

Art in Federal buildings is an American tradition which is proudly continued by GSA. The Fine Arts Collection is one of the nation's largest and most diverse collections, consisting of over 13,000 installed or associated paintings, sculpture, architectural or environmental works of art, and graphics dating from the 1850s to the present. These public works of art, located in Federal buildings and non-Federal repositories across the United States, are maintained by GSA as part of our cultural heritage and as a reminder of the important tradition of individual creative expression.

It is the mission of the Fine Arts Program Mission to manage the fine arts assets under GSA's stewardship to insure their accountability, accessibility, preservation and appropriate use to enhance and promote high quality work environments for Federal agencies and the public they serve.



General Services Administration  
Public Buildings Service  
Historic Buildings and the Arts  
Center of Expertise  
202-501-1554

# CADWMS

paul

jared

# FRENCH

The Conservation  
of two WPA murals  
at the Lewis F. Powell, Jr.  
U.S. Courthouse  
in Richmond, Virginia

## the murals

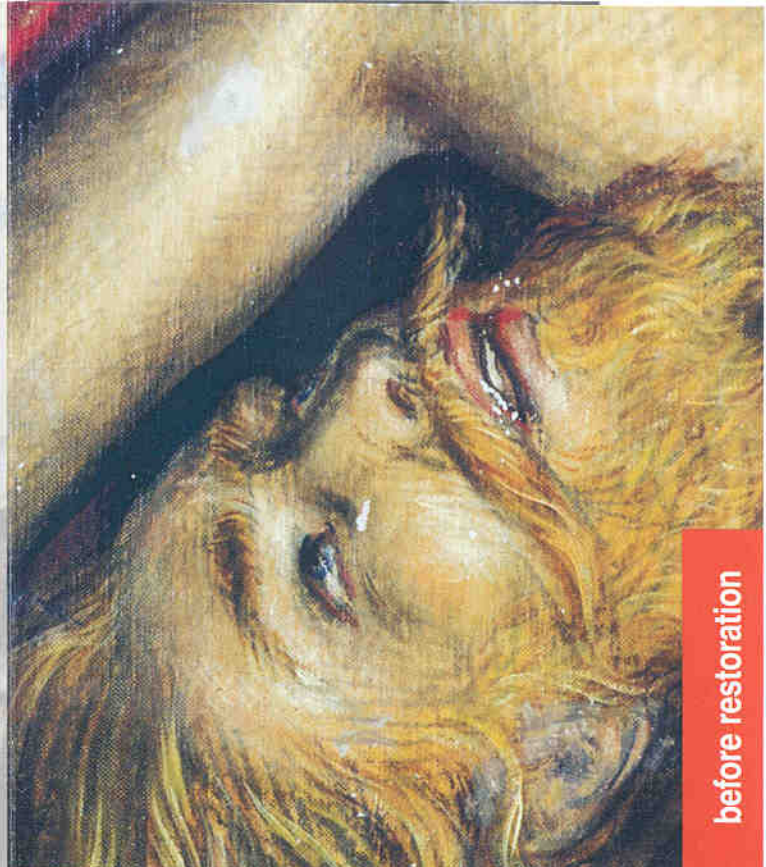


The murals were commissioned for the east and west walls of the public lobby of the Parcel Post Building, adjacent to the Lewis F. Powell, Jr. U.S. Courthouse in Richmond, Virginia, by the Section of Fine Arts, Works Progress Administration. The Section of Fine Arts, 1934-43, sponsored by the Treasury Department, awarded commissions for murals and sculpture in public buildings on the basis of anonymous competitions. Both artists received their commissions based upon competent work performed on other projects under the Section. The artists shared a studio while working on this commission. The murals were installed in 1939.

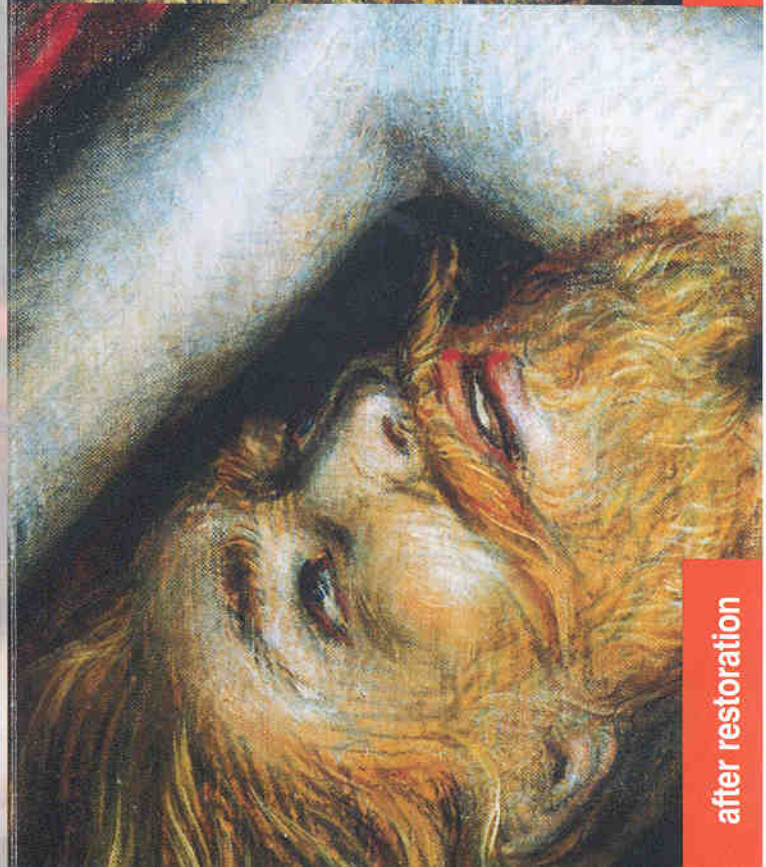
## conservation

It is the policy of the Fine Arts Program, General Services Administration (GSA), which is consistent with historic preservation law, to conserve historically and artistically valuable works of art and return them to their original locations whenever possible. In 1973, the murals were removed from the Parcel Post Building as part of a building renovation project. They were stored at the U.S. Courthouse in Richmond. In 1982, *Pocahontas Rescuing Captain John Smith* was exhibited at the Miami University Art Museum in Oxford, Ohio. In 1988, the murals were transferred to the regional office in Philadelphia where they remained in storage until the project to conserve and reinstall them was initiated.

In December 1995, as the first step in the conservation process, a contract for a condition assessment of and treatment recommendations for the murals was awarded to Wimsatt & Associates Art Conservation Studio, Inc. of Kensington, Maryland. This study was completed in 1996. Based upon the findings, the conservation of the murals was begun by JMV Art Conservation, Inc. of Frederick, Maryland. Frames based upon historic prototypes were created by Gold Leaf Studios of Washington, DC.



before restoration



after restoration



Overall dimensions: 7' h. x 20' w. Oil and tempera on canvas.

**Stuart's Raiders at the Swollen Ford**  
by Jared French

The crossing of Kelly's Ford was a dramatic event in Major General J.E.B. Stuart's ride around General McClellan's army. The cavalry, famous for being fast, courageous, and colorful, is here confronted with an almost impossible situation. Colonel W.T. Robbins, C.S.A., wrote of the event: "The stream, swollen by recent rains, was almost out of its banks and running like a torrent...No man or horse could get over without swimming...While we were trying to reach the opposite bank, Stuart came up, and, finding crossing at this point impracticable, rode off to...another point below...where he succeeded in throwing across a bridge strong enough to bear the artillery and upon which the men, having dismounted, could walk." Describing his painting, the artist stated, "I have tried to give the sense of danger, suspense and courage that must have attended the event." The

flanking panels portray J.E.B. Stuart and John Pelham, Stuart's right hand man. The artist received \$2,600 for this commission.



Photograph by George Platt Lynes from *Portrait 1927-1995*, Courtesy: Twin Palms Publishers

**jared french**

Jared French was born in Ossining, New York, on February 4, 1905, and died in 1988. He attended the Art Students League in New York, where he studied under Thomas Hart Benton. It was here that he met Paul Cadmus. He also studied for three years in Europe, including two years in Mallorca with Paul Cadmus. He was a member of Mural Painters Society and the Art Students League. His works are in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and many others. He also executed a mural for the U.S. Post Office in Plymouth, Pennsylvania.

For both artists, their European experience of museums, particularly of Florentine and Venetian painting, established their later vision and method.

## paul cadmus

Paul Cadmus was born in New York City on December 17, 1904. He studied at the National Academy of Design under William Auerbach-Levy, Charles Hawthorne, and others. He also studied for two seasons at the Art Students League under Joseph Pennell and Charles Locke. After working in the art department of an advertising agency, he went to Mallorca, Italy. Here he studied and painted for two years. Mr. Cadmus is also well known as an etcher. His works are in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and other institutions.



### Pocahontas Rescuing John Smith by Paul Cadmus

Overall dimensions: 7' h. x 20' w. Oil and tempera on canvas.

The saving of the life of John Smith by the Indian maid, Pocahontas, was a highly dramatic incident in the early history of Richmond. This romantic and historical event is portrayed with the vigor and color characteristic of Cadmus's work. The two side panels contain portraits of Sir Walter Raleigh, the explorer, and William Byrd, founder of Richmond. They are executed *en grisaille*, a monochromatic style of painting in shades of gray, used particularly to depict a subject in relief. The artist received \$2,600 for the commission.

