

OCT IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER TECHNIQUES FOR EXAMINING AND ANALYSING WORKS OF ART

David Saunders
The British Museum

E-mail: DSaunders@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

While the OCT technique provides a useful tool for the non-invasive examination of museum objects, it is not yet capable of analysing the materials that compose the structure which it images. This paper examines how OCT compares with other examination methods and can be used in tandem with those methods to give a more complete analysis of works of art.

OCT is compared with non-invasive imaging techniques such as visible imaging, ultraviolet fluorescence imaging and infrared reflectography, which largely provide two-dimensional images of objects, and with three-dimensional methods such as X-radiography and neutron radiography.

Non-invasive vibrational methods such as Raman and infrared spectroscopy and other non-contact analytical techniques, including X-ray fluorescence, give information about single points, usually on the surface. The information provided by these methods can be enhanced if the choice of sampling positions can be informed by mapping techniques, and the role of OCT in this process is explored.

Finally, the information from OCT is compared to that provided by invasive analysis, particularly the preparation of cross-sections from areas also examined by OCT. The correlation of information between the techniques is explored and the potential for extrapolating information obtained from a single point over a larger area is discussed.