

Triptych with Crucifixion and Saints



**ONGOING RESTORATION REPORT
FEBRUARY 2024**

Restoration Procedures

The painting consists of a complex structure of considerable size, one of the biggest and most articulated in the Vatican Pinacoteca. Probably disassembled in the 19th century to transport it from the Marche region, it was reassembled in the Vatican by adding new structural and decorative parts. In November 2023, a complex movement was carried out to transport the polyptych from the Pinacoteca to the Restoration Laboratories.

After careful observation under grazing light, the restorers performed minor bandaging where the paint film appeared lifted or unadhered before moving the painting. The veiling with Japanese paper and adhesive in water was done two days earlier to allow perfect drying before moving the work. Exactly as was the case two centuries ago, it was impossible to move the work without disassembling it, an operation that began before removing the polyptych from the wall by removing the highest brush strokes.



Then, with the help of a mobile platform and scaffolding, it was possible to lower the very heavy artifact to the ground.

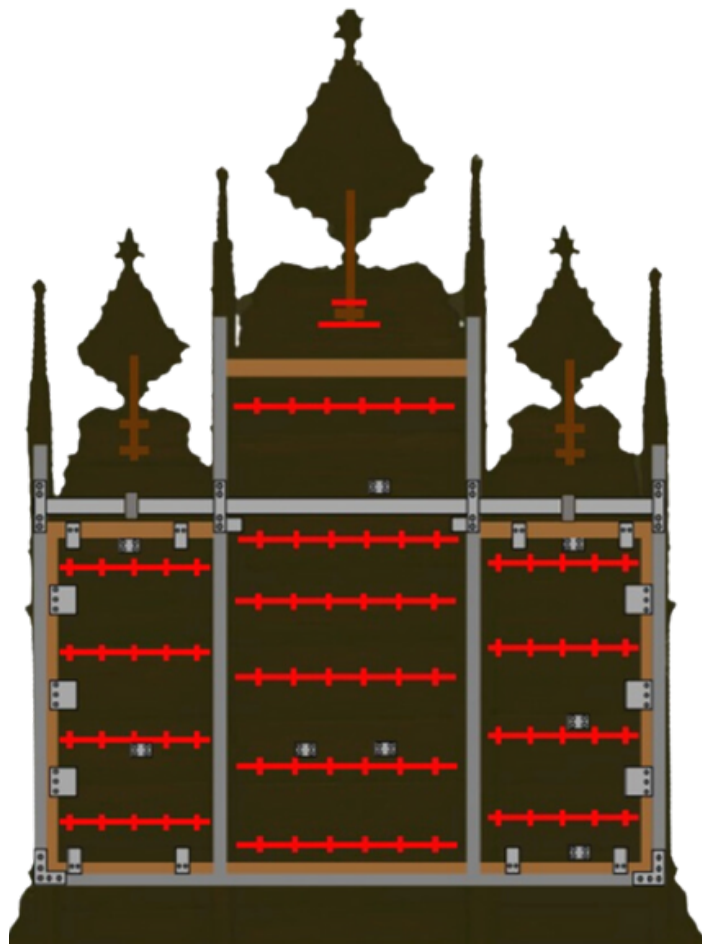


The polyptych was positioned on a special cart for large paintings and boards that allowed it to be handled and to observe the backside, finally visible.





Even before the complex handling took place, restorers could observe the portions of the frame that were not original and view the metal structure added on the back using a fiber-optic probe. While moving the work, restorers performed a partial disassembly, which allowed a more detailed observation of the support and the design of a diagram that will serve as a basis for understanding the proper restoration procedures.



The individual disassembled parts were placed in plastic bags to perform the anoxic treatment, including of course the frame. The anoxic nitrogen treatment is specifically for Cultural Heritage applications.



Insufflated air is a mixture of nitrogen, oxygen, and other gases. By reducing the presence of oxygen to negligible values, it is possible to achieve lethal conditions for each pest species at each stage of their life cycle (egg, larva, chrysalis, and adult).



Thus, anoxic treatment with nitrogen turns out to be a viable ecological alternative. It is a highly safe, guaranteed, and eco-friendly system that allows the preservation of artifacts and artworks in perfect atmospheric conditions and hygrometric stability even for long periods without further maintenance.



At present, most of the polyptych is still in anoxic treatment, while the two side portions are at the Cabinet of Scientific Research and are finishing diagnostic investigations preparatory to restoration.

In the meantime, the restorers in charge of the work have been collecting and studying archival sources to better understand the painting's conservation history and are completing the graphic documentation that will allow them to digitize the state of the work and the interventions that will be carried out.



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