

# Issues of Conservation: What to Do with a Muse

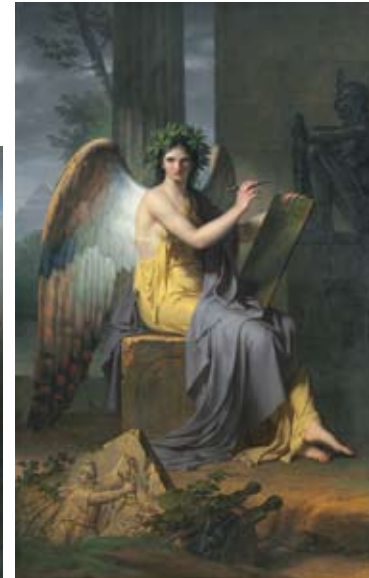
One of the primary missions of the Cleveland Museum of Art is to preserve and protect the art in its collection. The museum has a number of trained professionals on staff who specialize in the ongoing care of the museum's holdings.

Before acquiring these monumental paintings by French artist Charles Meynier, museum conservators carefully examined them and developed a plan that would return them to as close to their original state as possible. Surface grime was removed and old varnish layers were thinned. Deformations to the original canvas were also flattened, and the paintings were mounted on new stretchers, or supports. The accompanying images provide views of before (the larger images to the right) and after (the smaller images to the left) conservation.

The cleaned paintings were retouched and the damaged areas were inpainted. The materials used for reconstruction, including the final protective varnish layer, are all reversible and can be removed in the future without harming the original paint surface. In addition, the original frames were restored.



upper and lower left: *Apollo, God of Light, Eloquence, Poetry and Fine Arts with Urania, Muse of Astronomy*, 1798



upper and lower right: *Clio, Muse of History*, 1798



All images front and back: Charles Meynier (French, 1768–1832). Oil on canvas. Severance and Greta Millikin Purchase Fund 2003.6.1–5

## European Art Around 1800



# European Art Around 1800



far and near left: *Erato, Muse of Lyrical Poetry*, 1802



below left and right: *Polyhymnia, Muse of Eloquence*, 1800



above and right: *Calliope, Muse of Epic Poetry*, 1800

