

Video: The weird chemistry threatening masterpiece paintings

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Credit: The American Chemical Society

A good art dealer can really clean up in today's market, but not when some weird chemistry wreaks havoc on masterpieces.

Art conservators started to notice microscopic pockmarks forming on the surfaces of treasured oil paintings that cause the images to look hazy.

It turns out the marks are eruptions of paint caused, weirdly, by soap that forms via [chemical reactions](#). Since you have no time to watch paint dry, we explain how paintings from Rembrandts to O'Keefes are threatened by their own compositions—and we don't mean the imagery.

Watch the latest Speaking of Chemistry video here:

Provided by American Chemical Society

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