Mia x MACC Self-Guided Tour

Spanning 5,000 years of world history, Mia's collection requires dedicated care to withstand the test of time. Behind the scenes, art conservators clean, repair, and stabilize fragile objects, ensuring works remain on view for years to come. Many pieces at Mia have been treated by the Midwest Art Conservation Center (MACC) and are on display through their meticulous craft, care, and expertise. Explore recent conservation projects now in the galleries and learn how each work was brought to life.

(Gallery maps with artwork locations are on the last page.)

Scan the QR code to learn more about MACC and art conservation.



Shiva Nataraja (Lord of the Dance), c. 1100

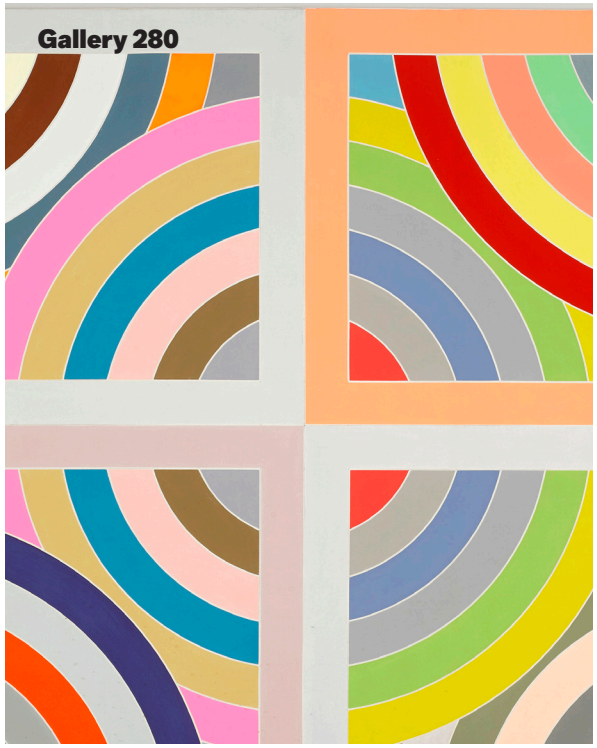
Set in a graceful cosmic pose, Shiva as Nataraja hides a modern rescue story right beneath his feet. Notice the mix of smooth and weathered metal at the base? A previous lead repair had slowly collapsed under the weight of the nearly 1,000-year-old statue. The smooth section is a fresh, skillfully made repair that not only saves the artwork, but secures Shiva's eternal dance for decades to come.



Christi Belcourt, *It's a Delicate Balance*, 2021

An artist's imagination often expands beyond typical canvas sizes. In Christi Belcourt's *It's a Delicate Balance*, this large painting was created on canvas that was stapled directly to the studio wall. With the artist's guidance, MACC conservators stretched the canvas onto a custom-built stretcher—a wooden support tool that keeps the canvas at tension and allows it to safely be on display.

Mia



Frank Stella, *Tahkt I Sulayman Variation II*, 1969

This iconic piece in Mia's collection has a reputation and fandom as outsized as the work itself. Since the artist mounted this painting on a rigid wooden frame (called a strainer), conservators couldn't easily adjust the canvas tension. To fix this, MACC conservators painstakingly pulled 646 staples from the edges and restretched the painting onto a new, custom-built stretcher to give it proper tension.



Piranesi, Rezzonico Pier Table, 1768

This elaborate pier table has a long repair history. Guided by a special UV light examination, conservators removed grime, stabilized insect damage, and reinforced vulnerable structural elements. This treatment not only made the work safe for display, but helped to clean and clarify details and decorative elements, returning the piece to its original splendor.



Salviati tapestry, "Meeting of Dante and Virgil," 1546

Back on view for the first time in nearly 70 years, this rare Italian Renaissance tapestry was long held in storage due to its fragile state. Thanks to months of painstaking restoration at the MACC textile lab, it is once again safe to display. Because the piece remains highly light-sensitive, it will only be on view through January 31.



Guido Reni cartoon, "Two Female Allegories," 1614

This larger-than-life drawing is made of multiple sheets of overlapping paper and layers of fabric lining. Over the past 400-plus years, many areas of paper had separated from each other and the supporting fabric, leaving them vulnerable to breaking and being lost. Working one piece at a time, MACC paper conservators re-adhered the delicate paper and fabric layers to each other and cleaned significant dust and grime off of the surface to restore the intricate sketch below.



Attributed to Agostino Zoppo, *St Matthew and the Angel*, c. 1570

Time hasn't been gentle to this delicate terracotta statue, marked by a history of fractures and mends. By delicately removing layers of dirt while carefully preserving precious flecks of original pigment, the MACC objects lab was able to restore remnants of the bright paint that once covered it entirely.



Jan Cossiers, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1657

This painting lived many lives before its recent conservation. Beneath layers of discolored varnish and heavy overpaint from previous restoration attempts lay the artist's true hand, obscured and forgotten for decades. By carefully taking away those layers, MACC conservators finally brought the original work back into the light by uncovering the details of the artist's intent.

Gallery Map





Mia

Minneapolis Institute of Art