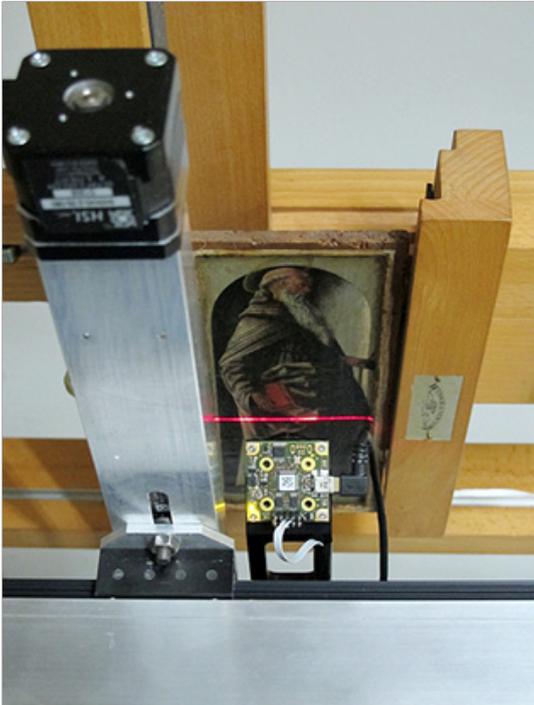




FACTVM
FOVNDATION
FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
IN CONSERVATION



Contemporary Heritage

02-02-2017

In the Spring The Wallace Collection, in its educational programme for children, is presenting a programme called: *Technology and Techniques in Sculpture* where the young participants will see how works of art were made and the complex processes that were necessary. The study of techniques used to create two and three dimensional works has long been a fascination for many and museums and institutions are constantly researching as well as providing programmes to increase our understanding.

As the 21st century develops one of the great changes that we are witnessing is the acceleration in many areas of technology – communications, medical, industrial, imaging, computing, transport, cryptology and, of course, in the creation and preservation of works of art. In the middle of the last century ‘science’ was still not seen as a subject that had relevance to art – Sir Kenneth Clarke – then Director of The National Gallery in London was eventually persuaded to include scientific research into the Gallery’s armoury – though his comments were not on the positive side. The impetus for science in conservation had started in Germany with Friedrich Rathgen at the end of the C19th (though people like Pasteur and Faraday had done early analysis) and was now unavoidable – well, at least its tacit acceptance was.

This is clearly not the attitude now and the importance of technology (or science) in both conservation and preservation of our heritage is now a fully accepted good. The Foundation works with many of the great institutions around the world in furthering knowledge and skill by sharing the technologies used and experience gained in its workshops – developed both to support contemporary artists by Factum Arte and, in the need for preservation techniques, by the Foundation. The contemporary and parallel use of new (digital) and traditional (manual) artisanal skills is part of what makes the workshops so exciting.

When visitors look at great works of art they may wonder what technology was used in their creation – in some cases they may be surprised that the object they are viewing is the subject of digital recreation (you will find many examples of facsimiles on this website, here are some examples - [Griffoni](#), [Teschens Table](#), [Piranesi](#), [Veronese](#), [Tutankhamun](#)). The use of advanced technology to record – to de-materialise - is now an essential and driving force in permanent, non intervention, digital preservation of our heritage and therefore its understanding. And it can now be used to re-materialise works, exactly as they are, where it is necessary or appropriate so that the public can enjoy, researchers analyse and custodians relax as the fragile/endangered original is protected/moved/re-patriated. This process might be called *contemporary heritage* – the use of technology only now available, in the understanding, preservation and even re-creation of important objects of our heritage so that we can have - and posterity will have – safe access to what we inherited. All we need is your support!