



**CONSERVATION MAINTENANCE OF THREE BOTERO SCULPTURES, St. Petersburg, FL**



**Client/Owner**  
Museum of Fine Arts/Art Services International

**Location**  
Museum of Fine Arts, Saint Petersburg, FL

**Project Dates**  
2010

**Materials**  
Bronze

**Services Provided**  
Treatment  
Documentation

Conservation Solutions, Inc. (CSI) treated three monumental bronze sculptures by Fernando Botero that were on temporary exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in Saint Petersburg, Florida in 2010. Each bronze: *Hand*, *The Rape of Europa*, *Smoking Woman*, had the characteristic fine finish, bulbous forms and troubling presence of the best of Botero's work. They were displayed as part of a comprehensive exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sculpture by the artist at the museum.

Exposure to the Florida sun and handling wear during the traveling show had caused each work to lose some of its protective wax coating and suffer minor damages to the foundry applied patinas. CSI work with Gulf Coast Art Conservation to clean the works, retouch the damages, and apply a new coating of specially formulated wax using the hot wax method. Work was performed on the museum grounds during the exhibition.

Each sculpture was carefully cleaned using anionic detergents and water. Care was taken to avoid disturbing previous repairs during this process and the rewaxing. After drying, each sculpture was heated with propane torches and the new wax coating was applied. The wax is formulated to resist the heat that the bronze is subject to while still being removable. It also includes corrosion inhibitors to further protect the bronze. Work was completed in April of 2010.