

RESTORATION PROCESS OF TWO PAINTINGS OF MANUEL ARELLANO

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN FROM GUADALAJARA AND
PORTRAIT OF MAN FROM MEXICO CITY

Lis Sebastián. Restoration Department. Colnaghi Madrid.

Initial and final state of the work



Both photographs show a comparative view of the state the painting was in before the restoration process began and the result after the process.

Technical data

-TITLE: PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN FROM GUADALAJARA AND PORTRAIT OF A MAN FROM MEXICO CITY
-ARTIST: MANUEL DE ARELLANO (MEXICO CITY 1662-1722)
-DIMENSIONS: 109 x 84,5 cm. (both)
42 29/32 x 33 17/64 in.(both)
-MEDIUM: OIL ON CANVAS
-DATE: 17th CENTURY
-SIGNATURE: On the ribbon banner: **Arellano F.va.**
-INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed on the ribbon banner: CRIOGLIA DELLA C.TA DI GUADALAJARA FIGLIA DI UN BISCAINO ED UNA CRIOGLIA and CRIOGLIO DELLA C.TA DI MESSICO CAP.DEL AMERICA FIGLIO D UN PORTUGHESE E DI UNA CRIOGLIA.
Inscribed in the top right corner (woman): Ni me pres/ Mi dueño so and inscribed in the top left corner (man): to ni me doi/ solo de.
-DATE OF RESTORATION: 2024



Labels on the stretcher.

Analytical Techniques Performed

The laboratory test had provided the restorer with the necessary documentation for the treatments to be performed.



Ultraviolet light

The ultraviolet rays make the materials fluorescent, behaving the oldest brighter and opaquer and darker the most modern.

The analysis done with ultraviolet light allows to see the areas of old over paintings. These can be distinguished because they take a dark purple color upon the varnish.

Low light

Consist of taking a photograph with light placed under an acute angle inferior to 20°.

The beam of light stands out with great intensity the state of relief in the surface of the painting due the shadows that occur.

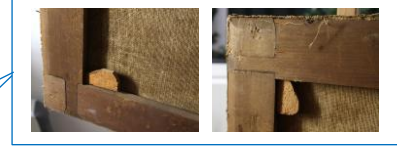
Macrophotography

Macrophotography takes photographs at a larger size of the natural one with an objective of increase. Its use allows the restorer to observe if there are alterations or not in this area

COLNAGHI

Initial state of conservation

It can be seen attached paper label to the stretcher.



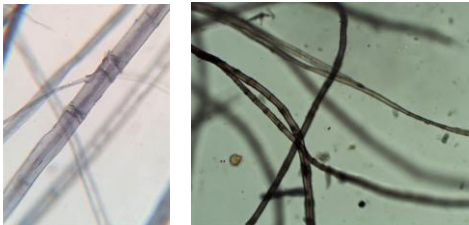
The paintings were a strainer with keys system and lowered edges, so they are suitable for a good conservation of the paintings. It was decided not to change it for a new proper one.

The stretcher has all keys present but doesn't have keys-retainers.

The auxiliary support has central cross which gives more stability to the frame structure.

Support

The support of the work is made of linen. Ideal fabric for works of art as it allows the stability of the painting as it is not very hygroscopic and absorbs little environmental humidity, so the fabric remains quite stable. Its fabric is Taffeta, that is, the same number of threads in the weft and warp and in a straight grid.

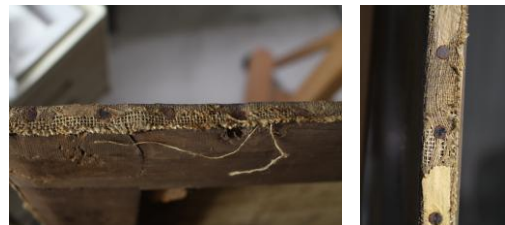


Linen fibers under the microscope.

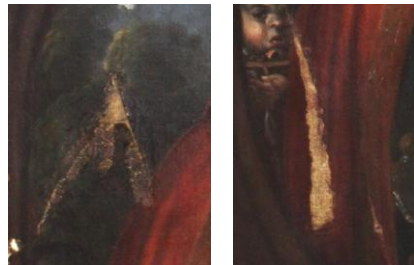


Taffeta fabric type.

The canvas has a full lining from a previous restoration that is in good condition of conservation. It was decided to keep it in both paintings.

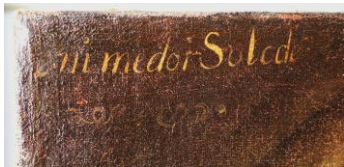


The man's canvas has two major blows that have broken the original support with the loss of part of the fabric.



COLNAGHI

Lagoon zone



Ground Layer

The function of the ground layer is to give elasticity and adapt to the natural movements of the support. The ground layer is made of calcium sulfate and animal glue done in the traditional way.

All the old paintings with canvas support present cracking that influences in their external appearance. This craquelure depends on the materials used in the painting, the artist's pictorial technique, the atmospheric conditions to which the painting is exposed and the way in which it has been treated.

The ground layer has generalized cracking due to extreme changes in relative humidity and temperature.

The preparation of these two works is red, made with Armenian Bol, characteristic of their time.

Painting Surface

The painting surface is in a good state of conservation, only has some damages produced by over paintings that cover some areas where the support damage is.

The rest of the painting there is not over paintings.

These over paintings are surpassed of their correct dimension reason why they are eliminated during the restoration process.

The paint surface shows a general crack pattern.

Superficial Surface

The varnish layer is very yellowed due to oxidation of the components. This effect prevents observing the true color of the original brushstrokes of the artist.

The varnish is very uneven, with some matt areas on the surface of the artwork.

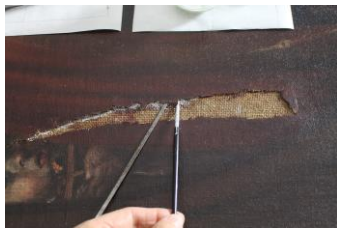
COLNAGHI

Restoration process

Consolidation process

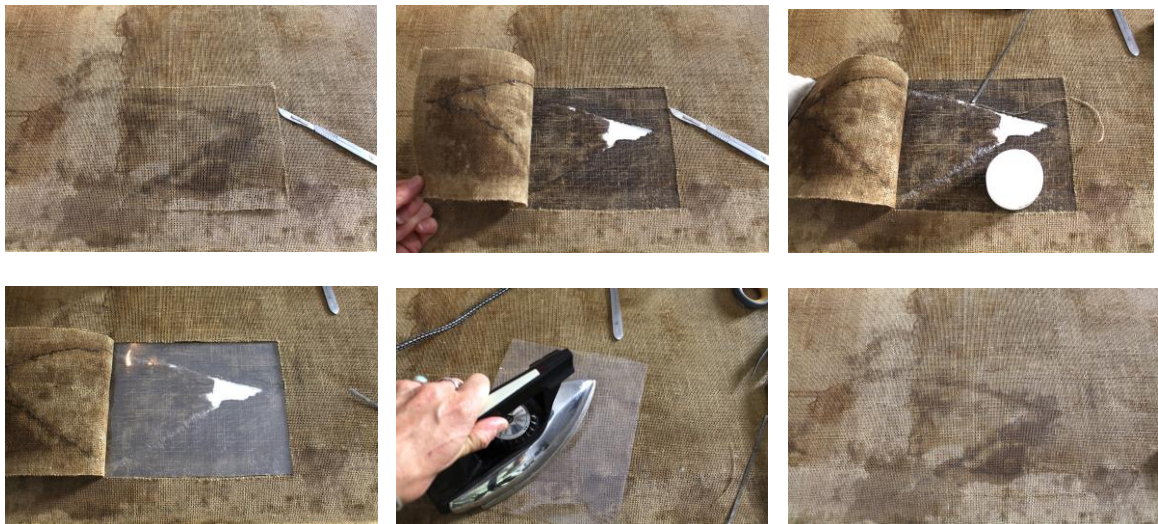
The first step is a complete photographic documentation of the artwork. This method of work will be carried out before, during and after treatment to document the restoration process.

The first process consists of repairing the cracks caused by impacts on the support. One of the tears can be consolidated on the obverse by adhering the detached tissue since there is access for this.



Adhesion of the peeled edges of the fabric gap.

The other break cannot be repaired on the obverse and due the lining is in good condition and does not need to be removed, it was decided to lift some windows on the back of the lining to access the crack and proceed to repair it.



Complete process of consolidation of the reverse blow.

COLNAGHI

Cleaning process



Over time, the varnish deteriorates, and the resin oxidises, turns yellow and crystallises, and over time layers of environmental dirt accumulate on the surface, together with smoke from old candle lighting. All this forms a dark film that prevents the original colours of the work from being seen. The removal of the different layers of varnish and environmental dirt it is carried out by chemical and mechanical cleaning, according to the compositional characteristics of the resins to remove. The cleaning was carried out in two phases. The first one consisted in the elimination of the superficial varnish and the second one eliminated surface over paintings and old dirty.

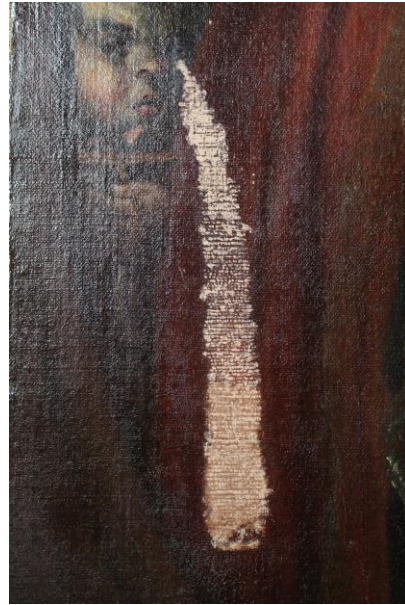


The condition of the paintings after cleaning, without any further intervention.

You can see how well preserved they are.

COLNAGHI

Stucco process



All the ground losses are filled to level the surface, matching with the original texture the new fillings. In the restoration we used a stucco with similar characteristics to the original, with this system we avoid differences in the reactions against humidity with time, or inter-interactions between both unwanted.

COLNAGHI

Chromatic retouching process

The new retouching gives color to the missing areas, so the lecture of the artwork is completed.

There are two types of retouching, one with watercolors that provides a base of color and another with the varnish colors where the tones are adjusted

Both materials can be eliminated without prejudice to the original in case of desired because they are completely reversible.



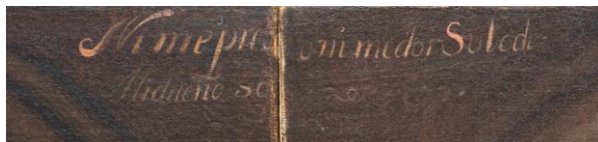
Reintegration process from covering the stucco with the water-based colour to the complete adjustment with varnish colours



COLNAGHI

Final state

Finally, a varnish layer is applied with a spray gun to protect the colors from the environmental damage. Furthermore, it saturates the color tones for a proper display by the observer extends.



The frame had a layer of very oxidized glitter which is removed to reveal the original fine gold that the frame had hidden.

Conditions of conservation

All treatment is made with materials fully reversible, which means that in case of being necessary withdrawal would not cause any damage to the original.

The work must be kept in stable temperature and humidity conditions, with a temperature range between 18 and 22 degrees Celsius and a relative humidity between 40 and 60%.

The painting is in a good state of conservation. It can travel under suitable transport and packaging conditions.

The artwork is at present in good condition of conservation.