The History of Drawings Conservation and Its Ethics (online, 13–14 May)

online, May 13–14, 2026

Edina Adam, J. Paul Getty Museum

This two-day symposium explores the history and ethics of drawings conservation, from early restoration methods to contemporary approaches in professional practice. By examining how drawings have been repaired, stabilized, and preserved over time, the sessions consider the evolving standards of care and address ethical questions of intervention. They also reflect on the role of material evidence in art-historical interpretation and the changing responsibilities of artists, conservators, curators, and collectors over a drawing's lifetime.

Co-organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Rijksmuseum, the symposium will feature presentations spanning four centuries of drawing from an international slate of speakers.

Day 1: Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 8am-12pm Pacific, 5pm-9pm Amsterdam

8am Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Housekeeping (10 min)

8:10am Session 1: History of Drawings Conservation (60 min)

Second Touches. Redrawing the lines, Conserving the Idea in Early Modern Drawings
Dr. Alice Ottazzi, cultrice della materia, Università degli Studi di Torino

Living Drawings: Pounce Papers and Workshop Practices of Preservation in Qajar Iran
Seyed Abdolreza Hosseini, Doctoral Researcher, University of Vienna

Cropped, Mounted and Fixed: Degas's Relationship with Paper Conservation
Lucia Elledge, Andrew W. Mellon Fellow, Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Dedalus Foundation Fellow in Conservation, New York University Institute of Fine Arts

9:10am Break (15 min)

9:30am Session 2: Methodologies (60 min)

Traces as Testimony in the Conservation of Drawings
Margaret Holben Ellis, Professor Emerita of Paper Conservation, New York University Institute of Fine Arts
Lisa Conte, Assistant Professor of Paper Conservation; Co-Chair of the Conservation Center, New York University Institute of Fine Arts

To do or not to do, that is the question

Ilaria Camerini, Ales spa, Archivio di Stato di Rieti

Image Reintegration in Graphic Art Conservation: Methodological Reflections and Practical Experience
Gabriella Pace, Head of Paper Conservation Laboratory, Istituto Centrale per la Grafica, Ministry of Culture, Italy
Miriam Pitocco, Paper Conservator, Istituto Centrale per il Restauro, Ministry of Culture, Italy

10:30am Session 3: Case Studies (80 min)

Drawing by the circle of Filippino Lippi “Head of Hercules covered by a lion skin”. Interaction of art historical and physicochemical methods of analysis.
Liubava Christova, Curator of Italian Drawings of the XVI – XVIII centuries, The State Hermitage Museum

Between a disaster and the work of art – Issues surrounding the restoration of Lagoa Henriques' burned drawings
Adriana Ferreira and Alice Nogueira Alves, Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Belas-Artes, Centro de Investigação e de Estudos em Belas-Artes (CIEBA), Largo da Academia Nacional de Belas-Arte

Conserving the drawings of Brett Whiteley
Analiese Treacy, Manager of Paper and Frames, Art Gallery of New South Whales

Irrevocable Choices: Peeling Back the Layered History of Stradanus’ sketches
Caitlin Condell, Associate Curator & Head of Drawings, Prints & Graphic Design Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
Heather Hendry, Senior Paper Conservator, Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts

11:50am Closing Remarks (10 min)

Day 2: Thursday, May 14, 2026, 8am-11am Pacific, 5pm-8pm Amsterdam

8am Brief Welcome and Housekeeping (5 min)

8:05am Session 4: Case Studies 2 (100 min)

Damaged and Beautiful: Reconstructing the Conservation History of Canaletto’s Drawings
Camila Pietrabissa, PhD, Adjunct Lecturer in Art History, Università di Venezia

Risen from the ashes: Treatment of a drawing by Pirro Ligorio
Kimberly Schenck, Former Head of Paper Conservation, National Gallery of Art

The history of the drawings by contemporary artist Daniela Sissi Olivieri. Conservation challenges of rapidly changing industrial materials between diagnostic studies and the principles of Sissi’s Theory of Parallel Anatomy
Beatrice Marseglia, Paper Conservator and PhD Candidate, Academy of Fine Arts of Bologna

Excavating Four possible Clouet Drawings from Layers of 'Restoration’

Eve Menei, Independent paper conservator, Paris, France

Ethical Considerations in the Conservation of Two Large-Scale Architectural Drawings by Boris Zinserling
Zuzanna Ciepielewska, Paper and Leather Conservation Department, Museum of the Polish Army
Magdalena Grenda-Kurmanow, PhD, Faculty of Conservation and Restoration pf Works of Art, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland

9:45am Break (20 min)

10:05am Session 5: History of Drawings Conservation, Institutional Histories
(80 min)

Beyond the science: A personal exploration of restorers in the Rijksprentenkabinet (1933-1964)
Diane Coetzer, Senior Project Manager, Erasmus Centre for Women and Organisations, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University

From Artistic Intuition to Scientific Discourse: Ethics and Professionalization in Paper Conservation Education at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (1965-2000)
Dr. Sigrid Eyb-Green, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
Andreas Hartl, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
Catherine Bouvier, private practitioner

Untitled proposal (the history of paper conservation at the Morgan Library)
Reba Fishman Snyder, Walter and Constance Burke Paper Conservator, Thaw Conservation Center, The Pierpont Morgan Library and Museum

Narrating Practice: Using Oral Histories to Document and Examine the History of Drawing Conservation
Lindsey Tyne, Conservation Librarian, Barbara Goldsmith Preservation and Conservation Department, New York University Libraries
Lisa Conte, Assistant Professor of Paper Conservation; Co-Chair of the Conservation Center, New York University Institute of Fine Arts

11:25am Q&A, Closing Remarks, and Reflections

Organization and Contact
The conference is a collaboration between the Rijksmuseum and the J. Paul Getty Museum. The point persons are Edina Adam, Idelette van Leeuwen, Leila Sauvage, and Michelle Sullivan. With questions regarding the symposium, emails should be addressed to drawings@getty.edu.

Registration
Tickets are free, but registration is required. Once you register, you'll receive an email detailing how to join via Zoom. Please register using the following link: https://www.getty.edu/calendar/drawings-conservation-ethics/

Reference:
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