



Dissertation in Progress: Analytical Pigment Studies as a Tool for Art Research

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This is a brief introduction to my dissertation that concentrates on Finland's tangible cultural heritage, or more precisely, on the investigation of the materials used to create it. In January 2017, I received a one-year research grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation to make an analytical investigation of pigments used in the work of the most well-known Finnish artists of the 19th century. My aim for the first working year is to concentrate on the pigment palette of Akseli Gallen-Kallela (1865–1931). All material analyses will be conducted in co-operation with and under the supervision of the Finnish National Gallery's Senior Conservation Scientist Seppo Hornytzkj. The material for this research consists of artworks by Gallen-Kallela that are in the possession of the Finnish National Gallery and also the Gallen-Kallela Museum in Tarvaspää, Espoo. I will also analyse pigments and other artists' materials that belonged to the Gallen-Kallela family and which are now in the collection of the Gallen-Kallela Museum.

Up to now the palette and chronology of pigments used by the great Finnish artists are known only in a few cases. With the help of the grant, Gallen-Kallela's palette will be thoroughly researched. The data will be of indispensable help in dating and attribution studies, in answering and solving conservation and restoration-related questions and problems, as well as in revealing forgeries. Akseli Gallen-Kallela is one of the most valued Finnish artists and also one whose works have been extensively copied and imitated by art forgers in Finland. The results of the analyses will be published in *FNG Research* as one or two scientific, peer-reviewed articles, which will be included in my article-based dissertation.

Akseli Gallen-Kallela's
Landscape with sheep (1884,
oil on canvas, 22 x 34.5cm)
is one of the paintings
to be included in Hanne
Mannerheim's research –
she is especially interested in
its green and blue areas.
Antell Collections,
Finnish National Gallery /
Ateneum Art Museum

Photo: Finnish National Gallery
/ Pirje Mykkänen

