

Issue 85, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2021



# NEWS IN CONSERVATION

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC WORKS



When Galleries Shake | Conservators who write fiction | It IS easy being GREEN!



The International Institution for Conservation (IIC) launched a new full-color conservation newspaper *News in Conservation (NiC)* in 2007 and transitioned into a completely digital e-magazine in 2011. Published six times a year, *NiC* provides a platform for members of the conservation community to share the latest research, interviews, and reviews; to promote new events, products, and opportunities; and to call for papers, ideas, and involvement. *NiC* also provides updates from the IIC Council and Regional Groups. *NiC* continues to evolve to better fit the needs and interests of our increasingly global conservation profession.

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**Cover image:** Saiful Bakhri working at a stereomicroscope. Read about his innovative research in Indonesia (story on p. 12). **Inside cover image:** Student intern during collection survey. West Dean College of Arts and Conservation. Read about creative solutions which allowed conservation students to participate in internships during the pandemic (story on p. 28).

*News in Conservation* is published by  
**The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works**  
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[www.iiconservation.org](http://www.iiconservation.org)  
 ISSN 1995-2635

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# CONTENTS

- 4 THE PRESIDENT'S DESK
- 5 FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | EDITOR'S SOUNDING BOARD
- 6 NEWS IN BRIEF  
*Stemming the Tide* symposium publication now available  
 Scottish Crannog Centre fire  
 Two recently digitized conservation films from the Brooklyn Museum Archive  
 Thundering water wherever the eye looks: summer floods in Europe
- 12 FEATURE ARTICLES  
*Innovative plant-based conservation materials in Indonesia: Citronella essential oil*, Saiful Bakhri  
  
*Conservators who write fiction*, Rebecca Rushfield
- 22 IIC NEWS  
 Opportunities Fund: Applications due 30 August  
 Winner announced for the 2021 First-Time Author Essay Prize  
 Apply to the IIC International Leadership Mentoring Program  
 Featured Jobs  
 Fellowship Corner  
 Meet our Trustees
- 28 STUDENT & EMERGING CONSERVATOR  
*Creative solutions allow conservation students at West Dean College to experience placements with a difference*, Rachel Aked  
  
*The Faces of Conservation* IIC-Student & Emerging Conservator Conference: registration and programme information now available
- 32 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY  
*Environmental sustainability in conservation: why should we care?* Marina Herriges  
  
 "Starter for 10" Environmental Sustainability Resources
- 36 BOOK REVIEWS  
*Provenance Research Today: Principles, Practice, Problems*, review by Riza Hussaini  
  
*When Galleries Shake: Earthquake Damage Mitigation for Museum Collections*, review by W. (Bill) Wei
- 42 EVENT REVIEWS  
*Brill-Nuncius Seminar: The Making of Conservation Science*, Esther van Duijn
- 46 ANNOUNCEMENTS

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The value of physical conferences was reinforced to me a couple of months ago when I managed to be part of the National Museums and Galleries conference in my native Australia. It brought back to all of us that attended the enormous value of professionally meeting in person. Once we had got over the group hugs, that proved to be so necessary and cathartic, we were reminded again of the benefit that comes from interaction with colleagues old and new in the coffee queues and social events and the introductions to people that are part of other discussions that we might not otherwise have met. I was particularly struck by the level of informal news (one could call it professional gossip) that we all had to catch up on, which seemed to have bypassed the normal social media channels. Try as we might with on-line Q&As, chat sites and virtual break-out rooms, these platforms cannot achieve anything like that level of informal intimacy from which we all have benefited during our careers.



With that in mind, IIC is continuing to look at how best to stage our next Congress in Wellington, New Zealand later next year. There is no doubt that it will need to be a hybrid version, as it is most unlikely we shall be in a post-Covid existence allowing full international travel by then. It is also clear that, even with increasing levels of vaccination, the form of conferences needs to be flexible with lock downs potentially impacting at very short notice. At the Australian conference about a quarter of the delegates, with only a few days notice, could not come due to the State of Victoria being locked down. We definitely want IIC Wellington 2022 to have a physical heart to it. However at the same time, we need to create a forum which provides a stimulating in-person quality for those present while also managing to include those online in a proactive rather than passive way. My experience at the Australian conference suggests that this can be successfully achieved, and whilst not as satisfying for those online, we can still create a highly worthwhile experience. Our great learning out of the IIC Edinburgh Congress at the end of 2020 was the number of colleagues able to participate online who would normally—through limitations of geography, time away from home or budget—have been unable to achieve that.

IIC's next conference is our Student and Emerging Conservator event at the Nova School of Science and Technology in Lisbon, Portugal from the 14 to 16 October, 2021. This is the sixth of these conferences that IIC has organised beginning with 2011 in London. The last one was in Cologne in 2019 which proved to be a highly stimulating event for all those involved. Seeing early career conservators in action constantly reinforces to me why we are called a passion profession.

And then, of course, there is the mega conference COP26 that is to occur in November in Glasgow. The role that conservators can play in climate action continues to be so important. The last pre-Covid conference that the Smithsonian Institution physically ran, in March 2020, was on the theme *Stemming the Tide: Global strategies for sustaining cultural heritage through climate change* in which IIC Vice President Amber Kerr played a major part. The publication that resulted from that conference has recently been made freely available [here](#), and I commend it to you (also find more information and links on p. 6 of this issue). It reinforces why such conferences are so important to bring together a body of knowledge and people to create action. To play our part in COP26, IIC is finalising a commitment to climate action for conservators from around the world. We are doing this in close association with ICOM-CC, given that between the two organisations, and with much commonality of membership, we represent the international conservation profession. I look forward to circulating that commitment to you as we lead up to this critical event in how we as a planet deal with climate change.

With my best wishes,

Julian Bickersteth  
IIC President



Click the image to watch IIC President Julian Bickersteth deliver his column.

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Given the challenges and changes we face as a sector, this is not the time for half-hearted gestures. Through our [International Leadership Mentoring Programme](#), we are empowering change and helping our members become confident in managing situations while also bringing flair, courage and imaginative thinking to the big societal issues that are affecting the profession, from Covid to climate change. We have extended the Programme to support three cohorts a year, with the next round of applications due to close on 30 August. You can find out how to apply [here](#). We are also providing a further round of small grants to members, including institutions, through [IIC's Opportunities Fund](#) to help create a sustainable and resilient future for our sector.



An important lesson from last year is that we must continue to promote more equitable access and opportunities for colleagues across the world to participate in our online programmes. This year IIC has already supported scholarships for 19 emerging conservators and young professionals to take part in various events, including the Young Professionals Forum (YPF) event, representing 9 different countries including Peru, Indonesia and Mexico. I was again honoured to spend time with these emerging professionals as part of the scientific committee, hosted by our friends at the Centro Conservazione e Restauro la Venaria Reale. The event benefits from the support of some of the most important international bodies including IIC, ICOM and ICCROM. [Together with YPF](#) important contributions have been put forward to the July meeting of the G20 Ministers of Culture in Rome for sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation.

As it is time to act, IIC is on a mission to reduce its carbon footprint and to support the sector in doing the same. We will be publishing our impact reports in early September in the lead up to COP26, and we will be introducing changes to help make sure our events, including our biennial Congress as well as our publications and initiatives, do not negatively impact the environment but instead do the reverse.

Our carbon footprint represents just a small percentage of the impact from the entire cultural heritage sector, but we hope that we will serve as a role model for others who, like us, are committed to our field operating in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner.

Sarah Stannage  
IIC Executive Director



# EDITOR'S SOUNDING BOARD

I have joked with my IIC colleagues that we seem to bend time in order to coordinate meetings between the USA, Europe, the Middle East, and Australia where (at least from my perspective) it is already "tomorrow." And yet, this complication has formed us into a close-knit team in which—like a ball bouncing from nation to nation around the globe—there always seems to be someone able to catch and support at a moment's notice.



Julian and Sarah's columns for this issue demonstrate how IIC, in always striving to become a more global institution, has also become keenly aware of the necessity of supporting members where they are individually. Through flexible grants, multiple membership discounts, hybrid events, and a re-vamped mentoring program (just to name a few recent changes) IIC is working to expand our circle in order to strengthen our profession. So explore these opportunities, take advantage of all IIC has to offer... and keep the ball bouncing.

Sharra Grow  
IIC Editor in Chief, *News in Conservation*

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## STEMMING THE TIDE SYMPOSIUM PUBLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

In early March of 2020, just days before the pandemic shut down the world, the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) and the Smithsonian's National Collection Program (NCP) hosted an informative, motivational, and action-oriented symposium titled *Stepping the Tide: Global Strategies for Sustaining Cultural Heritage through Climate Change*. The IIC, along with International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) were program collaborators for this two-day symposium which included a series of presentations and breakout discussions and concluded with an IIC Point of the Matter Dialogue, "Heritage at Risk: A Dialogue on the Effects of Climate Change" which was open to the public.

Over two days, a series of presentations and discussions explored the intersection of cultural heritage and climate change. The program examined the impact of climate change on cultural heritage and communities worldwide, discussed the responsibilities of stewards of cultural heritage in fostering collaborative solutions, addressed urgent questions of equity and inclusion, and identified strategies that leverage cultural heritage for climate action. On Thursday, March 5, a full-day symposium in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's McEvoy Auditorium highlighted innovative climate stories and strategies in cultural heritage. The second day divided attendees into dynamic breakout sessions held at six Smithsonian museums and archives. Speakers and discussion topics explored six categories of cultural heritage identified by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS): Museums and Collections, Archaeological Sites, Built Heritage (Buildings and Structures), Cultural Landscapes and Historic Urban Landscapes, Cultural Communities, and Intangible Cultural Heritage.



Some of the speakers, panelists, and organizers of the Stepping the Tide Symposium and Dialogue events. Photo by Michael Barnes. Image courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

The symposium aimed to empower cultural heritage authorities, managers, and advocates to pursue more ambitious engagement and collaborative approaches to climate change matters. With over 250 registrants and 1,100 live web stream viewers representing 33 states and 25 countries—ranging from the United Kingdom, Spain, and Greece to Canada, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago—the symposium empowered cultural heritage authorities, managers, and advocates to pursue more ambitious engagement and collaborative approaches to the climate crisis. The symposium's discussions will also provide a framework from which the Smithsonian may consider future national and international programming and new Institutional initiatives toward greater sustainability of cultural heritage and the natural environment.

We are excited to announce that the proceedings of the *Stepping the Tide* symposium are now available through the Smithsonian Scholarly Press and include an inspirational foreword by Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III.

The volume is open access and available to read and download, at no cost, from SISP's portal. Please share this link with your colleagues and networks:

[https://smithsonian.figshare.com/articles/book/Stemming\\_the\\_Tide\\_Global\\_Strategies\\_for\\_Sustaining\\_Cultural\\_Heritage\\_through\\_Climate\\_Change/14750727](https://smithsonian.figshare.com/articles/book/Stemming_the_Tide_Global_Strategies_for_Sustaining_Cultural_Heritage_through_Climate_Change/14750727)

You can also explore the intersection of cultural heritage and climate change through the series of presentations which were part of the multi-day conference, *Stemming the Tide: Global Strategies for Sustaining Cultural Heritage through Climate Change*, through [SAAM's playlist on YouTube](#).

Read a full review of the event in the [June-July 2020 "News in Conservation" Issue 78, p. 54-59](#).



The Iron Age wooden roundhouse before it burned down on 11 June 2021. "Crannog" Photograph by MarcProudfoot (July 2016). Image licensed through [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#). Original location [here](#).

## SCOTTISH CRANNOG CENTRE FIRE

On the night of 11 June, the Scottish Crannog Centre was destroyed in a devastating fire. Constructed on stilts over Loch Tay, Perthshire, the Iron Age wooden roundhouse is a beloved and iconic reconstruction which has long served as the focal point of the living history museum. The Centre regularly organized interactive demonstrations of ancient Scottish skills in the roundhouse including early technologies, cooking, storytelling and musical performances.

The museum's collection, which includes the artefacts excavated from the Oakbank Crannog, were not damaged by the fire, and the Centre has released a statement welcoming visitors to the Museum, which is unharmed and open to the public. The Centre has already received monumental support on local and national levels, not only in the form of funds to rebuild, but also in the form of physical help, with nearby carpenters and craftspeople offering their skills and expertise.

Those who witnessed the blaze sadly attest that it only took a few minutes. But the Centre Director Mike Benson, while discussing the devastation of the fire, also expressed hope in moving forward: "The fire is part of our story, it's not the end of our story". Visit the Scottish Crannog Centre website for more information: <https://www.crannog.co.uk/>

## TWO RECENTLY DIGITIZED CONSERVATION FILMS FROM THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM ARCHIVE

Top: *A Future for the Past* (1953). Film made by Caroline and Sheldon Keck at the Brooklyn Museum. Film and image published courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum.

Bottom: *The Hidden Life of a Painting* (1963). Film made by Caroline and Sheldon Keck at the Brooklyn Museum. Film and image published courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum.



Passionate about education, Sheldon and Caroline Keck constantly sought new technologies to advance knowledge of conservation materials and improve standards of collection care. Sheldon established the first conservation laboratory at Brooklyn Museum (BkM) in 1934 where he worked together with Caroline for over 30 years. During their tenure at the museum, the couple produced two films: *A Future for the Past* in 1954 and *The Hidden Life of a Painting* in 1962. The productions were innovative in their use of motion pictures as a didactic tool for museum audiences and a source of great professional pride for the Kecks.

The films are preserved in the BkM archive but had not been viewed for decades due to their outdated formats; they were digitized in 2018 and made publicly available on the BkM YouTube channel in 2021. The digitization project was motivated by research conducted as part of the major ongoing treatment of *Deborah Hall* painted by William Williams in 1766 and last treated by Sheldon in 1943. *Deborah Hall* appears in the *Hidden Life of a Painting* as an example of a work that was nearly destroyed by neglect and poor environmental conditions before entering the collection.

*A Future for the Past* features the conservation of an 18th-century European canvas including pre-treatment examination using ultraviolet radiation and magnification under a stereomicroscope. In the film, Sheldon reverses an old glue-paste lining and performs a new wax-resin lining with a hand iron followed by cleaning, spray varnishing, and compensating for loss. The lining is carried out according to the "Dutch Method". Emphasis is placed on the importance of testing during treatment as well as the practitioner's

knowledge of pigments and artist materials. The film was produced in conjunction with the *Take Care* exhibition held at BkM in 1954 to showcase the efforts required to preserve the collection.

*Hidden Life of a Painting* is broader in scope and includes footage from the Exposition of Painting Conservation held at BkM in October 1962. The event attracted a diverse group of international professionals and included demonstrations of equipment and materials for use in conservation such as x-radiography units, polarizing filters for photography, and a vacuum hot table. Other segments in the film include the examination of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italian painting on canvas using raking and



transmitted light; a lining performed on the vacuum hot table; fitting a painting in its frame using conservation methods; evaluating a suspected El Greco forgery using x-radiography, solvent testing, and a stereomicroscope; and an overview of the museum protocols for borrowing Jan Jansz Mostaert's *Adoration of the Magi* from the Rijksmuseum.

Both films offer a unique glimpse into mid-century American conservation practices. Of particular interest are the descriptions of each material selected for treatment and the rationale behind each process, as these details are often absent in the historic records.

Many thanks to Molly Seegers, museum archivist, for pushing to have these films available online and to Jessica Ford, former BkM conservator, for assisting in the research.

Lauren Bradley  
Associate Paintings Conservator  
Brooklyn Museum  
[Lauren.bradley@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:Lauren.bradley@brooklynmuseum.org)

## THUNDERING WATER WHEREVER THE EYE LOOKS

The mid-July floods in Europe devastated parts of Germany, The Netherlands, and Belgium this summer. Along with the loss of life, homes, and infrastructure, cultural heritage sites and collections were also impacted. The German Association of Conservator-Restorers (VDR) posted a statement of support and is acting as a point of resource during recovery efforts:

*"Thundering water wherever the eye looks ... At the moment, our thoughts and our sympathy go with the many people affected by the flood, especially the numerous fatalities and their relatives and friends.*

*"We feel great horror and sadness when reporting on ever new bad facts in the disaster areas. Humanitarian and technical aid are paramount here. We already know today that it will take a very long time until the human tragedy that is unfolding before our eyes is overcome and dealt with. Great efforts and considerable financial*



NW Bad Münstereifel, Germany: flooding "Hochwasser" 2021. © Roland Rossner / DSD

resources will be needed to restore the infrastructure, make houses habitable again or rebuild them. As restorers and preservationists, we are professionally involved in the protection of cultural assets. That is why our thoughts go further into the phase of damage assessment, property security and damage repair to affected cultural assets, monuments and in the museums.

*“The VDR and its members therefore offer help for what we can do professionally and with high quality every day: SAVE CULTURAL HERITAGE!”*

*“The Presidency would like to thank all of our colleagues who have put their expertise into the service of disaster management in the regions affected by the floods and who will continue to do so in the coming months.”*

Sven Taubert  
President, Association of Restorers

Read the full statement and find contacts and resources for help on the VDR website: <https://www.restauratoren.de/hochwasser/>

In further discussion with Patricia Brozio (VDR Press and Public Relations Officer), she was able to give an update on cultural heritage clean-up efforts:

*“Relief measures are already underway at the city archive in Stolberg near Aachen, where the Cologne emergency association is also using its unique cultural property protection container. This is a mobile workstation that contains equipment, installation and material for the initial supply of cultural assets. Today in Stolberg the salvage of the museum property from the museum in the Torburg begins.”*

*“There is a group on Facebook in which the rescue measures in Stolberg can be followed up on a daily basis and pictures can also be seen: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327562312335571/>”*

*“Otherwise the situation in the affected areas is still somewhat confusing, so it is not yet clear which (architectural) monuments, museums and other cultural institutions are affected... In addition, this week we addressed the interior ministries of the five affected federal [German] states, where the crisis management staff is located, with the offer to use the expertise of our members, as we have been keeping lists of who has relevant experience in disaster relief since last year.”*

*“In addition, we are of course currently in contact with many other associations and organizations so that aid and donation campaigns can be bundled as much as possible.”*



Dernau in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany after the July 2021 flood. Image taken by Alina Bökert.



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Mosses and lichens infested stone structure: before conservation. Image courtesy of Saiful Bakhrī.



# INNOVATIVE PLANT-BASED CONSERVATION MATERIALS IN INDONESIA: CITRONELLA ESSENTIAL OIL

By Saiful Bakhri

*Indonesia, like many other economically developing countries, faces a wide range of conservation challenges from education and skill gaps to natural disasters and climate conditions. In regard to the latter, with relative humidity ranges between 70 and 90%, Indonesia's cultural heritage is constantly threatened by biodeterioration. Heritage buildings are often infested with agents of biodeterioration like mosses and lichens.*

*To cope with this, the Borobudur Conservation Office (BCO), as the country's agency responsible for conservation research and development, has developed a range of methods for removing this biodeterioration.*

From the late 1990s to the 2000s, to remove agents of bio-deterioration from the stone surface, the BCO used a paste made from a mixture of sodium bicarbonate, carboxymethyl cellulose, Aquamolone (tetrasodium salt) and Arkopal (nonylphenol ethoxylate). While the paste proved to be effective in removing mosses and lichens, some of these products are harmful to humans and the environment. From the 2000s onwards, along with UNESCO's recommendation, the BCO has been exploring and scientifically investigating safer and more environmentally friendly materials to be used in cultural heritage conservation. BCO have been engaged with traditional communities, academics and local home industries to find plant-based materials and traditional methods that can help them to understand and conserve cultural heritage. Recently, they successfully developed citronella essential oil as an emulsion to remove mosses and lichens from stone surfaces.

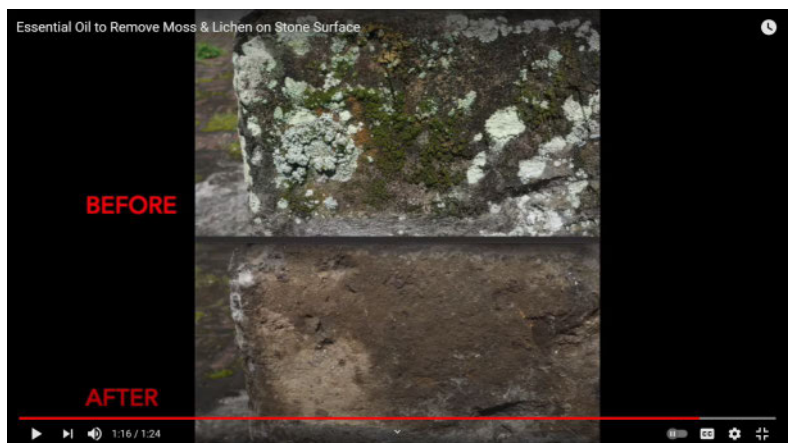
There are many ways to produce essential oils, and in Indonesia citronella essential oil is generally produced through steam distillation of citronella (*Cymbopogon nardus*). As a major exporter of a variety of essential oils products, it is common to find traditional essential oils steam distillation facilities in Java and Bali. Therefore, essential oils are less expensive and more accessible for Indonesians.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Every 100 ml of Citronella essential oil is emulsified into one litre of distilled water with 50 ml of Tween 80 (Polysorbate 80) surfactant. The oil is first mixed with the surfactant, creating a milky white solution, and then the distilled water is added. The prepared solution is poured into a spray bottle. A handheld pump pressurised spray bottle (click [here](#) to see the model used for this treatment) can be used to cover an outdoor surface in a location with limited access to electricity. The BCO recorded that every 900 ml of solution can cover one square metre of stone surface.

To apply, spray the solution directly, with reasonable distance, to the moss and/or lichen infested stone surface. In approximately 24 hours, the agents of biodeterioration will turn brownish indicating that they have died. Then, they can easily be removed with a small bundle of dried coconut fronds (*sapu lidi*), akin to stiff broom bristles. This tool is inexpensive and can easily be found in tropical Southeast Asia. The tool is used in this case because it is hard enough to scrape off the growth, but soft enough to not scratch the stone. Lastly, the surface must be rinsed with clean water to remove any remaining emulsion or biological growth residues.

This method is deemed to last for a year, and is safe for both the conservator and the environment. Last year I had the chance to join the BCO's online course called [BIO-CHEMCO' 20](#) where I gained information on the use of citronella essential oil. Earlier this year my colleagues and I at the Bali Cultural Heritage Preservation Office managed to test this method on a stone structure inside the Canggri Hindu Temple, Gianyar, Bali. We recreated the preparation



A glimpse of the work can be viewed [HERE](#) or by clicking the image above. Video courtesy of Saiful Bakhri.

**Opposite page images:**

**Top:** Spraying the citronella essential oil solution on the stone surface. Image courtesy of Saiful Bakhri.

**Centre:** Dead biodegradation removal with a small bundle of dried coconut fronds (*sapu lidi*). Image courtesy of Saiful Bakhri.

**Bottom:** After dry cleaning is complete and the stone is rinsed with clean water. Image courtesy of Saiful Bakhri.

and application method that had been presented, and it was wonderful to see for ourselves how much easier it was to remove the mosses and lichens once they were dead. We applied this method on 24 February 2021, and I am still continuously monitoring, bi-weekly, the long-term effect of this method on the structure. So far, the biological growth has not returned.

On 9 April 2021, the Director-General of Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Hilmar Farid, was invited to Central Java for a ceremony. It was a ceremony to hand over the intellectual property rights of the use of citronella essential oil to remove biodeterioration from stone cultural heritage surfaces, initiated by the BCO to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia. The ceremony was held to celebrate the achievement of the BCO scientists, along with other involved stakeholders, marking their contribution in inventing this sustainable conservation material and method. To show their gratitude towards the state facilities, the BCO gave the intellectual property rights for this technique to the state. This ceremony, published on social media, is a way to encourage small-to-medium scale essential oil industries to keep producing, because the demand will eventually increase as more government agencies and the wider public begin to use this new product.

The BCO is currently developing other plant-based materials to be used in the care of other types of cultural heritage. I am sure that the exploration, research and development of alternative environmentally friendly conservation materials is one of the answers to promoting sustainable conservation practices.

Click to read more of Saiful Bakhri's research on the IIC Community platform.



**Saiful Bakhri** is an emerging conservator at Bali Cultural Heritage Preservation Office, Gianyar, under the auspices of the Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. He is also a conservation consultant for Museum Pustaka Lontar, Karangasem. Having completed his master's degree in cultural materials conservation at the University of Melbourne, Saiful's expertise lies in the areas of place-based conservation and disaster management for heritage sites and museums.



"Kenz magnified" photograph by Steven Smith (2012). Licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#). Original location [here](#).



# CONSERVATORS WHO WRITE FICTION

By Rebecca Rushfield

*I have long been interested in how the field of conservation is presented to the public. While English language newspapers and general interest magazines will sometimes write about a conservation treatment that was recently completed or a catastrophe that conservators will have to deal with, most people gather their understanding of what conservation is and what conservators do from novels—particularly mystery novels. I have therefore read (or tried to read) many English language novels featuring conservators or restorers.*

Many are ludicrous as they feature a young conservator who has just finished a short course of study and who now has the job of restoring the most valuable of Old Master paintings belonging to a very wealthy private collector. When there is a mystery set in a museum which portrays life in an institution as it really is—along with a robbery or a murder or two—or a story in which a conservator spends more time doing conservation-related work than fighting international terrorists, the author always turns out to be a conservator.

While I am not at all surprised when I hear that a conservator is also a visual artist, I was surprised to discover several mystery writing conservators despite the fact that conservation practice requires a great deal of writing. Intrigued by the dual vocations of these conservators, I decided to look into the world of conservators who are also literary authors, including some who use their conservation practice as a jumping off point and others who don't.

***“Story telling is not the first thing one might associate with conservation, but deciding which moment in an object’s life to preserve is akin to choosing which story it will tell.”***

Conservator-literary authors seem to be a phenomenon of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. However, there are earlier models. In 1865, Henry Merritt (1822-1877)<sup>1</sup>, who according to the National Portrait Gallery’s database of [British picture restorers, 1600-1950](#) was recorded in the 1851 and 1861 censuses as a picture restorer, published *Robert Dalby and his World of Troubles*, a fictional autobiography which covers his life as a restorer under a pseudonym in 1865. Tom Mallin (1927-1977) earned his living as a London picture restorer working mainly on 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century paintings while also producing [his own art works](#). In 1962 he completed his first novel and by his death fifteen years later had written numerous novels, plays, and television scripts, [many of which were published or performed](#).

Some conservators have been writers for much of their lives. Paintings conservator Joyce Hill Stoner first started re-writing plays in the sixth grade and wrote her first musical in the eighth grade (March 4, 2021 email). Paper conservator Lien Gyles loved to write stories when she was a child; she stopped in her teens but “kept them all swirling around in my head instead” (March 1, 2021 email). Lucy Branch, principal at Antique Bronze Ltd., has been writing stories since she was about fourteen years old. In an interview she noted, “I remember writing through my break-times at school and not being able to bear to stop” (Armstrong, 2015). Retired conservator of art on paper Christine Smith told me that, before she “entered the all-consuming life of graduate school and then a conservation career, I wrote literature and made collages” (February 20, 2021 email).

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1. I must thank Sally Woodcock for telling me about Merritt in a March 10, 2021 email message. She also told me that “while commuting by bus from Cambridge to London when I was too hard up to afford the train I did while away the journeys writing a Mills & Boon romantic novel *The Lady Varnishes* as a joke.”

Story telling is not the first thing one might associate with conservation, but deciding which moment in an object's life to preserve is akin to choosing which story it will tell. While critics of certain restoration projects have accused conservators of "fictionalizing the past" (Hauenstein, 2019), story-telling can be seen as part of the conservation process.

"Every artifact in a museum's collection has a story to tell... A key decision conservators make early on in any project is which moment in the object's story they want to preserve" (Mohaupt, 2017). One of the questions Lucy Branch asks herself when restoring historic objects is "'what is missing from this object? What can I not see?' and 'Why might evidence have been lost?' It has made me very interested in what's absent from history and why" (Armstrong, 2015).

Conservation work can be preparation for literary storytelling; this goes beyond conservators having to write many technical reports and grant proposals. Architectural conservator Amanda Stauffer has noted that, "Conservation requires you to have painstaking attention to detail. We document cracks no thicker than hairlines, a church ceiling might get painted a color based on microscopic analysis of a single paint chip the size of a splinter..." (Klepper, 2018). Lucy Branch noted that "conservation is quite forensic. We're looking for clues. So it's a tiny step from conservation to a murder mystery" (Telephone conversation March 9, 2021). Retired objects conservator Miriam Clavir expressed the same sentiments to me in a March 22, 2021 call, saying that during her working life she saw many things that would fit into a mystery including scalpels and chemicals, the natural history museum bug rooms, and the analytical techniques that can be used to solve mysteries. Thinking about other conservator-literary authors, Joyce Hill Stoner noted that those conservators, "know a great deal about something fairly arcane and that is fascinating to others, and they are able to turn it into great story telling" (March 4, 2021 email).

Many conservator-literary authors set their stories within museums or conservation labs, frustrated by the presentation of conservators in fiction and wanting to inform the public about what really goes on. Retired Canadian Conservation Institute conservator Bob Barclay said, "Some of the stuff novelists write about museums is ridiculous. They should sit down with a curator and do some research" (Telephone conversation, March 4, 2021). Leslie Carlyle, recently retired from a position as professor of paintings conservation in Lisbon, said that she "had read many art crime novels and found they often got it wrong ... so I thought whatever I did had to be at least better on that front" (March 5, 2021 email). Speaking of novels featuring conservators, Rosa Lowinger, principal of RLA Conservation said, "None of these books have ever been written by an actual conservator. By someone who has held a scalpel... One of the scenes that I already know I'm going to write [in a forthcoming novel about a conservator] is someone teaching someone how to roll a proper swab. It's not easy. You gotta know how to do it. Your instinct is to take a big wad of cotton and start rolling, but no... you need to take wisps of the ends and slowly tease it into the shape you want" (FAIC Oral History interview, May 20, 2020). This

Right: Joyce Hill Stoner (book, lyrics, and part of the music) with the cast and fellow creators of "Larger than Life: Inside the mind of NC Wyeth" (1999). Image courtesy of Joyce Hill Stoner. See a clip of the musical [here](#).



Above: Lucy Branch holding her novels in her studio. Image courtesy of Lucy Branch.



Below: Author Lien Gyles (penname Lynn Maver) holding her books. Image courtesy of Lien Gyles.



level of accurate detail is found in conservation related novels written by conservators.

Students in the Hamilton Kerr Institute Summer 2020 Pandemic Lockdown Book Club were impressed by the “lovely incidental details [in Leslie Carlyle’s *Masterpiece of Deception*] which resonated strongly with everyday experience in the studio. At one point, the protagonist turned off the switch controlling the air exhaust unit that removed solvent vapours. ‘She felt immediate relief when the noise had subsided: she hadn’t been conscious of the constant hum until it stopped’” (March 5, 2021 email from L. Carlyle).

The need to share with the public what their work is really like has inspired many of the conservator-literary authors. It was in the 1970s that Kate Olivier, then a conservator of paintings in private practice in London, first had the idea for a television program (never produced) set in the conservation department of a university museum and featuring a female conservator in her early thirties, a retired conservator, an intern, and a museum director. There would be financial difficulties in the museum and cover-ups. “It was conceived as a soap opera that would teach people about museums” (Telephone conversation, March 4, 2021). Lucy Branch also wanted to make the public understand what was so special about her work, “opening a door to what conservators do without being dry.” She has said, “I love metals. I’ve always felt they were special... I wanted to explain to people why they were special and bring them into the very tactile experience of working with metal...” (Armstrong, 2015).

Conservators are not alone in using fiction to inform the public about their work. Scientists use fiction as a means of spreading knowledge about their work to the general public. “When there is a relationship [between research and literary fiction], literary fiction becomes a dissemination channel and opens an array of policy tools to increase transfer of knowledge and promote public understanding of science... A scientist that publishes a fiction book enters into new cultural circles of editors, other writers, readers, etc... Regardless of the book contents and of whether it transfers scientific knowledge, its author would have more chances to let the public know about his/her research” (Azagra-Caro et al., 2018). Scientist-literary authors as well as conservator-literary authors exhibit multipotentiality, “an educational and psychological term referring to the ability and preference of a person, particularly one of strong intellectual or artistic curiosity to excel in two or more different fields” (Elhanboushy, 2019). In speaking about his life, retired objects conservator Don Williams has said that “part of my success in this poly-dimensional disciplinary world was that I could synthesize information from completely unconnected sources” (Uhl, 2017).

Do conservator-literary authors think of their conservation and their writing as two equally important jobs? Or do they see writing as a respite from the pressures of their conservation “day jobs”—a term which implies that one’s passions lie elsewhere than in their everyday work (St. John Mandel, 2009). Joyce Hill Stoner “has basically done both

Joyce Hill Stoner is the lyricist for "Shanghai Sonatas". Watch the 3-minute trailer of the workshop event for the musical (September 2020). Video courtesy of Creator and Composer Xiang "Sean" Gao. Click the image to watch the video.

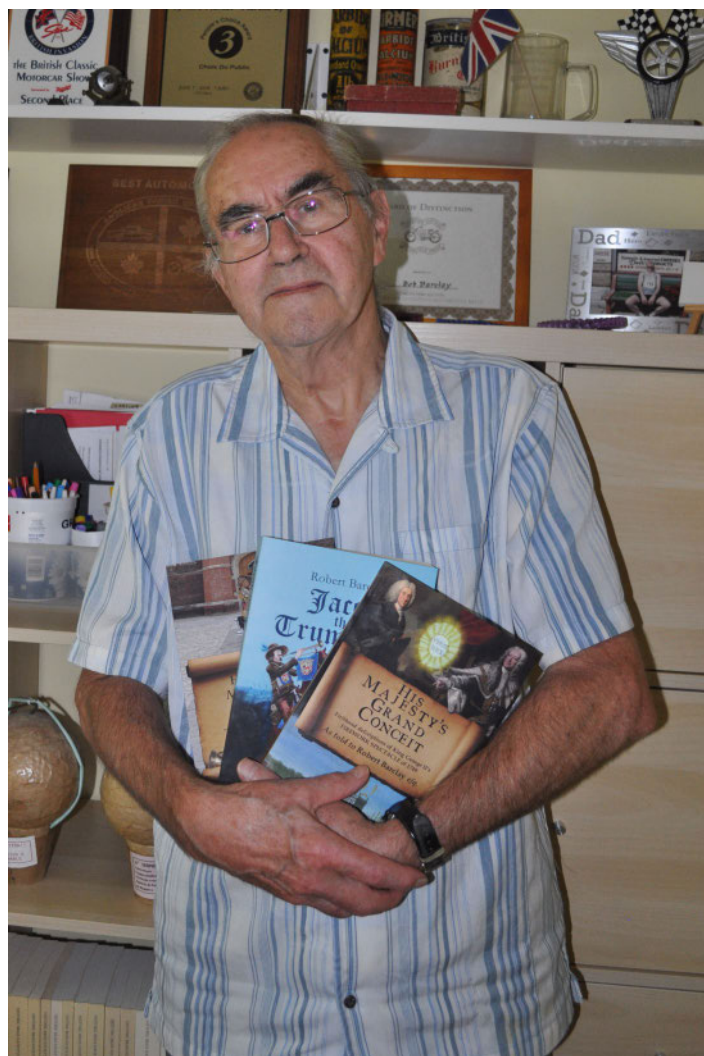


[writing for the] theater and art conservation simultaneously" most of her working life (March 4, 2021 email). To her they are equal.

For many, writing or story development is a respite from the tediousness of conservation work. Don Williams remembers working in the silver objects conservation lab at the Winterthur Museum, polishing and lacquering their monumental collections. "To amuse ourselves, my coworker Helen and I made up stories—or more precisely, story outlines." (March 4, 2021 email). Lucy Branch thinks about her stories when she is working on large, long term projects. For her, literary writing is an escape from the pressures of life. Her fiction is something that "takes her out of reality" (Telephone conversation, March 9, 2021). Lien Gyles expressed similar sentiments: "Writing is what keeps me sane; it de-stresses me, even if I only manage ten minutes a day" (Maver, 2018).

Writing can be an escape because it is different from the hands-on work some conservators perform all day. A British book conservator noted that because her job is mostly practical work, when she gets home she still has the energy to sit down and write. If she had a job that required her to be in front of a screen all day and do work-related writing, it "would bleed over too much into my creative writing and reduce the energy I have left for it in my spare time." This conservator has asked not to be named. In an email she wrote, "While I don't mind my conservator colleagues knowing that I write... I'd rather remain anonymous in an article for a wider audience."

Joyce Hill Stoner has expressed this concern that a conservator who is also a literary writer might be seen as less than serious about one's conservation work: "As you don't want to know your dentist tap dances, you don't want to know your painting conservator writes musicals. So you just live two separate lives" (Stoner, 2019). Perhaps as a means of keeping their lives separate, some conservators have written under pen names. Dr. Leslie Carlyle wrote as "Judy Lester". Belgian-born Lien Gyles writes as "Lynn Maver," a



Author Bob Barclay holding his books.  
Image courtesy of Bob Barclay.

name she chose because she thought a more English name would fit better with the stories she writes (March 1, 2021 email). We know the real identities of Lester and Maver. Could there be other conservator-literary authors writing under pseudonyms whose conservation identities are not yet known? I would welcome information about them as well as information about conservator-literary authors who write in languages other than English.

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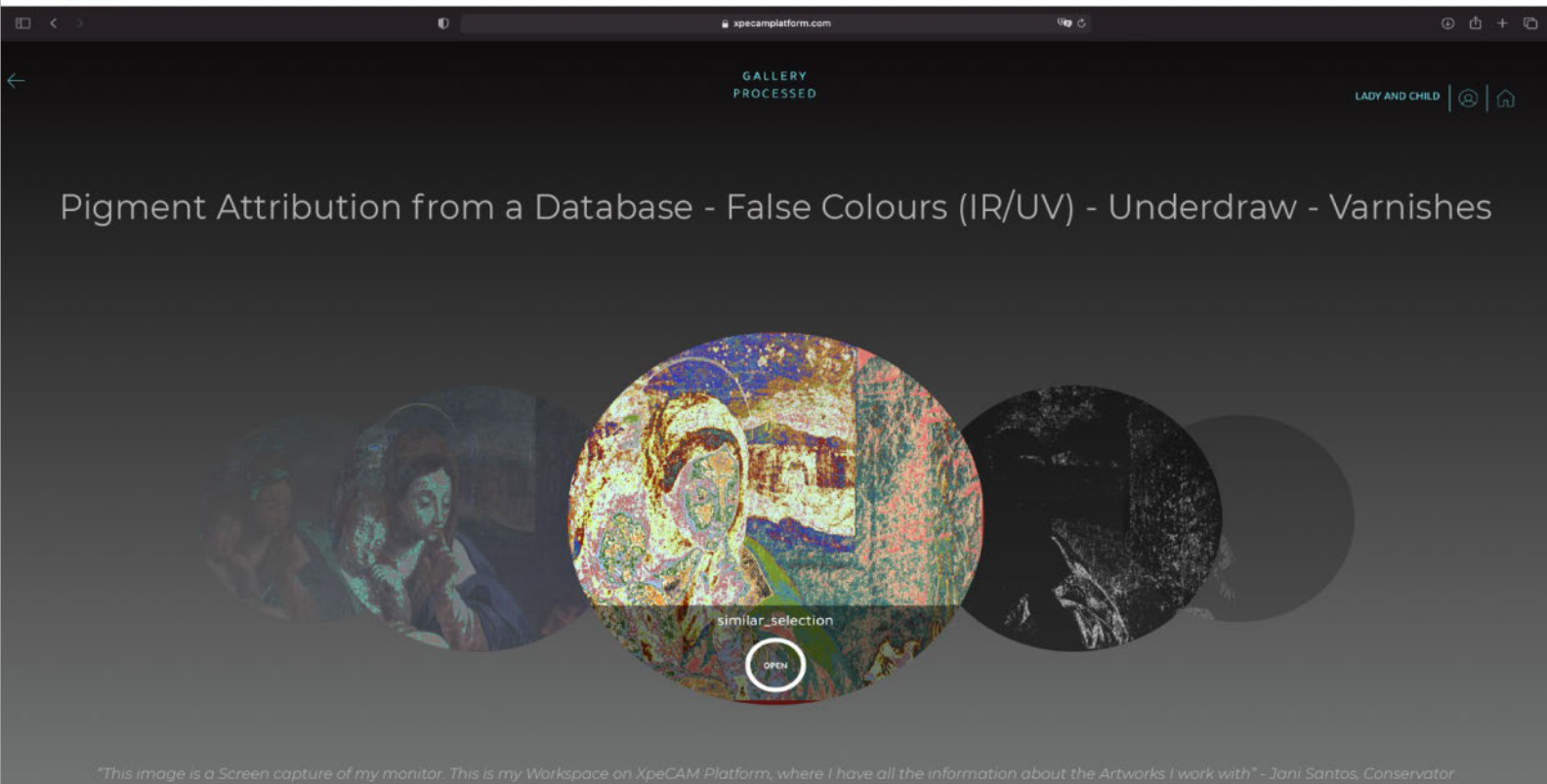
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Click the **BONUS CONTENT** link to see Rebecca's compiled list of conservator-literary authors and their published novels, plays, and poems, and pick out a few to new titles to read and enjoy this summer!



**Rebecca Anne Rushfield**, a New York City-based consultant in conservation, received her master's degree in art history and diploma in conservation from the NYU Institute of Fine Arts. Her special interests include the history of conservation, the transfer of conservation knowledge by both formal and informal means, and the public perception of conservation and conservators.



## OPPORTUNITIES FUND: APPLICATIONS DUE 30 AUGUST

HELPING TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT CONSERVATION COMMUNITY

There is increasing awareness that alongside the global economic, social and health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we are still facing a climate emergency. IIC has many members who often find themselves working in extreme and hostile environments – at times with very few resources or little support. We want to respond to these challenges – offering practical as well as moral support to our members and helping germinate the new approaches that we will need, as conservation professionals and as members of society, in the years ahead.

IIC is therefore radically revising its Opportunities Fund – expanding the funding available and opening it up to ALL members within two strands: Needs-Based and Learning-Focused IIC Stipends (up to £250) and Seed Funding Grants (up to £750).

Learn more about the grants, how to apply and helping build the fund [HERE](#).



## WINNER ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2021 FIRST-TIME AUTHOR ESSAY PRIZE

*The prize for first-time authors in IIC's journal Studies in Conservation was set up in 2019, by IIC and our publishing partner Taylor and Francis Routledge (T&F). The selection of the prize is made by IIC's director of publications and news editors, with input from others including IIC's executive director. The prize is designed to showcase and give greater access to papers that are useful to a wide range of both IIC members and the profession generally. IIC and T&F combine forces to publicise the winner, while T&F offers free access to the paper if it is not already available through open access.*

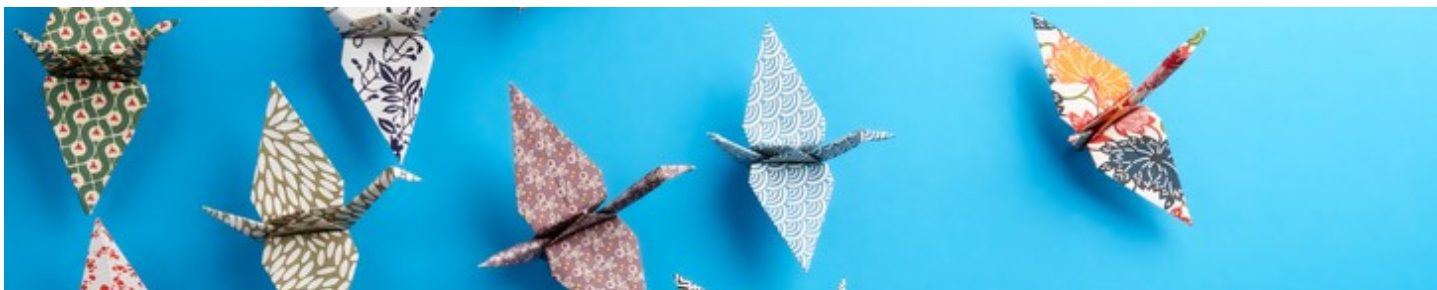
Which papers are eligible? The first-named author must be publishing for the first time in *Studies in Conservation* or in one of its supplemental volumes and must have published within the most recent IIC membership year (for instance, this year's finalist papers were published between July 2020 and June 2021). This author need not have been a member when the paper was published, though it is encouraged, of course, for the author to join the IIC family.

The winning paper must be clearly written and easily digestible even by professionals with different specialisms, roles and knowledge within the cultural heritage sector. Likewise, the paper must also be applicable to a broad range of readers, meaning it is likely to be read, used and cited to make an impact on practice. Considering these criteria, there were plenty of quality papers to choose from. This is the second time the prize has been offered, and this year the eligible candidates included the full papers (but not poster summaries) published in the online preprints for the IIC Edinburgh Congress 2020.

In 2021 the paper that has won the first-time author prize is "Experimental and Numerical Analysis of a Novel Display Case Design: Case Study of the Renovated Anne Frank House" by Karin Kompatscher et al. It has already been published with open access and is available here: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393630.2019.1703401>

The paper presents a solution to, and an assessment of, a common dilemma: all museums want to increase public in-person access to our heritage, and it is often conservators who must come up with a way of doing this while minimising risk to the objects. This process includes identifying the risks and working out how best to reduce them. If the solution offers lower energy use and is thus sustainable, so much the better! This paper discusses all these elements, and readers are sure to make use of the different aspects of case design and the guiding principles discussed—which is why this paper is sure to be widely read and deserves this year's award.

Dr Joyce H Townsend  
*IIC Director of Publications*



## IIC INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP MENTORING PROGRAM

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC WORKS

Against a background of change, we know that members at every career stage are responding to fluctuations in the job market or are wanting to develop leadership skills and strengthen networks. Consequently, we are seeing a good mix of participants take part in the International Leadership Mentoring Programme—from early career members looking to set up as freelancers and those seeking a change of direction and starting their own business, to senior staff building confident teams amidst a backdrop of significant change in the sector.

Given the changes that conservators and cultural heritage professionals now face, the next few years are going to be among the most challenging—and interesting—in our history. We know it is all the more essential that we help our members to become confident in managing situations, responding and adapting to change, while also bringing flair, courage and imaginative thinking to the big societal issues that are affecting the profession—from Covid to climate change.

We are committed to helping our members contribute to the profession through skilled advocacy and ethical practice as well as developing the conservation field through investing in people and talent. Our aim with this programme is to help our members develop their potential, build their confidence and help advance their career goals while ultimately growing as leaders.

The programme is underpinned by mentoring champions Rachel Sabino (IIC Council member and conservator, Chicago), Tom Learner (head of conservation at Getty Conservation Institute) and Sarah Stannage (IIC executive director) with the expertise of Bev Morton and Lucy Hawthorne, two very experienced career coaches and facilitators from My Next Chapter and the Clore Leadership Programme.

We know that peer learning is a power approach to professional development, so we have tailored the programme to suit the needs of our members, providing the opportunity to participate within a cohort of peers to test ideas and explore different elements of leadership (from authentic leadership to leading with impact). Members have access to online learning resources on the IIC Community platform and also benefit from taking part in one-to-one mentoring sessions over a two-month period with a sector leader to help strengthen their support networks and achieve their career goals.

“Shifting the program to a cohort model couldn't have come at a better time when so many of our members have been thrust into unfamiliar and unintended environments all whilst feeling more isolated than ever before. As a mentor it is highly rewarding to appraise your own trajectory and realize, almost by surprise, how far you have come and that you have a great deal to offer”.

*Rachel Sabino*  
IIC Council Member and Mentoring Champion

“The IIC mentoring program has been such a wonderful opportunity to connect with peers and sector leaders across the world. Through our mentoring group, I have learnt about the career paths of my mentor and fellow mentees, and the incremental steps in both museum and private practice that contribute to successful and varied careers in conservation. In addition to receiving practical advice and personal guidance, having such a supportive and accessible mentoring group has given me both the encouragement and confidence to take the next steps of my conservation career”.

*Sophie Croft*  
IIC International Leadership Mentoring Participant



"Being able to share our doubts and interests with mentors is an invaluable opportunity. They provide us with advice from their own experience and, by sharing with us their professional paths, they help us to strengthen our self-confidence in order to achieve our own professional goals."

*Luciana Murcia*  
IIC International Leadership Mentoring Participant

## HOW TO APPLY AND JOIN THE PROGRAMME

Whatever your current aspirations, do consider joining us for the next cohort due to start in September 2021. The programme is open to early career, individual members and Fellows of IIC only. You can find out more on how to apply to our [International Leadership Mentoring Programme](#).

The deadline to join the September cohort is 30 August. The programme is kindly supported by [Tru Vue Inc.](#)

## FEATURED JOB LISTINGS

### Director, Objects and Textiles Conservation

Employer: Art institute of Chicago

Location: Chicago, USA

Salary Start: 95,000 (USD)

Contract: Full-time

Summary: Reporting to the Grainger Executive Director of Conservation and Science, plans and directs the work of Objects and Textiles Conservation and establishes procedures for collection care, treatment, research and examination of 3D objects and textiles in the museum collection... (click link for full summary)

Application deadline: 8 August 2021

### Curator of 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century Works on Paper (M/F/X)

Employer: Rijksmuseum

Location: Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Salary Range: 3,744-5,214 (Euro) per month

Contract: Full-time, Permanent

Summary: The curator will work within the team of twelve curators and researchers of the Rijksprentenkabinet, as well as with the museum's curators, conservators, information specialists and registrars. The curator is responsible for the museum's holdings of 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century drawings and prints... (click link for full summary)

Application deadline: 14 August 2021

### Curator of 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Drawings (M/F/X)

Employer: Rijksmuseum

Location: Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Salary Range: 3,744-5,214 (Euro) per month

Contract: Full-time, Permanent

Summary: The curator will work within the team of twelve curators and researchers of the Rijksprentenkabinet, as well as with the museum's curators, conservators, information specialists and registrars. The curator is responsible for the

museum's holdings of 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century drawings... (click link for full summary)

Application deadline: 14 August 2021

### Assistant Scientist

Employer: Getty Conservation institute

Location: Los Angeles, USA

Salary range: 64,827-84,336 (USD)

Contract: Full-time (three-year, limited-term position)

Summary: To provide analytical and research support to our Managing Collection Environments Initiative (MCE). MCE... (click link for full summary)

Application deadline: 21 August 2021

### POST A JOB THROUGH IIC

*It is free for everyone to post a job at our standard tier and get noticed by thousands of conservators and heritage scientists who visit the [IIC site](#).*

*Featured listings are £100 or FREE to IIC Institutional Members. These will appear at the top of our job listings, will also be promoted on social media, and will now be featured in News in Conservation. If you would like a featured listing, simply tick the appropriate box on our [job listing form](#) and we will be in touch to arrange payment. If you have any queries, do contact us at: [office@iiconservation.org](mailto:office@iiconservation.org)*

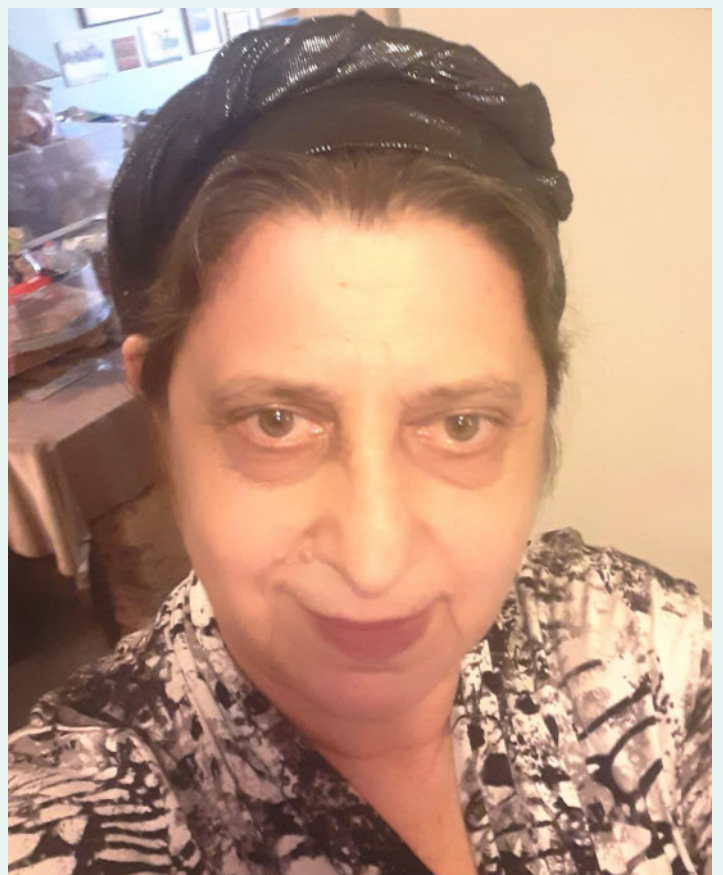
## FELLOWSHIP CORNER

**Sarah Scaturro** is the Eric and Jane Nord Chief Conservator at the Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio, USA. Previously she was the head conservator of the Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and assistant fashion curator and textile conservator at the Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, also in New York City. Besides developing her conservation leadership and finding solutions for a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive field, Sarah's research areas include conservation theory and history and the preservation of synthetic materials, specifically thermoplastic polyurethane. She is a doctoral student at Bard Graduate Center, writing her dissertation on the history of costume conservation in North America and the UK.



IIC Fellow Sarah Scaturro is the Eric and Jane Nord Chief Conservator at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Image courtesy of Sarah Scaturro.

**Rebecca Anne Rushfield**, a New York City based consultant in conservation, received her master's degree in art history and diploma in conservation from the NYU Institute of Fine Arts. She was one of the organizers of the symposium "The Conservation Legacies of the Florence Flood" (November 2006) which commemorated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that catastrophic event. She is co-editor of *Conservation of Easel Paintings* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2012; revised edition 2020). She has been associated with the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation Oral History Project for thirty years and is its associate director. Since 2017, she has helped to organize the IIC's "Point of the Matter" dialogues. Her special interests include the history of conservation, the transfer of conservation knowledge by both formal and informal means, and the public perception of conservation and conservators.



Rebecca Rushfield FIIC, is co-editor of *Conservation of Easel Paintings* (2012, revised edition 2020). Image courtesy of Rebecca Rushfield.

## MEET OUR TRUSTEES

**Isobel Griffin** has been an IIC trustee since 2019. Shortly after joining IIC Council she became the chair of the local organising committee for the 2020 Congress in Edinburgh, and although this eventually became a fully virtual event, the committee was nonetheless able to deliver an excellent package of virtual tours showcasing Scotland's cultural heritage. Following on from this, Isobel has taken over from Austin Nevin as chair of the technical committee, overseeing the selection of abstracts which will be worked up into papers and posters for the next congress, as well as the peer reviewing of the finished articles.

Following a first degree at the University of Cambridge which combined natural sciences with the history of art, Isobel studied wall painting conservation at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She then undertook a year-long environmental monitoring and control internship at the National Trust before moving to Scotland to begin her first job as the preventive conservator for National Museums Scotland. She has lived in Scotland ever since, working for several years at the National Trust for Scotland and the National Library of Scotland and then moving to the National Galleries of Scotland in 2019 where she is currently head of conservation.

As her career history demonstrates, Isobel is comfortable working with a wide range of both moveable and immovable heritage, but she has a particular passion for historic buildings. She therefore leapt at the opportunity in 2009 to undertake a collaborative PhD between the University of Edinburgh and National Museums Scotland, based at the National Museum of Flight which occupies a Second World War airfield in East Lothian near Isobel's home. Her PhD thesis was entitled *Deterioration mechanisms of historic cement renders and concrete*.

Isobel has been involved with the Institute of Conservation (Icon) throughout her career. Having attained professional accreditation herself in 2005, she volunteered as an assessor for Icon's accreditation scheme from 2009 until 2019. She has also been a member of the committee for the Icon Scotland group since 2014, and in her current role as vice chair, her responsibilities have included chairing the "Take Five" webinar series. She is committed to broadening access to conservation through programmes of internships and volunteering, and her role in the Icon Scotland group allows her to contribute towards the skills development of the next generation of conservators.

Isobel's research interests have been as eclectic as her career, with a PhD-generated batch of publications relating to historic building materials followed by several articles about conservation within libraries. She recently resumed a life-long interest in conservation standards by joining B560, the British Standards Institute committee for the conservation of tangible cultural heritage, which is responsible for the UK input to CEN/TC 346. Through this she has been holding a series of round table discussions with conservation professionals in the UK, with the aims of promoting the use of standards and identifying their perceived strengths and weaknesses.



Image of Isobel Griffin. Photo taken by Ryan Gibson, supplied courtesy of Isobel Griffin.

# CREATIVE SOLUTIONS ALLOW CONSERVATION STUDENTS AT WEST DEAN COLLEGE TO EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS WITH A DIFFERENCE

*When lockdown looked set to put a pause on external placements for MA conservation studies students at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation, the College benefitted from several creative solutions, enabling students to continue to gain valuable work experience.*

Students specialising in ceramics and related materials undertook an online work placement for five weeks with The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, USA - the online placement was the first of its kind for both the Museum and the Programme.

Students communicated regularly with conservation colleagues and those from departments across the Museum. They shared presentations, assignments, group discussions, tasks and advice over Microsoft Teams, offering insights into professional practice, skills development and the roles within the Museum as well as incredibly supportive one-to-one tutorials.



One task involved Roman archaeological glass objects donated for the task to be assessed during the placement. Conservation treatments were considered and discussed among the team of students and Museum staff.

As Lorna Calcutt, subject tutor, ceramics and related materials at West Dean College, explained:

“It was a great privilege that our students at West Dean College were chosen as a pilot for the Museum's online placement scheme instigated by the pandemic. We are extremely grateful to the staff and colleagues at The Corning Museum of Glass for their time, commitment and enthusiasm to support our students so effectively on this placement.”

Another creative opportunity for students specialising in books, ceramics and metals was to undertake their placement at the College itself and benefit from unparalleled access to the West Dean Collection. Students worked closely with the Collections team and were tasked with condition reporting, surveying, documenting and cataloguing items; with unique access to various significant objects in the collection. Books students conducted a detailed survey of the College's William Beckford Book Collection, discussing everything from bindings to the ethics of collecting. They then went on to conduct a sample survey of the House Collection, which includes some rare 16<sup>th</sup>-century editions.

Rose Zhou, MA conservation studies (ceramics and related materials) commented:

“While the pandemic situation impeded our original plan to do external work placements, it offers us a chance to have a peek into the fantastic collection at the College, which has such great educational value, and is yet to be further explored. For me as a ceramics conservation student, it's the first opportunity for me to carry out a condition survey and to work on objects within an historic house context. While archival materials and various mounting systems from original display settings linked the objects with the history of the house and the family, the objects themselves also tell their own stories through body type, design, labels and old repairs. Although the work placement started tentatively, it really benefited me with experiences that I would otherwise not acquire. I really appreciated our Collections team, who spared no effort to make this experience worthwhile for us.”

West Dean College of Arts and Conservation has an international reputation for excellence and is a full partner of the University of Sussex. Students regularly work with material from the College's amazing Collection and Archive within pathway workshops. For conservation and fine art study opportunities, see [www.westdean.ac.uk](http://www.westdean.ac.uk). For conservation studies specialisms including ceramics, clocks, furniture and metalwork applications are open now for September 2021 study.

West Dean College of Arts and Conservation can be found on Social Media:

<https://twitter.com/westdeancollege>  
<https://www.facebook.com/westdeancollege>  
<https://www.instagram.com/westdeancollege/>  
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**Left image:** Student intern during collection survey. West Dean College of Arts and Conservation.

**Right image:** Examination of a glass object as part of student internship. Image credit: Rose Zhou



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14-16th  
Oct. 2021

Registrations from 15th August to 3rd October

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# THE FACES OF CONSERVATION

The Sixth Edition of the  
IIC Student & Emerging  
Conservator Conference



IIC Student and Emerging Conservators Conference  
NOVA School of Science and Technology  
October 2021, via Zoom

## WHO, WHERE AND WHEN?

A group of students from the School of Science and Technology from the NOVA University of Lisbon are organising the first full virtual edition of the conference.

The conference will take place on the 14th, 15th and 16th October 2021, via Zoom.

Take a look at our website where you can register:  
<https://eventos.fct.unl.pt/secc2021-the-faces-of-conservation>

Reach out to us if you need further information:  
[iic.secc.2021@campus.fct.unl.pt](mailto:iic.secc.2021@campus.fct.unl.pt)

## THE FACES OF CONSERVATION

### IIC STUDENT & EMERGING CONSERVATOR CONFERENCES

have been bringing together conservation students, emerging conservators and conservation professionals from all-over the world since 2011. These conferences aim to provide a unique environment for participants to share their experiences, expectations and advice regarding a future career in conservation.

Following the previous successful editions, we are delighted to announce that the 6th Student & Emerging Conservator Conference will be held on three consecutive days. **Activities will consist of interactive 'round table' presentations, studio visits and social events. This year all the activities will occur online via Zoom.**

The title of the 2021 conference is a reflection of all of us: professionals at different career stages, working in the most diverse areas and all-over the world. Getting to know one another, the struggles and solutions we all face is the motto for this edition.

## SHORT PROGRAM

### THURSDAY • 14TH OCTOBER • 2021

#### Conservation Sciences and Research

The panel for this session will talk about their experience working in conservation sciences and academia, museum and laboratory research as well as the different idiosyncrasies of the field.

### FRIDAY • 15TH OCTOBER • 2021

#### Conservation and Restoration

Following the same panel structure as the first session, speakers will reflect on the subjective path each emerging conservator can follow when choosing a working area and hands-on environment.

### SATURDAY • 16TH OCTOBER • 2021

#### Preventive Conservation and Management

The panel for the third and last session will discuss their varied experience in prevention and management in conservation, providing insight on the alternative paths of this field.

**We look forward to seeing you!**

# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN CONSERVATION: WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

By Marina Herriges

*It is becoming increasingly hard to ignore the call for action against climate change as well as the evidence of this global crisis, which we can watch first-hand. The United Nations acknowledges that climate change “is a global emergency that goes beyond national borders.” With this in mind, we conservators can do our part to contribute to this agenda, while also making our profession relevant to the world we all live in.*

Many professionals have approached me saying, “we are such a small field; it [environmental sustainability] does not matter.” But I would argue it does matter! I usually say that there is no such thing as too small a field to make a difference. In fact, why would we choose not to contribute if we are passionate about our profession and committed to best practices in preserving heritage for everyone?

We have been seeing the effects of climate change in heritage all over the globe. The increase in floods affecting buildings and cultural sites as well as the rise in insect infestations are just a couple of the consequences of climate change within heritage. Various conservation institutions have been emphasising the importance of environmental sustainability, and IIC wants to inspire and encourage its members to be part of this debate and endeavour. We should re-examine our professional practice to identify which areas we might change and improve. Of course, there is a need to acknowledge that conservation, like many other fields, struggles to achieve the ideal of 100%

*“In fact, why would we choose not to contribute if we are passionate about our profession and committed to best practices in preserving heritage for everyone?”*

environmentally sustainable. In my view, environmental sustainability is still evolving and finding ways to be more effective. Therefore, it is a continuous work in progress that everyone can support.

Environmental sustainability is a subject I have been interested in for a long time, not only within conservation but also in my personal life. I regularly look at my practice and try to make better, more conscientious and greener decisions. I also work with students at the Centre for Textile Conservation, University of Glasgow, to help empower them to be active voices for environmental sustainability within our profession. My enthusiasm for this subject and my understanding that together we can make great things happen, meant that I did not have to think twice when asked to become the *NiC* environmental sustainability associate editor. Starting in this issue, I will be writing a new column intended to deliver content that will help our readers include more environmentally friendly measures in their daily practice. Hopefully, interviews with other conservators will inspire you to think about environmental sustainability and how to approach it in your own work. In addition, shared experiences will help you understand that sustainable conservation practices are actually not as difficult as you might have first thought. The content will be

Image created by and provided by Marina Herriges.



combined with the invaluable environmental sustainability resource centre that IIC is putting together to help conservators all over the world make better informed decisions within their practice.

This is a space to make you feel confident and bring you on board. I am keen on promoting conversation and empowering us to discuss the subject with colleagues at work, present possible solutions or even say "I am not entirely sure, but we can find out together." There is no right or wrong; I believe that in sustainability we are all learning and trying to implement solutions to improve everyone's lives. The more we act and talk about the subject, the more other professionals will realise that they can also be part of the discussion.

So keep an eye out for this column in every *NiC* issue where we will discuss a range of subjects: from reusing and recycling (first tip: reusing is always better than recycling) to more complex topics such as Life Cycle Assessment and green solvents. I look forward to sharing helpful information with you and encouraging us to make better decisions in our daily routines. Please stay connected and share your thoughts and ideas with us. Let's work together towards a more environmentally friendly profession.

*"I believe that in sustainability we are all learning and trying to implement solutions to improve everyone's lives. The more we act and talk about the subject, the more other professionals will realise that they can also be part of the discussion."*



**Marina Herriges** works as a textile conservator at the Textile Conservation Limited Studio in Bristol, UK. She holds an MPhil in textile conservation from the University of Glasgow, where she is currently researching environmental sustainability in conservation education. Marina has worked in a range of different heritage and conservation organizations in Brazil, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.



## “STARTER FOR TEN” ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC WORKS

There is a growing list of resources online for conservators, whether you want to begin by looking at supplies and meaningful recycling, or are part of ambitious plans to start transforming whole businesses or institutions. Here are a few places to look:



### It IS easy being GREEN

*“Whoever said “it’s not easy being green” (and I think it was Kermit the Frog) was not entirely right. Being green is not that difficult in itself. Actually, it can be surprisingly easy to make a difference (and surprisingly cheap), but sometimes we just need a helping hand to work out where to begin, or where to go next.”* ([Green Museums](#), a step-by-step guide)

### Podcast: Conservators Combating Climate Change

If you’re a bit daunted by the idea of complicated toolkits, the ‘[Conservators Combating Climate Change](#)’ podcast, from the Emerging Conservation Professionals Network, is a good place to start. Over two seasons, it mixes the big picture with small practical actions, and a look at how sustainability is interwoven with wider issues of representation and social justice. If you want to understand COP26, who is leading work among conservators and the wider museum sector and what networks are out there? Caitlin Southwick on [How to get involved](#) is a good start on this front.



### Choosing Materials: resources on the footprint of individual products

*“At what cost to our health and to the environment and do we protect, preserve, and exhibit cultural heritage? How can we tell, reliably?”* [Planning a Life Cycle Analysis](#) What swaps can you make in your conservation lab for more sustainable options? AIC’s [Sustainability and Chemicals](#) wiki offers substitutions and alternatives. Cradle to Cradle is a database evaluating materials used in conservation, in a project led by Sarah Nunberg, Sarah Sutton and Mathew Coughlin. [This article](#) lays out what the project hopes to achieve.

## Environmental Guidelines

In 2014, IIC and ICOM-CC finalised **Environmental** Guidelines advocating for collection care that do not assume air conditioning, and passive methods alongside simple technology that is simple to maintain. The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material has since developed **their own plan**, which describes how it plans to survey the current picture of practice in Australia, then develop guidelines for a country with many different climate zones.



## Creating a whole business or institution action plan

Making a whole business or institution environmentally sustainable is often a major piece of work, especially if it involves building renovations. But that shouldn't frighten you off from looking at your whole organisation. Julie's Bicycle, has produced this **seven page guide** to setting up an achievable plan for action – without needing major technical knowledge. The Australian Museum is one of the institutions that has progressed the furthest towards achieving net zero: despite operating out of a historic building. **Listen to Dr Jenny Newell speak** about how they've done it.

## Eco-Friendly Art Packing and Transport: are we stuck in bad habits?

Did you know Dutch museums and galleries have been using a 'turtle' – a reusable crate based on surfboard technology – to transport major artworks around the world for the past 25 years? Learn more in the recent **News in Conservation article, p.16-20** This begs the question: Why hasn't this approach become more widespread? And why does our sector continue to fall back on single-use packaging? IIC Fellow Peter Cannon-Brookes has been thinking about this since the 60s, even before the widespread use of plastics. Read his **NiC essay here (p. 61-63)**.



## Measuring your starting point

*"Targets make things happen"* (Sarah Staniforth, IIC President Emeritus)

Megan de Silva and IIC's Secretary-General Jane Henderson have produced **"Sustainability in Conservation Practice"**, a free-access article from the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*, which is a benchmarking guide specifically for conservators. **Julie's Bicycle recently reported** that only a minority of visual arts businesses currently measure their carbon footprints, but doing so is the first step to making progress in your own business. Find additional **carbon calculators here**, reviewed by green museums leader Sarah Sutton.



## More comprehensive searchable directories

ICCROM has recently launched its Our Collections Matter toolkit in beta, a directory bringing together many projects. It is currently in beta, with 162 resources, and IIC is among the partners. Watch the **one-minute introduction here**, and consider completing this survey to improve the resource.

Sustainability in Conservation is gathering a larger directory including a bibliography, websites, conferences and multi-media, well worth exploring for a particular topic or depth of knowledge. **Explore the new resource centre here**.



# PROVENANCE RESEARCH TODAY

Reviewed by Riza Hussaini

*Provenance Research Today: Principles, Practice, Problems*

Edited by Arthur Tompkins

Lund Humphries, London (December 2020)

Paperback / 224 Pages / \$49.99 USD / £29.99 GBP

ISBN: 9781848222762

This publication could not have come at a better time. A few weeks into reviewing this volume, several news articles, documentaries and tools emerged regarding forgeries, illicit sales, non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and repatriation of looted antiquities and art works.

For those working in heritage or the arts, the term provenance is perhaps no stranger. But how much of provenance do we truly understand? Is it merely the who, what and where of an object? What about everything else in between or even before any obvious documentation? In an increasingly ethics-led and equity-aware world, provenance research and due diligence ought to play a greater part in our work as heritage professionals, from considering acquisitions and conservation treatments to display and interpretation.

Drawing together experts and practitioners of provenance research, this volume takes the reader from the beginnings and aims of provenance research and current practices, right through to the future mitigation of potentially serious legal disputes.

*Provenance Research Today* is a wide ranging primer for those new to, or interested in, the subject. Though that said, anyone already carrying out such research would benefit from the extensive case studies, examples of legal implications and technical scholarship presented. What I appreciate and enjoy about this volume is the openness in sharing and explaining case studies where the disputes reached court and the extent to which people will go to falsify provenance.

This review includes my thoughts on a few of the essays that resonate with my interests and introduced me to provenance practices. This volume is organised into five parts, each carefully chaptered allowing the reader to easily navigate to specific topics. While each of the included papers can stand alone, some authors reference other essays within the volume, allowing the reader to further explore certain ideas. Generously, the book also provides a wide selection of additional resources as well as suggested readings which include online archives, databases and auction catalogues.

We start off with editor Arthur Tompkins illuminating us with “The history and purposes of provenance research”. His chosen case study of Gustav Klimt’s *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer* and two other paintings—also by Klimt—beautifully illustrated the complexities



Book cover, *Provenance Research Today: Principles, Practice, Problems*



# PROVENANCE RESEARCH TODAY

PRINCIPLES, PRACTICE, PROBLEMS

Edited by  
Arthur Tompkins

*Principles, Practice, Problems.* Image courtesy of Lund Humphries.

and importance of provenance research; that is, for “a just and fair” conclusion as to whom what rightfully belongs. The history of the painting’s journey was, at one point in its life, concealed, and efforts by the heirs to see its return were impeded even by the government. Thus is the thorny situation of Nazi-looted art. While unravelling the seizure of artworks during the Nazi era has been (and still is) overwhelming, it has played a pivotal role in the expansion of provenance research in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; a large portion of the case studies in this volume are reflective of this.

It was emphasised that securing a robust and well-rounded provenance requires time and persistence, building on previous information, evaluation and then more investigation.

In several essays, notably in Part V, notions of morality as motivation are referenced as part of the just and fair solution to the reconciliation of cultural property. Moral obligations being of a fluid nature, it was reasoned that to assess and deliver a just and fair solution, a new framework and guidance would be needed. From here on, the traditional tasks of provenance research (that is of authenticating artworks) are already inculcated; these tasks include connoisseurship, scholarship through authentication agencies and examination through catalogue raisonnés, a term recurrently mentioned. Once a matter exclusive to art historians and curators, provenance research has expanded greatly. The depth and breadth of research undertaken now encompasses all the nuances to reflect the multi-disciplinary venture in gaining a full comprehension of the origin and journey of an artwork to establish “whether such transfers are ethically, morally and legally valid and defensible” (p. 23).

In our age of technology, it is widely accepted that any research done is a hybrid between digital and analogue resources. As technology advances, provenance research of heritage objects has shifted more to the digital sphere. The topic of digital scholarship and data-driven research being an interest of mine, I was anticipating more from chapter 6 (by Jason Sousa and Ariane Moser) which seemed rather basic in the first part. It did eventually get up to speed touching briefly on blockchain technologies and utilising machine learning and AI to enhance provenance research. The essay does provide a good grounding in the collection, validation and use of data and databases which are now commonplace and addresses the gamut of misinformation, limitations and outdated databases that are also available. The authors make a timely argument for decentralising institutional data, emphasising the need for cost-effective access to, and the connection of, related databases to share knowledge which would provide greater data access for all. However, it left me wanting more.

There was a shared indication (in chapters 6 & 7) that the art market and art history research are rarely in sync. And as Louisa Wood Ruby pointed out in chapter 7, early art historians seemed quite hesitant in adopting the digital environment as a legitimate resource, perhaps due to conservatism and the complexities of navigating digital databases. This initial disinterest has meant that the move to incorporating and using digital resources has been slow and appears to

still be lagging. Wood Ruby evaluates, in some detail, initiatives and tools that digital advancements contribute to ongoing provenance and art research, particularly the use of specialised imaging technology, investigating web-archives and the increased reception of open data.

This volume does not indulge the reader in the thrilling world of art auctions and sales; rather it unpacks the rigorous (or not) back-of-house operations involved in running auction houses and galleries. To be sure, the book never downplays the impact and influence these organisations and collectors have on the popularity and market value of an artwork or artist.

Susan J. Cooke's essay in chapter 9 is an instructive investigation into how catalogue raisonnés are used in the modern art market ecosphere. The author summed it up deftly saying that the regular audience of the modern catalogue raisonné "are more often users than readers, more likely to scan than pore over its content" (p. 117). As I have little experience evaluating these catalogues, this essay was particularly helpful in my understanding of these catalogues and their place within provenance research; this essay was a welcome read despite it being so far into the volume.

Although the catalogue raisonné purports itself as a complete listing, it can differ between publishers, organisers, and time periods. For example, a previously listed owner may decide to exclude their name from a catalogue raisonné in order to remain anonymous in future editions and are then disguised through punctuation—brackets, back slashes and semicolons—which are also used to imply doubt or gaps in provenance. A limited provenance history may suggest a history that is flawed, perhaps less interesting, or just a very private owner. Yet a highly decorated provenance can also arouse suspicion, and "[a] work's provenance is not a guarantor of artistic authorship any more than its provenance" (p.120). What now seems obvious is that provenance is an interpretive process, and most catalogue raisonnés involve collective input from multiple experts; it is cyclical—to compile a catalogue raisonné involves undertaking provenance research.

*Provenance Research Today* is an informative read with some events discussed resembling that of a blockbuster movie. It is a fascinating and often moving insight into the sometimes dubious activities in the art and antiquities market exposing the unscrupulous practices of buyers and sellers. That the modern approach to provenance research should include computer scientists, imaging specialists, conservators and more to achieve a holistic outcome appears tacit.

There is an underlying sentiment that real change in the system must come from participants in the art market, and this volume highlights the conflict between commercial and national interests and the truth of provenance. Given how recent a more thorough approach to provenance research is in many major institutions, it is likely to take time for the necessary changes to manifest. With an increased interest in transparency in all aspects of life, and the rising profile of restitution of cultural property, increased pressure from outside the art world may well be the impetus needed.



**Riza Hussaini** is a UK-based conservator working with an emphasis on photographic and digital materials. Her research interests include collaborative approaches to digital humanities and promoting linked open data to enhance the conservation landscape. With a people-centred focus to her work, she is dedicated to opening avenues into conservation and advocating for increased representation in the field.

# WHEN GALLERIES SHAKE: EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE MITIGATION FOR MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Review by W. (Bill) Wei

*When Galleries Shake: Earthquake Damage Mitigation for Museum Collections*

By Jerry Podany

Los Angeles: J Paul Getty Museum, 2017

238 pages / \$60.00 / Paperback

ISBN 978-1-60606-522-8

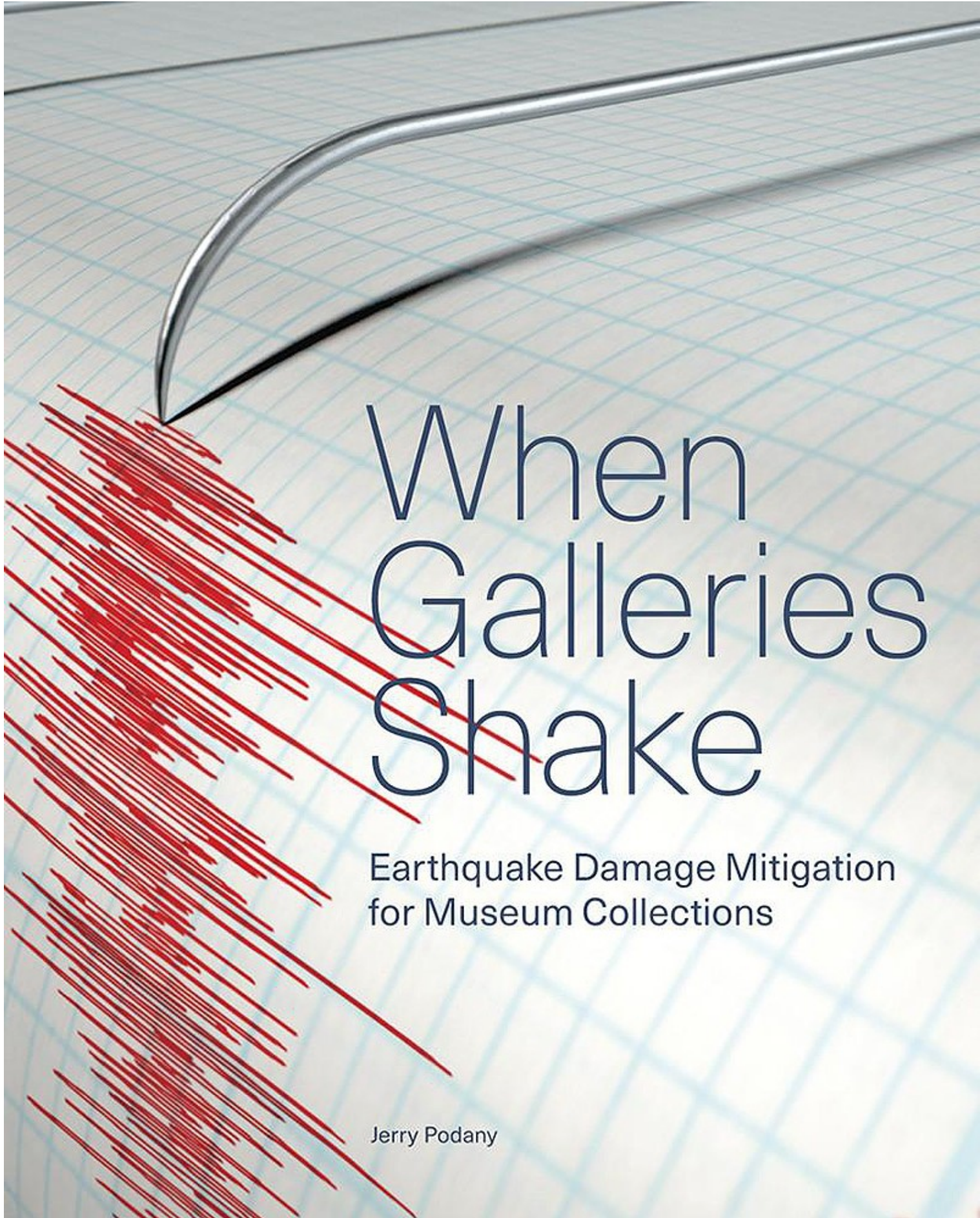
"Tolerable Risk = Acceptable Damage." If readers do not remember anything else from this excellent guide for museums in earthquake prone areas, it should be chapter 7 which is built around this equation. As the author, earthquake expert Jerry Podany, points out, this chapter may be short, but it is the most important chapter in the book. Earthquakes are going to happen, and the museum professional must accept that damage to a museum's collection is inevitable. However, with a multidisciplinary team of specialists working closely together, it is certainly possible to reduce the risk of damage or, more clearly put, how much damage is going to occur and to which objects and parts of the collection.

Chapter 7 clearly lays out what needs to be done to prepare for an inevitable earthquake. First, the museum should conduct vulnerability surveys with the highest priority being human safety. Then one must consider the vulnerability of the building, non-structural parts of the building, and finally the collections and objects. With respect to the collections, this is tantamount to making value assessments, in the broadest sense of the word, and then determining what is acceptable damage or loss. This order of priority in determining vulnerability might seem odd until one realizes that the response of objects depends on the response of the building and the often forgotten non-structural parts of the building. Once these issues are understood, one can begin to think about how to protect the most valuable objects and collections. But if this all sounds overwhelming to the reader, Podany recommends just starting with some common sense things. That little bit will do a lot, and then the reader can find their way through the rest of the complex issues.

Having just reviewed chapter 7, it might have seemed more logical to start the book with that chapter. But given that most people read the conclusions and shortest chapters of a book first, it is actually positioned quite well. From here, the reader can go back to the beginning and find the details in each of the first six chapters.

The book begins with a brief but fascinating look into the various explanations for earthquakes through the history of humankind ranging from the wrath of the gods and myths about large monsters moving under the ground, to movements of waters and subterranean winds. It has only been in the last one and a half centuries that scientists have begun to understand plate tectonics as the cause of earthquakes and have developed systems to measure the resulting earthquakes. The modern understanding of earthquakes is described in chapter 2 including the concepts of stress build-up and sudden release on fault lines. The description of the resulting motion of the ground when these stresses are released during an earthquake are quite complex and depend on a number of local geological factors. This makes the modelling of earthquake behavior and the description of earthquake intensity difficult. The popularly known Richter scale is not even used by seismologists.

Such complexities in the modelling of earthquakes are what make it difficult for seismologists to predict when an earthquake will happen and how strong it will be. This prediction must then be translated into the behavior of a (museum) building during an earthquake. This is where the problem begins for museums trying to protect their collections. As discussed in chapter 3, seismologists can try to predict the worst-case scenario earthquake (deterministic model), although there will always be a chance that a larger one could occur. However, preparing for a huge earthquake which might not happen for several hundred years could be a very expensive proposition. Another possibility is predicting the probability of earthquakes of various strengths (probabilistic models) and preparing for a particular strength and likelihood. This



# When Galleries Shake

Earthquake Damage Mitigation  
for Museum Collections

Jerry Podany



Left image and transparency on p. 39: Book cover: *When Galleries Shake*. Image courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum

reduces the costs of preparation, but there is a greater risk that a higher strength earthquake could occur. Some mix of the two approaches may be better.

At the collection or objects level, one can carry out calculations to determine how objects will react to the complex motions of earthquakes (chapter 4). Based on this theory, safety measures and mounts for objects in showcases (chapter 5) and more sophisticated sliding mounts can be designed and built for large free-standing objects (chapter 6). While preparing the collection for earthquakes, Podany does make several points that the reader should not miss. Human safety is the highest priority, and that goes with making sure that the building is designed for the predicted earthquake. However, one should not forget to look at what may seem like unimportant details including non-structural parts of buildings such as hanging lamps, ceiling panels, or show cases which can also fall over during an earthquake, destroying whatever objects are in their paths.

Podany has made an admirable attempt to create a guide that is readable for those without a technical/mechanical background. Still, for non-technical readers, it is recommended that they enlist the assistance of someone who does have such a background. While the engineering and mathematics are sound, in an attempt to simplify the presentation, there are occasional jumps in derivation steps and logic (which this reviewer has also been guilty of in the past), where it is assumed that readers can fill in the missing steps. These include the appearance of a number of important equations, which at first glance do not seem to be dimensionally correct, and a number of unfortunate sentences which, when taken out of context, are actually not correct and require a look at the references to understand where they came from.

However, the whole point of this book is for a multidisciplinary team to use it as a guide in reducing the risks of earthquakes on a museum and its collection. This is an excellent book for museums that have to deal with the location-specific characteristics and unpredictability of earthquakes in relation to the specifics and uniqueness of their valuable collections.



**Bill Wei** is senior conservation scientist at the Cultural Heritage Laboratory, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Among other topics, he conducts research into the effects of mechanical stresses including vibrations and shock on the condition of fragile works of art and cultural heritage. He has a B.S.E. in mechanical engineering, Princeton University (1977), and a Ph.D. in materials science, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (1983), both USA.



Image of J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer (1935-2020) featured in Ron Spronk's presentation. Image by Peter van den Brink / RKD, The Hague.

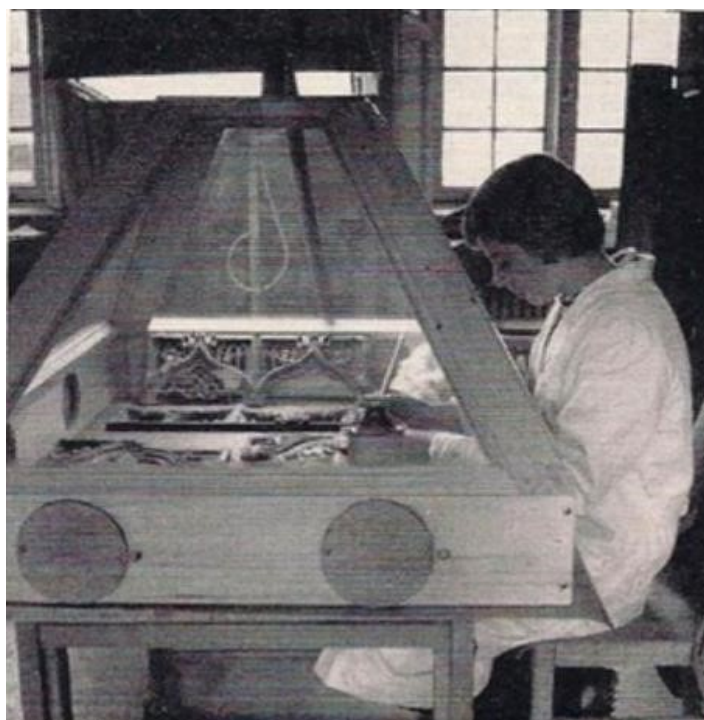
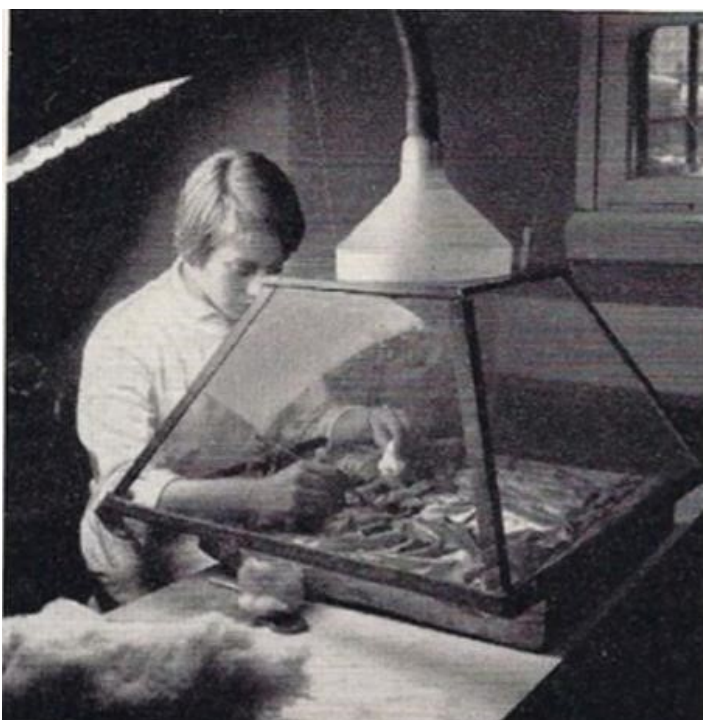
# BRILL-NUNCIUS SEMINAR: THE MAKING OF CONSERVATION SCIENCE

By Esther van Duijn

*On the 29th and 30th of April 2021, the Brill-Nuncius Seminar on The Making of Conservation Science took place. This seminar was organized by Sven Dupré (Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam) and Esther van Duijn (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam). This seminar is funded by the Descartes Centre (Utrecht University) and Brill Publishers. The recordings of the seminar can be found here: <https://artechne.wp.hum.uu.nl/brill-nuncius-seminar-recorded/>*

On 8, 9 and 10 May 2019, the symposium *The Making of Art Expertise—Changing Practices of Art History & Conservation, 1850-1950*, organized by Sven Dupré, Jenny Boulboulé, Jill Briggeman, Mariana Pinto and the author of this article, was held in Utrecht and Amsterdam. Its success launched the idea of a follow-up seminar about the period after WWII. To narrow down the scope, we concentrated on the disciplinary formation of conservation science, a field closely connected to the fields of conservation and technical art history. While the first half of the twentieth century witnessed the modest beginnings of a science-based conservation practice, the first museum laboratories and the introduction of new technologies for the investigation and conservation of art (such as X-radiography and UV imagery), the second half of the twentieth century saw the consolidation of these developments with the establishment of international organizations (e.g. IIC and ICOM-CC), peer-reviewed journals (e.g. *Studies in Conservation*, *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*) and institutes (e.g. the KIK-IRPA) in which the place of conservation science was negotiated. The Seminar considered the post-World War II period up to the 1970s when some conservation theorists, confronted with the processual and intangible aspects of contemporary art, questioned the dominance and principles of science-based conservation. The focus of the Seminar is on diverse actors including scientists and science policy makers, collectors and conservators, museum professionals and administrators and the institutional contexts in which these actors operated (e.g. museums, universities, laboratories, conservation studios).

Originally planned for May 2020, the pandemic forced us—like so many others—first to postpone the Seminar to 2021 and then to rethink its structure. We decided to make the Seminar a hybrid: the international speakers and all participants were virtually present, while the moderators and most commentators, all coming from the Netherlands, came together in a temporary studio in the Utrecht University Hall (*Academiegebouw*). The Seminar was held over two afternoons, instead of one full day, to account for the time difference and to include as many international participants as possible.



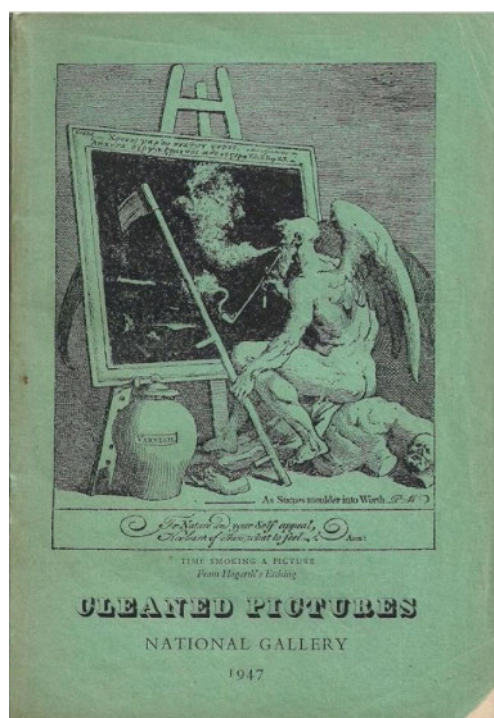
A pair of images taken of Thomas Brachert's ventilation system (likely from an early workshop) as discussed in Michael von der Goltz's presentation. Images courtesy of Thomas Brachert.

On Thursday, 29 April the Seminar was kicked off with a keynote lecture by Geert Vanpaemel, professor at the University of Leuven, who has specialized during his career in the history of science. His lecture was titled "From Rome to Brussels: science and art in the care of paintings". It was commented on by the author of this article. The next two lectures dealt with the scientific departments of two large museums, both with a rich history going back to the first half of the twentieth century. Jo Kirby, who herself has worked at the scientific department of the National Gallery, London for a long time, gave a wonderful lecture titled "Science and Conservation at the National Gallery, London: the 1950s to the 1970s". Her commentator was Katrien Keune, head of the scientific department of the Rijksmuseum. The third and last presentation on Thursday afternoon was given by Camille Bourdiel, who works at the Centre d'histoire sociale des mondes contemporains (CHS) of the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne; Camille's lecture was titled "The laboratory of the Louvre museum after World War II: the movement towards universality, 1946-1968". The commentator for this lecture was René de la Rie, currently a professor at the University of Amsterdam who specialized, during his long career in scientific research, on picture varnishes.

On Friday, 30 April the first lecture of the afternoon was given by Michael von der Goltz, professor at the University of Hildesheim and conservator of paintings and wooden sculptures. The topic of his lecture was "Conservation in the early Federal Republic of Germany—A difficult way to interdisciplinarity". Commentator on this lecture was Ernst Homburg, professor emeritus at the University of Maastricht, specializing in the history of science and technology. Next came Andrea Luciani, trained as an architect and now working as senior lecturer in architecture at the Luleå University of Technology. The topic of his lecture, "The ideal of the ideal environment: the influence of climate control on the emergence of preventive conservation theories", was based on his PhD on the preservation of architectural heritage. Bart Ankersmit, working as senior researcher at the Netherlands Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE), commented on this presentation.

The third lecture of the afternoon was given by Ron Spronk, professor at the Queen's University in Kingston and the Radboud University in Nijmegen. Although the topic of his lecture, "Infrared reflectography, the first decades", fell somewhat outside the time frame that the seminar focused on, the organisers felt it was important to include the history of this innovative imaging technique that has meant so much for the fields of painting conservation and technical art history since the 1970s. Commentator for this lecture was Michiel Franken, curator of technical documentation at the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) which—not incidentally—holds the IRR archive of professor van Asperen de Boer, the inventor of the technique.

The closing lecture of the seminar was given by Salvador Muñoz-Viñas, professor at the University of Valencia, whose thought-provoking presentation was titled "The role of science in the conservation world: a naïve exploration". Perhaps equally thought-provoking were the comments by Hanna Hölling, lecturer at the University College London and research professor at Bern University of the Arts. Both gave the seminar a fitting conclusion.



Above left: National Gallery “Cleaned Pictures” exhibition pamphlet cover from 1947, featured in Michael von der Goltz’s presentation. Image © The National Gallery, London. Above right: Students during a workshop instructed by Salvador, lining a work on paper. Image featured in the presentation of (and published courtesy of) Salvador Muñoz-Viñas.

As organisers of a seminar, you can only do so much to make sure it is successful. Much depends on the presenters and, in our specific case, the commentators. I’m so happy that for “The Making of Conservation Science” our hopes and expectations were fully met which was even more impressive given the fact that many institutions and archives were still closed in the months prior to the seminar.

Over the coming year, the lectures will be reworked into articles. Together with a few additional papers, they will be published in 2022 by Brill publishers in the Nuncius series (<https://brill.com/view/serial/NUNS?language=en>).

The recordings of the seminar can be found here: <https://artechne.wp.hum.uu.nl/brill-nuncius-seminar-recorded/>

*This overview also appears in the Newsletter of the ICOM-CC working group Theory, History and Ethics of Conservation (summer of 2021).*



**Esther van Duijn** is paintings conservator since 2003 and has specialised in the study of conservation history. She has worked for various Dutch museums and other art institutions and is currently affiliated with the Rijksmuseum, working in *Operation Night Watch*: <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/whats-on/exhibitions/operation-night-watch>

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Due to the rapidly evolving situation regarding Covid-19, many event details are changing. We are trying to update these listings as much as we can, but readers should contact event organizers directly for the most up-to-date information on specific events, conferences, workshops, etc. Thank you, from the IIC Communications Team.*

## CALLS FOR PAPERS

### Eastern Analytical Symposium

15-17 November 2021

Plainsboro, NJ, USA

Poster abstracts due: 4 September 2021

For more information visit: <https://eas.org/2021/?p=2155>

### AICCM Paintings SIG Virtual Forum: Australian-made

15 November-3 December 2021

Australia

Call for contributions

For further information please contact Raye Collins ([raye.collins@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:raye.collins@ngv.vic.gov.au)) or Raymonda Rajkowski ([raymonda.rajkowski@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:raymonda.rajkowski@ngv.vic.gov.au))

### ICOM-CC Working Group Graphic Documents, Interim Meeting

10-13 February 2022

Online

Abstract deadline 10 October 2021

For further information, please contact us at [icomccgraphdocs@aol.com](mailto:icomccgraphdocs@aol.com) or [andrea.pataki@th-koeln.de](mailto:andrea.pataki@th-koeln.de)

### IADA 2022: Show it and Save it—before, during and after Covid 19: Exploring the Compromises between Exhibition and Preservation

14-19 February 2022

Online / Germany

Abstracts deadline: 30 September 2021

For more information visit: <https://www.iada-home.org/en/news/iada-symposium-february-14-18-2022-call-for-papers.html>

## CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIUMS

### The Making of Bharat Kala Bhawan: Past, Present and Future Goals (INTACH)

14 August 2021

Online / Varanasi, India

For more information visit [HERE](#).

### Passive is Sustainable-Time for conservators to take the lead (Webinar)

26 August 2021

Online / UK

For more information and to register visit: <https://www.icon.org.uk/events/environmental-sustainability-network-passive-is-sustainable.html>

### Archives & Records Association Conference 2021: WE LOVE RECORDS-Sustainability, Diversity, Advocacy

1-4 September 2021

UK / Online

For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/archives-records-association-conference-2021>

### #SPPC2021: Symposium on Palaeontological Preparation and Conservation

6 September 2021

Online

For more information visit: <https://www.geocurator.org/events/97-sppc>

### EAA 2021-Archaeometallurgy

8-11 September 2021

Kiel, Germany and Online

More information found here: <http://www.e-a-a.org/eaa2021/scientificprogramme>

### Space and Time-Joseph Beuys' Installation Art, Its Presentation and Conservation

16-17 September 2021

Kassel, Germany

For more information write to: [t.kraemer@museum-kassel.de](mailto:t.kraemer@museum-kassel.de)

### The State of the Art 19

16-18 September 2021

Palazzo di Toppo Wassermann, Udine, Italy

For more information visit: <http://www.igiic.org/?p=6871>

### Pest Odyssey Conference 2021

20-22 September 2021

UK

For more information visit: <http://www.pestodyssey.org/Pest-Odyssey-2021--The-Next-Generation.php>

### Art Bio Matters 2021

22-25 September 2021

Online / USA

For more information visit: <https://www.artbiomatters.org/>

### 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Structural Analysis of Historical Constructions (SAHC 2020)

29 September-1 October 2021

Barcelona, Spain

Visit the webpage for more information visit [HERE](#).

**12<sup>th</sup> Baltic States Triennial Conservator's Meeting**  
 RESEARCH.DILEMMAS.SOLUTIONS  
 29 September-2 October 2021  
 Vilnius, Lithuania  
 For more information visit: <http://conservation2020vilnius.ldm.lt/>

**Icon Book & Paper Conference 2021**  
 Mod Cons: Modern Conservation. Modern Constraints.  
 Modern Conveniences.  
 4-7 October 2021  
 UK  
 For more information visit: <https://icon.org.uk/groups/book-paper/bpg21-conference-mod-cons>

**SCULPT2021: Shaping Genealogies**  
 International conference on late 19<sup>th</sup>- and early  
 20<sup>th</sup>-century sculpture  
 7-8 October 2021  
 Online / Porto, Portugal  
 For more information visit: <https://m.porto.ucp.pt/pt/sculpt2021>

**Watermarked Papers of the 1830-1950 Period**  
 8-9 October 2021  
 Paris, France  
 For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/conference-watermarked-papers-1830-1950-period>

**IIC-Student & Emerging Conservator Conference**  
 The Faces of Conservation  
 14-16 October 2021  
 Lisbon, Portugal / Online  
 For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/save-date-iic-secc-2021>

**Icon Bath 2021 Conference: Ceramics, Glass and Stained Glass**  
 16-17 October 2021  
 Bath, UK  
 For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/icon-bath-2021-conference-ceramics-glass-and-stained-glass>

**2021 Safety and Cultural Heritage Virtual Summit: Preserving our Heritage and Protecting Our Health**  
 19-21 October 2021  
 Online / Washington DC, USA  
 For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/2021-safety-and-cultural-heritage-virtual-summit-preserving-our-heritage-and-protecting-our>

**International Conference-Curation and Conservation: Dress and Textiles in Museums**  
 21-22 October 2021  
 Turin, Italy  
 For more information visit: <https://dresshistorians.org/cfp-turin-2020/>

**17<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Conservation-Restoration Studies (Zagreb 2021)**  
 21-22 October 2021  
 Online / Zagreb  
 For more information visit: <http://www.konferencija-restauracija.com/en/conference.html>

**Preservation Beyond Politics**  
 25-29 October 2021  
 Washington DC, USA  
 For more information visit: <https://www.eventscribe.net/2021/APTDC/>

**13<sup>th</sup> North American Textile Conservation Conference: Outside Influences**  
 25-30 October 2021  
 Virtual / USA  
 For more information visit: <https://natconference.com/conferences>

**TechFocus IV: Caring for 3D-printed Art**  
 25-30 October 2021  
 Online / USA  
 For more information visit: <https://resources.culturalheritage.org/techfocus/>

**6<sup>th</sup> International Virtual Meeting on Retouching of Cultural Heritage (RECH6)**  
 4-5 November 2021  
 Online (Spain)  
 For more information visit: <http://rechgroup.pt/rech6.html>

**Virtual Experiments for Wooden Artwork (VirtEx)**  
 5-6 November 2021  
 Online Colloquium / Dresden  
 For more information visit [HERE](#).

**Future Talks 021—the digital one—SMART SOLUTIONS IN THE CONSERVATION OF THE MODERN**  
 8-10 November 2021  
 Online  
 For more information visit: <https://dnstmd.de/en/future-talks-021/>

**Midwest Regional Conservation Guild Conference**  
 12-15 November 2021  
 Indianapolis, Indiana (USA)  
 For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/midwest-regional-conservation-guild-conference>

**Eastern Analytical Symposium & Exposition**  
 15-17 November 2021  
 Plainsboro, NJ, USA  
 For more information visit: <https://eas.org/2021/?p=2155>

**Knocking on Wood: Materiali e metodi per la conservazione delle opera in legno**  
 19-20 November 2021  
 Venaria Reale, Italy  
 For more information visit: [www.cesmar7.org](http://www.cesmar7.org) or write [cesmar7@gmail.com](mailto:cesmar7@gmail.com)

**Contemporary Art Conservation Revisited: 20 Years Later**

25-26 November 2021

Online event / Bern

For more information write to: [mmm@hkb.bfh.ch](mailto:mmm@hkb.bfh.ch)**Collection Care: new challenges in preventive conservation, predictive analysis and environmental monitoring**

1-3 December 2021

Valencia, Spain

For more information visit: <https://www.collectioncare.eu/conference>**SHAKE in Conservation Talks: Big Research in Tiny Speeches**

17 February 2022

Brussels, Belgium

For more information visit: [www.shakeinconservation.be/conservation-talks-2021](http://www.shakeinconservation.be/conservation-talks-2021)**Terra 2021 13<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Earthen Architectural Heritage**

7-10 June 2022

Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

For more information visit: <https://na.eventscloud.com/website/8033/>**IIC Wellington Congress 2022**

5-9 September 2022

Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand (and Online)

For more information visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/call-abstracts-iic-wellington-congress-2022>**Metal 2022**

5-9 September 2022

Helsinki, Finland

For more information visit: <https://metal2022.paper-flow.com/default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f> or contact: [admin.metal2022@paper-flow.com](mailto:admin.metal2022@paper-flow.com)**2022 ICOM-CC Glass & Ceramics Interim Meeting Recent Advances in Glass and Ceramics Conservation**

9-11 November 2022

Lisbon, Portugal / Online

For more information visit: [https://eventos.fct.unl.pt/icomcc\\_gc\\_2022](https://eventos.fct.unl.pt/icomcc_gc_2022)**COURSES, WORKSHOPS****Practical Science for Conservators VII: Welcoming MCP Version 11**

7 August 2021

Online / USA

For more information and the zoom link visit: <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/webinar-practical-science-conservators-vii-welcoming-mcp-version-11>**Young Researches of Archaeometry (YRA) Workshop**

24-28 August 2021

Évora, Portugal

For more information visit: <http://www.yra4.uevora.pt/>**#6 Pollutants (part of the "10 Agents Over 10 Months" seminar series)**

1 September 2021

Online / Australia

For more information on the series and registration visit: <https://aiccm.org.au/events-and-webinars/10-agents-10-months/>**Laser Operator for Cultural Heritage Cleaning**

16-18 September 2021

Mendrisio, Switzerland

For more information visit: <https://restaurierung.swiss/de/veranstaltungen/event/23-lang-de-weiterbildungsangebote-lang-lang-fr-formation-continue-lang-lang-it-proposte-di-formation-continua-lang/409-laser-operator-for-cultural-heritage-cleaning>**Ligatus Summer School 2021**

20-24 September and 27 September-1 October 2021

Online

Applications due 30 July 2021

Apply here: <https://www.ligatus.org.uk/summerschool/node/add/application>**Virtual Conservator's Portfolio Workshop (Icon)**

28-29 September 2021

Online / UK

For more information write to: [iconepn@gmail.com](mailto:iconepn@gmail.com)**Structural Treatments of Paintings: Reinforcement with Mist-Lining System (SRAL)**

29 September-15 December 2021

Online

For more information write to: [info@sral.nl](mailto:info@sral.nl)**VoCA Artist Interview Workshop**

4-6 October 2021

Virtual event

For more information visit: <https://voca.network/artist-interview-workshops/>**Indonesian Conservation Theory for Cultural Heritage-Workshop**

2-4 November 2021

Danube University Krems, Austria

For more information visit [HERE](#).**Eastern Analytical Symposium & Exposition In-person short courses (over 30 to choose from)**

14-17 November 2021

Plainsboro, NJ, USA

For more information visit: [https://eas.org/2021/?page\\_id=5072](https://eas.org/2021/?page_id=5072)



**Digital Teaching Workshop on Minimal Invasive  
Methods for the Conservation of Textile Painting  
Supports**

1 March-1 April 2022

Online / Germany

For more information visit: [https://www.th-koeln.de/en/cultural-sciences/fusion-1-mare-nostrum-digital-teaching-workshop\\_85653.php](https://www.th-koeln.de/en/cultural-sciences/fusion-1-mare-nostrum-digital-teaching-workshop_85653.php)

**Workshop on Asian Papers and Their Applications in  
Paper Conservation**

2022 (tentative)

The British Library, London, UK

For more information visit: <https://www.minahsong.com/workshop>



Do you have a cultural heritage  
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Send the announcement to  
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