



Perspectives on the Painting Technique of Jan van Eyck

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- This exploration of Jan van Eyck's technique stimulates new responses to questions concerning production of some of the most iconic images in the history of art

Technical examinations of the Ghent Altarpiece have yielded an immense body of data since the 1950s. Conservators and art historians have relied heavily on this information to support theories about the working methods and materials of Jan van Eyck, but should these theories be directly applied to van Eyck's other paintings? A review of conservation dossiers for works attributed to van Eyck, his contemporaries and earlier artists has, together with physical examinations of paintings carried out for this study, highlighted many common painterly practices. These investigations have also identified demonstrable differences between the Ghent panels and other paintings in the Eyckian corpus – differences that are considered in detail here in terms of the appearance and allocation of pigments in the paint structure. This exploration of technique and physical format has opened a path for new responses to questions about the production of some of the most iconic images in the history of art.