

# Panel Talk: Innovations in Framing and Sealed Packages

By: Dr. Jennifer Booth, Tru Vue Museum and Conservation Liaison



**Matthew Jones,**  
John Jones Chairman

With an ever increasing focus upon continued professional development, at a time when institutional budgets are only getting tighter, Tru Vue has recognised the need for educational support within the arts and heritage world. On Thursday 11th June, Tru Vue arranged renowned speakers and, together with John Jones, hosted an evening reception and panel discussion to explore current thoughts and techniques surrounding the idea of sealed packages.

As a conservator, the aim is to preserve an artefact and its associated values with as little intervention as possible. One conceivable way of achieving this is to limit the potential for change to occur by sealing the artefact within its own environment. Depending upon the type of package created, it can be possible to exclude pollutants, pests, ultraviolet radiation, and to buffer against changes in temperature and relative humidity.

Sealed packages might be a conservation solution, but they affect anyone involved with the preservation and presentation of an artwork or heritage item. This includes not only the conservator, but the curator, framer, exhibition designer, art advisor, owner, and, if still living, the artist themselves. For this event Tru Vue wanted to reach as many of these people as possible. To also give them a chance to meet and get to know one another, the evening kicked off with a cocktail reception and the opportunity to tour the John Jones conservation studio.

The panel discussion portion of the evening began with Hugh Phibbs, preservation consultant and previous Coordinator of Preservation Services at the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC. Hugh presented his recently developed methods for creating an easy to make, but highly effective, sealed package for artworks. By introducing new materials and simply modified equipment, Hugh demonstrated a sealed package that can be created quickly by anyone - even those with very tight budgets!

Matthew Jones, Chairman of John Jones, then provided an interesting summary of the history of the company. For those needing to contract for framing services, Matthew's

presentation highlighted what you should look for in a framer, particularly with their use and experience of conservation grade materials. Craig Horsfall, Head of Conservation at John Jones, emphasised the importance of conservation knowledge for a framer and provided examples of how his team has created different types of sealed packages for artworks depending upon their exhibition location.

Stuart Welch, Founder and Development Director at Conservation by Design, concluded the evening's talks by presenting a new framing concept – the Enigma™ frame. Originally developed for a papyrus collection, this frame package can be stored in Planorama® drawers and not only offers a sealed (low oxygen) environment but also a secure system for handling.



**Stuart Welch,** Founder &  
Development Director at  
Conservation by Design, UK



**Hugh Phibbs,** Preservation  
Consultant & previous  
Coordinator of Preservation  
Services at the National  
Gallery of Art in  
Washington DC.



**Craig Horsfall,** Head  
of Conservation at John  
Jones, UK

The evening wrapped up with a time for questions and more time to socialise. Attendees came from all over the UK and people from all over the world tuned in to the web cast as the talks were broadcast live. Video of the live event is available for viewing on the Tru Vue website [www.tru-vue.com/Museums](http://www.tru-vue.com/Museums)



**Dr. Jennifer Booth,** Tru Vue Museum and Conservation Liaison, has an archaeological conservation science background and previously worked with the Department of Conservation And Scientific Research of The British Museum on her D. Phil (PhD) at the University of Oxford. As Tru Vue's museum liaison, Jennifer provides a link between practitioners involved with the protection and conservation of art and cultural heritage, and Tru Vue, to increase understanding of the technical capabilities of the glass and acrylic glazing materials, how glazing options could benefit different collections, and deliver product innovation. Jennifer is available to answer any questions or information and can be reached at [jbooth@tru-vue.com](mailto:jbooth@tru-vue.com) or at +44 (0) 79 5077 6911.