

DIA Conservator of Paintings (June 30)

CONSERVATOR OF PAINTINGS

Conservation Department

Alfred Ackerman, Conservator of Paintings

co-workers: 3D objects, prints/photographs, furniture

works a lot w/ Collections Management

Responsibilities:

- photographing, x-raying objects. These conservation photographs are stored on Z drive. Key part of conservation is taking pictures before and after treatment
- producing conservation reports. Vast majority (94%) are paper-based. Beginning to transfer conservation info to TMS (have followed up by email about what fields this data is stored in)
- prepping objects for loan – loaned objects raise money for the DIA; -30-40 loans a year
- dictate to Collections Management how an object should be displayed.

IT tools used:

- paper
- conservation data (x-rays) stored on the "Z" shared server with images
- TMS - beginning to move paper conservation records (text) to TMS. 95% of conservation records on paper.

Points of interest:

- highly interested in sharing conservation info, processes with general public. E.g.: imagine a visitor able to access conservation data / images about an artifact – are they're duplicates? Reproductions at other museums? Is it a forgery? See the science craftsmanship behind conservation.
- DIA once did an exhibition that did mock ups of paintings based on layers of paint that were found in x rays. Exhibition was focused on technical aspects / practices of art making. Conservators along w/ artists produced mock up reproductions so you could see the layers of painting that go on in a work – shows there's more than meets the eye.
- objects are "alive" – they have life spans, go through changes. Sometimes conservation is like "hospice work"
- totally awesome conservation library (huge rooms, books around the walls and ladders). Contains books about conservation of various artifact types (e.g. books, paintings, sculpture, metals,...)