

Artistic Intent or Later Addition:

Analysis of a toned varnish on E.W. Deming's painting, *Indian Hunting Buffalo*

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American artist Edwin Willard Deming (1860-1942) focused on American Indian subjects in his illustrations, paintings and sculptures. During the pretreatment examination of his painting, *Indian Hunting Buffalo*, two distinctly different layers of varnish were found on the surface - an overall, thinly applied layer of a matte varnish; and a darkened, glossy varnish selectively applied to the figurative grouping, with drips and brush marks along the lower third of the painting. Samples of the darkened varnish were analyzed at the Museum Conservation Institute (MCI) to determine the composition and authenticity of the darkened varnish.

Amber Kerr-Allison will present the background, treatment, and reasons for sample analysis on this project. MCI's Maria Melendez and Anthony Maiorana will discuss the analytical results that provided guidance in the methodology and aesthetic consideration for the conservation treatment of the painting.



Edwin Willard Deming, *Indian Hunting Buffalo*
(Smithsonian American Art Museum 1985.66.362,158)

Normal light, *above*
Ultraviolet light, *below*

MCI

Topics in Museum Conservation

December 20, 2007
10:45 am

MCI Theater
MUSEUM SUPPORT CENTER
4210 Silver Hill Road
Suitland, MD 20746
301-238-1240



Smithsonian
Museum Conservation Institute