

# Dianne Dwyer Modestini

## Curriculum Vitae

Ms. Dwyer Modestini received her B.A. in Art History from Barnard College, Columbia University in 1968 and in 1973 obtained an M.A. and Certificate of Advanced Study in Conservation from the State University of New York at Oneonta, Cooperstown Graduate Program under the direction of Caroline and Sheldon Keck. She holds a Certificate in decorative arts from the Accademia di Belle Arti in Florence, one in the conservation of mural paintings from the International Center for the Conservation of Cultural Property and the Istituto Centrale di Restauro in Rome where she studied in 1972 under the direction of Laura and Paolo Mora. After returning to the United States she worked on mural paintings in the New England area and served as a consultant to the SPNEA.

After an internship with Bernard Rabin at the Princeton Art Museum, Ms. Dwyer joined the staff of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1974 as assistant conservator. She worked under the direction of John Brealey and was appointed associate conservator in 1977 and full conservator in 1984. While at the Metropolitan Museum her principal responsibility was the restoration of the American paintings collection in preparation for the opening of the new American Wing in 1980 and worked closely with the curatorial department on many phases of the new paintings galleries and some of the period rooms. In addition she had the opportunity of conserving and restoring many other paintings of all schools and periods, responsibility for supervising fellows and interns, assistance in the administration of the department, as well as extensive work with loans and travelling exhibitions.

In 1987 she left the Metropolitan and set up a private practice in paintings conservation in New York. During this period she worked closely with her husband, Mario Modestini, widely acknowledged as one of the greatest restorers and connoisseurs of Italian painting of the past century, former Conservator and Curator of the Kress Foundation, and an expert in the restoration of gold ground paintings. Among their clients were The Frick Collection, The Toledo Museum of Art, the Berlin Museum, the art museums of San Francisco, New Orleans, Birmingham, Houston, Columbia, South Carolina and Allentown, Pennsylvania as well as the galleries of E.V. Thaw, William Acquavella, Agnews, Wildenstein, Bob P. Habeldt, Sotheby's and the collection of the late Stavros Niarchos. A longtime fellow of the AIC, she has been consultant to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Los Angeles County Museum, a member of the Empire State Plaza Art Commission, part of the Kress Commission that evaluated the restoration of the vault of the Sistine Chapel, and Curator and Conservator of Villa La Pietra in Florence. Presently she serves on the board of the Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence, is Conservation Consultant to The Samuel H. Kress Foundation and Senior Research Fellow and Paintings Conservator for the Samuel H. Kress Program at the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University where she teaches an advanced paintings class on the cleaning and retouching of old master paintings and a course on technical materials for connoisseurship for art history students.

Her publications include a study of John Kensett's painting technique for the catalogue of the 1984 exhibition, several articles written together with Mario Modestini on various aspects of Italian painting technique and restoration, a presentation on retouching published in the proceedings of the 2002 Yale Symposium, *Early Italian Paintings*:

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*Approaches to Conservation*, and an essay on the cleaning of paintings for the 2005 *Journal of the Metropolitan Museum*. The publication *Studying and Conserving Paintings. Occasional Papers on the Samuel H. Kress Collection* derived from examination and treatments performed in the Kress Program in Paintings Conservation and consists of papers by Mrs. Modestini and her former students and Fellows. For the past several years she has been working on a continuing project involving a memoir written by her late husband, Mario Modestini. She has lectured at AIC meetings, the Winterthur Art Conservation Program at the University of Delaware, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the University of Florence and the Roberto Longhi Foundation in Florence. Under her direction the Kress Program at the Conservation Center has restored over a hundred and fifty paintings from Kress Regional Galleries and Study Collections across the country, conducted surveys and given public lectures.

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