

Icon NEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION • OCTOBER 2019 • ISSUE 84



#Icon19: impressions and reflections

Also in this issue

The challenges of filming • Valuing conservation education • Conserving figureheads



OCTOBER 2019 Issue 84



From the Editor

Welcome to this conference edition of Icon News, which brings you a taste of Belfast and #Icon19 - from our Chief Executive's thoughts on her experience of the event to the trepidation of an emerging conservator showing a poster for the first time. By all accounts, Icon's visit to Northern Ireland was a great success, maintaining and building on the standards set by the earlier triennial conferences. As one correspondent put it to me, 'I had a great time. I did go out of a sense of duty but I am so glad I did'.

Key qualities that come across from reports of the conference are enthusiasm, commitment and willingness to collaborate. These, along with a willingness to express your views, are also desirable qualities in a Trustee. So if you think you qualify on these criteria, or know someone who does, why not get nominating? Learn more in the article on page 3. Also look out for Ylva Dahnsjö's plea for high-quality conservation education, the result of the Heritage Science Group's photo competition and articles on figureheads and filming.

Lynette Gill



2 NEWS

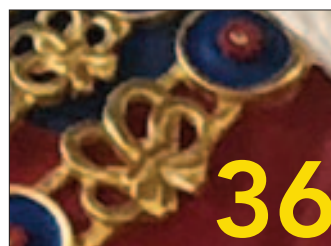
From the Chief Executive, Group news, grants and awards, HSG photo competition, goodbye to Camberwell, Board and AGM news



12 PEOPLE

15 CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS

Reports from #Icon19



26 REVIEWS

At ICOM-CC textile working group, at the AIC, history of waste paper, dynamic objects at #Icon19, a Japanese colour master, salvage workshop, Westminster Abbey effigies, harvesting traditional knowledge

34 IN PRACTICE

Preparing figureheads for exhibition and **the emerging conservator** on filming in historic properties in Scotland - the risks and benefits



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Deadlines for adverts and editorial

For the December 2019 issue
Friday 1 October 2019

For the February 2020 issue
Friday 29 November 2019

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professional update

From The Chief Executive



Sara Crofts reflects on #Icon19

I always arrive in Belfast with a feeling of happy expectation because I've visited many times before and it's become one of my favourite cities. As an architect I love the swagger of the nineteenth century civic and commercial buildings as they instantly remind me of Belfast's close relative, Glasgow – a place I know well since I grew up close by. The two ports have a similar

heritage of ship building and heavy industry, textile manufacture and transatlantic commerce and, of course, a deep and abiding fondness for tatties.¹ Both cities have also had to forge new identities and to find new paths to economic security in recent years, so it was good to be able to bring #Icon19 to Belfast to take advantage of the city's blossoming tourist offer and the warm Northern Irish welcome.

However, I also felt a slight sense of trepidation. The preparation and planning for #Icon19 had been an almost constant feature of my first four months in post as Chief Executive – a testament to the huge effort put in by Icon's staff, admirably co-ordinated by Head of Membership Michael Nelles, to ensure that the triennial conference is a success for speakers and delegates – and the anticipation had, quite frankly, reached fever pitch. So, when the moment came to take to the stage in the Ulster Museum to welcome delegates to the opening reception, a maelstrom of emotions was coursing through my veins. And the assembled company was a glorious sight – nearly four hundred people filling the atrium of the museum with excited chatter and oodles of energy. It was immediately obvious what my message ought to be: the importance of people. I therefore offered my reflection that our members are Icon's most important asset: you are Icon and Icon is you. And I made a pledge to champion your skills, your expertise and your professionalism because I want Icon to be better known and the value of conservators to be better understood and appreciated.

Listening to the presentations over the next couple of days in the International Conference Centre my appreciation of the profession deepened further. I attended many inspiring talks on an almost bewildering range of topics. Some of the most interesting to me were the papers that considered various aspects of the profession – what it means to be a leader, the value of internship programmes, and the challenges of forging a career in conservation. Christina Rozeik also shared some fascinating insights into various aspects of recruitment and pay

gained from close study of ten years of Icon's job advert data. This may have been one of the most talked about sessions, as the topic is, understandably, a matter close to the hearts (and pockets!) of many of our members. It was also very timely, as we are currently working on plans to refresh and expand the 'jobs' section of the Icon website. We are looking again at our recommended entry-level salary guidelines and will be adding a suite of new resources intended to encourage good recruitment practice and also offering support and advice to those who are seeking employment.

At the same time, we are also making good progress on our Sustainable Workforce Research Toolkit project² with our partners at the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The Toolkit will comprise an accessible methodology and survey template that can be used by any professional body or organisation which wants to survey its heritage workforce. This will enable the ongoing collection and dissemination of data on workforce size; composition; skills and trends in employment; and education. The Toolkit is currently being developed by our consultants, funded through a generous grant from Historic England; we expect to publish it by the end of October 2019.

Another theme that engaged me personally was discussions about the relationship between conservation and environmental sustainability. It was therefore a great pleasure to be able to introduce Dr Meredith Wiggins, Senior Environmental Analyst at Historic England, as the concluding keynote speaker. Meredith made a passionate call for us to grasp the challenges of climate change, noting that it affects not only the physical character of the landscapes and monuments that we are trying to conserve but is forcing us to think hard about how we choose the heritage (places, objects and stories) that we preserve for future generations too. Her presentation clearly struck a chord with many of the conference delegates and so we were delighted that she decided to reprise it in a webinar that was delivered on 10 July. Several Icon members participated in the online discussion; the presentation slides and webinar recording are still available on the Historic England website.³

The sustainability theme was also very timely as Icon is exploring ways in which we can reduce our carbon footprint and support members to make more environmentally conscious choices. You will already be aware of the change to recycled paper envelopes for Icon News but there are other practical measures in the pipeline too. I can also share the news that I have accepted an invitation to join the international steering committee working on the launch of the *Climate Heritage Network*, which will take place in Edinburgh on 24-25 October.⁴

So, now that the dust has settled, what are my lasting impressions about #Icon19? Well, I have to say that it more than lived up to expectations. It was an exciting and energising melting pot of ideas, imagination and inspiration. As with many such events, the value came equally from being able to learn from a wide variety of expert speakers across a

range of disciplines and from the many formal and informal networking opportunities that arose during breaks, social activities and visits. The triennial conference provides a rare occasion for Icon members from across the full spectrum of our membership to come together. It is therefore an incredibly important opportunity for members to introduce themselves to new contacts, to explore the common challenges that affect our professional lives (regardless of where or how we work) and also to benefit from discussing matters of shared concern with likeminded people. I appreciate that attending the conference requires a substantial financial and time commitment from members, but the initial feedback supports my conclusion that the investment on continuing professional development and building networks is well worth it.

Lastly, I would note that amongst the many achievements of #Icon19 I was encouraged to see how closely the conference aligned with two of Icon's core values. We aim to be **forward-looking and outward-looking** – so the theme of *New Perspectives: Contemporary Conservation Thinking and*

Practice provided an unparalleled way to ensure that we **keep our eyes on the horizon and on the world around us**. It also provided an excellent opportunity to be **collaborative and generous, as we work with our members to share learning and achieve the best results together**. And, in addition, it was enormously good fun! Huge congratulations to all those who played a part in its success – behind the scenes, on the speakers' podiums or as an engaged audience member.

1 Potatoes feature prominently in the cuisines of both countries and the Tayto company of County Armagh, inventors of cheese and onion flavoured crisps, is held in great affection: www.tayto.com/about/

2 <https://icon.org.uk/about-us/icon-policy-and-advocacy/sustainable-workforce-research-toolkit-project>

3 www.slideshare.net/HistoricEngland/ and <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/training-skills/online-training/webinars/>

4 <http://climateheritage.org/launch-2019/>

BOARD NOMINATIONS CLOSE SOON!

This year there are six vacancies for places on Icon's Board of Trustees and we need enthusiastic and committed Icon members to step forward now – as the deadline for nominations is early October.

Elected Trustees serve an initial three-year term and may be re-elected for a second term. Successful candidates would therefore be appointed as Trustees on 5 December 2019 and remain in office until the end of the 2022 AGM. As one of the six vacancies that we need to fill is reserved for Northern Ireland we are particularly keen to build on the success of this year's #Icon19 conference and to encourage greater communication and interaction with our colleagues there.

Candidates must be paid-up members of Icon but you do not need to have specific skills or knowledge. Accredited, Associate, Graduate or Student members are all welcome to apply. Bringing experience to the role is important, but we also welcome candidates who are new to the profession and can provide a fresh perspective.

The role is non-executive but we expect Trustees to offer an average of 1.5 days of their time each month. This includes preparing for and attending Board meetings, which currently take place four times a year on a weekday afternoon, and an annual Planning Day. Meetings are usually held in London. We also expect Trustees to take on a committee or working group role that fits with their interests and skills.

Many members may underestimate their own potential to serve as a Trustee, but perhaps you know one or two people who could be an asset to Icon's Board. If so, please encourage them to stand for election via our on-line portal www.mi-nomination.com/icon.

If you are ready to take the plunge and offer yourself for election then remember that you need to persuade other Icon members that they should vote for you – so take time to think carefully about what you want to say about yourself on your nomination form. Your proposer and seconder could be a useful resource as they may be able to articulate the qualities and skills that you can offer to the Board. And they may have spotted other hidden strengths and talents too!

Good luck with your nomination!

Sara Crofts
Chief Executive

ART FUND CONSERVATION GRANTS

In June the Art Fund made a welcome announcement about a new fund supporting the conservation of works in museum and gallery collections. This new, dedicated conservation scheme for public museums, galleries and historic houses has been made possible thanks to the generosity of Art Fund donors and members.

The new scheme is specifically designed to help give newly acquired works any conservation treatment they require, as well as to enable existing works to come out of storage and be prepared for public display. It is solely dedicated to conservation, allowing for a proportion of support for display and public engagement.

Art Fund chairman, Lord Smith of Finsbury, said: 'We're proud to be providing new funding towards the conservation of objects in UK collections, to help unlock new stories about these objects and improve collections care and display'.

The new fund is already open for applications, which must be accompanied by a conservation report prepared by an



WEST DEAN COLLEGE
ARTS & CONSERVATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION

<p>7-11 October: Art and Object Handling* (Object and Materials Conservation)</p> <p>28 October: Writing and Using a Preservation Policy (At the British Library)</p> <p>11-14 November: Mortars for Repair and Conservation* (Building Conservation Masterclass)</p>	<p>14 November: Preserving Historic Photographs (At the British Library)</p> <p>18-21 November: Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins* (Building Conservation Masterclass)</p> <p>10 December: Digitisation - Planning and Processes (At the British Library)</p> <p>*10% discount for Icon members</p>
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cost of attending the 4th International Institute of Conservation Emerging and Student Conservator conference, in Cologne, Germany where she will be giving a paper.

Tara Laubach, a paper conservation student from the University of Northumbria was awarded £185 towards her living costs during a paper conservation placement at the University of Edinburgh.

Charlotte Park, Paper Conservation Technician at the National Galleries of Scotland was awarded £300 towards the cost of travel to attend the 2019 NZCCM National Conference: Modern and contemporary materials in Christchurch New Zealand.

The June Baker Trust was set up in 1990 to help individuals working in the conservation of historic and artistic artefacts in Scotland, or training with the intention to do so.

The 'Awards for Conservators in Scotland' are available to assist with funding travel, attendance at conferences and on short courses, purchase of equipment, or other suitable projects for conservators with a strong Scottish connection. These awards are made once a year, with the deadline for applications being **31 May**.

The Trust can be contacted by email at: junebakertrust@gmail.com

WALL PAINTING CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT

The legacy of Sharon Cather, whose obituary can be found elsewhere in this issue, is wide-ranging and one significant aspect of it is the MA in the Conservation of Wall Painting at the Courtauld Institute of Art which, with David Park, she established some thirty-four years ago. Now its international reputation as a leading programme of its kind in the world is assured for more years to come with the announcement earlier this year by the J. Paul Getty Trust of a \$5m endowment grant to the Courtauld, which will specifically support scholarships and practical education on wall paintings in the field – both in Britain and abroad – for Master's level students. The Getty Conservation Institute has been a partner with The Courtauld's wall paintings conservation programme since its inception.

The programme is small and rigorous, accepting just eight new students once every three years from countries around the world. The next intake is for the programme beginning 2020/21 and further information will be published this autumn. It is welcome good news in the often threatened field of conservation education.

FIRST ICON ANNUAL LECTURE

Icon is delighted to announce that the inaugural Icon Annual Lecture will take place following this year's Annual General Meeting (for details of the AGM see right). The theme is 'Conserving Intangible Cultural Heritage'. The lecture will be delivered jointly by Clara Arokiasamy, Chair of the ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Louise Lawson,

accredited conservator (ACR). More information can be found at <https://icon.org.uk/news/art-fund-launches-a-new-conservation-grants-programme> and on the Art Fund website (www.artfund.org)

THE JUNE BAKER TRUST AWARDS

The June Baker Trust is pleased to announce the awards that it has been able to give out this year with its 'Awards for Conservators in Scotland' grants:

Shannon Campbell, a student on the Durham University museum and archaeological objects conservation course, was awarded £300 to help with travel costs while doing a nine-month internship at the National Museums of Scotland.

Emma Fraser, an independent book conservator, was awarded £300 towards the cost of attending the IADA Congress in Warsaw, Poland.

Marie Grima, a conservation student from France doing a six-month internship at the National Museums of Scotland was awarded £300 towards the cost of attending 'The Big Stuff' congress in Katowice, Poland, where she will give a paper on the conservation of NMS's Tod Lighthouse.

Marina Herriges, a student on the MPhil textile conservation course in Glasgow was awarded £300 towards the cost of attending the 4th International Student conference in Krakow, Poland, where she will give a paper.

Arielle Juler, the Icon Preventive Conservation intern with the National Trust for Scotland was awarded £300 towards the

Conservation Manager for Time Based Media at Tate. Clara will be introducing the topic of cultural heritage and what it means in terms of cultural practices through the work of the ICOMOS committee, with Louise moving on to discuss the ground-breaking work of Tate, where the focus is increasingly on collecting time based media and performance art, and the implication this has for conservation practices.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS & NETWORKS

Archaeology Group

The Archaeology Group's 2019 Annual General Meeting was held at the Ashmolean Museum in August and centred on their new exhibition: *Last Supper in Pompeii*. The jam-packed day included a selection of talks as well as a behind-the-scenes look at the museum's conservation facilities.

Alexandra Baldwin, Conservation Manager, gave a very interesting talk in the Conservation lab about the treatment of some of the copper alloys on display in the exhibition, which was a collaboration between the Ashmolean, Pompeii and Naples Museum. Nicky Lobaton, Objects Conservator, also gave a fascinating talk about the first steps in making the exhibition a reality, visiting Pompeii with Ashmolean curator Dr Paul Roberts and selecting and assessing the objects. Finally Stephanie Ward, Objects Conservator talked about her role as the exhibition conservator, making the gallery and display space ready and installing the artefacts.

There was also the opportunity to explore the exhibition which included a very detailed and fine mosaic showing a large variety of fish and seafood, a large and intact blue glass jug and the resin cast of the Lady of Oplontis and one of the famous cast voids of victims of the Vesuvius eruption, very thoughtfully displayed. Thank you to committee members Vicky Garlick, Ellie Rowley-Conwy and Hazel Gardiner for organising the event and to all the interesting and thought-provoking speakers.

We would like to thank three of our members who have decided to step down from the committee. Pieta Greaves served as secretary and one of the events coordinators since the 2018 AGM. We are grateful to her for contributing a great deal in only one year, including organising the seminar in Birmingham last December. Jenny Mathiasson has been on the committee for a number of years and has helped strengthen our social media presence. Sarah Morton has also decided to step down after many years serving as Treasurer and then as project manager for First Aid for Finds. She has worked hard to get FAFF up and running, leaving a good starting point for our new project manager. Thank you to all for your hard work. We have put out a call for new members which will be announced on our website soon.

We will be hosting a one day conference on X-radiography at the Museum of London in November. Look out for further details and a Call for Papers. We are also looking forward to organising a joint workshop with the Portable Antiquities Scheme, looking into the conservation of metal detected finds. Suggestions for future events and workshops are always welcome. Please watch Iconnect, Twitter and the website for further announcements.

We'd also like to let our members know that we've got a Twitter



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 15th Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Conservation will be held on Thursday 5 December 2019 at 5.00 p.m. at the St. Bride Foundation, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 8EQ, to consider the following business:

Ordinary Resolution 1: To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019.

Ordinary Resolution 2: To authorise the Trustees to appoint the auditors to serve until the end of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Trustees to decide the remuneration to be paid to the auditors.

A member of the Institute of Conservation who is entitled to attend and vote at the meeting (being a paid up Accredited, Associate, Student and Emeritus Member) is entitled to appoint a proxy, who need not be a member of the Institute of Conservation, to attend and vote instead of them. Proxies may be appointed via the web portal or to the registered office so long as they are received before 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday 3rd December 2019. Those received later will not be counted.

If you are eligible to vote you will be sent an email by our election support provider mi-voice inviting you to access the Proxy Notice enabling you to register your instructions on-line. If you do not have an email address, please phone the mi-voice office at 0845 241 4148.

Members are invited to stay on after the lecture for a glass of wine.

So that we can estimate numbers for catering please let us know if you are planning to attend by sending an email to membership@icon.org.uk

Simon Green, Company Secretary

9 August 2019

account you can follow (@ICONArchaeology). We would love to hear about your current archaeological conservation projects big or small. Please tag us and #findsfriday in your posts and follow us to see what everyone else is up to!

Charlotte Wilkinson

Icon AG Communications Rep

Ceramics and Glass Group

July saw the announcement of the winners of three prestigious awards supported by Icon's Ceramics and Glass Group: the Nigel Williams Prize, Nigel Williams Student Prize and the Denise Lyall Memorial Prize. The Nigel Williams Prize is a biennial award resulting from collaboration between Nigel Williams' family and Icon's Ceramics and Glass Group. The prize was created to serve both as a memorial to Nigel Williams' work, and to encourage continuing high standards at all levels within the profession of ceramics and glass conservation. The Nigel Williams Prize is awarded for an outstanding conservation project focusing on ceramic or glass objects.

This year's Nigel Williams Prize was awarded to a collaborative project at the British Museum on *'The Use of an Er:YAG Laser in the Removal of Biological Growth from Polychrome Archaeological Terracotta Figurines from Cyprus'*. The project was undertaken by conservators Dr Duygu Camurcuoglu ACR and Miriam Orsini, scientist Dr Lucia Pereira-Pardo and Curator of Greece and Rome Dr Thomas Kiely.

The judging panel commented that 'this is a tremendously interesting project and will potentially lead the way for more in-depth exploration and resultant applications for the use of Er:YAG lasers within ceramics conservation'. The prize was formally awarded at the conference at the British Museum, *Recent Advances in Glass and Ceramics Conservation*, on 5 September 2019.

The Nigel Williams Student Prize was awarded to Holly Daws, who completed her MA in Conservation Studies at West Dean College in 2018. Holly won the prize for her project *'The Benefits of Practical Tests and Analysis in Informing the Treatment of a Pair of 19th Century Plaster Panels'*, which looked into suitable treatment options for use with historic plaster. The judges felt that the project was 'an excellent piece of work that thoroughly investigates the options for treatment backing up decision with tests and careful evaluation'.

Holly Daws also received the Denise Lyall Memorial Prize. The prize is awarded annually to the student on the Conservation and Restoration of Ceramics and Related Materials Programme at West Dean College who has produced the best conservation research project. Holly's project, *'Comparison of Computer-Generated Colour Matching and Matching By Eye to Avoid Illuminant Metamerism in Ceramic Conservation'*, compared the Tennent and Nobbs' Computer Match Colour Prediction System (CMCPS) against colour matching by eye to avoid illuminant metamerism for retouching infills within ceramic conservation. Congratulations to all!

Icon Ceramics and Glass Group Committee

Heritage Science Group

AGM and guest lecture

Our AGM took place on 26 June at 4pm at UCL's Institute of Archaeology. The minutes can be found in the HSG Resources section of the website. The AGM was followed by the guest lecture "From Industry to Heritage - An Engineer's Perspective" by Nicola Grahamslaw. Nicola is a Conservation Engineer responsible for the conservation of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's SS Great Britain.

Election of new committee members

The HSG committee welcomed two new members: Antanas Melinis was appointed as Student Representative and Josep Grau-Bove was elected as general committee member.

Antanas Melinis



Antanas Melinis is a current MPhil Archaeology student at UCL Institute of Archaeology. After graduating BSc Archaeology in 2017 at UCL, he decided to pursue research in conservation and archaeological science within the Science and Engineering in Art, Heritage and Archaeology (SEAHA) programme, which is specifically tailored to provide a multidisciplinary basis for heritage science studies. His research in collaboration with English

Heritage is focused on the preventive conservation of early glass through the creation of optimal storage conditions. Using real-time visual and acoustic monitoring techniques, the process of glass surface cracking and deformation under physical stress from changing environmental variables will be explored. He is highly passionate about heritage and is planning to continue working in this field in the years to come.

Josep Grau-Bove is a chemical engineer; he obtained a PhD in Heritage Science in UCL in 2015. He is part of the UCL

Josep Grau-Bove



Institute for Sustainable Heritage, where he is a lecturer in Science and Engineering in Arts, Heritage and Archaeology. His research interests are the use of computer simulations to understand processes of change in heritage objects and environments. He is also interested in citizen science and developing new ways to involve the public in heritage science. He has used mathematical models to study the behaviour of

particulate matter, moisture, the management of collections and environmental conditions, from display cases to buildings. He is leading the new course MSc in Data Science for Cultural Heritage.

The members of the HSG committee want to warmly thank former members Ian Gibb, Lisa O'Hagan and Matija Strlic for their invaluable contributions.

Events

Some past events organised by the HSG will be repeated due to high demand: colour science and use of Excel. Dates will be announced on the Icon website and HSG social media. Power point presentations from past HSG events can be found in the section 'Past events' on the website.

Guidance documents

A section called Guidance documents has been added to the website and it is intended to be the repository for all guidance documents generated by HSG. Documents related to the new artefact sampling guidance can be found in this section: <https://icon.org.uk/groups/heritage-science/guidance-documents>

Keeping in touch

Finally, keep an eye out for our notices in Iconnect, on our webpages, and on Twitter (@ICONSci) and get in touch via our Group email address (hsg@icon.org.uk) if you would like to become more involved in the Group's activities.

Lucia Pereira-Pardo, HSG Communications Officer

Photographic Materials Group

At the beginning of July the PhMG committee, with help from the conservation team at the National Library of Scotland, hosted an event on re-housing daguerreotypes. 'Protecting daguerreotypes: a new structural housing system' was a workshop with photographic conservator Clara Prieto that taught delegates about the daguerreotype's history, structure and vulnerability and provided information on long-term storage and care. Head to our blog page to read about Yue Li's experience of the day.

Save the date for this year's PhMG Round Table discussion! On 29 November you'll find us back at the Dana Research Centre at the Science Museum in London, sharing our thoughts on photographic conservation. It's never too early to start thinking about possible discussion topics and projects you might like to share, so keep this in mind if you'd like to give a five-minute presentation!

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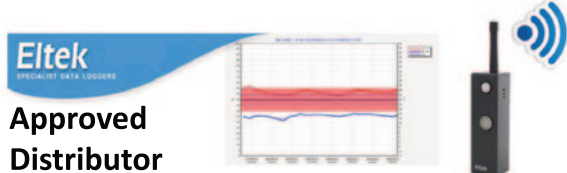
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Icon Scotland Group

Training and events

September has been a busy month for the Icon Scotland Group. Our first event was a seminar on *Consolidation with Nanolimes and Digital Conservation Mapping*, led by three experts from Germany who had come to Scotland for Historic Environment Scotland's *Monuments in Monuments* conference. It was held in the fitting surroundings of Stirling Castle, and was a great opportunity for conservation and historic building professionals in Scotland to get up to speed with new material and technological developments.

We also ran a five-day practical course on gilding at Kelvin Hall in Glasgow, led by Tim Ritson, who is the Head of Paintings and Frames Conservation at Royal Museums Greenwich. The participants enjoyed the intensively practical nature of the course and were able to take away the frames which they had gilded.

Looking forward, we are planning an event to bring together emerging professionals and student conservators in Scotland and a one-day conference featuring highlights of current conservation activity in Scotland, including some of the talks given by speakers from Scotland at the recent Icon conference in Belfast. Details of these two events will be released shortly. We are also selling tickets for our annual Plenderleith lecture, *After the dust has settled; rediscovering the spirit of Mackintosh*, which will be given by Liz Davidson on 28 November at the Lighthouse in Glasgow. This will provide a fascinating insight into the process of conserving and restoring the interiors and collections of the Glasgow School of Art and promises to be very popular.

Other happenings

The Icon Scotland Group continued to contribute to the Icon Groups Review, and we also met with representatives from the Historic Environment Scotland Grants team to discuss options for future grant applications, which could allow us to expand our training offering.

Contact and keep in touch

We obviously welcome primary and secondary members, but remember that all you need to do in order to receive the emailed Scotland Group Iconnects is tick the Group on your Icon membership form. You can also see our latest updates on social media: our blog is at <https://iconscotland.wordpress.com>, our Facebook page is <https://en-gb.facebook.com/iconscotlandgroup> and our Twitter feed is @icon_scotland. Comments and suggestions for events can be emailed to scotland@icon.org.uk.

Stained Glass Group

The Icon SGG Conference day is almost here. 'Accommodating the Past' will take place on Friday 4 October 2019 in the Chapterhouse at Gloucester Cathedral, along with our AGM.

Last minute registration details can be found on the Icon Stained Glass Group webpage under Upcoming Events and also directly on the Icon Events Page. Please contact the SGG committee as soon as possible if there are any items that you would like to put forward for discussion at the AGM, via iconstainedglass@gmail.com

Information about the Conference and other Group updates can also be found on our social media pages on Facebook and Twitter.

The SGG is always delighted to welcome new members to our Group. If you would like to join us please remember to tick the stained glass box on your membership form, or email Head Office to request Iconnect updates from the Group.

Textile Group

Events

On Monday 5 August at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Rachael Lee and Lilia Prier Tisdall led a workshop on Costume Mounting with Fosshape.™ This well-attended practical workshop explored and demonstrated new approaches to costume mounting using Fosshape.™ Thank you to all who organised and ran this course.

The events team are busy finalising workshops to be held later in the year to include a toile-making workshop.

Colour Symposium

The Textile Group's one-day symposium based around the theme of colour is to be held on Friday 8 November at the People's History Museum, Manchester. This will coincide with The Textile Society's Conference & AGM, *The Power of Colour* to be held on Saturday 9 November 2019 at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. Papers for the *Conservation in Colour Symposium* have now been selected and the committee are busy further organising events for the day.

Upcoming Events

Dress and Textile Specialists (DATS) Conference *Redressing Diversity: Making Hidden Histories Visible*.

Provisional dates are now Thursday 28 and Friday 29 November 2019 at Norwich Castle Museum.

The American Institute for Conservation's (AIC) 48th Annual Meeting *Conservation: Reactive and Proactive*. 19 - 23rd May 2020 in Salt Lake City, UT

In this Issue

Emily Austin, Textile Conservator for the Museum of London, reviews the *Westminster Abbey Effigy Tour* which was hosted by Zenzie Tinker Conservation Ltd in May 2019. And in a joint piece, committee members Viola Nicastro and Emily Austin review the ICOM-CC Textile Working Group's recent inspiring conference, *A Challenging Dimension: The Conservation and Research of Costume and Accessories*, which was held at the Abegg-Stiftung in June 2019. Finally, Terri Dewhurst gives us a flavour of her time at this year's AIC meeting in Connecticut.

Keeping in touch

Due to publication deadlines, it is not always possible to mention all events so please check the Icon website, Facebook page, Twitter feed and Iconnect for details. If you have anything that you would like mentioned in our communications please contact the Textile Group's News Editor: aimee.grice-venour@nationaltrust.org.uk

A COURSE IS AN IDEA

The MA Conservation course at Camberwell College of Arts closed this summer and in her speech at the very last students' exhibition, Ylva Dahnsjo ACR made an impassioned plea for conservation education and why it matters. Many present at the event asked for a copy, so Ylva has edited it to bring it to the wider audience of the Icon News readership

What is a course?

When I was pondering over what to say at this event, I kept returning to the question 'What is a course?'. The poet W B Yeats reflects:

'O chestnut tree, great-rooted blossomer
Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance
How can we know the dancer from the dance?'

A course is not the Course Outline. It is not the Handbook or the Impact Statement. Nor is it the Research Rating or the financial bottom line. The Camberwell paper conservation course was born out of the stated, post-war need of arts and heritage institutions for trained specialist conservators, and out of the experience and the passion and the sadness of those who went to help after the tragic Florence Flood for little material reward except cigarette money. So surely a course is


the bringing together; the sharing; and the growing of knowledge and values. **A course is an Idea.**

The world needs Conservation

Think back on the last fifty years in conservation and they are punctuated by big events and big responses: fires, floods, storms, wars and deliberate cultural vandalism. What motivates the professional response is not financial gain (or at the very least it is nowhere near top priority). The gut response to the potential loss of something universally valued is visceral and emotional and transcends national borders.

Extinction Rebellion and the fine and insistent voices from either end of a life - Greta Thunberg (age 16) and Sir David Attenborough (age 93) - remind us that climate change is real and that more frequent, sudden and violent weather events will be the norm from now on. Surely, to quote Fiona Macalister ACR, 'we need to train more conservators - not fewer!'

To quote the Speaker of the House of Commons Stephen Berrow: "It is so obvious that you would think you wouldn't have to say it. But obviously you do.....": Creating, curating and caring for art go together. The early cross-fertilisation of ideas and knowledge helps everybody's development, and is good news for arts and culture at every stage of a career. Last week when I asked the celebrated artist, academic, conservator



Willard

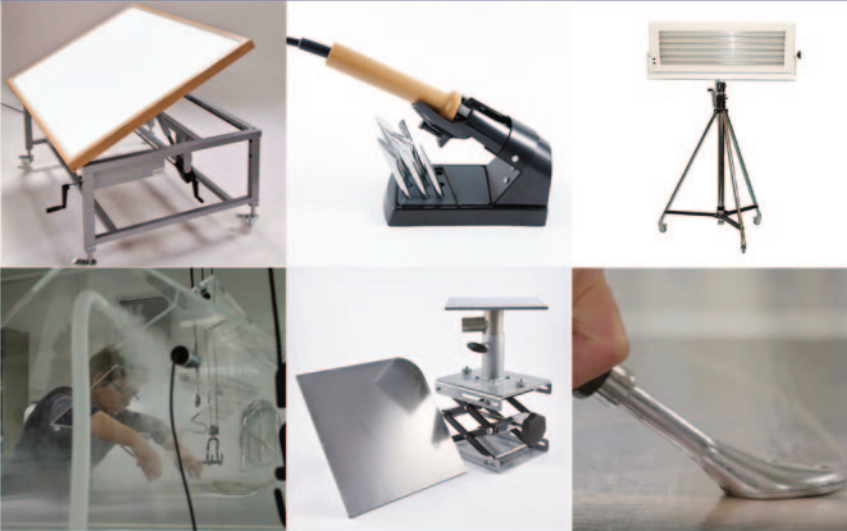
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Staff and the final class at Camberwell preparing for the final show

and Royal Academician Emma Stibbon (and my contemporary at Camberwell) for a quote about the course, she said:

'Studying conservation gave me a profound appreciation of how materials work, and their significance in making art. I am grateful to have benefitted from such an excellent course.'

I also think it is too obvious to state that conservation has a big part to play in sustainability and that we should throw our hat in the ring with Extinction Rebellion and Fashion Revolution and all those who work to close the circle of consumerism by using less, buying better, practising upcycling and re-cycling, and cutting pollution. To do all these things successfully, you need to know the intimate details of materials, just like Emma Stibbon. And that is what we can - and will - teach and do.

Ahead of the curve

I find it intensely interesting to see that at the same time as closing this course, University of the Arts London is investing in and recruiting for a new Institute for Decolonising Art. I compare this with the length of time that conservators have already been considering issues of cultural sensitivity, value conflicts, and different ways of experiencing things and contexts. We do this on a daily basis through necessity and choice. The ability to do so are competencies laid down in our professional standards. Publications like 'Preserving what is Valued'^{*} and 'Decolonising Conservation'^{**} were published in the early Noughties. It does not take much insight and imagination to see what conservation could offer such an institute. After all, a school of arts is only one place for conservation to grow and collaborate. It is an equally good fit with technology, life sciences, the performing arts, earth sciences, sustainability.....

So where next?

If 'conservation is the careful management of change', then as the Camberwell door closes we can celebrate the achievements of the last fifty years but we should also look forward to the next fifty. For you can close down a course in one place, but you can't close an *Idea*, if it is shared and nurtured. Let us boldly and collectively fling open new doors so that this excellent course can continue to train those who will deal with tomorrow's delights and disasters, for the world will need them.

Those of us who care have come together to draw up the basic guiding principles for its next iteration, wherever that might

turn out to be :

- It needs to be at MA level, delivered by a University
- It has to maintain the excellent standing it has built up in the UK and internationally
- The course content, equipment and teaching resources need to be kept intact as a unit.

And we have now opened up a series of discussions with a number of potential new academic hosts. These discussions are positive and stimulating, **so watch this space!**

^{*} Preserving what is Valued: Museums, Conservation and First Nations, Miriam Clavir, 2002, University of British Columbia Press

^{**} Decolonising Conservation: Caring for Maori Meeting Houses outside New Zealand, Dean Sully, ed., 2008, University College London Institute of Archaeology Publications

Postscript

In response to recent events which have raised concerns about the resilience, or rather the lack of resilience, of conservation education and training in the UK, Icon's Professional Development Team is preparing to host an important roundtable debate on **'Who values conservation education?'** in January 2020. Participants will consider whether the current mix of training opportunities is fit for purpose and whether more can be done to support a sustainable future for conservation education. The findings will be published in a report in due course.

SC CEx

THE HSG PHOTO COMPETITION

Meet the winner and her photo

Icon's Heritage Science Group opened a competition in May 2019 for photos depicting Heritage Science. A wide variety of interesting images were submitted and the judging panel consisted of HSG Chair, Eleanor Schofield and Icon Chief Executive Sara Crofts. The winning entry, announced at the HSG AGM, was **Stephanie Whitehead** for her image entitled 'X-radiography of Archaeological Metals'. The judges choose this entry as it perfectly showed how scientific analysis can answer important questions about our cultural heritage that we cannot see with the naked eye. The judges



X-radiography of Archaeological Metals

also like the teaching aspect covered in the picture.

Biography: Stephanie Whitehead is the Conservator at Historic St. Mary's City, Maryland, USA. She discovered conservation through her volunteer work at James Madison's Montpelier after completing her undergraduate degree at Christopher Newport University in Classical Studies. She then went on to pursue conservation as a career, attending Cardiff University in Wales and receiving an MSc in Conservation Practice with a focus on archaeological conservation. Stephanie is an active member of multiple conservation professional bodies and actively working towards achieving her accreditation. You can find her on Twitter at @stephewhitehead discussing all things conservation and museums.

Photo title: X-radiography of Archaeological Metals

Stephanie's narrative: In archaeological conservation we use x-rays to reveal the shape of the object beneath the corrosion layers and to discover how much core metal is left. In this photo intern Amanda Arcidiacono is learning to recognize the

difference between broken nails and nails that still hold diagnostic information, such as head type and length.

Some artifacts had already been bagged and separated during the cataloguing process as being diagnostic or identifiable, as seen on the tray (we found that a standard banker's box lid is the same size as our x-ray plate and works great as a tray for our digital x-ray). However, most of the pieces that were x-rayed in this photo were unidentifiable lumps of corrosion (lovingly called 'Cheetos' * in our lab).

Through x-radiography we are able to ensure that all objects are identified and documented ensuring that smaller artifacts such as hook and eyes and lead shot are not lost. After this stage, we then document the diagnostic nails and artifacts separately by taking a second set of x-rays with a lead ruler, so that size can be read as well as the shape and density. It is an integral part of our documentation process at Historic St. Mary's City and one that will hopefully become more accessible to more archaeological sites.

* Cheetos: a cheese-flavoured puffed cornmeal snack

Awards



Congratulations to **Caroline Bendix ACR**, recipient of this year's Plowden Medal – a prestigious award for conservation made by The Royal Warrant Holders Association to the person deemed to have made the most significant recent contribution to the advancement of conservation.

The citation quotes 'her outstanding work and professional achievements in developing a highly successful process for in-situ book conservation which has made a significant change in the way conservation is delivered in the historic built environment'.

Caroline is a freelance library conservator with thirty three years' experience, working for major national conservation bodies, cathedrals, churches, synagogues, learned societies/institutions, museums, historic houses, private collections, universities, municipal collections, schools, the Government, Historic Royal Palaces and independent libraries.

In addition, since 1992 she has been the National Trust's Advisor for Libraries Conservation and the advisor to The Arts Society and she also holds continuing consultancies to organisations such as All Souls College in Oxford, Eton College, Lambeth Palace and the Royal

Horticultural Society. She has written three of the British Library guidance booklets on libraries and archive care and teaches courses at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation on damage recognition and cleaning collections.

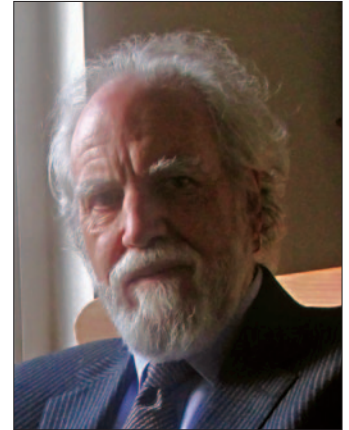
As the Medal citation concludes: 'Caroline has given practical and effective help to a multitude of libraries both in the UK and abroad in a remarkable, professional, efficient and creative manner and with an enthusiasm and energy which seemingly knows no bounds'.

Caroline herself writes: 'Receiving the Plowden Medal has been an overwhelming honour and delight. Although I have received much support throughout my career, not least from Dr. Nicholas Pickwoad and the National Trust, as a freelance conservator one treads a slightly solitary path; to be honoured by the Royal Warrant Holders Association and by my professional peers is a wonderful acknowledgement of all that I have done over the years and I am immensely proud to be the 2019 recipient'.

<https://bendixlibraryconservation.com>



Congratulations to **Jane Henderson ACR** for joining an elite band indeed with her appointment to the post of Professor of Conservation at Cardiff University. Other notable roles include that of Secretary General IIC, membership of the editorial panel of *Icon's Journal* and the ICOM –CC preventive conservation working group. She also represents Icon on the CEN TC 346 WG11, looking at a standard for the conservation process procurement and terminology. Jane is strangely proud that although she stopped being a museum conservation advisor for Wales many decades ago some people seem to think she still does that job. She loves the fact that random conservation questions appear in her email from time to time, from the lovely 'what flowers can we have at events' to gruesome 'how do you get blood and hair off a blade'. Most of Jane's questions come from students at Cardiff University where she teaches, and this forces her to stay on top of social media and advances in almost every aspect of object conservation. In the night Jane thinks about what she has forgotten to do, how conservators make decisions and how conservators can have more influence in the heritage sector.



West Dean College of Arts and Conservation has announced that they have introduced three Fellowships at the College for the first time. One of these has been awarded to **Jonathan Ashley-Smith**.

Jonathan is an independent teacher, researcher and consultant in the field of cultural heritage risk. With a background in chemistry, he subsequently worked as a metalwork conservator and analytical scientist at the Victoria and Albert Museum and from 1977 to 2002, he was Head of Conservation there.

In 2000 he was awarded the Plowden medal for his contribution to conservation. Other activities have included the roles of Secretary-General of the IIC; Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Art, London; research supervisor for a number of university students and project leader for the damage and risk assessment module of the EC research project 'Climate for Culture'.

Jonathan's interests are mostly in the area of decision-making in cultural heritage conservation, ranging across conservation ethics, risk-benefit studies, sustainability and the precautionary principle.

Moves



Chair of Icon, **Siobhan Stevenson ACR** has established a new business, Legacy Conservation, offering consultancy and project management for collections care and conservation.

Siobhan has thirty years' experience as a heritage professional. Originally an archaeological conservator, she has a diverse background including management, cultural policy and development, and conservation training. She established the MSc in Collections Care at Cardiff University and as Culture and Arts Manager at Belfast City Council authored Belfast's first Cultural Strategy. Until recently, Siobhan was Head of Collection Care at National Museums Northern Ireland where she managed collection storage, security and logistics, as well as the conservation.

Legacy Conservation offers services across the UK and Ireland, including review and development of policy, plans and business cases, as well as training. Building on Siobhan's unique skills and experience of complex capital projects, Legacy Conservation also undertakes management and delivery of collections projects, including conservation, storage, and collections relocation.

siobhan@legacy-conservation.com

www.legacy-conservation.com



Julie Bon ACR joined the National Library of Scotland as Head of Collections Care in May 2019 and is enjoying leading an excellent team of Conservators, Technicians, a Registrar and Audit Officer to deliver conservation and care for the over thirty million items in the Library collection. The Collections Care team supports active Exhibitions and Digitisation programmes.

Julie trained at the University of Lincoln and qualified with a Masters in Conservation of Historic Objects in 2004. Following that she took on a number of project roles across Scotland and was the Administrator for SSCR for a year before convergence into Icon. From 2006 until 2019 she was a regional Conservator at the National Trust for Scotland working across the West, and then the East, of Scotland delivering preventive conservation support and advice. Between 2015 and 2016 she delivered a nationwide project to deliver Collection Salvage plans for all Trust properties.

New ACRs

The Accreditation Committee approved the accreditation of the following conservator-restorers at its meeting in July 2019

Congratulations to all these new ACRs!

Fiona Austin-Byrne
Preventive Conservation
Austin-Byrne Conservation

Sophie Barton
Decorative surfaces
Tankerdale Ltd

Emma Coburn
Conservation management
Watts Gallery

Diana Davis
Large objects
National Museum of the Royal Navy

Shona Hunter
Paper
National Library of Scotland

Anna Johnson
Book and library materials
Cambridge University Library

Markus Kleine
Stained glass
Glasmalerei Peters GmbH

Abigail Moore
Collections care
Museum of London

Christine Slottved-Kibriel
Easel paintings
The Hamilton Kerr Institute

Lynn Teggart
Paper
Historic Environment Scotland

Laura Tempest
Stained glass
York Glaziers Trust

Katey Twitchett-Young
Easel paintings
Tate

Welcome to these new members

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in June and July 2019. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon!

Kirsty Archer-Thompson
Supporter

Danica Auld
Student

Amber Bailey
Associate

Shannon Campbell
Durham University
Student

Yuhao Cao
Student

Caterina Celada Prior
Student

Ronnie Clifford
Ornate Interiors Ltd
Associate

Rachel Curwen
Supporter

Hortense de Corneillan
Associate

Cecilia Gauvin
University of Glasgow
Supporter

Justina Gedgaudaite
Student

Mariarosaria Iannaccone
Associate

Joseph Jackson
Student

Sarah Kenny
Associate

Adam Klups
Diocese of Gloucester
Supporter

Erica Lumley
Supporter

Jean Macintyre
Supporter

Atsuko Matsumoto
Associate

Dora Mihaljevic
Student

Rampurawala Mohammed
Associate

Shirley Murley
Associate

Mark O'Neill
Student

In memory

Merridy Peters
Student

Margarita Radovic
Student

Raquel Saenz Pascual
Associate

Hannah Sutherland
Student

Vasilija Todorovic
Student

Melody Wentz
Associate



© Courtauld Institute

We are saddened to announce the death of Professor **Sharon Cather** on 6 June 2019. A visionary thinker, Sharon set out to change the field of wall paintings conservation by elevating the status of conservators as key professional members within the wider cultural heritage community. A pioneer in preventive conservation, she championed the importance of understanding why wall paintings were deteriorating, rather than simply repairing the damage.

Though never one to shy away from a difficult challenge, she also knew when to exercise restraint, advocating one 'do as much as necessary but as little as possible'. A respected voice in the field, Sharon challenged the status quo and questioned existing practice in an effort to improve standards.

Sharon studied art history at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Research at Princeton led to a Fellowship at the American Academy in Rome (1981–1982). She later taught at Cambridge University before joining forces with David Park in 1985 to found the Courtauld Institute of Art Conservation of Wall Painting Department. The Shelby White and Leon Levy Professor of Conservation Studies, she retired in 2018. During her thirty two years at the Courtauld, Sharon supervised

fifty-eight graduate dissertations as well as numerous PhD students. Her passion for wall paintings was infectious and greatly influenced, inspired and mentored a generation of conservators.

Her impact in the field of wall painting conservation extended worldwide and included directing major projects in Bhutan, China, Cyprus, Georgia, India, Jordan, Malta and Spain. Sharon was actively involved in the teaching of conservation in Georgia, Malta, and Israel, and in establishing the Leon Levy Foundation Centre for Conservation Studies at Nagaur in Rajasthan and an MA-level programme at the Mogao Grottoes, in collaboration with the Dunhuang Academy, Lanzhou University and the Getty Conservation Institute.

Sharon communicated through her teaching, and through numerous publications and conferences. She was a member of the Church Buildings Council's Paintings & Wall Paintings Committee (2006-2015); served on the editorial board of *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung*; was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries since 1993; a Fellow of IIC since 1995 including serving as Vice President (2010-2014) and as Chair of the Technical Committee for both the 2010 Istanbul Congress and the 2012 Vienna Congress; and was a guest scholar at the Getty Conservation Institute in 2000–2001.

In 2014, Sharon received China's highest award for foreign experts who have made outstanding contributions to China's economic and social progress. Winner of the 2017 Plowden Medal from the Royal Warrant Holders Association, she was cited for leading the field

towards 'a more holistic, methodical and scientific approach to conserving wall paintings across the world'.

Though perpetually overworked Sharon always made time for colleagues, students and friends, dispensing advice, guidance and a bit of humour—often late into the night during smoke-filled, brainstorming strategy sessions. Those who worked with Sharon remember her revolutionary spirit and uncompromising ethical stance but also her endless generosity and unwavering support. She will be greatly missed.

A conference to celebrate Sharon's legacy is planned for 16-18 April 2020 in York, and we will report further details when available.

Lori Wong, Charlotte Martin de Fonjaudran, Robert Gowing & Sarah Pinchin

CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS

A kaleidoscope of reports on the week in Belfast that was #Icon19

#Icon19: ambition, excitement and CPD



Michel Nelles

Michael Nelles, Icon's Head of Membership, reports on conference feedback

After three years in the making, the dust has settled on #Icon19 and the delegate feedback is in!!

It was an ambitious programme replete with new initiatives including wider ranges of tours, events and other initiatives for conference delegates. Feedback from Icon's previous triennial conferences – Birmingham in 2016 and

Glasgow in 2013 – was used to directly influence the scope of the agenda.

It also marked Icon's first triennial foray into Northern Ireland, plugging directly into our networks of active Icon members whose enthusiasm, energy and hometown pride helped to make #Icon19 a highly-rated critical success. In feedback, 91% of delegates reported the proceedings had met their expectations, and 72% rated #Icon19 eight out of ten or higher

The location won approval from delegates. 'I thought it was a great city for a conference,' reported one, 'offering a diverse selection of tours, with a good conference hall.' The tours helped those attending to orient themselves and experience something of the local area before the sessions began, providing 'a general overview of the cultural panorama of the city', as one delegate put it. Special thanks are due to our tour convenors – Icon members Ruth Bothwell, Claire Magill ACR, David Orr ACR and Siobhan Stevenson ACR who arranged highly-rated sessions that showcased the vibrancy of Belfast. 'I could hardly pick what to go and see', reported one delegate.

Plaudits are due to the Programme Committee, lead by Icon member Leanne Tonkin, who worked through hundreds of abstracts to put together a magnificent programme – one that gave a consistent series of difficult choices for delegates. With

Belfast: the conference setting



Image: Helen Hughes



Image: Stephen Potts

One of the conference tours explored some of Belfast's famous political street art

seven papers going on at any one time, deciding which to attend could be agonizing. 'Really, I wanted to be in four of them,' said one. 'It would be good if the number of parallel sessions could be reduced next time, even if this means holding the conference over a longer period,' suggested another. As this idea was prominent among responses, it is one that will be carefully considered by Trustees as they plot our next steps for 2022.

Thanks are also due to our sponsors - Conservation By Design, TruVue, Willard, and Meaco - who helped make the event such

a well-received success. Holding the fort in the centre of our exhibition space, our Champion Sponsors CXD put together a series of innovative films showing conservation products in action, and came armed with plenty of freebies for delegates, including a prize draw – all of which went over very well!

#Icon19 was also notable for the international attention it attracted – with more than 30% of abstracts arriving from would-be speakers based outside the UK. This aspect was strengthened when the Getty Foundation awarded Icon a grant to support conservators from developing economies to attend – see Patrick Whife's report below on this initiative. With high-profile speakers also coming from abroad to give plenary papers, Icon was positioned on the world stage like never before. 'I think Icon has the potential of being a major player in the conservation world,' reflected one delegate, 'both nationally and (as a result of this conference) internationally. This is a feeling I had not experienced before.'

Icon's corporate strategy is set to focus these energies over the coming years, and make the most of the legacies offered by our Belfast conference.

Collaboration

Meagen Smith, Collection Care Studio Manager at UK Parliamentary Archives, detects a recurrent motif in sessions she attended and takes away an important lesson

The formal theme of this triennial conference was *Contemporary Conservation Thinking and Practice*. But of all the aspects to thinking and practice, the strongest link was

Crowds gather at the opening reception at Ulster Museum



Image: Stephen Potts



Meagen Smith

example after example of working together, including breath-halting experiences of moving a vulnerable, large ship section through narrow and restricted spaces, an accomplishment only achieved with teamwork and coordination. And continuing with ships, Nicola Grahamslaw spoke compellingly about bringing her engineering education into heritage for the multi-disciplinary project of conserving and opening access to the *SS Great Britain*.

Collaborative practice was further demonstrated during panel sessions such as Julie Bon's revealing and candid description of her experiences during the Icon Leadership Launchpad programme. She elucidated both her evolution but also the support the group provided to each other, manifested in their research results around leadership in conservation.

During her talk about rebinding the Ruzbihan Quran, Kristine Rose-Beers explored treatment approaches arising from digitisation and was forthright about basing her decision-making not only on her own deep experience but also on the work of colleagues like Fiona McClees who conducted pigment analysis. Additionally, conservation commentary was part of the Quran's exhibition: a rare content combination even today.

I was proud to watch my Parliamentary Archives colleagues, Kirstin Norwood and Rhiannon Compton, present our experience of preparing the collection for a future move, which involves strong project management, ethical decision-making and working with all the other archive teams including cataloguing, public services and collection care.

Emily Yates spoke about the cross-discipline team preparing the Science Museum Group's collection for a move, working with photographers, barcoders who are also making condition assessments and volunteers on a possible professional pathway. One of Emily's strongest pieces of advice was 'hire for attitude and train for skills'.

Even Jane Thompson Webb's pest recording talk demonstrated that the What's Eating Your Collection Database is only made possible if conservators and organisations collaborate through the submission of their pest trap results in order to identify trends across the country. The British Library's Collection Salvage team stepped up their training programme by partnering with other teams, like the Reading Room staff, to reshape their training modules and styles, including gamification, to deliver important understanding about

collaboration. Many of the panel group sessions – like those on leadership, sustainability and emerging professionals - crossed traditional material groups and this crossover is emblematic of the world in which we work and develop. We cannot function and deliver in silos and this is reflected in the talks given and the collaborative nature of the work described.

Dr Eleanor Schofield from the *Mary Rose* articulated

collection care and agents of deterioration. One of the important points made was 'to not try to be perfect, just get it out there'.

The C-Word: The Conservators' Podcast session was a friendly riot of community engagement. Kloe Rumsey, Jenny Mathiasson and Christina Rozeik share the responsibilities of bringing the podcast to our ears. They make their listeners and supporters a part of the productions through calls for experience and opinions while confronting and discussing conservation issues.

There was so much technical advice and learning that I could take away and apply and the message I took away from Belfast is that we will only be successful as a profession if we stand and work together.

The plenary sessions

Icon Trustee Peter Martindale gives a flavour of the opening and closing sessions

Taken together, the plenary sessions show the profession to be outward-facing, seeking to engage and learning from that engagement. They also illustrated the wealth of skill, experience and enterprise within the conservation profession. There is, unfortunately, much I have had to omit and I apologise in advance for skimming over speakers' contributions so briefly.

Aspects of the nature of the profession today were covered in a paper by Leanne Tonkin (Chair of the conference Programme Committee) and a joint paper by Arianne Panton and Rebecca Plumbe. In a punchy address Leanne explained how she was stymied by the hierarchical structures in conservation. Her experience as a fashion designer, before changing to a career in conservation, was quite different in that enthusiasm and drive were valued and appreciated. She feels that those from working class backgrounds are least likely to be attracted to careers in the museums and arts. Arianne and Rebecca jointly highlighted the challenges and concerns facing emerging conservators, in particular the number of unpaid internships.

The development of experience, skills and management were covered in papers from Dr Eleanor Schofield ACR (*Mary Rose* Trust), Bronwyn Ormsby ACR (Tate), Sandra Smith ACR (British Museum), Nicola Grahamslaw (*SS Great Britain*) and Richard Mulholland (University of Northumbria). Eleanor and Nicola both encountered metal corrosion occurring from the inside

Peter Martindale



Image: Helen Hughes

out and faced similar logistical problems with conserving very large objects. The considerably diverse range of artefacts in the care of the British Museum was described by Sandra, including the problems of conserving modern materials, whilst Roy Lichtenstein's iconic 1963 painting 'Whaam' was the focus for Bronwyn's paper.

Richard had to wear a bullet-proof vest to work in Afghanistan at Kabul's



Iain Greenway, Director, Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities NI



Paul Mullan, Director Northern Ireland, National Lottery Heritage Fund

National Gallery, formerly the British Embassy, in a collaborative project between the Afghanistan National Gallery and the University of Northumbria. Half the paintings in the National Gallery in Kabul were damaged as a result of the war. At extreme risk to his life, Dr Mohammed Yousef Asefi saved many of them. More about this can be seen on-line ¹, where Dr Yousef Asefi explains that ‘when culture is gone from a society, humanity will be gone with it’, adding that the consequences of not investing in arts are forgotten by authorities and politicians. ‘You cannot expect a generation that has only seen wars to be cultured. Galleries, art exhibitions, cultural programmes are needed for society to develop’.

The importance and value of collaboration and engagement were covered by many of the speakers. Paul Mullan, Director Northern Ireland, National Lottery Heritage Fund, made a key point in explaining that objects only have meaning when connected with people and that we need to understand ourselves in society today. Heritage has to have a wider reach. Iain Greenway (Director, Historic Environment Division in the Department for Communities, Northern Ireland), echoed both Paul Mullan and Dr Yousef Asefi in

explaining that treasuring the past enriches the future through community building, well-being and tourism.

Collaboration in conservation and heritage science through the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science ² was presented by Matija Strlic. The aim is to bring together skill centres in different countries with a central hub in Florence and sub-hubs in each participating country (University College London is the hub for the UK).

The inter-relationship between public benefit, user experience and conservation ethics was explored by Siobhan Stevenson (Chair of Icon’s Board of Trustees). We need to be leaders in debates like these, she said. Jane Henderson (Professor of Conservation at Cardiff University and Secretary General of IIC ³) drew attention to the fact that we talk of risk as opposed to opportunity. She asked us to consider who we might be excluding when we conserve things for the future.

The present and the future formed the core of the closing keynote address on climate change given by Dr Meredith Wiggins (Senior Environmental Analyst at Historic England). Meredith asked the audience if any felt climate change would not have an influence on their lives: no hand went up. We are the caretakers of human knowledge, she pointed out and went on to ask what the role of cultural heritage is in a changing climate?

Aspects of mission were covered by Debra Hess Norris of the University of Delaware and Janet Berry, Head of Conservation of the Church of England’s Cathedral & Church Buildings Division. In a whirlwind address (concluding with *Eight Days a Week* by the Beatles), Debra noted that ‘people give to people’. She has raised an eye-watering \$20 million for art conservation (education and global programmes) and is willing to help others do the same. Janet explained that the Church of England is an accidental heritage owner and that they support their buildings for mission. The conservation grants programme totals around £200k per year; the aim being to help as many as possible and, in doing so, to act as a seed funder of quality assurance for other funders.

I have briefly outlined the conference themes, drawing on Jane Thompson Webb’s helpful concluding summary and by incorporating some personal thoughts and observations. As a group, the plenary papers demonstrated the considerable depth of experience and breadth of skills in the profession. There are problems, too, as demonstrated by the challenges facing emerging conservators. Looking to the future, they

A selection of plenary speakers L to R...Bronwyn Ormesby, Eleanor Schofield, Nicola Grahamslaw, Richard Mulholland, Sandra Smith



Image: Stephen Potts

highlighted the importance and value of looking outside of conservation, and in doing so seeking to engage and build links. This is essential because: –

- Icon needs to work with other stakeholders in these times where there is reduced funding and increased competition for that funding.
- The professions needs to work with communities, for in doing so unexpected opportunities may arise.
- Rather than acting as gatekeepers, conservators need to welcome and embrace.

1. www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/art/meet-dr-mohammad-yousef-asefi-the-man-who-saved-afghan-art-from-the-taliban-1.840534

2. <https://e-rihs.ac.uk/index.php/about/>

3. The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works

Poster girl

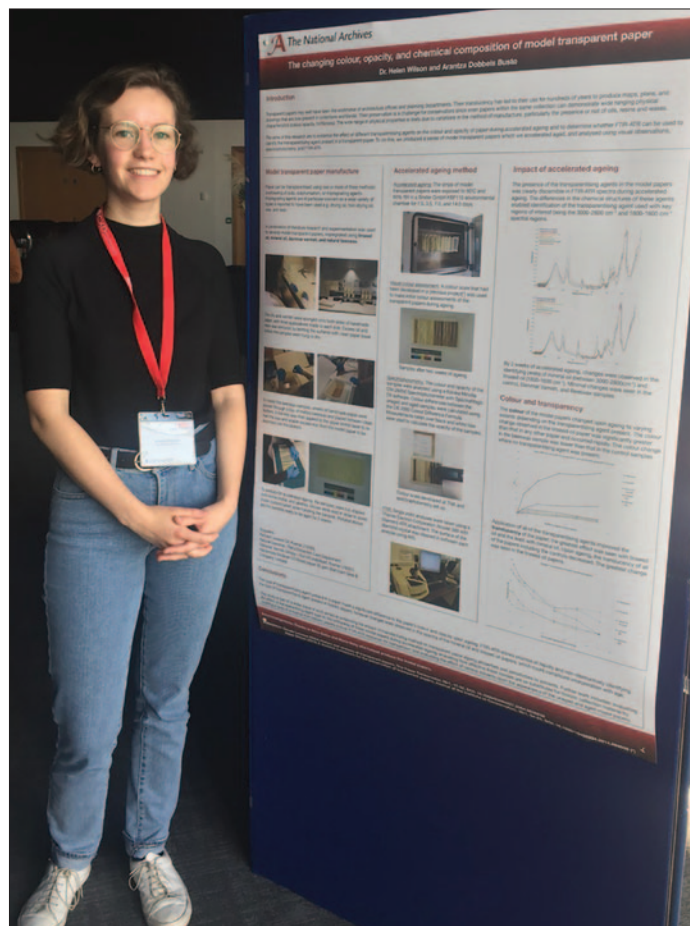
Arantza Dobbels, newly graduated from Camberwell College of Arts and starting her conservation career in London, on the experience of showing a poster

Being a young, emerging conservator at a big conservation conference can be intimidating. Hundreds of people, some whom you deeply admire, some whom you know, most of whom you don't know. Networking, lectures, posters and post-conference events. Did I even give out any of my newly-printed business cards? I better not recall.

Being a young, emerging conservator at a big conservation conference is even more intimidating when you have a poster being showcased. Or at least this is what I thought before setting foot in Belfast. I was excited and scared at the same time, of being asked questions I didn't know, of someone pointing out an argument-crumbling mistake, of just awkwardly having to stand next to my poster waiting for someone to walk by.

Although I had attended two conferences before this one, this was the first time that I was there representing something beyond my own 'conservation student' self. I was representing the work that Dr. Helen Wilson and I had carried out at The National Archives, and in one way or another, I was also representing my colleagues and teachers from Camberwell College of Arts, who were hard at work back in London preparing an amazing exhibition. All this happened to be a bit much, and I barely got closer than two metres to my poster on the first day. I did, however, keep a close eye from afar, curious to see how people were reacting to my transparent paper making skills and FTIR spectra.

On the second day, after delighting myself with one too many mini-pastries, I stood by the poster and took a picture. I had to prove to my parents that I was indeed standing by the poster; they also needed clarification that I was not giving a talk, I just had a poster. Afterwards, I built up the courage to stand around for a bit, hoping to get someone's attention and answer their questions. I did this sporadically during the day, only to find out that it is not that scary and



Arantza with the poster: 'The changing colour, opacity and chemical composition of model transparent paper'

that perhaps some people are scared themselves to ask any questions.

I was also able to walk around and admire all the other informative posters, which to my surprise came from all around the world. I found it very enjoyable to be able to get a small glimpse of people's work, whether it was someone in the UK, or far to the west in the US, or beyond. I was also immensely proud to see two other posters from my friends at Camberwell, and like a proud colleague, took multiple photos of people reading their posters.

Over the three days I spent in Belfast, I met many new emerging conservators like myself, whom I am keen to run into at future conferences. I attended extremely interesting, insightful and inspiring lectures and read some great posters. I also learned that I shouldn't be scared of standing next to a poster (A0 is big but words can't bring me down) or asking people if they have any questions. I can't wait to stand next to a poster at a next conference, and to hand out more than two business cards!

International perspectives

Patrick Whife, Icon's Training and Development Manager, reports on what the Getty-funded delegates took from the conference

In the August issue of Icon News we described the pre-conference CPD programme organised for the Getty-funded delegates in London. In this issue we turn our focus to their experience at #Icon19 itself and the huge opportunity it

presented them to support their own professional development.

This was made possible through the generous support of the Getty Foundation, which allowed twelve delegates from across the globe to take part in the London activities, before heading off to Belfast for #Icon19. The funding targeted professional conservators from developing economies, with delegates coming from Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Hungary, India, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, and South Africa.

Having flown in from London to Belfast en masse, the group rushed to check into their hotel and hurry over to *SS Nomadic* for the International Delegates Reception, which was put on in honour of the many conservators who came from across the globe to take part in #Icon19. Following a rather late first night, they were able to take part in the conference tours, receptions and of course the conference itself.

#Icon19 presented a unique opportunity to network at one of the largest gatherings of professional conservators, particularly when most of our 'Getty' delegates came from countries with much smaller professional conservation communities.

Here we have picked out just a few of their highlights.

The range of sessions

Many commented on the sheer range of sessions available to them, with Grace Welsh, a Private Practice Paintings Conservator from South Africa remarking: 'what a feast this really was, with such a huge variety of different fields of knowledge for us to tap in to and learn from. Indeed, the sheer range of knowledge and specialist areas of practice in conservation was apparent through the programme, with sessions ranging from scientific lectures to lectures on practical approaches and treatments. I enjoyed the variety as there was something for everyone to relate to.'

Anupama Gaur, Paintings Conservator in India, commented that she felt like a: 'child in a candy shop, I was unsure how to choose between

Snapping away to capture the whole experience: (L-R) Fatima February, Laura García Vedrenne and Ali Mahfouz



them when looking at the many compelling sessions happening simultaneously. I focused mainly on three panels: Paintings, Contemporary Art and Collections Care. Through all of the sessions I attended, it was interesting to learn how conservators world-wide are redesigning and adapting new methods and philosophical approaches to address contemporary art forms and its varied range of material. Offering valuable insight into the future of conservation, in a rapidly changing world, the conference highlighted how the priorities of the field are shifting from treatment-based conservation to preventive conservation'.

Specific highlights

Picking out specific talks that spoke to them, Ali Mahfouz, Director - Mansoura Storage Museum in Egypt, particularly pulled out the presentation delivered by Richard Mulholland and Elsa Guerreiro ACR 'Conservation in a Conflict Zone: Assessing War-Damaged Paintings at the National Gallery of Afghanistan', which for Ali spoke to: 'the importance of conservation in today's changing world encompassed by armed conflicts and terrorist attacks negatively affecting cultural heritage property; preservation, conservation, and documentation are integral methods of safeguarding our heritage. It was terrific that this issue was addressed in the sessions of Icon conference'.

A problem shared...

Others also found reassurance in meeting other likeminded professionals, with Laura García Vedrenne explaining that 'unlike when I moved to Glasgow to attend the Centre for Textile Conservation, this time I was aware of the current job scenario in my home country and the advantages of working in an institution that is supported by a professional body like Icon, which Mexico lacks. While chatting with other delegates, my first surprise was to find out about the outstanding similarities between my country and the Philippines, Chile, Brazil, and India (to name a few!) with regards to conservation. A feeling of empathy arose – both in a comforting and striking way – as we talked about limited budgets allocated towards research, the lack of suppliers for conservation-grade materials, and the lack of acknowledgment of health and safety concerns by our authorities'.

Grace went further explaining that 'having time with the other delegates was very special, as it emphasised the similar situations that many of us in emerging countries experience. Although we are all from different countries and continents we could relate first-hand to similar situations. Being isolated and struggling to get materials with very little financial support was a common theme. It was very reassuring discovering we are 'not alone' in that way. Working in isolation can be very challenging, so this conference was a wonderful way of drawing conservators together and to know that one is part of a bigger body'.

The value of networks

There were also very positive views of the power of the networking which #Icon19 presented. Fatima February, Conservator at Iziko Museums in South Africa commented that 'the opportunities to meet and greet fellow conservators led to discussions of collection care. And my informal chat with mentor Christine Murray ACR from the National Trust could not

have happened at a better time. The invaluable information she shared was of utmost importance as it resonated with my daily work as a conservator. My experience as a whole made me more aware of the strong knowledge and skills base that I already have, while learning from others' experiences whilst sharing my own. I could not help but reiterate how the conference had a direct impact on my career in conservation'.

Grace also explained that 'one of the biggest gifts of this conference for me, was the opportunity to network with others in order to exchange experiences, thoughts, ideas and to solve problems. This can easily be taken for granted when surrounded by other conservators, but when you come from a country with only a handful of conservators, this is something to treasure. With modern technology we have so many resources but for me nothing can replace a conversation with a person you have met. This conference has opened new faces and contacts for me which I value'.

Bringing things back to their practice at home, Ina Hergert, Head of Paper Conservation at the Museu Paulista of the University of São Paulo explained that 'in São Paulo we have been working for two years to strengthen professional ties around preventive conservation of collections at the University of São Paulo by organising meetings, events and training. The contact with the Icon's work as a concise and



Celebrating the end of a successful conference!

A thank you from the Getty. Top row, L-R: Eszter Mátyás, Fatima February, Patrick White, Ali Mahfouz, Grace Welsh, Elizabeth Palacios, Francisca Campos Álvarez; Bottom row, L- Laura García Vedrenne, Ina Hergert, Anumpama Gaur, Anuja Mukherjee, Ina Hergert, Lou Po



articulate professional association is an inspiration to broaden partnerships with other professionals and institutions as well as continue the network inside the University’.

After leaving the conference and coming back home, Fatima remarked

‘I absorbed so much information during the conference and am already committed to sharing the information within Iziko Museums of South Africa and to institutions beyond. Since my return from the conference I’ve been busy with the development of a training programme for staff who engage with housekeeping at our various museum sites. The programme will focus on the agents of deterioration for the long-term care and preservation of artefacts’.

Ina explained that

‘the programme helped me to broaden the references and examples that can be adopted here in Brazil. The projects that were presented once again pointed to the need for institutional planning to be able to operate effectively within reduced budgets and teams, which is currently the reality in Brazil. Once again I learned that simple steps and commitment to goals should be our focus if we want to make a difference’.

In one of the most resounding accolades for having been given this opportunity, Ali explained that he ‘came back entirely with a lot of positivity and creativity; I have many plans, ideas, and hope for the coming tomorrow. I see myself much more robust, much more ambitious than currently I am willing to make the changes, not alone, but with my other colleagues in my home institution’.

We’re absolutely delighted to have been able to welcome

such a fantastic group of conservators to the UK and are so pleased to have them in the Icon family! This was just the views of a selection of the delegates. Do look out for the full blogs from all of the delegates on the Icon website.

Apologies to Fatima February whose name was given incorrectly in the August issue of Icon News.



Isobel Griffin

Conference Tours

Isobel Griffin ACR, Head of Conservation at the National Galleries of Scotland, enjoyed learning more about Belfast’s history and architecture

The Icon Conference offered a range of exciting visits and tours, and I opted for a walking tour of the city centre followed by a tour of the City Hall. The walking tour was led by Andrew Molloy, an architect who has done a PhD looking at ways of visualising cityscapes. Andrew used four very different churches to illustrate his introduction to the architectural history of Belfast.

At the start of the walking tour with Andrew Molloy



Image: Isobel Griffin



Image: Isobel Griffin

A tour of Belfast's lavish City Hall with Dawson Stelfox

We began with St. Malachy's, a Roman Catholic church built in 1842 with a vast and ornate interior. It had been badly damaged during the Blitz and repaired inappropriately afterwards, with a more sympathetic programme of restoration eventually following. Andrew explained that the Blitz damaged 50,000 houses in Belfast, and although this did not lead to the implementation of the ambitious masterplan proposed by some architects, it did at least prompt a programme of slum clearances.

Our walk took us along Castle Street past the point where a motte and bailey castle had once stood (now home to a Starbucks!) and on to the Protestant, St. George's church. The current building dates from 1836, and is at least the third church to have occupied the site. We were met by the church warden, Billy McArthur, who told us how the church had been damaged during the Troubles, with the windows being blown in several times. We admired the Victorian wall paintings by Gibb, whose paintings can also be found in Keeble College, Oxford, and we were asked to guess what the candlesticks had been originally, with the lucky winner being awarded a pound coin by Billy. (The answer was bedposts!).

We proceeded to Sinclair Seamen's, a Presbyterian church dating from 1857 and designed by Lanyon, who also designed Queen's University. Here we were met by Billy Greer who showed us the collection of maritime-themed memorabilia which the minister added in the early twentieth century. This included a ship's prow protruding from the pulpit, a bell from *HMS Hood* and a set of lifeboat-shaped collection boxes!

As we walked to the next church Andrew told us some more about Belfast's maritime history. The first quay was built in 1613 for ships sailing up the river which now runs under the High Street, and in response to the increasing number of ships the river was deepened, with the silt being used to create Queen's Island. The shipbuilding industry took off in the late eighteenth century, and Belfast became home to many shipbuilders and sailors. Our final church was in Sailortown, an area of Belfast

The interior of the Sinclair Seamen's Presbyterian Church



Image: Isobel Griffin

which was cleared in the 1970s to make way for a new motorway, with St. Joseph's church being one of the few historic buildings left behind. The church had been locked up and neglected for many years, although its displaced congregation had still gathered to worship outside it. In 2006 the church was deconsecrated and leased back to the community, and since then a group has worked tirelessly to repair the fabric and create a useable community space. Our meeting with a member of the group, Terry Mckeown, was a reminder of the power of heritage to unite and enthuse communities (www.sailorstown-regeneration.com).

Andrew took us back to the City Hall and handed us over to Dawson Stelfox, the conservation architect and Christopher Burns, the Collections Manager. Dawson explained that the City Hall was built at a time when Belfast was a major industrial centre, with the third largest port in Britain. Its first Town Hall had been completed in 1871, but it was soon considered inadequate and a competition was held to create a new design. The winner was Brumwell Thomas, and his City Hall took seven years to build and cost £360K, which was over twice the original budget.

The reasons for the overspend became clear during our tour, as the building's interior is extremely lavish, with marble columns and panelling, marble and mosaic floors, enormous chandeliers, a large mural by John Luke which was painted in 1951 for the Festival of Britain, and Victorian stained glass. Dawson gave an overview of the refurbishment project he led in 2006-2009, which had involved removing unsympathetic additions and returning the building to its original colour scheme and finishes. The building is used intensively, with an exhibition for visitors, a chamber for council business and two grand halls, the larger of which was to be the venue for the conference dinner.

All in all it was a fascinating afternoon, and the group was very grateful to the fantastic tour guides for sharing their expertise with us.

Speaker and delegate

Helen Hughes ACR, of Historic Interiors Research & Conservation, attended in a dual capacity and had a dilemma

I arrived late at the Waterfront Hall mid-morning Thursday and so had missed the opening reception and all the other events laid on. I immediately sensed that I was joining a party that was already in full swing.

Helen Hughes



I had been pleasantly surprised that morning by the energy of Belfast and the warmth of everyone I had met and discovered that this was the experience shared by all the delegates. Those who had come early were all full of praise for the city and the surrounding countryside.

While greeting and kissing old friends during the first coffee break, I anxiously scanned the



Image: Helen Hughes

At the conference dinner

programme and lengthy delegates' list to see what was on offer and who was there – and when I would be presenting my paper. That is the problem with parallel group sessions – you can be spoilt for choice.

I really wanted to hear the 'C Word' team as I am a big fan of their humorous and highly informative podcast. I red-penned their slot only to have my hopes of seeing them dashed – I was speaking at the same time – gnash! So there was my audience gone. Would anyone be tempted by my paper - '*Authenticity – the pursuit of shifting sands*' (sometimes a paper title can be too arch for its own good) – when you could be guaranteed a good laugh with the C Word? And they had props. An amusing bingo card which encapsulates the universal conference experience. Many thanks for those who did turn up to listen to me, by the way. I appreciate your loyalty.

That night we enjoyed a fabulous gala dinner at Belfast City

Head of Membership Michael Nelles summons the conference to the gala dinner - bow tie sorted



Image: Helen Hughes



Image: Helen Hughes

Steam's up!

Hall. My lasting memory of the evening will be Michael Nelles personally escorting us across the grand marble lobby (and the several futile attempts made to sort out his dickie-bow tie until someone who knew how to do it turned up).

The highlight of the final day for me was Leanne Tonkin's brave and heartfelt paper '*Forging ways forward through the fear factor*' in which she 'outed' a lot of the unspoken issues in our discipline with reference to her own experiences as someone from a working class background. The conference ended with a joyous event, a Jazz Steam Night. We were taken along the coast in a steam train and at various intervals we stopped at deserted stations and our jazz band set up on the platform. As

our journey progressed - and drink was taken - our dancing improved. There were solo performances, elegant couples applauded, and there was even some impromptu line dancing. Who knew conservators had so much rhythm? A fabulous event and our organisers, especially Siobhan Stevenson who was the heart of the event, deserve our thanks.

I made up for lost time and stayed on an extra day to take a personal taxi-ride Mural Tour (really it is 'The Troubles Tour') which I would highly recommend. My driver (who had tales to tell...) kindly dropped me off at the Crumlin Road Prison in time to catch the late tour which was extremely moving. There is so much to see in this friendly city - I will be coming back.

The musicians give it their all



Image: Helen Hughes

All aboard the steam train for the jazz night



Image: Helen Hughes

CONFERENCES

47TH AIC ANNUAL MEETING

New England USA May 2019

In May this year I was delighted to be able to attend AIC's 47th Annual Meeting in Connecticut, USA. The five-day conference included tours, talks and workshops, with most of the week focussing on the presentations of papers and posters from conservators and museum professionals from far and wide on the topic of *New Tools, Techniques & Tactics*.

The opening reception was held at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center in Connecticut, which is a part of the government of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. The Museum & Research Centre seeks to further knowledge and understanding of the richness and diversity of the indigenous cultures of the United States and Canada. The displays were eerily realistic creating an authentic atmosphere of the Pequot Tribe. We were also treated to music, singing and traditional Mashantucket dancing over canapés, drinks and networking with other delegates.

During the week I attended a half day workshop 'Natural Dyes, Mineral Colours & Synthetic Dyes on Textiles' at The University of Rhode Island. Not only did this workshop give a valuable overview of dyes used from the 18th century onwards with examples of each shown, it also gave me the chance to meet textile conservators and textile historians from America and other countries, sharing experiences on current projects and techniques.

During the week I heard from many textile conservators presenting papers on a whole range of topics. Highlights for me include the use of gels to remove foxing on a 20th century Japanese silk painting and the investigation of ultrasound used in immersion wet cleaning techniques. I was also able to support my colleague Yoko Hanegreefs, during her talk on the use of Japanese paper overlays on the cornices from The Spangled Bed at Knoles House, a National Trust property we have been working with on the conservation of two major state beds.

The focus was not solely on textiles. I also made sure that I attended presentations on other topics to get a good overall view of the conference. I particularly enjoyed an Architecture Group presentation which discussed the difficult-to-control environmental conditions at Texas' oldest brewery; Kreische's House, Smokehouse and Brewery built in 1846. Working for The National Trust where I frequently have to consider the historic interiors and structures in which our collections are housed, I found this talk particularly insightful and food for thought. Attending other talks, there



Examples of natural dyes shown in a 19thC patchwork during the AIC dyes workshop

seemed to be a general trend for papers and sessions on the use of gels in conservation of almost all material types, Japanese paper treatments of many kinds were also presented with an array of useful techniques I could take back to The Studio.

I also managed to book onto an evening tour of Mystic Seaport Museum, which included a chance to join other textile conservators from across the globe. As well as socialising and chatting about textiles, conservation and life in the sector in general we were treated to a boat ride which took us to see the fabulous restoration work being done on the Mayflower II, a 1950s' replica of the ship that carried the Pilgrims to the New World in 1620. The evening closed with a walk back through the 19th century maritime village located in the museum grounds.

I would like to thank Anna Plowden Trust and the National Trust Textile Conservation Studio for their generous funding which enabled me to attend the conference and broaden my horizons in the field of conservation.

Terri Dewhurst Textile Conservator
National Trust Textile Conservation Studio

Apologies to Laura Chaille, whose name was misspelled in the review of the AIC meeting which appeared in the last issue of Icon News.

A CHALLENGING DIMENSION: The Conservation and Research of Costume and Accessories

ICOM-CC Textiles Working Group Interim Meeting

Abegg-Stiftung 20-21 June 2019

This has been a conference that many have been looking forward to, both for the topic and the venue. It has been very well attended worldwide, not only by conservators, but also by curators, scientists, mount-makers, costume specialists and designers, and more; showing how collaboration with different professionals is vital for our projects to be successful.

After a warm welcome by the Abegg-Stiftung, the conference kicked off with a paper by **Ana Serrano** about archaeological silk fragments from the Netherlands, followed by archaeologist **Beatrix Nunz** and pattern specialist **Rachael Case**, who talked about the challenges of reconstructing medieval garments from XV century textile fragments from Lengberg Castle-Austria, whilst **Lara Derks** spoke on the challenges of conserving the Elector August of Saxony's costume. **Zenzie Tinker** and **Rachel Rodes** talked about the ethics involved in the conservation treatment of the royal funeral effigies from Westminster Abbey.

Melangell Penrhys, and pattern-specialist **Michelle Barker** presented the conservation



Icon Textile committee on tour: Viola Nicastro and Emily Austin visit Abegg-Stiftung for the ICOM-CC Conference.

treatment of a mantua. **Teresa Toledo de Paula** and **Larissa Torres Garcia** talked about Carmen Miranda's costume conservation project, including 172 multi-media objects. **Costanze Zimmer's** paper focused on the treatment of a unique collection of costumes worn by Andrew Logan. **Dana Goddin** presented a case study of a fashion exhibition from low class rural communities in Heartland-US, showing how mounting it is not only a 'fitting-the-dress exercise' but involves the challenge of presenting the identity of the people who wore it.

The second day focussed on conservation in practice, beginning with a paper by **Rosie Chamberlain** looking at the identification and treatment of weighted silk. Followed by **Lauren Osmond** discussing her research into beetle elytra textile decoration. **Deborah Panaget's** paper discussed 3D modelling and how it informed the treatment and mounting of a 1920s' beaded dress.

Following the opportunity to view posters, delegates were invited to explore the spacious Abegg-Stiftung conservation studios and discuss an array of interesting projects and see the custom-made storage. Delegates were also able to visit the textile galleries showcasing highlights of the collection, as well as innovative lighting and mounting solutions.

The post-lunch session began with **Marina Hayes** detailing solutions to conserving leather and fur costume, followed by **Cinzia Oliva** describing her complex treatment of finely pleated burial robes. To mix things up, next came a Pecha Kucha session, a succession of short five-minute presentations, including papers on costume at Claydon House; working with designers to display Rodarte costume; re-visiting past treatments at an Arkansas museum; and exhibiting a local dressmaker's work and the impact it had on a North Carolina community.

Ann Coppinger shared recent store improvements at The Museum at FIT and their approach to a fast paced exhibition schedule. Then **Johanna Nilsson** and **Sarah Benson** concluded with reflective thinking for conservation treatments, focussing on laid couching, followed by an open discussion led by session chair **Sarah Scaturro** on general themes and points of interest from the conference.

With many thanks to the Abegg-Stiftung and the ICOM-CC Textile Group for such a welcoming and inspiring conference.

Viola Nicastro & Emily Austin

Events coordinator and Secretary, Icon Textile Group

HISTORIES, THEORIES & USES OF WASTE PAPER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

Oxford University Centre for Early Modern Studies.

15 June 2019

Beautiful Balliol College in Oxford was the setting for a fascinating conference which explored the uses of waste paper in early modern England. This one-day conference was jam-packed with fifteen impressive presentations by leading early modern scholars from the United Kingdom, Europe, and the United States of America.

For a Book Conservator, manuscript and printed waste is a familiar sight in library and archive collections, where reused paper can be found as the coverings, boards, linings, pastedowns and guards of books.

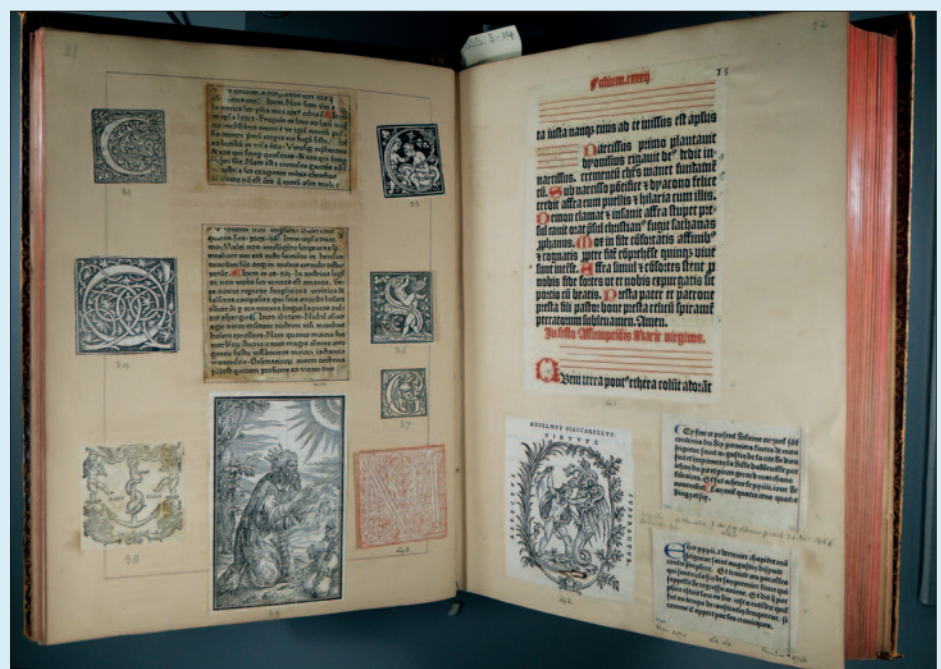
Having mainly witnessed waste paper reuse within the bookbinding trade, I was astonished to learn of the demand for print and manuscript waste among England's other trades. In the words of poet Henry Fitzgeffrey (d. 1639/40), the fate of unwanted books included their use 'to wrap Drugg's', 'dry Tobacco in', and package 'Pippin-pyes.' I must admit the thought of incunabula and medieval manuscripts lining 'pye' (pie) dishes was something of a surprise to me.

However, **Dr Kate Bennet** (University of Oxford) spoke of an even worse fate: a vast quantity of waste paper ended up hung from hooks as 'privy fodder'. One notable example of this practice comes from a poem written by Lady Mary Wortley Montague (c. 1689-1762), who noted her preference for furnishing her privy with printed pages from authors she did not like.

Luckily, meeting with such an undignified end was not the only outcome for unsold or unwanted books. The poet Alexander Pope (1706-82) wrote that the linings of ladies fan-boxes were 'unvalued repositories of learning'. The textual-waste archive also contains examples used to stiffen collars, ruffs and cuffs in the clothing industry; as linings for sizing hatter's block-heads; while architectural picture frames, papier mâché ceilings, and plaster mouldings have also been found with linings of textual waste.

Dr Lucy Razzall (University College London) gave a wonderful talk about the pasteboard industry in early modern England. She

Fragmenta Varia SSS.3.14 in Cambridge University Library



Cambridge University Library

described a notice in a 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* that listed different prices for binding in 'paste or boards'. Such documentary evidence indicates that the waste paper trade enabled binders and book sellers to sell books at different prices – those with pasteboard bindings representing a cheaper alternative. The use of printed and manuscript waste in pasteboard manufacture was clearly known to early modern authors. John Day's prologue to his *Parliament of Bees* (1641), describes his concern that if his book proved unpopular it might end up as pasteboard.

I was interested to learn from **Dr Geoffrey Day** (former Winchester College Librarian) that early modern printed books were commonly left in sheets, not only so people could have it bound in their preferred style, but mainly because unbound sheets were easier to sell on as waste (sold by weight), if left unsold. Dr Day mentioned accounts from the Oxford University Press which recorded higher profits from selling printed sheets as waste rather than as books. In the second-hand book trade, Dr Razzall mentioned the sale of whole libraries to pasteboard makers during the 17th century; the necessity of removing the bindings probably affecting the final sale price.

In most cases of waste material re-use, the value of the raw materials outweighed the importance of their textual content. However, an excellent presentation by **Professor Whitney Trettien** (University of Pennsylvania) explored a different side of the waste industry, where the textual or graphic content of the books outweighed the value of the raw materials. Early modern dealers, such as John Bagford (1650-1716), collected rare and unique book fragments to sell on to bibliophiles. Bagford sourced and collected tens of thousands of printed ornaments, historiated initials, coloured endpapers, title pages, playbills, broadsides, samples of manuscript texts, illuminated figures, wood engravings etc – creating fascinating 'speciment' books that he sold on to collectors. One such example, *Fragmenta Varia* SSS.3.14 now in the Cambridge University Library, contains dismembered examples taken from incunabula as well as lesser known works that may not have survived otherwise.

While this cycle of use has long been understood as destructive, one of the aims of the conference was to explore the mentality of our early modern forebears engaged in the waste economy. Much discussion was had around use of the term 'waste', and whether it is appropriate, given that paper and parchment in any form was clearly valuable, highly sought after, so very useful, and certainly not treated as 'waste' in the past. **Dr Tamara Atkin** (Queen Mary University of London) suggested the terms 'reused' and 'repurposed' as a fairer



Herbaria sheet utilising print and manuscript waste paper

alternative for this genre of material.

The conference greatly benefitted from a visit to Oxford University's Department of Plant Sciences, where **Professor Stephen Harris** (Herbarium Curator) presented some fine examples of herbaria specimen sheets from the University's collection. Fragments and leaves of books repurposed as seed wrappers, backing supports, and hinges were seen on specimen sheets from the early modern period, demonstrating yet another useful end for unwanted books.

Butchers and bakers no longer reach for the pages of early printed books to use as wrapping paper for their sausages and bread. However, the fact that this was deemed to be an affordable, necessary, expected, and acceptable fate for unsold books gives us a glimpse into the material economies and historical attitudes of the early modern period. This conference really shone a light on a trade which I had hitherto only glimpsed in the gutters and linings of bookbindings.

The people behind this early modern waste economy, whether deemed biblioclasts or saviours, have left an impressive archive of waste: at that time, simply waste material, but now a treasure trove that we conservators spend our lives preserving. This wonderful conference has given me a much broader view of the shifting fate of books across time, and given me an insight into the 'life' of these waste paper and

parchment fragments. The conference will further inform my treatment, rehousing, description and documentation practices for this type of fascinating documentary heritage; and I will now be on the lookout for previous signs of use – especially those tell-tale hook holes!

Rachel Sawicki

Conservator, Cambridge University Library

DYNAMIC OBJECTS SESSION AT #ICON19
Icon Dynamic Objects Network
Belfast June 2019

All the Dynamic Object presentations really brought home the underlying importance, wow factor or jaw-dropping wonder potential that onlookers or users get when kinetic objects that have been created to move do actually move or work. There is a degree of physical wear, or in one presentation metal fatigue, with kinetic objects that needs sympathetic, innovative assessment and treatment approaches described in the following presentations.

1. **Derek Frampton** (Clocks Adviser to the Church of England), **Chris McKay** (Horological Author & Consultant) and **Janet Berry** (Head of Conservation, Cathedral & Church Buildings Division, Church of England) on *A New Code of Practice for Turret Clocks*.

Janet presented the paper on behalf of her co-authors. Janet's wide role is to provide

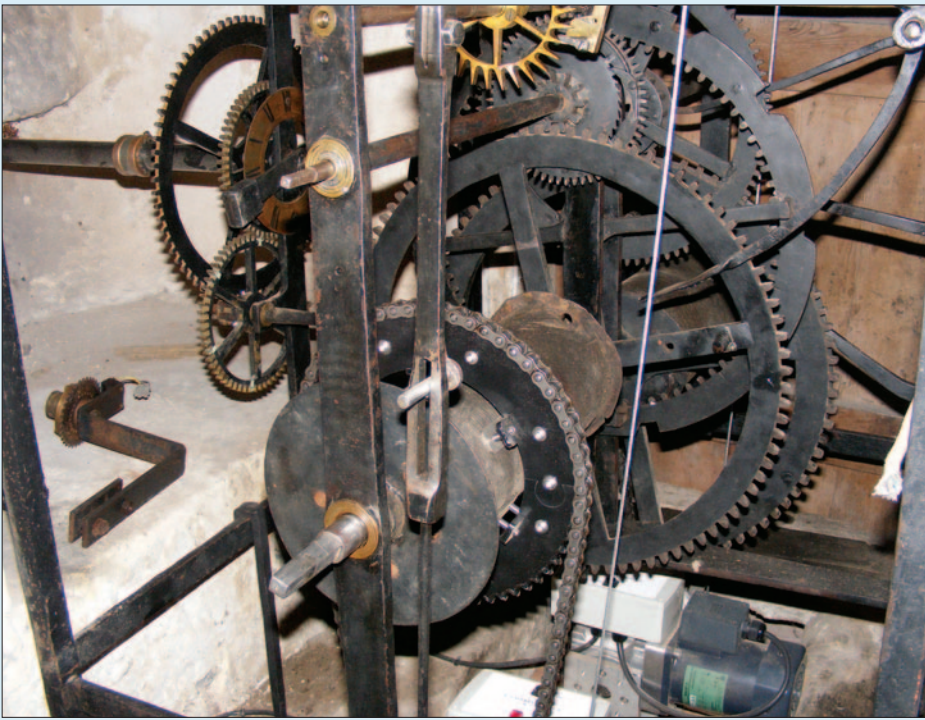


Image: Malcolm Wiffen

This turret clock at St George's Church, Wrotham in Kent, was made in 1614, conserved by The Cumbria Clock Company Limited in 2019

advice on conservation of historic interiors for 16,000 churches and forty cathedrals of the Church of England. This is achieved with the support of six conservation committees and a fabric repairs committee, including a turret clock conservation committee. The Church of England has around four thousand working turret clocks.

To ensure that all personnel working in the turret clock sector are working to the same principles, the Turret Clock Advisers' Forum initiated a new Code of Practice for working practitioners and advisers to follow. There has been a wide consultation for the draft code with everyone concerned including companies, contractors, Diocesan Turret Clock Advisors and the Church Buildings Council and its turret clock conservation committee. The code emphasises the shift in practice towards a less interventive approach and more towards conservation principles recognised in many other conservation sectors. As such it promotes a very important philosophical change in turret clock practice.

The key requirement for the Code of Practice is to ensure that there is a unified approach to the conservation, maintenance and repair of turret clocks and their peripheral components like bell hammers and dials, as well as the surrounding and supporting fabric. The code updates health and safety responsibilities for all practitioners.

The guidelines promote a coordinated and scheduled approach to inspection, maintenance and fault finding rather than diving in to 'oil and grease', 'fix it' or 'give it a lick of paint'. There is a greater emphasis on regular inspections, maintenance where necessary and documentation leading to accountability. Where faults are found the emphasis is to find the cause of underlying

deterioration and when repairing the fault reversibility is to be built in if it can be. As an example Janet cited that a clock's frame must not have new holes drilled into it to add fittings and new functionality like the installation of electrical automatic winding systems, but new parts need to be affixed with removable fittings. Such a system is now applied to the clock's existing winding barrels resulting in minimal removal of existing parts like the barrels themselves and associated flys for the clock's strike and chiming trains.

Janet's talk was inspiring and wide-ranging of which a small part is described. Janet acknowledged co-authors Chris McKay, an eminent horological historian and turret clock consultant, and Derek Frampton who is a diocesan clock adviser and national spokesman for diocesan clock advisers via the Clocks Advisers Forum.

Finally, the Code of Practice can be found at <http://www.clocksadvisersforum.uk/info.html>. Whilst this presentation focussed on turret clocks in the Church of England, its use is intended for across the heritage sector.

2. **Carla Flack** (Sculpture and Installation Art Conservation department at Tate London) on *Cybernetic Umbrella: A Case Study of Kinetic Art Conservation at Tate*.

Carla's presentation used the conservation of a dynamic art installation to illustrate the Tate's approach to conservation issues. The Tate has a long history of displaying and treating kinetic works of art which have their own unique technical and ethical questions.

In 1972 Tate purchased Wen-Ying Tsai's *Umbrella* (1971). The dynamic sculpture, with radiating spines of thin metal rods is secured at a central boss held aloft by a single thin rod anchored to the ground in a block of concrete. The whole system,

housed in a darkened area, is made to vibrate producing 'tuned' standing waves along the metal components and is lit with a strobe whose flashing frequency is modulated by sounds generated by onlookers. The rate of flashing on the rods creates a visual undulation. As the artist was working in new materials of the time the approach demands new treatment strategies. Over time metal fatigue had taken its toll and because of component obsolescence the strobe had stopped working too.

Carla explained that Tate is in continuous communication with the artist, or artist foundation, to ensure that there is a consistent anchor to maintain the difficult balance of artist intention with technical functionality. A collaborative approach has had the most successful results for these complex kinetic artworks. Carla discussed how they draw upon various skill sets from outside the heritage sector that includes conservators, technicians, engineers and manufacturers.

An assessment of the condition of the original along with health and safety concerns and how to present the work for display concluded that it was too fragile for further display, so it was decided to make a replica using materials with similar dynamic properties yet with fewer failure mechanisms. Tuning the structure, including the radiating arms, required great patience. An electronic engineer was commissioned to make a new acoustic stimulated stroboscope using LEDs instead of a Xenon tube.

The original remains easily accessible. Collaboration is critical and the approach made the most of the combination of external contributors with their wide range of skills, knowledge and innovative thinking found in Sculpture and Time Based Media in the conservation department at Tate. The replica performs in the same manner as the original and has the endorsement of the artist's foundation.

3. **Vicki Marsland** (Conservator at the National Trust) on *Bringing Nancy Astor's electric canoe back to life: the restoration of 'Liddesdale' at Cliveden*.

Cliveden is set above a still reach of the River Thames with wooded banks bordering the estate making the area ideal for canoeing. Vicki started by saying that in the 1920s canoeing was popular and electric canoes were very popular for both hire and private ownership. Liddesdale, an electric canoe, was commissioned from a local boat yard by Nancy and Waldorf Astor and used by the family in the fair weather season while being kept in a boathouse over winter. Liddesdale did not spend all its life with the family but had been reunited with the estate nearly thirty years ago when Cliveden House hotel operated the canoe as part of their



The Liddlesdale canoe: conservation is almost completed

fleet. However by 2016 the boat was in a poor condition with much of its electrics out of date or missing.

Thanks to a generous donation, the National Trust was able to acquire Liddlesdale. It was decided to restore the vessel as a working electric canoe, rather than preserve it as a static exhibit. Although there are few craft of this age and technology around now, keeping the boat in use enhances its significance and will give people an authentic experience. The National Trust raised funds from visitors, its Centres and Associations and other gifts for the restoration work. Liddlesdale was not such that it was beyond repair and the work being done on it now will have a significant positive impact for future scheduled maintenance.

Vicki and the property team decided to turn the boathouse into a workshop and to let visitors have viewing access to the work. The project enabled the National Trust to engage a group of 2018 graduates from the International Boatbuilding Training College in Portsmouth, giving them the opportunity to put their skills into practice. A paint analysis showed that the original colour was not red but a blue-green. Furthermore CAD drawings of the whole boat are being prepared that will be of benefit for future recording of its maintenance. It was noted the topside is mahogany which meant salvaged wood was used for repairs.

At the time of the presentation Liddlesdale was about to be turned over for fitting out the interior and painting. In further questioning Vicki reported that the students were surprised to find that the stuffing box was filled with bitumen. The propeller will be powered using the thirty year old 3hp electric motor and onboard lead acid gel batteries. The canoe will be driven with an

electronic variable speed control behind a replica of a period original handle and engraved brass plate. The project is a success and use of Liddlesdale, a working electric canoe nearly a century old, in future should be a visitor attraction.

Kenneth Cobb, C.Eng.

Dynamic Objects Session Chair

TALK

A TIMELESS PALETTE: The Story of wa no iro - Japanese colours

The Japan Foundation

Royal Society of Arts, London 8 April 2019

Yoshioka Sachio is a fifth generation Japanese master dyer and colour historian who runs the Yoshioka Dyeing Workshop. He uses only natural dyes for textiles and paper having revived a number of ancient dyeing techniques to create a spectrum of colours from the Japanese medieval court. He explained that the same ingredients are used in dyeing and medicine. When people visit the workshop, they say it smells of a pharmacy because plants are used for both.

He began his translated talk by describing a shopping trip earlier in the day to London's China Town where he bought 100 grams safflower for £8.00 which is the equivalent of 1,000 yen. He then went on explain that in his business, he uses approximately 100 Kilograms a year. He uses the safflower to dye approximately sixty sheets of paper that the priests make into red Cornelia flowers for the Todajji festival, as they've done for fifty years.

His family business originated from creating colours from plants before the industrial revolution. He then reviewed the primary colours, describing how each is made in a

Master dyer and colour historian Yoshioka Sachio



traditional manner. He started with yellow explaining that he uses Japanese pampas to create a beautiful yellow. The plant itself does not look yellow but has been used for over a thousand years in Japan with records from 1200 years ago detailing the use of pampas for dyeing, and sourcing it from the mountains.

Most of his red dyeing uses safflower imported from China applied to paper. However, safflower can be used to make lipstick, too. Dyeing with safflower is technical using vinegar, rice straw ash and smoked plums. Without all four ingredients they do not get the colour. Temples and shrines sustain red dyeing because of the festivals and ceremonies that entail decorating the buildings with red paper flowers. He also makes red using madder

akane, saffron wood which is imported or lak grown in Yamagata.

For blue, Yoshioka-san uses the indigo flower blossom or the leaves. Fresh leaves create a turquoise colour. The leaves that are harvested in summer and dried in the sun are used for darker blue. The leaves are piled up with water. The vat ferments, the temperature rises and the process preserves the indigo leaves. Wood ash and sake are added. When the vat 'drinks the sake' the liquid is used to dye cloth to a sky blue colour.

Yoshioka-san said everyone thinks it would be easy to dye green because we are surrounded by it but chlorophyll doesn't make a good dye. To create green he dyes blue then dyes yellow. He studied old techniques and saw everyone doing same

thing from the Andes to China.

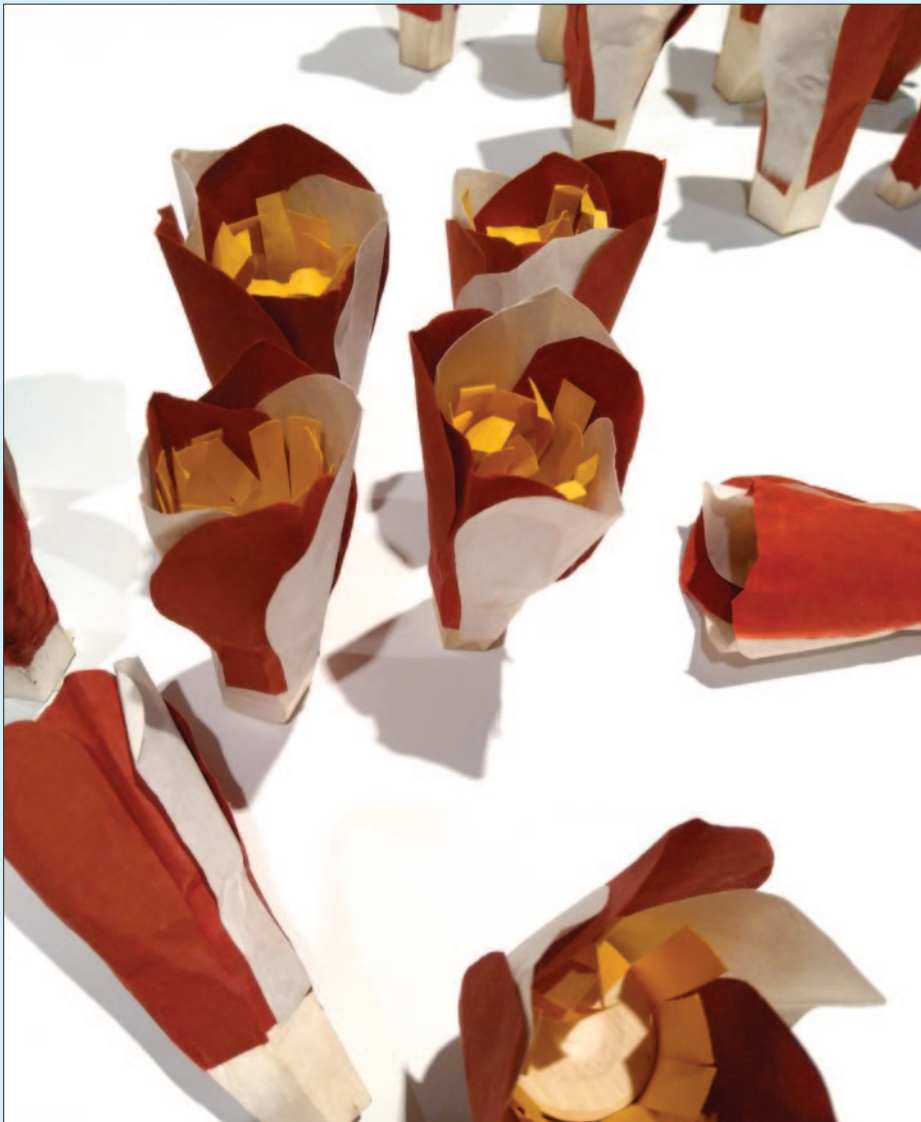
Purple is Yoshioka-san's favourite colour to dye. With dyeing history in China, gromwell is difficult to handle, as it is a delicate plant. He asked farmers to grow gromwell ten years ago and now cultivates a wonderful purple crop. The root is pounded in a stone mortar and camellia ash is added to promote the colour. He admits it is easy to understand why the colour was for the nobility owing to all the work that goes into making the colour.

Yoshioka points out that emperors, nobles, warriors and Edo ladies loved bright colours. As described in *Tales of Genji* and the *Pillow Book*, there are descriptions of their love of beautiful colours. When asked if he discovered new colours/plants, he answered that his job is to produce pre-Edo colours and that he does not seek new colours as there are no better ones to be had. He studies the old to discover the new.

Meagen Smith

Collection Care Studio Manager
Parliamentary Archives

Red Cornelia flowers for Todaiji festivals



WORKSHOP

SALVAGE OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVE & MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Icon Scotland Group
St Andrews June 2019

This *Salvage of library, archive and museum collections theory and practical workshop* day was hosted by the University of St Andrews Library and presented by **Helena Rodwell** from the Fitzwilliam Museum and **Sophie Rowe** from the University of Cambridge Museums, with practical demonstrations by conservators from Scotland.

The day began with Sophie and Helena emphasising the importance of planning and preparing for a disaster. Organising, delegating and creating a list of priorities in advance of a small or large-scale event can all help to create confidence in the event of a disaster. Staff training and regular refresher courses are also important. As the first forty eight hours are critical, pre-organised roles - e.g. a co-ordinator who knows the building and different teams for salvage, recovery, and documentation, and health and safety/welfare - all contribute to safe and effective management.

Two points became obvious during the day: the first was that there is no one right way, one-size-fits-all but that plans must be tailored to each individual collection; and the second that everything is connected and no one part can be planned for in isolation. The plan can also inform what the



Participants at the Salvage Workshop

collection can cope with – a small leak could be managed, but a flood would be very different. It is also important to know what your manageable threshold is, and when you need external help. For example, do you need overflow drying space at another institution? Or access to commercial freezing?

Some things seem obvious, such as laminating important documents: floor plans, collection locations, and up-to-date phone numbers (it is surprising how quickly these can become out of date); and having salvage kits both on and off site for easy access. Other points were not so immediately obvious, such as the importance of checking legal and insurance facts: can volunteers help; are they covered by your insurance? **Saho Arakawa** highlighted an issue which the National Records of Scotland have come across – that certain legal papers cannot cross a border so it would not be possible to use a commercial freezing facility in England.

It is important to take photographs throughout the process, as these can help to document items, and can also be used in insurance cases. However, mobile phone images might pose copyright issues, as they are stored on personal clouds. All this emphasised that there is much to think about, and why pre-planning is so important. The day continued with practical examples and clear advice from conservators with different specialisms: **Will Murray** (artefacts), **Tuula Pardoe**, (textiles),

Henry Matthews, (paintings) and **Saho Arakawa** (paper and books).

In the afternoon session we were shown an incident in a mock store and split ourselves into salvage, documentation and recovery teams to put our morning learning into practice, discovering how easily miscommunication is possible and how bottlenecks can occur in a salvage situation. We were so keen to get everything out of the disaster site that the documentation team was quickly swamped and the recovery/drying team was soon overflowing. We swapped roles halfway through so that everyone had an experience of a different role, which was enlightening. This also demonstrated how what appears to be a few items can quickly take up huge amounts of space and resources, and also how tiring it is even in a practice situation. Overall the amount of information and things to think about is overwhelming but there is a lot of help, experience and information on hand. The presenters emphasised their continuing availability to give advice, to share their experience and knowledge.

Planning for a disaster appears time consuming, but it will be invaluable if it is ever needed. This day took some of the mystery out of being involved in a salvage incident. I certainly feel a little more prepared for a disaster. We were given the tools to be able to plan for and be effective if disaster may strike.

The participants included archivists, collection managers, gallery curators, students, recent graduates and conservators in private practice and institutions. These events are always a great opportunity to network, catch up with each other and learn new and valuable information.

Very many thanks to Helena and Sophie, and Will Murray and Tuula Pardoe (Scottish Conservation Studio), Henry Matthews (Egan, Matthews and Rose) and Saho Arakawa (National Records of Scotland). Thank you also to St Andrews University Library and staff for hosting and for providing an excellent location in the loading bay for the flood! Thanks to Erica Kotze for organising such an informative, enjoyable, hands-on day, and to Icon Scotland for supporting the event. Last but not least, thanks to my fellow salvagers, it is always a pleasure to meet new faces and connect with old ones.

Anna Trist

Freelance Paper Conservator

VISIT

WESTMINSTER ABBEY EFFIGY TOUR

Icon Textile Group
London 24 May 2019

Following on from their talk on the conservation of the royal funeral effigies that took place in late April, Zenie Tinker

Conservation Ltd hosted a guided tour of the recently completed Queen's Diamond Jubilee Galleries at Westminster Abbey to see the royal effigies on display. It was a chance for those who attended the Icon Textile Group AGM talk to see the effigies in real life and for those who hadn't to learn more about the project in situ.

The gallery sits high up in the abbey in a horse-shoe shape looking down into the main space. The effigies are divided into two groups, firstly the older carved wooden effigies and then the later wax ones, grouped chronologically and finishing with a large painted portrait of Elizabeth II to bring the royal group up to date. Other than the wooden Elizabeth I effigy the others do not have any textile elements, so the tour mostly focussed on the wax effigies which are all dressed in multiple layers of clothing.

The tour began with an introduction from the Westminster Abbey conservators, who had co-ordinated the overall project, as well as bringing in specialised conservators, which included Zenzie and her team. The effigy project lasted three years from initial assessment to installation and the team had designated space in the abbey to carry out treatment and re-dressing. Although Zenzie's team focussed on the textile elements of the objects, they worked closely with the abbey conservators and Valerie Kaufman who conserved the wax heads and limbs.

Textile conservators **Rachel Rhodes**, **Minnie Close-Brooks** and **Mira Karttila** took the group from one effigy to the next describing the treatment and points of interest for each piece. This was illustrated with useful folders of before and in progress treatment images to help explain to processes that were being described. There was also the opportunity to see samples of the faux ermine fur which was made to infill large sections of the effigies' clothing, which was necessary now that they would be viewed from all sides.

It seemed that each effigy had its own treatment or mounting issues in one way or another to be solved and several surprises hidden along the way. The most complex treatment appears to have been to the Elizabeth I wax effigy, whose embellished dress had a heavily degraded silk top layer, which was believed to have been part of re-dressing more recently in its history. The decision was made to remove the embellishment from this shredding fabric and reattach it onto new silk, while retaining the older silk for future reference.

The informal feel to the tour and relatively small group size helped encourage questions and discussion over treatment types and solutions. When talking about issues of lifting large heavy fully dressed

objects into glass-sided display cases it was easy to see the planning and thought that was necessary for this project.

Following the guided tour and an opportunity for free time to look around the remaining museum space, attendees were also able to explore the abbey and join the throngs of tourists admiring the historic building.

Emily Austin, Textile Conservator
Museum of London

FILM

HARVESTING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Icon Ethnography Group
London 9 April 2019

Icon's Ethnography Group organized this screening of the documentary *Harvesting Traditional Knowledge*. It documented a two-way learning project created in 2013-2014 by the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAAA) alongside Aboriginal Community Art Centres and the Centre for Cultural Material Conservation, University of Melbourne.

The film was produced by Mulka project, an indigenous film crew. It revealed cultural production practices in great technical detail, including harvesting bark and ochre, sourcing and processing natural fibres, and production of tools. Traditional knowledge holders and conservators from Australian cultural institutions mutually exchanged various approaches to caring for cultural material.

For me, there were two highlights in the film. One showed a trip to the bush in North East Arnhem Land, where traditional masters demonstrated how to strip bark off a tree and prepare it as a canvas for bark paintings. Conservators observed indigenous artists cut bark for removal, heating the bark to flatten it and harvesting and boiling *mulmu* roots to make a dye for colouring pandanus fibre. The other highlight was a trip to an ochre pit, where indigenous artists showed how various colours were collected and prepared for paints. Cultural knowledge holders and conservators shared knowledge and practised the production of a wide range of Kimberley materials, including boab fibre, pearl shell, boab nut carvings, ochre, sap, kangaroo sinew, spinifex gum, and boomerang and spear making.

These workshops offered a good interdisciplinary platform for traditional artists, local people, and museum conservators to share knowledge. By

learning from indigenous masters making cultural products and working under their guidance, conservators could gain a better understanding of the raw materials and manufacturing processes of cultural objects. This learning process is important both ethically and practically, in order to care for cultural materials in their collections. Museum collections, which include not only the objects but also the biography, value and associative significance, need to be kept alive and preserved for the local communities.

For conservators taking care of ethnographic collections, the film gives a great example of learning traditional knowledge from indigenous artists and local masters to assist ethical consideration of conservation. The documentary also reminds ethnographic collection conservators of the importance of communication among different communities and explores the double win that cooperation could achieve.

Daran Qin

MSc student, Conservation for Archaeology & Museums
University College London

FLOATING FIGUREHEADS

Orbis Conservation Ltd are treating a collection of figureheads and planning a mounting and suspension system

BACKGROUND

In late 2017 Orbis Conservation began a pilot conservation treatment of two large 19th century carved timber figureheads, Topaze and King William. The project is due for completion at the end of this year. The two sculptures form part of a larger collection of fourteen figureheads owned by the National Museum of the Royal Navy, currently on loan to Plymouth City Council. The 'pilot' figureheads were selected as representative of the extremes of scale and condition: Topaze relatively small but severely degraded, King William monumental in scale and fairly stable in condition.

The principal aim of the pilot project was to establish a methodology to be used for the analysis and conservation treatment for the remainder of the twelve figureheads in the collection. The second aim was to design a mounting system, in conjunction with the structural engineers, in order to suspend the sculptures from the ceiling in a new museum space.

CONDITION ISSUES

Several of the figureheads had been coated in fibreglass during the 1960s following a diktat from the Navy in a bid to preserve them following years at sea and display outdoors. This

The Orbis team working on Topaze



Topaze – in need of treatment

impermeable layer served to trap water within the timber, creating a perfect environment for brown rot to thrive. The fibreglass not only served to hasten the decay of the structure of the sculptures but also made analysis of the surface very difficult.

Removing the rot from Topaze



The fibreglass was to be removed as part of the conservation treatment, revealing the original carved surface. Sonic tomography was used to assess the levels of decay caused by the fungal attack, and subsequently decisions were made with the engineers on which figureheads needed to be dismantled in order to remove rotten timber and consolidate acceptable timber.

MOUNTING APPROACH

The pilot project worked well for fine-tuning material choices, honing methods such as fibreglass removal, consolidation and controlled drying requirements and maintaining a consistent aesthetic finish. However, in reality, each figurehead presented its own unique problems for both mounting and conservation. They required different mounts depending on shape, scale and extent of reconstruction following conservation treatment.

The one constant was the lifting crown for each, which was a single pick up point with three eyes for the suspension cables in the ceiling to fix onto. A Lindapter plate was used on the mounts, which is a very useful temporary clamping fixing that can be used to establish the exact centre of gravity prior to fully welding the lifting crown in place.

For Topaz, Tamar and Defiance, three of the most severely degraded figureheads, the mounts incorporated internal armatures needed to re-build the figureheads following the removal of rotten timber. Again, the mounts varied but followed a similar formula – an internal steel armature with ply ‘ribs’ which are fixed chemically and physically to the interior of the remaining sculptures. The figureheads are built around these armatures, which are then connected to the mounts.



Adding the finishing touches to Topaze

Orbis Conservation 2019



King Billy after consolidation and before painting

Orbis Conservation 2019

Painting Topaze



Orbis Conservation 2019

The Orbis team add finishing touches to King Billy



Orbis Conservation 2019



Render showing the Figureheads' display at The Box, Plymouth opening Spring 2020

FLOATING FREE

Several of the figureheads will be suspended within the main entrance and atrium of The Box Plymouth, a new arts and heritage complex opening in spring 2020, in a huge sweep

that appears to sail across the front glazed facade from left to right.

You can follow the rest of the project at www.orbisconservation.co.uk

Topaze, King Billy and Calcutta in the Orbis workshop



FILMING IN HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Anna Rathband, Filming Manager for the National Trust for Scotland and Charlotte Tomlin, previously National Trust for Scotland Bute/Icon Preventive Conservation Intern, now Preventive Conservator with Spencer & Fry, discuss the benefits and challenges of encouraging filming in historic properties.

National Trust for Scotland ('the Trust') locations have been popular sites for feature films and television programmes for many years. We have welcomed 'Kidnapped' starring Michael Caine at the historic Royal Burgh of Culross in 1971; 'The Wicker Man' at Culzean Castle in 1973, and more recently 'The Queen' starring Helen Mirren using Castle Fraser as Balmoral in 2006; 'The Dark Knight Rises' over Mar Lodge Estate in 2012 and the 2016 re-make of 'Whisky Galore' at Geilston Garden and St Abb's Head. We have also hosted popular television dramas such as 'Garrow's Law' at Pollok House and epic time-travel series 'Outlander' at numerous Trust locations including

BBC *Rise of the Clans* filming at Falkland Palace, June 2018



National Trust for Scotland/Anna Rathband

Culross Palace, Falkland Palace and Preston Mill. Trust locations are also popular for fashion photo shoots, national and international travel programmes, documentaries and adverts for everything from cars to whisky to dog food.

THE BENEFITS

It is fantastic to see scenes from your favourite movie or TV series shot on location. Natural landscapes and authentic heritage buildings are far more impressive than any fabricated set. They can also add interest and drama to potentially dry documentaries. The attraction for production companies to film in such locations is therefore very clear, but why as a heritage institution and conservation charity would we allow filming to take place in, quite often, fragile and historically important locations? The fact is that, if managed well, the positives of filming generally far outweigh the negatives. This is especially so for the Trust, as the benefits of filming directly align with the objectives of our new five-year strategy:

1. *To protect and care for Scotland's heritage.*

Clearly our number one aim is to protect the heritage in our care. To do this we need funds. One of the main benefits of facilitating filming is that it brings in money; enquiries and income from production companies have grown year on year and the Trust now welcomes over two hundred projects a year to its locations, every penny of the income generated goes directly back to the featured location to aid in its conservation.

2. *To provide opportunities for everyone to experience and value Scotland's heritage.*

The Trust is seeking to diversify the way the public can interact with and experience Scotland's heritage. Filming is one way in which this can be achieved; documentaries, films and TV series that use heritage locations often highlight impressive architecture, astonishing interiors and fascinating stories, presenting them in new and interesting ways to reach and appeal to a much wider audience. As well as encouraging more people to visit featured heritage sites to experience them for themselves, they also present the opportunity for people to experience heritage remotely, engaging those who may not ordinarily visit an historic site.

3. *To promote the benefits of heritage.*

Scotland's heritage sites provide educational, social and numerous other benefits for many people. Filming, by allowing more people to experience these sites, offers an extraordinary opportunity to promote the benefits of heritage to a wide audience.

4. *To create an efficient and sustainable business which supports our conservation needs.*

Closely aligned with our aim to protect and care for Scotland's heritage is our need to create an efficient and sustainable business which is able to support and fund our conservation programme. Allowing filming on our sites is good business planning; production companies provide funds directly, but the advertising gained from a property featuring on TV or film can help to increase visitor numbers, which in turn increases income.



BBC *Rise of the Clans* filming at Falkland Palace, June 2018



THE CHALLENGES

Despite the benefits it is clear that allowing filming in historic properties does provide organisational and logistical challenges and increases the potential risk of damage to historic interiors and collections. Following growing demand for Trust locations to be used as sites for film and television, the Trust decided in 2012 to become fully film-friendly and appoint a dedicated Filming Manager. The Filming Manager is responsible for liaising with the production team and the relevant property staff and internal and external specialists to

ensure that filming and photography projects can be facilitated with ease while also maintaining the integrity of the location and its conservation principles; it is very much a team effort!

Whilst there are certain issues that arise more frequently than others, every filming project is different and will provide different challenges and risks depending on what the filming entails and what historic space it is to take place in. It is important to involve conservators and other specialists at an early stage in the planning process so that these challenges and risks can be managed and reduced.

We all imagine film sets to be very glamorous, but in reality they are very busy and hectic, especially if confined within the limited and fragile interiors of an historic location. This can potentially have a negative impact on collections and interiors; accidental damage can occur, historic floors can potentially be pushed over their weight-bearing capabilities, environmental conditions can be adversely affected and the extra dirt and dust carried in by film crews can cause deterioration of materials and encourage unwanted pests. In addition to this, production companies often request to use historic objects, light real fires in historic fireplaces, light candles and introduce food and drink both for filming and the crew. This can result in damage to collections, increased fire risks and risk of spillages and stains on collections and interiors which could, in turn, increase the risk of pest infestations. So how do we manage these risks effectively so that filming is beneficial?

MANAGING THE RISKS

Planning

Initially it is important to understand exactly what the production company wants to do whilst in the property. This allows many of the risks to be minimised in advance and for ground rules and protective measures to be outlined in the initial contract. For larger productions, with numerous crew

members and bulky equipment, it is important to limit the potential for accidental damage and increased levels of dirt and dust by agreeing protective measures which may include installing surface protections, insisting on the use of shoe protectors, decanting collections and possibly even propping floors or restricting access to certain spaces to reduce the stress on historic floors.

Supervision

It is also important to have a qualified filming conservator supervising on site so that we are flexible enough to react to changes or questions that arise on the day, to offer advice and guidance to the crew and react effectively if damage does occur. Trust conservators are developing their in-house experience of filming conservation but aim to contract this work out wherever possible to support the growth of freelance filming conservators in Scotland. We monitor environmental data for temperature, humidity and light in all our properties so that at the very least the effect of the presence of film crews can be analysed effectively and the risk of increased light exposure and fluctuating humidity to collections can be discussed in relation to the benefits of increased access to the collections.

Using objects

Some production companies are keen to use historic collection objects for filming; the required use will vary depending on the specific desire of an individual production company but may involve actors or presenters sitting on historic chairs or handling historic objects. Any use of its historic collections is closely managed by the Trust to protect objects from unnecessary wear and tear. A request to use a particular collection item will be considered independently and will judge the stability of the object, its historic importance and the type of use requested to evaluate the risk of damage and whether this is acceptable. In some cases, production companies will prefer to use their own props in the historic setting, so it is necessary to decant original collection items. This approach, although it may involve moving a lot of objects, generally presents a lower risk to the collections as Trust trained staff will be the ones handling the collection items.

Fire hazards

As many production companies use historic houses to re-enact a specific period of history it is often important for them to be able to use fires and candles. Whilst ordinarily the Trust does not allow fires or candles to be lit in most of its properties, exceptions are made for filming as long as the situation is properly supervised by a Trust employee and the production company abides by certain stipulations to ensure the risks are reduced. A hot works permit is completed for every day that fires and candles are used, only certain types are allowed and there are regulations about how they are to be maintained, where they can be placed and what protections need to be implemented to prevent any damage to historic interiors.

Food and drink

Similarly, the Trust is quite strict on protocols controlling the use



National Trust for Scotland/Anna Rathband

BBC *Rise of the Clans* filming at Falkland Palace, June 2018

of food and drink in properties. If a production company is keen to use food and drink in a scene, this has to be discussed in advance to allow safeguards to be put in place to prevent damage to interiors; these may include stipulating what kind of food and drink can be used, where it can be prepared and installing protective surfaces in case of any accidental spillages. The safeguards enable allowances to be made around the use of food and drink in our historic interiors for filming purposes. Personal consumption of food and drink by the film crew is generally not allowed, with the exception of bottled water, as this is much harder to control and spillages are more likely.

SUMMARY

All this can sound daunting to the filming novice; the planning and precautions can seem overwhelming even if the financial and educational benefits seem advantageous. Once a framework is in place, however, the burden of planning for subsequent filming projects becomes more structured and manageable. Although risks to collections, even with all possible protections in place, still remain, these have to be quantified against the benefits of increased access and income.

As a conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland is committed to protecting and caring for Scotland's heritage, however it is also pledged to provide opportunities for everyone to experience and value Scotland's heritage. These two contradictory objectives, preservation and access, are familiar to conservators worldwide; any amount of access to collections can correspondingly negatively affect their preservation. It is part of the job of the conservator to work to



Feature film filming at Newhailes House, June 2016

balance these contrasting aims. In many cases, the Trust believes that the benefits of filming, which provides unique access to collections and income to support conservation, outweigh the risk to collections, reduced and carefully managed by extensive planning.

Note on the wider context

The National Trust for Scotland has built up a positive reputation as a filming venue due to the hard work and professionalism of the Filming Manager and the valued support of property staff and specialists, who aim to be flexible, pragmatic and accommodating in order to meet the needs of production companies whilst also maximising efforts to

minimise the risk to our historic collections.

Our growing reputation has encouraged more production companies to use Trust locations, increasing our experience of working with film crews and enhancing our reputation yet further. This positive cycle is set to increase our business and income in this area supporting our conservation needs for the future.

The Trust is part of the Scottish Locations Network of regional film offices and we work closely with Creative Scotland and Visit Scotland as well as other heritage organisations in promoting our locations and Scotland as a whole to the national and international film industry.

Mats and tennis balls provide protection for a vulnerable historic floor





Figurehead of Tamar undergoing treatment at the Orbis workshop in Greenwich
Orbis Conservation 2019

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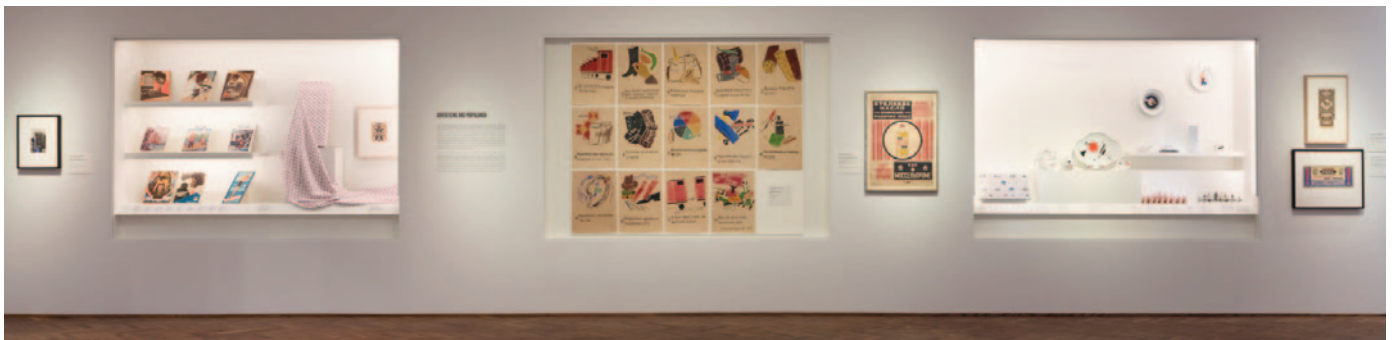
Funerary papi on display in *The Tomb* exhibition. © of National Museums Scotland.



The reframed *Adoration of the Magi* in situ, Exeter College Chapel, University of Oxford. Image: Studio8



Installation view, *Arts of Korea*, Brooklyn Museum, on view beginning September 15, 2017. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum)



Installation view, *Revoliutsiia! Demonstratsiia! Soviet Art Put to the Test*, on view Oct 29, 2017 – Jan 15, 2018, Art Institute of Chicago. Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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