



Article: New Insights into the Composition and Permanence of the Silver-Platinum
Satista Paper and the Satista Prints of Paul Strand (Abstract)

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New Insights into the Composition and Permanence of the Silver-Platinum Satista Paper and the Satista Prints of Paul Strand

Lisa Barro, Silvia A. Centeno, and Katherine Sanderson

Presented at the 2015 PMG Winter Meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts

Satista was a short-lived commercial silver-platinum paper produced by the Platinotype Company as a replacement for platinum papers before palladium papers were introduced. Legendary photographer Paul Strand used Satista paper during one of his most exceptional artistic periods around 1916 and, unfortunately, these unique prints exhibit varying amounts of deterioration including fading, staining, and discoloration of the image material. The current study of commercial Satista paper and of Paul Strand's Satista prints builds upon research conducted previously at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Barro 2003).

Initial X-ray fluorescence (XRF) results looking at image material and deteriorated areas of Strand's prints were reported. In addition, questions on terminology, exhibition, and storage for Satista prints were addressed, along with microfading and spectrophotometric analyses of Paul Strand's Satista prints before and after exhibition over a fifteen-year period. Initial results show that the Strand Satista prints at the Met are changing at a rate faster than traditional platinum prints both during exhibition and--at a slower rate--during storage in ambient conditions. The initial results of the analysis of a recently discovered package of unprocessed Satista paper from 1914 were presented. The methods of analysis included: attenuated total reflectance- Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (ATR-FTIR), transmission FTIR, enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), scanning electron microscopy-energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (SEM-EDX), Raman spectroscopy, and XRF. Recommendations for Satista prints include limited exhibition at 4 foot-candles, sealed climate packages for exhibition under controlled humidity, continued color monitoring, and cool storage.

References

Barro, Lisa. 2003. The Deterioration of Paul Strand's Satista Prints. *Topics in Photographic Preservation* vol. 10. Photographic Materials Group of the American Institute for Conservation. Washington, D.C.: AIC. 37-54.

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