



## **Proteins: Building Blocks of Art**

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Artists and artisans have used proteinaceous materials in their artmaking forever. Characterization of these using only small samples was challenging; however, in the past few decades there have been major advances in analytical methods that will be reviewed. These developments fostered the field of proteomics. Recent proteomics (and allied -omics) allow us to begin to ask, and answer, detailed questions about the use of organic materials in trades associated with artmaking and their role in creating works of art. The information gained through proteomics gives insight into artistic and technical skill, and technological know-how. Our understanding of protein reactions has increased in sophistication and it is interesting to read treatises and examine works in light of the increase in our knowledge of protein chemistry. Application of proteomics also potentially offers advances in our approaches to preservation and appropriate conservation of ancient and contemporary works that contain proteins.