

ARCHLAB ACCESS REPORT

*(this report will be made public)**

Call number 654028/period July 2018:

Title of the ARCHLAB TNA Project: Conserving Artifacts – New Cleanings

Project Acronym: CANC

User Group:

Name and forename(s) User Group Leader: Giulia Basilissi

Institution: Freelance restorer and researcher.

Name of other researchers of the User Group:

ARCHLAB **Provider**/home institution: Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), Amsterdam (NL).

Contact person ARCHLAB Provider/home institution: Ineke Joosten

Period of the visit: 16-18 July 2018

Date of the report: 28/11/2018

Background to the project: I made a research about the use of erasers for the cleaning of silver and metallic artifacts. The aim of my access is to improve our knowledge respect to the use of eraser and sponge in artwork conservation. I developed the first part of the project on the use of commercial erasers to remove the silver tarnishing. The second part of the research focuses on new tools for the dry-cleaning, like testing the addition of known inert components to a known matrix for self – producing tailored erasers.

Questions addressed by Access:

- Which dry cleaning products have been selected for the "Dry Cleaning Approaches for Unvarnished Paint Surfaces" project and why?
- Which diagnostic investigations were used and how was the investigations set and why?
- What are the criteria for defining a useful dry method for cleaning unpainted and painted surfaces? What methodological characteristics have been investigated?
- Which silver cleanings methods are used?
- Have you ever used erasers to clean silver? If so, how were they selected and what were the results? If not, could they be useful materials to test given the results we have had?
- Could it be useful to develop a research project on cleaning with erasers on more than one material?

Main objectives of the project proposal (max 1 p):

The request for Access at the RCE arose from the research on dry cleaning methods on pictorial unvarnished paint surface developed at RCE. Since my study is based on the use of erasers to cleaning silver (but will extend to other metals and materials) I thought it would be useful to compare the setting of the experimental procedures and the results obtained. I will compare the diagnostic methodologies selected to study the dry cleaning system composition (for us erasers and dental tips for the RCE sponge, eraser and fabrics), the method to realize the mockups, the procedures to modify the surfaces and the system to make this information easily usable for the researchers.

I also wanted to understand whether the method of cleaning with erasers on silver and metals was in use in the Rijksmuseum conservation laboratories or whether it was possible to evaluate its use. It was also useful to discuss the cleaning methods most used for silver and the advantages and disadvantages of these techniques. My goal included also understanding whether mechanical, chemical or electrochemical techniques were preferred and whether lasers were used.

For me it was important to talk to researchers and restorers to understand if it would be useful to make self-produced erasers. Part of my research in fact is based on the possibility of making our own erasers to allow the restorer to obtain the hardness and specific properties for the object to be restored.

Personally, I wanted to confront myself with the study method of such an important foreign research institute.

Main achievements of the ARCHLAB visit (max 2 p):

At the beginning of my visit I was introduced at the RCE (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands) by Ineke Joosten than explained to me the organization of the RCE laboratories and the main research projects.

The first day of my visit I illustrated my studies to the metal conservators of the Rijksmuseum (Joosje van Bennekom and Tamar Davidowitz), some other researchers of the RCE (ink on paper lab) and Ineke Joosten. I illustrated the first part of my project about the use of erasers to remove the silver's tarnishing and the second part which includes the realization of self-made erasers to clean the artwork surfaces. I showed some images of my thesis work about the dry cleaning on silver inlay of some Islamic artifact, the erasers that I have selected and their effects on silver.

At the end of the presentation we started a confrontation about how I setting the studies, the goals of the research and the results. The presence of several professionals (chemists and restorers working of different materials) was very helpful, as we could analyze the work from different point of view. This discussion was very useful to understand how I can improve my work and to focus on new details to be deepened or explained more clearly. The metal conservators seemed interested in my work and we could exchange very useful information on silver cleaning methods. I visited the metal restoration workshop of the Rijksmuseum and I could see the work organization, the silver cleaning methods usually used and the protection approach for this metal (i. e. application of protective coatings). In the previous days I visited the Rijksmuseum and I had been able to observe the exposed silver artworks. I particularly dwelt on the silver pieces, the level of cleaning and the protection systems.

The following days I was able to consult the files of the research conducted by the RCE on dry cleaning of unpainted paint surfaces. I was able to observe in details the selected diagnostic investigations, the materials chosen and the results of the research. I talked with Ineke Joosten who explained in detail the researches developed at the RCE and gave me suggestions on the work that I would conduct in the future on the erasers.

I was also able to consult the internal archive of the RCE where I found materials and researches on dry methods and uses of erasers on other materials. In the Rijksmuseum database I found some reports on the restorations carried out on silver and the cleaning methodologies.

Dissemination:

I plan to prepare a publication in an Int Journal in consortium with the ARCHLAB providers	I hope that we can activate a direct collaboration with the RCA laboratories to improve the research of dry cleaning on metal surfaces.
I plan to include the results in my thesis	No
I have no plans yet	We want to develop the research on the auto-production of eraser starting from known inert and rubber matrices. The information collected at the RCE will be

	useful to set up the work.
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You are kindly invited to provide pictures that might be used to illustrate the advantages of ARCHLAB to the public.

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