

ABSTRACT

Internal Struggles: A Look at Interior Mounting Solutions

Presenter:

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This talk explores some of the challenges and unique solutions when mounting takes place within an object's interior. The artwork presented spans a variety of cultures indicative of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection. A pair of American porcelain vases, an Egyptian statue, and a Chinese earthenware horse, all share the quality of having mounts that exist internally.

A pair of 19th century Porcelain Vases needed to be stabilized for storage in the Met's American Wing. The previous mounting solution allowed movement between each of the vase's three stacking components, some of which were compromised by repairs. New mounts were designed to key into the interiors of the vases using various sized brass tubes, epoxy resin molds, felted arms and Sorbothane cushioned clamps. The new mount holds the assembled pieces firmly together from within, leaving the enameled and gilded surface untouched and uninterrupted.

An 8ft tall, 4000 year old sandstone Egyptian statue of Mentuhotep II was remounted for temporary exhibition. Two 9 inch steel rods set into the permanent gallery floor at random angles of 95.5 one way and 93.7 in another. When it was discovered the holes in the sandstone structure weren't much wider than the rods, the angles had to be precisely replicated. A digital protractor, precision squares found the angles and directions. Acetate and jigs were used to create a template to assist in welding the proper angles that would fit the same holes.

An earthenware Tang Dynasty Horse needed to relieve its legs of its own weight. A mount within the object's hollow structure locked onto an acrylic wall that lifted and supported the horse. Screw mechanisms adjust the distance between two brass plates within the mount, enabling it to lower safely and securely. One by one each leg is finely tuned to hover at an unnoticeable 1/8" above the deck.

Although most mounts supporting art are hidden, a viewer can usually crane their head at an angle to see the mount behind the piece. Some objects provide opportunity for mounts to exist entirely out of view. This talk offers a glimpse within the walls of a few objects whose mounts would otherwise be hidden.

BIO



Warren Bennett is an Object Conservation Preparator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art In New York City. Warren began working at the Met in 2006 for the Islamic Department during the renovation of their new galleries, the Art of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia. In 2010, he transferred to the Objects Conservation Department where his mount making responsibilities shifted to cover all of the museum's curatorial departments. He has worked as a model maker and scenic painter, before entering the museum world in 2002 as a model painter at the American Museum of Natural History. Warren received a BFA in Printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design.