



Salisbury Cathedral

Polychromy associated with five monuments

A survey was commissioned to aid and inform decision making with regard to the conservation of five monuments in Salisbury Cathedral. The five monuments are:

- John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury 1491 – 1499.
- The Audley Chantry, Bishop Edmund Audley (d. 1524).
- Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, son of the Lord Protector of Somerset (d. 1621) and his wife Lady Catherine Grey (d. 1568).
- Elihonor Sadler, a resident of the Close, dating from 1622/3.
- Sir Richard Mompesson (d. 1627) and his wife Katherine (Pagington).

An illustrated condition report was prepared for each monument which presented information gathered during detailed in-situ surveys backed up with materials analysis and historical research.

Two of the five monuments (Richard Mompesson and Elihonor Sadler) had been garishly overpainted in the 1960s such that today, as one walks through the cathedral, no original decoration is visible because it is hidden by the overpaint. With regard to the other monuments, one needs to look carefully to see original decoration as so much has been lost over the centuries.

Decoration that remains, whether overpainted or not, is of considerable importance because it provides us, and those who follow us, with valuable information on the materials and techniques of polychrome decoration as well as an indication as to what these monuments would have looked like originally. Skilled craftsmen carved and built these monuments, and their decoration was applied by painters who knew their materials and how to employ them.

