

Animal mummies in Liverpool

Also in this issue

Rescuing a large map

The Mary Rose revealed

An intern's year





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Norton Priory is the most intensively excavated monastic site in Europe, displaying hundreds of medieval and later period objects discovered during the extensive archaeological digs. The project comprised thirty eight showcases in a number of configurations.

A particular feature in some of the showcases is the integration of LED lit dress panels to highlight the skeletal remains. These exhibits will help visitors to understand what we can learn from medieval skeletons about diet, disease and life at the time.



JANUARY 2017 Issue 68



From the Editor

Happy New Year to all our readers!

In this first issue for 2017 our Chief Executive, Alison Richmond, takes a wide-ranging look at what lies ahead by way of challenges and opportunities for conservation. Drawing on the findings of last year's membership survey, our Board of Trustees has also been considering the outlook for the future, as they prepare a new Strategy document to guide Icon through 2017 to 2021. Chair Siobhan Stevenson shared the Trustees' thinking to date with those present at the AGM in early December. There will be a wider consultation with the membership soon, so do keep a look-out for the relevant Iconnect.

This issue couldn't illustrate more vividly the great range and diversity of what conservators get up to in the course of their daily work. We range from the five hundred year old Mary Rose undergoing treatment for the past thirty-four years (surely a record?) to the recently dug-up Christmas tree undergoing a swift and dramatic transformation into art work, not to mention the mummified animals and a rare and valuable map used as a draught excluder. Read on...!

Lynette Gill



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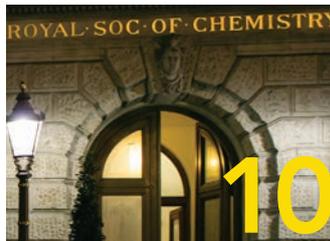
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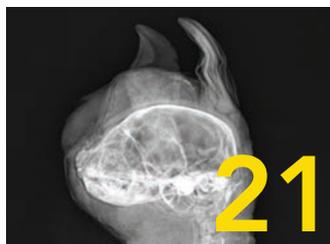
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Cover photo:
Wooden 'coffin' housing a cat mummy currently on display at Liverpool's World Museum as part of its *Animal Mummies Revealed* exhibition. Image: Manchester Museum © Paul Cliff

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professional update

From the Chief Executive



THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Alison Richmond ACR FIIC on threats and opportunities facing the profession

Identifying trends that present challenges to our profession and influence its future direction is one of Icon's responsibilities. At our last meeting of the National Conservation Education and Skills Strategy Stakeholder Group held in November, we

had a go at doing this, with particular focus on training and education.¹

A few months earlier, a consortium of organisations had issued a research report, 'Character Matters: attitudes, behaviours and skills in the Museum Workforce', which aims to identify what the museum workforce would look like and how to achieve it over the next ten years.² While there is much common ground – the museum workforce includes conservators but it does not cover all of Icon's members – there are issues specific to the conservation profession that need bespoke solutions.

Retaining practical skills

The NCESS Group recognised that we are facing the loss of practical interventive skills in the workforce. This is due to many factors that are combining into a perfect storm. Opportunities to develop and hone practical skills are diminishing because of pressures on the curricula of Higher Education Institutes, senior conservators with practical skills retiring and changes in the workplace with more demands on conservators to have ever-widening range of skills. Jonathan Ashley-Smith argued that the profession needs to have people who do hands-on work and must not leave them behind if it is to remain relevant. Although our profession's need to preserve *practical* skills is a particular challenge, we are not alone in the heritage sector in facing the challenge of protecting specialist knowledge. 'Character Matters' research acknowledges this for other professional roles in museums.

Acquiring other skills

At the same time, the 'Character Matters' work has identified the need for a more flexible and entrepreneurial workforce, with business, management, and better leadership skills. These workers should also be prepared to collaborate across specialisms (meaning specialisms in the museum context) and have key personal qualities, such as conscientiousness, optimism, motivation, self-efficacy, persistence, curiosity, creativity and the ability to learn.

That there is an appetite for this amongst conservators can be in no doubt. Over fifty people attended Katy Lithgow's leadership session at the Icon conference last year. The challenge is to protect specialist knowledge and skills whilst broadening roles and encouraging collaboration across specialisms. Growing 'T'-shaped skills is a model that was unfamiliar to me but is apparently used in other sectors. The vertical part of the T is the depth in one particular discipline or skill area and the horizontal part is the ability to co-operate with other disciplines and apply knowledge in areas other than one's own.³ The 'Character Matters' research proposes increasing capacity of the Subject Specialist Networks to ensure the development and retention of collections based knowledge in museums. Icon is considering setting up funded networks of ACRs supporting such knowledge retention across the public, private and civil society sectors.

The private sector

There are also challenges for our profession that lie outside of the museum workforce. We know from our Conservation Labour Market Intelligence Research 2012–13 research that 71% of employers were private sector.⁴ What makes this picture even more complex is that approximately one third of the conservation workforce is employed in micro-businesses (fewer than five employees) or are self-employed. Critical for the conservation profession is how to support the private sector in passing on skills, as many of those skills are maintained in the private sector, and in the importance of business skills in maintaining the resilience of the private sector. A clear message from the NCESS Group was support for the private sector to provide the training opportunities that are needed, whether practical, management or leadership. We need to think creatively about how this can be done. While most funders cannot fund private individuals, Icon can act as a conduit for such targeted funding.

Impact of our age profile

We also know that of the remaining three hundred and fifty ACRs who were fast-tracked in 1999, many will be retiring in the next five to ten years as all will have been working for at least twenty seven years and some for longer. In 2012, 24% of the workforce was aged between 55–59 and will now be over 60. It is urgent that we establish a mechanism for very experienced ACRs to support mid-career conservators with developing advanced skills and knowledge, not only practical, but also helping them with business development. It will be critical to engage those ACRs who are about to retire or who have just retired in developing the next generation of leading professionals. This is the basis on which we are developing a retired member category for Icon.

Diversity

In common with the museum workforce conservation lacks diversity. 'Character Matters' found that 92% of the museum workforce is white (while 86% in the general population is). Conservation is even worse. Our CLMI research found 97% of the conservation workforce (including volunteers) to be white.

This is a big challenge for our sector and one that needs programmes that focus specifically on this outcome.

Government education policy

Another trend identified is changing Government education policy and the move towards increasing the prominence of technical and vocational training. Apprenticeships are where funding is being directed for developing skills in young people. Apprenticeships are critical not only to addressing capacity issues in major projects but also to increasing diversity in the workforce. The challenge for our profession is to come together in time to develop the conservation standard for apprenticeships before anyone else. Icon is currently bringing a group of employers together to develop a conservation apprenticeship standard.

At the NCESS stakeholders' meeting the concern was expressed that this would be to the detriment of the well-established route into the profession via Higher Education courses. This is not about *replacing* the academic route but about creating a parallel, complementary pathway that is more accessible. It will formalize what is already happening in some areas of conservation and will unlock funding and create vocational qualifications that will become steps towards PACR. Icon will balance the promotion of both academic and vocational offers.

Opportunities ahead

Looming on the horizon are major projects conceived on an unprecedented scale, not-to-be-missed opportunities to build in learning – from apprenticeships to PhDs. The £7bn refurbishment of the Houses of Parliament is due to start in 2020 and will need qualified practitioners and trainees across heritage professions and trades. With the slightly smaller price tag of £379m, the ten-year refit of Buckingham Palace will add to this enormous demand for skilled people. Along with HS2 and other infrastructure projects, these offer us huge opportunities for our profession to advocate for our professional standards, for appropriately qualified professionals, and for new routes into the profession through work-based training and higher education.

In order to develop strategies for addressing these challenges we need to update our 2012–13 workforce intelligence. This established the benchmark and through the next iteration of the research we will be able to confirm a trend. With accurate data, we can be more nuanced in how we think about our profession, job roles and work places, and about who is planning to retire when – thus avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach. We need to identify exactly where gaps and shortages are likely to occur, in what disciplines, whether in private, public or civil society, and what part of the UK. For the craft sector, The Radcliffe Trust has funded the Heritage Craft Association to maintain a wiki of craft skills at risk: 'The Radcliffe Red List'.⁵ Jonathan Ashley-Smith has proposed 'a national mediated system of succession planning'. This is something that Icon could co-ordinate with the right funding.

Needless to say, Icon cannot do all of this alone. Employers need to support their workforce to develop. The 'Character Matters' report is full of ideas for how this can be done in museums and conservators should engage with these in their own workplaces.

If we count up the volunteer effort that has gone into and continues to deliver PACR, the Icon internships and the conservation technician qualification, it is clear to the dullest eye that the conservation profession is enormously altruistic. What we cannot ask professionals to do is continue to stretch far beyond their capacity. Part of Icon's role is to make the case that while the conservation profession is part of the heritage and museum workforce we also have our own distinct identity. Our challenge is to find the solutions that fit.

- 1 <http://icon.org.uk/system/files/documents/ncsess-stakeholders-group-notes-04-11-16.pdf>
- 2 www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/ACE_Museums_Workforce_ABS_BOP_Final_Report.pdf
- 3 <http://creativealliance.org.uk/engagement2/>
- 4 http://icon.org.uk/system/files/documents/conservation_labour_market_intelligence_2012-13_0.pdf
- 5 <http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk/wiki/doku.php>

REPORT ON ICON'S 2016 AGM

Icon's 12th Annual General Meeting took place in early December in London. Numbers were down a little on the previous year's event but those attending were engaged and enthusiastic, so it was a good meeting followed by a pleasant social get-together.

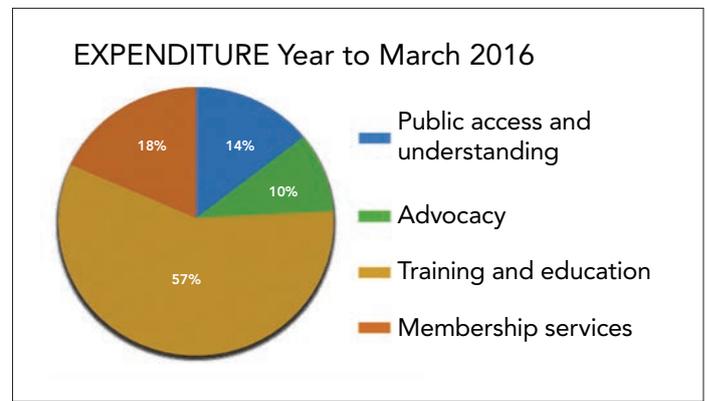
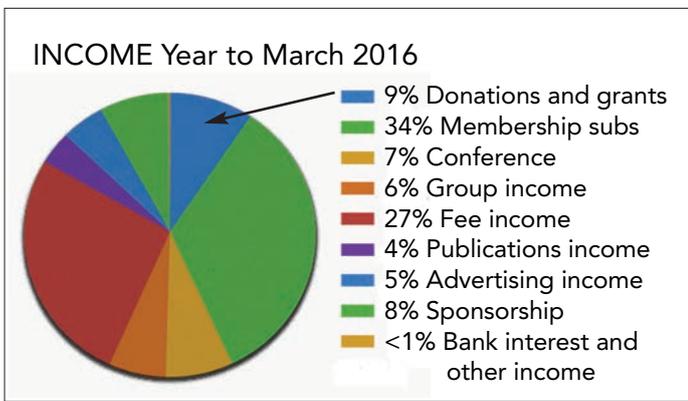
Events in the 2015/16 year

After a welcome from our Chair Siobhan Stevenson and approval of the previous year's AGM minutes, we heard from CEO Alison Richmond, who noted that her report covered the year to March 2016. It was surprising to be reminded of how much had happened and been achieved in those twelve months, such as revamped office systems resulting in better and more useful data and a membership survey which was

largely positive but had also generated lots of ideas to take forward, like the channelling of more resource into advocacy.

Highlights of a very active Group schedule included the hugely successful *Adapt and Evolve* conference and an outstanding Plenderleith Lecture; work started on getting the Icon16 conference up and running, whilst the Conservation Awards saw double the previous number of applications and were a great success. Alison paid tribute to its sponsors and supporters.

The list of achievements continued: the development of the new complaints procedure, a working group on salary guidelines; a major adaptation by the organisation to the ending of the Heritage Lottery funding; the huge response to the launch of the PACR Pathway; development of the



Conservation & Collections Care Technicians' Diploma; a new publishing agreement for the Journal and funds devoted to a digital strategy with the new website delivered on time and on budget. As the recitation went on, Alison gave heartfelt thanks to all those responsible.

The 2015/16 finances

Iain Boyd, co-opted Trustee and Chair of the Finance Committee, then took to the podium to deliver his report on Icon's 2015/16 financial position, noting with perhaps a faint hint of surprise that Icon's finances were well-managed and 'in pretty good shape for a small charity'. He presented two interesting charts showing income and expenditure for the year to March 2016, which are reproduced here.

Elections to the Board

The formal resolutions of the meeting concerning the Trustees' report and accounts and the auditors' remuneration were passed and we moved quickly on to the results of the hotly contested election to the Board of Trustees. Thanks to the new electronic voting system many more members than ever before took the opportunity to vote and the candidates – there were ten of them for the five seats – were all popular choices. The outcome was very close-run but the winning candidates were Mel Houston for the reserved Scotland seat and Jonathan Betts, Lorraine Finch, Caroline Peach and Deborah Walton for the four unreserved seats.

The value to the Board of an outsider's perspective was also recognised with the appointment of two new co-opted members, following a process of advertisement and interview. Ruth Howlett is Head of Media and PR for Historic Royal Palaces and Frances Graupner comes from a legal background, including six years as legal adviser to the University of the Arts London.

Looking ahead

Siobhan Stevenson then took the opportunity to look beyond the formal reporting year. She noted that Icon's members are the lifeblood of the organisation and at the heart of what Icon does, from the inspiring conference in June to the introduction of the new complaints procedure, the success of the Documentation Network, the setting up of the Chairs' Forum (see item below) and many other plans and initiatives.

Drawing on the results of the Membership Survey, the Trustees have been wrestling with the key issues for the future and as a change of Board membership takes effect, she offered sincere thanks to the retiring Trustees for their great contributions during their terms of office: Ylva Dahnsjö, Charlotte Lester, Pierrette Squires and Adam Webster.

The formal business of the meeting concluded at this point

but the Chair went on to share with those present the Board's thinking to date about Icon's strategy for the next five years. This developed from an overarching vision of Icon - 'championing the value and practice of conservation of our cultural heritage' – to a dense and detailed presentation on how this might be achieved. An attentive and interested audience generated some diverse responses in the following question and answer session. The aim is for all the Icon membership to have an opportunity to comment on the strategy before it is finalised by the Board at its March meeting. Look out for Iconnects inviting your views!

A NEW ICON FORUM

One of the recommendations coming out of Icon's current Governance Review is for more effective mechanisms for the membership to feed into matters under consideration by the Icon Board. One such initiative is to establish a direct route of two-way communication. The Chair of Icon's Board of Trustees, Siobhan Stevenson, has set up a forum to meet with the Chairs of Icon's special interest Groups.

The first of these took place in September 2016 and the next is currently being scheduled for early Spring 2017, thus giving plenty of lead-in time and establishing a programme of meetings twice a year. All Group Chairs are invited to the meeting. Minutes are taken and matters arising are followed up between meetings.

The September meeting provided a timely opportunity for Siobhan to present the draft strategy document (2017–2021) to the Chairs. The draft was the result of a lot of development by the Board. The meeting took place a few months before Icon's Annual General Meeting, where Siobhan was going to present it to the membership, so it acted as a test run. There was a lot of positive feedback as well as constructive criticism. The Chairs were very clear about what they thought would work well and what would not work at all.

The Group Chairs were also clear about wanting to work more collaboratively across Groups and made many suggestions about how this could be facilitated by Icon. Everyone at the meeting agreed that it was a valuable occasion and should continue on a regular basis.

CHANGES TO PSD

A new governance structure has been drawn up for Icon's Professional Standards and Development Committee (PSD). The structure was approved by the Board of Trustees at its meeting on 7 December 2016.

New Terms of Reference have been drawn up for the Committee and the diagram facing illustrates the new PSD structure and its various areas of work and responsibilities.



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Professional Development Team will carry out the general management of PACR, with any policy making issues being referred to PSD. Recent examples include:

- i) the approval of an updated appeals process for PACR applicants
- ii) the approval of new Terms of Reference for the Accreditation Committee with guidance on how new volunteers are appointed to the Committee
- iii) the approval of a revised 'Time Out' policy for accredited members

A new Terms of Reference document for the Editorial Panel of the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* is also being finalised; it will include the need to engage international members on the panel, which will enhance its academic standing.

Full details are available on the Icon website at icon.org.uk/about-us/icon-documents

CHANTRY LIBRARY NEWS

A warm welcome to Chantry's new librarian, **Mastan Ebtehaj**, who starts on Wednesday 18 January. Mastan will be working Wednesdays during Oxford University's term time, and the library will be open from 9.30 to 4.30; all dates when the library is open will be listed on the website and we hope these longer hours will be helpful to readers. Please go to www.chantrylibrary.org for full details.

Until recently, Mastan was the librarian in charge at the Middle East Centre Library at St Antony's College, Oxford. She brings her experience in developing library strategy to

In the Chantry collection, Valérie Beutemps and Liz Gardner, conservator at the Ashmolean Museum.



Board of Trustees						
Professional Standards and Development Committee						
HPD			CE	CE/HPD	CE	JE
Professional Development Team						
PACR	IIP	CCCTD Technician Qualification	SMT	NCESS	Liaison with Heritage Science Forum	Icon Journal
Accreditation Committee		Liaison with V&A	Conservation Register			

CE = Chief Executive: Alison Richmond

HPD = Head of Professional Development: Susan Bradshaw

IIP = Icon Internship Programme

JE = Journal Editor: Jonathan Kemp

NCESS – National Conservation Education and Skills Strategy
Professional Development Team: Susan Bradshaw, Patrick White, Shulla Jaques

PACR = Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers

SMT = Icon's Senior Management Team: Alison Richmond, Simon Green, Michael Nelles, Susan Bradshaw

V&A = Victoria and Albert Museum (re the Conservation & Collections Care Technicians' Diploma CCCTD)

With the professional qualification, PACR, now operated solely by Icon, some of the matters originally addressed by the PACR Management Board have been re-directed. The



provide new services for users and in developing and maintaining a very specialised collection.

We also take this opportunity to thank **Valérie Beautemps**, librarian from mid-July, for her work re-establishing the library and reopening to readers. Best wishes to Valérie with her move back to Brussels!

And finally, please have a look out at our new blog:
<https://chantrylibrary.org/blog/>
More news to come very soon!

Jane Eagen Head Conservator
Oxford Conservation Consortium

HERITAGE SCIENCE FORUM NEWS

The National Heritage Science Forum's Research Strategy Summit, held in Stirling on 10 November, was a fitting end to a year which has seen the Forum's activities expand considerably. Over ninety people registered to attend the event which was held in partnership with NHSF member, Historic Environment Scotland.

The summit was themed around partnerships for research and we welcomed Professor Ian Simpson from the University of Stirling to talk about interdisciplinary research and Dr David Mitchell of Historic Environment Scotland to talk about public engagement with heritage science research, against the backdrop of the soon-to-open Engine Shed (Scotland's dedicated building conservation centre). NHSF trustee Nancy Bell reported on recent work by NHSF to 'Fill the Gaps' in research carried out since the publication of the National Heritage Science Strategy and the floor was opened to participants to contribute their views on the priorities for future heritage science research.

Chairman, Alastair McCapra, reported on NHSF's activity in 2016, highlighting the good progress that has already been made against many of NHSF's goals for 2016-17. This progress includes:

- **Open access:** Earlier in 2016 the Forum adopted a policy in favour of open access publication. This has been backed by creating a Gold Open Access Fund which will pay for up to six papers a year to be immediately made free to access on publication (see www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/publications.php). This

was announced at a public meeting in September at which the Shadow Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy, Chi Onwurah MP was the main speaker.

- **Effective use of infrastructure:** The Forum has continued to expand its Kit Catalogue, the list of equipment which member institutions are willing to share or lend to others. This keeps the cost of heritage science research down and promotes new partnerships between members of the Forum. The Kit Catalogue has recently been supplemented with a checklist to aid the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding to support shared use and loans.
- **Policy:** NHSF corresponded with ministers about the potential impact of Brexit on heritage science, urging the government to make a firm commitment that all heritage science research projects currently supported by EU programmes should be funded through to their natural completion. It also contributed evidence to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee's enquiry on the same subject.
- **Research Strategy:** A research strategy summit was held in Stirling on 10 November. This considered the top priorities for future research against the backdrop of the existing National Heritage Science Strategy and NHSF's more recent 'Filling the Gaps' report. It asked for contributions to the priorities to inform NHSF's work in 2017 and beyond.
- **Wikipedia:** Lastly, the Forum has agreed a partnership with Wikimedia UK which aims to significantly improve the number and quality of Wikipedia articles on heritage science, as well as adding images, datasets and other assets to other wiki sites. This is a piece of work that will continue during 2017.

Caroline Peach NHSF

A MEMORIAL FUND

At their last meeting the Trustees of Icon approved the setting up of the Holly Marston Memorial Fund in memory of a young member who died suddenly. Holly Marston was an archaeological conservator working for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council at Clifton Park Museum at the time of her death at the age of 27. In July 2015, a group of Yorkshire conservators along with friends and family decided that they would like to set up a fund in her memory to be administered by Icon.

The overarching aim of the fund will be to support conservators at the start of their careers in archaeological conservation to progress their careers and gain Icon Accredited status (ACR). There will be a particular focus on conservators in the Yorkshire region. Icon will administer the funds, while Archaeology Group will administer the application process and select recipients of the fund.

More information will be available in due course about how to donate and criteria for applications to the fund.



Dr Neil Brodie, with Siobhan Stevenson and Rob Thomson, Chair of the Icon Scotland Group

The 2016 Plenderleith Lecture

It was a full house for the Icon Scotland Group's Annual Plenderleith Lecture, which took place in late November, this time in Glasgow. The event proved such a draw that some members travelled from as far afield as Bristol to attend, and the Icon Chair of the Board of Trustees, Siobhan Stevenson, had come over from Belfast.

The group gathered at the St Mungo Museum of Religious Art and Life to hear Dr Neil Brodie address a controversial and highly topical subject: the global trafficking of antiquities and other cultural objects.

Dr Brodie is a Senior Research Fellow working on Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa at the University of Oxford. In just over an hour Dr Brodie explored some of the key issues at stake. The audience heard of the dubious provenance of some objects that have made their way around the international art market; of the challenges posed by the sale of artefacts excavated by treasure hunters, which have never been catalogued as part of any collection; and of the many challenges involved in monitoring platforms such as eBay for any looted artefacts that may appear on sale.

Socialising after the lecture



Dr Brodie went on to delve into some of the networks driving illegal antiquities trafficking, and to review some of the major successes of international policing in uncovering shipments and disrupting such networks.

Given that the audience was predominantly composed of conservation professionals, it was particularly interesting to hear of the role which conservators can play in the trafficking of art and antiquities. The traffickers may commission conservation work to stabilise or improve the appearance of an object, and a period in a conservator's workshop also enhances the provenance history of an object, helping to make the object appear more legitimate. However, as stated by the Icon Code of Conduct, conservators have a professional obligation to establish 'to the best of [their abilities] that [they] are not agreeing to work on stolen or illicitly traded cultural objects', and Dr Brodie questioned whether this professional obligation is always adequately met.

The question and answer session was lively and thought-provoking – and naturally continued into more informal discussion during the wine reception. As ever, the Plenderleith highlighted the strength of conservation networks in Scotland and set an impressive standard for the 2017 event.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Book and Paper Group

Chair's update

We are delighted to announce the recipients of the first round of Book and Paper Group Professional Development Bursaries. The winners are:

- Katie Brew
- Katharine Lockett
- Rebecca D'Ambrosio

We look forward to hearing about their projects in a future edition of Icon News. The second round of bursaries will be awarded later in 2017, so start thinking about your application!

In other news, the Group is looking into procuring camera equipment so that we can film lectures and training sessions and make them available to members online. We hope this will be a useful resource, especially for members outside London. If you have any suggestions regarding camera equipment, please feel free to get in contact.

If you have any queries or ideas for the Book and Paper Group, please don't hesitate to contact us via iconbpg@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you all at the AGM in April!

Michelle Stoddart

Events & Training update

We ended last year on a high with three sold-out workshops. The first focussed on non-adhesive paper bindings with Tracey Rowledge; the second on using the Alexander technique to improve our wellbeing at work; and the third on making drop-spine pressure-boxes with box-making expert Bridget Mitchell.

This year we have more workshops and lectures in the pipeline for book and paper conservators. These include an innovative course in adapting four-flap boxes using magnetic fastenings led by experienced independent conservator Sayaka Fukuda in late February. In March we will be hosting an evening lecture on the subject of paper history, given by Bodleian Library book conservator Andrew Honey. We are also planning a rerun of the parchment workshop that was held in Cambridge last year. Keep an eye on your inbox for further details of our upcoming events!

As always, please contact us at iconbpg@gmail.com if you have an idea or a request for specific training.

Fiona McLees, Events & Training Chair

Care of Collections Group

Storage Day event

Several of the major institutions in Oxford have recently experienced or are currently undergoing changes in their storage provision including major capital building projects, whole collection-based storage moves and refurbishment and adaptation of historic storage spaces. This event will be a day of talks and visits, bringing together some of the main people involved in these storage projects who will share their experience and knowledge.

The morning programme will consist of a series of presentations. Our impressive line-up of speakers includes Alex Walker, Head of Care of Collections at the Bodleian Libraries, who will discuss the Weston Library's recent refurbishment and the storage opportunities and challenges this has brought about. Our second speaker is Daniel Bone, Head of Conservation at the Ashmolean Museum, who will discuss the changing collections storage at the museum since its major refurbishment and extension in 2009.

Third on the bill is Andrew Hughes, Ethnographic Conservator at the Pitt Rivers Museum, who is currently managing the museum's external stores move. Andrew's presentation will focus on how buildings can impact on collections storage and access and some of the opportunities for improved collections care, particularly in terms of pest management,

that the move has facilitated. Our final speaker is Zoë Simmons, Curatorial Officer of Life Collections at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. Zoë will discuss the unique storage provision at the museum, a Grade 1 listed Victorian building with a layout and integral design features that are sometimes incompatible with modern requirements, and how the curatorial staff have addressed the challenges and constraints the building imposes on the care of the collections.

In the afternoon, participants will have the opportunity to tour three of the four sites highlighted in the morning. There will be a choice of tours, and participants can choose two of the three available:

- The Bodleian's Weston Library
- The Oxford Museum of Natural History
- The Ashmolean Museum

Booking for the Storage Day will open on 28 February and numbers will be limited to forty five. Please do save the date, as we hope you will be able to join us for what promises to be a varied and comprehensive look at storage across institutions and collections in Oxford.

Furniture and Wood Group

AGM

Notice is given of the Furniture and Wood Group AGM, including a talk by Jonathan Ashley-Smith titled 'Losing the Edge' based on his recent article in *Icon's Journal*. The AGM is to be held on Friday, 24 February, 2017 at the William Morris Society, Kelmscott House, 26 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, W6 9TA from 6:30 to 9pm.

Full details, including an agenda, will be emailed to members via an iconnect and are available on the Group pages of the *Icon* website. Please email the Group chairman should you wish to attend or require any further details.

Alex Owen: aowen.cons@gmail.com

Committee members

The Group is looking for new committee members. We have worked hard to revitalise the Group's fortunes, but now need help continuing to bring you, our members, interesting and relevant CPD courses and informative networking and conference-type events. If you would like to see the Group do more in a certain area, or are simply interested in giving something back to the members, then please consider joining the committee. We are only as capable as our committee is strong.

The committee meets approximately once every three months, usually in the Dove pub, by the river in Hammersmith, London. The meeting is always very relaxed and friendly. Reasonable travel expenses to and from these meetings will be covered by the Group. We currently have vacancies for an events officer, a student representative and a social media officer. Each of these positions should take up no more than an hour or two a week. It is also possible to join as an ordinary committee member with no specific portfolio.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the committee or just wish to discuss the idea further, please contact the Group chair, Alex Owen: aowen.cons@gmail.com. Any new

applicants can then be voted in at our upcoming AGM in February.

Recent events

The recent day of visits to the furniture conservation studio at the Rijksmuseum and the Willet-Holthuysen Museum in Amsterdam was a great success. Held to coincide with the bi-annual Stichting Ebenist conference, the visits were an enjoyable and informative way to warm up for the main conference. The Group is indebted to Paul Tear for his work organising the day. Look out for Rachael Dealey's wonderful write up of the event on page 28 of this issue of Icon News!

Future events

The Furniture and Wood Group Symposium 2017 will be held on Friday 12 May at the Freemasons' Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ from midday to 5:30 (exact timings are still to be confirmed so keep an eye out for relevant Iconnects).

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is the beginning of February so expect a full line up to be announced soon. We are aiming to keep the focus of the talks as much as possible on descriptions of practical conservation work. A light lunch and coffee will be provided. Please see the Group pages on the Icon website or our relevant Iconnects for more details.

Heritage Science Group

Many thanks go to Siobhan Watts and David Howell for their excellent work on the HSG committee. Following their departures earlier this year the Heritage Science Group elected two new members to its committee at its AGM in July 2016. The committee now consists of Prof. Matija Strlic (Chair), Dr Ian Gibb (Secretary), Dr Anita Quye (Treasurer), Dr Nigel Blades (Events Coordinator), Natalie Brown (Student Representative), Lisa McCullough (Web Manager), and members Dana Goodburn-Brown, Dr Eleanor Schofield, Dr Helen Wilson and Dr Eric Nordgren.

In October the committee met at the Mary Rose Museum, Portsmouth to report on its current activities and discuss plans for 2017. An exciting series of events, activities, and communications are being planned to inform, involve, and inspire new and existing audiences in heritage science and conservation. Keep an eye on our events page, Iconnect, and twitter (follow us @ICONSci) for details about our upcoming photo competition (opening on 1 February 2017) and Scanning Electron Microscopy events, for example. If you have an idea for a heritage science-based event that would benefit from HSG support, please contact our Events Coordinator, Dr Nigel Blades (nigel.blades@nationaltrust.org.uk).

We will also be sharing news, latest developments in the field, and case studies of heritage science in action via a variety of platforms including Icon News and our new blog. If you would like your heritage science work or news included in our communications please get in touch with Dr Helen Wilson (helenlouisewilson@gmail.com).

Helen Wilson

Textile Group

It has been a busy couple of months for the Textile Committee, planning and organising events. The Textile Group's *Wet Cleaning Symposium* was held at St. Fagans National History Museum, Cardiff, on 3 December 2016. The free event was a great success, with all thirty five places fully booked, and focused on current wet cleaning issues and experiences, followed by a tour of the conservation and textile stores. An account of the day will be on the Textile Group's web page and in the next issue of Icon News. Many thanks to Kim Thuesing and Alison Lister for organising this event and to the speakers for giving their time.

Call for papers – deadline extended

The Textile Group Forum 2017 will be held on Monday 27 March at the Assembly Rooms, Bath (home to the Fashion Museum). *From boxes to buildings: creative solutions for the storage of textiles and dress* will include presentations on both this theme and on recent activity concerning the interpretation, care and conservation of textiles. The second part of the day will involve presentations on any current or recent area of practice, research or evaluation. Full details can be found on the Textile Group's page on the website. Please note that the deadline for abstracts has been extended until 31 January. Contact Alison Lister a.lister@textileconservation.co.uk.

Call for expressions of interest

Late April/early May 2017: Special event for Textile Group members offered by the National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh. This one day event, entitled *Curator, Conservator, Mounter: Working Together on a New Costume Gallery* will include lectures by curatorial and conservation staff and visits to the Museum's newly created Fashion and Style Gallery. Please check the Group's event page for further details.

The committee is considering running a one day symposium later this year, exploring the issues associated with the interpretation, care and conservation of modern (20th/21st century) tapestry. This event would most likely be held in Coventry to enable a visit to view the Sutherland tapestry in the Cathedral. The day could consist of several different activities including short talks and discussion sessions. If you are interested in participating or have suggestions for topics please contact Alison Lister.

Because of publication deadlines, it is not always possible to mention all events, so please check the Icon website and Iconnect for further details. If you are attending an event and would like to write a review for Icon News, please contact nadine.wilson@nationaltrust.org.uk.

HERITAGE SCIENCE OUTREACH

Students from the EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Science and Engineering in Arts, Heritage and Archaeology (SEAHA), which is based at University College London, the University of Oxford and Brighton University, in collaboration with the Royal Society of Chemistry, held a one-day workshop on Science in Art for approximately sixty five school children, ranging in ages from 13 to 17, at Burlington House, London.



SEAHA student Danae Pocobelli speaking to a member of the public outside the Heritage Science Mobile Lab at the Royal Society of Chemistry's 'Science in Art' networking event

Over the course of four workshops, SEAHA students aimed to highlight how their advanced research on heritage links to the basic scientific principles taught in secondary-level science courses, as well as the many different career paths opened up by studying a science discipline at third-level. Central to each presentation was a practical demonstration that the children could partake in, giving them further insight into the practical application of the knowledge they are currently taught, outside of the prerequisite experiments.

In the morning session SEAHA students **Martin Michette**, **Danae Pocobelli**, and **Alexandra Bridarolli** emphasized the role that acid rain plays in the decay of our built heritage as well as discussing the value judgments professionals must make when conserving these objects. During her talk, **Hayley Simon**, discussed the different decay mechanisms present in objects found within marine or an earthen environment; her demonstration allowed the children to 'excavate' samples and discover how they might have decayed.

After lunch the children heard presentations from **Anna Pokorska** and **Sarah Hunt** who spoke about the many ways in which wavelengths of light can be used to examine artworks. They demonstrated how underdrawings can be viewed via IR, how FTIR helps to distinguish different material types and how UV can be used to highlight differences on painted and varnish surfaces.

The final presentation of the day was given by **Yun Liu**, **Hend Mahgoub**, and **Natalie Brown** who described the damaging effect of iron gall ink. During the demonstration the children were invited to make up their own ink from historic recipes and discuss the differences between them.

Regarding the event, **Cristina Fonseca**, Education Coordinator at the Royal Society of Chemistry said: 'The Royal Society of Chemistry aims to promote, support and celebrate chemistry. We want to enthuse the next generation and show them the place of chemistry in everyday life and how interdisciplinary science and other fields can be. Collaborating with SEAHA will allow us to inspire students and help them see the connection between science and heritage.' While **Mark Kearney**, SEAHA doctoral student and organiser of the day, said '[the event] is also of benefit to the SEAHA students who gain valuable experience dissecting their projects into fundamental concepts and demonstrations that can then be easily presented to many different audiences.'

Following the schools event, the team attended the Royal Society of Chemistry's 'Science in Art' networking event. The

mobile heritage lab was kept busy during the two-hour event, demonstrating some of the techniques used in-situ to examine objects to around fifty people. Inside, the team spoke to a lively mix of artists, and science professionals about their research and the aims of SEAHA.

RECORD, RETAIN, REVEAL

How to avoid the wrong side of the law

There are three ways a conservator might find themselves in contact with the Art and Antiquities Unit of the Metropolitan Police, as 'a witness, an expert witness, or a suspect'.

If anything was going to get the attention of the fifty delegates at the third PACR Pathway event, *Conservation and the Law* held in London last November, it was this telling phrase from the first speaker, Detective Sergeant **Claire Hutcheon**. DS Hutcheon illustrated the role of the Unit and the different types and complexities of art and antique crime that come under its remit. These include Illicit trafficking; theft of exhibition items; sale of fakes and forgeries (whether to induce financial gain or loss); legal assistance requests to the London Market; and providing specialist crime protection/advice.

Comprising five personnel the Unit's investigative work requires patience and evidence-gathering can be long and time-consuming. Individual cases can take anything from several years to a decade or more to reach a conclusion. Evidence collecting from a UK-based art and antique crime can be straight forward, as was shown by the example of a fake nineteenth century artwork put up for auction and identified as being a modern fake by the distinct 'new glue' odour emanating from it when unframed. Other cases may not be so simple because the crime crosses European or international borders, because there is a reluctance to find someone prepared to be an expert witness or because parties involved have not followed best professional practice.

In crime that has crossed borders and where UK law does not apply, the Unit relies on mutual legal assistance and international networking. This has proved fruitful when expert witnesses from other countries have agreed to provide crucial evidence. The Unit has also relied upon evidence from professional conservators who have provided reliable and accurate records as well as calling upon their expertise. For example conservators have helped to identify illegally imported items from Libya. Where conservators have found themselves under suspicion, it has been largely due to poor professional practice: in particular chaotic or non-existent record keeping.

Kathy Tubb ACR picked up some of the ethical as well as legal perspectives of being an archaeology conservator and lecturer within an institutional and academic environment in her personal and heartfelt talk. Although in general attitudes to importing/exporting archaeological material have changed (mostly for the better) over recent decades there are still unscrupulous individuals who flout ethical and criminal laws by trading in looted artefacts. Whilst condition reports can authenticate material, Kathy asked how material can be



At the PACR Pathway event on conservation and the law

authenticated if it has not been scientifically excavated. This is especially true for objects from sites of historic, cultural and religious importance that may not be of high value but are still attractive enough to be sold through forums such as internet auction sites.

We were shown alarming illustrations including satellite images of how archaeological sites such as that of the North-West Palace in Nimrud are now all but destroyed, poked by looting pits; images of figurative pieces mutilated for ease of transport and selling and images of items that have been faked. Sadly too the reputation of conservators is not helped by the media which still persist in using headlines such as 'rogue restorer' despite the 'rogue' having no connection to the profession.

It is not just illegal inorganic objects that conservators could find in their studios. **Alan Roberts**, Investigating Support Officer and Detective Constable **Sarah Bailey** from the National Wildlife Crime Unit drew attention to the form that illegal trade in animal products can take and what conservators should be aware of if they are asked to work on items such as ivory and fur. Alan and DC Bailey explained how conservators need to be aware of The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES, ratified by the UK in 1976) and The Endangered Species (Import & Export) Act 1976 which was the first piece of legislation to give effect to CITES. This has been substantially amended and is now largely superseded by the European Regulations. The Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 (COTES) make provision for enforcement of the European Regulations, of relevance is Regulation 338/97, Annex A and Annex B.

Using examples from a display of carved ivory ornaments and animal fur soft furnishings and textiles, it was explained that the sale of elephant parts and derivatives is prohibited under the 1997 Regulations, however elephant ivory that is classed as 'worked' prior to 1947 is exempt. 'Worked' means that it has been altered from its natural state for jewellery, art, adornment, musical instrument or utility; so a piece of elephant ivory that was carved prior to 1947 would be exempt and it may be legal for it be sold. Although legal to sell within the UK an export permit (Article 10 Certificate) would be required to sell and export worked ivory items outside the EU. This would mean, for example, that works with certain animal products being lent or borrowed from abroad would require export/import permits. Similarly, this is true of newly worked items whereby a permit would be required to change an object from its original state into something else.

Janie Lightfoot ACR, Private textile conservator, showed further examples of how animal products have been used throughout history in clothing and accessories from feathers to fur and how attitudes to their use have changed. However, these products have not appeared in her studio solely as fashion items; many of the textiles Janie has worked with, made in full or part of animal products, have had cultural, historic or spiritual significance. As well as working within the law they have also had to be handled within an ethical framework and with sensitivity to the object's spiritual heritage.

From all the fascinating and informative talks there were several lessons to take away. One of the messages was that those criminals determined to make money will turn any circumstance to their advantage and they will exploit ignorance. Professional conservators need to be aware of the law and work within it. Whilst it may be a challenge to know when suspicion becomes reasonable the message for professional conservators was that they have nothing to fear as long as they have shown due diligence and used professional judgement. Knowing the client, asking questions and recording the answers is paramount; as is treating each item individually and knowing the details of the piece that you are working on.

Conservators can protect themselves and help the Unit by

- Following good practice in line with Icon's Code of Conduct and Professional Standards.
- Asking the right questions of their client and recording the answers.
- Finding out the provenance of the item being restored.
- Keeping accurate written records with good quality photographs (with measurements and colour scales).

In other words, as DS Hutcheons explained, conservators remain on the right side of the law when they too work by the rules that the police themselves employ: that is to 'Record, Retain, and Reveal'.

For further information and some resources of interest:

Animal & Plant Health Agency, which is responsible for the issue of permits and certificates and has guidance on importing and exporting live animals or animal products. Go to www.gov.uk

Art and Antiques Unit, The Metropolitan Police
www.met.police.uk/artandantiques

Art Loss Register www.artloss.com/en

Art Recovery International <http://artrecovery.com>

FBI, www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/art-theft/national-stolen-art-file

Interpol, www.interpol.int/Crime-areas/Works-of-art/Database

London Stolen Art Database <http://content.met.police.uk/Article/London-Stolen-Arts-database/1400011390417/1400011390417>

National Wildlife Crime Unit, The Metropolitan Police,
<http://www.nwcu.police.uk>

Object ID™ (J. Paul Getty Trust)

PSYCHE Protection System for Cultural Heritage, www.formez.eu/node/1492

Red List ICOM, icom.museum/programmes/fighting-illicit-traffic/red-list/

UNESCO, whc.unesco.org

Shulla Jaques, ACR

Icon Accreditation Officer

Moves



With the Staffordshire Hoard conservation project coming to an end, **Pieta Greaves** has made the move back into commercial conservation. Pieta has teamed up with heritage professional Jenni Butterworth to form a new company, Drakon Heritage and Conservation, which offers a comprehensive range of both conservation and heritage services.

Pieta told Icon News: 'Starting a new company comes with fresh challenges, but we have also discovered that there are many exciting opportunities and projects in the conservation and heritage sector requiring the kind of support we provide. One of the most difficult things so far was choosing a name and a logo! So far, 2017 looks like it will be a fantastic year ahead with several projects and education events in the pipeline already'.

Pieta has also recently joined the PACR Accreditation Committee and is excited to be part of the process which supports conservators to become accredited.

<http://www.drakonheritage.co.uk/>
twitter @drakonheritage

Appointments



Deborah Cane has left her post as Collections Care Manager at Birmingham Museums Trust, leaving on a high note this summer having hosted the hugely successful Icon16 Conference. She has moved to Tate in London where she takes up the position of Conservation Manager of the Sculpture and Installation Art Department.

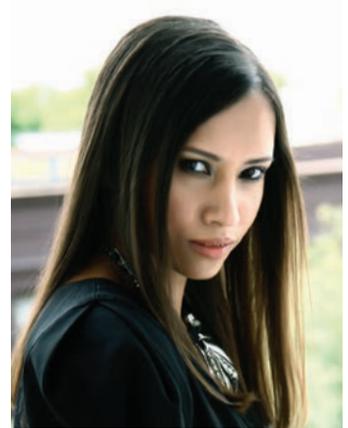


Jacqueline Moon has been appointed to the new post of Senior Conservation Manager: Public and Academic Engagement at The National Archives.

Jacqueline has worked at TNA for the last eight years; she became the photographic conservator in 2013 and was sponsored to study an MRes in Heritage Science. She is also the Vice Chair of Icon's Photographic Materials Group.

In her new post, as well as managing the loans and heritage science teams she will be responsible for raising the profile of the collection care department with public and academic audiences. The organisation is expanding its events programme, to engage with new audiences and bring the TNA's collection – and therefore preservation issues – to the fore. Collection care is also raising its in-house profile by keeping colleagues informed about preservation and conservation treatment, loans and exhibitions and scientific research. Jacqueline wants to promote cultural heritage to government; seek new collaborative research opportunities; build relationships with peers and experts around the world, and promote conservation in creative ways.

Departures



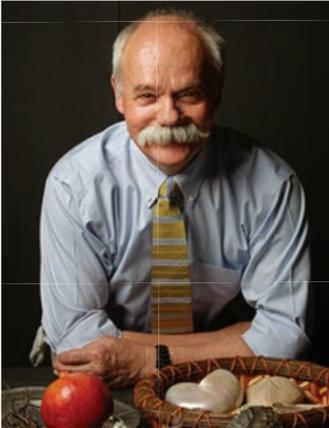
This month, the office bids goodbye to a highly valued member of the team – our Digital Content Officer, **Kia Abdullah**.

Kia joined the team as Icon's new website was bedding down. Bringing her keen eye for detail and well-developed nose for a good story directly to our networks, she engaged members to promote their stories and generated content that achieved considerable viral attraction online. During her tenure, Icon's Twitter following increased by 2,000.

One would never guess that the impressive volume of weekly news stories and social media updates emanating from Icon's website was all created solely during Kia's two days a week in the office – a Herculean task! Kia also worked directly with Icon's Groups on the public-facing Group web pages and was always keen to lend a helping hand to Digital Outreach Officers wherever needed.

'It's been lovely', she said. 'Whether faced with a thorny editorial question ('whale dust or dusty whales?'), or a philosophical debate ('do objects ever die?'), Icon members have been gracious, spirited and generous with their time and expertise. I will miss working with such an interesting and, yes, eccentric group of people and will be thinking of you from afar.'

Retirement



Mark Norman retired as Head of Conservation at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford at the end of last year. He had served there for thirty one years first as Chief Conservator for the Antiquities Department then as the first Head of Conservation in a newly formed Conservation Department in 1999. Mark skilfully led the conservation team through major transformations at the museum, most notably the museum's £60M redevelopment between 2006–9, which included two permanent public galleries devoted to the subject of conservation and new conservation studios. Mark trained in conservation at University College London and was Chair of UKIC, the predecessor to Icon. He developed a phenomenal and invaluable knowledge of the Ashmolean collections and the historic building, with a particular interest in the history of conservation and the museum's Egypt collections. Mark retains links with the museum as an Honorary Curator.

We wish him a very happy retirement!

Welcome to these new members

We'd like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in October and November last year. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon.

Fatima Al Dhaif
Student

Rita Amor
Student

Ruby Antonowicz-Behnan
Student

Tabitha Austin
Student

Ella Booker
Associate

Jennifer Booth
Complimentary Publications

Fiona Brandt
Icon Staff

Ines Bravo
Student

Giuseppina Buttitta
Associate

CRL Restoration
Organisation

James Davis
Student

Alicia de la Serna
Student, UCL

Yona Dresner
Israel Museum
Associate

Ina Frohlich
Student

Amy Griffin
Simon Gillespie Studio
Associate

Fraser Hale
Woodbridge Tide Mill
Museum
Associate

Nigel Heldreich
Kedleston French Polishers
Associate

Joanne Hoppe
Student

David Hussey
Glasswood
Associate

Claire Hutchison
Student

Sarah James
Student

Hilary Jarvis
Associate

Christian Jeeves
Associate

Craig Kamrath
Camberwell College of Arts
Student

Janay Laudat
Student

Harriet Lewars
Student

Shoshana Mandel
The Israel Museum
Associate

Christina McLean
Queen's University
Student

Jonida Mecani
Associate

Manoj Phatak
Supporter

Amy Raethorne
Student

Harri Sands
City and Guilds Art School
Student

Bhavesh Shah
Victoria and Albert Museum
Associate

Tor Erik Skaaland
HLF intern

Diane Taylor
Associate

Brendan Teasdale
Team Force Restoration Ltd
Associate

Evangelia Valavani
Durham University
Student

Eveline Vandeputte
Student

Amy Ward
Associate

Rhian Ward
Student

Stephanie Whitehead
Student

Catrina Whiteside
Northumbria University
Student

Emily Willis
Associate



Willard

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The Mary Rose

Eleonora Piva takes us on an historic tour of this unique vessel

Eleonora is completing her PhD at the University of Portsmouth under the supervision of Dr Eleanor Schofield, Head of Conservation and Collections Care at the Mary Rose Trust

On 11 October 1982, in front of the eyes of hundreds, the timbers of the Mary Rose surfaced from the waters of Portsmouth for the first time in 437 years. After being the Flagship of King Henry VIII's fleet and in service for over thirty four years, from that day a completely new phase of her story began. Housed in a dry dock in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, an example of well-established treatments and at the forefront of new scientific techniques in conservation, this only surviving Tudor ship is now on full display in the Mary Rose Museum.

THE ORIGIN

The story of the Mary Rose begins in 1510, when the newly crowned King Henry VIII started building his 'Army by Sea'.

His first request was for two carracks: the bigger one, of 400 tons, was the Mary Rose. Although she was never the fastest ship of her time, she was overall the most successful, which earned her the title of flagship.

The Mary Rose was special also for another reason: she was specifically built for the King, who probably contributed to her design. Hence reports from the time cannot always be considered reliable, as it may have been in everyone's interest to compliment the King and make him proud.

After just one year of being launched, she took part in several actions during the First French war (1512–1514). However, since the 16th century was a time of fast development in shipbuilding and artillery, she did not take part in the Second French war (1522–1525) as she needed major reinforcement and refitting in order to be employed at war again. She was therefore put in reserve between 1522 and 1545, when the Third French war took place. On 19 July 1545, during the Battle of the Solent, she sank while leading the English fleet

View of the castle deck, port side of the Mary Rose during the final phase of PEG spraying in 2013





Installation of the air ducts for the conditioned drying of the hull

against the invading French galleys. Her defences against boarders proved to be the downfall of many of her crew. Fewer than twenty five of the five hundred souls on board managed to escape her sinking.

THE RECOVERY

Several attempted the recovery of this famous ship, the first being just days after she sank. All failed. She then remained

A member of the conservation team collecting core samples from the starboard side of the ship to determine the moisture content



untouched until three hundred years later when the Dean Brothers, who are considered to have invented what we now call scuba diving in the 19th century, rediscovered the site, retrieving some artefacts. Again, the site was left undisturbed until 1971, when she was rediscovered by a very dedicated diver and historian, Alexander McKee.

Thanks to the later involvement of an archaeologist, Margaret Rule, the discovery soon led to a four-year excavation, over 23,000 hours of diving, the recovery of more than 19,000 objects, and finally to the recovery of the hull itself. The years spent underwater obviously had an impact on the ship, to the point where half of the hull was lost to shipworms, waves and numerous other hazards of the underwater environment. Indeed, only the starboard side lying on the seabed was completely covered with silt and protected in an anaerobic environment, allowing the survival of the Mary Rose.

THE CONSERVATION

Conserving such a big artefact from a marine environment clearly presented a massive challenge. It was decided to approach the conservation of the ship as a whole, when at the time the only comparable venture was that of the Vasa in Stockholm. Therefore, all the original planks and timbers from the decks, which were removed underwater to simplify the lift, were replaced. To ensure the mechanical stability of the remaining hull structure, titanium support props and beams were strategically placed to compensate the missing elements.

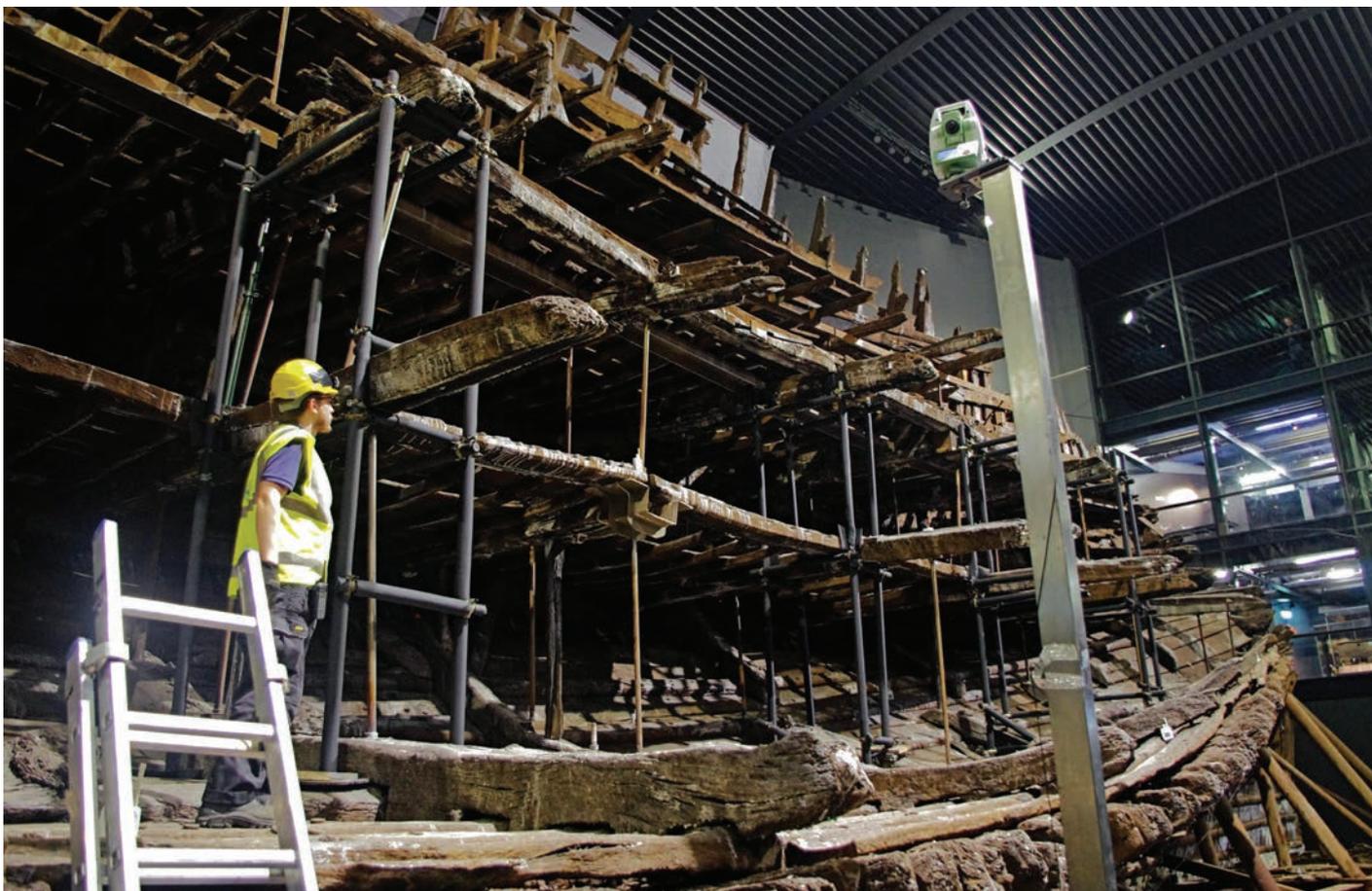


Nora Piva taking movement measurements of the starboard side planks during one of the manual survey rounds of the ship.

She was sprayed with cold water for twelve years, to keep her wet, wash away salt, mud and any chemicals contained in sea water but also to slow down any bacterial activity eventually activated after being exposed to the oxygen rich air. It was only in 1994 that the conventional polyethylene glycol (PEG) conservation treatment started.

This technique employs a polymer, PEG, to impregnate the waterlogged organic material. The two steps method chosen consisted in applying two different molecular weights of PEG, to achieve both improvement for shrinkage and collapse of the degraded wood cells. The ship was first sprayed with PEG 200 for twelve years and starting in 2006 she was sprayed with PEG 2000 for an additional seven years.

View from the hold of the Mary Rose



THE DRYING

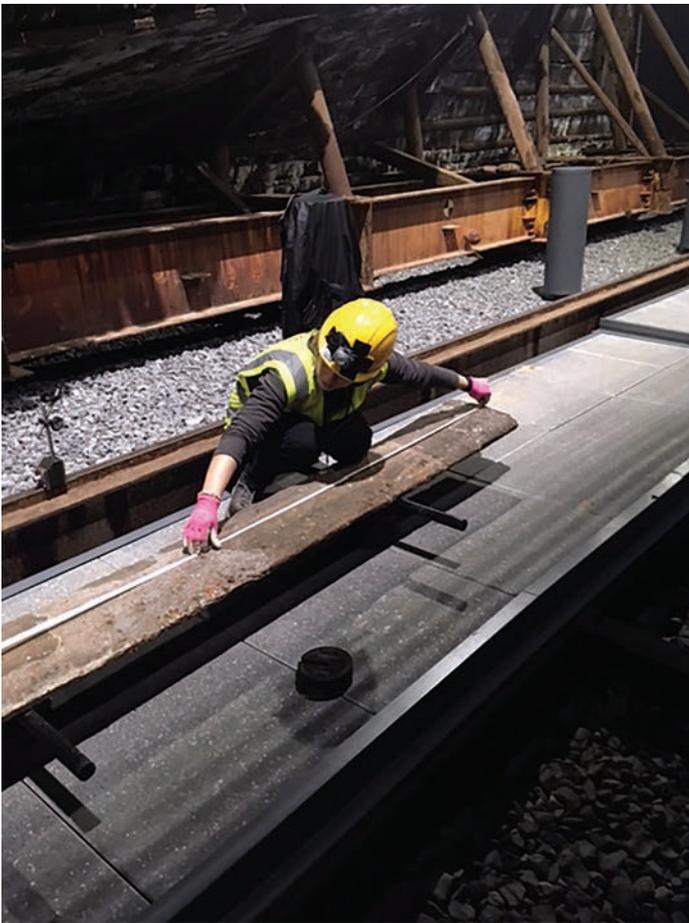
Finally on 27 April 2013 the PEG sprays were turned off and the Mary Rose started drying for the first time since the 16th century. The drying plan was designed by the Conservation Manager of the time, Glenn McConachie, who published his PhD thesis on this topic.

The 'hot box' where she was sprayed for thirty one years was kept sealed at a controlled temperature of 19°C and at a stable relative humidity of around 54%. An air conditioning system of tubes running along all the decks insured a homogeneous drying of all areas of the ship. To keep track of the progress, throughout the following three years, core samples were regularly collected from the hull.

As of May 2016, the moisture content in the ship was around the desired 10% on the wood surface and at most 20% in the deeper parts of the timbers.

THE MONITORING

It is no surprise that having only half of a structure designed to be whole and, especially, to be in water and not in a museum causes tremendous structural issues. These are emphasised by the degradation of the wood components and the inevitable shrinkage of the wood. Measuring the structural



Nora Piva measuring one of the Orlop deck planks to determine the mechanical properties of wood

stability of the timbers has been therefore a key component of the monitoring regime.

This will also inform the design of a future permanent supporting structure for the ship to be hosted in the museum long term. Some of the measuring is automated, with a Total Station sponsored by Leica Geosystems, recording daily the displacement of particular targets spread all over the decks.

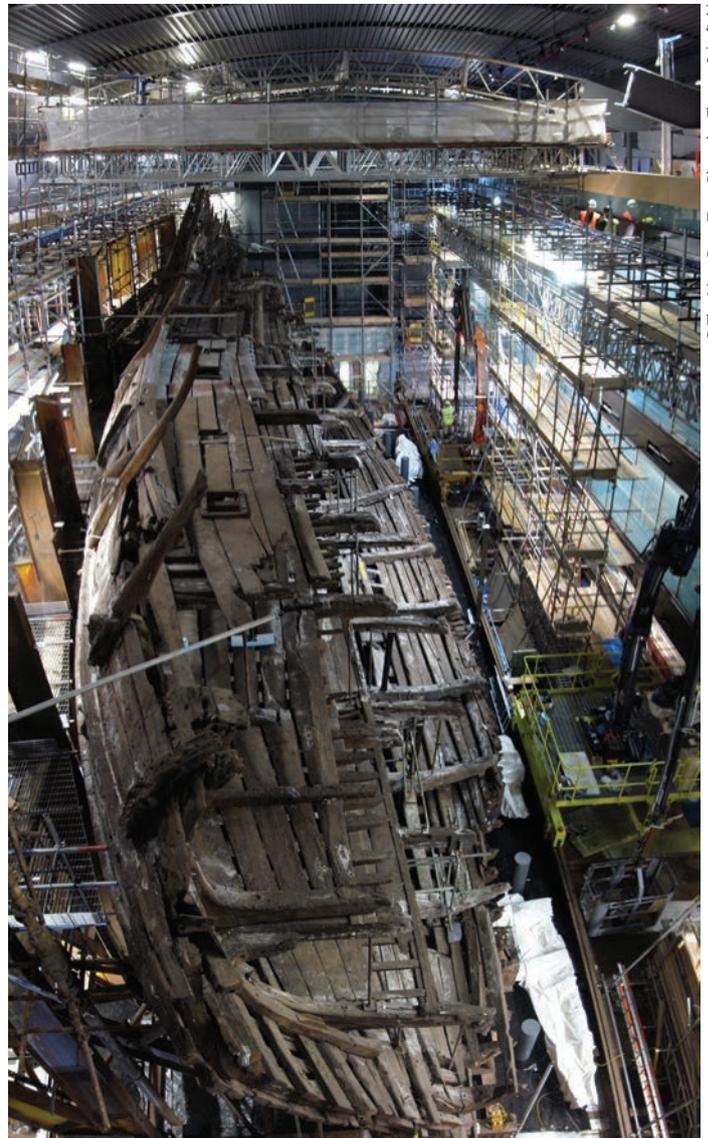
However, in order to have not just an overview of the biggest structural movement and so to keep track of most critical areas, a large part of the monitoring is done manually. Walking along the decks with tape in hand and a camera is still one of the best ways to complete our understanding of what is happening to the ship's timbers. The rewarding view from the decks is well worth the effort of crawling for hours in the most inaccessible and uncomfortable areas of the hull.

ASSOCIATED PROJECTS

The Mary Rose is a never ending source of information and study material. So many phenomena are taking place within her framework – from the cellular level to the macro structure – so it is critical to keep studying every aspect of her.

Among some of the main projects are studies of chemical development of acidic components in the wood, the development of de-acidification strategies, sonar and radar testing for non-invasive moisture content monitoring methods, neutron imaging for water-PEG interactions, and many more.

Together with the conservation team and the maintenance team of the Museum, hundreds of students and experts from



Building the museum around the ship: construction phase of the new museum in Summer 2016

different disciplines have worked on her, involving institutions from all over the world, as far as Canada and as close as Portsmouth. Most visitors will never fully know the incredible effort that it took, and still takes, to keep the Mary Rose as she is: her presence in the museum will always be testimony to the extraordinary passion of so many people.

The most fascinating aspect is that there is no need to be interested in Tudor shipbuilding or naval warfare to enjoy a visit. Once you step in the museum and you see her it is impossible not to be captured by the gripping story of this incredible ship, and the five hundred people who worked and lived on her.

The new-look Mary Rose Museum now allows you to see the ship without obstruction as never before. Many of the thousands of artefacts recovered from the seabed are also on display, telling the story of the men who lived, worked and died on board the Mary Rose.

Information about visiting can be found on www.maryrose.org



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around and about

Q. When is a Christmas tree not a Christmas tree?

A. When it's a work of art

Shirazeh Houshiary's Christmas tree was unveiled at Tate Britain on 1 December 2016. It is the first tree at the gallery since work began on the New Tate Britain and it re-establishes the tradition of marking the festive period with an artist commission. Houshiary re-imagined a piece created for Tate over twenty years ago. The work, which focuses on the tree's natural qualities hangs upside down from the glass ceiling in the Millbank entrance, its roots exposed and covered in gold leaf, drawing light and attention to what is usually hidden.

In 1993 Houshiary described her tree for Tate Britain as 'taking earth back to heaven.' She now says, 'I would like us to contemplate that the pine tree is one of the oldest species and recognise that the roots are the source of its continued stability, nourishment and longevity. As the roots remain hidden, it is best to seek what is hidden rather than what is apparent. As a Buddhist monk wrote: "An old pine tree preaches wisdom".' But how does one achieve the artist's vision?

Gilding in progress



© Tate Conservation



© Tate Photography

The gilded tree installed



© Tate Conservation

The half-gilt root

Clarrie Wallis, Senior Curator of Contemporary British Art, approached Shirazeh Houshiary to recreate her work. Clarrie's mission was to secure a tree with a suitable fibrous root ball as opposed to a tap root, as specified by the artist. This took several weeks of discussions with different Christmas tree growers and a visit to the Balcombe Estate in West Sussex to view suitable candidates. An interesting discussion, one could imagine: 'I'm looking for a six metre tree with a good shape and an extensive root ball; I am going to gild the roots and hang it upside down.'

Great care was taken by the Balcombe Estate to dig up the tree causing minimal damage to the root ball. On arrival at Tate the tree roots were carefully cleaned and dried and the art handling team had the job of manoeuvring all six metres of it up to the second floor gallery to an empty space suitable for the team to gild. Working with and to the artist's instructions a team from Antique Bronze Limited, in collaboration with members of the Tate sculpture conservation team and the artist's assistant set about gilding the tree roots. Three days and a flurry of gold later the roots were revealed in all their glory.

The art handling team in conjunction with Unusual Rigging then had the job of positioning the tree, upside down, all of which was carried out after hours when the gallery was closed to the public.

So as a conservator working at Tate, expect the unexpected and be prepared to be challenged. 'Can you gild a Christmas tree root ball in three days? Yes we can.'

Many thanks go out to Lucy Branch, Jessica Albert, and Antonella Buonaiuto from Antique Bronze Limited, Fin, the artist's assistant, Roger Murry, senior conservation

technician, Mikei Hall senior art handler, and all the art handlers who assisted with the manoeuvring of the artwork, along with Juleigh, Liam, Andy and Aicha from the curatorial team.

Deborah Cane ACR

Conservation Manager Sculpture and Installation Art
Tate

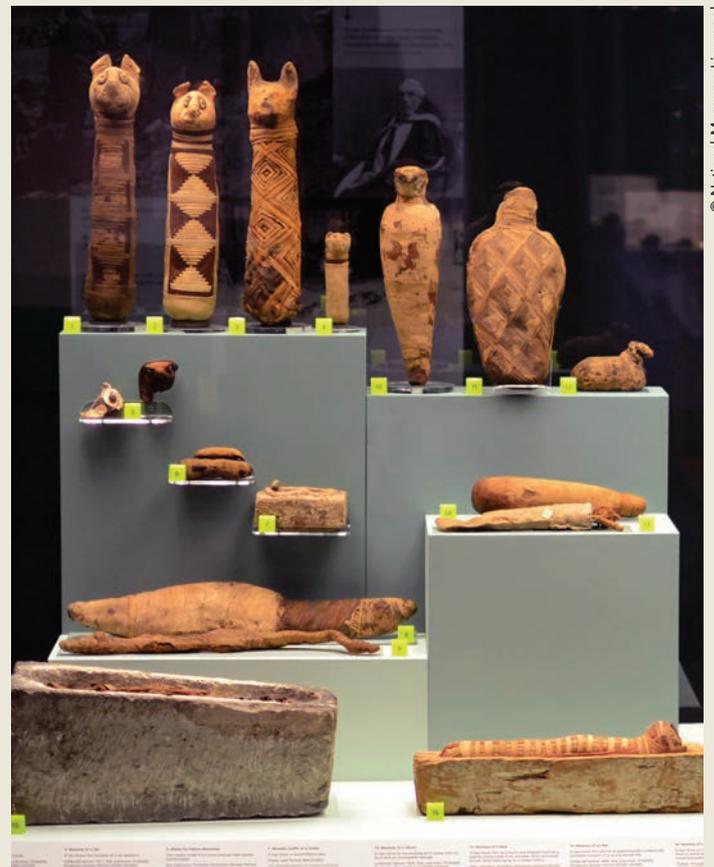
Pets in perpetuity?

The first exhibition in the UK devoted to ancient Egyptian animal mummies is currently running at Liverpool's World Museum. *Animal Mummies Revealed* looks at the practice of preparing animals as offerings to the gods. Nearly sixty specimens are on display: mummified jackals, crocodiles, cats and birds, along with some rare cultural artefacts, 19th century works of art, and previously unseen archives.

Photographs, archaeological archive material and travel journals show how the animal mummies were excavated and selected by archaeologists and museum experts, and then distributed as curios and souvenirs, particularly in Britain.

Bringing the story up-to-date, the exhibition shows how the study of mummies using X-ray and CT scanning technology has led to greater knowledge about the subject, though has still yet to reveal conclusively how animals and people were mummified.

The mummies on display



© National Museums Liverpool



© National Museums Liverpool

Installing the animal mummies exhibition

Exhibition Curator, Dr Ashley Cooke said 'Millions of bandaged animals have been found across Egypt, and thousands are now preserved in museum collections around the world. It will surprise some visitors to learn that very few of these animals were pets, and that the process of transforming an animal into a sacred gift for a god was done on an industrial scale.

Scientific study incorporating modern X-ray machines and scanning techniques revealed that what was sacrificed, wasn't always what it seemed. We found that some mummies were made up of more than one animal!

Visitors will be able to see the diary written by collector William Wilde, Oscar Wilde's father, as well as letters and stories featuring the experiences of Victorian tomb raiders. Also on display is the humorous cartoon that appeared in Punch magazine in February 1890 depicting a farmer confronted by hundreds of mummified cat zombies. It was inspired by the auction of an estimated 180,000 mummified cats, weighing 19.5 tons, which were sold at auction at the docks in Liverpool.

Ashley continues: 'Victorian farmers knew that mummified remains were a prime source of phosphates and made excellent fertiliser, so almost all the animal mummies auctioned in Liverpool were crushed and spread on fields like

manure, but some were saved and remain at World Museum!'

Animal Mummies Revealed looks at the history and future of their scientific study. There are seventeen specimens on display, which come from a variety of UK collections including World Museum's. Using wrapped, partially wrapped and completely unwrapped animal mummies, visitors will see how imaging such as photography, X-radiography, computed tomography (CT scan) and light microscopy has led to greater knowledge about the subject.

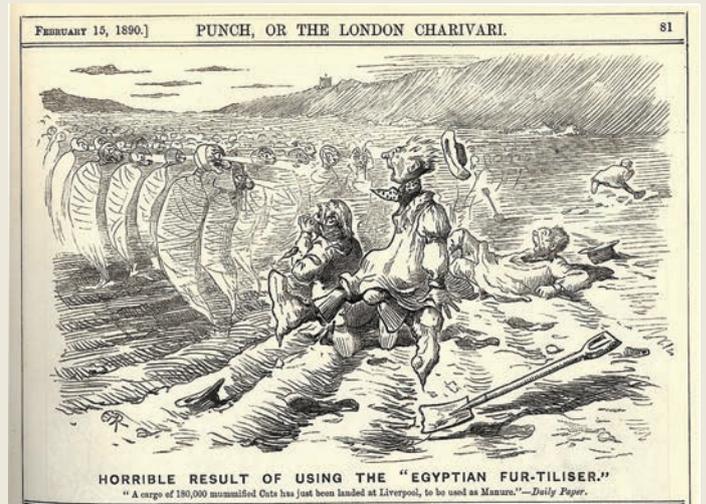
Icon News tracked down the Head of Organics Conservation at National Museums Liverpool, Tracey Seddon ACR, who told Icon News about her involvement in the exhibition: 'I carried out some essential treatments to secure loose wrappings and applied netting loops to enable the mummies to be safely displayed on vertical supports. As the mummies went on tour before returning to Liverpool for our exhibition, I made dedicated packing with handling boards for all.

Our staff accompanied the mummies to Manchester University where they were CT scanned. I condition-checked and installed the items, monitored the environmental conditions on the gallery and installed conditioning material in all cases to ensure a stable environment.'

Tracey also told us that animal 'mummies' often contain no animal remains and so part of the challenge is helping to



The mummified image of a jackal side



Right hand column:

The packing for a small dog mummy

Zombie cats! An 1890 cartoon from Punch magazine

Small cat mummy with full skeleton (left)

This possible cat mummy contained snakes (right)

identify the nature and significance of the object. She went on to confess that the most challenging aspect of preparing for the exhibition was 'trying to improve my needlework skills with a small curved needle and invisible monofilament thread to stitch brown netting to itself while laid over brown, ancient, degraded linen! The most rewarding aspect has been making the items accessible, first of all for investigation, then ultimately with the new information for the public to be fascinated by.'

Animal Mummies Revealed continues until 26 February 2017. The exhibition was developed in partnership with Manchester Museum, the University of Manchester and Glasgow Museums. It is supported by a Wellcome Trust People Award and a Research Grant from the Leverhulme Trust.



CONFERENCES

SAVING THE NOW: Crossing Boundaries to Conserve Contemporary Works

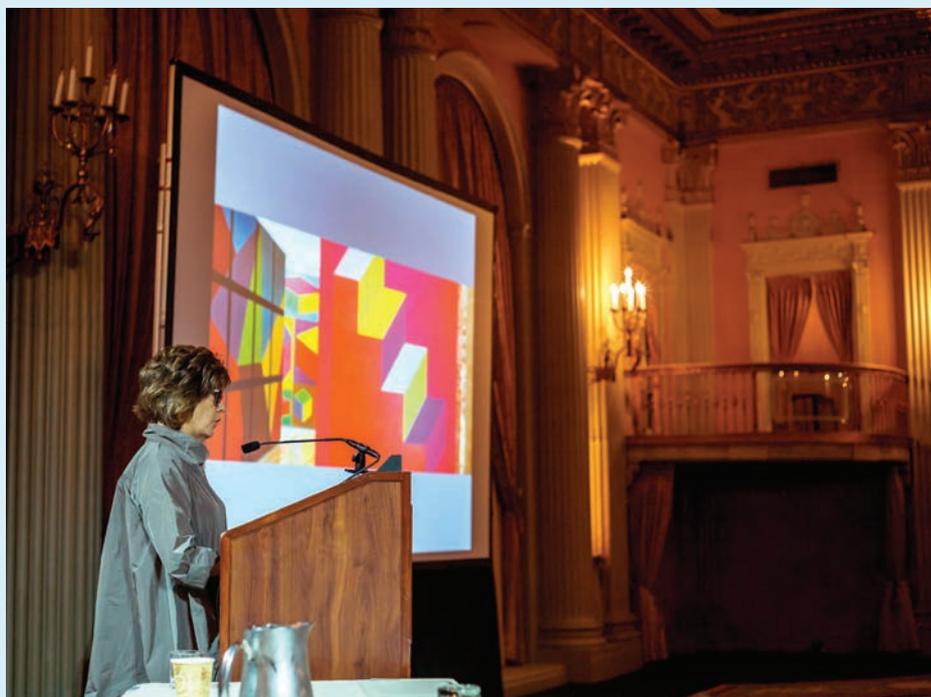
IIC Congress 2016

Los Angeles USA 12–16 September 2016

This review has to start with a declaration of interest – as Executive Secretary of IIC I was very much involved in the organisation and execution of this event, but I hope nevertheless to present a reasonably reliable overview of a very full week in Los Angeles.

IIC's Congresses, now held every two years, started in Rome in 1961; the 2016 event was the first to be held on the west coast of America and the first to focus on contemporary art (or, rather, 'contemporary works'). The venue for the week was the Biltmore Hotel, itself a historic landmark in downtown Los Angeles, with its unique 'Spanish-Italian Renaissance Revival, Mediterranean Revival and Beaux Arts styles' (their words...) intriguingly mingled, all dating from 1923. The room used for the main presentations to the audience of five hundred was the grand Crystal Ballroom, the scene of many of Hollywood's 'Oscar' presentations over the years; the ornate ceiling and balconies of the room caught many a conservator's professional eye.

This congress was organised in collaboration with the International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (INCCA) and the Getty Conservation Institute. Opened by IIC President Sarah Staniforth, the event was started off on Monday morning with a bravura presentation from **Carol Mancusi-Ungaro** of the Whitney Museum of Art: *The Falsification of Time*. This was the IIC Forbes Prize Lecture, keynote presentation for the week, and it framed and defined the Congress in many



© Mikkel Scharff

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro presents the 2016 IIC Forbes Prize Lecture

ways, addressing concepts of time and decay and documenting discussions with living artists about their reactions to these familiar challenges in their works and methods, leading in to the recognition of loss and decay; it set the theme for much that followed.

The format of the week was familiar to those who have been to IIC congresses before: a week of plenary sessions, with the serial paper presentations grouped thematically and energetically driven by IIC's Secretary-General, **Jo Kirby Atkinson**. These papers were interspersed with discussion and panel sessions, and the associated trade fair and poster and student poster sessions were in separate (but no less glamorous) rooms alongside, made popular by the copious supplies of food and drink available.

Paper presentations during the week covered topics that may be familiar to many – as well as some that were very new, or until now unexperienced, by those new to

contemporary works. For example, **Louise Lawson** and **Simon Cane's** *Do conservators dream of electric sheep? Replicas and replication*, or **Megan Randall's** *Reality and illusion: Achieving a balance in the exhibition and treatment of Robert Gober's Untitled wax legs*.

Some of the papers generated heated discussion – the conservation of sections of the Berlin Wall described in **Kiernan Graves'** and **Katey Corda's** *Conserving a boundary: The conservation and management of a Berlin Wall mural* generated some lively and impassioned exchanges, well handled by the moderators, that were so much more than a discussion of comparative researches or treatments. The recentness of the works cited in many papers allowed conversations to cover more recent issues – and often more recent passions – than other conference topics would perhaps have allowed.

New conference features, as far as IIC is

Panorama of the Crystal Ballroom, with presentation in progress



© Jerry Hafner



© Graham Voce

Poster session in the Gold Room of the Biltmore Hotel

concerned, were the Panel session *The Elephant in the Room: the Influence of the Art Market on Conservation Decisions*, where representatives of some of California's leading commercial galleries discussed their relationship with artists, clients and the issue of the post-sale life of art works. There was also the *Conserving Protest Art, Street Art*

and Murals session, with invited speaker **Ihor Poshyvailo** of the Maidan Museum / Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance in Kiev, talking under the title *Creativity of Freedom: Preserving Artistic Expressions of the Ukraine Revolution* – a topic that again generated some energetic discussion and debate.

Eloy Torrez explains how he is restoring his now thirty-year old mural *The Pope of Broadway*, to an audience of conservators



© Graham Voce

And, of course, the tours to heritage and creative sites in and around Los Angeles – I took the Mural walking tour and the group ended up discussing conservation techniques with mural artist Eloy Torrez as he restored his own thirty-year-old mammoth mural 'The Pope of Broadway' – all 30 × 30 metres of it ...

There was the social side of things too. The welcome reception on Monday evening was at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), where as well as a free viewing of MOCA there was the chance to see around the newly opened Broad Museum of Art as a private view. *The Grand Event* on the Thursday evening at Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) was also a chance to catch up with colleagues new and old and see the riches of LACMA's collection. On the comfortable side, LACMA threw its doors (and its bar and a great quantity of canapes) open to the congress; on the challenging side we could visit the galleries showing the full weirdness of *Guillermo del Toro – at home with monsters*, an exhibition for those who were fearless enough to enter...

Friday Evening's Farewell Reception at the Biltmore was notable for three things: the realisation that so many friendships had been made or renewed in such a short time; the recognition that so many people in conservation from around the world have so many common points of discussion and ideas to share; and the appreciation of good Californian wine and excellent canapes and desserts as a fine finale. The whole week's smooth organisation was a tribute to the Local Organising Committee led by Jerry Podany and Tom Learner.

As usual with IIC events, it was good to meet conservation professionals from so many countries – from Argentina to Zimbabwe, via Brazil, Mexico, Germany, Australia, Latvia, Finland, China, India, Hong Kong, Canada, Spain and Italy among many others. And turning to Italy, the presentation about the 2018 IIC Congress in Turin was especially well-received, as the presentation highlighted the food, wine and chocolate of the next host city as well as the multifarious cultural heritage (and its conservation) to be experienced there.

If you want to read more, a blog written during and after the Congress week on the Congress web pages can be found at: www.iiconservation.org/congress

Graham Voce
Executive Secretary, IIC

AURICULAR STYLE: FRAMES

London, Wallace Collection.
5–6 October 2016

Conferences dedicated to picture frames are rare. Those dedicated to a particular, historic frame type are exceptional. 'The Auricular Style: Frames' conference was initiated and developed by **Gerry Alabone** and **Lynn Roberts**. It has been their objective to promote the significance of this important frame style, which has been largely overshadowed by the earlier Italian frame designs of the Renaissance and the French frame patterns of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both of which have tended to dominate frame making throughout Europe to this day.

The programme for the two-day conference was extensive in its approach to presenting an understanding of the development of the Auricular style throughout Holland, France, Germany, Italy and Britain. The lectures were given by curators, historians and conservators from these countries. Each of the presentations was distinctly enlightening, allowing the audience to appreciate the various influences and developments in a diversity of media from the late sixteenth century through to the late seventeenth century: developments, which ultimately led to the formation of the Auricular frame style and to the decorative elements thought to be particular to the Auricular frames in each country.

The speakers acknowledged that there are various opinions as to when the Auricular style began and how, and what defines an object as being in the Auricular style. At the same time they also pointed out that a finite definition of the Auricular style might never be feasible.

The conference initially focused on the development and use of the Auricular style in both the arts and architecture in Holland. These talks introduced the concept that the Auricular form could have emerged from the Grottesque Movement of the sixteenth century in stark contrast to the preceding formality of Italian Classicism. Consideration was given to the idea that the style was primarily developed and indulged to its utmost by the Dutch silversmiths whose patrons encouraged them to create exceptional pieces of unnatural, flowing, amorphic forms with little distinction between shape and ornament. One particular gilt-silver vessel made by Adam Van Vianen, in 1614, was highlighted in several talks. It was of such high status and regard that it was portrayed in over fifty paintings in the early seventeenth century in Holland.

Pictures of this period, including those by Rembrandt and his followers, also depicted furniture with similar, imaginary, carved ornament: furniture, which also existed in reality. It was felt that from the 1630s



At the conference discussing auricular style frame

onwards the use of the Auricular design became progressively more desirable in the production of artefacts, furniture and architecture: ecclesiastical architecture and furniture were sited as being an important source for such evidence.

Each of the presentations took into account the significance of the dissemination of the Auricular style throughout Europe, not only by way of the royal courts and patrons but also by artists, craftsmen and pattern books. This circulation of the style was demonstrated in the paper on gilt leather, drawing examples from book bindings to embossed leather shields and leather wall hangings. Patents were taken out by the craftsmen and designers to protect their designs, which distinctly incorporated Auricular motifs. The commissioning of such remarkable artefacts demonstrated, and enhanced, the wealth of the patron.

We learnt that the French appeared to be less enthusiastic about the Auricular style because of its fluid, seemingly uncontrollable forms and, thus, they were late in adopting Auricular elements in their artworks. It would appear that the French felt that the use of the Auricular needed to be more clearly defined, incorporating more naturalistic features such as the peapod motif, the significance of which was addressed in detail in two of the talks.

In another lecture, it was thought that the Auricular style might not have been so popular in Germany, even when taking into account its close proximity to Holland. It was felt that there was less evidence of the Auricular than elsewhere in Europe. The reason was described as possibly being due to German politics of the time and the considerable influence of the Italian Baroque on the arts in Germany. This lecture highlighted the importance of social context when looking at the history of artworks.

A number of the talks were illustrated with slides showing that engravings as well as

pattern books became an important means of publicising the Auricular style. Portrait engravings often showed the sitter surrounded by a contrived frame including Auricular motifs. Seventeenth century paintings were also described as being a useful guide as to the importance of Auricular frames to artists at this time: for example, as seen in the picture of 'Man Writing A Letter' by Gabriel Metsu, circa 1664. At present, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which contemporary artists used and encouraged the use of the Auricular frame style to surround their own pictures.

There seemed to be consensus amongst the specialists speaking at the conference that the fashion for Auricular frames reached its zenith in the second half of the seventeenth century in Europe. However, it was also explained that Auricular frames did not dominate the frame market during this period: in Holland, for example, Classical style frames and ebonised, profile frames were equally desired by the artists and their patrons.

In addition to describing the origins and development and characteristics of the Auricular style and Auricular frames, the subject of how the frames were constructed and finished was explored. It was interesting to hear how the woods favoured by different countries could affect the style of their frames – it was felt that the use of linden in Holland accommodated a more voluminous appearance whilst the use of oak in England, a harder wood, resulted in a more restrained ornament.

It is anticipated that over time our knowledge about the composition of the gilded schemes on the face of the Auricular frames will develop further with more extensive expert analysis and scientific investigation. Such work is currently being undertaken in Italy and was addressed in two papers focusing on the history of Auricular frames in Florence, where the Auricular frames in the collections of the Medici family

and the Palazzo Pitti are being carefully assessed and catalogued. In another paper we were informed how the Medici's frames appeared to adopt Auricular motifs, which were more anthropomorphic and zoomorphic in form.

The second day of the conference gradually drew us further towards the use of the Auricular frame style in Britain. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the artists and craftsmen of the Lowland countries frequently travelled to and from London to work. With them they brought the patterns and skills to make Auricular frames. Anthony Van Dyck's interest in framing and his close association with Charles I and his court exerted a strong influence on the use of the Auricular frame style in the mid to late seventeenth century. A series of papers presented us with the splendour of the 'Gallery Of Beauties', a group of female portraits encased in small Auricular frames, which are in the collection of Her Majesty The Queen, and the dignity of the Auricular frames surrounding the 'Fire Judges', a collection commissioned by the Corporation Of London after the Great Fire in 1666, many of which have since been damaged or removed from their paintings.

British Auricular frames tend to be referred to as Sunderland frames, a term not introduced until the nineteenth century. We were reminded of how significant the taste of the Netherlands and Northern Europe had been on the Auricular style and frame making in the latter part of the seventeenth century in Britain

The conference skilfully progressed through an intertwining series of lectures: too many to acknowledge individually. These comprehensive papers can be accessed on the website: <https://auricularstyleframes.wordpress.com/about>. Throughout the conference there was an inspiring openness to the exchange of ideas both in the lectures and the discussion sessions. Such information enhanced our growing understanding of the Auricular frame style. Each lecture was thought provoking, reinforcing a desire to continue exploring the subject, both academically and technically.

The realisation of the conference was also due to the support of Arnold Wiggins & Sons. They complemented the conference with a display of seventeenth century Auricular frames at their London premises. Ultimately, the success of the conference was due to the commitment of Gerry Alabone and Lynn Roberts as well as the Icon Gilding and Decorative Surfaces Group committee and their volunteers, who ensured that each day was a particularly rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Annie Ablett, ACR
Conservator-Restorer Of Historic Frames



Katie Webbe talking about her treatment of the model canoe.

VISITS

BEHIND-THE-SCENES IN GLASGOW TOUR

Icon Ethnography Group Glasgow 11 November 2016

In November, Icon's Ethnography Group organised a guided tour of some of Glasgow's conservation spaces and stores, starting with the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre (GMRC) in Nitshill. It is home to nearly 1.4 million objects from a central collection utilised by seven museum venues. GMRC Learning and Access Assistant **Billy Collins'** enlivening narrative on the history and scope of the GMRC collections, and how they are prized by the community set the scene for conservator **Katie Webbe** to discuss how GMRC blends public access with conservation activities and goals.

Katie and conservation manager **Graeme Scott** led the tour through the conservation spaces for paintings, paper, frames, and objects. In the object conservation lab, Katie highlighted three of her current conservation projects. An Inuit costume from the Northern

Alaska/Mackenzie region of parka, boots, and trousers of fur and skin were nearing the end of cleaning and humidification treatments for mannequin display.

In mid-treatment was a small wooden canoe model in need of repairing multiple breaks and replicating missing components with balsa wood, which generated discussion from members who had treated similar objects. Finally, Katie presented a recent acquisition of sculptural, knotted, grass objects by a late twentieth-century outsider artist. Katie talked about her experiences with difficulties of conserving fragile objects that were possibly never intended to survive long-term by the artist.

In the afternoon, the group was hosted by the Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History (CTCTAH) at the University of Glasgow. Dr **Margaret Smith** and **Karen Thompson** presented their research into painted silk banners from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition to materials analysis, documentation and collections surveys, Margaret and Karen have also worked with contemporary banner painters and archival material to document textile substrates,

Misa Tamura demonstrating the use of a lightbox to document 'beaters marks' on barkcloth objects



techniques, paints, and binders.

Following the presentation a lively discussion of personal experiences on conservation of painted cloths and similar flexibly painted objects took place. A discussion of these types of textiles and objects that bridge a number of conservation specialties carried on during a break for tea and cake.

The final tour of the research project *Situating Pacific Barkcloth Production in Time and Place* was led by Principle Investigator **Frances Lennard** and research conservator **Misa Tamura**. Four barkcloths and rolled storage of over ninety objects were on view in the conservation space. Frances and Misa discussed the partnerships with the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in London, and the Smithsonian Institute in the U.S. that form this interdisciplinary research.

A historic sample book, tools for barkcloth production, and characteristic features and marks were enthusiastically viewed and discussed by the participants. A highlight of the barkcloth talk included the first look at the beaters' marks of a large and unique grey barkcloth from Hawaii revealed using transmitted light. Misa ended the tour with describing her treatment techniques and tools for barkcloth, including preferred adhesives and ratios, brushes, and weights of Japanese tissue for different types of bridges, repairs and fills.

Thank you to the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre and the Centre for Textile Conservation at the University of Glasgow for sharing your ongoing work and collections. Special thanks to Misa Tamura for organizing the event.

Megan Mary Creamer

Post-graduate student
Centre for Textile Conservation
University of Glasgow

SEEING STARS: Behind the Scenes at The Museums

Icon Furniture & Wood Group Amsterdam 17 November 2016

A day of visits to coincide with the 12th International Symposium on Wood and Furniture.

The *Night Watch* may be considered one of Rembrandt's greatest works, but look up to the ceiling in the rooms to either side of it in the Rijksmuseum and you will see a glorious 21st century galaxy of 47,130 hand painted stars by Turner prizewinner Richard Wright, commissioned to celebrate the building's astonishing renovation. This was a day of counterpoints and contrasts.

Huddled outside a building behind one of the world's greatest museums on a cold, wet and blustery November day in Amsterdam, our small group of conservators gathered and the tour began.

The traditional exterior of the



Iskander Breebaart talks Furniture and Wood Group members through the current projects in the Rijksmuseum's furniture conservation studio

'Ateliergebouw', home to the Rijksmuseum Conservation Centre, gave way to an ultra-modern interior, where the decor and furnishings are pristine and white. And in the light, bright furniture conservation studio Senior Conservator **Iskander Breebaart**, our host for the morning, introduced us to the work of the team: an imposing carved early-17th century cabinet attributed to Herman Doomer, partially stripped and re-polished; intricate filigree carved wood with newly-fashioned pieces inserted seamlessly; scaled ship models with new stringers and rigging; and a gold-and-black fragment of aventurine awaiting analysis.

In the window a graduated stack of apparently gift-wrapped boxes – actually an artwork by a living artist – prompted a lively discussion about the ethics of conservation, restoration and enhancements to contemporary pieces.

At the end of the morning tour, Iskander led us to the Rijksmuseum itself where we spent an all-too-short hour in the 17th century galleries, just enough time to walk round and absorb the soul-soothing beauty of the

place.

At the medieval heart of Amsterdam's UNESCO listed 17th century canal ring, the double-fronted townhouse that is the Museum Willet-Holthuysen is full of surprises. Thanks to conservators **Jaap Boonstra** and **Paul Born** of the Amsterdam Historisch Museum, we were allowed to explore every inch of this characterful building, up into the eaves and out onto the rooftop. From the intriguingly-dressed gentleman's parlour to the mezzanine pantry with its chic dinner service and silverware, this is a real gem and we were privileged to be given access to all areas with expert guidance. If you are ever fortunate enough to visit, be sure to look up in the gorgeous octagonal conservatory – you may not see stars here, but recent research has uncovered an original ceiling painting with grapes, leaves, butterflies and flowers, in delicious pale yellows, greens and blues. Perfect.

Rachel Dealey Conservator
Buckinghamshire County Museum

Jaap Boonstra describes work to uncover original wall paintings in the conservatory of the Museum Willet-Holthuysen



A CLEAN SWEEP

Claire Thomson, Book and Paper Conservator at The National Library of Scotland, describes the conservation of the 'Chimney Map'

INTRODUCTION

In 2007 a rare 17th century map was handed into the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland. It was unrecognisable, having been scrunched into a ball and stuffed up a chimney in the north east of Scotland to prevent the cold wind coming down.

HISTORY

The map had been made by Gerald Valck, a renowned Dutch map maker of his day. It would have required eight large copper printing plates to produce, giving an overall size of 2.2 × 1.4 metres. The map would probably have belonged to someone of great importance, and hung as a decoration piece on its linen backing. Similar maps can be seen in the paintings of Johannes Vermeer.

Entitled 'Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Tabula', the map consists of two large hemispheres with elaborate decoration in each corner depicting the four seasons. Portraits of William III and Mary in the centre help to date the map as their short reign spanned from 1689 to Mary's death in 1694. This also implies that the map was produced for sale in Britain. There are traces of red and yellow pigments present and it seems likely that it would have originally been very brightly coloured.

Only two other copies of the map are known to exist, one in the British Library and the other in the Maritime Museum, Rotterdam. Our copy and the map held in Rotterdam have been enhanced by adding finely executed town views to the right and left hand borders.

ASSESSMENT

The map was identified as a priority for treatment because of its rarity. However, it was recognised that its condition was so poor that treatment might not be feasible. Upon unfurling the

The map was left to acclimatise for 24 hours after being unfurled



Image: Trina Mckendrick



Image: Trina Mckendrick

The 17th century map when it was first removed from the plastic bag

map it was immediately obvious that around half of the image had been lost; there was no evidence of mould damage, but the presence of seeds and insect casings suggested that the map had been home to rodents or birds, using the paper for food and/or bedding. The harsh environmental conditions which the map had endured had resulted in the paper being brittle and acidic in some places, and soft and thin in others.

The map consisted of eight paper sections, adhered to a coarse linen backing with crudely sewn joins. The linen had probably reacted to atmospheric changes in a different way from the paper, resulting in planar distortions, large tears and delamination along the overlapping joins between the paper sections. Many pieces of paper had become detached altogether. Additionally, both the paper and the linen were heavily stained and ingrained with surface dirt.

PRELIMINARY TESTS AND TREATMENT PROPOSAL

PH readings were taken in several places and tests were done on the inks and pigments to check if they were water soluble, which fortunately was found not to be the case. The map was then opened out fully, with many large pieces separating from the main body during this process, and left to acclimatise for twenty four hours; it could then be gently stretched with light weights. Surface debris was removed using a combination of a squirrel hair brush and a dental

Dry cleaning with brush and aspirator



Image: Trina Mckendrick

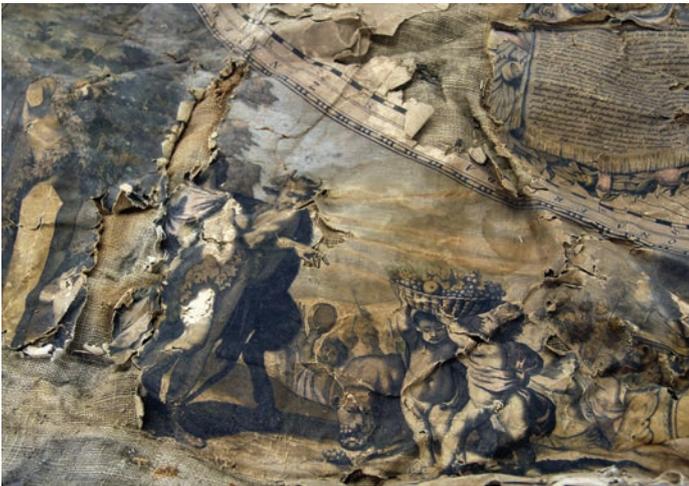


Crude joins on the linen backing had created fissures in the paper

aspirator, although many areas could not be cleaned due to the folds in the brittle paper.

A preliminary discussion was held with the map curator and the conservation manager regarding the treatment to be undertaken, and it was decided that the removal of the linen backing and subsequent relining of the map were required in order to prevent further damage. It was also decided that the map should be separated back into its eight sections to facilitate the treatment; this was not particularly destructive because the map was already splitting along most of the joins between the sections.

Untreated section of the map



Building up layers of Japanese paper



Re-aligning fragments of the map under the stereo microscope

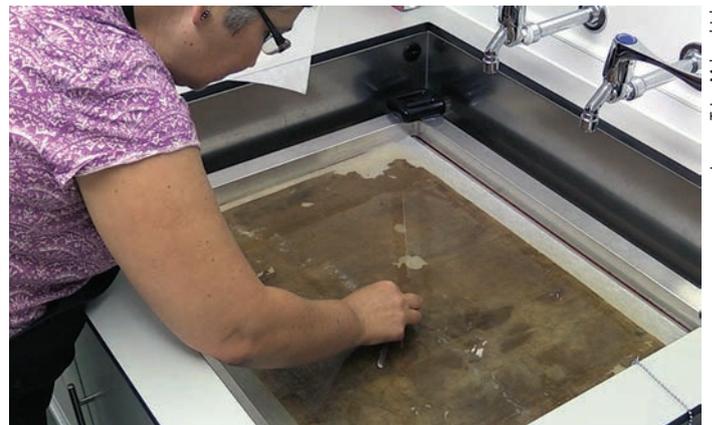
TREATMENT

The separation of the sections was achieved using strips of gelatine gel, prepared from a 6% solution of gelatine dissolved in water. The strips were placed along the joins between sections, and were weighted down to ensure good contact with the paper. It took around ten minutes for the old adhesive to swell and soften, and the edges of the sections were then lifted, allowing the linen backing to be cut along the joins. Once separated the individual sections were supported on layers of blotter and Bondina.

The same section of the map after humidification and light pressing



Washing a section of the map and removing the old adhesive





Relaxing and flattening the map in the humidifying chamber

The sections were placed in a humidifying chamber with a humidity of 60%. It was considered important to minimise the amount of moisture used to avoid cementing the dirt within the paper fibres. The humidity relaxed the paper, enabling the folds in the map to be teased open and held in place with small weighted pads of Bondina, blotter and board. This process was continued until a section was completely flat, and it was then removed from the humidifier, placed between lightly weighted blotter and Bondina and left to dry.

The next stage of the treatment was the application of the facing. Loose pieces of the map were realigned and temporarily re-adhered to the linen backing with Funori adhesive, and small squares of RK17 machine-made Japanese paper were adhered to the front of the map in two layers, using a 7% solution of methyl cellulose dissolved in water. While the map was slightly damp from the methyl cellulose it was turned over and the linen backing was removed using hand tools. The sections were then left to dry between Bondina and blotter for a forty eight hour period.

The sections could now be washed one at a time in a heated sink at 45°C. Methyl cellulose has a lower critical solution temperature (LCST) of between 40 and 50°C, and is readily soluble below 40°C, so it was crucial to keep the temperature constant to prevent the facing from detaching. Each section was washed for sixty minutes, with gentle brushing of the old adhesive and agitation of the water to move the dirty water away.

A large sheet of 30gms Bondina was pasted onto the upright light box with a double layer of spider tissue on top. After washing, each map section was blotter dried and adhered to the spider tissue, with a supporting layer of Bondina on the front. The surface of the section was sprayed with cold water, and this dissolved the methyl cellulose and allowed the facing to be peeled off. Where necessary the more fragmentary



The map with its spider tissue lining, prior to the addition of a final Japanese tissue lining

areas of the map were realigned, using an image of the map at the Maritime Museum in Rotterdam for guidance. The following day the section could be removed from the light box by gently lifting off the base layer of Bondina.

The final stage of the treatment was to bring the sections together onto a single lining. The entire surface of the light box was required for this. Again 30gms Bondina was applied as a base layer, and two layers of toned 16gms Japanese paper were built up, using small, overlapping pieces. The sections of the map were then adhered to the lining using a mixture of wheat starch paste and methyl cellulose, and the edges of the lining were left protruding because they can be used to attach the map to a backboard for display. No attempt was made to infill the missing areas; this would have made the treatment into a conjectural restoration, and in any case the losses constitute an important reminder of the map's fascinating history.

DISPLAY AND STORAGE

It is hoped that the map will be put on display in the Library for a few weeks early this year. There is not a suitable space for a longer display, and in any case the map is too fragile for this to be desirable. Following its display the map will be put into storage, and will have to be loosely rolled because of its size. It will be interleaved with acid-free paper with a sheet of polyester wrapped around the outside, and placed inside a cube tube made from archival boxboard.

FILMS OF THE CONSERVATION TREATMENT

The treatment of the map was filmed by a professional filmmaker, who has made the footage into two short films explaining the history of the map and illustrating its



Re-aligning the washed map onto spider tissue using the upright light box

conservation. These films are available on YouTube* with links from the National Library of Scotland's website. From the conservator's perspective, the filming prolonged the treatment process and added extra stress to the more difficult tasks. However, the research undertaken by the film-maker, Trina Mckendrick, was extremely useful to the Library, and the finished films have provided the Library with a fantastic way of promoting the project and raising awareness about conservation. The films were launched in November 2016 and they generated a huge amount of media interest, with articles in many newspapers and a slot on the 'One Show'.

CONCLUSIONS

The project was very challenging both in terms of managing the physical space which the map required and organizing

Final assembling of the map from its composite sections



Removing the facing

such a complex process alongside other work commitments. However, it was a huge learning experience: the techniques developed to face and line the map will be useful for other projects, and the facing method was particularly successful as a way of holding a fragmented object together while removing its backing.

The involvement of various experts and the filming slowed the work down considerably, but the benefits of creating the films far outweigh the disadvantages.

*Find the films at
<https://youtu.be/g6Bn3xBGfWY>

and
<https://youtu.be/WxxJpAYhzpj>

AN INTERN'S INSIGHT

Kate Clive-Powell describes an Icon intern's year

I have just benefited from completing an Icon internship in textile conservation at The Bowes Museum. The following article is an insight into my internship year which I hope will be interesting and useful to those who are considering undertaking an Icon internship.

My time at The Bowes Museum gave me a rounded experience of working as a textile conservator within a museum. I participated in museum activities such as installing and de-installing exhibitions, preparing textiles for storage, and outreach work. I was also given opportunities to develop my professional network.

WHY I APPLIED

Icon conservation internships have been run in a number of conservation departments within the UK and usually last from six months to a year. Icon interns are paid and are given conservation training in a specialist area. In 2014 The Bowes Museum received Heritage Lottery Funding which enabled

The Bowes Museum Flat Textile Store after re-organisation



A unit in the Flat Textile Store before re-organisation

them to run a five-year 'Skills for the Future' project, hosting year-long Icon internships. I was part of the second cohort of interns there.

I viewed the internship as a useful bridge between the end of my academic training and working as a professional textile conservator. In 2015 I completed the Textile Conservation MPhil at The University of Glasgow. The degree gave me an understanding of the theory behind different techniques used in textile conservation and I gained practical experience through class projects and short placements. Despite this intensive training I felt that there were gaps in my practical experience which an Icon internship would fill.

WORKING WITH FLAT TEXTILES

Undertaking an internship specifically at The Bowes Museum appealed to me because it has a fantastic collection of quilts, textiles which have interested me for a long time. However, I had no practical experience of conserving them. In fact, I had minimal experience of conserving any flat textiles. Consequently my internship supervisor and intern advisor ensured that I was given projects through the year that would give me experience of storing, conserving and mounting flat textiles. Every Icon intern has an internship supervisor, an experienced conservator working at the host institution, who supervises the intern on a daily basis. An intern advisor is also assigned to an Icon intern and is on hand to offer help and guidance during the year.



A hole in Toile de Jouy fabric (middle of r.h.s. edge)



After applying a stitched support – spot the hole!

STORAGE

At the beginning of the year I was allocated a re-storage project to manage. I was asked to reorganise the museum's flat textile store, so that each textile would be properly supported and labelled. The image on the previous page shows the condition of one of the storage units in the store before the project; several of the textiles were rolled in non-conservation grade materials and many of the rollers were overloaded.

I set about rectifying this by re-rolling the textiles correctly in inert materials. In the process I re-stored a range of flat textiles: shawls, hooky rugs, quilts, pieces of tapestry and embroidered seat covers. I rolled each textile onto a polypropylene tube or re-used the original tubes of cardboard with an added barrier layer of Melinex®. I then interleaved each textile with acid-free tissue as I rolled it onto the tube, while making sure that the grain of the fabric was straight, to prevent distortion to the textile. The rolled textile was then wrapped with a sheet of Tyvek® for added protection and secured closed with Velcro®.

CONSERVING FLAT TEXTILES

The main flat textiles I treated at The Bowes Museum were two pieces of Toile de Jouy which had several small holes. As the holes were only in small areas I created support through applying local patches rather than applying a full backing to each textile. For the support fabric I chose to use a cotton lawn which was a similar weight to the Toile de Jouy fabric.

The support patches needed to be a close colour match to the object to act as a visual in-fill, making the damage less noticeable. The undyed cotton lawn support was too bright, so I set about dyeing it an off-white that would blend in better, using Novacron® FN (a reactive dye used in conservation to dye cellulosic fabrics).

The process was not as straightforward as I had anticipated. The conservation department's archive of dye recipes did not contain a close match to the colour I was trying to dye, so

there was a bit of trial and error before I finally achieved the colour I needed. I dyed several batches of cotton samples, varying the amounts of the three component colours, before I eventually achieved a good colour match. However, the tone of the samples was still incorrect, so I experimented further to get a closer tonal match. The tone of a colour is altered by changing the depth of shade (the percentage by weight of dyestuff to fabric). This project gave me plenty of dyeing practice which consolidated the information I was taught about dyeing at university.

FURTHER EXPERIENCE

I was encouraged by my supervisors to organise short placements elsewhere during the year if there were certain skills that I wanted to develop that The Bowes Museum's conservation department could not accommodate. This was also seen as a good opportunity to increase my professional network.

I wanted to gain tapestry conservation experience, but it was not possible to do this at the museum due to space

An area of loss on the reverse of a quilt treated at St Fagans by applying a stitched support





© Hynes Photography

De-installing the Yves St Laurent exhibition

restrictions. Consequently I organised a short placement at Textile Conservation Ltd., where I worked on a 16th century Flemish tapestry titled 'The Presentation of Esther' from a set of five belonging to Berkeley Castle. I experienced joining the linen backing; making scrim lines on the tapestry and on the linen; attaching the linen to the tapestry along scrim lines; attaching the linen and tapestry to the frame; and tapestry conservation stitching.

One of my future career ambitions is to work as a freelance textile conservator in Wales. For this reason I felt that it would be useful to organise a placement at St Fagans National History Museum during the internship. This would enable me to become more familiar with Welsh textiles and would help to increase my professional network in Wales. I worked at St Fagans for two months during which I conserved textiles for the museum's complete gallery re-development.

At St Fagans I developed my flat textile conservation experience through treating a quilt, hooky rug and proddy rug. The 19th century Welsh quilt I was given to stabilise had large areas of wear on the back and a few small holes on the front, which had loose edges at risk of catching and worsening when the quilt is taken on and off display. These loose edges were manipulated back into position using gentle humidification. Then nylon net overlays were stitched on to provide support, anchored into strong areas around the holes using staggered running stitch. I also put a few securing stitches through the middle of each patch to help make the net lie flat on the quilt's undulating surface. The securing stitches followed the zig-zag lines of original quilting to



© The Bowes Museum

Making a storage bag

minimise the number of new stitch holes that I added to the fragile cotton surface.

After consultation with the textile conservator and curator it was decided that the holes on the front and back of the quilt would not be in-filled with patches to improve its appearance because the worst of the damage would be structurally stabilised by the net overlay. Leaving the holes visible also meant that evidence of the quilt's construction and use would remain, which is in keeping with the context of the quilt's display within a social history museum.

Costume in its storage bag



© The Bowes Museum



Costume mounting at Manchester City Galleries



Kate (r) and Icon paintings intern Pauline Murray at a salvage training day

EXHIBITIONS

This year I have helped with the installation and de-installation of several exhibitions of both costume and flat textiles. I assisted with the de-installation of the blockbuster costume exhibition *Yves Saint Laurent: Style is Eternal* at The Bowes Museum in readiness for transportation. This involved undressing the costume and accessories from the mannequins, checking the condition of the textiles and packing the costume for transit.

I helped decant The Bowes Museum's Fashion & Textile gallery in readiness for the *Shoes: Pleasure and Pain* exhibition. As part of this I designed and made covers, with my fellow Icon intern Jamie Robinson, to protect the gallery's costume while it is in temporary storage. I also gained some experience of mounting flat textiles through assisting with the installation of a display of historic quilts from The Bowes Museum's collection. This involved stitching Velcro® to the back of each quilt, then carefully attaching them to batons in the museum's glass cube gallery.

During a short placement at Manchester City Galleries I had my first experience of mounting costume from start to finish. I was taught how to mount costume on Stockman® mannequins and was given a black Mary Quant dress and jacket to mount, which is currently on display in *Mary Quant: Fashion Icon*. I padded up the mannequin, made a jersey cover, arms and underpinnings so that the costume is well supported during display.

TRAINING AND OUTREACH

The generous training budget I received from The Bowes Museum as part of my internship enabled me to attend a diverse range of training days and short courses, from The Conservation of Plastics to Salvage Training.

Through writing blogs, and speaking to the public during tours and open days I have increased my experience of outreach work and have found that I particularly enjoy communicating about conservation to people outside the profession.

CONCLUSION

The Icon internship year has been invaluable for me. I have learnt new skills and consolidated information that I was taught at university. This has enabled me to build a solid portfolio of work which has helped me to secure further employment.

In closing, I would encourage any potential applicants to think about the following when considering undertaking an Icon internship:

- Do you have a clear idea of what you want to get out of it?
- Will the host institution be able to supply you with the experience you need?
- If not, then will the host institution be willing for you to complete short placements, courses or training days elsewhere?

Visiting the host institution's conservation department is an excellent way to help answer these questions as it will be possible to gain an impression of their facilities, projects and collections.

I would like to thank everyone involved in my internship for making it such a valuable and enjoyable experience



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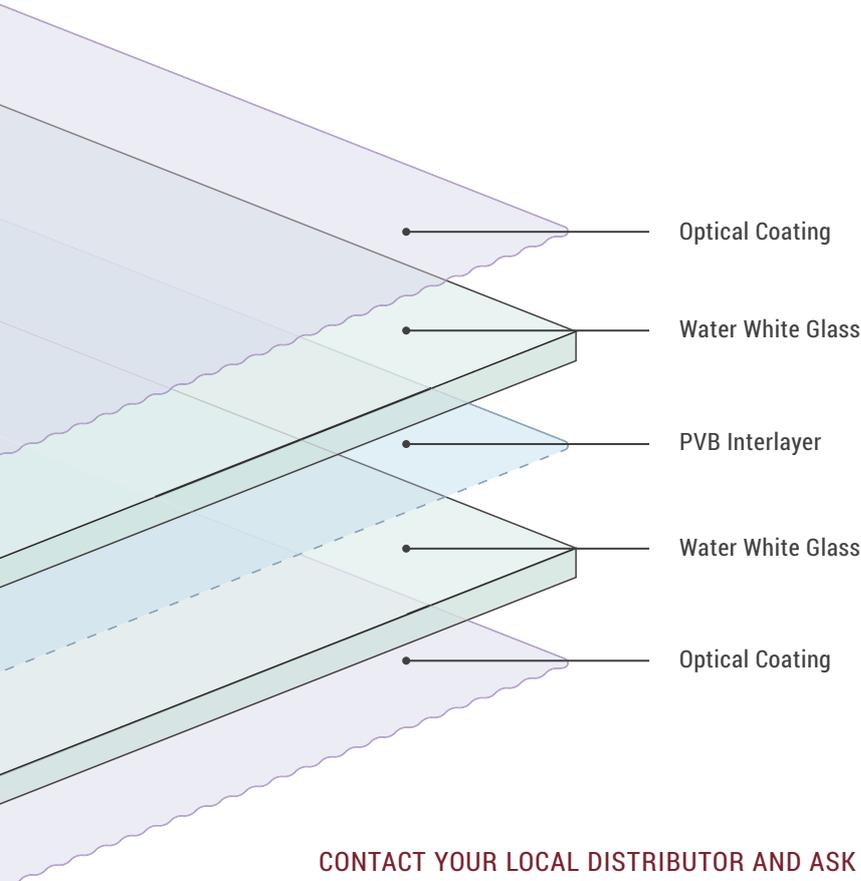
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