



**University of Delaware
Program in Art Conservation
ARTC 464: Treatment Report on Gilded Panel by Nikolas Lokhoff**



Owner: University of Delaware Art Conservation Program
Acquisition: Deaccessioned from Harvard Art Museums/ Fogg Museums
Object: Painting
Accession number: n/a
Artist: Nicholas Lokhoff
Date: 1911-1920
Materials: egg tempera, gold leaf gilding on asbestos panel
Dimensions: 98.4 inches x 37.75 inches
Marks: no marks
Reason for Treatment: Painting required cleaning, has multiple areas of loss
Examined by: Yulimar Luna Colon and Angie Lopez
Report Date: February 26, 2021

1. Historical Context
Origin

The Procession of the Magi, originally, was painted by artist Benozzo Gozzoli, a well-known Italian painter during the Renaissance. Gozzoli was especially interested in fresco painting,



which we see in the Procession of the Magi. The panels that consist of this original Procession of the Magi were painted with fresco for the chapel in the Medici Palace.¹

The painter of this reproduction of Procession of the Magi was an artist known as Nikolas Lokhoff, a Russian artist born in the 20th century. Lokhoff was especially interested in painting copies of Renaissance paintings. He began studying at St. Petersburg Imperial University where he spent most of his time copying paintings, never finishing his degree, which was originally in the natural sciences.² Being an active political student and a member of the Union for the Liberation of the Working Class, eventually led to his expulsion from the University. After being expelled, Lokhoff had the opportunity to travel to different places, primarily Europe, which allowed him to study the styles of the old masters. This peaked his interest in Renaissance painting and thus, creating an interest in copying paintings led to him experimenting with paints and techniques in order to mimic those of old master painters, such as Benozzo Gozzoli's Procession of the Magi.

Materials

The original Procession of the Magi, as previously mentioned, was made of fresco on panel. This copy of the painting is made with the materials of egg tempera on an asbestos panel. This technique was common and Lokhoff wanted to keep the practice of egg tempera as accurate as possible. Egg tempera consists of egg yolk, powdered pigment and DI water. The yolk in this case serves as the binder that holds the pigment in place.³

II. Visual Description

From left to right the work is a depiction of the lower body of a light gray horse which is facing to the right, under which a medium sized dark gray dog stands, and the legs of multiple men and two other horses which seem to be facing forward. On the left,



¹ Benozzo Gozzoli. "Lokhoff Copy of Fresco." *Notes (Fogg Art Museum)* 1, no. 1 (1921): 17-20. Accessed March 4, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4300817>.

²Katz, Naum Gregory. "Dream and Reality in the Life of Nicholas Lokhoff: On the History of the Creation of Nicholas Lokhoff's Pittsburgh Cloister ." *PRZEGLĄD WSCHODNIOEUROPEJSKI*, 2019, 37–46. http://uwm.edu.pl/cbew/2019_10_1/02_Katz-NG.pdf

³ Savino, Diane. "Egg Tempera." Pigments through the Ages - Egg Tempera, WebExhibits, www.webexhibits.org/pigments/intro/tempera.html.



behind the light gray horse, 6 human legs can be seen, one of which is blue with a grey sock while the others are a pale red with orange-yellow socks. Below these legs there is a light brown rock like area in which they are standing, and further behind them is green grass with multiple plant details. Next to these figures is a dog, which is the only figure in this section of the painting which has a visible upper body. The dog can be seen standing on a grassier area compared to the previously discussed legs, implying that it is further back in the composition. Continuing to the right, two more legs can be seen, similar to those previously mentioned. However, these figures are seemingly wearing tunics or some sort of brown clothing on their upper half, which have gilded trimming on them. These figures are standing further from the front of the painting seemingly, as they do not appear to be as close as the light gray horse. This section features the beginning of grass at the bottom of the painting, which continues into the bottom right section of the painting. Above this the dirt / rocky ground changes to be a lighter, sandy color. Standing on this area are two horses, which from left to right are reddish brown with white feet and a black horse. On each side of the horse legs can be seen inside of light blue stirrups, showing that there is a person riding the animal. On the chest of the horse a small section of dark brown cloth can be seen, which has small dots of gilded gold.

The light gray horse, which takes up most of the left side of the painting, also has multiple gilded details on the saddle. This gilding can also be seen on the stirrups and the spurs on the back of the feet of three legs, one which is in front of the horse on the right, and the two others can be seen to the left and right of the legs of the brown horse with white feet. Gilding can also be seen on the tunic of the figure with red legs which stands in the middle of the painting.

The grime present on the painting has caused many colors to become muted and become less saturated. An instance of this was the blue legs in the middle of the painting, which can be seen underneath the brown tunic with the gilded section. When cleaned the blue became much richer and more vibrant. The grass present behind the brown and black horses on the right of the painting also became significantly brighter after removal of grime. This can especially be seen on the large horse on the left side, which we later discovered to be white during aqueous cleaning. This was also the case on the framing around the panel. The detailed frames on the sides of this panel are only present on the bottom and the right side. These sections looked significantly whiter after cleaning with chelator.



Before vs. after cleaning using spring water



■ All losses

■ Staining

■ Area of loss

■ Missing

Figure 1. Overall Damage: The damaged areas of the panel are highlighted in different colors



III. Condition

Overall Damage

This panel of the Procession of the Magi is in fair-to-good condition. The asbestos substrate is stable in its foundation. The surface of the painting suffers from a few losses and flaking of the egg tempera. Another area of interest in this panel is the gilded section at the top. This area of gilded golden leaf is very sensitive and susceptible to flaking. The bottom of this panel has a significant number of dark stains. At the top right, as highlighted in the key, is a missing piece of the panel itself. On the surface, the panel was covered in grime and dust.



Structural concerns

- A chunk of the top right corner is completely missing from the panel

Losses

- As seen in figure 1, there are a few losses
- There is a big area of loss (as highlighted in yellow) at the bottom left and bottom right of the panel
- There are other small losses that can't be seen because of the blue tape

Cracking

- There is cracking caused by the pieces being fragmented
- There are no cracks in individual pieces

Staining

- There is some staining on the lower left section of the panel

Previous restoration

- There is no sign of any previous restoration

IV. Treatment Proposal Options

Throughout the treatment process some things might change. It all depends on how the object responds to the planned treatment.

1. Document before, after and during the treatment process
2. Create photographic map of damaged areas
 - a. Losses, stains, missing areas, etc. will be color coded in order to navigate what must be treated
3. Use UV to see if any repairs have been done previously
4. Dry cleaning
 - a. Acid free makeup sponges will be used in order to avoid driving dirt into the painting any further

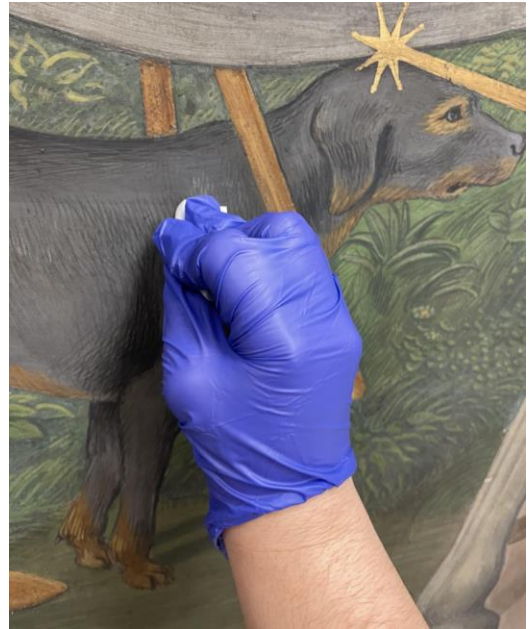


5. Aqueous Cleaning
 - a. Spring water with cotton swab
 - b. 5% EDTA chelator was utilized in order to remove chemically bonded grime on the surface of the painting
6. Consolidate areas of flaking by wicking paraloid B72 in acetone between the paint layer and fresco layer using fine brushes
7. Inpaint area of losses

VII. Treatment Report

Completed Treatment:

1. Completed photographic documentation
2. Surface cleaning with makeup sponges
3. Aqueous cleaning
 - a. Spring water with cotton swab
 - b. 5% EDTA chelator was utilized in order to remove chemically bonded grime on the surface of the painting

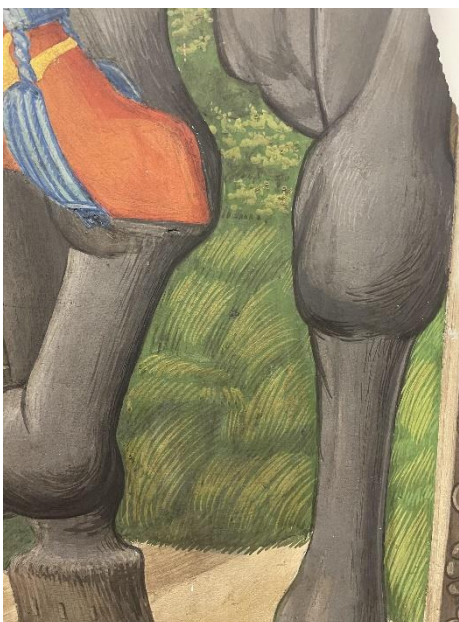


Surface Cleaning with Cosmetic Sponge

VIII. During Treatment Photos



Sensitive Green Area



Before and after of Chelator Cleaning



Gilding cleaning with spring water & cotton swab



Aqueous cleaning with EDTA revealed the color of the horse (white)



Cleaning with Chelator (before and after)



Before and After of Aqueous cleaning with chelator





Sources

Benozzo Gozzoli. "Lokhoff Copy of Fresco." *Notes (Fogg Art Museum)* 1, no. 1 (1921): 17-20. Accessed March 4, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4300817>.

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