



The Modular Cleaning Program (MCP) is a systematic approach to cleaning artworks. The MCP consists of a series of concentrated stock solutions and a computer database. The database assists the conservator in combining the stock solutions and provides information about the stock solutions, their components, and the mixtures used for cleaning. The database also allows the conservator to specify new cleaning solutions and assists him/her in mixing them. The MCP has been developed to assist conservators in cleaning with water-borne systems, solvent gels, and solvents. The workshop will introduce the participating conservator to the cleaning theories behind the MCP and the use of the MCP database and concentrates. Each participant will leave with a set of the aqueous concentrated stock solutions and, materials permitting, a set of the stock solvent gels.

The workshop offers exposure to a new system of working with concentrated stock cleaning solutions and a computerized system to assist the conservator in mixing and testing different cleaning solutions. The computer uses calculations based on physical constants to formulate the stock and cleaning solutions. The conservator guides the computer program in changing physical parameters of the potential cleaning system. The concentrated stock solutions can be mixed together in different proportions to allow the conservator to test many more potential cleaning solutions and pick the cleaning system that the conservator decides provides the best cleaning outcome and leaves the surface in the best possible condition.

This workshop will reinforce the participating conservators' theoretical background in aqueous cleaning theory, solvent theory, and the formation of solvent gels. We will also discuss the polymer stabilized emulsion systems, even though they are not yet supported in the MCP computer program. There will also be some discussion of the special considerations presented with cleaning acrylic surfaces that have developed from last year's Cleaning Acrylic Paints - Research into Practice Colloquium.

The course and working with the Modular Cleaning Program reinforce the connection between the theory of cleaning and the practice. By learning to think about fine tuning a cleaning by, perhaps, changing the pH of the cleaning solution, adding a chelator, or increasing the hydrogen bonding component of a solvent mixture, the conservator learns to think of cleaning as a rational process rather than a phenomenological exercise or a choice of whose recipe to try next

Participants leave the workshop with a set of the concentrated aqueous stock solutions, and if feasible, a set of the stock solvent gels, so that they can implement the cleaning techniques learned in the workshop immediately upon returning to their studios.

Chris Stavroudis