Call for papers

RESONANT PASTS
EAA 2026
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SHADES OF RED:
FROM CHARACTERIZATION TO PROVENANCE STUDIES AND CONSERVATION OF RED PIGMENTS IN ANCIENT POLYCHROMY

Since prehistory, red color has long served as a fundamental chromatic component in ancient polychromy, widely employed not only in wall paintings but also in the decoration of statues, reliefs, and a broad range of artefacts. The sources of red pigments were multiple, encompassing naturally occurring iron-richearths, mineral ores such as cinnabar and arsenates, and artificial lead-based compounds including red lead and massicot. Each of these materials imparted distinct optical, textural, and durability characteristics to the resulting surface layers—qualities that were well understood in antiquity. Historical sources (such as Pliny the Elder, Dioscorides, Theophrastus, Vitruvius, etc) provide information on both the economic and symbolic values of ancient red pigments, and provide technical details on their extraction, preparation and application.

This session seeks to investigate the multifaceted use of red pigments across diverse contexts, from their adoption in wall-paintings and mortar stratigraphies to their use in the applied polychromy of statuary, architecture and other organic or inorganic artefacts. Particular attention will be devoted to studies of pigment characterization, the provenance of raw materials from mineral deposits or trade networks, technological and applicative aspects, and the long-term stability and conservation behavior of red pigments on different supports and within varying depositional environments.

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TO SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT:
https://www.e-a-a.org/EAA2026/contributions
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