

EXAMINATION REPORT

Title: Painted panel
Artist: Robert W. Chanler
Client: Planting Fields Foundation

Dimensions: 19 1/2" x 24"
Medium: Estimated oil gilding
Primary Support: Panel
Date of Painting: 1924
Signature: Recto, lower proper left

ArtCare #: 4123
Examiner: KO, ArtCare Conservation NYC



PRIORITY LEVEL: 1/2

(1: Urgent 2: Treatment Required 3: Structurally Compromised 4: Aesthetic Treatment Needed 5: Good Condition)

DATE OF EXAMINATION: August 28, 2025

CONDITION SUMMARY

This artwork by Robert Winthrop Chanler was assessed onsite at Planting Fields in late August, 2025. The artwork was closely inspected under visible light (650 lumens) and ultraviolet (UV) radiation (365 nanometers). The following are observations made regarding the aesthetic and structural integrity of the artwork.

This three-dimensional artwork is executed on a wood composite panel, consisting of wood veneers on both sides of the panel. From an inscription on the verso 'Chanler Die creation' the die creation process is estimated to be the technique Chanler used for creating this composition. This would consist of hardened tools called dies which are used to shape and mold the raised composition on this wood panel. The panel is experiencing extensive vertical craquelure throughout the surface veneer along the wood grain. The veneer on the back side is split and lifting away from the panel at the lower proper left corner. Abrasion is also evident on the back veneer, as the panel sits proud of the frame at the verso, which places the panel into direct contact with the wall during installation.

The design layers appear to be a thin white ground and/or a thin red bole layer, followed by thin washes of gold pigment. Red bole is often used in gilding to create a warm preparatory layer for the gold. The red bole is exposed in areas of lifting and loss. The craquelure in the wood veneer has caused extensive tenting, lifting craquelure, and loss throughout the design layers. Several areas remain actively lifting, most notable at the bottom edge.

Previous treatment is estimated to include consolidation; however, most notable treatment is the amount of retouching over areas of exposed red bole or wood veneer with newer gold pigments. These retouches are visibly darkened and discolored throughout the surface. It appears that no fill was used during the previous retouching campaign. Some areas of previous repair remain stable along the proper left edge. An area of drip accretions is evident in the center proper left. Newer loss without intervention is present, which suggests that the issue is inherent to the artist's materials and techniques. There is estimated to be a thin natural resinous varnish on the surface under uv.

The darkened cherry wood composite frame is in relatively good condition. The corners are opening, most notable at the upper proper right corner.

We highly recommend that this work is consolidated to prevent further loss to the design layers. The level of consolidation required is extensive, due to the tenting, vertical craquelure throughout the surface. Once the surface is stabilized, the work would benefit from a surface cleaning to reduce grime and reintegrating areas of lifting and loss into the composition. During cleaning, areas of previous retouching may become more noticeable. These areas may benefit from toning as well. A new frame or adapting the current one to protect the panel verso while on display is also recommended.



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It is important to note that due to the make up of this composite wood panel (as well as the issues the panel has already experienced), this work will require monitoring and possible treatment in the future. It is highly advised that this work remain in a stable temperature and humidity controlled environment. This will help the stabilize the wood components and prevent accelerated deterioration of the panel.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION

Support

Primary Support: Panel
Fabrication: Composite
Surface character: Visible
Auxiliaries: None
Joins: None
Secondary Support: N/A

Ground

Material: Estimated gesso and red bole
Assembly: Primed
Color: White
Thickness: Thin

Paint Layer

Medium: Estimated oil gilding
Handling: Lean vehicular
Pigments: Not analyzed
Pentimenti: None evident

Surface Coating

Material: Estimated natural resin
Thickness: Thin

CONDITION IMAGE



DESCRIPTION OF CONDITION

Support

Damage, Loss, Distortion: The composite wood panel has areas of lifting veneer on the front and back side of the panel. On the back, there is split and lifting about to break off of the back proper left corner. On the front, there is vertical craquelure and scattered loss to the wood veneer.

Degradation, stiffening: Panel is desiccated and brittle

Mold, Insects: None evident

Previous Treatment: None evident

Notable features: Composite panel with veneers on both side of the panels

Ground and Paint Layers

Damage or Loss: There is previous loss, as well as new areas of loss and lifting revealing the wood veneer and the artist's red bole preparatory layer.

Scratches, smudges or rubs: Minor abrasion is occurring

Discoloration: From dust and grime

Cleavage: Intra-layer cleavage (lifting) is occurring within the design layers and interlayer cleavage is occurring between the design layers and the wood veneer. Areas along the bottom and top edge appear to be actively lifting at this time.

Craquelure: Vertical craquelure is evident throughout the surface, attributed to the grain in the wood veneer.

Mold or Accretions: Minor drip accretions in the center proper left

Previous Treatment: Previous retouching campaigns evident in areas of previous paint loss

Surface Coating

Irregularities: None evident

Blanching: None visible

Discoloration: From aging

Previous Treatment: Not known

Labels and Inscriptions

Labels: Auction labels

Inscriptions or Stamps: Inscription on recto and on verso

Framing

Description/Material: Dark cherry frame with thin gold painted inner rebate

Dimensions: 22 3/4" x 27 5/8" x 1 1/8"

Condition: Good, frame is opened at corners, most notably at the upper proper right

Protects Surface: Appears to protect the perimeter of the panel; however, the panel sits proud of the verso, putting the work into direct contact with wall during installation

Backing Board: None

Mounting: D-rings and picture wire

Proposed Treatment: A new frame or adapting the current one to protect the verso of the panel during display

PROPOSED TREATMENT:

1. Written and photographic documentation, before, during and after treatment
2. Consolidate surface insofar as possible with conservation grade adhesive
3. Surface clean to remove grime, after testing
4. Further consolidate as necessary
5. Fill and tone losses
6. Adjust discolored retouches as necessary
7. Adjust surface sheen as necessary

ESTIMATED TREATMENT COSTS:

Stabilizing and Cleaning Treatment: \$7,500 (with 20% in kind donation) = \$6,000

Aesthetic Treatment: \$6,500 ((with 20% in kind donation) = \$5,200

Total Treatment: \$14,000 (with 20% in kind donation) = \$11,200

IMAGES



Recto



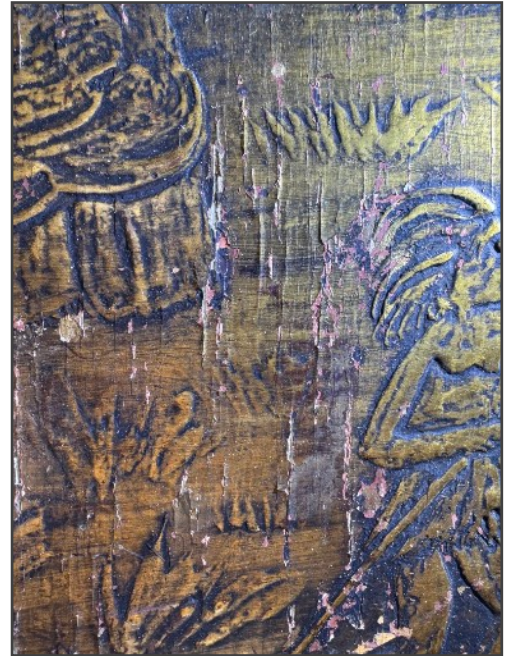
Detail of artist signature and date

IMAGES



Overview of various surface issues (craquelure, loss, tenting and lifting) in raking light

IMAGES



More details of tenting, active lifting and retouching over old loss in raking light

IMAGES



Details of previous retouching and new damage in normal light and under uv examination



Details of previous retouching and new damage under normal light and under uv examination

IMAGES



Verso

IMAGES



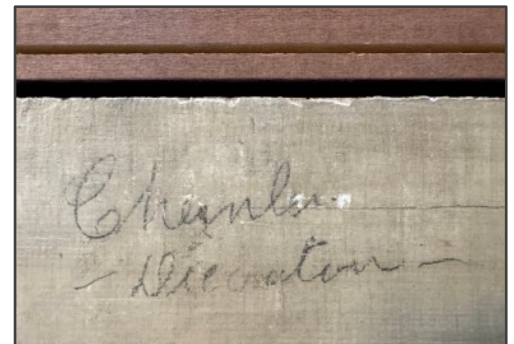
Details of auction labels, abrasion and edge of back veneer



Panel verso slightly proud of the frame



Splitting of the wood veneer



Inscription on verso

TRAVEL/LOAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The artwork should be transported by a professional art handling company and kept in an environment with regulated air conditioning and relative humidity at all times.

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This work should be monitored and kept in a stable environment with controlled temperature and relative humidity. Issues affecting an artwork often correlate with fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity. Our environmental recommendation for painted artworks is to strive for a range of 45-55% relative humidity, with an annual range of no less than 40% and no more than 60%, and a temperature range of 60-73 degrees Fahrenheit. Fluctuations in temperature should not exceed +/- 3 degrees Fahrenheit within a 24-hour period. Please note that hanging artwork on exterior walls or above fireplaces increases risk of significant relative humidity and temperature fluctuations outside of the recommended range.

Eliminate or minimize exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation whenever possible with UV-filtering plexiglass in frames or UV-filtering windows. Reduce unnecessary light exposure whenever possible, avoiding the display of light-sensitive materials (fugitive pigments, fluorescent pigments, dyes, photographs and paper) in lighting that exceeds 50 lux. It is appropriate to display most acrylic and oil paintings on canvas or wood at 200-300 lux or below.

MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A cyclical maintenance program is advisable. Routine dusting and condition checks can help mitigate future complications.