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Kelsey Museum Watercolors

Kelsey Museum of Archaeology
University of Michigan
434 South State Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology at the University of Michigan received an Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Conservation Project Support grant to treat a series of unique watercolors.

The twenty-one large drawings are faithful copies (at 5/6th scale) of a famous fresco cycle in the Villa of Mysteries in Pompeii, Italy. They were painted by Italian artist Maria Barroso from 1925 to 1927 and are so carefully drawn to reproduce the condition of the wall paintings in Pompeii that they include depictions of cracks and losses.

Each panel was removed from its previous mount and had its condition fully documented. Minor repairs were made and the objects were humidified and flattened. New hinges were attached and each was mounted to a rigid support panel for installation in a newly renovated gallery.