

## *Affichomanie:*

# Retracing the History and Practice of Lining Belle Époque Posters with Fabric

### INTRODUCTION

An 1881 Parisian freedom of the press law forever changed public notions regarding the placement of graphic artists and illustrators within the hierarchy of art. The law allowed for the liberal pasting of bills, or posters, throughout the city of Paris, where previously one had to be authorized to do so. Further, the law also extended to other forms of media and created an overall expansion of the mass media market within Paris.<sup>1</sup> Almost overnight the streets of Paris became an open-air gallery exhibiting the now famous images of bold color, design and celebrity depicted by skilled artists of the time; it was the birth of modern advertising. For artists, such as Jules Chéret (1836–1932), considered the “father of the poster”, this environment provided an opportunity to share colorful and playful imagery with the masses amongst the hustle and din of busy Parisian streets.

In 2010 and 2013 the gifts of Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller were acquired into the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario. Consisting of more than 80 artworks by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901), Théophile Alexandre Steinlen (1859–1923), and other Belle Époque artists, the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection is a remarkable compilation of posters, rare prints, drawings, archival materials, and illustrated books.

An initial survey of the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection revealed that many of the posters had been lined with fabric. The fabric linings varied in age, type and method of application. The universal demand for works by Lautrec and other Belle Époque artists remains high and often provides opportunities for conservation treatments to be performed, however, simultaneous research opportunities are rare. A fellowship funded by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation opened the door to explore the history and practice of lining Belle Époque posters with fabric. The objectives of the 2013–2014 Samuel H. Kress

Fellowship in Paper Conservation at the Art Gallery of Ontario were as follows:

1. Organization and condition survey of the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection
2. Research
3. Testing and analysis
4. Treatment
5. Exhibition preparation
6. Storage

These objectives guided a year of research and conservation practice, the results of which are presented in this paper.

### AFFICHEURS

For Lautrec, Steinlen and artists of the Belle Époque new posters were eagerly anticipated, each new poster gave the public rare glimpses into the dancehalls, clubs and cabarets of Montmartre and avant-garde Paris; each day presented a new opportunity for the flames of “affichomanie” or “poster-mania” to be fanned. The public obsession with posters and the freedom of the press law also contributed to the growth of related trades, such as the rise of afficheurs or poster pasters, as seen in figure 1.<sup>2</sup> In the image it is possible to see a female poster paster in the process of adhering a poster to an outdoor wall, she is equipped with a pasting brush, paste bucket and satchel containing folded copies of the poster. It is noted that Belle Époque posters typically exhibit creases from prior folding for this reason; it is also believed that posters were often stored folded as collectors’ notations are frequently found adjacent to folding creases, as seen in figure 2 (Romand, N., 2014). The man in the image could be a tax officer surveying the wall to ensure that all of the posters have acquired the necessary tax stamp for public display. An example of a tax stamp can be seen in figure 3, these stamps are frequently found on surviving Belle Époque posters.

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Fig. 1. A female afficheur adhering a poster to an outdoor wall.

#### COLLECTORS

Literature often states that at the peak of the “affichomanie” those compelled to do so were able to seek out and obtain instructions outlining how to remove freshly pasted posters in the middle of the night.<sup>3</sup> However, further research revealed that the original reference had a much more satirical tone. In an April 1893 letter that he wrote for *Le Père peinar*, described as an anarchist newspaper, Félix Fénéon illustrates the fervor for the work of the poster artists and encourages those as enamored as him to help themselves to the posters. Fénéon writes:

One (poster artist) who has guts is Lautrec: his designs and his use of color are by no means pretentious. Use of white, black and red over large surfaces and simplified forms: that’s his thing. LA GOULUE, REINE DE JOIE, le DIVAN JAPONAIS in a café: these are examples of the creative poster art of Lautrec: and these few examples are full of drive, audacity and cheekiness...

Furthermore, I have an idea in the back of my mind which I am going to share with you right away. These posters are really fine...why not take advantage of them? If they’ve only

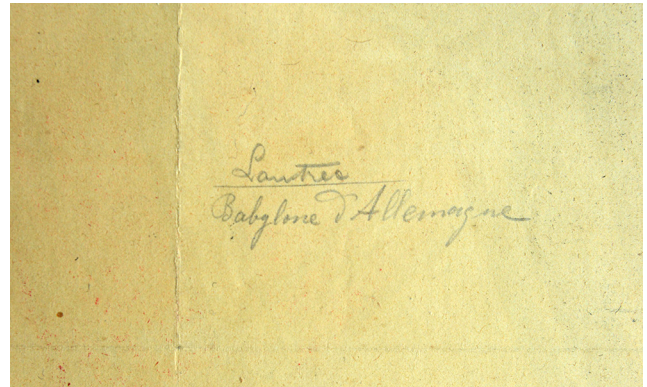


Fig. 2. A collector’s notation adjacent to central folds on the verso of a poster.



Fig. 3. A typical tax stamp found on Belle Époque posters.

been pasted for a short time or while it’s raining, or when the posters have been slapped over a thick layer and become like cardboard—it’s quite easy to get them off the wall: but watch out for the cops...Once you’re back home—what to do? Wash them well, then dry them on the line, patch up the tears and voilà! Pin your booty on the walls of your apartment—your apartment where, of course, your landlord lets the wallpaper hang in ribbons. A Lautrec or Chéret at home: that’s the thing that will make it gleam! Your place will light up with a riot of color and fun. These posters are really class (Halperin 1988, 229–31).<sup>4</sup>

It is clear that Fénéon is truly an admirer of Lautrec and the poster artists, however, considering that this article was written in a small, independent, niche newspaper, it is difficult to believe that more than a select few individuals would have taken Fénéon’s advice literally. Imagine for a moment peeling a three or four foot poster off of a wall in one piece and then attempting to carry it home without it folding into a wet, sticky, crumpled heap. Although it is likely that a handful of enthusiastic and determined individuals would have attempted such a feat, it is also equally, if not more so, likely

that many afficheurs were paid-off by enterprising collectors, and that Fénéon-like behavior was less common. Accusing eager collectors of peeling posters off of walls in the middle of the night provided an ideal cover for the afficheurs.

One question that arises is the conundrum of the tax stamp, many believe that if a surviving Belle Époque poster has a tax stamp that it must have been displayed outdoors, and therefore removed from a wall by an eager collector. This may not be the case, it is possible that posters were stamped in large volumes once received in the tax office from the printer. It would have been significantly easier, and more efficient, to stamp a large run of posters in succession than to complete the task on-site at various locations throughout Paris. Consequently, a collector could have acquired a stamped poster from an afficheur prior to the poster being pasted onto a wall.

#### POSTER DEALERS

For those less inclined to remove Lautrec posters directly from walls, or pay off afficheurs, there was soon a third option, the poster dealer. The most widely known poster dealer in the 1890s was Edmond Sagot, a postcard advertising his shop can be seen in figure 4. Nicolas and Mireille Romand, descendants of Edmond Sagot, continue to operate two commercial galleries in Paris, Galerie Sagot—Le Garrec, and Galerie Documents. Throughout the 1890s and into the 20th century Edmond Sagot sold posters directly from the printers to private collectors and institutions in Paris and around the world. The original Sagot poster archive is comprised of index cards listing the name of the poster, who the poster was sold to and the cost, it is a truly remarkable resource. Even with the aid of poster dealing and private collecting it is still extraordinary that so many Belle Époque posters have survived into the 21st century, especially considering their ephemeral nature and the use of poor quality paper; certainly, the practice of lining the posters with fabric has saved many of them from ruin.



Fig. 4. A postcard advertising Edmond Sagot's shop.

#### SURVEY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A detailed survey of the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection uncovered that many of the Lautrec posters had indeed been lined with fabric supports, including: *Le Pendu* (1892), *Aristide Bruant* (1893), *La Vache Enragée* (1893), *Au Pied de l'Echafaud* (1893), *Babylone d'Allemagne* (1894), *Le Photographe Sescou* (1896), *L'Aube* (1896). Research questions regarding the fabric linings included:

- Were the posters originally lined with fabric in the 1890s or were the linings a later addition?
- Who lined the posters?
- What materials were used to line the posters?
- How have the fabric linings affected the conditions of the posters?
- How has the practice of lining Belle Époque posters with fabric changed, or remained the same, over the last century?

Librairie Artistique.		Edmond Sagot		18 rue Guisard 18.	
M. Pott & Fils (Paris)		Paris le 20/11. 1891.		P. P.	
1	Affiches illustrées par Chéret, Gresso, Willet, Lepore				5.-
1	Album. Héros et éras				15.-
1	de 8. Rouquartiers				10.-
1	de Bonlieux de l'Opera				25.-
1	de Belle-Beaumont-Saint-Hubert				3.50.
1	de Louvre-Stienne??				3.-
1	de Enfant prodigue				
1	Affiche Sagot (primauté Catalogue)				
1	Collage sur toile des affiches et dévants (dans tout)	5.-		35.-	
1	Album. Héros de Paris			5.-	
1	de Rouquartiers			3.50.	
1	de Grotto Guillard			3.50.	
1	Lepore. Cycle Cochet			3.-	
1	Gresso. Librairie romantique			3.-	
1	de Héros et éras			3.50.	
1	de Héros de Paris			10.-	
1	Collage des f. affiches et dévants doublets		3.-	2.-	
1	M. Pott Enfant prodigue et collage sur toile			2.-	
1	Catalogue d'affiches illustrées			10.-	
				Total des	165.-
				emballage en boîtes	3.-
				gros	168.-

Fig. 5. An 1891 transcript from Designmuseum Danmark outlining the costs to have posters lined with fabric.

**COMMERCE**  
DE L'INDUSTRIE  
DE LA MAGISTRATURE ET DE L'ADMINISTRATION  
ou  
**ALMANACH 1,500,000 ADRESSES**  
DE PARIS, DES DÉPARTEMENTS, DES COLONIES ET DES PAYS ÉTRANGERS  
**DIDOT-BOTTIN**  
101<sup>e</sup> ANNÉE DE LA PUBLICATION  
**1898**  
PREMIÈRE PARTIE  
**PARIS**  
DÉPARTEMENT DE LA SEINE (ARROND., CANTONS ET COMMUNES)

L'avis de tout changement de domicile pour le DÉPARTEMENT DE LA SEINE doit être parvenu avant le 1<sup>er</sup> OCTOBRE.

B

L'avis de toute modification pour la PROVINCE doit être parvenu avant le 1<sup>er</sup> OCTOBRE, et pour les PAYS ÉTRANGERS avant le 1<sup>er</sup> OCTOBRE.

Nous accueillons avec empressement, pour l'édition 1899, tous les renseignements qui nous seront adressés jusqu'aux dates indiquées ci-dessus.

**SIÈGE SOCIAL : PARIS, 54, Rue Jacob**

**LE (H.),** torres en tous genres, Pont-de-Chaux, 27.  
**SET & C<sup>o</sup>,** encadrements et vitres, rue de la Harpe, 63.  
**Belleville, 63.**  
Sculpteur, médailles en tous genres, lettres et cartons, r. du Faub.-St-Marc, 5, 50.  
**SSART (A.),** rent., 1 mié. de vauze.  
**ZINC,** four préparations, rue le plaignage des  
**CUIVRE**  
**ETC.** Spécialité, r. de la Harpe, 63.  
**(D.),** fabr. d'enseignes et inscriptions sur cuivre, 183, r. d'Aboukir.  
**bel, in.**  
**SLAAN (J. G.),** enseignes métalliques en marbre, 108 bis, r. de la Voie, 11.  
**Spinola,** boul. Richard-Lenoir, 120.  
**Foncteur-Hautelou,** boul. Haubert, 32.  
**TRIER (EUGÈNE),** cristaux, rambures, etc.  
**VALÉE (Charles),** 1879, 1889, 1890, ENSEIGNES et  
**STORES,** fabr. de lettres en relief en zinc doré, spécialité d'enseignes et de lettres en fer, BOULONNE-SUR-MER, attributs, etc.  
**12, RUE BEAUFORT, 12.**  
**Vallet (Jules),** r. d'Aboukir, 108.  
**Vandrounque,** r. des Lons, 10.

**RAMBOUTZ,** Directeur d'enseignes, r. du Temple, 172. **PLAQUES** en tous genres **LETTRES** brevetées s. g. d. g. 113.  
**REGNARD** (Pierre), Bernard, succ.), **LETTRES MONSTRÉS** en zinc doré pour enseignes brevetées. Siège de tous métiers, r. Bayen, 50. **TELEPH. 500-55.**  
**REIGNIER,** r. J. J. Rousseau, 29.  
**Richomme-Denis,** 8 m<sup>es</sup>. @ 1891, 1879 et 1870, 82, 80, 90, fabr. et enseignes en zinc, gravures, découpes, charbon, gants, ombrelles, lettres en zinc et en cuivre, r. des Gravilliers, 72.  
**Rivaux,** r. de Buci, 15.  
**Roq.,** r. du Choeur-Midi, 108 bis.  
**Ruelle,** r. Mademoiselle, 10.

**SARREQUEMINES & DIGOIN (S. et L.),** **UTZSCHNEIDER & C<sup>ie</sup>,** Tailleurs et Enseignes en France, Belgique, r. Paradis, 28.  
**Silvert,** pass. des Panoramas, 26 (Voir Étiquettes à la main).  
**Sire (Louis),** Faub.-du-Temple, 115.  
**SLAAN (J. G.),** enseignes métalliques en marbre, 108 bis, r. de la Voie, 11.  
**Spinola,** boul. Richard-Lenoir, 120.  
**Foncteur-Hautelou,** boul. Haubert, 32.  
**TRIER (EUGÈNE),** cristaux, rambures, etc.  
**VALÉE (Charles),** 1879, 1889, 1890, ENSEIGNES et STORES, fabr. de lettres en relief en zinc doré, spécialité d'enseignes et de lettres en fer, BOULONNE-SUR-MER, attributs, etc.  
**12, RUE BEAUFORT, 12.**  
**Vallet (Jules),** r. d'Aboukir, 108.  
**Vandrounque,** r. des Lons, 10.

**ENTOILAGE DE CARTES ET PLANS**  
**CAILLOL,** ancien employé de la maison Cavalier, r. Galande, 30.  
Cailloil (ancienne maison) **(D'ARDAUVILLIERS** succ.), entoilage de plans et cartes géographiques, collages, dessins, etc., quai des Grands-Augustins, 27.  
Charpentier, r. N.-D.-des-Champs, 8.  
**Corion (ancienne maison) (Ch. GEFPROY** gendre et succ.), spécialité d'entoilage et services de plans et cartes géographiques, fournisseurs de la ville de Paris, des ministères, chemins de fer, etc., quai des Grands-Augustins, 20 (près le Pont-Neuf).  
**DENCEDE (A.),** fournisseur des écoles Polytechnique, des Ponts-et-Chaussées, des Beaux-Arts, des Ministères, de la Préfecture de la Seine, des compagnies de chemins de fer et grandes administrations. Collage, entoilage et sérissage d'Invarolles. Lettes, Cartes géographiques et plans de tous formats, r. de Rennes, 121.  
**Dardaillères (A.),** quai des Grands-Augustins, 57.  
**Dupuis,** r. Pierre-Sarrasin, 7.  
**Fores,** r. de Buci, 15.  
**Hédouin,** r. Percival, 28.  
**Picou (E.),** boul. Bonne-Nouvelle, 7 bis.  
**(C<sup>o</sup>)** Villiers (Jules), fab. de boîtes métalliques à profil, brev. s. g. d. g., r. de Bondy, 74 cité Rivaroli, 2 et 4.  
Valée, rue Rambuteau, 63.

**ENTOURAGE D'ARBRES** (dus CORSES en 1890)  
**CHOUET (D.),** fournisseur de la Ville de Paris, tous à vue pour et sur place, cours de Vincennes, 20, 22, 24.

**ENTREPOSITAIRES (Pour tous WARRANTS)**  
**Bastide (G.) et C<sup>o</sup>,** r. d'Hauterive, 35.  
**BRASSERIE DE VANTORVILLE, TOURNEI,** rue Albany, 11.

LEFT TO RIGHT

Fig. 6a. Records from the Archives de Paris showing registered businesses for the service of entoilage as early as 1898.

Fig. 6b. Records from the Archives de Paris showing registered businesses for the service of entoilage as early as 1898, detail of entoilage listings.

At the advice of Edmond Sagot, collectors purchasing posters from him were encouraged to have them lined with fabric for the purposes of transport, display, and preservation (Romand, N., 2014). Sagot himself would have had only a few lined posters on hand in his shop for display purposes, posters were typically lined on an as needed basis once purchased by collectors (Romand, N., 2014). It cost between three to five Francs to have the posters lined with fabric as outlined in transcripts from Designmuseum Danmark, formerly the Danish Museum of Decorative Arts (fig. 5). An excerpt from the transcript reads, “collage sur toile des affiches ci dessus”, translating to, “line with canvas the above posters”. At five Francs each the total is thirty-five Francs for the seven Chéret posters listed at the top.

There is little evidence to suggest that Edmond Sagot himself lined the posters. Investigation into the Edmond Sagot archive at the Institut national d’histoire de l’art (INHA) in Paris revealed early 20th century invoices for the service of entoilage or lining. Further, records from the Archives de Paris show that specific entoilage businesses were registered within Paris as early as 1898 (figs. 6a, 6b). Prior to 1898 it is probable that the poster lining practice was carried out by professionals in related fields such as bookbinders or professionals in the wallpaper industry (Romand, M., 2014).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The original poster linings of the late 19th century were described as a loose, gauze-like fabric called “toile à beurre”, translating to “butter or cheese cloth”. They were typically composed of cotton and adhered with wheat paste or possibly fish glue (Romand, M., 2014).

Samples of a select group of linings from the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection were analyzed by Kate Helwig, Senior Conservation Scientist at the Canadian Conservation Institute and Dr. Daniel Kirby, Associate Conservation Scientist at the Harvard Art Museums Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies. The results of the material analysis were not unexpected. The fiber and adhesive analysis, as seen in table 1, identified all fibers as cotton and adhesives composed of both starch and protein, with traces of ruminant animal fat, paraffin wax, Pinaceae resin, gypsum, talc and magnesite.<sup>5</sup> The presence of fish glue was not detected for any of the samples.<sup>6</sup> However, based on personal examination of fabric lined Belle Époque poster collections at Les Arts Decoratifs in Paris, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, it was determined that all of the linings in the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection post-date the earliest “toile à beurre” linings.

CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES

The practice of lining Belle Époque posters with fabric continues today by conservators and private restorers. The Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection presents a range of lining types, including conservation and commercial linings. An example of a commercially restored poster within the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection can be seen in figure 7. Contemporary commercial practice often includes first stretching a thick, tightly woven canvas around a stretcher then facing the canvas with cartridge or masa paper. The poster is then adhered to the paper-faced fabric with wheat starch paste and dried under tension. Extensive restorations

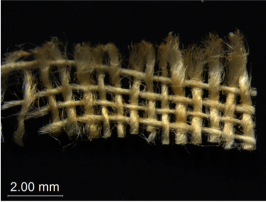
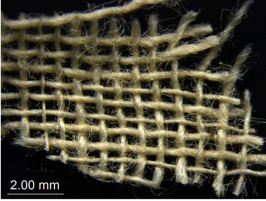
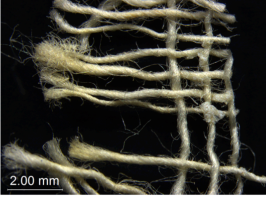
ADHESIVE	FIBRES	SAMPLE
starch protein (collagen type) minor ruminant animal fat trace paraffin wax trace <i>Pinaceae</i> resin	vertical: cotton horizontal: cotton	 <p>©Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute</p> <p><i>Babylone d'Allemagne</i>, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1894</p>
starch protein (collagen type) gypsum ( $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ) minor ruminant animal fat trace <i>Pinaceae</i> resin	vertical: cotton horizontal: cotton	 <p>©Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute</p> <p><i>Le Photograph Sescou</i>, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1896</p>
<p><b>Transparent Material:</b>                      protein (collagen type)                      minor ruminant animal fat                      trace <i>Pinaceae</i> resin</p> <p><b>White Material:</b>                      starch                      protein                      talc (<math>\text{Mg}_3\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{10}(\text{OH})_2</math>)                      magnesite (<math>\text{MgCO}_3</math>)</p>	vertical: cotton horizontal: cotton	 <p>©Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute</p> <p><i>L'Aube</i>, Henri de Toulouse- Lautrec, 1896</p>

Table 1. The analysis of three poster lining fabrics and adhesives.

including toning, paper in-fills, and in-painting are completed once the poster is dry. Prior to these steps, posters are often separated from older linings or backing boards with aqueous treatments. While this type of commercial practice has been partially informed by concepts used in conservation, it is very difficult to reverse. It remains unclear as to when these more rigid, heavier, fabric linings came into almost universal practice and where the practice and techniques originated.

Unfortunately, condition issues resulting from the inherent vices of the poster papers, unsuitable paste mixtures, and improper framing still remain and require attention, as seen in figure 8. For these reasons seven fabric-lined Lautrec posters were selected as a representative group from the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection to provide experience with variant treatment approaches and methods, as seen in table 2.



Fig. 7. A commercially restored poster from the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection, *Au Pied de l'Echafaud*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1893, lithograph on paper, 83.4 x 61cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/92.



Fig. 8. A poster with visible distortion due to improper framing, *Babylone d'Allemagne*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1894, lithograph on paper, 125.5 x 89cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/93.

POSTER	LINING TYPE	CONDITION ISSUES
<i>Le Pendu</i> (1892)	Tightly woven, impregnated fabric	Planar distortions, overall discoloration, restored
<i>Aristide Bruant</i> (1893)	Loosely woven fabric	Planar distortions, discoloration, possibly exposure to moisture
<i>La Vache Enragée</i> (1893)	Tightly woven fabric	Adhesive residues and staining, restored
<i>Au Pied de l'Echafaud</i> (1893)	Tightly woven fabric	Adhesive residues, restored
<i>Babylone d'Allemagne</i> (1894)	Loosely woven fabric	Planar distortions, cockling, delaminating from fabric lining
<i>Le Photographe Sescou</i> (1896)	Loosely woven fabric	Surface grime, planar distortions, losses along bottom edge, lining wrapped around recto edges
<i>L'Aube</i> (1896)	Loosely woven fabric	Planar distortions, overall discoloration

Table 2. Fabric-lined Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec posters from the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection



Fig. 9. Jeff Peachey's Carbon Fiber Lifter used to remove a fabric lining from a poster.



Fig. 10. The thread-by-thread fabric lining removal process.

#### TREATMENT

Condition reports, dry cleaning and aqueous solubility tests were completed. Of the seven posters, three had previously undergone extensive restoration, *Le Pendu* (1892), *La Vache Enragée* (1893), and *Au Pied de l'Echafaud* (1893); it was decided that for these three posters further treatments, apart from dry cleaning, would not improve their appearance. For the remaining four posters, *Aristide Bruant* (1893), *Babylone d'Allemagne* (1894), *Le Photographe Sescou* (1896), and *L'Aube* (1896), although previously believed to be stable, various inks demonstrated sensitivity to repeated aqueous spot tests. The red inks of Belle Époque posters can be particularly sensitive and have a propensity to bleed through to the verso of the poster when lining (Catcher, 2014). For this reason it was determined that, where possible, mechanical removal of unstable linings would be fitting.

Linings were mechanically removed using two methods, the first with the use of a flat *Carbon Fiber Lifter* designed by Jeff Peachey (fig. 9). The *Carbon Fiber Lifter*<sup>7</sup> worked very well on poster linings with a noticeably dry and brittle adhesive layer. The second method of lining removal involved removing the lining thread-by-thread (fig. 10). This method was

used for posters where the *Carbon Fiber Lifter* could not successfully get between the adhesive layer and the lining. For a 2 x 3 ft. poster, the thread-by-thread method was completed in approximately two full working days. Remaining adhesive residues on the versos of the posters were removed to the extent possible first mechanically, and second with the use of a methylcellulose poultice. For posters with media sensitivity these two lining removal techniques proved effective.

Often the condition issues present when examining fabric lined Belle Époque posters are not caused by the fabric linings themselves, but the result of close-framing, exposure to humid environments or loss of adhesion due to the embrittlement of pastes. If fabric linings were widely used in the late 19th century and provided adequate support to prolong the life of so many Belle Époque posters, could fabric linings continue to be used today in conservation practice?

To determine if the use of fabric linings could be a viable conservation treatment for Belle Époque posters two fabrics, one natural in color and one white, were sourced from France for their potential use as lining materials.<sup>8</sup> Referred to as "étamine", the fabrics are often used in a culinary setting, and, with a looser weave, they are similar to both the original "toile à beurre" linings previously mentioned as well as older linings examined at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Both fabrics were tested for their suitability as conservation materials by the Canadian Conservation Institute, and both fabrics demonstrated stability with a neutral pH and cotton composition, as seen in table 3.<sup>9</sup>

Newsprint mock-ups were created using each of the French fabrics and wheat starch paste to see how the fabrics would interact with paper of similar age and condition to the posters (fig. 11). While the process of creating the mock-ups was informative and demonstrated that the fabrics can be used to line posters, the process also brought forth more points for discussion. The fabric linings do create a different type of object, similar to a wall hanging or a piece that can be wrapped around a tertiary support, these are factors that must be considered when determining future display, or future display can inform the relining process. If the poster is likely to be matted and framed a Japanese paper lining might be more suitable as it is thinner. For these reasons it makes sense that Belle Époque posters were originally lined with fabric supports, as it is unlikely that early collectors had the posters matted and framed, as Fénéon illustrated when describing the ideal form of display, pinning posters to the walls of one's apartment.

The relining of posters within the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection is an on-going process. As each poster is unique and presents varying challenges, determining a suitable relining material will continue to be done on an individual basis. To provide a sampling, the results of two lining removal and relining treatments from the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection can be found in the

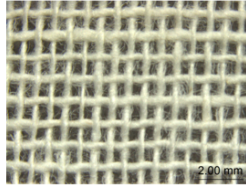
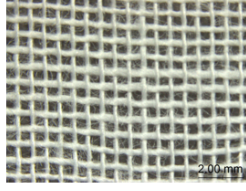
ELEMENTS	pH	SAMPLE
major: carbon minor: oxygen  <b>Results:</b> cotton trace tallow fatty acids	vertical: cotton horizontal: cotton	 <p>©Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute</p> <p>Natural Étamine</p>
major: carbon minor: oxygen  <b>Results:</b> cotton trace tallow fatty acids	vertical: cotton horizontal: cotton	 <p>©Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute</p> <p>White Étamine</p>

Table 3. The analysis of two fabrics (étamine) considered for use as poster lining materials.



Fig. 11. Newsprint mock-up using wheat starch paste and white étamine

Appendix. The relining treatment for *Le Photographe Sescou* (1896) was completed using Japanese paper, and the relining treatment for *L'Aube* was completed using “étamine”. Equivalent techniques, outlined in the Appendix, were used to line both posters. Due to time constraints, and the postponement of a major exhibition to showcase the Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection, only *Le Photographe Sescou* (1896) and *L'Aube* (1896) were conserved using these methods. The two remaining posters to be treated, *Aristide Bruant* (1893) and *Babylone d'Allemagne* (1894) are stable and will undergo further conservation treatments as time permits.

STORAGE

It is often difficult to find workable storage solutions for larger poster collections due to both the volume and oversized nature of many artworks. The popularity of Belle Époque posters requires that storage solutions provide long-term stability, ease of access, and a low storage footprint. In collaboration with Art Gallery of Ontario Collections Care Specialists, large, custom, Mylar® L-sleeves were created to house all posters in Ross R. Scott and Donald R. Muller Collection prior to storing them in large map cabinets or enclosed trays. The custom Mylar® enclosures can also easily be clipped to rigid boards for temporary display, such as for curatorial talks or behind the scenes tours.





Fig. 12. *The Wrinkles of a City, La Havana, Leda Antonia Machado, Cuba, JR, 2012, wheatpasted print, unknown dimensions.*

## CONCLUSIONS

The search for more information regarding the history and practice of lining Belle Époque posters with fabric revealed a fascinating narrative including afficheurs, poster dealers, clandestine purchases, and entoilage businesses. Over time the practice of lining Belle Époque posters with fabric has changed significantly. The evolution of both conservation and commercial practices has produced a range of varied lining methods and materials. Although diverse, the use of fabric linings to support Belle Époque posters has aided tremendously in their ability to outlast other ephemera of the late 19th century. “Étamine” can be added to the list of viable relining materials for use in the conservation of Belle Époque posters.

While the practice of lining Belle Époque posters has changed over the last century, the occasion for artists to exhibit their artwork globally as an international phenomenon on city streets has become commonplace. Contemporary street art in the form of wheatpasting is thriving as a direct descendant of the poster revolution. Artists continue to share their artwork with the masses, and on an even larger scale, such as the artwork of French artist JR (fig. 12). Either overnight, or occasionally taking days for larger projects, wheatpasting artists continue the tradition of using conventional spaces to encourage unconventional social dialogue. But, who is collecting their work, and what will it look like a hundred years into the future?

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who were very gracious with their time; as well as Kate Helwig and Dr. Daniel Kirby for their scientific research and analysis." This represents only a few minor changes in the text of the acknowledgement, but it seemed easier to copy out the whole section than mark up the document.

## APPENDIX

2010/100—*Le Photograph Sescou* The poster depicts a woman cloaked in red, wearing a half-mask and carrying a lorgnette and fan. She is being photographed by Paul Sescou, who is only visible by his checkered pant legs. There is also a small drawing in the top right corner of a girl and a pig. The poster has been printed in five colors, black, dark blue, red, yellow and olive green.

### ARTIST

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

### DIMENSIONS

62cm x 80cm

### TECHNIQUE

Lithograph

### SIGNATURE

In the printed image, HTL elephant monogram

### SUPPORT TYPE

Wove paper

### PRINTER

None

### SUPPORT FIBRE TYPE

Wood

### INSCRIPTIONS

Stamp, recto, red ink, HTL circular monogram

### SECONDARY SUPPORT

Loosely woven textile support, cotton

### PREVIOUS TREATMENT

No visible previous treatment

### SUPPORT CONDITION

An overall color shift is visible, as seen in the exposed area beneath the overlapping lining in the bottom right corner. There is a heavier deposit of surface grime along the right side of the paper sheet. Significant planar distortions and creases are present, as well as numerous image and support losses along the bottom edge. A few small tears are also visible along



LEFT TO RIGHT  
 Fig. 13a. Before treatment.  
*Le Photograph Sescou*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1896, lithograph on paper, 62.5 x 80cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/100.  
 Fig. 13b. After treatment.

the left and top edges. There is a small area of surface damage present in the “e” of “Pigalle” and there are also small biological accretions present throughout the paper sheet.

#### IMAGE CONDITION

The media appears to be stable, the ink rests nicely on the paper sheet and has an even tone of application. See Testing below.

#### TESTING

The media was tested for solubility with distilled water and all colors exhibited some sensitivity to moisture at the surface, especially red, yellow and dark blue. The area of surface grime along the right side of the paper sheet responded well to a dry surface cleaning test. The secondary support may undergo fiber analysis to determine the fiber type.

#### SECONDARY SUPPORT CONDITION

The secondary support is unstable and aiding planar distortions, with the left and right edges of the lining folding over and adhered to the recto of the work. The secondary support is very noticeably torn and frayed along the bottom edge. The adhesive binding the secondary support to the paper sheet is quite dry and the adhesion is not very strong.

#### PROPOSED TREATMENT

Overall dry surface cleaning, possible consolidation along the bottom edge, mechanical or aqueous removal of secondary support depending on the results of further testing, adherence of new secondary support (to be determined), appropriate drying, assess any losses for fill and/or toning requirements, especially along the bottom edge.

#### TREATMENT

The poster underwent dry surface cleaning, visibly reducing surface grime particularly along the right edge. The fabric lining was removed using the Carbon Fiber Lifter. The remaining adhesive residue was removed using a methylcellulose poultice and spatula.

The poster was humidified in a humidification chamber and then lined with Tosa Usushi Japanese paper and wheat starch paste. Paste was first applied to the lining paper using a Japanese brush, the humidified poster was then placed on the pasted lining paper. With a Mylar® sheet on the recto the poster was then smoothed out from the center using light hand pressure. Using this method the red inks on the recto did not bleed through to the verso of the poster. The lined poster was placed between Hollytex and blotters in a blotter stack to dry. Final decisions regarding the toning of losses along the bottom edge are pending as well as the possibility of relining the poster again with a thicker Japanese paper. Before and after treatment images can be seen in figures 13a and 13b.

#### 2010/101— *L'Aube*

This poster was produced for *L'Aube*, a journal at the time; it depicts a man in a wagon being pulled by a horse and women following behind them. It has been printed in two colors, dark blue and a green-blue background.

#### ARTIST

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

#### DIMENSIONS

60.8cm x 79.1cm

#### TECHNIQUE

Lithography

#### SIGNATURE

In the printed image, HTL elephant monogram

#### SUPPORT TYPE

Wove paper

#### PRINTER

None

#### SUPPORT FIBRE TYPE

Wood

## INSCRIPTIONS

Verso, bottom right corner, “16” or “76”, and along top edge, under the lining there is an unknown inscription

## SECONDARY SUPPORT

Loosely woven textile support, cotton

## PREVIOUS TREATMENT

No visible previous treatment

## SUPPORT CONDITION

There is a minor overall color shift visible, as well as many small yellow-brown spot stains throughout the paper sheet, possibly due to an unidentified paste mixture. There is significant planar distortion present (exposure to moisture? from lining?) and an overall crinkly feel to the poster. There is some surface grime present.

## IMAGE CONDITION

The media appear stable, the ink rests with a slight three dimensional quality on the paper sheet and has an even tone of application.

## TESTING

The media was tested for solubility with distilled water, both colors exhibited some sensitivity to moisture, see attached media card. The work also responded well to a dry surface cleaning test, however, some surface media may transfer; a gentle dry surface cleaning with a soft brush is recommended. The secondary support may undergo fiber analysis to determine the fiber type.

## SECONDARY SUPPORT CONDITION

The secondary support is unstable and aiding planar distortions. There are slubs present and the small yellow-brown spot stains mentioned above are also visible on the secondary support. The adhesive binding the secondary support to the poster is quite dry and the adhesion is not very strong. Hinges are attached to the lining on the verso of the work, as well as a paper remnant in the top right corner.

## PROPOSED TREATMENT

Overall dry surface cleaning, mechanical or aqueous removal of secondary support depending on the results of further testing, adherence of new secondary support (to be determined), appropriate drying, assess any losses for fill and/or toning requirements.

## TREATMENT

The poster underwent dry surface cleaning using a soft brush. The fabric lining was removed using the thread-by-thread

method. The lining removal revealed a collector's inscription located at the middle of the top edge, adjacent to a central fold, the inscription reads “Lautrec L'Aube”.

A methylcellulose poultice and spatula were used to remove the residual adhesive from the verso, as a cautionary note, the support unexpectedly became very reactive to this process. The support would temporarily appear as though the residual adhesive had been removed, however, on drying, the treated area would crinkle, and had a tendency to split along creases (fig. 14b)<sup>10</sup>. Also, after removing the residual adhesive a pasting pattern became clearly discernable. The pasting pattern could have been caused by the application of the previous lining or the adherence of the poster to a wall. Visually, there appeared to be two different types of paste on the verso of the poster, the adhesive was removed to the extent possible before relining the poster.

The poster was humidified in a chamber and then lined with natural color étamine and wheat starch paste. Paste was first applied to the fabric lining using a Japanese brush. After removing the poster from the humidity chamber a dahlia sprayer was sparingly used on the verso of the poster to ensure it did not dry out and return to its previously distorted state. The poster was then placed on the pasted lining fabric. With a Mylar® sheet on the recto, the poster was smoothed out from the center using light hand pressure. The lined poster was dried under tension on an acrylic sheet with weights along the edges of the lining to hold tension. Before, during, and after treatment images can be seen in figures 14a, 14b, 14c, and 14d.

## NOTES

1. The law still remains in effect today, for further information visit [www.france.fr/en/institutions-and-values/freedom-press-fundamental-legal-cornerstones.html](http://www.france.fr/en/institutions-and-values/freedom-press-fundamental-legal-cornerstones.html)
2. See Phillip Dennis Cate, *The Color Revolution*, 1978, 10.
3. See Jane Abdy, *The French Poster: Chéret to Cappiello*, London, 1969, 21.
4. Translated by Christine Fillion, Conservator of Paintings, Art Gallery of Ontario
5. Analysis was completed using Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), pyrolysis-gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (Py-GC-MS) and polarized light microscopy (PLM).
6. Analysis was completed using Peptide mass fingerprinting (PMF).
7. Designed to slide between and separate materials, visit [www.jeffpeachey.com](http://www.jeffpeachey.com)
8. The fabrics were sourced from Marché Saint-Pierre, 2 Rue Charles Nodier, 75018 Paris, France
9. Analysis was completed using scanning electron microscopy/energy dispersive spectrometry (SEM/EDS), Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), pyrolysis-gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (Py-GC-MS) and polarized light microscopy (PLM).
10. A similar result can be seen in the during treatment images provided by Ingelise Nielsen in *The Conservation of Toulouse-Lautrec Posters*.



Fig. 14a. Before treatment. *L'Aube*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1896, lithograph on paper, 60.9 x 41cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/101



Fig. 14d. After treatment. *L'Aube*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1896, lithograph on paper, 60.9 x 41cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/101

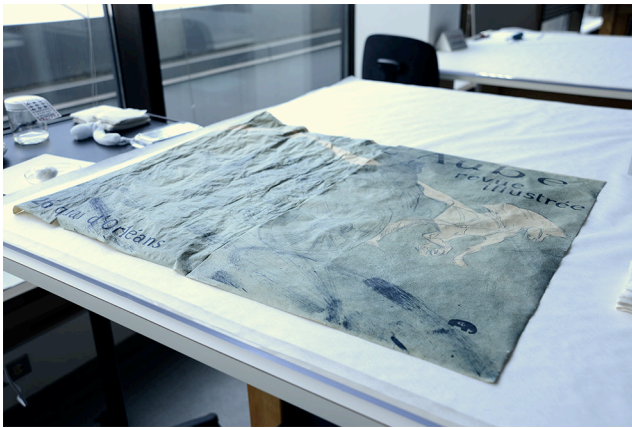


Fig. 14b. During treatment, recto; methylcellulose poultice has been used on the verso of the left side to remove residual adhesive, on drying the poster crinkled significantly. *L'Aube*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1896, lithograph on paper, 60.9 x 41cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/101



Fig. 14c. During treatment, detail of verso showing pasting pattern. *L'Aube*, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1896, lithograph on paper, 60.9 x 41cm, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010/101

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