

# PIGMENTS ANALYSIS

*Pigments analysis is a two-step scientific method for determining after what date the pigments were made or manufactured that were used to create a painting.*

**The first step** consists in analyzing a pigment to determine its chemical composition.

**The second step** consists in researching when this particular type of pigment was first made or manufactured.

Let's take the case of Prussian Blue.

The reason for using it as an example is that it was the first artificially manufactured color. It was first produced in 1704.

It became available to painters in 1724.

When we chemically analyze the composition of the blue in your painting and see that it matches Prussian Blue what we learn is that your painting cannot be older than 1724.

What identifying the pigment does not tell us is WHEN your painting was painted.

A factor to take into account is that a painting can be older and have been restored using Prussian Blue. We must therefore be careful to check that we are looking at the original paint and not at restoration paint applied much later.

By itself pigment analysis is not going to tell you when your painting was painted but it will give you a cut off date. It will tell you what is the earliest date when it might have been painted.

***If you would like to identify and date pigments in your painting, we offer our laboratory services.***