)

Green: malachite 'copper resinate' glaze, verdigris

Brown : brown and red-brown earths umber, Van Dyck brown, brown lake

Black: charcoal black, carbon black, bone black

Mediums: linseed oil, walnut oil, turpentine, pine resin and occasionally egg (both white and yolk)

Apotheosis (red drapery)



Vermilion used widely on the paintings.

XRF analysis results from Apotheosis included **Hg** on **55** out of the **83** points of analysis.

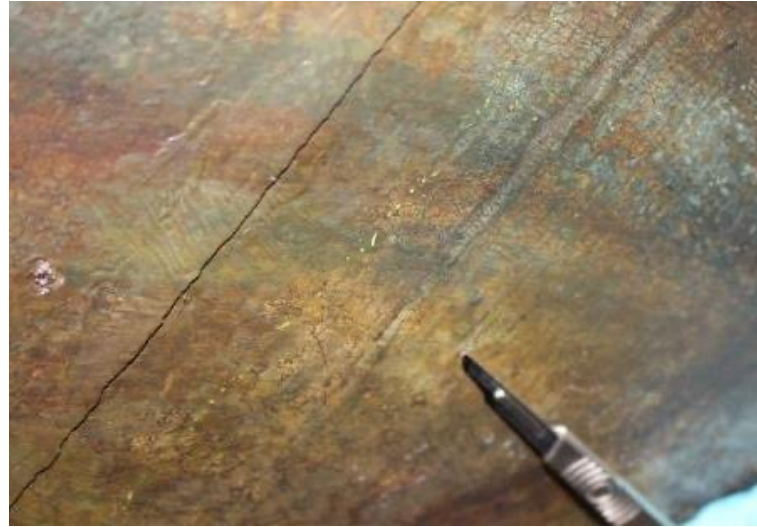
In Wise Rule **Hg** was traced on **42** of the **74** points of analysis

Smalt: sky



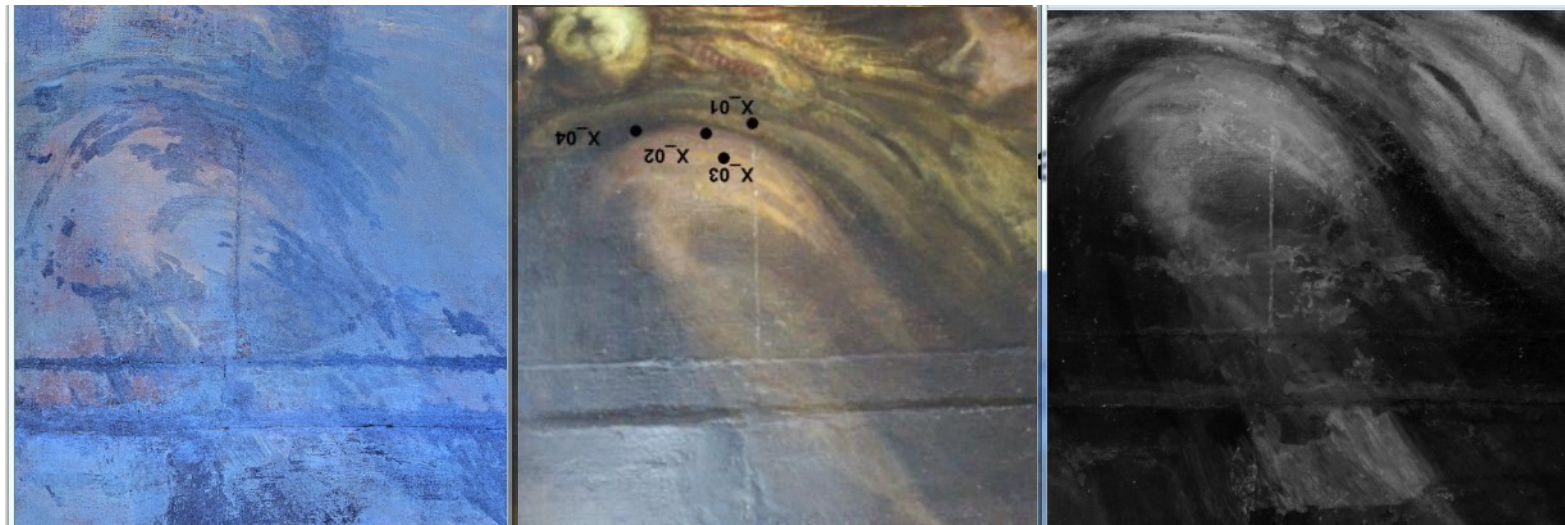
XRF results show that **Co** and **K** were detected in **12** points of analysis on Apotheosis, and **16** points of analysis on Wise Rule.

Wise rule: purple/green

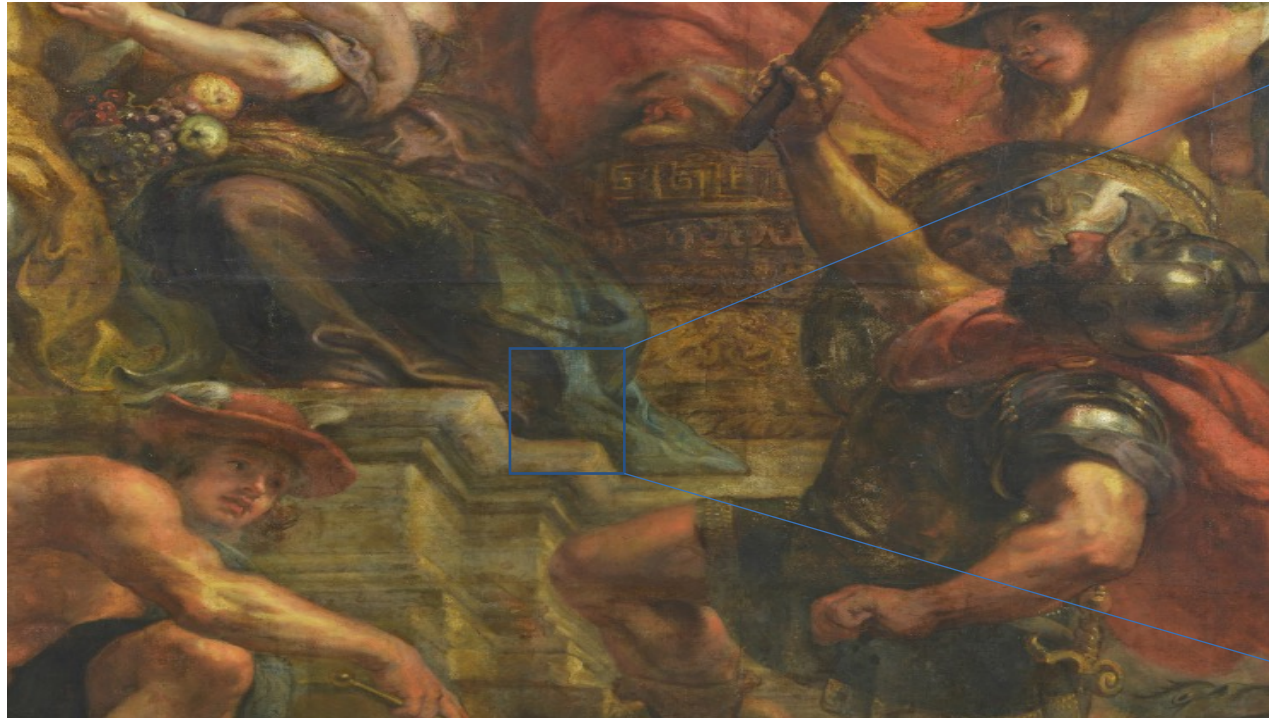


Green: Malachite (Cu)
Smalt (Co and K), yellow
earth (Fe).

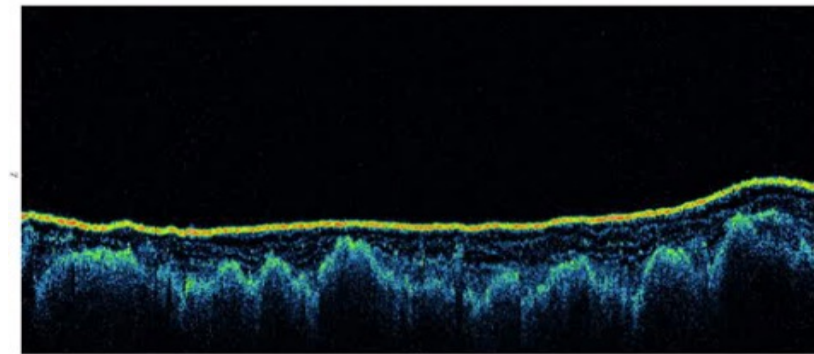
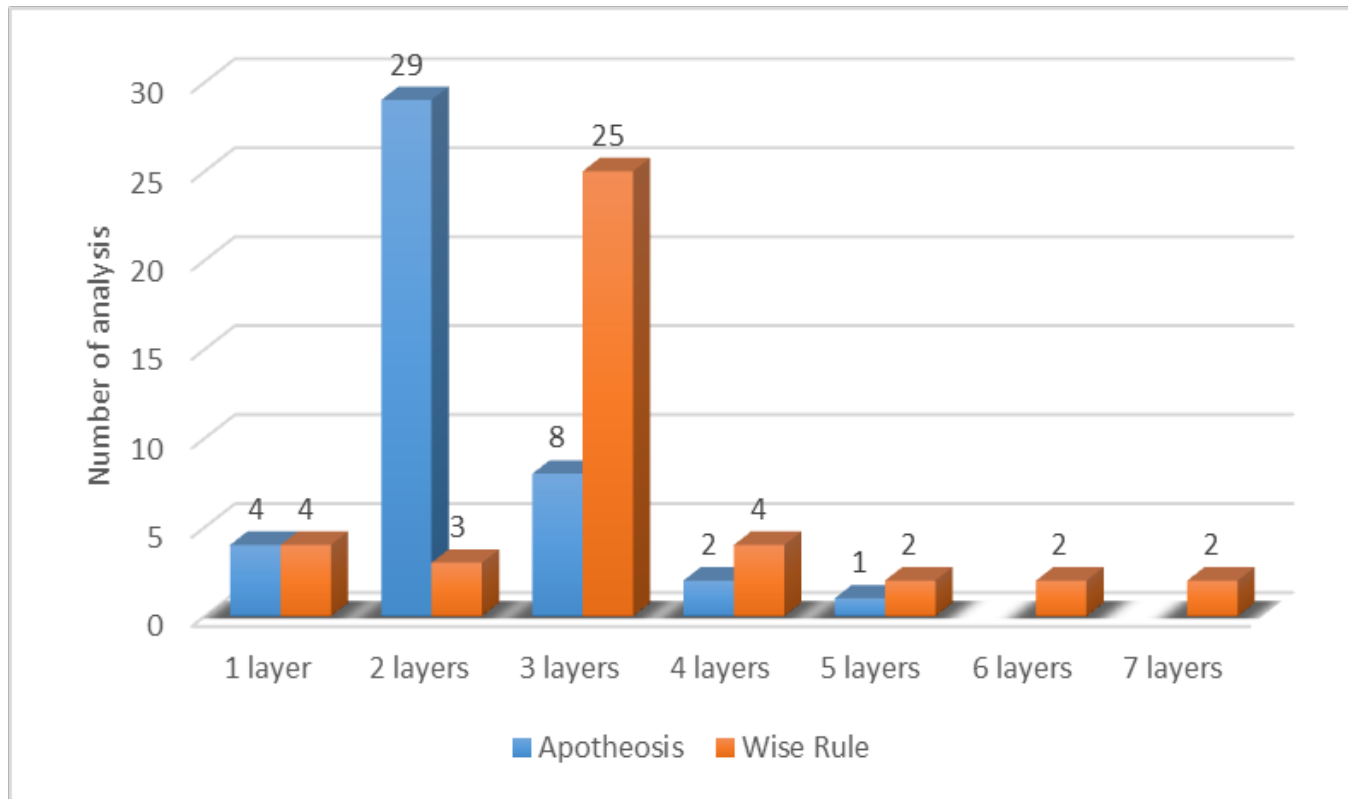
Purple: a lighter shade of
green that appears purple.
Retouched area with a high
Zinc content.



Wise rule reflection FT-IR analysis: soaps (likely of Pb) and oxalates



OCT analysis: number of varnish layers



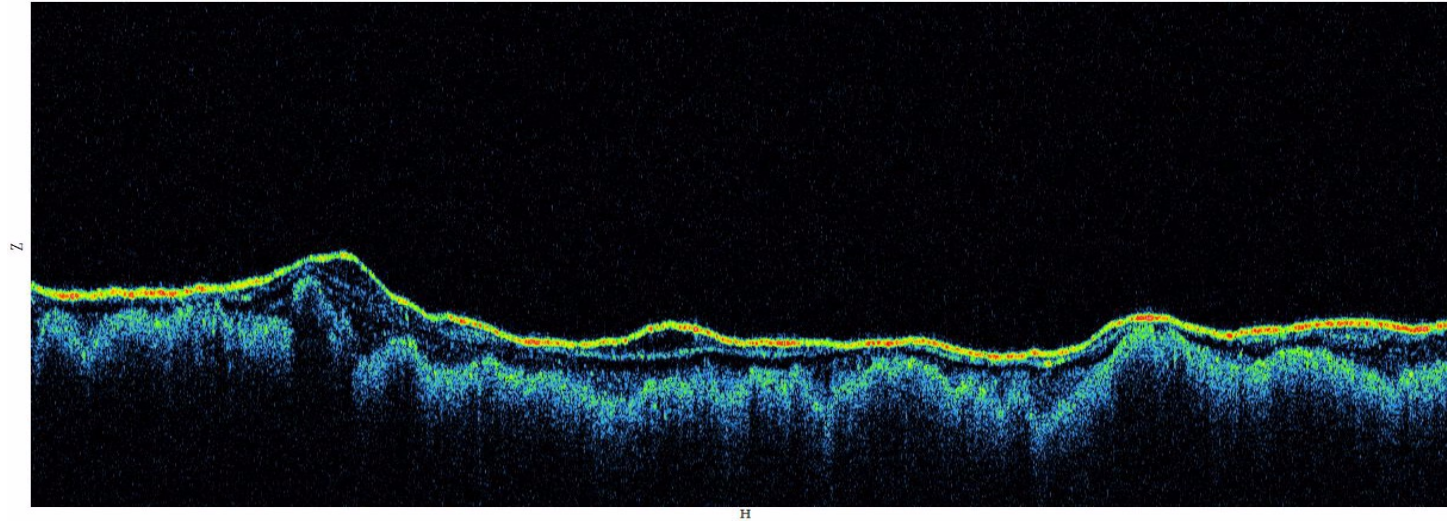
200 um
Object:
WiseRule
2018-03-15_173202_3000x10

Measurement:
15-03-2018 (17:32:02), focal
Single measurement, horizontal

Description:
WiseRule 5 ABS OCT 10 sky
not cleaned



OPTICAL COHERENCE TOMOGRAPHY (OCT)



200 um

Object:

WiseRule
2018-03-15_192352_3000x100

Dimension (H|V|Z) [mm]:

12,0 | 12,0 | 0,79

Measurement:

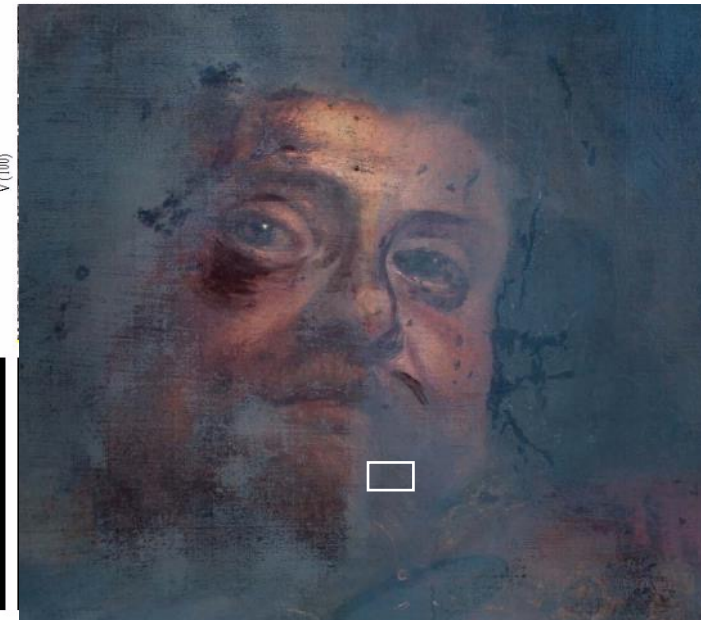
15-03-2018 (19:23:52), focal length: 54mm
Single measurement, horizontal

Tomogram:

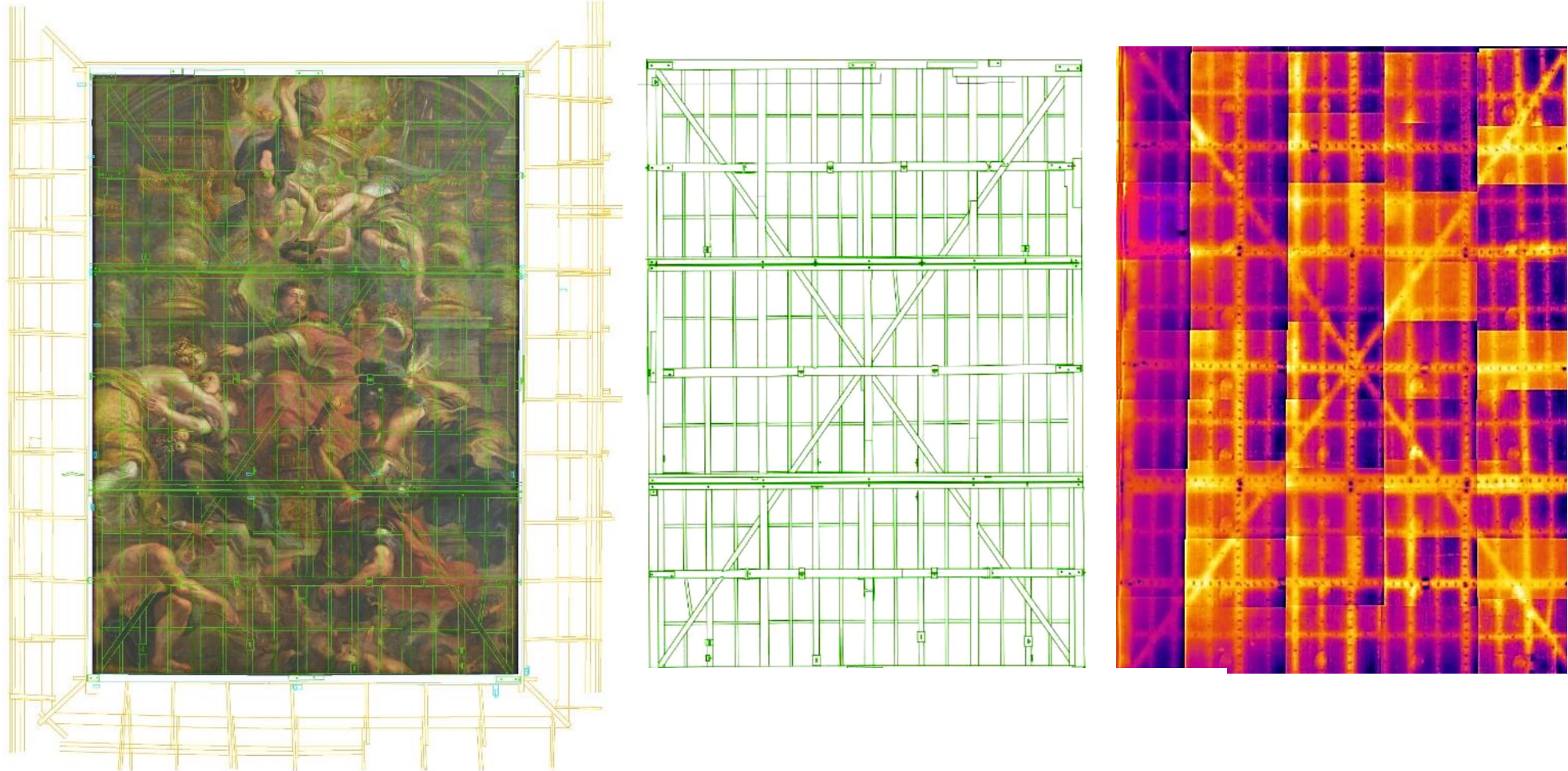
1/100

Description:

WiseRule_S_AE9_OCT_15
the King's beard, area of strong
UV fluorescence

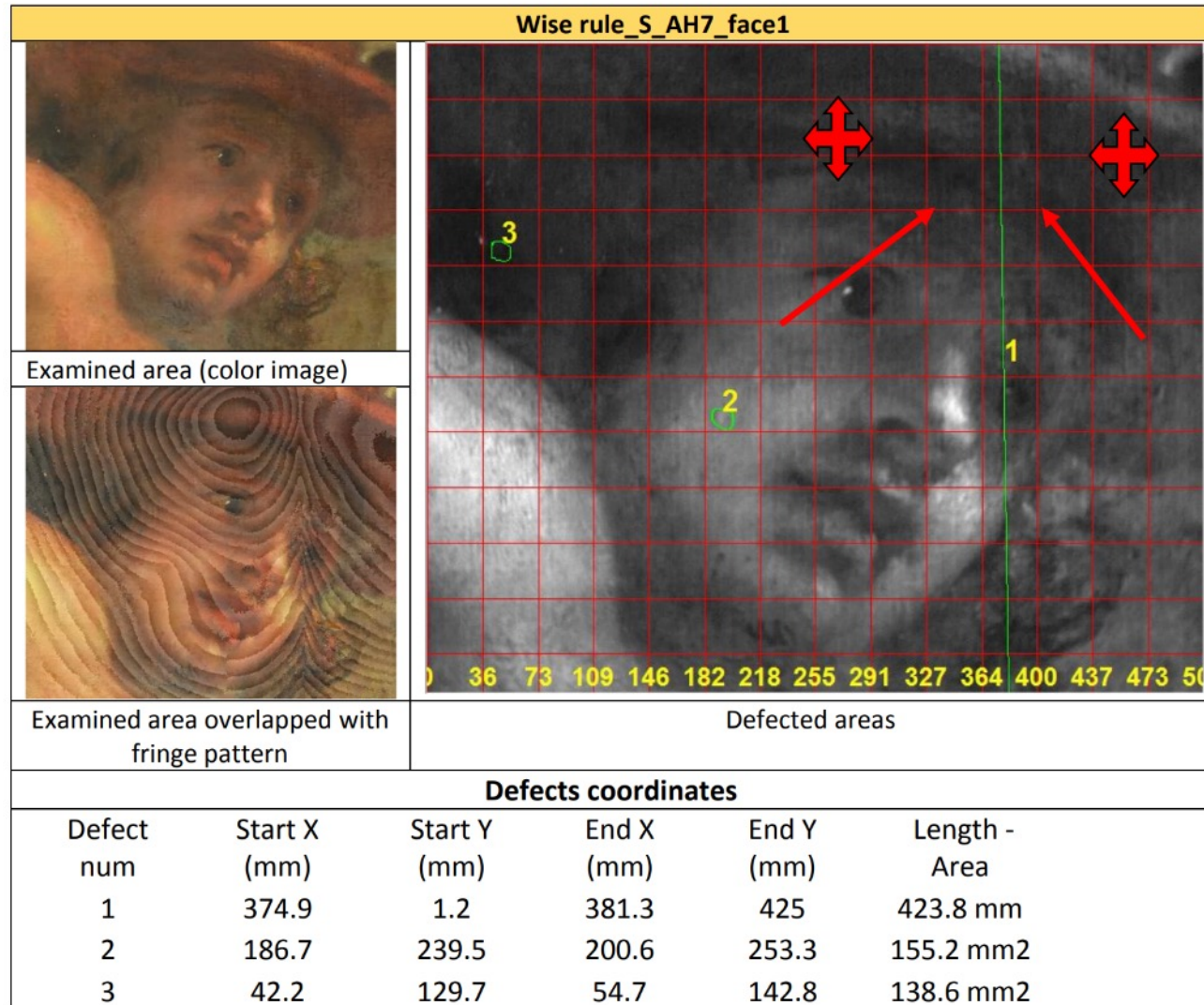


THERMOGRAPHY STIR - RESULTS



IR thermography revealed 1,600 nails under timbers holding plywood boards together

DIGITAL HOLOGRAPHIC SPECKLE PATTERN INTERFEROMETRY (DHSPI) - RESULTS



DATA COLLATION AND INTERPRETATION

RubensAnlysisCollatedDatabase - Excel

AU540

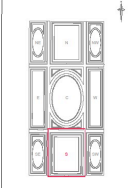
Sample/Site of Analysis	Total No. of samples	No. per Painting	Painting	Area Code	Sample/Site of Analysis CODE	Sample/Site of Analysis description	SEM	EDX elemental analysis	EDX mapping	Raman	
51	17	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_W10	Apotheosis_C_W10_SP17	Original from the yellow drapery of Justice.	Crust formation: Lead sulfate UV fluorescent, medium-rich layer mixed with particulate matter: Lead white, red lead, calcium carbonate (?), carbon		Pb	S,Pb	Al,K,Ca	
51	17	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_W10	Apotheosis_C_W10_SP17		Thin red-brown paint layer: Lead white, red lead, calcium carbonate (?), sulfur		Ca	S,Pb	Al, Si	
51	17	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_W10	Apotheosis_C_W10_SP17		UV luminescent varnishes (multiple layers)			Al, Si, S, K, Ca, Fe, Pb	Mg, Ti	
51	17	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_W10	Apotheosis_C_W10_SP17		Particulate matter, uppermost					
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18		Grey ground (GU)	Backscattered images	Major	Minor	Trace	
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18		Pink beige paint layer (far right, bottom): Lead white, iron-containing earth pigments, lead tin yellow (type I)		Pb	Ca	Al, Si	
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18		Pale orange beige layer: Lead white, vermilion, lead tin yellow (type I)		Pb	Sn	Al, Si, Ca	1054 (vw), 1045 (vw), 525 (vw), 41 (vw), 379 (vw), 31 (vw), 292 (vw), 21 (vw), 255 (vw), 15 (w), 129 (s)
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18		Thick yellowish layer: Lead white, lead tin yellow. Possible lead soap formation, mid-left (light area in the UV image)		Pb		Al, Si, S, Cl, K, Ca	
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18		Crust: Lead sulfate, lead potassium sulfate		Pb	S, K	Al, Si, Ca	
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18		UV luminescent varnish layer					
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18	Partial off-white paint layer: lead white (?)		Pb		Al, Fe		
52	18	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_U10	Apotheosis_C_U10_SP18	UV luminescent varnish layers						
#REF!	22	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_V11	Apotheosis_C_V11_SV22	Varnish scraped from the green drapery of Justice, around her proper						
1	1	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_01_pink	pink						
2	2	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_02_pink	pink						
3	3	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_03_pink	pink						
4	4	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_04_pink	pink						
5	5	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_05_flesh	flesh						
6	6	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_06_flesh	flesh						
7	7	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_07_flesh	flesh						
8	8	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_08_sky	sky						
9	9	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_09_sky	sky						
10	10	Apotheosis	Apotheosis_C_P8	Apotheosis_C_P8_X_10_sky	sky						

Analysis Database table for ppt

RUBENS CEILING PAINTINGS
WISE RULE
OVERPAINTS



Key
Overpaints



REPORT TO BE MADE WITH PLANS
DRAWN BY THE ARCHITECT
DATE: 1911

- BANQUETING HOUSE
- WHITEHALL
- RUBENS CEILING PAINTINGS
- WISE RULE

IMPACT - PUBLICATIONS



A non-invasive multi-technique investigation of Banqueting House Whitehall Rubens ceiling paintings

Constantina Vlachou-Mogire^{a,*}, P. Moretti^b, L. Monico^{b,c}, A. Chieli^{b,c}, M. Iwanicka^d, P. Targowski^e, V. Detalle^f, E. Bourguignon^f, K. Laclavetine^f, F. Mirambet^f, Tong Tong^g, S. Pinchin^h

^a Historic Royal Palaces Conservation and Collections Care Department, Hampton Court Palace, Surrey, KT8 9AU, UK

^b CNR-SCITEC, c/o Department of Chemistry, Biology and Biotechnology, University of Perugia, via Elce di Sotto 8, 06123, Perugia, Italy

^c SMAArt Centre and Department of Chemistry, Biology and Biotechnology, University of Perugia, via Elce di Sotto 8, 06123, Perugia, Italy

^d Faculty of Fine Arts, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Sienkiewicza30/32, 87-100 Toruń, Poland

^e Institute of Physics, Faculty of Physics, Astronomy and Informatics, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Grudziadzka 5, 87-100, Toruń, Poland

^f C2RMF/ CNRS – Palais du Louvre, Porte des Lions, 14 quai François Mitterrand, Paris, France



Vlachou-Mogire, C., P. Moretti, L. Monico, A. Chieli, M. Iwanicka, P. Targowski, V. Detalle, et al. 2020. "A non-Invasive Multi-Technique Investigation of Banqueting House Whitehall Rubens Ceiling Paintings." *Microchemical Journal* 156: 104797. doi:10.1016/j.microc.2020.104797

STUDIES IN CONSERVATION
2022, VOL. 67, NO. 3, 161–167
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00393630.2020.1825900>



ORIGINAL RESEARCH OR TREATMENT PAPER



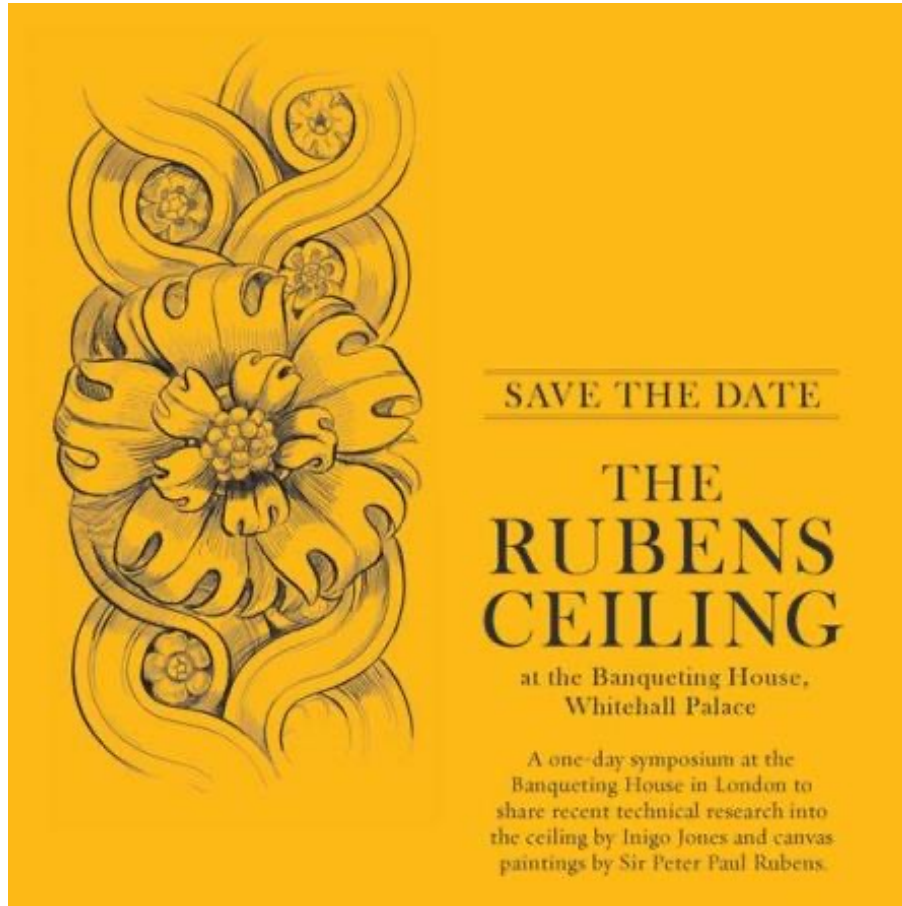
Non-invasive Survey of Rubens' Ceiling Paintings at the Banqueting House Whitehall, London, by Means of Optical Coherence Tomography

Magdalena Iwanicka¹, Constantina Vlachou-Mogire², Lucia Pereira-Pardo^{2,4}, Marcin Sylwestrzak³, Magdalena Kowalska³ and Piotr Targowski³

¹Faculty of Fine Arts, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Toruń, Poland; ²Historic Royal Palaces Conservation and Collections Care Department, Surrey, UK; ³Faculty of Physics, Astronomy and Informatics, Institute of Physics, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Toruń, Poland; ⁴The National Archives, Kew, Surrey, UK

Magdalena Iwanicka, Constantina Vlachou-Mogire, Lucia Pereira-Pardo, Marcin Sylwestrzak, Magdalena Kowalska & Piotr Targowski (2022) Non-invasive Survey of Rubens' Ceiling Paintings at the Banqueting House Whitehall, London, by Means of Optical Coherence Tomography, *Studies in Conservation*, 67:3, 161-167, DOI: 10.1080/00393630.2020.1825900

IMPACT - SYMPOSIUM



- 14.15-15.50 **THE RUBENS PAINTINGS
TECHNICAL RESEARCH**
Chair: Adrian Phillips
- 14.15 **KATE FRAME**
'The Rubens paintings of the
Banqueting House: from painted
canvasses to marouflaged structures'
- 14.35 **DR CONSTANTINA VLACHOU**
'Uncovering the Paintings' Secrets;
Technical Examination and
Material Analysis'
- 14.55 **SARAH PINCHIN**
'Potential Treatment Options
for the Ceiling Paintings at the
Banqueting House'
- 15.15 **KATHRYN HALLETT**
'Structural and Environmental
Investigations'
- 15.35 **QUESTIONS**

E-RHIS SCIENTIFIC STRATEGY CASE STUDY



Example 1.3.:

Optical Coherence Tomography to Investigate Rubens Canvases at Whitehall Palace

The set of nine ceiling paintings created by Rubens and studio (1636) is one of the largest and most complex works by the master surviving in-situ. Due to many undocumented past restorations a detailed survey of the state of preservation was needed. Thickness and structure of varnishes were resolved; delaminations as well as retouchings from former restoration campaigns were detected. Different build-up of varnish layers due to past selective cleaning treatments was found in many places and linked to discolourations of the surface. Optical coherence tomography (OCT) is a non-invasive method of structural imaging, providing virtual cross-sections of the build-up of sub-surface layers. It substitutes microscopic analysis of samples thus enabling structural examination of the heritage object in unlimited number of areas.

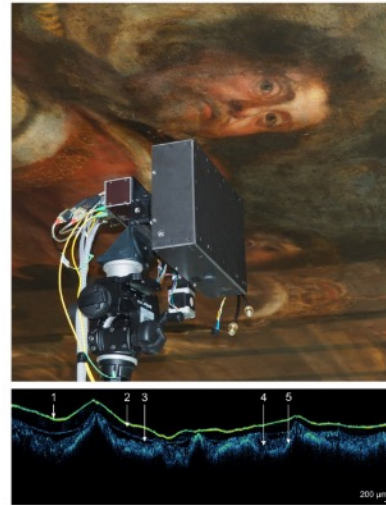


Figure: OCT examination of The Apotheosis of King James I, P. P. Rubens, Whitehall Palace, London with the instrument facing up (top, photo P. Targowski) and the resultant cross-sectional image (bottom).

In the OCT cross-section: 1 - surface of the painting; 2, 3 - two varnish layers; 4 - glazes; 5 - surface of an opaque paint layer.

Constantina Vlachou Mogire et al. "A non-invasive multi-technique investigation of Banqueting House Whitehall Rubens ceiling paintings". In: *Microchemical Journal* (2020), p. 104797

MOLAB access: RUBENS TCR BHW (project leader: Dr Constantina Vlachou-Mogire, Historic Royal Palaces Conservation and Collections Care Department, Hampton Court Palace, Surrey KT8 9AU, UK)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NON-INVASIVE ANALYSIS

Molab France

Centre for Research and Restoration of
Museums (C2RMF) Paris

Dr Vincent Detalle
Dr Elsa Bourguignon
Dr Francois Mirambet
Dr Kilian Laclavetine

Molab Greece

Foundation for Research and Technology
(FORTH) Crete

Dr Tornari Vivi,
Dr Andrianakis Michalis

Molab Poland

Nicolaus Copernicus University of Poland Toruń

Prof Piotr Targowski
Dr Magdalena Iwanicka

Molab Italy

Institute of Molecular Science and Technologies of
CNR (CNR-STM) Perugia

Dr Letizia Monico
Annalisa Chieli
Patricia Moretti
Brenda Doherty

MOLAB coordinator

Radiation Protection Advisor, UCL

Dr Andrew Hancock



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Sample analysis

Dr Lucia Pereira Pardo (team member 2017-18)

Dr Marta Melchiorre (team member 2016-17 and sample analysis 2016)

Eleanor VanAderkas (sampling 2018, organic analysis 2016)

Dr Marika Spring, National Gallery, sample analysis 2016

Dr Jilleen Nadolny, Francis Eastaugh, Art Analysis and Research (sample analysis 2018-19)

Tong Tong (Analytical data collation and digital preservation)

Documentation

Dr Giovanni Verri (multispectral imaging and XRF analysis testing 2016)

Stephen Paine (UV imaging)

John Hallett-Jones , Glanville (visible imaging and 3D laser scanning)

Valentina Risdone (AutoCAD annotations)

THANK YOU!

Constantina.Vlachou@hrp.org.uk

