National Gallery Technical Bulletin

VOLUME 36

Titian's Painting Technique from 1540



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FRONT COVER Titian, Diana and Actaeon (NG 6611; NGS 2839), 1556–9 (detail).

TITLE PAGE TOP LEFT: Titian, *The Vendramin Family, venerating a Relic of the True Cross* (NG 4452), 1540–5 (detail). TOP RIGHT: Titian, *Diana and Actaeon* (NG 6611; NGS 2839), 1556–9 (detail). BOTTOM LEFT: Titian, *The Death of Actaeon* (NG 6420), *c*.1559–76 (detail). BOTTOM RIGHT: Titian, *The Tribute Money* (NG 224), 1567–8 (detail). Photographic credits

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Dr Ashok Roy and the National Gallery Technical Bulletin

The volume that follows this *Technical Bulletin* will be the last to be edited by Ashok Roy. He has edited all volumes that have been published, with the exception of the first that appeared in 1977, the year he began to work for the Gallery in the Scientific Department. From these early issues he pioneered the now widely established style and method of multidisciplinary studies of Old Master paintings, an approach that has come to influence researchers in our field around the world.

Ashok is now Director of Collections, a division of the Gallery that includes the Scientific Department, of which he was Head from 1990 to 2013, the Conservation Department and the Curatorial Department. Long before he assumed this responsibility, Ashok acquired a senior academic status within the institution that was acknowledged by members of all these departments. His indefatigable interest in the Gallery's collection and his untiring appetite for investigating paintings from all origins and periods, which is so clearly reflected in the many articles he has published in the Technical Bulletin, has not been equalled by any other scholar who has worked here. His greatest achievements lie in the breadth and depth of his own research and in his key role in establishing the pre-eminence of the National Gallery as a leading - perhaps the leading - institution for the scientific study of paintings in the Western tradition and for the history of the techniques of Old Master paintings. He is justifiably proud of having always championed multidisciplinary research within the Gallery, bringing the work of scientists, conservators and curators more closely together than they have ever been elsewhere, both by example and by editorial commissions and of course tactful tenacity.

This collaboration has been the consistent strength of the *Technical Bulletin* and it has also informed many other undertakings made by the Gallery: the scope of the scholarly catalogues, my own included, from the mid-1990s onwards, for example, and before that some of the exhibitions and related publications - exhibitions that have been among the most widely acclaimed and imitated to have been mounted here. Ashok was an organiser of the first series of these, the five Art in the Making exhibitions and a principal contributor to their catalogues; Making and Meaning followed. Making Colour, in 2014, dealt with his lifelong special interest in the material history of artists' pigments, their origins and manner of use over the period spanned by the Gallery's collection of paintings. He has also organised many conferences for the Gallery, among which that celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Technical Bulletin in 2009 was the most remarkable. It was a signal demonstration of the central significance of the work undertaken here in this field - not least because it provided a meeting place for continental European and North American scholars. Ashok has always been as much at home in Paris and Florence as in Los Angeles and New York. He has always worked to bring scholars together from different parts of the world as well as to promote collaboration within the Gallery itself.

In 2009 it was announced that after Volume 30 the *Technical Bulletin* would appear exclusively in digital form. Conventional print has in fact been maintained, but the entire series is available on the Gallery's website (an achievement not equalled by any other area of research in the Gallery) and this is available free of charge, enhanced by additional digital content.

There will be many other advances and changes in the future no doubt, but no Editor of the *Technical Bulletin* will achieve more than Ashok, and no Director will have the privilege of praising so highly the achievement of any one scholar working in this institution.

> Nicholas Penny June 2015