



Gathering Water Lilies by Peter Harry Emerson, 1886, platinum print.

of the wet collodion process and its resulting commercialisation.

Photography for the masses will include displays of cartes-de-visite, the production of photographic novelty wares and work by amateur photographers like Julia Margaret Cameron.

Displays of tintypes, the low-cost image popularised around the time of the introduction of Bank Holidays in 1871, followed by an AV of the story of George Eastman and the development of the Kodak company from 1888, and taking visitors to the mass commercialisation of photography in the twentieth century, will round the exhibition off.

NMS's Paper Conservators have developed a successful and collaborative relationship with the exhibition team to ensure that optimum conservation and display requirements will be met. To date we have:-

- conducted a survey of the collection in order to prioritise the areas and types of photograph requiring greatest conservation input.
- focussed much of our work on the treatment of daguerreotypes and ambrotypes displaying glass deterioration
- organised a two day Identification and Conservation workshop by Susie Clark, Photographic Conservator for NMS's exhibition team in Autumn 2014
- agreed that the installation schedule will include a six week 'off gassing' period for the case interiors.
- carried out Accelerated Ageing Tests on paint samples and case interior material.
- worked with the National Galleries of Scotland to carry out microfading analysis of all salt paper prints intended for

display to inform the selection process.

- agreed a rotation policy with Curators and Design & Exhibition for the most sensitive material, and agreed that some exceptionally sensitive early material will be shown only as copies.
- held regular mock-up sessions with the exhibition team to ensure best outcomes for lighting and displaying the photographs.

Please access the Museum's website www.nms.ac.uk to find out more information on the exhibition and read forthcoming blogs related to our work.

We are also hoping to hold a seminar and gallery tour, organised between NMS and Icon's Photographic Materials Group after the summer.

Victoria Hanley
Paper Conservator, NMS

The Prince and I

As part of the celebration of 150 years of London's main sewerage system, held at Abbey Mills Pumping Station, the site was visited by HRH The Prince of Wales earlier this year. Helen Hughes ACR, an architectural paint conservator, was on hand to meet him. She and Saskia Huning, an artist and specialist decorator, had been asked by Thames Water to create and present reconstructions of how the polychrome decoration of the internal cast-iron work of Bazalgette's pumping station – known as 'the cathedral of the sewers' would have looked in 1865 when the pumping station was opened.



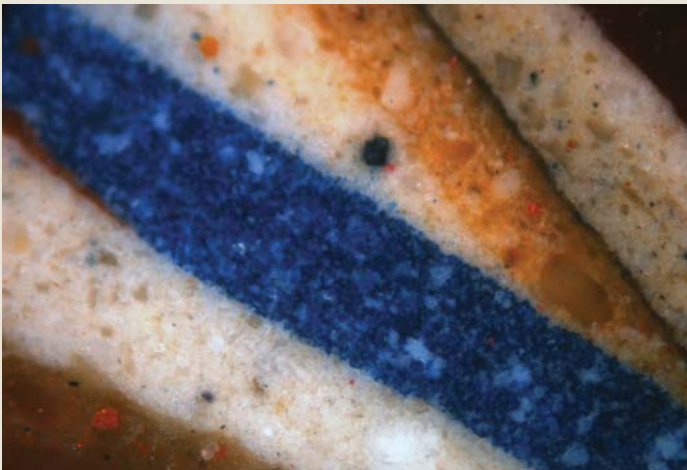
© Saskia Huning

Full size reconstruction of the original 19th century polychrome decoration painted by Saskia Huning

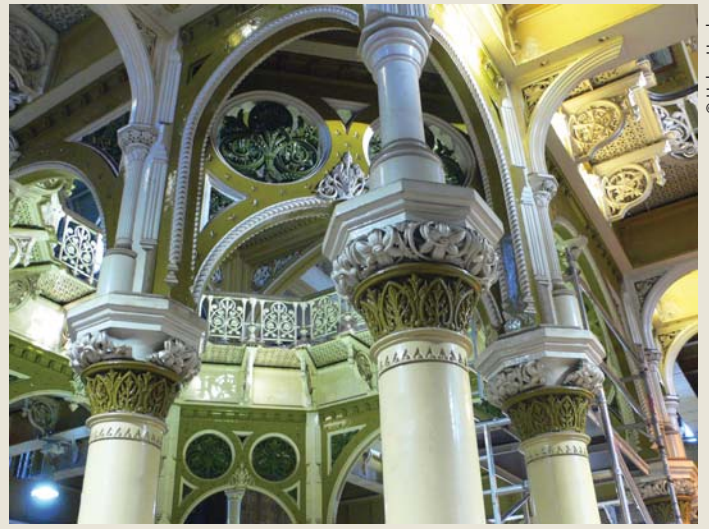
Helen Hughes had already carried out extensive microscopic paint research to establish the existing scheme. She and Saskia spent time on site colour mixing and working out how the main colours would have worked together. During their research they began to appreciate the magical theme of the decorative scheme – the architectural elements sprouted into foliage as the cast-iron structure ascended the building.

From these discussion full size sample boards were painted up by Saskia, of the base of the columns, the capitals and sections of railing. The boards gave a vivid impression of how the interior once looked – and could look again if Thames

Paint sample mounted in cross-section x500 magnification. Showing the original blue picked out on the columns



© Helen Hughes



© Helen Hughes

The existing decoration of Abbey Mills Pumping Station – the building is known as the 'cathedral of the sewers'



© Clearwater Photography UK

The collaboration team – paint researcher Helen Hughes and artist Saskia Huning at the pumping station

Water decides to reconstruct the scheme. It is hoped that local partners can be found to take the project forward and Saskia hopes to direct the repainting, providing training for decorators and involving local schoolchildren.

Prince Charles, an amateur painter himself, took a great interest in the details of the research and the recreation.

Helen reports that it was 'A thoroughly enjoyable project to work on, culminating in meeting HRH Prince Charles and other VIPs on the event day to talk them through the extravagant scheme that would have been in place'.

Helen Hughes ACR explains her research findings to HRH Prince Charles



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