

The Dutch Method Unfolded

Masterclass on Wax-Resin Lining
University of Amsterdam

VISITS GUIDE



Amsterdam
22-31 January 2025

Rijksmuseum / Conservation Studio

_ Visit to the painting conservation studio conducted by Esther van Duijn

_ Address

Ateliergebouw, Hobbemastraat 22, 1071 ZC Amsterdam

_ Meeting spot

Groups meet in the hallway of the Ateliergebouw. Group 1 at 08h45, and Group 2 at 10h15. Esther van Duijn will pick you up there.

_ Program

During the visit of the conservation studio the participants will be able to view and compare a selection of paintings from the collection that demonstrate the characteristics of wax-resin linings dating from various periods, focusing on the 19th and early 20th century. These and other paintings in the studio will give a good overview of the (early) history of wax-resin lining in the Rijksmuseum collection, starting with Nicolaas Hopman, the inventor of the wax-resin lining and his son Willem Anthonij Hopman, who took over his studio after his death. Comparing the wax-resin linings from various periods will give insight into (dis)continuations of the methods and materials used for this technique. Furthermore, the participants will view historical objects related to the history of wax-resin lining in the museum, such as irons and brushes, as well as various archival documents and conservation documentation.

_ Case studies

1. SK-A-36 Hendrick Berckman, *Portrait of Adriaen Banckert (ca 1620-84), vice-admiral of Zeeland, c.1648-c.1670*



Lining by Nicolaas Hopman, dated 1866 in the archives, one of the earliest wax-resin linings in the collection

2. SK-A-224 Johannes Lingelbach, *The Riding School*, 1650 - 1674



Early-career wax-resin lining by Willem Anthonij Hopman dated 1875 from the label on the reverse and archives

3. SK-A-168 Melchior d'Hondecoeter, *Dead birds*, c.1660-c.1665



Early-career wax-resin lining by Willem Anthonij Hopman dated 1875 from the label on the reverse, just after his switch to a different lining canvas

4. SK-C-1358 Alessandro Magnasco, *Three Camaldolese Monks in Ecstatic Prayer*, 1710-1740



Late-career wax-resin lining
by Willem Anthonij
Hopman dated 1899 in the
archives

5. SK-A-205 After Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of Michel le Blon (1587-1657)*, in or after 1700



Lining of 1914, most
probably by W.F.C.
Greebe, the first
Rijksmuseum liner in
permanent employ

Rijksmuseum / Operation Night Watch

_ Visit to Operation Night Watch conducted by Lisette Vos

_ Address

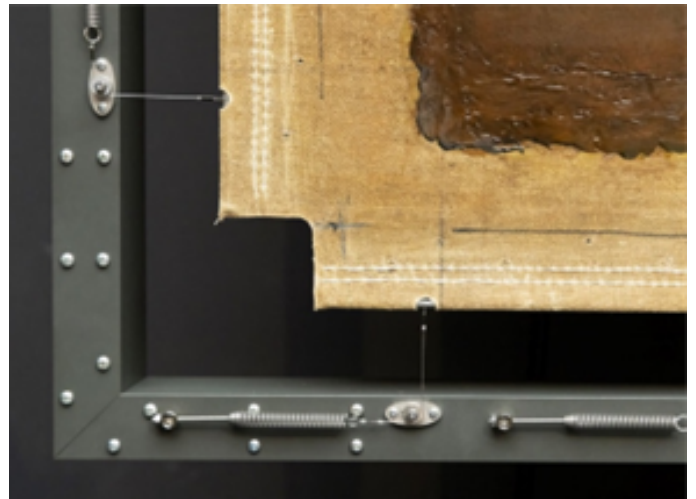
Rijksmuseum, Museumplein, Amsterdam

_ Meeting spot

Groups meet in the hallway of the Ateliergebouw. Group 2 at 08h45, and Group 1 at 10h15. Lisette will pick you up there.

_ Program

The 1642 Group portrait of the officers and other members of the militia company of District II, under the command of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch, now known as The Night Watch, is Rembrandt's most ambitious painting. The Night Watch belongs to the city of Amsterdam, and it has been the highlight of the Rijksmuseum collection since 1808. The architect of the Rijksmuseum building P. Cuypers (1827-1921) even created a dedicated gallery of honor for The Night Watch, and it is now admired there by more than 2.2 million people annually.



The impact of past restorations on the present condition of the painting is a significant aspect of the research that will be carried out. The Night Watch has undergone three wax-resin linings during its lifetime; in 1851 by N. Hopman, in 1945 by C. Jenner and in 1975 by L. Kuiper. In 1851 Hopman removed an even older lining, probably an 18th-century glue-paste lining. For this painting Rembrandt used for the first time the so called 'quartz ground' that would become unique to Rembrandt and his studio. It is a matter of debate how much darkening of the painting, especially of the ground layer, has occurred as a result of past linings. During this excursion the group of trainees will meet and discuss with paintings conservators and researchers of the Rijksmuseum working on The Night Watch. At the time of the masterclass the structural treatment of the painting is finished. It will be the perfect opportunity to see the painting on its new aluminium strainer with spring tensioning system. It will be discussed how the team of Operation Night Watch took the current wax-resin lined condition of the painting into consideration when choosing and executing the structural treatment that took place between January and March 2022.

Frans Hals Museum

_ Visit to the painting conservation studio conducted by Mireille te Marvelde, Liesbet Abraham, Herman van Putten, Jessica Roeders, paintings conservators, and Christi Klinkert, curator

_ Address - Transports

Groot Heiligland 62, 2011 ES Haarlem.

Directions:

Group 1. 15 min train from Amsterdam Centraal to Haarlem Station.

Group 2. 35min train from Den Haag Station to Haarlem Station.

Then 20 min walk, or 10 min bus, buslijn 2, 3, 300, to the Frans Hals Museum.

_ Meeting spot

Groups use public entry. Group 1 gathers there at 09h00, and Group 2 at 14h00. Mireille will pick you up.

_ Program

The purpose of this visit is to present to the delegates a number of paintings that can collectively illustrate some key aspects of the history of wax-resin lining.

By viewing two large 17th century civic guard paintings that remained unlined (which is highly exceptional!) we gain an understanding of the appearance of unlined paintings from that period (nos 1 and 2). Not only are they unlined, but also the original method of stretching (laced), which is generally lost due to lining, has largely remained intact. Since there are only a few 'laced' paintings left, we tend to interpret the influence of wax-resin lining to paint layers, without fully understanding what these paintings looked like before treatment. During past research in the Oranjezaal in the Royal Palace Huis ten Bosch wax-resin lined and unlined paintings could be examined and compared. It turned out that phenomena that we normally interpret as consequences of the wax-resin lining, were sometimes also found on the unlined paintings. It is therefore worthwhile to consider this aspect and discuss it with the delegates.

Before wax-resin lining was invented, many paintings on canvas were glue-paste lined. Two paintings will be discussed that were glue-paste lined and each shows different consequences of that treatment (nos 3 and 4). One of them has severely raised paint edges and extensive loss of paint (no 4). The moisture used during lining seems to have made the canvas shrink. These two cases help to understand Nicolaas Hopman's concern for the negative effects of moisture (as a result of the Dutch climate, *and* the use of water based lining adhesives) and thus understand his starting point for the invention of wax-resin lining in the mid-19th century.

For this visit we have the exceptional opportunity to present for study front and reverse of the oldest wax-resin lining we know of, one of the very few that survived, done by the inventor Nicolaas Hopman himself (no 5). This wax-resin lining is more than 160 years old and still in good condition.

Furthermore, we will focus on the relatively recent conservation treatment of the three regent group portraits by Frans Hals (nos 11 – 13). These paintings show wax-resin at the back of the linings and at the edges (dating from the end of the 19th / beginning 20th century), but turned out to be glue linings that were later impregnated with wax-resin. We explain how we discovered the exact nature of the linings and especially what the consequences were for the condition and the treatment of the paintings. For this purpose, some slides with technical details will be shown. Since these and the other large group portraits by Frans Hals are on display in the galleries, we will study them on the spot (nos 6 – 13). Although we cannot see the reverse of the canvases, the consequences of wax-resin lining and glue lined paintings to which a layer of wax-resin was added later, can clearly be seen on the front. One civic guard painting by Hals that

was wax-resin lined by Willem Antonij Hopman turns out to be in the best condition (no 6). This seems to be a result of Hopmans careful thought out method in several steps, considering a full removal of the former glue-paste lining before relining with wax-resin.

As an example of how wax-resin lining practice changed over time, there are two modern paintings by the same painter, painted in the same year, one unlined, one wax-resin lined presumably around the 1950ies (nos 14 and 15). They can be compared with each other and can be seen near Nicolaas Hopmans lining, to compare 19th century with 1950ies wax-resin lining

_ Case studies

1. Frans Pieters Grebber, *Banquet of a platoon of the Calivermen Civic Guard* (inv.no. OS 75-337, 1610, oil on canvas, 193 x 404 cm).



Unlined

Partly original stretching

2. Pieter Claesz. Soutman, *Officers and sub-alterns of the St George Civic Guard* (inv.no. OS I 313, 1642, oil on canvas, 203 x 344,5 cm).



Unlined

Partly original stretching.

3. Pieter van Anraadt, *The regentesses of the Holy Spirit Almshouse* (inv.no. OS I-1, 1674, oil on canvas, 202 x 253.5 cm).



Glue-paste lined.

4. Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem, *Kitchen piece with merry company* (inv.no. OS 2022-1, 1596, oil on canvas, incl. frame: 166,1 x 231,5 cm).



Glue-paste lined.

Recently acquired, no information on material history available.

5. Caesar van Everdingen, *The Grape Harvest* (inv.no. OS I-190, c. 1655, oil on canvas, 174,5 x 171,0 cm). Recto and verso



Wax-resin lined by Nicolaas Hopman around 1860.

6- Frans Hals, civic guard paintings (inv.nos. OS I-109 - 113, 1616 - 1664, measurements on scale, largest painting 218 x 421 cm).



Reverse of OS I-109 (no. 6). Hopman lining.

We know from the sources that all five civic guard paintings (6-10) had previously been glue-paste lined, sometimes several times, but now they also appear as wax-resin linings. OS I-109 (no 6), was certainly wax-resin lined by Willem Antonij Hopman after the glue-paste lining had been carefully removed.

It is suspected that the other Frans Hals militia paintings that were not lined by Hopman, are still glue-paste linings with wax-resin added, or with a complete wax-resin lining on top (incl lining fabric), probably carried out by Frans Vos. In the case of OS I-110 (no 7), we see even three lining canvases.

7- Frans Hals, regents portraits (inv.nos. OS I-114 - 116, 1616 - 1664, measurements on scale, largest painting 218 x 421 cm).



All three regents portraits (11-13) are still glue-paste lined with wax-resin on top. To OS I-115 (no 12) an extra canvas has been added as well.



Reverse of OS I-116 (no. 13).
Glue-paste linings with wax-resin on top.



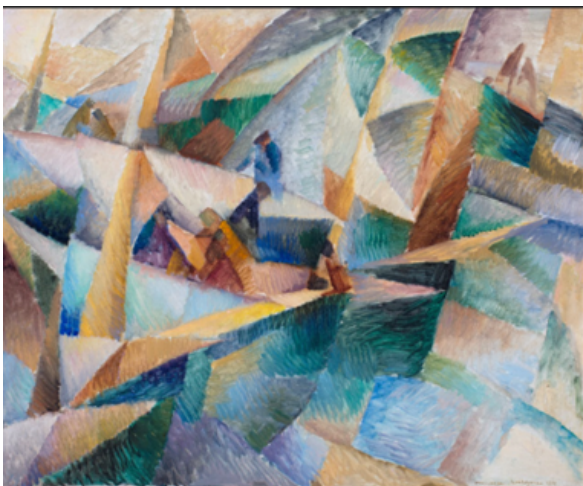
Reverse of OS I-115 (no. 12).
Glue-paste linings with wax-resin on top, plus an extra lining canvas.

8. Leo Gestel, *The Port of Mallorca* (inv.no. msch 64-53, 1914, oil on canvas, 68,5 x 54,2 cm).

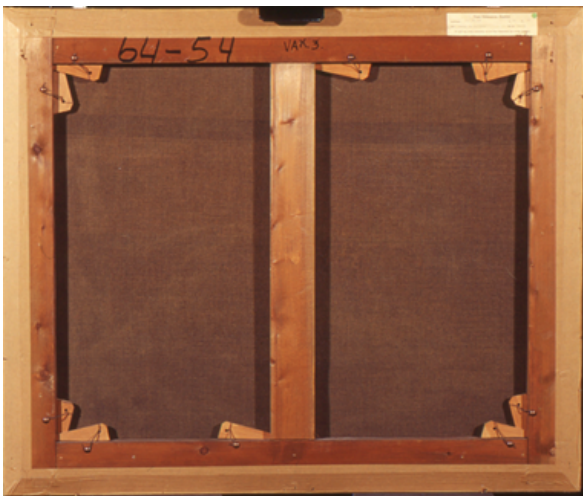


Unlined.

9. Leo Gestel, *Palma di Mallorca* (inv.no. msch 64-54, 1914, oil on canvas, 73,5 x 90,5 cm). recto and verso



Wax-resin lined, probably in the 1950ies.



Boijmans van Beuningen Museum

_ Visit to the paintings conservation studio supervised by Louise Wijnberg, paintings conservator (freelance), Christel van Hees, Head dep. Conservation and Restoration, Rika Pause, Painting Conservation and Sandra Kisters head dep. Collection & Research

_ Address – Transports

Museumpark 24, Rotterdam.

Directions:

Group 1. 1h train from Haarlem Station to Rotterdam Central Station. From the station the museum is 15min walk

or 10min by public transport: Tramlijn 7, stop: Museumpark.

Metrolijn A, B of C, stop: Eendrachtsplein.



_ Meeting spot

The group gathers at the staff entrance at 14h. This is the entrance at the side of the parkinggarage/hospital Erasmus MC, at the right side of the truck dock and public entrance. Ask for Christel van Hees.

_ Program

14.00 arrival at the staff entrance of Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen

14.15 lecture in Conservation studio A2-03

The first part of the program will be held in the Painting Studio on the second floor. A power-point presentation will be given on the combined project of the museum and RCE: *Heritage of the 20th-century* - Project 5/8 – ‘Painting surfaces by Mondriaan, Appel and Schoonhoven’ and the history of lining in the past years. Louise Wijnberg was recently researching in total 10 paintings of the collection of the museum by the Dutch artist Karel Appel (1921-2006). The research includes archival research, literature reviews and material- technical analysis of individual paintings not only at The Depot but also in the lab of RCE Amsterdam with Klaas Jan van den Berg (Project leader) and colleagues.

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/topics/heritage-of-the-20th-century> and at the Karel Appel Foundation in Amsterdam.

14.45-15.15 discussions and study two paintings of Karel Appel

At least two paintings of Appel will be studied with their different conservation histories: with a wax-lining and no lining. What was the result of these interventions and to modern works of art in particular? Solutions will be discussed.

15.15-15.45 tea break

15.45-16.30 visiting exhibition 'Beloved'

The second part of the meeting will continue with a tour through The Depot building, visiting one depot space at the inside to get a better idea of its concept. (Closed to the public on Mondays).

16.45-17.00 End

_ The location

The new Depot of the museum is situated in the museum area of Rotterdam. It opened its doors to the public in November 2021. This depot building is unique in its kind (Architect MVRDV – Winy Maas). It is the first building in the world that makes a museum's entire collection public while also providing behind-the-scenes glimpses of how a museum works. In addition, it provides space to store private and corporate collections. The museum building opposite is closed for renovation.

The main part of the collection is owned by municipality of Rotterdam. The collection of paintings dates from 1400 till today. The collection paintings are divided into Old and Modern Art.

The museum has been working for a long time with private painting conservators who executing conservation work in the museum or in their private studios. For two years the museum is counting a Modern Art painting conservator as staff member. Still freelance conservators are hired for specific works of many different disciplines.

_ Case studies

1. Karel Appel, *Angry Cat*, 1951 Paris.



Wax-resin lining with bleached wax; the so called 'White lining'.

Private conservation studio – after acquisition 1966

2. Karel Appel, *Fantastic Creature*, 1953 Paris.



Not lined

'Should be lined' - Report
1983.

Mauritshuis Museum

_ Visit to the painting conservation studio supervised by Sabrina Meloni, paintings conservator

_ Address – Transports

Doelenstraat 1, The Hague.

Directions:

Group 2. 44 min train from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Den Haag Centraal.

Then, 15 min walk, or 10 min tramlijn 3, 4, 15 or 16, or buslijn 28, to the Mauritshuis.

_ Meeting spot

The group meets at the staff entrance at 09h00, where you will meet with Sabrina Meloni.

Sabrina: 0655855177

_ Program

At the Mauritshuis we have about 370 paintings on canvas. The majority are 17th century Dutch and Flemish paintings. All of these paintings except for one are lined. Of these linings about 75% is wax resin lined. For the majority of these linings we have good records of by who and when the linings were executed. A lot of the famous conservators in the Netherlands from the 19th and early 20th century worked for the Mauritshuis, like Nicolaas and Willem Anthonij Hopman, the De Wild family, J.C. Traas, L. Kuijper and Hans Susijn. The knowledge of their practice keeps growing and growing also by exchanging information with colleagues from other collections. During the visit at the conservation studio of the Mauritshuis we see different wax-resin linings, where we can compare the technique of the different liners and the impact on the paintings.

_ Case studies

1. Jan Davidsz de Heem, *Sumptuous Fruit Still Life with Jewellery Box*.



A wax resin lining by Willem Anthonij Hopman from 1889 on a painting that was previously transferred onto a new canvas in Paris around 1798.

2. Abraham van Beyeren, *Still Life with Seafood*.



A wax resin lining by Willem Anthonij Hopman from 1899.

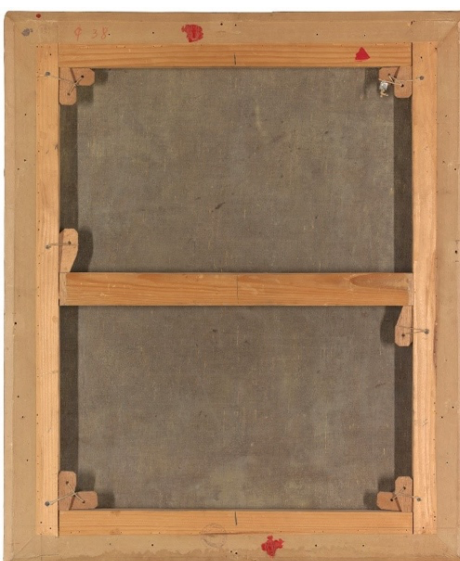
We also have an example of a stretcher used by Hopman.

3. Pieter de Hoog, *A Man Smoking and a Woman Drinking in a Courtyard*.



Wax-resin lined by J. C. Traas in 1947.

4. Rembrandt van Rijn (?), *Study of an Old Man*.



Wax-resin lined by J. C. Traas in 1950.

5. Jan Weenix, *Jachtstilleven*.



A newer wax resin lining from a lining table.

6. Paulus Potter, *The Bull*.



We will also visit the special conservation studio in the galleries where, at the moment, is the public conservation treatment of one of the largest paintings of the collection: the Bull by Paulus Potter.

We have extensive information of two lining campaigns: in 1931 by Derex and Martin de Wild and in 1972 by Hans Susijn.

Pieces of the lining canvases from the old glue paste lining executed in Paris around 1800 are preserved as well as the lining canvas from the wax-resin lining in 1931.

Van Gogh Museum and De Mesdag Collection

_ Visit to the painting conservation studio conducted by René Boitelle, senior paintings conservator, and Saskia van Oudheusden, paintings conservators

_ Address – Transports

Museumplein 6, Amsterdam.

Directions:

5min walk from Ateliergebouw and Rijksmuseum.

_ Meeting spot

Groups gathers at the staff entrance located at the Rietveld building, the “old building”, (see photo).

Group 1 at 14h, and Group 2 at 15h45.

Saskia van Oudheusden will pick you up at the reception.



_ Program

During the visit wax-resin lined paintings will be presented and examined in the conservation studio. The paintings selected were created by Vincent van Gogh and other 19th century artists represented in the collections of the two institutes.

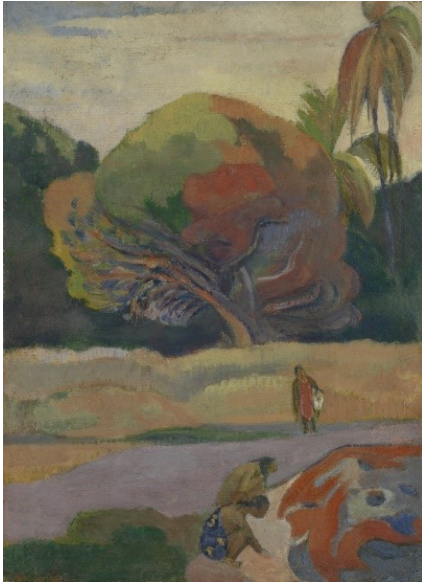
The selection from the Van Gogh Museum (1-4) comprises paintings on various types of woven supports (linen/burlap) and grounds, (no ground, commercial, self-made, thin/absorbent). The paintings have different restoration histories (wax-resin, synthetic adhesive lining). The participants will also study linings carried out by J.C. Traas. One relevant unlined work and unvarnished will be made available for comparison and reference.

The paintings will be compared in terms of color and surface texture.

Paintings of De Mesdag Collection (5-10) were selected based on their availability to give an overview of the type of wax-resin linings executed by different generations of conservators between the early 1920s (when linings numbers of canvases at DMC were first lined) till mid-1970s (when lining canvases became a rarity).

_ Case studies Van Gogh Museum

1. Paul Gauguin, *Women on the banks of the river*, 1892. P. Gauguin, *Women on the banks of the river*, 1892



- self-made ground
 - painted on burlap
 - wax-resin lined by Traas.
- Correspondence between Traas and Steenhoff about lining.
- trimmed tacking margins
 - left tacking margin folded over
 - possibly retouched by Gauguin himself
 - current condition, challenges, permanent delamination problems due to support and technique.
 - weave imprint, 'fibrous effect' due to lining.

2. Vincent van Gogh, *Farmhouse in a wheatfield*, 1888



- thin absorbent ground (zinc white barite)
- exposed canvas in composition
- synthetic adhesive: not analysed, appears rubbery, glossy
- less darkening of ground/canvas
- lined after 1970

Comparison will be made between *Farmhouse in a wheatfield* and the painting: *Peach Tree in Blossom*, by V. van Gogh.

- exposed canvas in composition
- wax-resin lined
- trimmed tacking margins
- issues with removal linings residues

3. Vincent van Gogh, *View of the Alpilles*, 1890



- unlined
- early strainer
- condition of paint on tacking margins
- stretching and framing à how to support and protect the unlined canvas from vibrations & how to protect painted tacking margins
- once varnished, removed but residues present.

4. Vincent van Gogh, *Ears of wheat*, 1890



- painted on a *torchon* (tea towel)
- unground
- support left exposed in composition
- discolored varnish present.
- how much of the darkening is due to impregnation of wax-resin varnish or due to impregnation of varnish.
- discoloration of red lake: tonal shift

_ Case studies De Mesdag Collection

Paintings were selected based on their availability to give an overview of the type of wax-resin linings executed by different generations of conservators between the early 1920s (when linings numbers of canvases at DMC were first lined) till mid-1970s (when lining canvases became a rarity).

1. Ch.-F. Daubigny, *Kérité*, hwm 92, 55 x 99,2 cm, – conservator De Wild (1921)



2. A.Vollon, *Evening Landscape*, hwm 330, 29 x 49 cm – conservator J.C. Traas (1925)



3. de Cock, *Riverbank*, hwm 59, 62 x 50,5 cm – conservator V.D. Beek (1960)



4. J. Maris, *The Shell Fishers*, hwm 191, 85 x 126 cm – conservator L. Kuiper (1964)



5. S. Mesdag-Van Houten, *Still life*, 251c, hwm 103 x 89,5 cm – conservator H. Susijn (1975)

