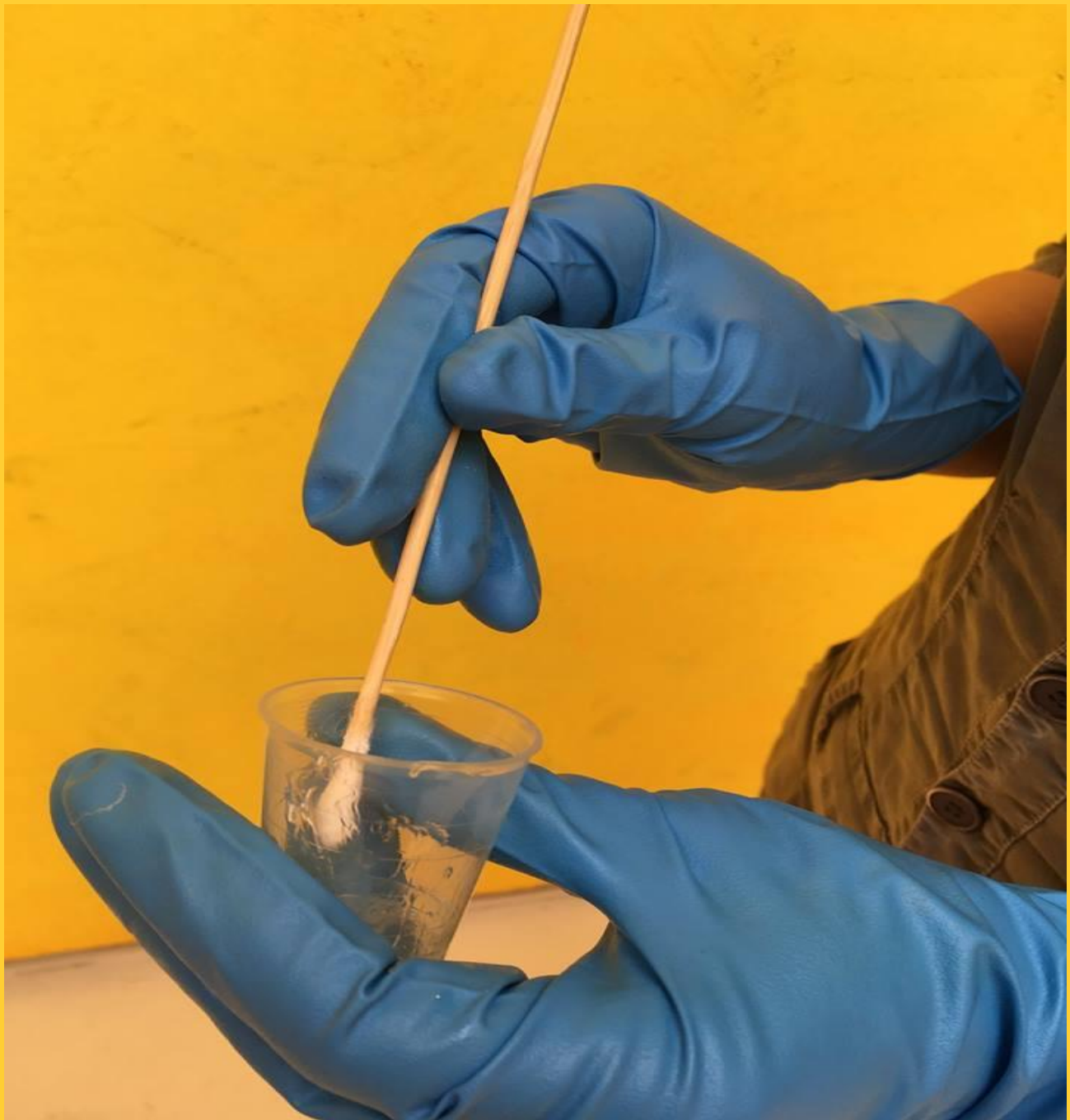


# CONSERVATION PORTFOLIO

## VERA TOLSTOJ

Conservator of historic interiors, specialising in architectural paint analysis, conservation of decorative surfaces and preventive conservation





# DETAILS:

**Date of Birth:**

04-06-1989

**Phone:**

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**E-mail:**

v.tolstoj@gmail.com

**BA:**

Mediterranean  
Archaeology  
(University of  
Amsterdam)

**MA:**

Restoration and  
Conservation of  
Historic Interiors  
(University of  
Amsterdam)

# SKILLS:

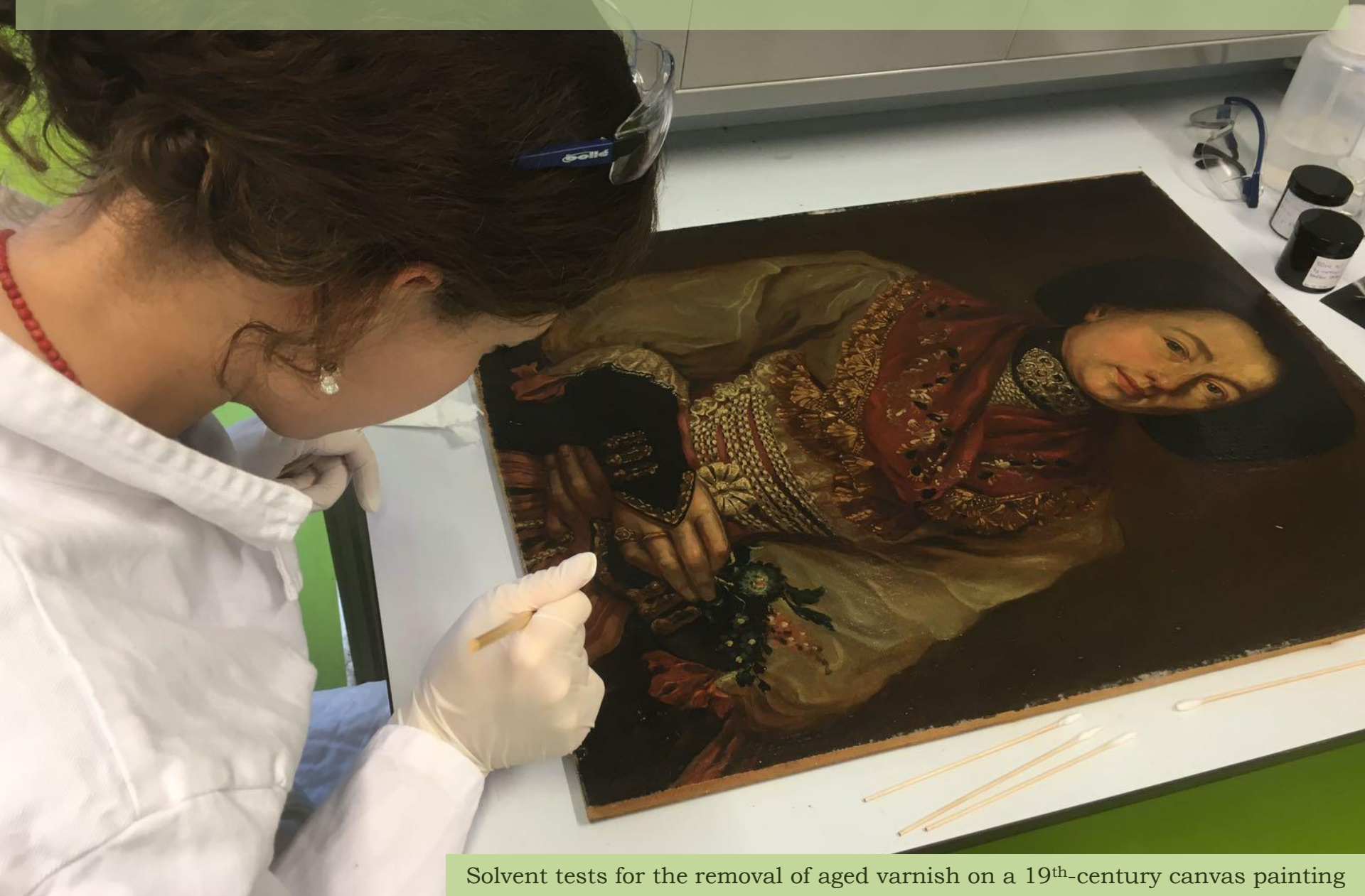
- Hands-on treatment skills;
- Architectural paint research and microscopic analysis;
- Sufficient knowledge of chemistry to create modified cleaning methods;
- Historic decoration techniques such as gilding, marbling and graining;
- Knowledge of historic decorative and coloured finishes and architectural styles;
- Trained to have a critical/ethical approach to conservation and restoration of artefacts.

# SUMMARY OF PORTFOLIO

- CONSERVATION TREATMENTS
  - 18<sup>th</sup> Century Mantle Piece
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century Painted Door
  - Vergilius 1960's Painted Interior
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch "Kussenkast"
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century Stool
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century Ribbon Frames
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century Painted Screen
- RESEARCH PROJECTS
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century Panels From Paleis Huis Ten Bosch
  - Preventive Conservation in a 1960's Painted Interior
  - 18<sup>th</sup> Century Window Blinds
- ARCHITECTURAL PAINT ANALYSIS
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Century Interior in The Hague
  - 18<sup>th</sup> Century Interior In Amsterdam



# CONSERVATION TREATMENTS



Solvent tests for the removal of aged varnish on a 19<sup>th</sup>-century canvas painting

# SUMMARY

- 18<sup>th</sup> Century Mantle Piece
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Painted Door
- Vergilius: 1960's Painted Interior
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch "Kussenkast"
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Stool
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Ribbon Frames
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Painted Screen



# 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY MANTLE PIECE

Conservation treatment of an 18th-century rococo mantle piece (oil painting on linen, mounted on a wooden frame)



# TREATMENT DETAILS

- Documentary research;
- Surface cleaning (with aqueous solutions);
- Climate treatment to restore the surface of the canvas;
- Consolidation of paint layers;
- Application of strip lining on canvas;
- Remounting the painting on its frame;
- Application of patches and supports on holes and tears;
- Constructive treatment of wooden frame;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- Writing a treatment report

Dismounting the canvas  
from the oak support







# 17TH CENTURY PAINTED DOOR

Conservation of a 17th-century painted door from a “hofje” (a Dutch courtyard with almshouses) in Haarlem.



# TREATMENT DETAILS

- Documentary research;
- Stratigraphic paint research;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- Cleaning the surface with a modified solvent gel;
- Filling and retouching of the painted surface;
- Constructive treatment (in order to make the door fit in a modern door frame);
- Writing a treatment report



BEFORE TREATMENT



AFTER TREATMENT





# VERGILIUS 1960'S PAINTED INTERIOR

Research aimed at (preventive)  
conservation of the artwork  
“Vergilius” (1992):

two painted interiors in a  
bomb shelter in Den Helder,  
made by the artist R. van de  
Wint in his sculpture garden  
“De Nollen”





# TREATMENT DETAILS

- Cleaning of the painted surfaces with a specially modified aqueous cleaning gel (designed to remove dirt and mould);
- 
- Writing a report on conservation and treatment of the two spaces;
- 
- Draft a proposal for the preventive conservation (climate control) of the two rooms of the artwork

Cleaning the mould on  
the blue paint in  
Vergilius







17TH  
CENTURY  
DUTCH  
KUSSENKAST

Conservation of a Dutch ebony and rosewood veneered wardrobe (Kussenkast) that was found in a dilapidated state in 61 pieces on the attics of Knole House, Kent. The project was aimed on stabilising and reassembling the wardrobe in order to reinstate it in one of the showrooms in Knole House, Kent



# TREATMENT DETAILS

- Documentary research;
- Surface cleaning with aqueous gel;
- Removing of old glue with modified solvent gel;
- Stabilisation of loose elements with hide glue;
- Repair and reconstruction of losses;
- Loss compensation;
- Reassembly;
- Writing a treatment report



Three stages of cleaning, clockwise: cleaned surface with agar-agar gel; the agar gel working on the soiled surface; the mobilized dirt

BEFORE TREATMENT



AFTER TREATMENT





# 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY STOOL

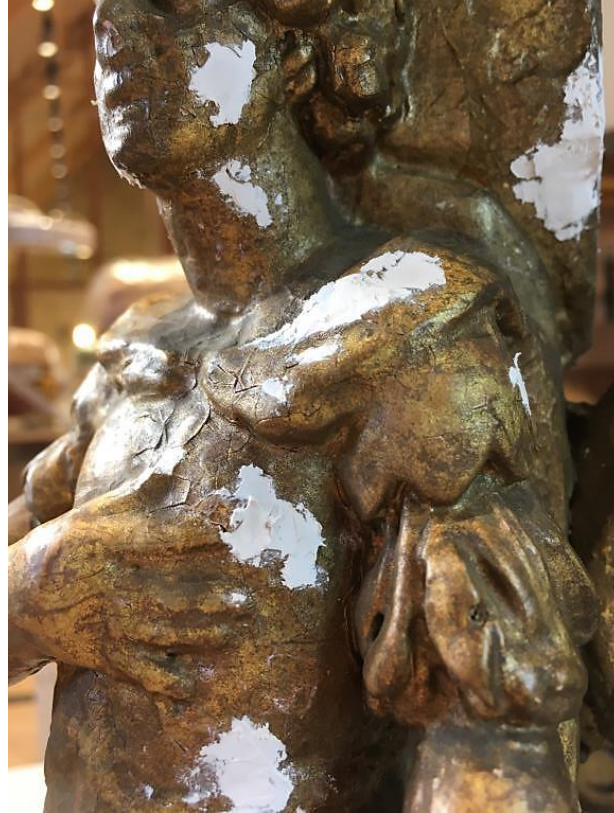
The image shows a highly ornate 17th-century stool. The frame is made of dark wood, heavily carved and gilded. It features two large, standing figures on the sides, possibly representing personifications of Justice and Liberty, holding scales and a sword. The central part of the frame is decorated with intricate scrollwork and a panel of figures. The stool has a high, upholstered backrest. The entire piece is displayed in a museum setting with a brick wall in the background.

Conservation of gilded surface of a stool commissioned by King James II in 1688, now part of the collection of Knole House in Kent

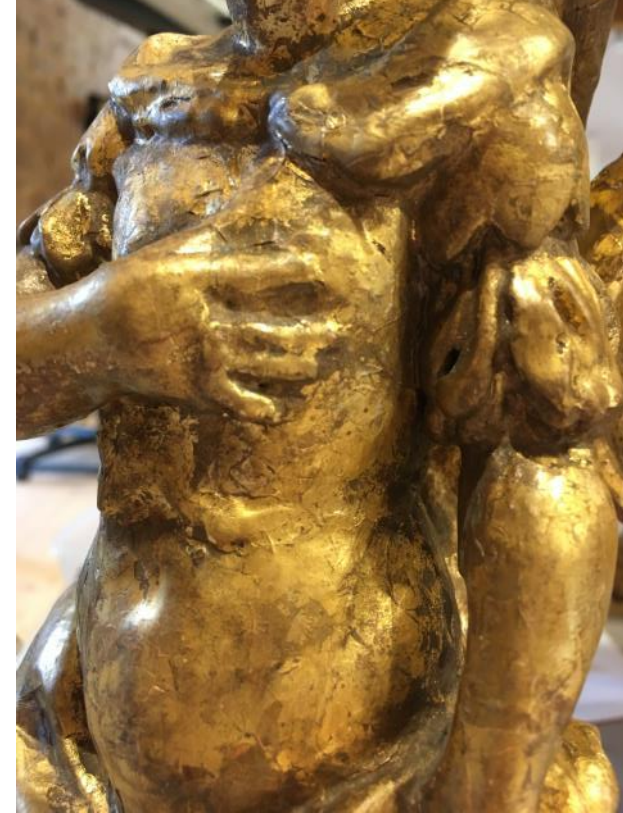




BEFORE



DURING



AFTER

## TREATMENT DETAILS

- Surface cleaning;
- Consolidation with warm gelatine;
- Filling with gesso;
- Toning in the fillings;
- Water gilding with 24k gold leaf;
- Patinating the gilded surface with watercolours and mica



# 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY RIBBON FRAMES

43 portraits on oak panels with decorative gilded frames from the collection of Knole House, Kent. A minimal conservation treatment was carried out to stabilise the decorative surface. Only the frames and painted spandrels were treated.



## TREATMENT DETAILS

- Cleaning the surface with deionised water;
- Consolidation of flaking paint and gilding with rabbit skin glue;
- Inpainting of the losses with watercolours;
- Structural repairs to the ribbons and bows;
- Writing concise treatment reports

Inpainting of the losses on the frame of one of the Ribbon Portraits (Prince William of Orange)





# 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY PAINTED SCREEN

An 8 by 8 meter screen in the Great Hall at Knole House in Kent. The project was aimed at removing the thick layer of dust and researching previous decorative schemes



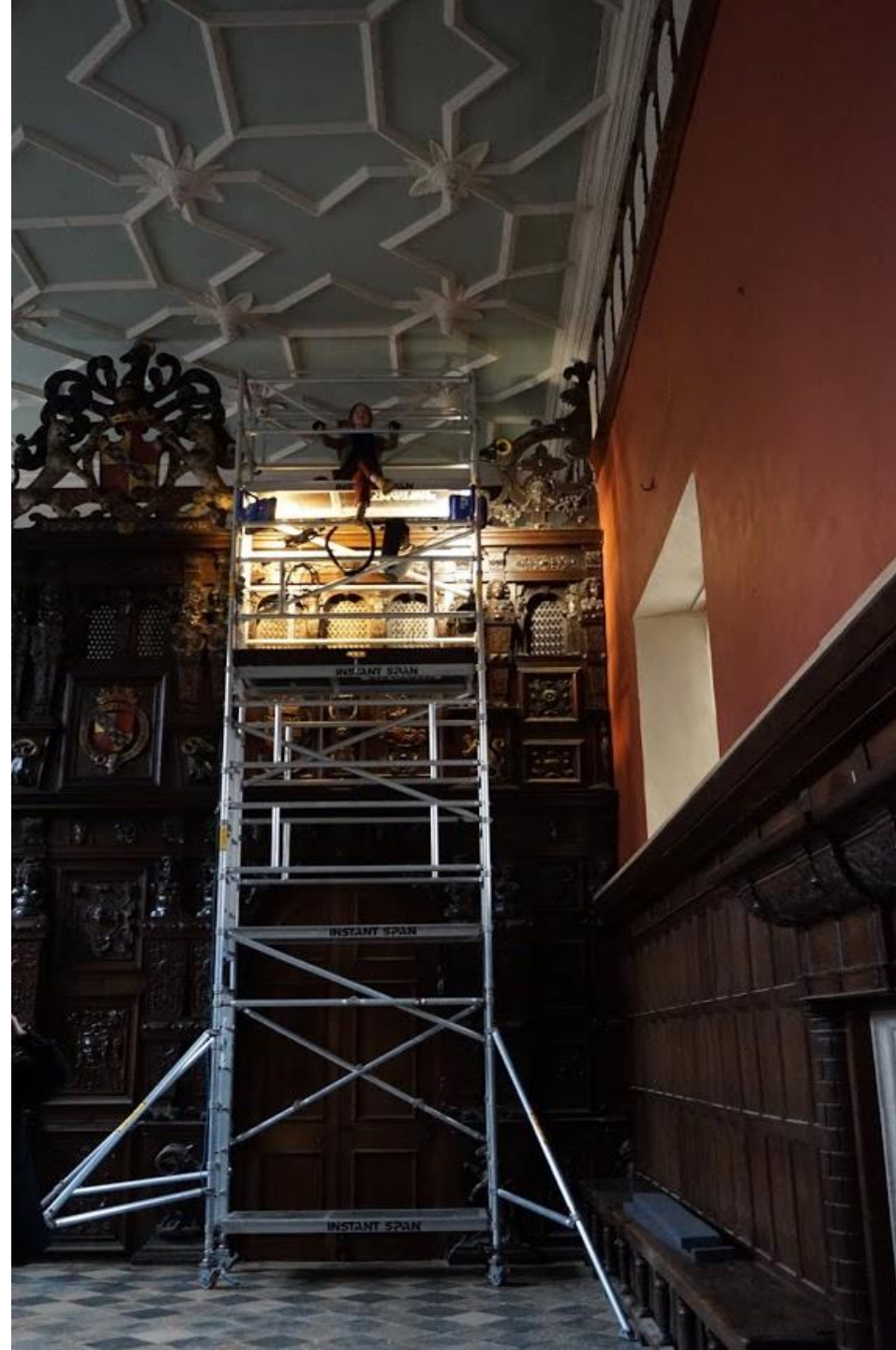


## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

- Documentary research;
- Dry cleaning the surface;
- Interpretation of decorative schemes;
- Writing treatment report



Three stages of cleaning, f.l.t.r.: cleaned with smoke sponge, cleaned with brush, not cleaned





# RESEARCH PROJECTS

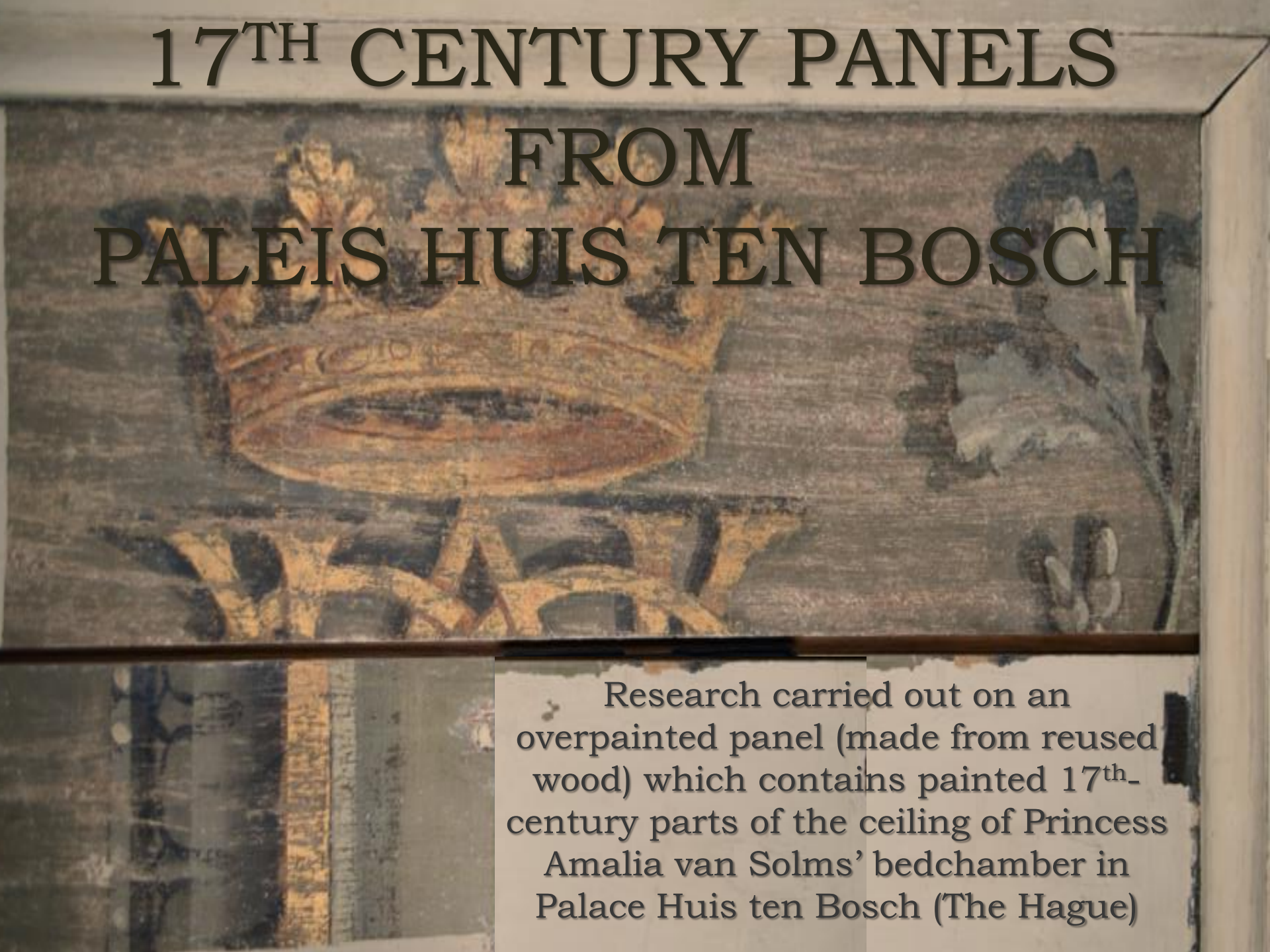
X-Ray Analysis on overpainted panels from Paleis Huis Ten Bosch

# SUMMARY

- 17<sup>th</sup> Century panels from Paleis Huis Ten Bosch
- Preventive Conservation in a 1960's Painted Interior
- 18<sup>th</sup> Century Window Blinds



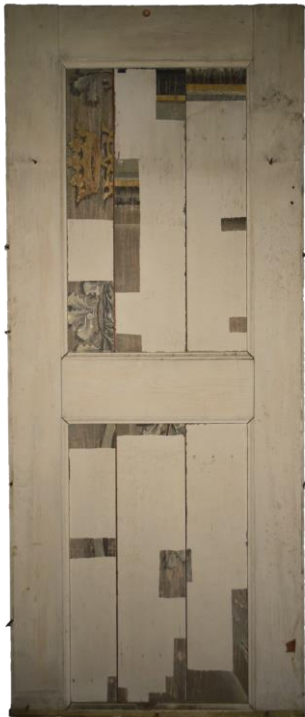
# 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY PANELS FROM PALEIS HUIS TEN BOSCH



Research carried out on an overpainted panel (made from reused wood) which contains painted 17<sup>th</sup>-century parts of the ceiling of Princess Amalia van Solms' bedchamber in Palace Huis ten Bosch (The Hague)

## Research activities:

- Documentary research;
- IR-reflectography (OSIRIS camera);
- X-Ray photography;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- Uncovering 17th-century painting by removing modern paint layers;
- Presentation of results on a symposium;
- Writing treatment report







# PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION IN A 1960'S PAINTED INTERIOR

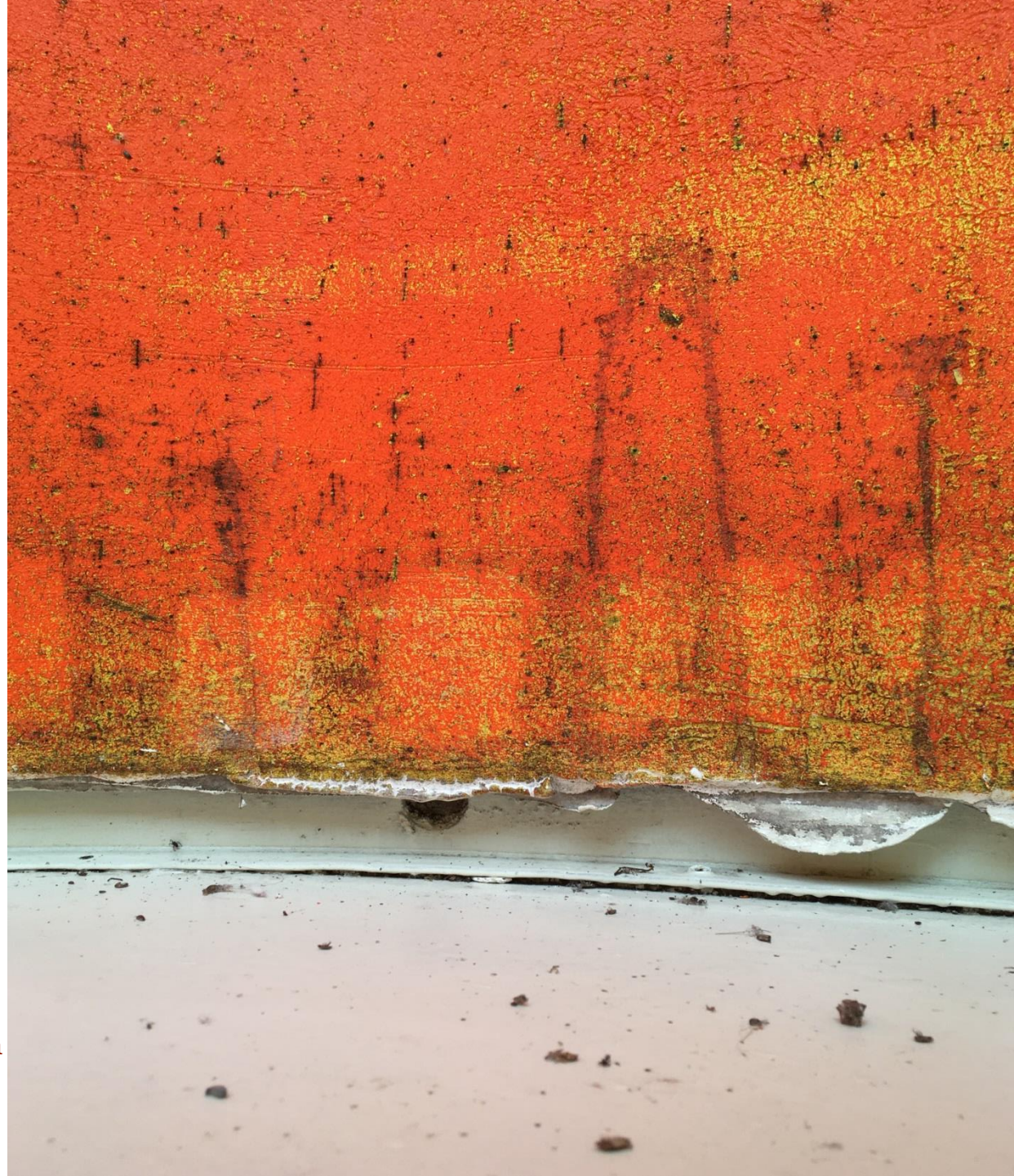
Research aimed at (preventive) conservation of the artwork “Vergilius” (1992), two painted interiors in a bomb shelter in Den Helder, made by the artist R. van de Wint. The main problem was how to tackle mould growth caused by incorrect RH



## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

- Documentary research;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- SEM-EDX analysis;
- On-site testing of cleaning methods;
- Draft report on conservation and treatment of the two spaces.

Mould growth on one of the painted walls in "Vergilius". On the bottom several cleaning tests are visible





# 18<sup>th</sup> CENTURY WINDOW BLINDS

Preliminary research on four overpainted window shutters from an 18th-century monument (het Moriaanshoofd) in Alkmaar. The research was aimed on creating a method to remove the cross-linked lead white overpaint



xantan pH4  
10 minuten

xantan pH4  
8 minuten

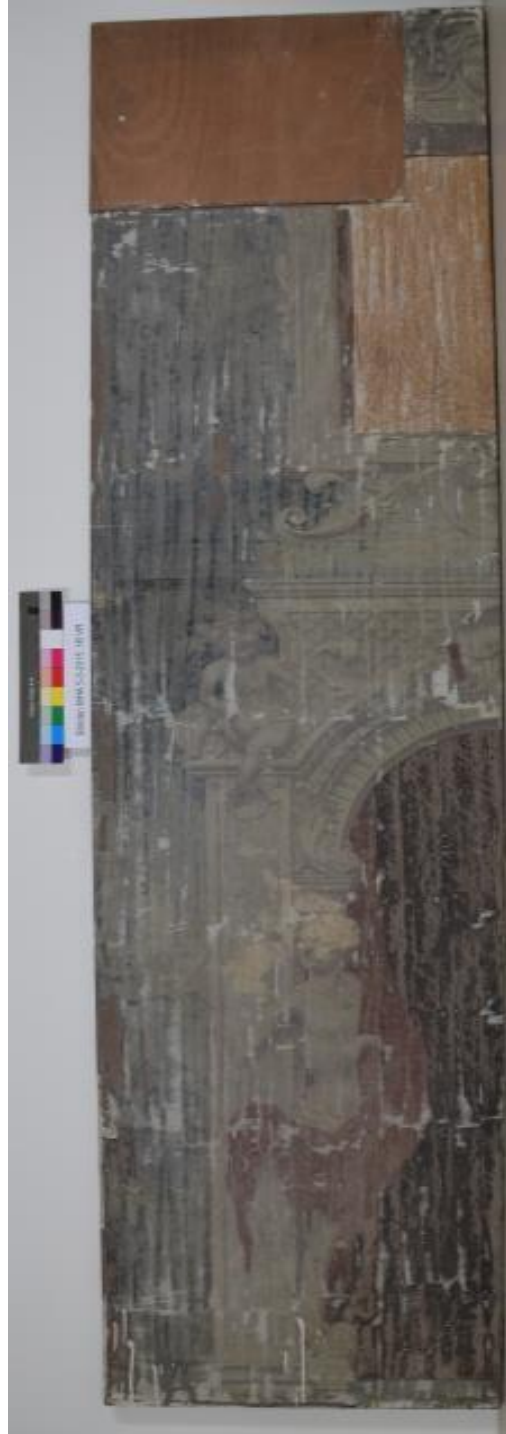
xantan pH4  
12 minuten

xantan pH4  
15 minuten

## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

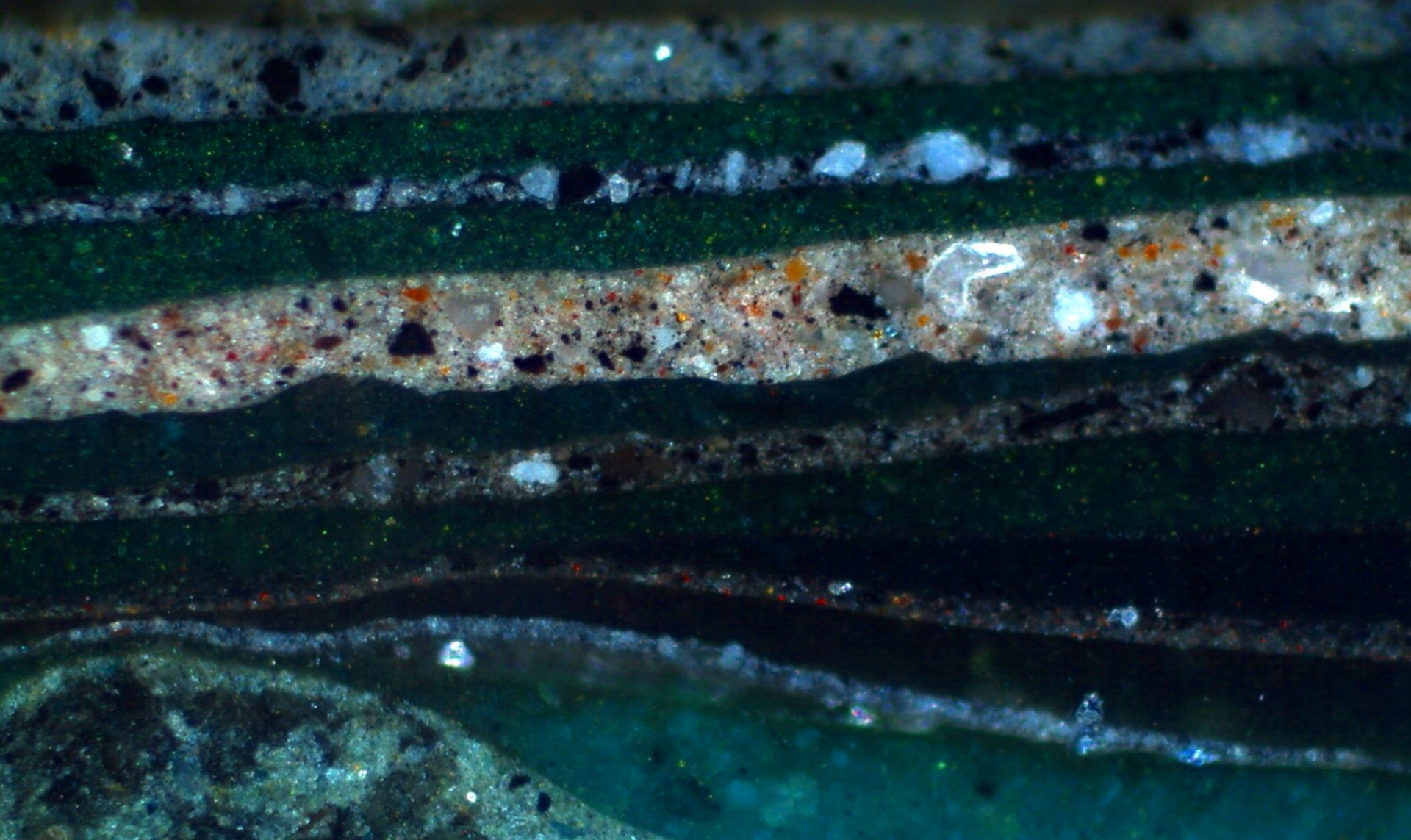
- Documentary research;
- Stratigraphic paint research;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- SEM-EDX analysis;
- Uncovering 18th-century painting by removing modern paint layers, using modified solvent gels;
- Writing a treatment report.

Front and back of one of the four window blinds. One of the sides has been stripped with paint stripper in the 1970's





# ARCHITECTURAL PAINT ANALYSIS



Cross Section of the paint layers on a 17<sup>th</sup> century painted door

50  $\mu$ m

# SUMMARY

- 19<sup>th</sup> Century interior in The Hague
- 18<sup>th</sup> Century interior in Amsterdam



# 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY INTERIOR THE HAGUE

Architectural  
paint research  
carried out in a  
late 19<sup>th</sup>-century  
building (now  
used as an office)  
to determine the  
original  
appearance of the  
interior



# DETAILS

- Documentary research;
- On-site stratigraphic research;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- SEM-EDX analysis;
- Virtual reconstruction;
- Advice on reconstruction;
- Writing a treatment report

Window made on the staircase, showing the original 19<sup>th</sup>-century decorative finish: a mahogany graining





# 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY INTERIOR IN AMSTERDAM

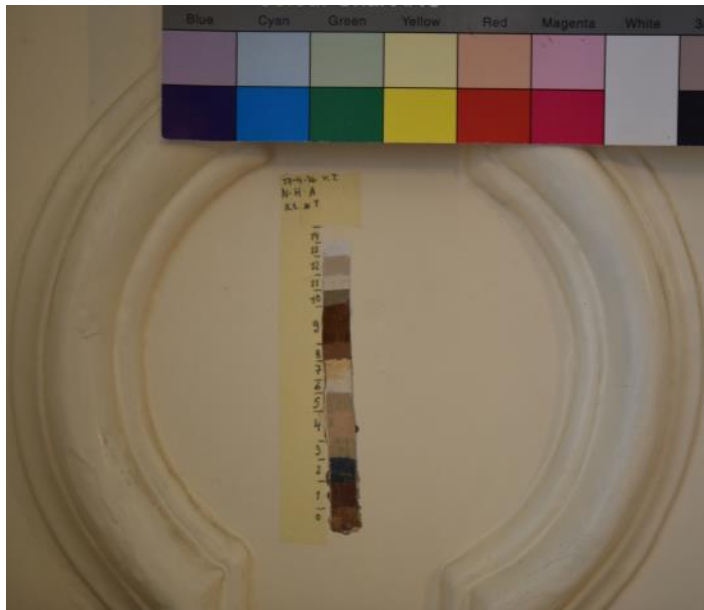
The background of the image is a detailed white plaster relief sculpture. It features a central cherub-like figure with curly hair, surrounded by other figures in classical or allegorical poses. The relief is set within a decorative frame of scrolls and floral motifs.

To determine the original appearance of a room in a canal house from 1724 (Nieuwe Herengracht 143, Amsterdam), architectural paint research was carried out on an ornamental plaster ceiling and wainscoting.

This research was part of my MA-thesis.

# DETAILS

- Documentary research;
- On-site stratigraphical research;
- Microscopic analysis of paint samples;
- SEM-EDX analysis;
- Writing an extensive treatment report (thesis)



Cross section of a paint sample taken on the wainscoting