

# Conservation Department records

Collection ID: RG.12

Finding Aid prepared by Hoang Tran



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY  
OF THE FINE ARTS

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts  
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215-972-2066

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## Summary Information

<b>Repository</b>	The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Dorothy and Kenneth Woodcock Archives
<b>Creator</b>	PAFA
<b>Title</b>	Conservation Department records
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1984-1990
<b>Extent</b>	1 document box
<b>Location note</b>	
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language of Materials note</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	Small collection of grant materials by PAFA's conservation department. Information important for tracing collection management activities and renovation projects. Images can be found in PC.01.26 for sculpture conservation.

### **Preferred Citation note**

[identification of item], Title of Collection, Collection ID#, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Art Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

## **Historical note**

Little information exists about the early history of conservation activities at the Pennsylvania Academy. Board minutes contain references to artists such as Thomas Sully or others “repairing” or varnishing various works. Treatment reports preserved in the object files offer valuable clues. For example, there are references from the late nineteenth century to works being sent to outside restorers. In the 1920s Thomas H. Stevenson and Ernest L. Parker are known to have restored works in the collection. In the 1930s the names Hannah Mae Horner and A. J. Brooks appear in the records for several paintings.

In 1939 the Academy hired Joseph Schindler, a Viennese émigré, as a professional conservator. He also instructed Academy students in the chemistry of paints and color, a practice continued today by the Academy’s conservator or by a faculty member. Schindler died in 1951. In 1999 Schindler’s lecture notes on grounds, supports, and varnishes were donated to the Archives (see 3-B).

Schindler’s successor, Theodor Siegl, had begun as his assistant in 1950. Siegl worked on paintings for both the Academy and the Philadelphia Museum of Art for about fifteen years. In the late 1960s, Siegl became the full-time conservator for the Philadelphia Museum of Art. His conservation work at the Academy was continued by his assistant, Joseph Amarotico, an Academy faculty member. In 1971 the former Gallery G, in the northwest corner of the gallery floor, was converted into a professional conservation lab. Air conditioning, an X-ray machine, a small spray booth, and a dark room were installed. The facility was dedicated to Mrs. T. Carrick Jordan, the major donor of the funds for these improvements. Amarotico died in 1984.

Mark F. Bockrath began as the full-time painting conservator in 1986 and assumed the title of chief conservator in 1992. During his tenure more scientific equipment was added to the lab, including several microscopes, a tabletop humidification and suction unit, and an infrared video camera and monitor. A program hosting interns from graduate conservation training centers began in 1988. Aella Diamantopoulos succeeded Bockrath in 1998. She inaugurated conservation lab monitoring of the building’s environmental systems, and performs in-house frame conservation as well as the day to day work on paintings.

In the 1980s Virginia Norton Naudé conserved almost every sculpture in the collection as part of a grant-funded project to catalogue and publish the Academy’s sculpture. Currently, contracted staff conserves sculpture and works on paper under the supervision of the chief conservator. In 1994 a separate paper conservation lab was installed in the basement vault area.

Treatment reports, test results, and detail photographs are maintained in the conservation office. Special project and overview photographs are in the Archives.

### **Conservators**

Joseph Schindler	1939-1951
Theodor Siegl	1951-1976
Joseph Amarotico	1976-1984
Mark Bockrath	1986-1997
Aella Diamantopoulos	1998-2014
Mary McGinn	2014-2017

## **Scope and Contents note**

### **Arrangement note**

No specific arrangement.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Conditions Governing Access note**

Collection is open for research.

The archives reserves the right to restrict access to materials of sensitive nature. Please contact the department for further information.

### **Conditions Governing Use note**

The collection is the physical property of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Archives. The Museum holds literary rights only for material created by Museum personnel or given to the Museum with such rights specifically assigned. For all other material, literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. Researchers are responsible for obtaining permission from rights holders for publication and for other purposes where stated.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

### **Provenance note**

### **Processing Information note**

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

### **Person(s)**

### **Corporate Name(s)**

### **Genre(s)**

### **Geographic Name(s)**

### **Subject(s)**

## **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note**

### **Collection Inventory**

<b>Series</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Folder Title</b>	<b>Box #</b>	<b>Folder #</b>	<b>format</b>
Grants	1989-1990	NEA Conservation treatment	1	1	paper
Grants	1984	Glenmeade Trust	1	2	paper
Grants	1986-1987	Grants re: Charles Bregler	1	3	paper
Grants	1984-1985	NEA - Print room renovation	1	4	paper
Grants	1984	IMS - print room grant	1	5	paper
Grants	1983	NEA - conservation of specific works on paper	1	6	paper
Grants	1981-1982	NEA - Print room renovation	1	7	paper
Grants	1989	William Penn - grant for conservation lab	1	8	paper