Rebecca Clendinen Art Conservation Program, Dept. of Art History & Art Conservation, Queen’s University, April

Rigid polysaccharide gels are a relatively recent entry into the paper conservator’s repertoire. Gels are an effective technique for spot cleaning, removal of auxiliary supports, and overall washing as a replacement for immersion baths on objects with soluble media. Gellan gum, one of the main gels used in paper conservation, leaves more residue on the object than other gel treatments when applied without an intermediary tissue layer. This study explored how calcium acetate content influences the residue in 2% w/v gellan gum and whether higher concentrations of calcium acetate cause the residue to become harmful over time. The research also integrated a comparison of three gellan gum formations available to conservators: Kelcogel CG-LA, Kelcogel F, and Ticagel L-6.

Spectrophotometer