
The George Eastman House in Rochester, N.Y., the world’s leading photography museums, has received two Edward Steichen autochromes. They are the few surviving masterpieces from the earliest days of color photography.

They were taken by Steichen, probably in Buffalo, and are thought to be portraits of Charlotte Spaulding, a friend and student who became his luminous subject for the portraits. As far as any one knows, the photographs were never displayed and were kept in a cupboard or closet for decades. Because the autochromes had never been exposed to light, their colors remained particularly vivid.

Autoregraphs are positive images, made using a complex process in which tiny dyed grains of potato starch were spread across a piece of glass and light was passed through them to a photo-sensitive plate. Unlike most other antique prints, autoreographs are usually displayed with a light source behind them, allowing their colors, which are dim in regular light, to shine through the semi-transparent glass or to reflect onto a mirror. But prolonged exposure to light was passed through them to a photographic plate. Unlike most other long-forgotten plate. Unlike most other techniques, his Pacific Palisades backyard. Frescoes scenic painters who worked on movie sets designs to create pictorial imagery in homes. Of operation and was in dire need of restoration. For more than half a century, the museum's collection. He targeted one of the most important works in the collection, Edgar Degas “Portrait of Estelle Masson De Gas”, which he sold for $25,000 for a small wall.

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“Buffalo Bill: Lockport Woman
Completing Restoration on 1878 bill-
board,” Lockport Union Sun & Journal,
07/22/2007

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project of recent times in Italy, is to go ahead. After nine years of bitter argument and despite the rage of Florentines including the opera and film director Franco Zeffirelli, the dramatic and imposing new portico at the side of Italy’s most famous art museum was given approval this week.

Its designer is Arata Isozaki, the celebrated avant garde architect from Kyushu. His solution was simple, bold, and arresting: a huge cantilevered canopy fanning out from the gallery, supported by slim rectangular pilasters. There was no attempt to integrate the new work with the Renaissance original: the contrast between old and modern was deliberately stark.

The last large modern building to be erected in Florence is the station, which dates from 1935. But the reaction of conservatives was ferocious. Oriana Fallaci, the Florentine journalist and novelist, called the design “absolutely indecent and unheard of,” and threatened to return to Florence from her home in New York “and tear it to pieces with my bare hands.”

The architect now expects building work to start in the autumn, and for the structure to be completion by 2011. But the project’s opponents will not give up without a fight.

“Ingleswood’s Famed History of Transportation Mural makes a Bold Comeback,” Los Angeles Times, 08/11/2007

Sixty-seven years after it was installed in Ingleswood, with great fanfare, and six years after it was removed for restoration, in deplorable condition, Helen Lundeberg’s massive WPA mural The History of Transportation has a new home. The 60-panel, 240-foot-long artwork runs along a curved wall in the new Grevelle Art Park, close to Ingleswood City Hall and High School.

This is quite a comeback for the mural, which was badly battered and disfigured before it underwent treatment at Sculpture Conservation Studio in West Los Angeles. Made of petrachrome, a terrazzo-like material composed of crushed rock embedded in tinted mortar, the artwork was built to last. But two panels were destroyed by wayward vehicles; others were cracked, and buried under layers of graffiti.

Lundeberg, a Los Angeles-based artist who died in 1999, at 91, was commissioned to make the mural by the Work Projects Administration’s Federal Art Project. She designed the panoramic view of the evolution of transportation -- from Native Americans on foot to passengers boarding a DC-3 aircraft -- for the entrance to Centinela Park (now Edward Vincent Jr. Park).

Conservation began in 2003 and was finished in a couple of years. Then came the challenges and inevitable delays in installing the work exactly as it was in 1940. Finally on view again, the softly colored parade of people walking and riding into the future can be seen up close with surfaces cleaned, cracks filled, and the two missing panels replaced by facsimiles in colored cement.

“Getty Museum to Give Back Forty Works of Art to Italy,” Agenzia Giornalistica Italiana, 08/13/2007

The deal to return forty works of art was made by the minister of Cultural Activities, Francesco Rutelli, and the general director of the J. Getty Museum, Michael Brand. The agreement includes the following points: - The Getty transfers 40 objects to Italy, including the Cult Statue of a Goddess. Technicians from Italy and the Getty Museum will decide on a timeframe for the transfer of the objects in the coming months, with the exception of the statue which will stay in the Getty until the end of 2010.

The parties agree to refer further discussions on the statue of a young victorious athlete to the legal steps in progress in Pesaro. Italy and the Getty agree on a broad cultural collaboration that will include loans of important works of art, joint exhibitions, research and conservation, and restoration projects. Both parties “are pleased that, after long and difficult negotiations, an agreement was reached and now proceed to a new relation of collaboration”.

“Next Restoration: The Sarcophagus of the Married Couple,” RomaOne.it, 08/14/2007

Housed in the Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia and originally from Cerveteri, the masterpiece in terracotta is the next goal after the restoration of the Hercules of Veio. Discovered in a tomb of the necropolis of Banditaccia of Cerveteri and dating from around the 6th-5th century B.C., the Sarcophagus of the Married Couple is one of the principal attractions of the museum and one of the most famous examples of Etruscan plastic arts. Witness to a love that has lasted more than two millennia, the cover of the sarcophagus represents a life-size couple reclining on a dining couch in an attitude of tender affection. The conservation is to be sponsored by the Federazione Italiana Tabaccai.

“Restoration Proposed for the "Casiceddher di Noha,'” Edil One, 08/22/2007

The so-called “Casiceddher,” or houses of the dwarves, are miniature buildings in polychromed Lecce stone. They are of significant historic, artistic, and cultural importance and may be found in Noha, near the baroque city of Lecce in Puglia, Italy.

The tiny buildings constitute the faithful reproduction in miniature of sixteenth century palaces. Rich in architectural detail, they are considered a rarity among scholars and historians. Cracks in the paving surrounding them and in the building below as well as weeds and roots from nearby pine trees are threatening the tiny buildings. It is not known who constructed these little architectural gems.


A lost sketch by John Constable, never recorded in the catalogues of his work, has tumbled with a cascade of other drawings and letters from volumes which the British Library has owned for almost a century. The library has only just appreciated the scale of its bequest from John Platt, a wealthy textile manufacturer who became a serious art collector, who died in 1902, leaving many of his magnificently bound volumes to the British Museum.

The delicate little pencil drawing of Hyam Church in the artist’s native Suffolk, bought from his grandson 50 years after his death, has been hidden among the pages of one of the books ever since. The Constable, some of the other drawings and documents, and some of the volumes themselves, will now go on display in the library’s Treasures gallery.