

# Film series: Restoring Artemisia Gentileschi's Self Portrait

Go behind the scenes in Conservation to learn about the restoration of an exciting new acquisition – a recently discovered self portrait by the most celebrated female artist of the Italian Baroque, Artemisia Gentileschi

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/behind-the-scenes/film-series-restoring-artemisia-gentileschis-self-portrait>

## **Starting the restoration of Artemisia Gentileschi's 'Self Portrait' (2:28)**

Larry Keith, our Head of Conservation and Keeper, explains the steps we take to restore our paintings:

## **Cleaning Artemisia Gentileschi's 'Self Portrait' (5:44)**

What have we found so far during restoration? Larry Keith explains how the painting's appearance is changing as old varnishes are removed:

## **"It's such a 17th century thing to do" (2:23)**

Larry Keith and Letizia Treves, the James and Sarah Sassoon Curator of Later Italian, Spanish, and French 17th-century Paintings, discuss the process of cleaning the painting:

## **Who was Artemisia Gentileschi? (5:02)**

Who was Artemisia Gentileschi and how does she portray herself in this rare self portrait? Letizia Treves explores the life story of the most celebrated female artist of the 17th century, and why her self portrait is such an important acquisition to our collection:

## **Finishing the clean (7:55)**

What can we learn from Artemisia Gentileschi's painting process now that cleaning of the painting has finished? Larry Keith talks us through what he's found and what's next for our latest acquisition:

This conservation treatment was made possible with Art Fund support.

## **Repairing a 17th-century canvas (5:57)**

Where do you start when relining the canvas of a 17th-century painting and why is relining the painting so important? Find out with Conservators Paul Ackroyd and Lynne Harrison:

## **Applying the moisture treatment (5:04)**

How do we prepare a 17th-century painting and its canvas to be relined and what does a moisture treatment entail? Paul Ackroyd and Lynne Harrison show us the process:

### **Finishing the relining (7:45)**

Now that the painting has gone through a moisture treatment and the new canvas has been added to the back of the painting, it's time to examine the work by removing the facing on the surface:

### **Reconstructing the unusual composition (6:22)**

During the restoration of the painting, the unusual composition of Artemisia's 'Self Portrait' has come into view. Letizia Treves and Larry Keith discuss the decisions they have made to help restore the painting to what could be its original composition:

### **'It's True, It's True, It's True': Becoming Artemisia Gentileschi (16:14)**

Co-writer/director Billy Barrett and performer/co-writer Ellice Stevens tell Letizia Treves how Artemisia Gentileschi inspired their play, 'It's True, It's True, It's True', and how relevant her story is today:

### **Re-touching a 17th-century painting (9:39)**

Larry Keith begins the task of retouching some of the areas of damage seen on the painting:

### **Choosing a frame (12:37)**

How do you choose a frame for a 17th century painting that's never had one? Curator Letizia Treves chats with our Head of Conservation, Larry Keith, and our Head of Framing, Peter Schade, to talk about what frame will work for Artemisia Gentileschi's 'Self Portrait' and, surprisingly, what won't.

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For more updates on the conservation of this self portrait by Artemisia Gentileschi, follow [#NGArtemisia](#) on our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) channels.