

Margaret Priest

she/her
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Education

Garman Art Conservation Department at SUNY Buffalo State University 2025 – 2028
Master of Arts in Conservation of Art and Cultural Heritage
Master of Science in Conservation Science and Imaging

- Specialism in paintings conservation.

University of North Carolina Asheville 2021 – 2025
Bachelor of Arts in Art History
Minor in Chemistry and Studio Art

- Chemistry courses (including labs): General, Quantitative, Analytical, Organic I and II, Inorganic, Research Methods and Ethics, Energy Interdisciplinary Project Lab.
- Art history courses: Introduction I and II, Art and Archaeology of Early Christianity, Islamic Art and Architecture, Histories of Clay, Modern Art and Modernism, Senior Research Seminar I and II.
- Studio art: Foundation Drawing, Painting I, II, and III.

Institute for American Universities (Study Abroad) 2023
Aix-en-Provence, France
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

- Relevant courses: Museums Today: Missions and Challenges, Identities of the Ancient Mediterranean, Artistic Encounters in the Mediterranean: Cross-Cultural Perspectives in European Art.

Conservation and Relevant Experience

Garman Art Conservation Department at SUNY Buffalo State University, Buffalo, NY
Graduate Fellow in Paintings Conservation 2025 – 2028

- Painting treatment of an untitled 1923 portrait by Pavel Schmaroff in poor structural and aesthetic condition due to material incompatibilities. Performed imaging before treatment in visible, raking, transmitted, and axial specular illumination and an in-depth examination report including condition and artist research. Treatment scheduled for Spring 2026.
- Object treatment of an early 1930s broken ceramic egg cup by Bauhaus-trained ceramicist Margarete Heymann-Loebenstein. Treatment beginning Spring 2026 is expected to include surface cleaning, solvent testing, reassembling fragments, creating fills and inpainting where necessary, and further documentation.
- Paper treatment of an 1827 hand-colored lithograph from *The Aboriginal Portfolio* published by Lehman and Duval and owned by the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library. Treatment in Spring 2026 will include removing binding residue and addressing tears and creases along the edges to increase structural stability for handling and exhibition.

Painting Conservation LLC, Asheville, NC

Fall 2024

Pre-Program Intern

- Advisor: Elizabeth Sanchez.
- Supporting the conservation of oil and acrylic easel paintings in a private practice environment through partial treatments.
- Training in aesthetic treatment skills including: aqueous, solvent, and gel cleaning, varnish removal, loss compensation with BEVA Gesso, and inpainting with Gamblin Conservation Colors.
- Training in structural treatment skills including: support removal for stretched canvas and canvas adhered to board, lining and strip lining, and stretching canvases.
- Diagnosing problematic variables in projects and researching relevant literature for material and procedural resolutions.

Department of Chemistry, UNC Asheville, Asheville, NC

Research Assistant

Summer 2025

- Faculty advisor: Dr. Jeromy Rech.
- Researched and optimized a practical multi-step organic synthesis for polymer-based solar energy applications.
- Independently performed complex inert reactions, microwave-assisted synthesis, column chromatography, and ^1H NMR characterization.
- Delivered presentations summarizing methods and progress to faculty and peers.
- Strengthened skills in cost analysis, sustainable material development, and technical communication within a collaborative lab environment.

Inorganic Teaching Assistant

Spring 2025

- Faculty advisor: Dr. Philip Shivokevich.
- Leading weekly student-driven instruction sessions to reinforce key inorganic concepts and develop problem-solving strategies.
- Organizing weekly study halls and individual meetings to support student community.
- Attending lectures to provide real-time peer support and facilitate class discussions alongside a faculty supervisor.

Organic Laboratory Assistant

Fall 2024

- Faculty advisor: Dr. Philip Shivokevich.
- Guiding sixteen students in safe and effective lab work alongside faculty and an Environmental Health and Safety supervisor with demonstrations and peer mentoring.
- Aiding students in techniques and instruments including rotary evaporation, column chromatography, thin-layer chromatography, infrared spectroscopy, and ^1H NMR.
- Supplementing the transition from lab work to asynchronous research during local emergency circumstances.

Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center, Asheville, NC

Spring 2024

Collections Intern

- Advisors: Alice Sebrell (Director of Preservation) and Holly Filsinger (Collections Specialist).
- Cataloged and digitized art collections and a wide variety of archival materials dating from the 1930s in collaboration with collection specialists.
- Strengthened and standardized organization of the permanent collection with thorough surveys of the database and archives.
- Developed expertise in the history of Black Mountain College through engagement with archives and the historical campus.

Research and Presentations

Art History Undergraduate Thesis

Department of Art and Art History, UNC Asheville, NC

“Between Two Masters: Reconciling Faith and Scholarship in the Museum of the Bible.” *UNC Asheville Journal of Undergraduate Research*. Fall 2024

- Advisors: Dr. Leisa Rundquist, Dr. Laurel Taylor, and Dr. Rodger Payne.
- Awarded with University Research Scholar Designation.

Chemistry Research

Department of Chemistry, UNC Asheville, NC

“Synthesis and characterization of Cu²⁺-doped brookite TiO₂ nanoparticles for treating organic dye pollution,” Interdisciplinary lab course paper and presentation. Spring 2025

- Advisors: Dr. Oksana Love and Dr. Pin Lyu.

“Optimizing PTQ10 polymerization using thiazolothiazole acceptor units for organic solar cells,” laboratory progress presentation. Summer 2025

- Advisor: Dr. Jeromy Rech.

Additional Experience

Chair of Programming, Community Arts Networking Society Fall 2024 – Spring 2025
UNC Asheville, NC

- Founded a club to empower aspiring arts professionals through professional development and community engagement.
- Organized curriculum for monthly general meetings and board meetings.
- Coordinating guest lectures from faculty advisors and the University’s Career Center.

Volunteer Summer 2024

Old Buncombe County Genealogical Society, Asheville, NC

- Revamped efforts to organize and digitize a collection of historical documents in a volunteer-based organization while implementing archival standards to increase accessibility.

McClinton Fellow Spring 2024

Study Abroad Office at UNC Asheville, NC

- Advised peers on the study abroad process and assisted international student orientation.

Docent Spring 2023

Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence, FR

- Collaborated with peers to deliver a David Hockney retrospective tour.
- Researched a presentation of a select series of works as part of the wider exhibition.

Awards and Memberships

Caroline K. and Sheldon Keck Fellowship Fall 2025 – 2028

Garman Family Art Conservation Fellowship Fall 2025 – 2028

UNCA University Research Scholar Designation Fall 2024

UNCA S. Tucker Cooke Art Scholarship Spring 2024

McClinton Global Fellowship, UNCA International Experience Scholarship Spring 2023

Member, American Institute for Conservation Spring 2024 - Present

Member, Southeast Regional Conservation Association Summer 2024 – Present

Skills

Laboratory: Basic lab hygiene and management, H and C NMR, UV-Vis spectroscopy, Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), scanning electron microscopy (SEM), dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS), X-ray diffraction (XRD), UV-Vis diffuse reflectance spectroscopy (DRS), pyrolysis-gas-chromatography-mass spectrometry (Py-GCMS), artificial light aging, photocatalysis, independent organic synthesis.

Imaging: Digital photography from visible light and image processing.

Software: Adobe Photoshop, Bridge, and Lightroom, Microsoft Office, Google Suite, iOS, CollectiveAccess, Zoom.

Language: Intermediate French (reading, speaking, and writing).