

Upholstery Survey Results

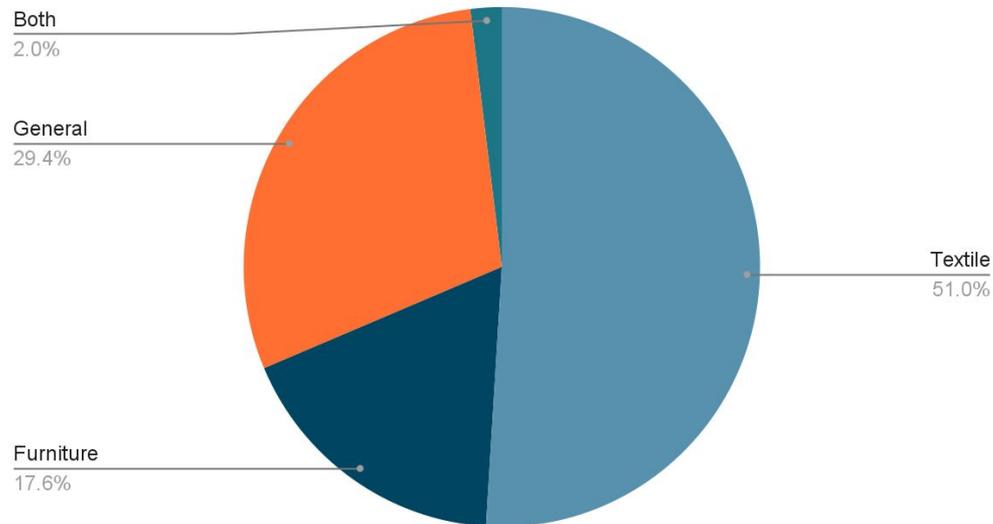


Icon Textile Group
Isabella Rossi

Upholstery Survey

- Open for 24 October to 30 November 2023
- 81 respondents

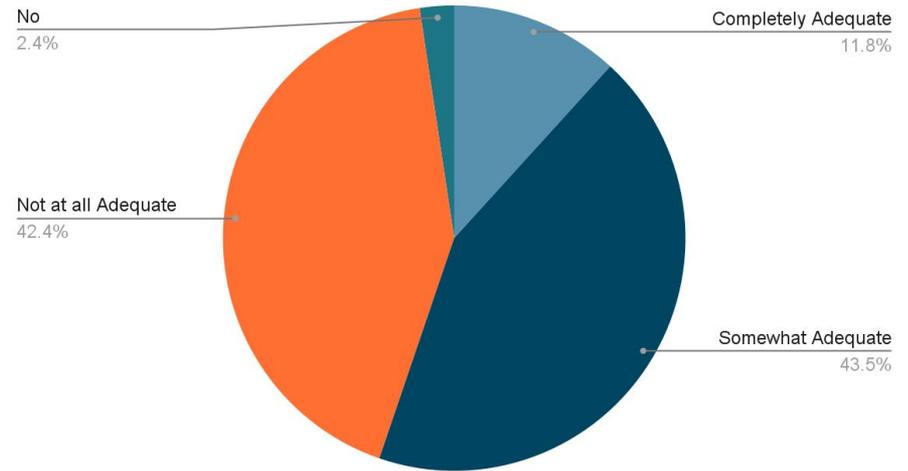
Types of Conservators



Training

- Need for more training in upholstery treatment
- 70% learned about upholstery during training
- 92.7% said that upholstery consisted of less than a quarter of training

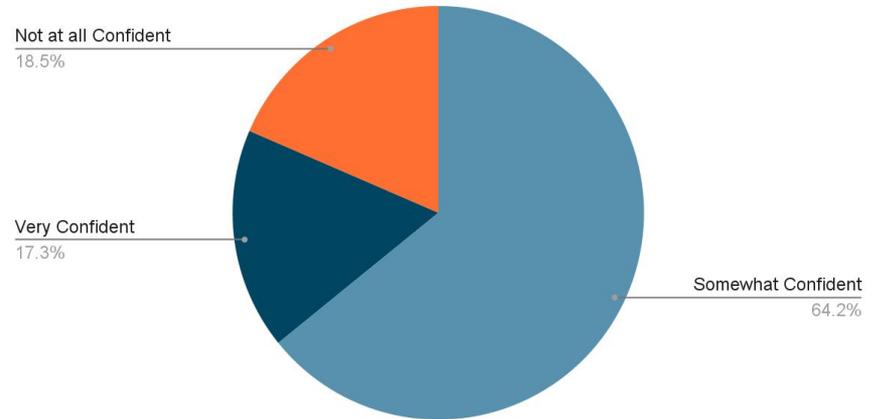
Was the amount of teaching you received adequate and useful?



Confidence

- Overall a low level of confidence in ability to conserve upholstery
- Most confident in treating top covers in situ, treatment and reapplication of top covers, and replacing top covers
- 56.6% only somewhat confident in looking for evidence of original or earlier upholstery

Do you feel confident taking on the treatment of upholstery objects?



Materials

- Choice of material depended on treatment
- Chose modern materials when undertaking conservation style treatment
- Chose traditional materials when undertaking restoration style treatment
- Most respondents were somewhat familiar (40.2%) or had no experience (37.8%) with conservation grade alternative materials for upholstery



Display of upholstery materials at Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg
©Isabella Rossi

Collaboration

- 57.5% work with commercial upholsterers or upholstery conservators when treating upholstery
- Division of labour varied by project
- Textile conservators often treated top covers, trimmings, and original materials
- Commercial upholsterers would reupholster and focus on shaping and support
- Furniture conservators were more likely to do majority of work

Conclusions

- Interest in learning about upholstery conservation
- Lack of access to knowledgeable people and desire to network
- Need for more published information on topics such as case studies, historic structures and shapes, removable systems, and ethics of removing original materials
- Desire to learn more about tools and available materials

The Future

- 16-17 October: Upholstery Conservation Workshop at the V&A
- 18 October: a tour of the Frederick Parker Furniture Collection



Winged easy chair with ebonised beech frame c. 1690-1710 ©Frederick Parker Collection