

Kadriorg Art Museum's 5th Annual Spring Conference, 13.-14. May 2011

Title of presentation

16th century underdrawings in two family trees of the Danish Queen Dorothea and Christian III

Abstract

Two family trees of the Danish Queen Dorothea and Christian III were painted in the second half of the 16th century and constitute a rare example of Danish painting technique related to canvas painting from this early period. During a recent copying of the paintings purposed for their original hanging at Sønderborg Castle in southern Jutland, a technical examination of the painting technique in the family trees was carried out. Analysis with infrared reflectography (IRR) revealed extensive underdrawings showing numerous alterations compared with the appearance of the final paint layers. The IRR also indicated that both a liquid and a dry material were used in the execution of the underdrawings. This presentation will discuss the findings in the underdrawings of the two family trees in relation to general techniques and materials utilized during this preliminary stage in the build-up of 16th century paintings and in relation to contemporary workshop practice.

Author Biography

Anne Haack Christensen is a paintings conservator at the National Gallery of Denmark. She holds a M.Sc. in Paintings Conservation from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Conservation in Copenhagen from 2008. Her main area of research is historical painting techniques related to 17th century Netherlandish paintings.

Mikkel Scharff is head of the paintings conservation department at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, the School of Conservation. His research and teaching areas include canvas painting deterioration and conservation techniques, history of paintings conservation, imaging

techniques and technical art history spanning from antique and medieval polychromy, over more recent painting techniques to contemporary art.