

BIO



BJ FARRAR
Senior Mountmaker
J. Paul Getty Museum

bjfarrar@getty.edu

BJ is a Senior Mountmaker in the Decorative Arts and Sculpture Conservation Department at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles. He specializes in the application of 3-D scanning to seismic mountmaking and has presented on various mountmaking topics often, including for the Advances in the Protection of Museum Collections from Earthquake Damage symposium series, the Western Association of Art Conservators annual conference, and the International Mountmaking Forum.

ABSTRACT

The Cordier Challenge: A New Approach to Internal Mounts

In 2022, the Getty Museum acquired a pair of exquisitely carved onyx and bronze busts, Sudanese Man and Woman from the French Colonies, by the esteemed 19th century artist Charles Cordier. The artist played a pioneering role in the revival of polychromed sculpture in France, often combining rare colored marbles with cast bronze to create visually arresting and complex representations.

Both sculptures are comprised of multiple parts, stacked one on top of the other, with minimal connections between the various sections. This makes them precarious under normal display conditions but frighteningly vulnerable if subjected to an earthquake.

The primary mountmaking challenge was to unify the individual elements of each sculpture without visually intruding on the artworks. Due to the complexity of these sculptures, we had to devise new methods for designing internal mounts, which included 3D scanning, modeling and printing, as well as magnetic connections and reversible adhesives. Our presentation will cover these various methods in addition to the research and testing employed prior to realizing our new approach to internal mounts.