

Conservation of oversized drawings by Valerio Adami

Rita Udina

In 2018 a flood damaged some drawings by Valerio Adami, in Musée Jean Cocteau (Menton, France). Conservator Silvia Brunetti was in charge of the initial emergency decision regarding conservation of these drawings, as well as the subsequent Conservation treatment.

Their large size as well as the degree of damage suggested a team work. This paper provides some details regarding the particularities on working on oversized formats.

CoVid does not precisely enhance the unavoidable hands-on nature of a conservation, and yet we should not stop collaborating and looking for fruitful synergies when dealing with complex treatments. We finally achieved to plan a short collaboration of some days in which many processes could be fulfilled.

Besides the drawings were apparently very similar (same author, same technique, similar scale and similar date) the slightly diverse degree of damage implies using different techniques and/or conservation methods for each. And although a thorough planning of the whole treatment was scheduled in advance, some slight changes in the general proceeding were applied for the latter, due to the experience on the first as well as other factors.

A slanted capillary was carried on, and this part demands quite a complex set on a conservation studio, which is detailed on the paper.

After cleaned, the drawings had been lined. The consolidation stage is also complex in terms of humidity control of the object along all the process, due to the big format of the drawing as well as the painting technique (probably casein).

The timings of flattening and drying out of the drawings is quite crucial to enable a nice finishing and proper adhesion of the backing support. Avoiding tensions and wrinkles is means having a control of the drying out, which might take many hours.

Biography

Rita Udina is paper and book conservator based in Barcelona (Spain) at her private conservation lab, where she works for Archives, Museums, Libraries and private collectors since 1999. Such variety of customers has led to a diverse focus of interest as well. She enjoys very much books structure issues, but also architectural plans, oversized drawings and any new challenge shall be included as new point of interest. She occasionally collaborates with other private conservator studios in other countries (France: Silvia Brunetti; USA: Amparo Escolano; Italy: Antonio Rava). She organizes international conservation courses at her studio as well as in other countries and with other institutions (Restauratoren Nederland, Institut National du Patrimoine, Paris; Atelier pour le Papier, Switzerland; Universidad de Granada, Spain...). The topics covered are diverse: inpainting and loss compensation on paper conservation, housing and framing photographs, book conservation, introduction to paper conservation and others related to book and paper conservation. She enjoys sharing conservation issues in lectures, papers, and on social media, particularly with her blog (<https://ritaudina.com>) which has followers from all over the world.