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University of Dayton

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NEWS RELEASE

BOON OR BANE? PANEL PRESENTATION AT UD TO EXPLORE BENEFITS, DETRIMENTS OF TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN ART CONSERVATION

DAYTON, Ohio — Collagen. Retinol. Silicone. Rogaine.

Advancements in technology have facilitated today's proliferation of products and techniques designed to forestall the appearance of aging. Now, society's intolerance for age seems to be spilling over to the world of art, and the same technology that allows us to cling to youth has begun to affect some of the world's most treasured works, say some artists and art experts.

Whether the ability to renew aging art is beneficial or a bane will be the topic of a panel presentation at the University of Dayton. "Modern Alchemy: The Place of Technology and Values in the Conservation of Art" will be presented from 3 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, March 21, in Kennedy Union room 222. The discussion is free and open to the public.

The session will include discussion and visual media to explore the issues of technology and art conservation and will be moderated by Roger Crum, associate professor of visual arts and Graul chair in arts and languages. Guest speakers will be Stephen Bonadies, chief conservator and director of museum services at the Cincinnati Art Museum, and Eileen Carr, adjunct professor of fine arts at UD.

"With today's technology, anything seems possible in the realm of art conservation and restoration," Carr said. "In the last few decades, the Sistine Chapel ceiling has been returned to its original glory, and two of Rembrandt's vandalized works have been miraculously repaired. They appear to look 'as good as new,' but do they really? Or perhaps more importantly, should they?"

Carr cautions that, although technological advances have facilitated great strides in conservation and restoration efforts, technology is simply "a tool whose use is governed by decisions that reflect our values."

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"We need to ask what those values are and whose they are," she said. "In this session we'll explore society's ideals of beauty, its reverence for the authentic and its cultural aversion to the aging of objects. The speakers will bring varying perspectives and case studies to the session to provide both an historical and practical look at the issues."

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For media interviews, contact **Paul E. Tibbetts Jr.**, professor of philosophy and coordinator of UD's values, technology and society cluster, at (937) 229-2753 or via e-mail at paul.tibbetts@notes.udayton.edu and **Eileen Carr** at (937) 229-3237.