



Smithsonian
***Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture***

***National Portrait Gallery
Smithsonian American Art Museum***

News

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Lunder Conservation Center Fact Sheet

The Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery share the innovative Lunder Conservation Center, the first art conservation facility in the United States that allows the public permanent behind-the-scenes views of the crucial preservation work of museums. The Lunder Conservation Center is visible to the public through floor-to-ceiling glass walls, which allow the public to view all aspects of conservation work that traditionally takes place behind the scenes at other museums and conservation centers.

The 10,200-square-foot center is located on the third-floor mezzanine and fourth floor of the museums' shared historic building. Its five laboratories and studios are equipped to treat paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, sculptures, folk art objects, decorative arts and frames.

In addition to providing expanded space for conservation projects, the center is a destination for learning about conservation and modern techniques that conservators use to examine and treat artworks. Conservators from across the United States participated in creating the educational components for the center. A 40-foot media wall features 16 of these experts, with brief video clips exploring special conservation projects and career experiences. Extended interviews with 22 experts, along with many other educational resources, are available at lunderconservation.si.edu.

Public outreach and interpretive programs—from weekly behind-the-scenes tours to specialized lectures—are offered to target audiences, including students, families and conservation professionals. Interactive kiosks and special displays make it easy for visitors to learn about the importance of conservation and show how to take an active role in caring for public art and monuments, as well as how to care for personal treasures at home. Each lab and studio is introduced by a kiosk that includes specific information about the types of treatments performed in each area with video clips and photographs of before-and-after treatments.

The Lunder Conservation Center is named in honor of the lead donor, The Lunder Foundation, which provided a \$4 million challenge grant that was the catalyst for attracting \$6 million in matching funds from 65 private contributors.

The National Historic Landmark building that houses the museums and the Lunder Conservation Center is located at Eighth and F streets N.W., above the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metrorail station. Hours are from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Web sites: reynoldscenter.org, npg.si.edu and americanart.si.edu.

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