



CULTURAL HERITAGE

THE MYSTERY OF THE GIRL HIDDEN IN THE PAINTING OF “THE PASTON TREASURE”

Something that was hidden in a painting for almost four centuries has now become visible for the first time and this is partly thanks to a special X-ray scanner called LANDIS-X, built by researchers from the INFN and the National Research Council (CNR). What was hidden was a female figure, painted then removed, probably a member of the family shown in the picture “The Paston Treasure”, an important work of painting in the history of English art. An exhibition dedicated to this painting opened on 23 June at the Norwich Castle Museum, in England, which the work belongs to and where the analyses were carried out. The discovery is credited to a team of researchers from the INFN Southern National Laboratories and the Institute for archaeological and monumental heritage (IBAM) of the CNR. The researchers photographed “The Paston Treasure” with the innovative LANDIS-X scanner, designed and developed in the laboratory for non-destructive analysis (LANDIS) of the INFN Southern National Laboratories, which it is named after, in synergy with the CNR; the LANDIS laboratory is part of the network of the INFN, which is dedicated to applications for cultural heritage, CHNeT (Cultural Heritage Network).

The images provided by the researchers made it possible to completely reconstruct all the pictorial layers and restore the work to its original composition. ■