enables their preservation
Centre for Art Technological Studies and Conservation

National Gallery of Denmark
National Museum of Denmark
School of Conservation

VILLUM FONDEN  ✕  VELUX FONDEN
The purpose of CATS is

- to advance ‘collections research’, which in present-day gallery vocabulary incorporates not only the long-established art historical research of the collections but also the technical research which have increasingly proved to be essential to a true understanding and appreciation of works of art
The purpose of CATS is

• in-depth scientific research to explore the material nature of works of art and comparable objects in museums with which CATS is collaborating
• to provide analytical services to other institutions
• to conduct collaborative projects with conservation scientists, conservators and curators from around the world
The aim of CATS is

• to generate and document a deeper understanding of methods and materials of the past through advanced research on works of art in museums

• to be part of an interdisciplinary effort to analyse by traditional and state of the art methods and equipment to answer questions regarding the interpretation and understanding of the collections
The aim of CATS is

• that these activities will not only advance a scholarly understanding, but also contribute to the public appreciation of the collections and their long-term safekeeping through preventive alternatively instrumental conservation-restoration actions
A brief overview of conservation science institutions

- 1888 Chemisches Labor der Königlichen Museen zu Berlin, now Rathgen-Forschungslabor
- 1902 Versuchsanstalt und Auskunftsstelle für Maltechnik, München
- 1932 Laboratori di Restauri at the institute of Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence
- 1937 Reichsinstitut für Maltechnik, now Doerner Institut
- 1921 British Museum, London, founded its Research Laboratory
- 1928 Centre for Conservation and Technical Studies, now Strauss Center for Conservation and Technical Studies at the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard
- 1930 Research and conservation analytical laboratories at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
- 1934 Scientific Department at the National Gallery, London
- 1950 Scientific Department at National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
- 1963 Scientific Department at Smithsonian, Washington D.C.
- 1985 Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles
- 1998 Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France (C2RMF), Paris.
- 1948 Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), Brussels
- 1963 Centraal Laboratorium voor Onderzoek van Voorwerpen van Kunst en Wetenschappen, Amsterdam
- 1965 Nationalmuseum of Denmark has dept for Research, Analyses and Advice
- 1971 School of Conservation with labs for teaching and research
- Scandinavia so far never had an institution specialised in ART technological research
- 2011 CATS will undertake the challenge…
Conservators are ‘doers’ - other scholarly disciplines will perform the ‘thinking’
Ether form, 1986
Claus Carstensen

2010
Diana and her Companions

Bought 1876 by the Mauritshuis as a work by Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693)
Oil on canvas, 97,8 x 104,6 cm (originally 97,8 x c 120 cm)
Christ blessing the children
Nicolaes Maes, c 1652-3
Oil on canvas, 218 x 154 cm
National Gallery, London
Christ in the house of Martha & Mary

C. 1654-1655

Oil on canvas

160 x 142 cm

National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh
Earth Pigments
germany & france

Indian Yellow
india

Zinnabar
spain

Oak planks
the baltic

X-section

Nat ultramarine
(lapis lazuli)
Afghanistan

Lead ore for
lead white
England

Lice for
Carmine red
Latin Amerika
The conference aims to explore how art historical and technical examination of paintings in tandem can address key subjects as meaning, materials and manufacturing techniques, as well as be a catalyst for fresh perspectives on prevailing European Workshop practices when copying, replicating and emulating paintings in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries.
This conference will focus on both the theoretical and technical aspects of conservation in the nineteenth century, as well as their impact on the profession today

• Nineteenth century treatment methods that have withstood the test of time (are there any?)

• The evolution of documentation and its impact on the professionalization of conservation

• Finding solutions for problems caused by nineteenth century materials and interventions

• Historical persons’ contributions to conservation and their impact on the field

• Philosophical trends and their impact on practice
Understanding artworks

- enables their preservation

Thank you for your attention