INES SANTY ACR PAINTINGS CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

15 Leopold Place, Edinburgh EH7 5LB

Tel/Fax: 0131 556 5002 E-mail: isanty@btinternet.com Mobile: 07884 06 16 21

**CONDITION REPORT**

1. DESCRIPTION

ARTIST: TITLE: DATE: TECHNIQUE:

DIMENSIONS:



CLIENT:

CONTACT:

1. CONDITION

Anonymous.

‘Portrait of Sir William Arrol’. Possibly around 1900.

Oil paint on canvas. H86cm x W66cm.

Ornamental gilded wood gesso/composition frame. H109.5cm x W89.4cm.

Heriot-Watt University, School of the Built Environment, William Arrol Building, Room 4.08, Riccarton, Edinburgh EH14 4AS.

Anne Ormston, School Office Administrator.

*Varnish layer*

The varnish layer consists of a natural resin and has slightly yellowed over time. The surface is covered with a layer of grime, nicotine and loose dust. A 2.2cm long scrape is situated l2cm from the left edge and 30cm from the bottom edge. 3.5cm and 2cm long scratches are situated 8cm from the left edge and 25.5cm from the top edge. A small scratch is situated 7.5cm from the left edge and 40.5cm from the bottom edge. The scrape and scratches do not appear to extend to the paint layer. There is some abrasion in the varnish of the sitter’s tie. Four small black paint drips are pTesent near the top edge (centre).

*Paint/ground layers*

The ground layer is a commercially prepared white layer; the paint/ground layers are generally stable. An overall craquelure pattern has not yet developed. Two 1.7cm long brush hairs are caught in the paint layer on the sitter’s right shoulder. They appear like scratches as they catch the light. More brush hairs are caught in the paint layer in the background.

Prfmary support

The canvas support is medium to heavy weight, tightly woven and probably made of linen. The tension in the canvas has slackened. Dust and debris are caught between the back of the canvas and stretcher members, causing shallow bulges in the canvas along the front edges. The canvas has been reduced in size in the past, possibly to fit into the frame. Slight canvas deformations run horizontally from the tacks along the right side of the palnting. This is caused by over tensioning the canvas while stretching unto the stretcher. The tacks have become rusty. Paper gum tape is glued to the second foldover flaps at the back and partly on the tacking margins. The back of the canvas is extremely grimy.

Secondary support

The softwood stretcher is in a fair condition and consists of four members. All keys (wedges) are present. The keys are not secured to the back of the stretcher. There is a hole in one of the keys, which may be a beetle flight hole. Paper gum tape is glued to the back of the stretcher.

Framc

The frame is structurally sound. There are small losses of gesso/gilding in the four corners. The painting is held with large copper staples in its frame. The staples penetrate the stretcher at the back by up to 1cm. The hanging rings are loose and hold a chain.

Paper gum tape is glued to the back of the frame. The innerslip has been cut away along two sides to fit the painting. It is held with plenty panel pins. Small slivers of wood spacers have been inserted between the innerslip’s outer edges and the frame, to stop movement. There are some beetle flight holes in the back of the frame; they do not appear to be live. The painting protrudes at the back of the frame.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The varnish coat needs a surface clean. A fresh varnish coat would only be applled if necessary.

The scrape, abrasion and scratches would be removed with the application of local varnish. The brush hairs stuck in the paint layer cannot be removed. They may still show up as ‘scratches’ after treatment.

The back of the canvas needs a surface clean to remove the heavy grime layer. The canvas would be tensioned. The slight canvas deformations along the right side may still be there after tensioning. The keys would be secured.

The dust and debris between the canvas and stretcher members would be removed. The shallow bulges caused by this cannot be removed (without removal of the canvas from its stretcher).

The paper gum tape at the back of the painting and frame would be removed. New tacks would be added to the tacking margins as the present tacks are rusty.

A wood build-up at the back of the frame would better secure the painting and a backing material would provide mechanical protection to the back of the canvas as well as keep out dust. The painting would be properly secured with plates and screws. The beetle flight holes would be treated. The hanging 'rings would be removed as they are not secure.

The innerslip would be removed. Low reflective 4.4mm laminated glass would be added to the frame and the innerslip used as a spacer between the glass and the painting.

4. PROPOSED TREATMENT

Surface clean back of canvas.

Remove dust and debris between canvas and stretcher members. Add more tacks.

Tension canvas. Secure keys.

Surface clean stretcher.

Remove paper gum tape at back of stretcher. Surface clean varnish coat.

Apply varnish locally to scrape, abrasion and scratches.

Brush varnish painting, if necessary. Spray varnish painting, if necessary.

Repair of frame:

Retouch gesso/gilding losses.

Conservation enframing:

It may include surface cleaning of the front and back of the frame, removal of paper gum tape, treatment of beetle flight holes, construction of a wood build-up at the back of the frame, addition of padding material in the rebate, securing of the painting with brass plates and screws, protection of the reverse of the painting with a backing material, tape to keep out dust, addition of two corks to aid air-circulation, etc.

The frame would be fitted with low-reflective 4.4mm laminated glass, as requested. The innerslip would be removed and held in-situ with brass plates (bent and with an extra hole drilled into).

ESTIMATED COST

ARTIST:

TITLE:

Anonymous.

'Portrait of Sir William ArroJ'.

The estimated cost for conservation work of the painting is £510 - £600 (17 - 20 hours).

The estimated cost for conservation enframing and minor frame repair is £300 -

£360 (10 -12 hours).

The hourly rate for conservation/restoration work is £30.

VAT is not applicable.

Included in the price is a treatment report with photographic documentation, cost of products/mate1ial, wrapping, administration and insurance.

The cost of low-reflective 4.4mm laminated glass (99% UV- light protection) is

£403.10.

The painting is insured by my insurance broker for £5,000 during stay in my studio.

Please send a £400 deposit if you would like conservation work and conservation enframing to go ahead.

Ines Santy ACR

Paintings Conservator 19 September 2011