International Society of Icono-diagnosis

THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear colleagues and friends,

Icono-diagnosis is on trend! After academic presentations in Paris, Nancy, Lisbon, Gorizia and Rome, but also thematic issues in biomedical journals (for example *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health*, Elsevier), icono-diagnosis is increasingly being featured in museums. Far from being a simple "game" or "retired doctor's hobby", icono-diagnosis is now established as a full scientific discipline related to the history of medicine, the history of diseases and paleopathology.

This newsletter invites you to discover the fields of possibilities around this modern look at the past which reconstructs, like a long and precise puzzle, the evolutionary mapping of pathological processes and the relationship between man, diseases and the environment.

A very happy new year to you all, and may 2025 give us the opportunity for great discoveries and original diagnoses!

Dr Philippe Charlier

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THE PAINTING of the month

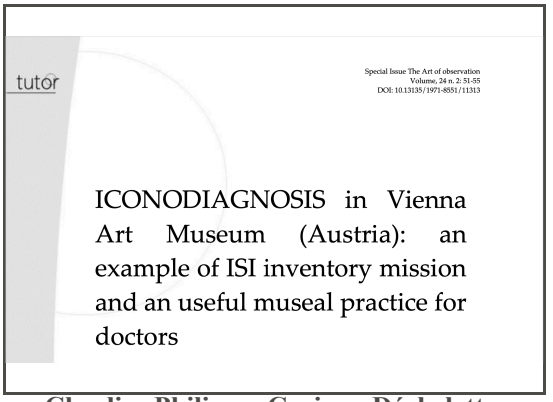


Painting of a young man by Lorenzo Lotto (1508).

Debate about the type of nevus. Spitz naevus or not?

OUR LATEST ARTICLES

Please, send us your latest articles !



Charlier Philippe, Corinne Déchelette, Antonio Perciaccante



Brigitte Hillion, Corinne Déchelette, Nadège Sébille, Antonio Perciaccante, Charlier Philippe,

5 iconodiagnosis and 1 pseudo-diagnosis have been identified among the permanent collection on paintings and sculptures (Figure 1, Table 1). The pseudo-diagnosis corresponds to craniofacial dysmorphia in an icon. As this anatomical anomaly is found
on all the people represented on this icon, we can conclude that it is clearly due to the painter's style.

Learn More

A group of international doctors and scientists with a passion for art history has established the International Society of Iconodiagnosis (ISI) to advance research and awareness in iconodiagnosis. ISI initiated the collaborative project "SKIN & ART," focusing on identifying dermatological cases of iconodiagnosis through an unprecedented partnership between the medical and museum communities.

Learn More

NEED TO KNOW about Art History

by Dr Brigitte HILLION

Medicine, art history : It's all in the observation!

- What do the 17th-century physician and the 20th-century art critic have in common?
- Between the Dutch genre painter and the provocative American press illustrator?
- Medical semiology or analysis of a painter's palette and touch?
- Diagnosis or attributing a work to an artist?
- You have to look, mobilize your knowledge, make comparisons and come up with hypotheses… an approach similar to the basis of iconodiagnosis!



Normann Rockwell (1894-1978)

Considered America's most popular artist, left a humorous record of twentieth-century American life through his magazine covers. Long scorned by art critics, he is now recognized as one of the post-modern realist painters. The multiple references in this painting are a tribute to the paintings of Rubens for the portrait and Frans Hals for the canvas on the right, but the amused looks of the protagonists complete the ridicule of the critic obsessed by a detail and unaware of the vitality of the models.

Art Critic, Rockwell Norman, 1955, Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge



Gerritt Dou (1613-1675)

Studied with Rembrandt in Amsterdam, then moved to Leiden and developed a flourishing studio. Famous for his genre scenes, he emphasizes the figures through the use of chiaroscuro and adopts a tight framing with an architectural foreground. His fine, light brushstrokes leave an impression of refinement, in contrast to Frans Hals' vigorous, thick brushstrokes.
The theme of the medical consultation is often found in the genre scenes of 17th-century Dutch painters. The brightly-colored clothes and framing evoke a quackery scene, and suggest a double reading of the subject: an interior scene and a critique of doctors.

To know more

EVENTS

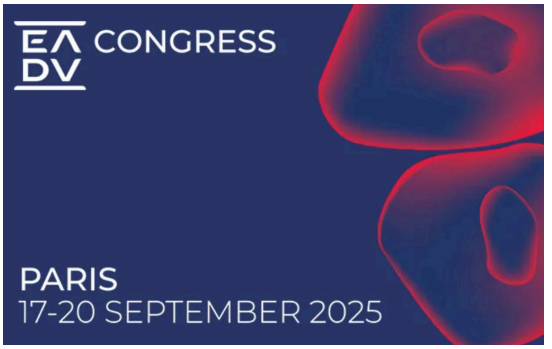
10-13 September 2025

17-20 September 2025



ISI will run out an iconodiagnosis dermatological exhibition

Let's meet each other during EADV in Paris !



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International Society of Icono-diagnosis

THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear colleagues and friends,

Iconodiagnosis is expanding and diversifying.

Born from the fertile intersection of art history and medicine, iconodiagnosis is currently experiencing a real boom and is now reaching far beyond specialized circles. From schools to art history festivals, iconodiagnosis challenges, intrigues, and above all, communicates: because behind each work lies a body, a gaze, a symptom to be deciphered. This interdisciplinary approach, both rigorous and sensitive, reveals how images can be formidable tools for understanding life through the centuries. ISI supports and structures this movement, convinced that iconodiagnosis has its place in the public, educational, and scientific spheres. It is a renewed way of reading works, but also of better understanding our own humanity. We invite our colleagues to go beyond the restricted circle of icono-diagnosis as it is currently practiced, almost exclusively within Western art: what about elsewhere? It is time to develop an extra-European icono-diagnosis.

Let's get to work!

Dr Philippe Charlier

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THE PAINTING of the month



Francesco Giamberti (vers 1404-1482)
by the italian artist Piero di Cosimo

Iconodiagnosis : Temporal arteritis or Horton's disease

OUR LATEST ARTICLES

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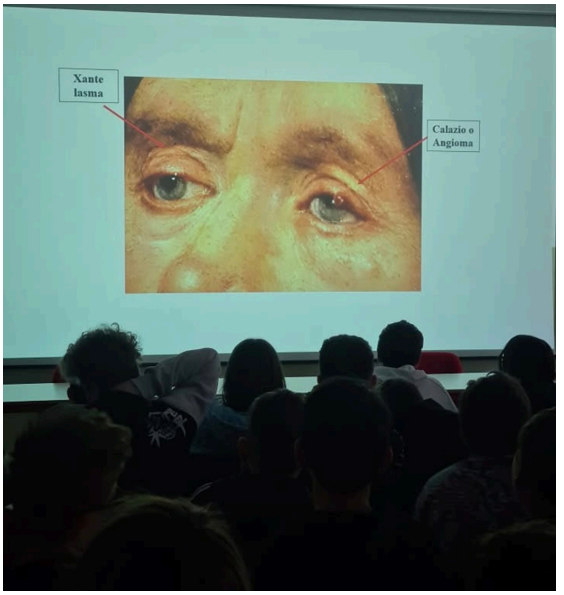


Dialogue between medical science and the arts at FESTIVAL OF ART HISTORY in FRANCE by Brigitte Hillion

Following the exemplary collaboration between the **International Society of Iconodiagnosis (ISI)** and the **Fécamp Museum**, which led to the publication of two articles featuring five iconodiagnostic case studies, the interdisciplinary momentum continues with a new highlight.

As part of the **Festival of Art History in Fontainebleau**, taking place from **June 3 to 6, 2025**, a **conference dedicated to iconodiagnosis** will be held, bringing together art historians, medical professionals, and researchers around this unique approach that blends clinical insight with iconographic analysis.

This event will not only showcase the richness of **dialogue between medical science and the arts,** but also demonstrate the potential of iconodiagnosis to shed new light on works of art. It is a wonderful opportunity to illustrate how medicine, when applied to the history of art, can



"SICK of ART " ICONODIAGNOSIS at SCHOOL by Antonio Perciaccante

On April 15, 2025, a lesson on Iconodiagnostics was held for the students of the **"Graziadio Ascoli" middle school in Gorizia (Italy).** The lesson was part of the project "Sick of Art: Iconodiagnosis at School," organized by the International Society of Iconodiagnosis (ISI).

The aim was to **introduce the students to iconodiagnosis and, more generally, to bring them closer to Art, and stimulating critical thinking.** Observing an artwork requires time and attention and has to be done carefully in order to notice every detail and understand its true meaning.

After an initial introduction on iconodiagnosis and on the strict relationship between art and medicine, several paintings representing pathological elements were presented, and the students were asked to identify them.

Moreover, the importance of knowing the artists' medical history to better understand their work was also emphasized.

transform our understanding of how the human body has been represented through the ages.

Learn More

The students actively participated in the observation and critical reasoning, showing great attention and curiosity, and they successfully identified the pathological elements. **Well done, kids!**

Learn More

NEED TO KNOW about Art History

by Dr Brigitte HILLION

The art of discussion

Medicine is not a solitary endeavor, and staff meetings are essential to our practice. In art history as well, confronting one's analysis with others is fundamental.

Caricaturists have certainly taken notice, delighting in poking fun at the sometimes heated debates where distinguished individuals can lose their cool in an effort to have their arguments prevail...

Beyond a keen sense of observation, the confrontation of viewpoints is a key element of *iconodiagnosis*—it is these exchanges that make the exercise so rich and engaging.

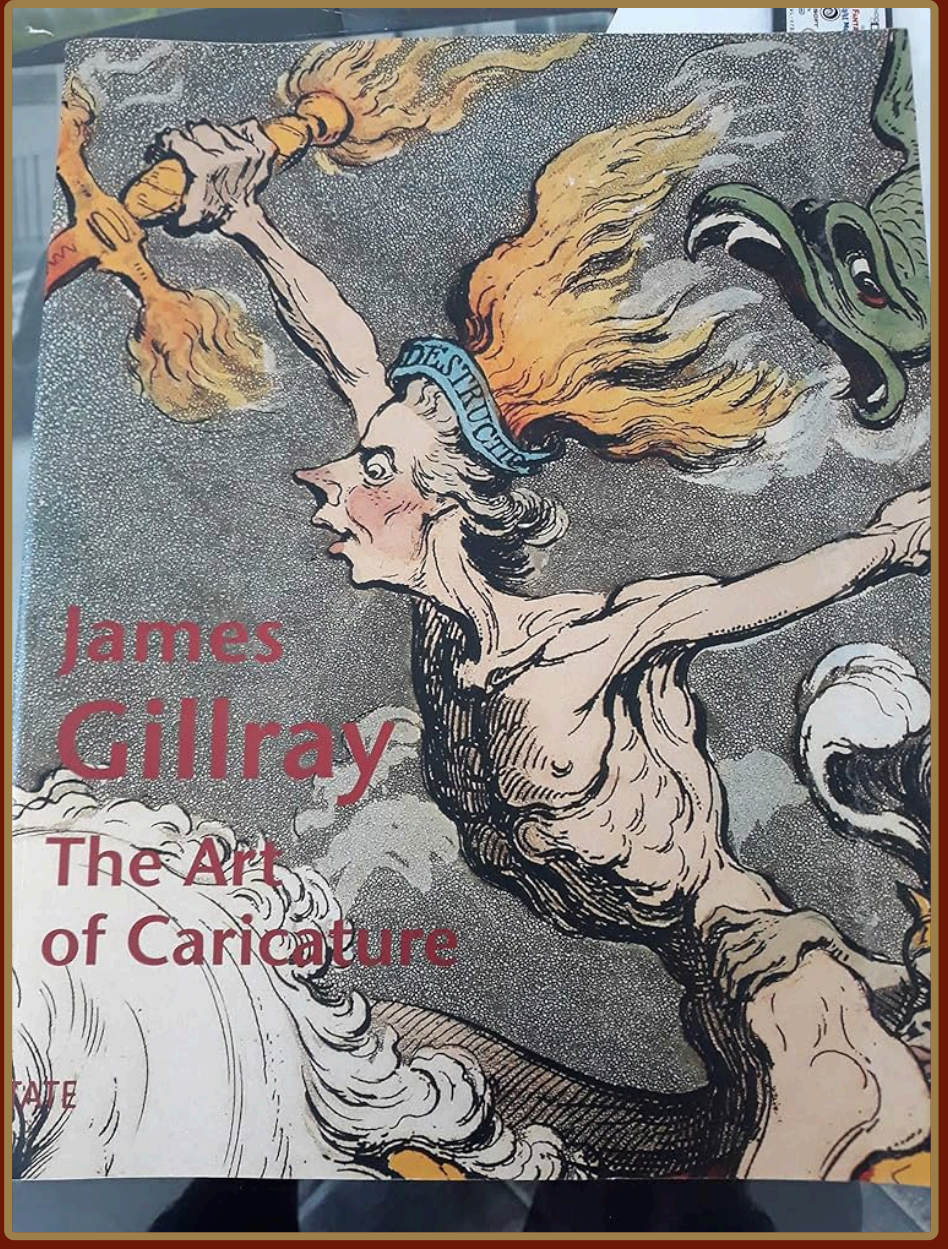
Let's hope the atmosphere at ISI remains more peaceful than in these caricatures!



Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761–1845)

Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761–1845) was a French artist who specialized in small portraits and finely executed trompe-l'oeil works. He enjoyed inserting himself among the characters in his paintings and created many playful self-portraits.
He also became known for his caricatures, collected in a series of lithographs titled *Les Grimaces*, in which he mocked his contemporaries.
Here, the debates seem just as passionate among physicians as they are among art enthusiasts.

Louis Leopold Boilly Consultation of Doctors, 1823)



James Gillray (1756–1815)

James Gillray (1756–1815), a British caricaturist and engraver influenced by William Hogarth, became especially well known for his political cartoons.
In this piece, he pokes fun at a group of experts admiring a collection of paintings by George Morland (1763–1804), an artist portrayed here as a peasant, known for his rustic scenes.
The intensely focused, serious, and pretentious expressions of the experts starkly contrast with the simplicity and pastoral nature of the pig-themed paintings.

To know more

EVENTS

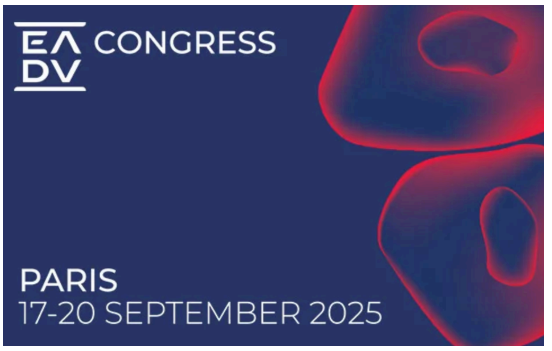
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International Society of Icono-diagnosis

THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear members and friends of iconodiagnosis,

Our Society has just reached an exciting milestone: we are now more than 50 members from several countries — France, Italy, Turkey, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United States, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Denmark… Fifty enthusiasts brought together by a shared perspective — one that questions images, history, and skin, creating a dialogue between art and medicine.

This symbolic number reflects a growing momentum: the increasing recognition of iconodiagnosis as a field of research and international exchange. It also speaks to the richness of the approaches that converge within it — dermatologists, art historians, curators, conservators, researchers, students… all contributing to shaping this vibrant and open discipline.

To accompany this momentum, we would like this Newsletter to become more participatory. Your ideas, your iconographic discoveries, your readings, your work or exhibition projects are most welcome! Feel free to share a commented image, a bibliographic reference, a short text, or simply a reflection: every contribution helps nourish our collective perspective.
Together, let us make this letter a space for exchange, curiosity, and inspiration.
Thank you for your involvement.

Dr Philippe Charlier

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THE PAINTING of the month

REINTERPRETATION ORIGINAL



Piero della Francesca's *Portrait of Federico da Montefeltro* (1465) was reinterpreted by Botero in his unmistakable style of voluminous figures, while the **NEVUS** on the duke's face were faithfully preserved.

OUR LATEST ARTICLES

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Corinne Déchelette, Antonio Perciaccante, Charlier Philippe

"Searching for Horton's Disease in Renaissance Art: First Systematic Review of Iconodiagnostic Cases on a Specific Disease Conducted by the International Society of Iconodiagnosis"

#Iconodiagnosis is a method of analyzing works of art to identify



Corinne Déchelette, Brigitte Hillion, Antonion Perciaccante, Philippe Charlier

"Contributions and Limitations of Digital Art Databases for Dermatological Iconodiagnosis"

This article presents the results of work conducted with the #Musée_Fabre team in #Montpellier on a corpus of paintings from the museum's digitized database, compiled using a

#visual #semiological elements associated with pathologies. It is not limited to dermatology but extends to all medical disciplines with cutaneous and/or visible signs on the skin, such as #Horton's disease.
#ISI is launching a series of systematic reviews organized by type of iconodiagnosis to compile data enabling #semi-quantitative analysis. In accordance with #PRISMA_2020 guidelines, we have developed a protocol for a #systematic_review, including predefined eligibility criteria and a structured data extraction strategy.

Here is the first review dedicated to #Horton's disease in #Phlebology.
Published in #Veins_and_Lymphatics by Paolo Zamboni
Join #ISI and participate in a systematic review of #iconodiagnosis on the pathology of your choice!

Learn More

methodology inspired by #PRISMA guidelines.
Our #hypothesis: to identify and analyze online artworks that could reveal historical dermatological diagnoses. A total of #169 digitized portraits were analyzed, of which #6 were subject to iconodiagnostic hypotheses. This was followed by on-site examination at the Musée Fabre, including direct visual inspection of the paintings and in-depth consultation of the artwork files in the documentation department.
#Results: only 4 dermatological iconodiagnoses were confirmed. Two initial hypotheses were discarded as they were attributed to #pictorial_artifacts or alterations related to the conservation state of the works. (Thanks to my undergraduate #ArtHistory courses!!!)

Learn More

NEED TO KNOW about Art History

by Dr Brigitte HILLION

Mannerism – A Risk of Overdiagnosis in Iconodiagnosis

- Mannerism is an artistic movement that emerged in early 16th-century Italy, as a reaction against the aesthetic standards of the Renaissance inspired by ancient sculpture. Perfect proportions and mathematically constructed perspectives were rejected by young artists who took inspiration from Michelangelo's later works and the twisting movements he gave to bodies. What matters above all is the *"maniera"*—the artist's personal manner of painting, meaning the creative freedom that breaks away from established norms.

- **Understanding this artistic period helps prevent excessive diagnoses!**



Jacopo PONTORMO 1526

IIn his *Deposition*, Pontormo eliminates all architectural elements; the intertwined movements of the figures form a spiral that seems to rise toward the heavens. The use of bright, acidic, contrasting colors is characteristic of this period.

To know more

EVENTS

3-8 December 2025



Next week, we will see all the french ISI members !

30 Sept. 3 October 2026

Let's meet each other during EADV in Vienna !
ISIS will submit posters !



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THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear members and friends of iconodiagnosis,

At the beginning of this new year, the International Society of Iconodiagnostic (ISI) extends its very best wishes for 2026.
We wish you a year rich in exchanges, projects, and discoveries around images and iconodiagnostic.

We are pleased to announce the **imminent launch of the ISI collaborative mobile application for iconodiagnostic**.
This application has been designed to facilitate case sharing, encourage collective reflection, and strengthen connections between members of our community, both nationally and internationally.

Accessible and collaborative, it fully reflects ISI's mission: to bring together perspectives from medicine, art, and the humanities, and to advance iconodiagnostic through dialogue and shared expertise.
We hope you will make this tool your own and actively contribute to its development.
Wishing you all a very happy new year,
Kind regards,

Dr Philippe Charlier

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THE PAINTING of the month



Picture provided by Pr. Thomas van Gulik from Amsterdam.

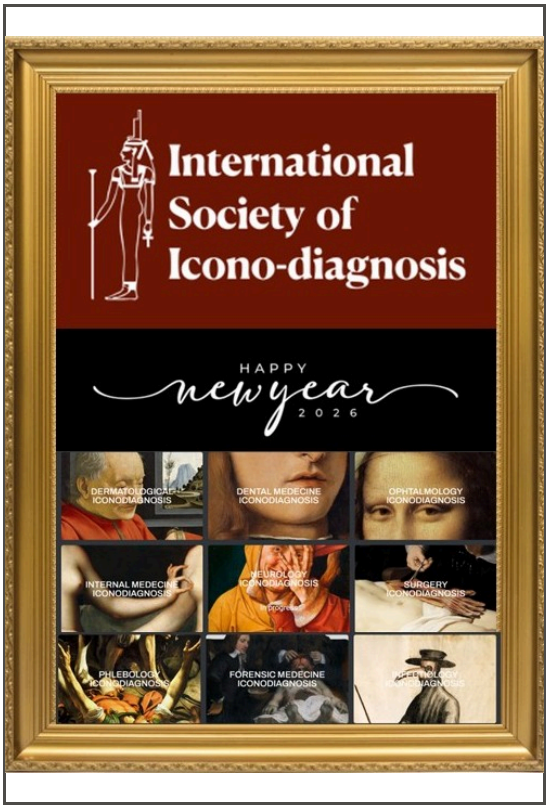
Detail of the ‘The Seven works of Mercy’ painted in 1504 in The Netherlands. We see a disabled man sitting on the street with stretched knees and hand crutches. His feet are rotated inwards while his left foot is depicted with seven toes. The foot deformity is compatible with (untreated) congenital clubfoot (*talipes equinovarus*) while the two extra toes (*polydactyly*) suggest a rare underlying genetic syndrome such as PITX1 gene mutation or trisomy 13 (Patau Syndrome). Isn’t it fascinating that this rare combination of anomalies was captured by an artist in the early 16th century!

To know more :

Bult S.A., De Ruiter P.E., Vergroesen P.A., van Gulik T.M. Orthopaedic portrayals in The Seven Works of Mercy painted by a Dutch master in the year 1504. Int Orthopedics 2025; Vol49, p2733-2739.
doi.org/10.1007/s00264-025-06653-7

OUR LATEST ARTICLES

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HAPPY ARTISTIC

NEW YEAR 2026 !

This frame is a work that is both individual and collective, bringing together all ISI specialty boards and reflecting the diversity of expertise and the collaborative spirit that underpin our learned society.

Thank to all the ISI international members !



ANTHROPOLOGIE

Le respect de la pudeur dans l'iconographie médicale a grandement évolué depuis le XIXe siècle. Peu à peu, l'anonymat et le consentement des patients pour l'utilisation de leur photographie dans les publications scientifiques se généralisent. Au XXIe siècle, la visibilité du corps humain est radicalement différente de celle admise au XIXe siècle. L'anthropologie comparative de la décence et de la pudeur dans les publications biomédicales depuis deux siècles permet de se questionner et d'améliorer les comportements en visant une meilleure humanisation.

Pudeur et publications scientifiques

Philippe Charlier
Laboratoire anthropologie, archéologie, biologie (LAAB), UFR Simone-Veil santé (UVSQ/ Paris-Saclay), Montigny-le-Bretonneux, France.
Département d'épidémiologie et de santé publique, CHU Raymond-Poincaré (AP-HP), Garches, France.
philippe.charlier@uvsq.fr

Récemment, j'ai pris l'avion pour assister à la soutenance d'une thèse d'histoire de l'art sur les illustrations scientifiques du corps humain au XIXe siècle européen.[1] Pendant que je feuilletais le volume d'environ 300 pages, mon voisin, un homme d'une cinquantaine d'années, s'est d'abord offusqué que je regarde en public certains clichés de corps masculins (pourtant sans organes génitaux visibles) porteurs de lésions syphilitiques avancées. Puis, quelques pages (et minutes) plus loin, quand il s'est agi d'un cliché torse nu d'une jeune femme avec une dermatose (fig.1), ses propos ont été radicalement inverses et... particulièrement lubriques.

Ce cas (lamentable) illustre la tension palpable que véhiculent encore ces clichés vieux de plus de cent ans. Certains, comme le cliché présenté ici, sont bâtis comme de véritables œuvres d'art, reproduisant (ici avec une patiente) la pose d'une madone italienne ou, ailleurs, la naissance de Vénus par Botticelli avec un rachitisme sévère. Comme le rappelle Axel Hohnsbein, « *la tentation de l'interprétation est lancinante : le mobilier, la nudité totale ou partielle, les draps et tenues d'hôpital, les vêtements de ville, les accessoires (colliers, bijoux, coiffes), la posture, l'âge, le sexe, le regard frontal ou détourné, le cadrage serré ou non, les effets de flou, tous ces éléments invitent à l'interprétation esthétique. (...) La nudité répétitive des corps confère à cette iconographie des connotations érotiques allant de la peinture classique à la pornographie* ».[2] Pourtant, certains lecteurs n'hésitent pas à « anonymiser » les clichés, comme celui qui a couvert

Figure 1. **Femme atteinte de « *vegetable parasite disease of the body* » (dans Alexandre Balmanno Squire, *Photographs [colored from life] of the diseases of the skin*, 1866).**

MODESTY and SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS
by Philippe Charlier

Respect for modesty in medical imagery has evolved significantly since the 19th century. Gradually, patient anonymity and consent for the use of their photographs in scientific publications have become standard practice. In the 21st century, the visibility of the human body is radically different from what was acceptable in the 19th century. A comparative anthropology of decency and modesty in biomedical publications over the past two centuries allows us to reflect on and improve practices, aiming for greater humanization.

Learn More

NEW

ISI MOBILE APPLICATION

- **A mobile application serving collaborative iconodiagnostic**

  The International Society of Iconodiagnostic (ISI) has developed a mobile application dedicated to exchanges between its members, with the aim of advancing iconodiagnostic in a collaborative, rigorous, and international manner.

  The application is intentionally simple and intuitive to use. It allows any ISI member to contribute directly from a museum or exhibition venue.

  How does it work in practice?

  When you are facing a work of art presenting a potential medical anomaly (formal sign, morphology, posture, expression, etc.):

  - You take a photograph of the artwork.
  - You photograph the label or the information associated with the work.
  - You complete a free-text field including your personal observations, iconodiagnostic hypotheses, and differential diagnoses.
  - You publish the case within the ISI members' community.

  What happens next?

  The case is then discussed by members of the various ISI specialty boards (dermatology, neurology, internal medicine, and other relevant disciplines). These multidisciplinary exchanges make it possible to refine the analysis and to compare hypotheses.

  At the end of this collective process, a well-argued and robust iconodiagnosis is established. The case may then be integrated into the ISI database and potentially lead to a scientific publication, thereby contributing to the advancement of knowledge in iconodiagnostic.

  This application fully embodies the mission of the ISI:

  - to cross perspectives,
  - to structure observations,
  - and to transform the analysis of works of art into a genuine tool for medical and scientific research.



ISI-App

The official contribution tool of the International Society of Icono-diagnosis

About ISI

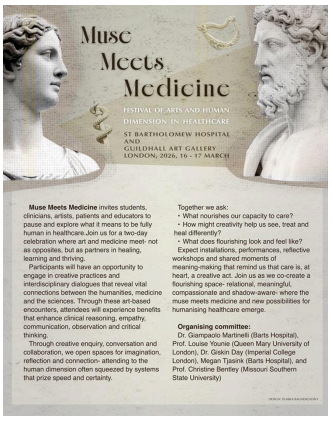
International Society of Icono-diagnosis

The ISI Mobile APP will be available in February 2026 !

To know more

EVENTS

16-17 March 2026



Information from Dr Giampaolo Martinelli

30 Sept. 3 October 2026

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ISI will submit posters !



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THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear members and friends of iconodiagnosis,

Over the past few months,
significant work has been carried out to research and organize a **Zotero bibliographic database dedicated to iconodiagnosis**.

This database gathers the main publications identified in this field, across all specialties, reflecting the growing interest in this practice.
The objective of this initiative is simple: to provide our community with a **shared, structured, and evolving tool** that facilitates access to existing work and helps better map the field of iconodiagnosis.

In the coming days, each member of the Society will receive
a **link granting access to this database**.
This access is not only intended for consultation of references; it also offers the possibility to **contribute to and enrich the database**.

This bibliographic database has been designed as a **collective tool**, serving the development and visibility of iconodiagnosis. It will truly grow and remain dynamic only through the participation of all members.

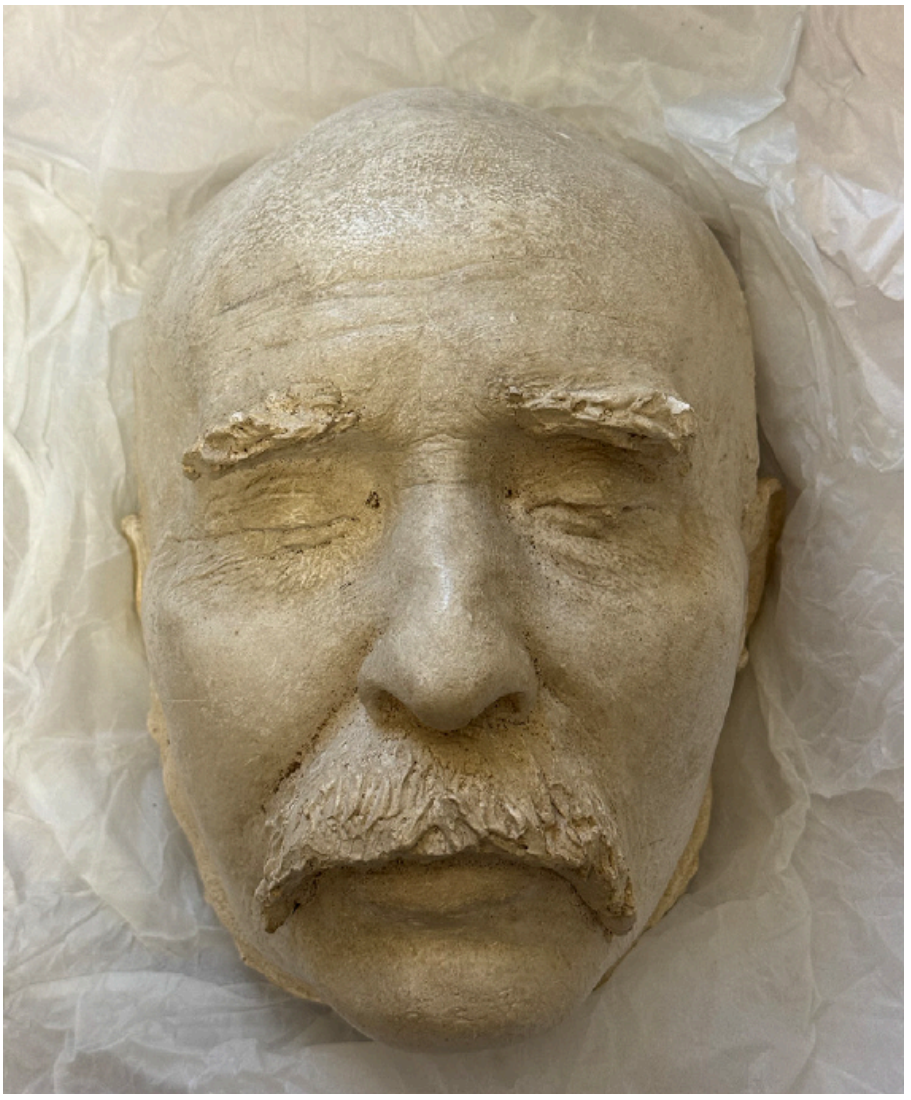
We therefore invite you to **add articles related to iconodiagnosis**, and initially to include your own publications, in order to progressively enrich this shared resource for the benefit of the entire community.

,
Kind regards,

Dr Philippe Charlier

Visit the ISI website

THE PAINTING of the month



Death mask of
Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929)
known as “the Tiger,” Prime Minister of France during the First World War.

"A death mask is like the ghost of a person."

A **death mask** is a three-dimensional reproduction of a deceased person’s face that faithfully preserves their features. It can be described as the “ghost” or physical imprint of the individual, allowing the deceased’s visage to be “presented” across time as a tangible witness of their appearance.

OUR LATEST ARTICLES

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Annales de cardiologie et d'angéiologie 75 (2026) 101985

Available online at ScienceDirect www.sciencedirect.com

Elsevier Masson France EM|consulte www.em-consulte.com

Lettre à la rédaction

Un signe de Frank (*Diagonal Earlobe Crease*) chez Georges Clemenceau (1929)

L'icono-diagnostic consiste en l'examen médical d'œuvres d'art figurant des individus humains : peintures, gravures, dessins, films, sculptures. Les masques mortuaires font partie de cette catégorie de support diagnostic, et doivent donc être considérés comme des patients à part entière, sur lesquels des signes cliniques objectifs sont visibles (et interprétables avec un œil professionnel) [1]. Autrement, des études précédentes ont ainsi montré la possibilité de diagnostiquer la présence d'un signe de Frank (« *Diagonal Earlobe Crease* ») sur le masque mortuaire de Gustave Flaubert [2] ou et sur des sculptures représentant l'empereur romain Hadrien [3]; ces lésions étaient d'autant plus pertinentes qu'elles intéressaient deux sujets dont le décès était lié à des complications cardiovasculaires.

Le récent examen direct d'un modèle ancien (premiers tirages) du masque mortuaire de Georges Clemenceau (médecin, fils de médecin), mort en 1929 à 88 ans d'une crise d'urémie, a mis en évidence un signe de Frank bilatéral assez net. Ce masque est conservé dans la maison de Clemenceau, à Saint-Vincent-sur-Jard (Vendée, France), sous le numéro d'inventaire CLE1936001537 (coll. Centre des Monuments Nationaux).

Ce pli auriculaire est, chez Clemenceau, de type « acquis », puisqu'il est absent sur les clichés photographiques qui le représentent jeune, puis se développe progressivement jusqu'à cette forme de sillon profond et bilatéral symétrique qu'on observe nettement sur le masque mortuaire de 1929.

Dans le cas présent, cette anomalie est à mettre en rapport avec le mauvais état de santé de ce patient, caractérisé par l'accumulation de plusieurs facteurs de risque cardiovasculaires : sexe masculin, âge supérieur à 65 ans, antécédent familial (père mort à 87 ans d'une « faiblesse des reins »… mais jeune frère mort d'une « angine de poitrine » en 1927), [4] diabète (il fut le premier à se faire traiter en France avec de l'insuline, dès 1923, à l'hôpital américain de Neuilly), surpoids, [5] tabagisme (servé à l'âge de 60 ans), [6] stress [7]. On ne lui connait pas d'hypercholestérolémie ni d'hypertension artérielle (Fig. 1).

Rappelons que le signe de Frank, nommé d'après le praticien nord-américain Sanders T. Frank, [8] est associé dans un nombre significatif de cas à une coronaropathie, des pathologies vasculaires périphériques et cérébro-vasculaires…[9] Relativisons tout de même l'importance épidémiologique et pronostic de cette lésion : d'autres études cliniques ont remis en question, notamment chez les sujets diabétiques (ce qui était justement le cas pour Georges Clemenceau), cette association pli auriculaire / accident cardio-vasculaire [10–11]. Le « Tigre » garde encore son secret.

Fig. 1. Masque mortuaire de Georges Clemenceau (face, profil droit, profil gauche) avec signe de Frank sur les deux lobes d'oreille (clichés P. Charlier).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ancard.2025.101985
Received 28 June 2025; Revised 22 October 2025; Accepted 6 November 2025

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ICONODIAGNOSIS

on DEATH MASK

Iconodiagnostics are often associated with paintings or sculptures, but **death masks** also reveal valuable clinical signs. The **death mask of Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929)**, a statesman nicknamed *"The Tiger"* and trained physician, shows the **Frank sign**. At 88 years old, this bilateral earlobe crease reflects a high cardiovascular risk profile, making the mask a true **"frozen patient"**, useful for learning and practicing medical semiology.

Call for Papers!

We need your articles to **enrich the newsletter** and **populate the iconodiagnostic database**.

Every publication makes the resource more complete and valuable for all members.

Learn More

NEW

ISI BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASE

ZOTERO SOFTWARE

What?

The **New ISI Bibliography Database** is a centralized database that compiles all reported cases of iconodiagnosis, classified by specialty: dermatology, ophthalmology, dental medicine, internal medicine, infectious diseases, psychiatry, and others.

For whom?

Access to this database is reserved for members of the Society who are up to date with their membership fees. It can be used as a **pedagogical and scientific tool** to support their education and clinical practice.

By whom?

Initiated by **Corinne Déchelette** and **Philippe Charlier**, this database is the result of a **collective effort**. It has been structured to allow the collection, organization, and classification of publications by specialty, while encouraging the active contribution of all members.

How?

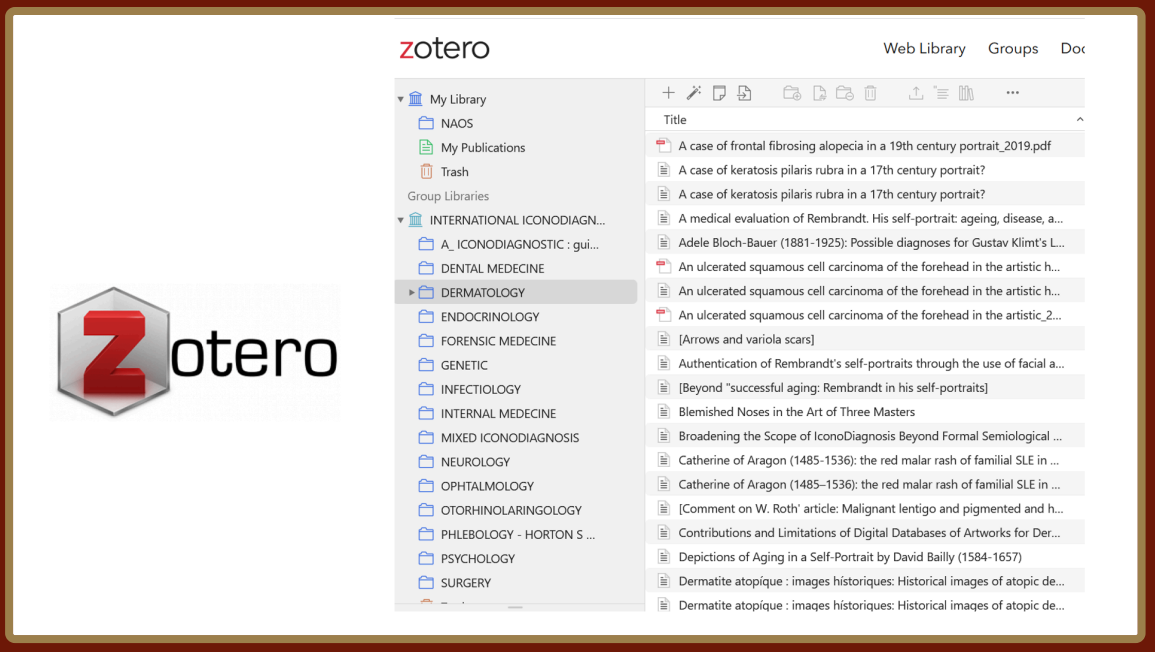
Each member will receive a **personalized email** providing individual access to the database via **Zotero**. Members can consult all the folders already available and are invited to verify that their own publications are included. If some of their studies are missing, they may add them themselves, thereby contributing to the **completeness and continuous updating** of the resource.
This procedure ensures **secure and individualized access** for each member while encouraging collective participation.

Why?

This collaborative approach ensures that the database remains **comprehensive and up to date**, faithfully reflecting the full body of work available in the field of iconodiagnosis. It also promotes **knowledge sharing across disciplines, interprofessional education, and the development of medical humanities**.

When?

Members may access and enrich the database **at any time**, provided they are up to date with their membership fees, allowing the resource to evolve continuously as new publications and observations emerge.



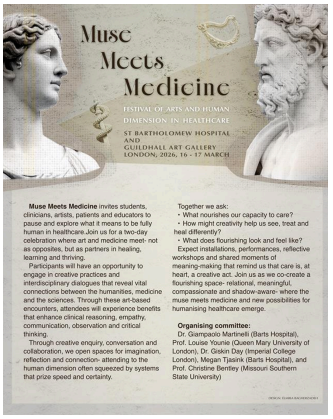
Zotero

The ISI Mobile App will be ready for the summer!
Just in time for your museum visits during the holidays.

To know more about ISI MOBILE APP

EVENTS

16-17 March 2026



Information from Dr Giampaolo Martinelli

30 Sept. 3 October 2026

Let's meet each other during EADV in Vienna !
ISI will submit posters !



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THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear Members and Friends of Iconodiagnosis,

We are delighted to report that the ISI collaborative mobile application is now functioning very successfully. Since its launch, the platform has demonstrated its value as a unique tool for sharing observations, discussing diagnostic hypotheses, and fostering scientific exchanges among specialists from different disciplines and countries.

As announced, dermatological iconodiagnosis has been chosen as the pilot specialty for this first phase. The ISI Dermatology Board serves as the testing board for the application, ensuring the scientific evaluation and discussion of submitted cases.

We would like to warmly thank Dr. Brigitte Hillion, who coordinates the Board's activities and oversees the preparation of the expert commentaries and memoranda produced by its members. Her dedication, together with the active participation of the Board members, has made it possible to establish a rigorous and collaborative review process.

We are also pleased to announce that, together with Corinne Déchelette, Vice-President of ISI, we are currently finalizing the development of a centralized database that will integrate all cases analyzed through the mobile application. This database will constitute a unique scientific resource, allowing the systematic archiving, classification, and retrieval of iconodiagnostic observations. It will provide a valuable foundation for future research projects, publications, and educational activities within our Society.
Below, you will find an example of this collective work. It illustrates how observations submitted through the application can be enriched by the complementary expertise of several specialists, leading to a more robust and documented iconodiagnostic discussion.

We encourage all members, regardless of their specialty, to continue contributing photographs and observations from museums, exhibitions, archives, and collections. Every contribution helps to expand our shared knowledge and strengthen the scientific foundations of iconodiagnosis.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and participation.
Wishing you a wonderful summer.

Kind regards,

Dr Philippe Charlier

Visit the ISI website

THE PAINTING of the month



Picture provided by Dr P. Charlier

Dermatological Iconodiagnosis on a Tapestry: A Rare Case Report

An example of the collaborative work of ISI Dermatological Board under the lead of Dr B. Hillion, Paris, France

The Grape Harvest (Les Vendanges), 16th-century tapestry, Musée de Cluny, Paris, France (Inv. Cl. 21541).

A male grape harvester is depicted with a well-circumscribed papulonodular lesion on the left zygomatic region. Because of the limited resolution inherent to the tapestry medium, a precise diagnosis cannot be established. Differential diagnoses include a melanocytic nevus, sebaceous cyst, seborrheic keratosis, viral wart, basal cell carcinoma, or squamous cell carcinoma. Prominent centrofacial erythematous streaks are also visible and may suggest a predisposition to rosacea. In addition, a second harvester, represented within the wooden vat, appears to display a dermal nevus on the cheek. These observations were independently noted by dermatologists **Brigitte Hillion, Massimo Papi, and Nicolas Kluger**. The limitations imposed by the textile support preclude a more refined morphological assessment.

OUR LATEST ARTICLES

Please, send us your latest articles !



ISI Iconodiagnosis Boards by Specialty

We would like to remind all members that the ISI Iconodiagnosis initiative is structured around several specialty-based expert boards, each contributing its own perspective and expertise to the interpretation of visual and iconographic material.

Each board plays a key role in the collaborative process, from the collection of cases to their scientific discussion and validation. The Dermatology Board currently serves as the pilot example of this organization.

Within this framework, **each board leader has the opportunity to actively disseminate the ISI mobile application within their own professional network and specialty environment. This local diffusion is essential to stimulate participation, encourage case submission, and ensure a continuous flow of visual material into the system.**

Once cases are submitted through the application, they are systematically collected and centralized, allowing for structured review and collaborative analysis by the relevant expert board. This process ensures both rapid data acquisition and high-level interdisciplinary interpretation.

Through this dynamic workflow—local activation, case submission, centralized collection, and collective expert analysis—the ISI aims to build a robust and evolving global platform for iconodiagnosis across specialties.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE

Learn More



PSYCHOLOGICAL ICONODIAGNOSIS

This study, conducted by ISI (International Society of Iconodiagnosis) in collaboration with **SiiTACT (Interdisplinary & international society of Touch),** investigates the representation of touch in painting through the lens of psychological iconodiagnosis. It aims to explore whether artworks can be analyzed as "clinical-like" visual cases, focusing on the affective and symbolic meaning of gestures, postures, and gazes.

A representative corpus of Virgin and Child paintings from different historical periods was analyzed by a psychologist-psychoanalyst in collaboration with an art historian. This led to the development of a typology of tactile gestures (holding, presenting, caressing, intertwining) and to the study of their evolution from Byzantine hieratic conventions to the more expressive and humanized interactions of Renaissance and Baroque art.

Results show clear historical variations: Byzantine works are characterized by symbolic, low-reciprocity gestures, whereas later periods exhibit increased emotional expressivity, bodily interaction, and relational dynamics. A standardized scoring system (1–10) was introduced to quantify posture and gaze (5 points each), enabling comparative analysis across artworks. Using this framework, Peter Paul Rubens' *Virgin and Child Surrounded by the Holy Innocents* (1618, Louvre Museum) achieved the highest affective touch score (9/10).

In conclusion, **psychological iconodiagnosis offers a promising interpretative framework for analyzing visual expressions of affect. However, caution is required in religious iconography, where conventions may override psychological expression.** The approach may be particularly relevant for secular

imagery such as portraits, and provides both an analytical tool and a means of enhancing visual literacy.

NEW
ISI MOBILE APPLICATION

HOW TO USE IT IN PRACTICE ?

A mobile application serving collaborative iconodiagnostic

The International Society of Iconodiagnostic (ISI) has developed a mobile application dedicated to exchanges between its members, with the aim of advancing iconodiagnostic in a collaborative, rigorous, and international manner.

How does it work in practice?

When you are facing a work of art presenting a potential medical anomaly (formal sign, morphology, posture, expression, etc.):

- You take a photograph of the artwork.
- You photograph the label or the information associated with the work.
- You complete a free-text field including your personal observations, iconodiagnostic hypotheses, and differential diagnoses.
- You publish the case within the ISI members' community.

What happens next?

The case is then discussed by members of the various ISI specialty boards (dermatology, neurology, internal medicine, and other relevant disciplines). These multidisciplinary exchanges make it possible to refine the analysis and to compare hypotheses.

At the end of this collective process, a well-argued and robust iconodiagnosis is established. The case may then be integrated into the ISI database and potentially lead to a scientific publication, thereby contributing to the advancement of knowledge in iconodiagnostic.

This application fully embodies the mission of the ISI:

- to cross perspectives,
- to structure observations,

- and to transform the analysis of works of art into a genuine tool for medical and scientific research.

DOWNLOAD THE ISI MOBILE APP

https://iconodiagnosis.vercel.app/

Here the ISI mobile app LINK

INSTRUCTIONS
for I Phone & Android
"Share and add to Home Screen"

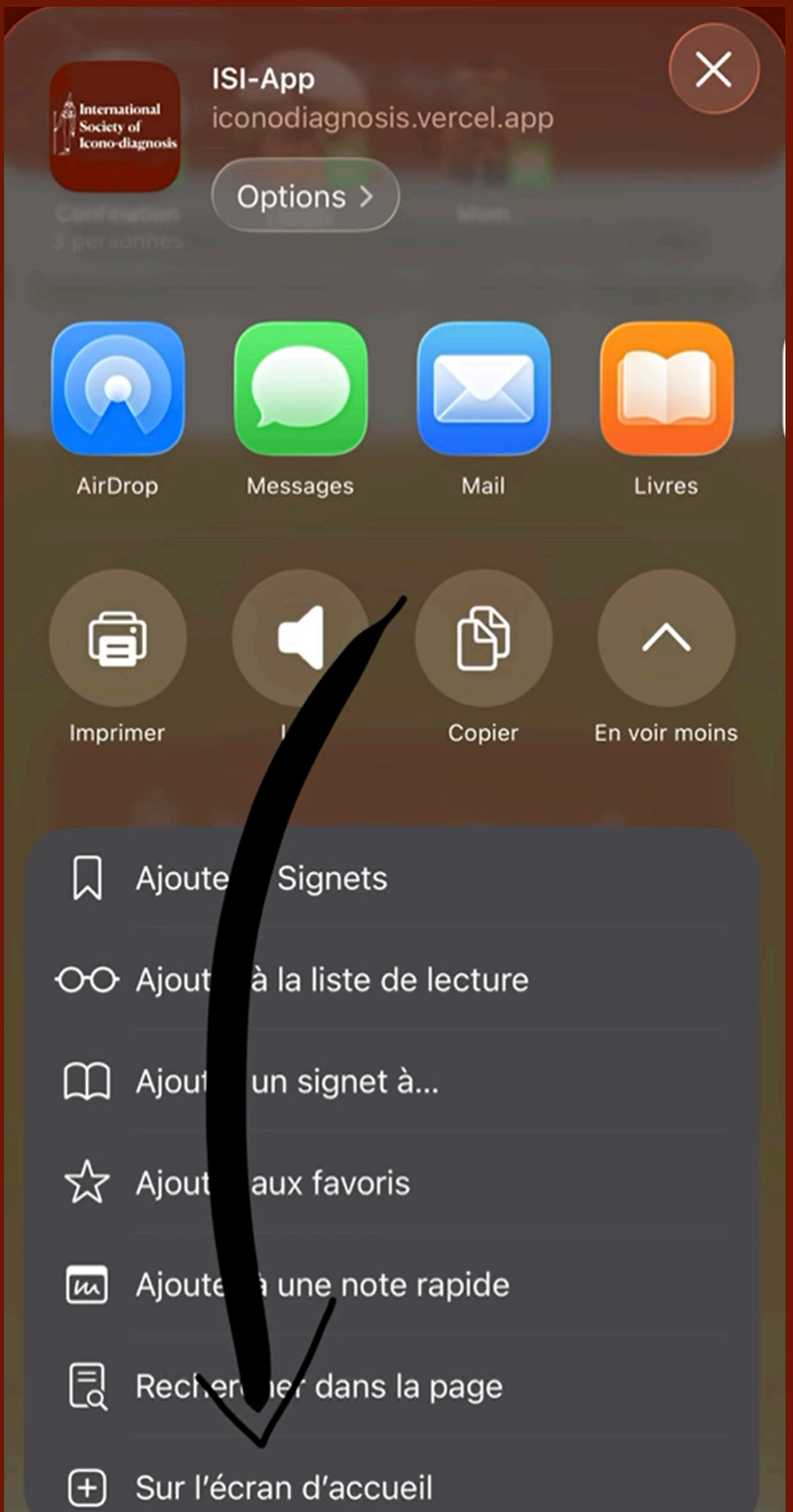
International Society of Icono-diagnosis

ISI-App

The official contribution tool of the International Society of Icono-diagnosis

About ISI




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iconodiagnosis.vercel.app
International Society of Icono-diagnosis
Options
AirDrop
Messages
Mail
Livres
Imprimer
Copier
En voir moins
Signets
à la liste de lecture
un signet à...
aux favoris
une note rapide
dans la page
Sur l'écran d'accueil

To know more

EVENTS

9-12 September 2026



For the third time, ISI will run an exhibition

23-25 Sept. 2026

Several ISI members will attent this symposia in Boston, US. Let's meet each other !



International Society of Icono-diagnosis

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THE WORD of PHILIPPE CHARLIER

Dear colleagues and friends,

We hope that you all had a wonderful summer and have made a great start to the new academic season!

Iconodiagnosis continues to grow, and the ISI community continues to thrive thanks to your contributions! During the summer, some of you visited museums and explored works of art through a medical and historical lens. Thanks to your enthusiasm and participation, we have already received new cases through the **ISI mobile application**.

Discover the new collaborative sections of the ISI website

We have recently opened new sections dedicated to **scientific communications and exhibitions organized by ISI members at scientific congresses**. Have you presented an ISI poster or scientific communication at a congress? **Send us your contribution, and we will be delighted to publish it on the ISI website.**

Would you like to organize, an **Iconodiagnosis exhibition at a scientific congress** in your specialty? The exhibitions organized in dermatology since 2024 provide an inspiring example of how works of art can become a genuine scientific and educational resource within a medical congress.
And perhaps **you will be the next to bring Iconodiagnosis to your specialty and organize an exhibition at your congress!**

Thank you once again for your participation, your contributions and your curiosity.
Iconodiagnosis is a collective adventure — and its future depends on all of us.

Dr Philippe Charlier

Visit the ISI website

THE PAINTING of the month



SYPHILIS — FROM BLACK AND WHITE TO COLOUR

The Syphilitic (1496)

by the German painter & engraver

Albrecht Dürer

British Museum, London, UK

OUR LATEST ARTICLES



Discover the new ISI section: Iconodiagnosis Exhibitions at Scientific Congresses

You can also organize an Iconodiagnosis exhibition at your own scientific congress!

If you are interested in bringing art and medical observation together within your specialty, **why not propose an Iconodiagnosis exhibition at your next scientific congress?**

Simply contact the congress organizers and suggest an exhibition featuring carefully selected reproductions of artworks that are free of copyright restrictions. The exhibition can be designed around the diseases, clinical signs, or medical themes relevant to your specialty.

Since 2024, this approach has been successfully developed in dermatology at the European Society for Dermatological Research (ESDR) congresses, demonstrating how Iconodiagnosis can become an engaging educational and scientific component of an international medical meeting.
Be inspired by what has already been done—and bring Iconodiagnosis to your own specialty!



Discover the new ISI section: Scientific Communications Presented as Posters at International Congresses

Share Your ISI Scientific Communications

We have created a new section dedicated to showcasing **all scientific communications presented by ISI members at scientific congresses worldwide**.

Have you presented an ISI poster, oral communication, or other scientific contribution at a congress? **Send us your poster or communication, and we will publish it in this new section of the ISI website.**

This section aims to highlight the scientific activity of the International Society of Iconodiagnosis and to make our members' work more visible within the international scientific community.

Send us your scientific communications and help us build the ISI collection!

Learn More

Learn More

NEED TO KNOW about Art History

by Dr Brigitte HILLION

What do these beautiful Renaissance women have in common?

Could it be an epidemic of frontal fibrosing alopecia?

Throughout Europe, at the end of the 15th century, the greatest portrait painters gave these women a haughty appearance, with foreheads that seem to stretch disproportionately high.

This fashion trend originated in France when the ladies-in-waiting of Queen **Isabeau of Bavaria**, who reportedly suffered from a scalp disorder, decided to shave or pluck their hairline to resemble her, as illustrated by a manuscript illumination dating from around 1410, depicting **Christine de Pizan presenting her book to the ladies of the court**.

This alteration of facial appearance, creating a more elongated face, became a beauty criterion, and many women far beyond the French court—in Italy and the Low Countries—adopted it, as illustrated in paintings by **Piero della Francesca** and **Rogier van der Weyden**.

Perhaps the queen really did have **frontal fibrosing alopecia or lichen planopilaris**. However, we should be cautious about **overinterpreting iconodiagnoses without taking into account the sociocultural context of the period**.



Master of The City of Ladies
Christine de Pizan with Queen Isabeau
Illumination on parchment, c. 1410
From *The Book of the Queen*
British Library, London



Master of the Virgin among the Virgins
Virgin and Child with Four Holy Virgins
(Saints Catherine, Cecilia, Barbara and Ursula)
1495

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

To know more

EVENTS

23-25 September 2026



Several members of ISI will attend this meeting !

1-3 October 2026

Let's meet each other during EADV in Vienna !



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