

BMA Behind the Scenes

August 2011

Reinstalling George IV



It takes more than a hammer, nail, and picture hook to get *King George* up on the wall at the BMA. The painting, almost 10 feet tall, had been removed from the gallery of European art so that its golden frame could be cleaned and its original shine restored. The painted canvas was removed from the frame and stored safely away. Then the frame was dismantled by removing the long screws that held the four sides together. After the cleaning, the four sides were reassembled and the painting carefully secured in its frame. The painting (including its frame) weighed well over 200 hundred pounds.

It took ten people to maneuver the heavy painting into position so that *King George* could be lifted and safely reinstalled on the gallery wall. Here, seven BMA staff members wearing purple surgical gloves support the frame's lower edge, sides, and back. Meanwhile, two more staff members stand on lifts in order to connect two S-hooks attached to the wall with two additional S-hooks attached to the back of the frame. The Painting Conservator holds some of the foam pads that were set on the floor to cushion the edge of the frame and protect it from possible damage.

Connecting to 21st Century Skills

In a challenging operation, each person has a job to do. To install an enormous painting, muscle is clearly required, but TEAMWORK is also essential. Everyone has to work carefully and precisely to carry out the leader's plan and ensure that the painting, frame, wall, and floor will survive without a scrape.

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BMA staff reinstalls *George IV* in the Jacobs Gallery of The Baltimore Museum of Art, 2008.

George IV. 1820-1830. Studio of Sir Thomas Lawrence P.R.A. (English, 1769-1830). Oil on canvas. 116 x 80 inches. The Mary Frick Jacobs Collection. BMA 1938.174. Photo by Mitro Hood

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