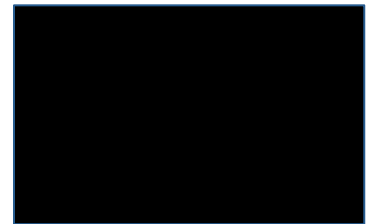


What might the reliefs have looked like?

The reliefs were originally **polychromatic** (painted with multiple colors).
If you look very closely, you can still see some of the paint!

Can you find any traces of these colors on Bowdoin's reliefs? Where?



Why do you think there is so little color remaining on the surfaces?



Austen Henry Layard. ca. 1849. Northwest Palace



Digital re-colorations of a relief from the exterior of the palace of Sargon II at Khorsabad, (© Li Sou & the Trustees of the British Museum).

The image on the left is one **rendition** of how the inside of the palace might have appeared during the reign of King Ashurnasirpal II. This interpretation also includes painted murals that were in the palace and that may have included more colors than the reliefs. To the right is another interpretation of color placement on the reliefs. The truth is, we don't know exactly what the original reliefs looked like; it's something scientists and historians still debate today.

Bowdoin College Museum of Art

Now, you can “paint” your own Assyrian relief! If you were the painter in 879 BCE, what colors would you paint the reliefs? Try to imagine what this relief might have looked like when it was new or invent your own color scheme!

