

Work at the University of Kentucky / Brent Seales / Digital Restoration Initiative

Post by “Cassius” of August 25, 2019 at 9:33 AM

LEXINGTON, Ky. (May 21, 2019) — Dubbed "the man who can read the unreadable," the story of [Brent Seales](#) is one of patience and perseverance. With the computer science professor at the helm of the Digital Restoration Initiative, the University of Kentucky is poised to become a world-class leader in "unwrapping" cultural artifacts.

For more than two decades, Seales and his dedicated team — of staff and student researchers — have doggedly labored to do the impossible. With renowned expertise, they've non-invasively recovered fragile texts, such as Homer's "Iliad" and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Yet, there is one mystery the team still longs to solve — revealing the elusive texts within the carbonized Herculaneum scrolls.

These papyri are among the most iconic — and inaccessible — of the world's vast collection of damaged manuscripts. Buried and burned in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, the scrolls offer a unique window to the ancient world. Unfortunately, they are too fragile to unroll.

Now, after a 10-year lull, Seales has found a way forward.

Mellon Grant Advances Digital Restoration Initiative

Thanks, in large part, to a \$2 million grant from [The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#), Seales finally has the materials access, funding support and technical approach needed to solve the 2,000-year-old mystery.

<https://uknow.uky.edu/research/brent...GClv9IVNOajlXzE>

Digital Restoration Initiative: <http://www2.cs.uky.edu/dri/>