



NEWS IN CONSERVATION

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC WORKS



Issue 100, FEBRUARY-MARCH 2024

FEATURES

Contemporary art conservation in India

IIC NEWS

Socrates and conservation ethics

REVIEWS

Dwell Time: a memoir of art, exile, and repair

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About NiC

Published six times a year, *News in Conservation (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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Submissions and queries to news@iiconservation.org.

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Cover Image

Front and back covers: Consolidation of the crumbling plaster with diluted Syton X30 at the Buzludzha Monument. Photo by Nikifor Haralampiev. (Story on p. 12)

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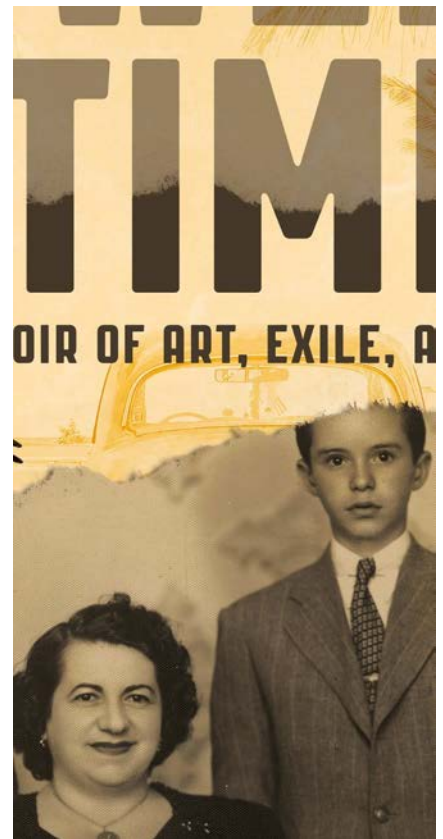


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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



IIC's AGM was held on 29 January 2024 at the Institute's offices at 3 Birdcage Walk in Westminster, and it was a pleasure to welcome members there in person and online.

IIC Council met for one and a half days on either side of the AGM. Council meets three times a year, with generally two of those meetings online lasting no more than three hours. So our annual in-person meeting, in coordination with the AGM, is all the more important, allowing issues to be unpacked in more detail and to have wider and more free ranging discussion than the online meetings afford, as well as allowing us to enjoy each other's company. We were privileged to meet in-person at the ICOM-CC Valencia meeting in September 2023 and will do so again at the IIC Congress in Lima in September 2024, when the majority of Council will be gathered together in Peru.

After the AGM was the annual Talk followed by discussion with Dr Nick Merriman OBE on the subject of "Focusing on the practical reality of the transition to a net zero future". Dr Merriman is the incoming CEO of English Heritage. He was instrumental in the first UK Museum COP held at Tate Modern on 31 October 2023, organised by the National Museums Directors Council. This groundbreaking event secured consensus from museum leaders on collective action to decarbonise the sector and mitigate the impacts of the climate and biodiversity crises.

Dr Merriman is also the editor of the recently published *Museums and the Climate Crisis*, which includes a series of challenging papers on how museums can respond to the interrelated global climate, biodiversity and pollution crises. I encourage you to access an e-copy or purchase a hard copy: [Museums and the Climate Crisis | Nick Merriman | Taylor & Francis eBook \(taylorfrancis.com\)](#)

The book highlights the increasing focus on not only how museums should respond to the climate crisis but also what they can actually do, illustrated by a range of case studies. The book opportunistically arrives off the back of progress at COP28 in Dubai where, for the first time, culture appeared on the COP28 formal agenda, resulting in the [Emirates Declaration on Cultural-based Climate Action](#). Conservation gets more than an honourable mention with aspirations including "Maximizing climate, social, and environmental co-benefits such as social cohesion, wellbeing, creativity, education and intercultural dialogue, across sectors including the built and natural environment, agriculture, cities and regions, energy, and care for habitats and communities, by including the conservation, protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage and the promotion of culture in adaptation and mitigation activities".

It's a tremendous outcome for the Group of Friends of Culture-

Based Climate Action formed by the Climate Heritage Network (of which IIC is a founding signatory). As HRH Princess Dana Firas of Jordan, the Climate Heritage Network Special envoy, said, "This is an absolutely pivotal step towards the full integration of culture and heritage in the climate agenda to achieve transformative and meaningful action".

So now, fellow conservators, we must show we really can take transformative and meaningful action. IIC is continuing to lead the profession with our IIC Net Zero Pilot Project being launched this month. This includes a heap of resources including on-demand lectures about net zero. Do look out for it.

Meanwhile my best wishes for 2024

Julian Bickersteth,
IIC President

[CLICK HERE](#)

to read the President's column in the following languages:

TRADITIONAL CHINESE
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FRENCH
GERMAN
PORTUGUESE
SPANISH



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's another big year for IIC with our focus firmly on unlocking a sustainable future for the sector.

Following our AGM + AGM Talk in January with Dr Nick Merriman OBE, we are delighted to launch a new [Net Zero pilot programme](#), free for IIC members. Driven by the [Joint Commitment for Climate Action in Cultural Heritage Conservation between IIC, ICCROM and ICOM-CC](#), this pilot programme will support institutions as well as freelancers to meet the Paris Agreement goals and accelerate the transition to a net zero sector. The field of conservation has

undoubtedly developed unequally and inequitably around the world – these discrepancies are widely recognized to have become more extreme with climate change and during the recent global pandemic. Sustainable conservation strategies are desperately needed to create safe and more affordable approaches that will increase protection for the world's heritage and provide greater resilience to future world events and crises. This will be the subject of our 30th biennial Congress to be held in Lima, from 23 to 27 September, online and in-person, [Sustainable Solutions for](#)

[Conservation: New Strategies for New Times'](#), registrations are now open.

Finally, we're delighted to announce the renewal of our partnership with the Palace Museum, Beijing for the IIC-International Training Centre for Conservation. You can read more about the amazing three-year programme in this issue with details on how to apply for the 2024 conservation and restoration of metal programme [here](#), with online and in-person elements.

Sarah Stannage
IIC Executive Director

EDITOR'S SOUNDING BOARD



Welcome to the 100th issue of *News in Conservation*! While IIC has published a bulletin, newsletter, or newspaper for decades, the

most recent title and general outline were formalized in August 2007. *NiC* has grown from an eight-page newspaper to a full-fledged 60+ page magazine, but there are still many elements that remain from that first issue. *NiC* still includes longer feature articles, reviews, IIC news, event announcements and "News in Brief" stories all accompanied by colorful images. And design-wise, through the years we've preserved elements such as the dotted line motif and IIC's signature dark blue.

In that first issue of the reborn publication in 2007, then editor

Christina Rozeik wrote to the IIC members and subscribers, "Above all, *News in Conservation* is your paper, so we look forward to hearing what you think about the new design and content. We also hope that you will want to contribute". Christina's words still ring true today. *NiC* is your magazine, written by and for you, so don't be a stranger.

You can read all 100 issues, archived on the IIC website, [here](#).

Sharra Grow
IIC Editor, *News in Conservation*

NEWS IN BRIEF

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS CALL FOR STORIES

The European Heritage Days (EHD) are a collection of over 50,000 grassroots events and programs each year, organized and run in 48 participating signatories all over Europe. EHD's common vision has developed in recent years to protect, promote, and enhance European heritage.

The call for European Heritage Days stories, with competitive grants to be awarded, is now open. The European Heritage Days 2024 theme is "Heritage of Routes, Networks and Connections", aiming to promote and celebrate the sharing of cultural heritage. Organizers are encouraged to plan and participate in community events, tours, talks, etc. on local heritage, highlighting cross-cultural connections of the past and fostering new connections going forward.

For more information on eligibility and how to apply, visit the EHD website [here](#).

CYBER ATTACK ON GALLERY SYSTEMS

Just before the new year, on December 28th, Gallery Systems (which merged with Artsystems in 2022) reported a ransomware attack which encrypted some of the company's servers. Gallery Systems claims to serve 800 clients (mainly collections and museums) in 31 countries. In their report, the museum software provider stated "certain systems that run our software became encrypted, which prevented them from operating. We immediately took steps to isolate those systems and implemented measures to prevent additional systems from being affected, including taking systems offline as a precaution."

Systems taken offline included servers that run eMuseum, which is an online viewing platform used in operating museum websites for 260 of Gallery Systems clients. TMS, another popular Gallery Systems program, was also reported to be having access issues.

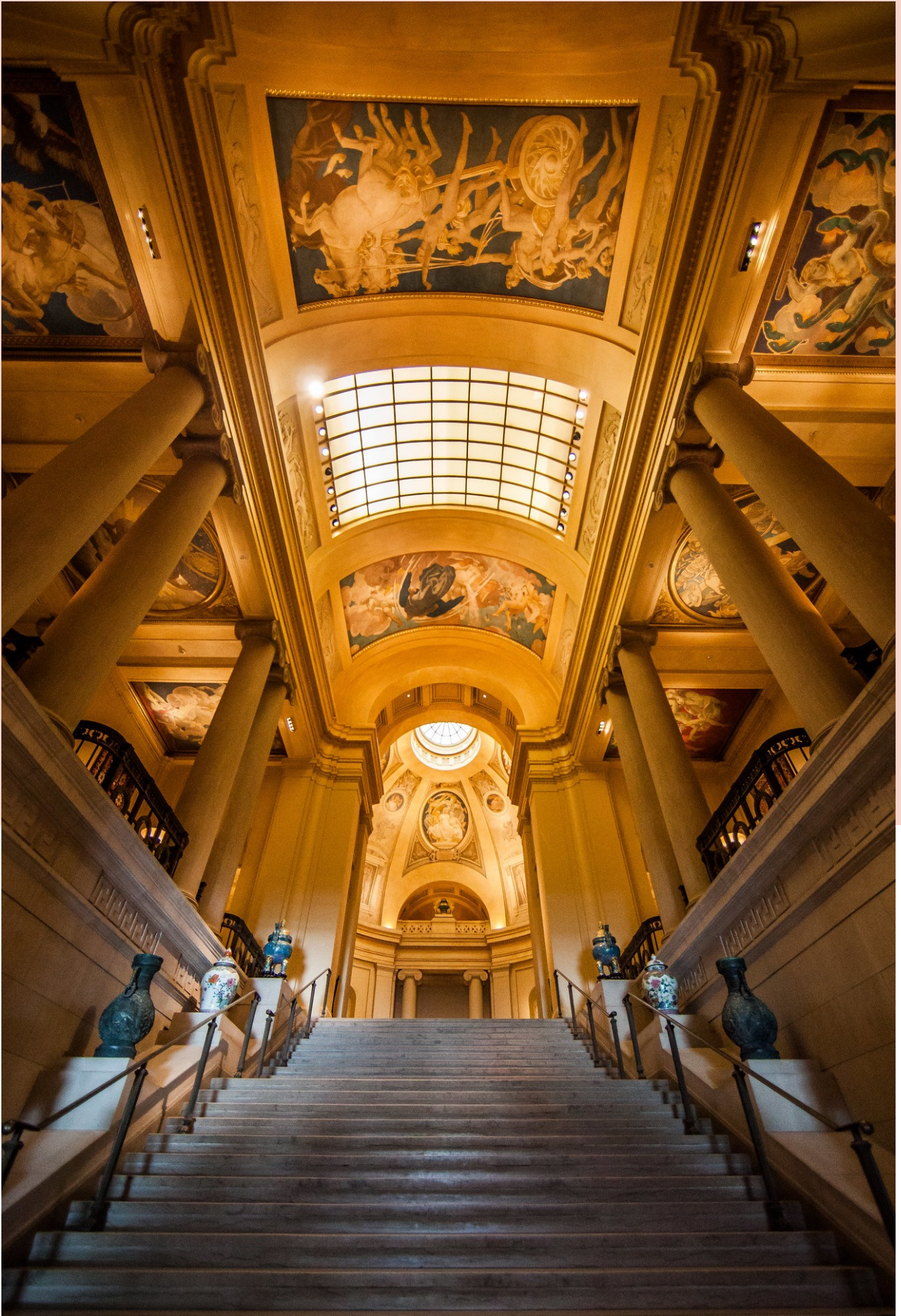
Based on first-hand accounts from several museums, it appears that the ransomware attack mainly caused loss of access to museum websites and online collections, as well as some collection information held within TMS, but it is unclear whether or not the hackers gained access to sensitive information within TMS, such as loan agreements and collection storage locations.

Collections including the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (USA) reported that the ransomware attack "did not impact non-public data about the MFA's collection, which is



Left: SZEGED, HUNGARY - SEPTEMBER 18, 2022: Flag with the logo of European Heritage Days on a landmark of Szeged. Image by BalkansCat/Shutterstock stock photo ID: 2260136763

Right: Endless Summer (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston staircase. Image by [Thomas Hawk/Flickr](#). Licensed under [CC BY-NC 2.0 DEED](#).



hosted on internal systems... All confidential information remains secure, including donor data, artwork values and storage locations.”

Paige Francis, chief information officer of art and wellness enterprises at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Arkansas (USA), told reporters, “access to our online collection has been down for a week due to the recent Gallery Systems issue,” but “the data of our customers and visitors has not been compromised.”

CONTROVERSIAL RESTORATION PROPOSED FOR THE MENKAURE PYRAMID

Egypt has just announced the three-year project plans to restore the surface of the Menkaure Pyramid, the smallest of the three Great Pyramids of Giza. The project is to be headed by famous archaeologist (and secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt) Mostafa Waziri and a Japanese team.

The proposed work includes refacing the pyramid with a granite casing. Only seven of the original 16 blocks of this surface covering remain in place, making this project a huge and controversial undertaking. While the Supreme Council of Antiquities sees this project as crucial in the stabilization and protection of the pyramid’s eroding limestone, the proposal has received severe pushback from other prominent experts including archaeological conservator Ibrahim Badr who, in opposition to the project, wrote, “Someone needs to

Right: Colosseum (2009). Image by [daisy.images/Flickr](#). Licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 DEED](#).

Below: The big three (the pyramids of Giza, Egypt). (2022) Image by [orientalizing/Flickr](#). Licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 DEED](#).



read the international conventions for restoration and dealing with Egyptian antiquities.” Egyptologist Monica Hanna, voicing a similar opinion, called the proposal absurd, stating that “all international principles on renovations prohibit such interventions.”



With some reports measuring Egypt's temperature rising three degrees Fahrenheit every decade, Waziri and other project supporters warn these ancient stone monuments will continue to crack and crumble under the sun without intervention. Specialists on both sides of the controversy have been arguing whether it's best to use only original materials found at the site or whether modern materials and methods will be necessary to combat the severe environmental conditions to which the pyramids are subject.

This proposed granite facing is just one part of the larger three-year project. You can see videos introducing the project, posted by Mostafa Waziri [here](#).

STUNNING MOSAICS DISCOVERED NEAR THE COLOSSEUM IN ROME

An excavation team at the Archeological Park of the Colosseum in Rome has discovered a largely intact, decadent mosaiced room within an ancient domus or townhouse likely owned by a wealthy or powerful citizen.

The home is located near Palatine Hill and several Agrippa-era warehouses along Vicus Tuscus, which was a key commercial road that led to the trading port on the Tiber River. The mosaics covering the walls were created using a wide variety of materials including shells, polychrome glass, travertine, white marble and Egyptian blue tiles.

One prominent mosaic, located in what is thought to be a banquet hall, is separated into four sections with columns and includes depictions of a city by the sea, as well as three ships on the water, possibly representing the home owner's (who is suggested to have been a Roman senator) victorious return home from battle. Other illustrated elements include vines, vases, musical instruments and sea tridents.

The mosaics date to the late Republican Age at the end of the second century BCE.

Park Director Alfonsina Russo has reassured the media that the domus and its mosaics will be open to the public once excavation and research are completed.

Click the BONUS CONTENT button to read more on these stories...



NEWS ON THE NIGHT WATCH

Analysis has revealed a lead-rich preparatory layer under the painting, possibly applied as a protective layer against conditions the painting was expected to experience as an exterior wall hanging. (image: Rembrandt, The Night Watch. By Anita Gould/Flickr. Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0 DEED)



DIGITIZING BUDDHIST HERITAGE

A lack of archives has led to inappropriate renovation and rebuilding of Buddhist temples. A new digitization project in Vietnam aims to improve the documentation and future preservation of these monuments. (image: Temple colours in the rain. By Piktour UK/Flickr. Licensed under CC BY 2.0 DEED)



ROMAN JIGSAW PUZZLE

Check out a recent conservation treatment, piecing together an ancient Roman armguard for exhibition at the British Museum, featuring conservator Bethan Bryan. (image: Newstead manica. Example of ancient Roman armguard from National Museum of Scotland. By Ross Cowan/Flickr. Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0 DEED)

NOMINATE A SITE TO THE 2025 WORLD MONUMENTS WATCH

Deadline to submit: March 15

World Monuments Fund invites nominations for heritage sites facing urgent challenges.

Every two years, the Watch selects 25 sites that tell a local story with global relevance and works with communities to amplify preservation efforts through advocacy, capacity building, and close collaboration with WMF's team and professionals around the world.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Nominate your site at: wmf.org/nominate

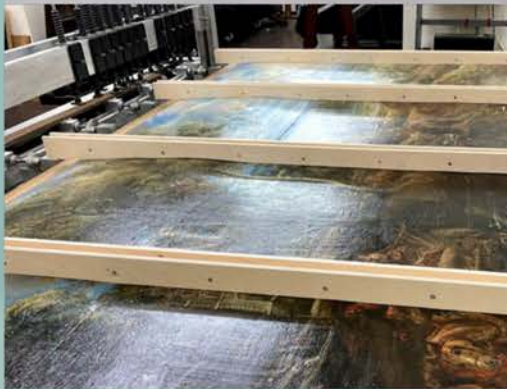


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THE BUZLUDZE CONSERVATION PROJECT

THE CHOICE TO TAKE ACTION

By Nikifor Haralambiev

THE HA ON CT TION

ampiev

The Buzludzha Monument was opened in 1981 to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Buzludzha Congress, which later led to the establishment of the Bulgarian Communist Party. It is a project of the distinguished Bulgarian architect Georgi Stoilov (1929-2022) and stands at the top of the historically significant Hadzhi Dimitar (Buzludzha) peak in the central Balkan Mountains, with an altitude of 1,432 meters.



Top left: View of the Main Hall of the Buzludzha Monument with the inner mosaic ring and the dome mosaic, 1983. Photo by Bedros Azinyan.

Top right: Team meeting during the emergency conservation of the Buzludzha mosaics. Photo by Dora Ivanova.

Bottom right: Stabilization of the arriccio layer in the inner mosaic ring. Photo by Nikifor Haralampiev.



The building was used for special political ceremonies and guided group visits, part of the regime's propaganda. The interior decoration, made by some of the most eminent Bulgarian artists at the time, included bronze and crystal sculptures and 913 square meters of stone and glass mosaics located on two ring walls located on the second level of the monument and in the dome.

Following the fall of the communist regime in 1989, the Buzludzha Monument was gradually abandoned and became subject to vandalism and looting which caused severe damage to the entire structure. Most significantly, its preservation state was harmed by the dismantling of the copper roof covering and the windows, exposing the interior to the direct impact of the harsh mountain climate.

In 2013 Dora Ivanova, a Bulgarian student of architecture at the Technical University of Berlin, encountered the Buzludzha Monument. Instead of a controversial

ruin from a difficult past, she saw an outstanding architectural masterpiece with tremendous potential. In 2015 she founded the Buzludzha Project Foundation (BPF) with the aim of preserving the monument and turning it into a functioning heritage site.

The focus of the foundation in the first years was on provoking discussion and raising awareness of the monument among the segregated Bulgarian society. The organized conferences, exhibitions, and meetings with the governing authorities were crucial for the viability of the project as it steadily gained public support and began to benefit from professional expertise. Following its nomination by the BPF, in 2018 the Buzludzha Monument was listed among the seven most endangered heritage sites in Europe, as ranked by Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank Institute.

In 2019, within the Keeping it Modern (KIM) program, the Getty Foundation awarded funding for "Research, Conservation Planning, and



Adaptive Reuse Study of Buzludzha Monument". The project was coordinated by the BPF and ICOMOS Germany in partnership with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy in Sofia (UACEG). Along the way more than 100 international experts from various fields and multiple volunteers joined the project.

Preparation of the [conservation management plan](#) included the digitization and study of the monument's official archive; laser scanning and creation of a precise 3D model of the building; a detailed catalog of the site materials and surfaces; and architectural, art historical, landscape and utilities studies. Crucial for the continuation of the project was the structural investigation conducted by the UACEG which concluded that the main structural elements of the building have no major damages and can be reused.

As part of the research, an oral history initiative, "Buzludzha's Unwritten Stories" was also launched. So

far 35 people who either worked at the monument or who were somehow connected to it have been interviewed.

THE WALL MOSAICS

In the fall of 2019, during the architectural survey of the monument, the team realized the only preserved elements of the interior decoration—the mosaics—were in critical condition, and if no urgent measures were taken, large sections of the artwork would be lost. Therefore, the BPF and ICOMOS Germany applied again to the KIM program, and a second grant for emergency stabilization of the mosaics was awarded in the summer of 2020 by the Getty Foundation.

The main objective of the conservation team—including the National Academy of Art in Sofia (NAA), the TUM, the Bern University of the Arts (HKB), and the Diadrasis NGO from Athens—was to secure the most critical areas of the mosaics in order to prevent



significant new losses of original material. The work on site also created opportunities for training in conservation of modern mosaics for a group of conservation students from the NAA and HKB.

The first step of the [emergency actions](#) was to document, collect and systematically store the already fallen mosaic fragments and tesserae. The space around the walls was then cleared of construction debris to allow safe access.

The multiple smaller detachments along the edges of the existing lacunae of the bedding layer and the ar-riccio were stabilized by edging repair. Where needed, the mosaics were further secured with a temporary wooden support system made of vertical pillars and cushioned horizontal props. The numerous loose tesserae found throughout both mosaic rings were also re-adhered.

A temporary [protective shelter](#) was constructed in two phases over the two mosaic rings. Its purpose is to significantly reduce water infiltration into the mosaics, to protect them from falling objects and strong winds, and to help establish a more stable microclimate around them. It is constructed of wooden beams and

covered with corrugated sheet metal. The sidewalls of the shelter are closed with durable hydrophobic—but air permeable—textile which stops rain and snow from reaching the mosaics while still allowing normal air circulation.

The results from the research, conservation planning, adaptive reuse study, and the emergency stabilization of the wall mosaics were presented at the international conference, [In Restauro: Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe – Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites](#), held in July 2021 at the Iskra History Museum, Kazanlak.

THE DOME MOSAIC

In September 2021 the Buzludzha Monument was listed as a heritage site of national significance by the Bulgarian National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage. This very important step allowed the BPF, together with the Regional Administration Stara Zagora as a legal manager of the site, to apply for state funding for the first time. The approved funding was for the stabilization of the dome mosaic; clearing of

Detail of the outer mosaic ring of the Buzludzha Monument, 1981 (Archival image of the new monument). Photo by Dobrin Keresteliev



The panoramic corridor and the outer mosaic ring. Condition in 2020. Photo by Nikifor Haralampiev.



the roof from the dangerous, disintegrating remains of the original covering; and providing secure visitor access. The project was successfully implemented in 2022.

The dome mosaic is made of smalti and gilded household glass tesserae on pre-cast cement panels, mounted to a custom-designed metal structure and suspended from the roof's steel frame. The prolonged exposure to the harsh mountain climate has caused significant damage such as loss of nearly all the leaf gilding, partial detachment or loss of multiple tesserae, and detachment of the bedding layer from the panels in some areas. Extensive salts efflorescence and biological growth are also observed throughout the mosaic. Some key elements of the mounting structure are severely corroded, threatening the stability of the panels.

The main objectives of the emergency action were, as with the wall mosaics, to stabilize the compromised areas of the mosaic in order to prevent further losses and to ensure safe access for visitors to the building. The emergency interventions undertaken by the same conservation team, along with eight conservation students from the NAA, started with the re-adhesion

of the loose tesserae and the securing of the detachments in the bedding layer in order to avoid the risk of new losses when the roof was cleared. All loose tesserae were carefully detached, their backs and setting beds were cleaned from the algae and the salts, and the tiles were re-adhered. The re-adhesion of the tesserae was done in two stages. First, a thin layer of epoxy resin was applied on the back of the detached tesserae and on their setting beds in dots or strokes. The resin was allowed to cure and lightly abraded to reduce the observed darkening effect on the bedding layer and to provide a larger and rougher surface for the re-adhesion of the smooth glass tesserae. The tesserae were then re-adhered with a solution of Paraloid B-72 in acetone. The partially detached and deformed fragment of the bedding layer was taken down, stabilized, and re-attached in place with a polymer-modified cement-based adhesive similar to the originally used bedding mortar. After all the debris from the roof and the rear of the mosaic was removed, the mounting structure was stabilized by welding new steel elements where needed.

The dome mosaic was also covered with a temporary shelter in order to prevent direct water infiltration into its structure. The shelter is fixed to the steel elements

Deterioration mapping of the wall mosaics. Photo by Dora Ivanova.





of the roof and extends three meters beyond the rim of the mosaic to provide better side protection. It is made of wooden beams and cladding covered with a waterproof PVC membrane. As the shelter was constructed in a similar manner to the original roof covering, it doesn't change the silhouette of the monument.

After the building was secured, [temporary wooden pathways](#) were installed in the foyer, the main staircase, the main hall, and the panoramic corridor to provide a safe route for visitors.

THE FESTIVAL

Public involvement has been an essential part of the BPF's activities since the beginning. Besides the use of traditional and social media, the foundation organizes different local events for open and direct dialogue with the public. An annual event, beloved by the team and the public, is the [Open Buzludzha Festival](#). The festival [raises funding](#) for the conservation of the monument, but it is much more than this. It brings an even wider public to the site and lets everyone experience it

in a new and a different way. The event takes place at the monument and in the surrounding foothills. The program includes live music and DJ sets on different stages in the evenings and lectures, discussions, workshops, exhibitions, cultural tours, and sports during the day.

The culmination of the Open Buzludzha 2023 was a [3D mapping](#) projection on the monument, created exclusively for the festival by one of the leading studios in the field. The [next Open Buzludzha Festival](#) is planned for August 8-11, 2024. We would love to meet you there!

FUTURE CHALLENGES

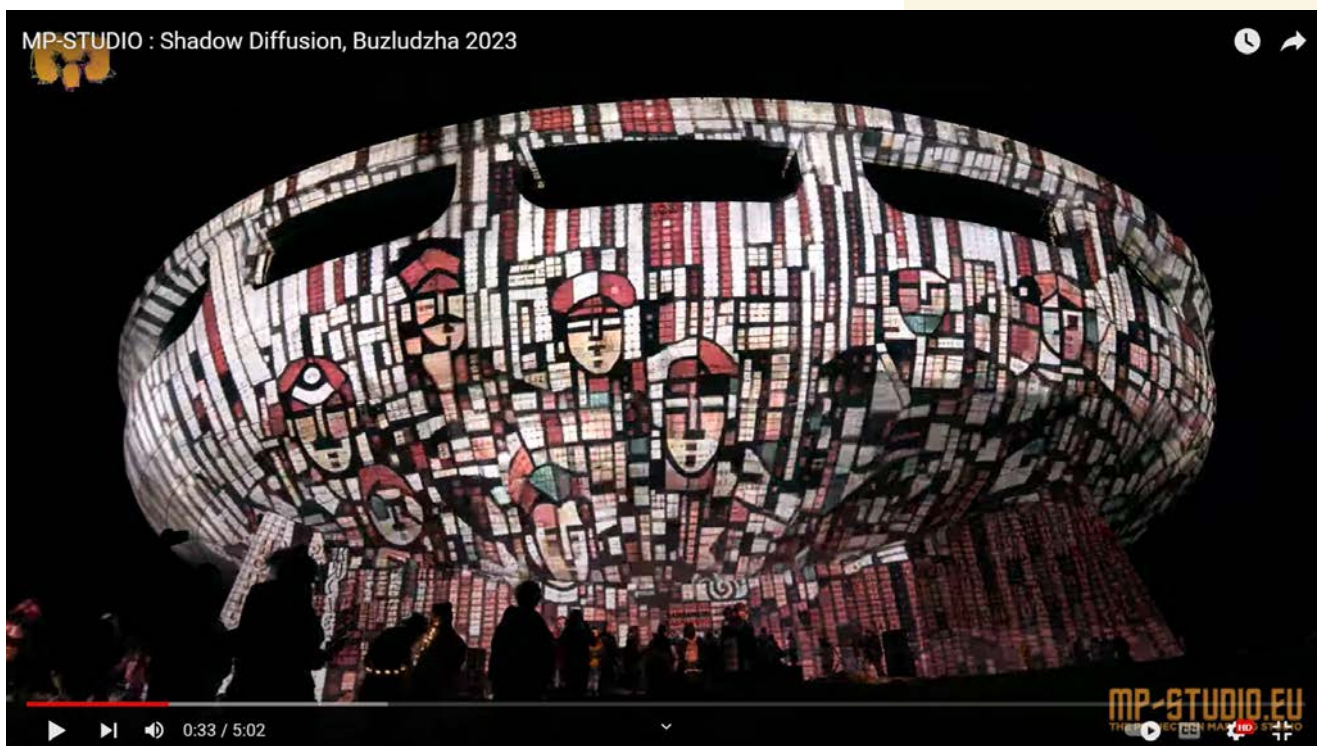
The main priority of the BPF for the near future is the funding, planning, and construction of a new roof covering and windows, which are essential for the building's preservation and the continuation of conservation work in the interior. The foundation is also working to enable the opening of the monument for visitors, which is still not possible due to legal and management issues.



Left page: Winter monitoring and maintenance visit at the Buzludzha Monument. Photo by Dora Ivanova.

Top right: Roof clearing of the Buzludzha Monument. Photo by Dora Ivanova.

Bottom: Video recording of "Shadow Diffusion" by MP-STUDIO, which was projected onto Buzludzha as part of the Open Buzludzha 2023 festival. Click on the image to watch the video of the 3D mapped projection, or click [HERE](#).





The cleared roof with the completed protective shelter over the dome mosaic. Drone photo by Alexander Makedonski.

In parallel, the BPF is starting the research and development of an inclusive narrative for the Buzludzha Monument, which will tell its multi-perspective story, online and on-site, provoking critical thinking of the past and better understanding of the present.

THE FORUM

As the challenges for Buzludzha’s preservation are generally similar to those for other immovable cultural heritage in Bulgaria and Europe, broad discussions on heritage preservation are highly valuable to exchange experience and to discuss urgent topics. Therefore at the end of 2023, the BPF organized an international Heritage Forum which is expected to become an annual event. The first edition of the forum discussed the topics of management and storytelling and included experts from various fields and institutions from Bulgaria, France, Germany, and the UK. The next Heritage Forum is planned for December 3-4, 2024. Follow the BPF’s social media pages to learn how you can take part.

You can learn more and follow the project here:

<https://buzludzha-project.com/en/>

<https://www.instagram.com/buzludzhaproject>

<https://www.youtube.com/@Buzludzhaproject>

https://www.facebook.com/buzludzhaproject?locale=bg_BG

You can support the project here:

<https://buzludzha-project.com/en/support>



Nikifor Haralampiev holds an MA degree in conservation from the NAA, Sofia and a PhD in technical art history from the Sofia University. He interned at the Ivan Duichev Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies and at the Getty Conservation Institute. Since 2014 Nikifor has been teaching in the Conservation Department of the NAA. In 2020 he joined the BPF as a coordinator of the conservation work at the Buzludzha Monument.



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SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS IN CONSERVATION: NEW STRATEGIES FOR NEW TIMES

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UTEC (Universidad de Ingeniería y Tecnología, Barranco, Peru)

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The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC) and the Research Center for Heritage Conservation at the Universidad de Ingeniería & Tecnología (UTEC) in Lima, are pleased that the 30th biennial IIC Congress 2024 will be hosted **in person** and **online** in Lima, Peru.

We are delighted that the Congress in 2024 will again take a **hybrid format** for the main technical sessions of the programme, promoting a more sustainable and climate-friendly event. By offering the Congress in a hybrid form, IIC aims to make this event as accessible and inclusive as possible, extending our global

reach from Africa to Asia-Pacific, as well as offering the opportunity for in-person events at **local regional hubs** in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, with networking and experience of the unique culture and heritage that South America has to offer.

We look forward to welcoming you online or in-person.

See all the ways to participate and
[REGISTER HERE](#)

CONTEMPORARY CONSERVATION CHALLENGES PERSPECTIVES

By Shubhankar Pr Bh



Sheela Gowda, *Untitled*, 1992, Installation View, Lenbachhaus Munich, 2020. Photo: Simone Gänsheimer, Lenbachhaus © Sheela Gowda
UNTITLED, 1992, (left)
208 x 170 cm, Cow dung, charcoal, pigment on paper, jute
UNTITLED, 1992 (center),
132 x 142 cm, Cow dung, kumkum, textile, wood, pastel, paper, jute
UNTITLED, 1992 (right),
144 x 137 cm, Cow dung, charcoal, pigment, paper, jute

CONTEMPORARY ART INNOVATION IN INDIA: MATERIALS, STRATEGIES, AND ETHNOGRAPHIC REFERENCES IN ARTWORKS BY SHEELA GOWDA

by Anjali Ghosh, Nalini Biluka & Sindhu Nagaraja





While conservation practice in India faces challenges on many levels, much contemporary artwork presents a unique set of challenges distinct from traditional art forms due to its relatively recent age, conceptual complexity, and innovative material usage loaded with cultural symbolism. This article aims to explore conservation methodologies and nuanced decision-making based not only on technical expertise, but also on cultural understanding.

Contemporary Indian art, deeply rooted in the country's rich artistic heritage dating back to the Indus Valley civilization, boasts a dynamic, engaged, and innovative character. Artists, both emerging and established, have crafted a distinct visual and conceptual identity that transcends colonial influences and Western art.

In this article, we introduce the case of *Untitled* (1992), a mixed-media series by Sheela Gowda which presents a microcosm of the challenges, strategies, and ethnographic considerations intrinsic to conservation-restoration of contemporary art in India.

Sheela Gowda (b. Bhadravati, India, 1957) is one of the most iconic figures in contemporary Indian art, employing unconventional materials intertwined with cultural symbolism in her creations. Her use of materials resonates with broader themes of labor, societal hierarchies, and cultural identity, inviting viewers to engage with the complexities of contemporary Indian society (Smith, 2009). Her artworks have been included into the collections of Tate Modern; MOMA; and showcased at the biennials of São Paulo (2014), Kochi (2012), Venice (2009), as well as Documenta 12 (2007).

Sheela Gowda, *Untitled*, 1992, detailed view: Crack and loss from surface layer, at INTACH Bengaluru, 2020. Photo: INTACH © Sheela Gowda

CONTEMPORARY ART CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE IN INDIA

While the research in contemporary art conservation has seen significant growth since the 1990s, this has still not yet prepared conservators to deal with the unique and complex cases of contemporary art (Marçal, 2012, p. 19).

Additionally in India, many conservator-restorers are not equipped with enhanced infrastructure and strict training programs in conventional methods compared to western countries. While they are constantly improving their conservation approaches, matching ICOM's code and ethics, they are equally endowed with a deep understanding of the cultural context, contemporary art history, and skills borrowed from artists and craftsmen, aligning themselves with an ethnographic approach.

Given this unique situation, contemporary art conservation in India stands at a crossroads with an opportunity to find a balance between boundaries of conventional methods and concepts, cultural and ethical complexities. The keys lie in a holistic approach in preserving the artist's intent, cultural relevance, and employing ethical conservation and restoration practices.

With emerging academic programs, workshops, institutional collaborations and exchanges, funding, and grants, it is beginning to gain momentum. Some examples are the INTACH conservation institutes, Tata Trusts Art Conservation Initiative, LLFCC, Nagaur, ICFP by Andrew Mellon Foundation, and various conservation centers at Mehrangarh Museum Trust, Jodhpur, CSMVS Museum, Mumbai,

IGNCA, New Delhi, and MAP in Bengaluru.

UNTITLED (1992) - A STORY OF A CULTURALLY LADEN CASE STUDY

Commencing her career with figurative oil paintings, Sheela Gowda swiftly identified limitations within the medium, particularly during the tumultuous 1990s when India underwent significant economic, political, and cultural shifts. Starting from wall-based works,

“Contemporary art conservation in India stands at a crossroads with an opportunity to find a balance between boundaries of conventional methods and concepts, cultural and ethical complexities.”

her practice later expanded into three-dimensional pieces and installations. The “Cow Dung” series, *Untitled* (1992), marks a turning point in her artistic development.

Sheela Gowda approached INTACH Conservation Institute, Bengaluru to restore this series for her retrospective exhibition at Lenbachhaus Museum, Munich, Germany in 2020. The artworks had suffered severe deformation and mold infestation due to flooding. Although the artworks were brought back to Bengaluru, India after ensuring they were completely dry, several conservation issues had already manifested by then, leaving them fragile.

Most contemporary artworks received at INTACH, Bengaluru adhere to traditional materials, allowing for conventional treatment approaches. However, the *Untitled* series presented a distinctive and challenging opportunity due

to its unconventional material usage and the conceptual and cultural values it embodies.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPOSITE MATERIALS

The three *Untitled* (1992) artworks are composed of cow dung, Kumkum, Rangoli powder (calcium carbonate), neem oil (*Azadirachta indica*), packaging paper (tetra pack), jute, charcoal, and used fabric.

Cow dung, constituting a large portion of the artworks' surfaces, is a material that resonates with history, ritual, economic, and gendered subtexts and overtones (Millar, 2004). When dried, it is used as fuel in rural areas. When mixed with scents, it is used as incense in religious practices. Rangoli and Kumkum powder are used by Indian women for different ceremonial occasions and have their own contextual and religious significance. Neem oil is also used for multiple medicinal purposes and as a traditional insecticide in India.

The understanding of these intricate cultural connections was indispensable in preserving the essence and authenticity of Gowda's artworks.

CHALLENGES & ALTERATIONS IN THE ARTWORKS

Following an initial assessment and discussions at the artist's studio,

the artworks were delicately transported to INTACH, Bengaluru, for conservation treatment.

The top surfaces of the artworks feature found objects like charcoal, fabric, cow dung, rangoli powder and other pigments. The original primary supports consisted of paper mounted on a jute layer while wooden strainers served as auxiliary supports at the base.

The flooding had rendered the jute layers brittle and the wooden strainer dislodged. The surface faced several issues including cracks in the cow dung layers, discoloration, loss of pigments, deformations, and insect frass.

compromise and, therefore, cope with these challenges (Muñoz-Viñas, 2020).

INTERVENTION METHOD

The primary objective of the treatments was to prevent further deterioration and to stabilize the structural condition of the artworks allowing them to withstand transportation and display in Munich.

Dry and solvent cleaning methods were tested and applied to remove dust and debris from all the artworks. To retain the intended meaning of the artworks, a blend of cow dung and neem oil was em-



CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The technical examination highlighted the fact that strictly following the traditional conservation approach with absolute notions of “objectivity”—such as authenticity and reversibility—would pose a threat to the artwork. They would have altered the cultural significance of the materials and the artist's intention, thus endangering the integrity of the series. Recent contemporary conservation theories that are based on subjective notions, such as meaning and value, prove to be better tools for dealing with the need to

played to fill losses following the artist's recommended technique. Using cow dung and neem oil to treat the artworks was more an ethical decision than a technical one, acknowledging the materials' artistic and cultural relevance while addressing preservation needs.

The three artworks presented almost identical problems. Controlled humidity was used to deal with surface deformation of paper from the center to outer edges. As the final jute layer and wooden strainer in each artwork was beyond repair, it was mutually

decided to replace those supports in order to save the paper layers. New mounting systems were added for display.

COLLABORATION WITH THE ARTIST: A KEY POINT

Sheela Gowda expressed her keen interest in participating in every decision-making process throughout the project. She provided essential insights into the materials necessary for restoring the areas of loss in the cow dung application. She advised sourcing dung from a specific breed of

artists, we know how to conduct an artist interview, we know what documents to collect, how to arrive at a mutual consensus in collaborative decision-making, and how to improvise and adapt traditional approaches in conservation practice in the care of Indian contemporary art.

BALANCING ARTISTIC INTENT, CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND CONSERVATION ETHICS

While the tailored treatment method here goes beyond the limits of what is generally

Left: Conservation team working on *Untitled* (1992) by Sheela Gowda, at INTACH Bengaluru, 2020. Photo: INTACH © Sheela Gowda



Right: Sheela Gowda, *Untitled*, 1992, detailed view: Support deformation and undulation, at INTACH Bengaluru, 2020. Photo: INTACH © Sheela Gowda

cows and from those fed only hay, to obtain a dung richer in fiber. The artist interviews, based on available resources (Beerken et al., 2012), allowed us to strengthen our documentation. Furthermore, bi-weekly meetings, phone calls, and emails generated important information needed to address complex conservation related questions. This project also gave us the knowledge to deal with similar cases going forward; we can now prepare questionnaires for contemporary

considered minimal intervention, our conservation strategy reflects a thorough examination and understanding of the risks.

We demonstrate our commitment to transparency, professional standards, and ethical decision-making. One must accept that conservation decisions may involve some compromises (Wharton, 2018, p. 62) but may also result in a work's enrichment (van de Vall, 2009, p. 53).



Conservation team with Sheela Gowda at her studio, 2020. Photo: INTACH © Sheela Gowda

The negotiation between the various stakeholders is crucial for the development of an appropriate conservation strategy (Beerkens et al., 2012, p. 14). Alongside the cultural understanding we happened to inherit, we also collaborated with local community members to arrive at a decision-making consensus.

EMBRACING AN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH IN CONTEMPORARY ART CONSERVATION

Contemporary art and ethnographic objects both challenge traditional tenets of conservation as it extends beyond the physical aspect of material (McHugh & Gunnison, 2016). Yet, important divergences exist in conservation ethics and treatment approaches to ethnographic and contemporary art. Sheela Gowda's use of cultural materials and objects demands that conservators grasp not only the technical expertise but also the ethnographic significance in contemporary art conservation.

To see the bibliography and resources for this article, click on the **BONUS CONTENT** button below



Alongside our technical and methodological understanding, seeking cross-cultural collaborations from the respective cultural communities proved essential in nuanced decision-making that respected the artist's intent and material cultural contexts.

It is also worth mentioning that there is still a lack of contemporary art conservators in non-Western countries, making global

support and collaborative efforts even more crucial for conservation of contemporary art worldwide, beyond Western countries.

In essence, Sheela Gowda's case study allowed us to provide an insight into conservation of contemporary art in India. It stands as an example, emphasizing the paramount importance of cultural sensitivity in contemporary art conservation.



Shubhankar Pr Bharti is an art conservator and artist. Currently head registrar at 193 Gallery, Paris, he has previously worked at the Collection LAMBERT, Avignon, LUMA Arles in France and at INTACH Bengaluru, India. Specialised in contemporary art, he holds a degree in art conservation from the Ecole Supérieure d'Art d'Avignon (ESAA).



Nalini Biluka is an independent conservator based in Bengaluru, India. She is specialized in Indian traditional and contemporary painting with an M.A. in conservation from Delhi Institute of Heritage Research. As senior conservator, she contributed to conserving paintings at INTACH, Bengaluru, TIFR, Mumbai, Asiatic Society, Kolkata, Albert House Museum, Jaipur, and IGNCA among others. She received the Andrew Mellon Fellowship in 2021.



Sindhu Nagaraja is a painting conservator, specialized in South Indian traditional art. She holds a master's degree in art history and was a conservation trainee at the INTACH Conservation Institute. As conservator, she has worked at the Karnataka State Museum, MAP Bengaluru and INTACH. Currently she works as paper conservator at NCBS, Bengaluru.

SOCRATES AND CONSERVATION ETHICS

By W. (Bill) Wei

*Before you start madly flipping back through your notes from your first-year philosophy classes, rest assured that, **no, Socrates did not** conduct any dialogues about conservation ethics.*





The Death of Socrates, by Jacques Louis David (1787).
Oil on canvas. Image in the Public Domain/The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image accessed [here](#).

Conservation as we know it, did not exist at that time. In fact, it wasn't until 400 years later that Pliny the Elder complained about the cleaning of a painting by Aristiedes ([Keck 1984](#)). What Socrates was doing, however, was using the life experiences and perspectives of his dialogue partners to understand and define basic human virtues. One such virtue, ethics, is a cornerstone of the field of philosophy. While Socrates might have asked "what does it mean to live ethically?", we, as members of the conservation field, can tweak the question and ask "what does it mean to work ethically in the conservation of cultural heritage?"

Discussions within conservation on codes of ethics—how they are to be applied and whether or not a conservator's work/training is up to "ethical" standards—continue to be quite lively to this day. These codes not only revolve around the specific virtue of being ethical but also around a number of other terms which appear, undefined, in many Western codes of ethics; these terms include "respect," "integrity," and "authenticity." If he had encountered one of our current debates, Socrates would have certainly wondered how, or even if, the participants could define such terms.

Let us fast-forward 2,400 years after Socrates' death to the present day. The IIC has been organizing Socratic dialogues to answer those questions which Socrates may have asked. But unlike the one-on-one dialogues which Socrates had with his pupils, the IIC dialogues make use of methods developed by German philosopher [Leonard Nelson](#) in the early 20th century ([Kessels, et al. 2009](#)). Participants are asked to try to define a term such as "ethical" or "respect" using personal experiences as examples. Participants then investigate each other's answers in the form of a

"question-dialogue" with the goal of coming to a better understanding of the term, if not a definition.

This modern Socratic dialogue has a structured form in which all participants actively contribute. In order to understand each other's experiences and opinions, participants pose open, informative, and non-judgmental questions. These are questions which begin with the words "what," "who," "when," "where," "why," or "how." The sole purpose of this question-dialogue is to understand what each participant has experienced and said and to understand differences in opinions. The purpose is not to convince someone of a particular argument or to determine right from wrong. The moderator assists the participants, ensuring that their questions are truly **informative** and that questions are neither steering the answer nor being judgemental about a certain viewpoint. The method thus provides a safe, open environment for participants to better understand each other's views, and perhaps even their own, on decision-making in their work.

Given its philosophical nature, a Socratic dialogue could go on until everyone dies. However, this author, as a moderator, has found it more practical to end the dialogues at the pre-arranged time. To give participants a reference point for continued thought, at the conclusion of each dialogue, each is asked to write in one or two sentences what the essence of the dialogue was for them personally, what each participant took away from it.

For example, in one of the first IIC dialogues, participants were asked to complete the sentence, "In my conservation work, I once had to deal with ethics when ...",

The term "informative question" is part of the professional language used by practitioners of this form of Socratic method. In the Socratic dialogues, we differentiate between an "informative" question, which is a neutral question with the sincere goal of increasing our knowledge about our partner's experience, thoughts, feelings, etc. The term "informative question" is used to set such questions off against "steering questions" which try to elicit an answer in the direction of the questioner's own opinion, or a judgemental question which essentially challenges the other's opinion.

with the underlying question being, "what does it mean to work ethically as a conservator?" Two example responses are as follows:

"Conversations (everyone having a voice) to calibrate the varying value perceptions and judgements towards a shared and agreed common goal are essential."

"It seems to me that ethical issues in conservation mainly rotate around two poles. On the one hand, the relationship with the object, which symbolizes an 'otherness' of some kind (the past, a different culture, etc.), on the other hand, the relationships with different people involved in conservation, who may represent an 'otherness' because of their various points of view and opinions on the object."

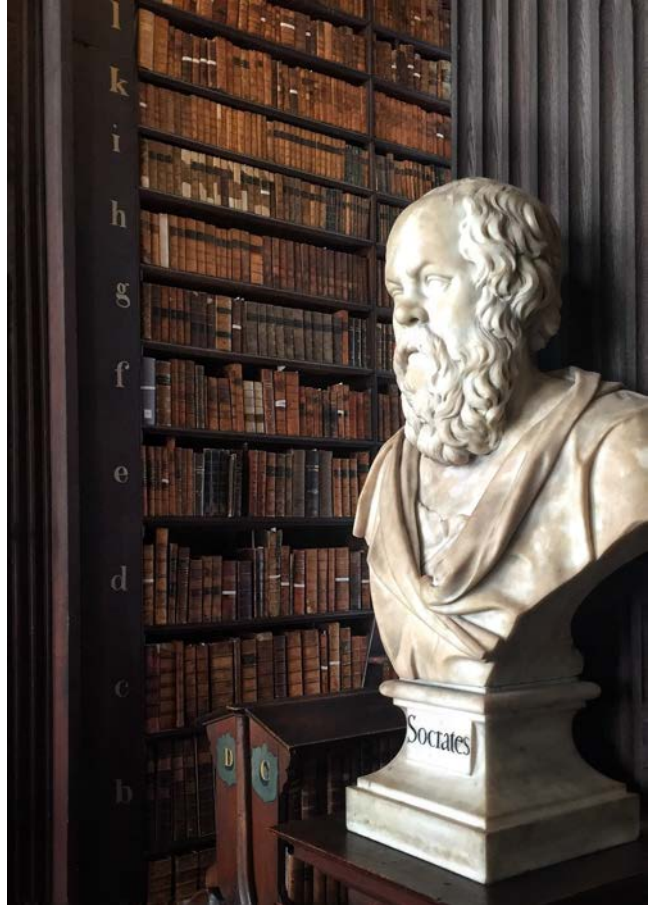
“The sole purpose of this question-dialogue is to understand what each participant has experienced and said and to understand differences in opinions. The purpose is not to convince someone of a particular argument or to determine right from wrong.”



The IIC is currently conducting two series of dialogues. The first consists of five lecture/dialogue workshops aimed at heritage professionals with more work experience. This series was developed as a result of the IIC *Conservation and Philosophy Symposium: Intersection and Interactions* held in 2020. During each workshop Dr. Lisa Giombini (assistant professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Roma Tre) first gives a lecture on how philosophers think about the term in question. This author then moderates a Socratic dialogue on that term.

The second series of dialogues, designed for students in conservation and young heritage professionals, is being co-organized and moderated by this author and IIC Fellowship and Membership Engagement Manager, Ellie Sweetnam. Participants are asked to consider a number of fundamental questions pertaining to the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage such as “what is it that you, as (future) heritage professionals, want to preserve for future generations, for which generations, and why?” These questions were based on those posed during a 2019 ICOMOS workshop on [future heritage management](#). It was surprising that even seasoned professionals were initially stumped with these questions, having never thought about them. The goal behind this series of dialogues is, thus, to get young professionals to start thinking about these important questions at the beginning of their careers.

The fourth in the series of lecture/dialogue workshops, and the last in the series of student/young professional dialogues, will be held in spring 2024 for IIC members. The final lecture/dialogue workshop will then be held in fall 2024. Based on the feedback from participants, initial planning has begun for a new series starting in 2025. Announcements and registration for the workshops and dialogues will be posted on the IIC website shortly.



Socrates. Image by Allan Henderson/Flickr. 2016. Licensed under [CC BY 2.0 DEED](#)

Click the BONUS CONTENT button to see Bill Wei’s reference list for further reading



Dr. Wei is an independent consultant, formerly senior conservation scientist (retired) at Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE). Besides technical research, one of his major interests is how conservation decisions are influenced by the differing perception of objects by heritage professionals and the public. As a trained Socratic dialogue moderator, he has organized over sixty dialogues internationally since 2011.



NEW FOR 2024 CAREER ADVICE SESSIONS

THE IIC IS INTRODUCING A NEW INITIATIVE, 'CAREER ADVICE SESSIONS', TO SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS WITH THEIR CAREER DEVELOPMENT.

Our aim is to continue to foster an environment of generosity and knowledge and is designed to provide a platform where you can discuss various aspects of career advancement and advice. Run by IIC Council member and IIC Fellow, **Duygu Çamurcuoğlu**, participants can sign up for a 15-minute individual 1-to-1 slot with Duygu.

These sessions are free and open to our **Student and Early Career** members. These sessions are a great sounding board and opportunity to gain guidance, perspective and constructive feedback on your career aspirations and decisions. The topics for discussion are led by you and could include:

CV's · Portfolios · Navigating job applications · Harnessing social media for job hunting · PhD opportunities · Exploring international work experiences · Strategizing career growth

We always aim to be as accessible as possible, so we've set the sessions to work across multiple time zones to support members across the world.

Day 1: Thursday 22nd Feb: 9.30am – 11.00am (GMT/ UK time)
Day 2: Thursday 23rd May: 2.00pm – 3.30pm (BST/ UK time)
Day 3: Thursday 24th Oct: 5.00pm – 6.30pm (BST / UK time)

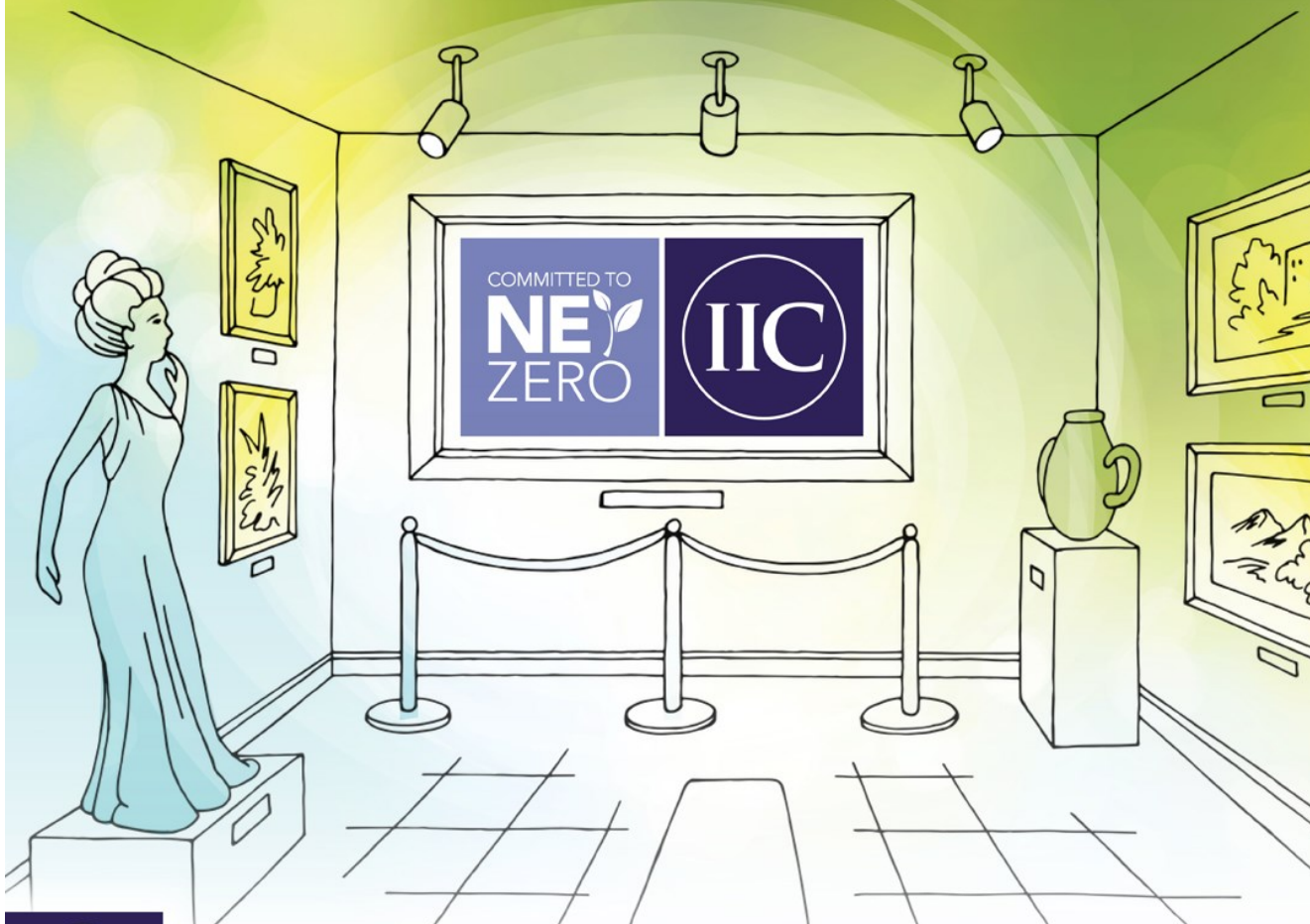
The **deadline to register for Day 1 is Monday, 19 February**. We only have 6 sessions per day available, so sessions will be on a first come, first served basis. If you have any questions or require any assistance, then please get in touch with **Ellie Sweetnam** at ellie.sweetnam@iiconservation.org

Find more
information [HERE](#)

To secure a slot,
register for a ticket
via Eventbrite [HERE](#)

About Dr. Duygu Çamurcuoğlu

Dr Duygu Çamurcuoğlu ACR, FIIC is a senior inorganic objects conservator at the British Museum, London. She has extensive experience leading international conservation projects, in project management, training and teaching cultural heritage conservation in the UK and abroad. She is well-connected both nationally and internationally, and actively collaborates with international conservation institutions, such as IIC and ICOM-CC. She is an Icon accreditation assessor and mentor, supporting colleagues to successfully move forward in their careers. Her main interest areas are research into archaeological materials, interpretation and display of objects in museums, conservation research, building international collaborations, training and career development in conservation, and leadership in conservation.



NET ZERO PILOT PROJECT

Learn best practices for responding to the climate crisis with the IIC certified Net Zero Pilot Project

Aligning with the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\): Race to Zero Partnership Campaign](#) and driven by the [Joint Commitment for Climate Action in Cultural Heritage Conservation between IIC, ICCROM and ICOM-CC](#), this pilot programme will support professionals in small and large institutions as well as freelancers to build momentum to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and help accelerate the transition to a net zero sector. It aims for the conservation field to show leadership by committing to the Net Zero pledge, setting science-based targets, taking action and reporting on the positive changes achieved.

The course provides clear guidance to conservation professionals through a strategic and operational overview of environmental sustainability as it affects our sector. It is focused on the individual's needs and context, with a range of on-demand content that can be watched at any time, combined with the option to attend online networking sessions where participants can discuss their progress and share ideas.

We invite conservation professionals in the international community to join this programme that will contribute to our field and our planet. [Find more information and join the programme HERE.](#)

IIC MEMBERSHIP RATES, INCENTIVES AND DISCOUNTS FOR 2024-25

Last year, IIC reviewed and amended its rates to support members around the world by extending bands 2-4 country discounts for the first time for Institutions, as well as adding a new membership loyalty discount of 10% for all Students, Early Career professionals, Individuals and Fellows including retired members, which will be time limited this year to the end of September 2024.

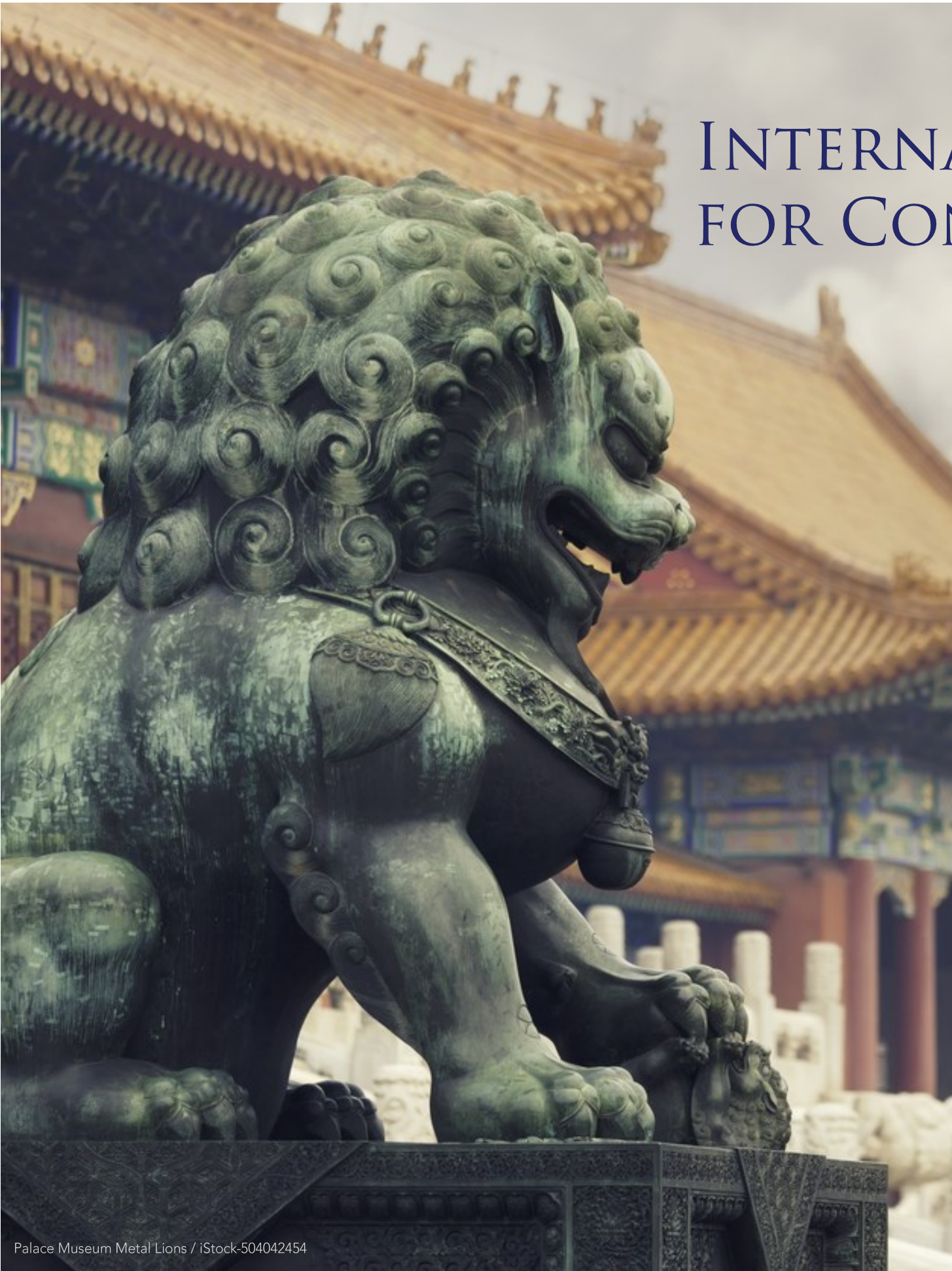
IIC does not pass on administration fees to members or for processing Fellowship nominations, which was previously set at £25. These Fellowship administration fees have been waived for the last two years and the rates between Fellowship and Individuals on the Pathway to Fellowship are set at the same level to encourage nominations of Fellows in traditionally underrepresented regions. The Fellowship and Individual categories of membership will be increased slightly by £5 for Band 1 with adjustments for Bands 2-4, however the administration fees will continue to be waived across all categories.

It is important to note that voting rights, as outlined in IIC's Article of Association, are unchanged.

Membership Category		Band 1*	Band 2*	Band 3*	Band 4*
		Discount Rate Applied			
		0%	25%	50%	75%
Essentials	Students	£27	£20.25	£13.50	£6.75
	Early Career	£55	£41.25	£27.50	£13.75
	Retired Individuals and Retired Fellows	£55	£41.25	£27.50	£13.75
Professionals + Organisations	Individuals - Ordinary	£75	£56	£37.50	£18.75
	Individuals - Pathway to Fellowship	£77	£57.75	£38.50**	£19.25**
	Fellows	£115	£86.25	£38.50**	£19.25**
	Institutions and medium/ large organisations (more than 5 employees)	£360	£270	£180	£90
	Studios and small organisations (up to 4 employees)	£110	£82.50	£55	£27.50

* Discount bands for different countries can be viewed online [here](#).

** Rates will be set at the same level for individuals on the Pathway to Fellowship and for elected Fellows who are living and working in band 3 and 4 regions.



INTERNATIONAL FOR COM

Palace Museum Metal Lions / iStock-504042454

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE FOR CONSERVATION

IIC is pleased to announce the renewal in 2024 of its fruitful collaboration with the Palace Museum, Beijing, celebrating nearly a decade of partnership for the IIC International Training Centre for Conservation (ITCC).

With the idea originally founded in 2014, the IIC-ITCC is an initiative of the IIC and Palace Museum, Beijing, that offers mid-career conservation professionals the opportunity to promote research and international exchange in the region. Since then, 117 participants from 37 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, America and Oceania have benefited from training workshops held in Beijing, covering topics such as preventive conservation, non-destructive analysis, textiles, paper and photography, archives and photography, and a fifth workshop in 2019, 'scientific approaches to ceramics and glass'. The global impact and positive contribution of the ITCC training workshops has been recognised and celebrated in ['Mid-Career scientific training for 21st century conservators: Methodology, research, and practice at the IIC-International Training Centre at the Palace Museum, Beijing'](#).

The course themes for the next three years have been chosen to fit with the evolving needs and changing landscape of the profession and will include the conservation and restoration of metals, paintings (including wall-painting, thangkas, oil paintings and traditional Chinese paintings) and furniture.

We are delighted that the course for 2024 will be ['Conservation and Restoration of Metal'](#), focusing on recent advances in metal conservation, and will

[open for applications on 1 February](#) and will close on 14 March.

Due to funding by partners involved with the Palace Museum, Beijing, participation in the programme is provided on exceptionally generous terms – with applicants from beyond mainland China receiving support to cover flights and accommodation as well as training costs. This means that conservation professionals from a variety of developing countries and economic means can benefit from an immersive professional and cultural learning experience.

Courses for 2024 and beyond will be developed in English and will include in-person as well as online lecture programmes, case studies, practical sessions, networking, presentations, and site visits with participants benefiting from the rich collections, resources and expertise of the Palace Museum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Palace Museum, Beijing, has secured the kind support of the Longfor Group as a generous sponsor for the three training courses in the ITCC series, 2024-2026, including the International Symposium planned for 2025.

Metal support securing the object (drawing after the statue of Apollo kept in the Archaeological Museum, Zagreb) (Ivan Tudek)

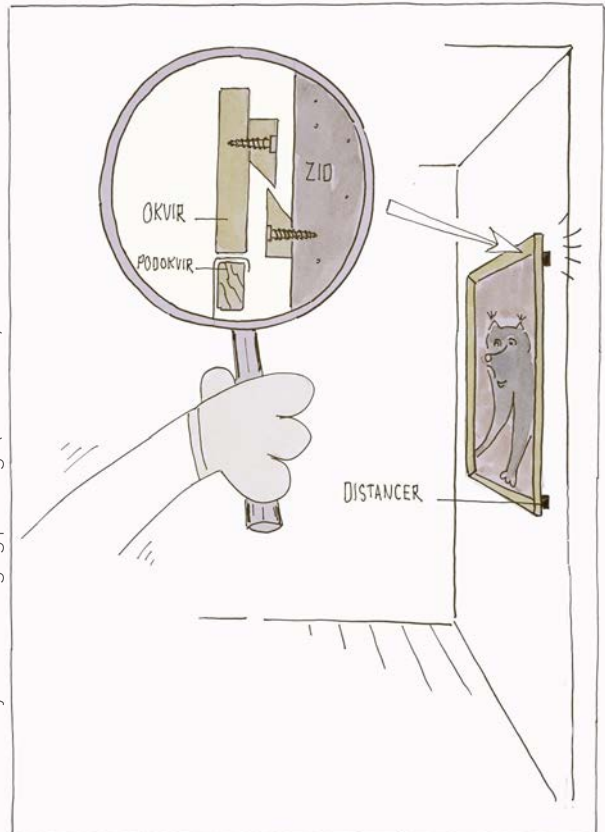


PROFESSIONAL GUIDE FOR PREVENTIVE PROTECTION OF MOVABLE HERITAGE AGAINST EARTHQUAKES

NEW PUBLICATION FROM THE
IIC-CROATIAN GROUP

Announcement by Mirta Pavic

French cleat system of hanging paintings (Ivan Tudek)

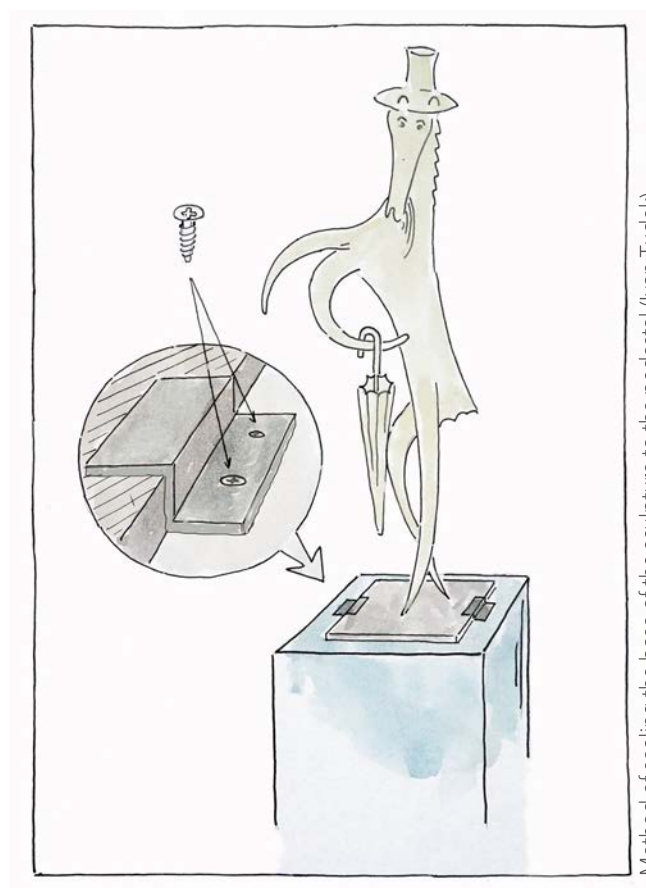


The devastating earthquakes that hit Zagreb and the Banovina region during 2020 and 2021 caused significant damage to both architectural structures and museum collections as well as sacred objects and other movable cultural property, affecting numerous institutions that care for cultural heritage. After the incurred damage, the question naturally arose: could the materials in museums and other collections have been better protected? Could we have prevented the consequences with minor interventions in exhibition spaces and architectural adjustments?

Motivated by these difficult circumstances, and following seismic predictions that there was a high probability of subsequent ground tremors, professionals from two associations, the International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC) Croatian Group and the Section of Conservators-Restorers of the Croatian Museum Association (HMD), created and published a professional guide for the preventive protection of movable heritage against earthquakes.

Following the earthquakes, professionals in the field naturally focused on addressing the aftermath by evaluating the damage and analysing the resulting

GUIDE E PAGE QUAKES THE



Method of sealing the base of the sculpture to the pedestal (Ivan Tudek)

conditions in museums and other cultural heritage institutions. Throughout this process, there was a remarkable level of solidarity among colleagues and institutions, providing invaluable support during uncertain times. After primary protection and conservation was carried out (although these procedures are still ongoing in many institutions and will likely take some time), the idea to gather recent experiences in one place naturally emerged to improve preparedness for possible emergencies in the future.

Twenty-two authors—professionals from museums, universities, and the public sector in the field of preservation—responded to the editors' appeal and contributed their first-hand experiences to this valuable edition. The book opens with introductory texts by the renowned experts Jerry Podany and architecture conservator Goran Nikšić. It includes chapters on preventive conservation, risks and risk management, methods and procedures for securing materials in adaptive reuse buildings, exhibition spaces and storage rooms according to the type of object and material, and methods of protection in specific spaces such as memorialized artist apartments, ateliers, private and religious collections. Another significant

contribution in the book is a list of inert materials recommended for preventive conservation, as well as those not recommended.

The book is designed as a series of comprehensive, practical, and easy-to-apply instructions, with the aim to provide assistance in caring for movable heritage, not only for experts and managers of museums and (sacred) art collections, but also for anyone involved in such work outside institutions. This includes planning exhibition methods and protecting objects from risky situations from the very beginning. Proposed measures can prevent a significant amount of damage with relatively modest resources.

Publication editors include Mirta Pavić (Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb) and Slađana Latinović (Archaeological Museum in Zagreb), and the book has been peer-reviewed. Its creative visual appearance is the work of the artist Ivan Tudek.

The *Professional Guide for Preventive Protection of Movable Heritage against Earthquakes* was published in September 2023 and was presented in Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik. Additionally, it was introduced at the

26th Seminar on Archives, Libraries, Museums in Poreč. As part of its promotion, a panel discussion titled "Challenges and Possibilities of Implementing Anti-Seismic Measures in the Protection System of Movable Heritage" was organized to raise awareness about the importance of assessing risks and taking preventive action in preserving movable cultural heritage. Museum professionals, conservators and different experts dedicated to heritage preservation participated in this discussion.

The book has an initial print run of 300 which will be provided free of charge to museums, galleries and heritage institutions across Croatia. It will be published in digital format as well.

The book's publication was supported by the City of Zagreb and by generous donors: the Society of Friends of Dubrovnik Antiquities (with a special acknowledgment to Renata Andjus), Studio M, NEFC (USA, with gratitude extended to Irena Matulić), The International Trust for Croatian Monuments (UK, with heartfelt thanks to Lady Jadranka Beresford Peirce), and Crescat Ltd.



Upper right: Book cover of *Professional Guide for Preventive Protection of Movable Heritage against Earthquakes*.

Below: Event promoting of the book in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb on October 16th 2023. Photography by Filip Kovačević, MSU archive.



Antique materials from the conservation studio © Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain

A SPACE FOR SHARING EXPERIENCES

THE IIC-SPANISH GROUP BULLETIN

Carmen Moral Ruiz
Editor GE-IIC Bulletin

The monthly bulletin of the IIC-Spanish Group (GE-IIC) aims to highlight the different experiences that underlie the profession of conservators—a profession, sometimes little known and undervalued, that needs to make its actions visible and promote collaboration. This bulletin looks to the future and has established itself as a source where interesting topics can be shared and valued. It is a publication that, despite its brevity, brings us closer as a group allowing us to celebrate our experiences, showing that our professionals are increasingly valued. In this way, we continue protecting the legacy of our past and present society for the future. With this aim in mind, several bulletins have highlighted the vision of various professionals in our group who carry out their work related to cultural property in various museums. The following bulletin shows the experience of a paintings conservator at the Prado Museum (Madrid, Spain).





THE CONSERVATION WORKSHOP OF THE PRADO MUSEUM. INHERITANCE OF THE PAST AND PROJECTION OF THE FUTURE

*By Eva Martínez Morales
Painting Conservator at the Prado Museum
Madrid, Spain*

The conservation workshop of the Prado Museum has been in continuous operation since the very creation of the Museum when some of the conservators then in charge of the Royal Collection were incorporated into the new Museum which, from a very early date, made sure to remain permanently equipped with a team of conservators.

Today the conservation studio of the Prado Museum is largely heir to that tradition; every day we are faced with the responsibility of preserving a collection that, for the most part, has been maintained with great rigor and dedication for centuries. The need to know the collection in depth, to analyse the techniques of the different authors and schools, and to prioritise the study of any previous records of the work as the starting point of the conservation process, is a practice that has traditionally been carried out within the workshop and that we continue today.

Our work, in recent decades, has also been well supported by technical documentation, carried out by the Museum's cabinet and laboratory. These studies, conducted prior to the conservation treatment, are routine giving us insight into main issues, alterations and problems that we will encounter in the work during the treatment process as well as providing us with fundamental information prior to conservation processes. The technical studies also contribute to knowledge of the artist and the historical context; in this way, working hand in hand with the Technical Documentation Department and the laboratory makes the conservation process a unique moment for the study of the work. The knowledge of a work's authorship, period, style and provenance is completed as much as possible—information that is fundamental to the research and work in a museum. It is also essential to collaborate throughout the process with our team of curators seeing as the data obtained in the conservation studies complement their research, which is likewise a great help to the conservators. Undoubtedly, the possibility of working in an environment that brings together different disciplines, and that is backed by a great team, is a guarantee for good work and optimal results; a conservator's work is

Conservator working on a painting on canvas
© Museo Nacional del Prado. Madrid, Spain



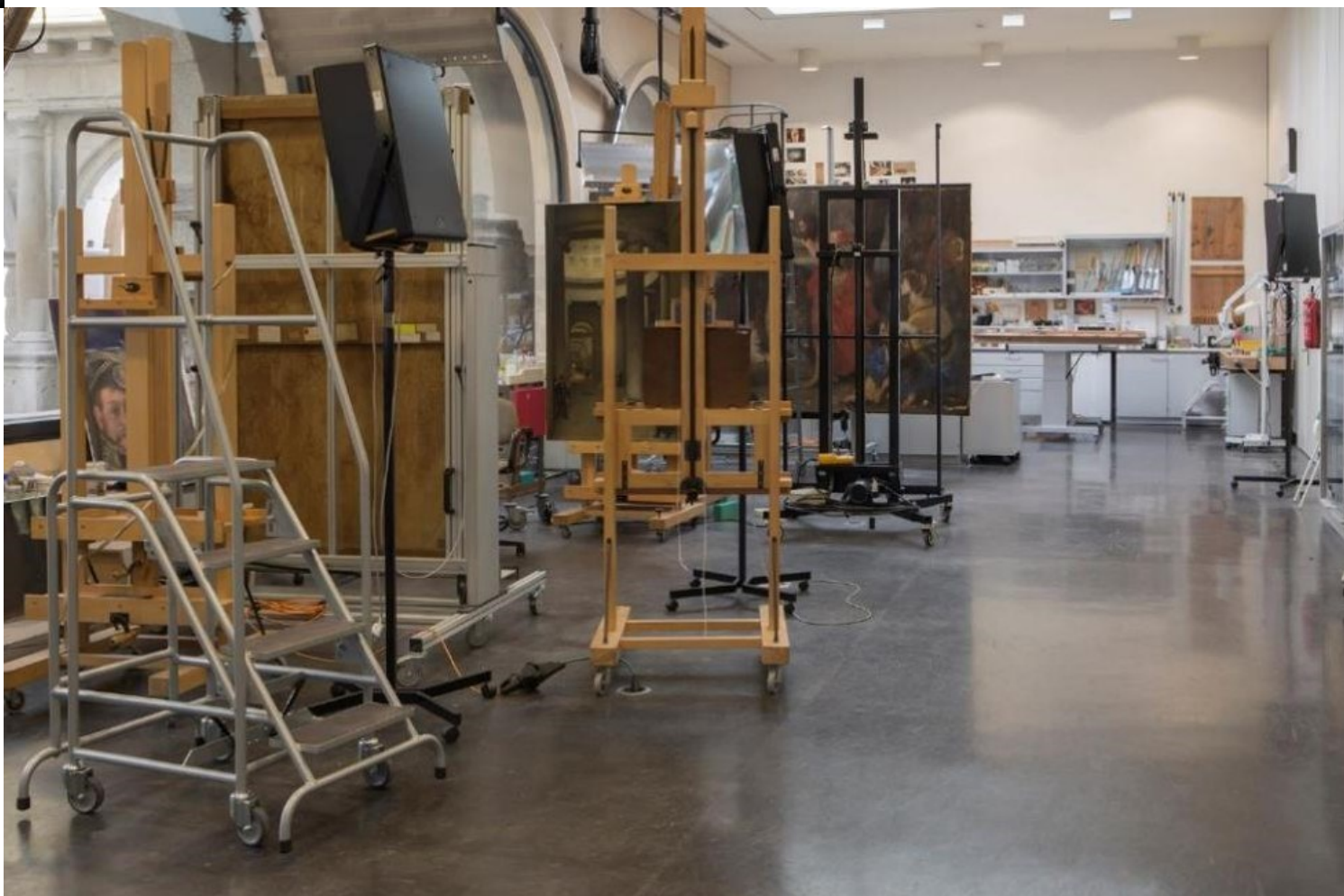
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always agreed upon by the team, and decisions are made jointly and in collaboration with members of the workshop itself and with the curators.

The beauty of the conservator's work is perhaps an unusual blend of modernity and tradition. On the one hand, we are supported by the most advanced technical means; on the other hand, aspects of our work and craft have been inherited from the past and are also essential to ensure we choose the best techniques and materials for the works of art. We combine the use of products and procedures resulting from the most recent studies (such as cleaning methods with aqueous solutions or gels formulated with the most modern materials) with the use of traditional supplies of which we are perhaps the last heirs and which are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. These materials include animal glues, plasters, linen cloth, ox gall, Venice turpentine and natural resins and are an essential part of our daily work since we know that their affinity with the original painting materials often makes

them the best to use in new interventions. For example, in the Prado's workshop we use natural damar resin to varnish paintings, since it provides the best saturation and the most appropriate brightness on the paint surface while also maintaining reversibility over the centuries. Modern technologies also help us preserve the varnish; the elimination of atmospheric pollution in the museum galleries, as well as the suppression of ultraviolet light, have proven to significantly slow the aging of a natural resin varnish, supporting damar as a good option.

While the world is advancing faster and faster, we as conservators are attached to our traditional materials but also join in on the dissemination of information through social networks, digital technology, research in chemistry and biology. We know that our work is important as is our collective knowledge of the past. Steadily moving forward will allow us to remain, for many generations, the custodians of our irreplaceable heritage.



The painting conservation workshop © Museo Nacional del Prado. Madrid, Spain

FELLOWSHIP CORNER



Ida Hovmand trained as an archaeological conservator in Cardiff, UK, which led to contract work in the UK and teaching practical conservation at the Durham conservation course. Since 1998 she has been conservation manager at Bevaringscenter Fyn at Langelands Museum, DK where she is also responsible for conserving archaeological finds. Bevaringscenter Fyn collaborates with several partners, and Ida works closely with archaeologists, collection managers, curators and exhibition designers. For a number of years, her conservation unit has hosted conservation students from the Durham programme, as it is important to look to the future of the profession.

Ida's research has primarily focused on various aspects of waterlogged organics, and she is the current coordinator of the ICOM-CC Working Group for Wet Organic Archaeological Materials. Working with other museum professionals has also led Ida to explore and publish on the subject of local community involvement, outreach and training of volunteers.

IIC Fellow Ida Hovmand is conservation manager at Bevaringscenter Fyn. Image courtesy of Ida Hovmand.



David Carrington is a stone and sculpture conservator based in Nottinghamshire, UK. Graduating as an archaeological conservator from Cardiff in 1986, he subsequently (2000) obtained his DPhil from York, studying the impact of historic restoration and conservation on the survival and authenticity of church monuments. He is an ACR accredited member of Icon, and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. He set up Skillington Workshop in 1997 and now heads a team of 12 conservators as one of the UK's leading private specialist conservation firms. He also serves on the Fabric Advisory Committee for Durham Cathedral, was conservation advisor for the recent conservation of the west front of Lincoln Cathedral and has for many years been conservation cases recorder for the Church Monuments Society. He is passionate about training and career development in conservation and is a vice-chair of Icon's Accreditation Committee.

David Carrington, FIIC, set up Skillington Workshop in 1997. Image courtesy of David Carrington.



Dr. Aga Wielocha, a researcher, collection care professional and conservator specialising in modern and contemporary art, earned her PhD from the University of Amsterdam (2021). Her doctoral research, part of the [New Approaches in the Conservation of Contemporary Art](#) project, focused on the evolving nature of contemporary artworks within museum collections. Aga's research centres on the processes of institutional art collecting, with a particular focus on contemporary formats like art projects, participatory art and performance. She frequently lectures and writes on these topics. Currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Bern Academy of the Arts, she contributes to the research project "[Activating Fluxus](#)." Previously, Aga worked at Hong Kong's M+ Museum, developing efficient documentation strategies for expanding collections spanning visual art, design, architecture and moving images. Prior to her doctorate, she served as a conservator at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and gained valuable experience in private practice. Aga holds a master's degree in conservation and restoration of works of art from the Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw.

IIC Fellow Aga Wielocha is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Bern Academy of the Arts. Image courtesy of Aga Wielocha.



Associate Professor Yoko Taniguchi received her PhD in 2009 from the University of Tsukuba, focusing her scientific research on painting technology of the Bamiyan Buddhist wall paintings in Afghanistan, in 2009. She received an MCons in conservation science from Tokyo University of Art. She has been a faculty member at the University of Tsukuba (Japan) since 2013, interned at the Getty Conservation Institute and was assistant lecturer at Tokyo University of Art before joining to the Diagnostic Science Laboratories, Malta Centre for Restoration (MCR) incorporating the Institute for Conservation and Restoration Studies (ICRS).

Yoko joined the Japan Centre for International Cooperation in Conservation (JCICC) of NRICPT in 2004 as a research fellow and conducted conservation and research projects in China, India, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan among others. In 2015 she began research on wall paintings and rock hewn churches in Cappadocia and now leads a remote-conservation project for the Ain Dara temple site using 3D models. She published *Wall Paintings of Bamiyan, Afghanistan: Technology and Materials* in 2022.

Yoko Taniguchi, FIIC, as worked on heritage sites and wall paintings all over the world. Image courtesy of Yoko Taniguchi.

MEET OUR TRUSTEES

James Brooke-Turner studied the history of European art at the Courtauld Institute in the early 1980s (when it was in its Robert Adam house in Portman Square) with some wonderful tutors such as Jennifer Fletcher, Neil MacGregor, Anthony Blunt, Anita Brookner and Chris Green.

What he learnt from that experience was that he did not want to go into the business of selling art but wasn't smart enough to work in a museum. Instead, he went to help manage the assets of the Church of England (in a large Victorian building, next to Parliament). They had lovely archives relating to church property. A lot were very "Jane Austen", but there was plenty of material written on vellum if the gift of property was medieval. After some years he qualified and went off to be the finance director of a medium sized medical research charity for a few years before he went (in 2000) to be finance director of the Nuffield Foundation, a £500M endowed charity funding social research in the UK (including two international councils on data ethics and bioethics), based in a beautiful Georgian building in Bloomsbury. About five years ago, he reduced his role at Nuffield to only manage Nuffield's investment portfolio so he could set up a consulting firm, Yoke and Co, helping charities manage their investment portfolios successfully.

Apart from working at a fascinating organisation, James has made time around his work to pursue a number of other interests. For example, he completed an MA in medieval culture, writing his dissertation on what happened if you became insolvent in the English countryside in the year 1200, but also covering a wide range of other subjects from astrology to Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. He speaks widely on charities and investment matters and has a book, *Investing for Charities*, due out later this year.

It's not all work and no play though. He founded and captained the Extremely Tall Cricket Club (average player height: 2m), was a dove in the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics and spent an hour as one of the statues on artist Anthony Gormley's *Fourth Plinth* project in London's Trafalgar Square. He's a cold-water swimmer (and was the Polish champion for his



Image of (and courtesy of) James Brooke-Turner.

age group in a competition in Gdansk harbour one January), and he's cycled over more Alpine passes than he cares to remember. None of this would have been possible without the (incredible) forbearance of his wife Alison (a former paediatric nurse and now a UK Blue Badge guide) and their four children, now all adults.

So finally, he begins to return to his roots in art history, hence his total pleasure at being involved with the work on the Council of IIC.



OPPORTUNITIES FUND

IIC has radically revised its Opportunities Fund, expanding the funding available and opening it up to **ALL members** within two strands to respond to the challenges of our time, 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.

Any IIC member can apply to the Opportunities Fund; this includes members who are displaced or seeking refuge from conflict and disaster. Potential applicants can join IIC to become eligible for the grant.

Needs-Based Learning-Focused Bursaries (up to £250) for Student, Early Career, and Individual members

Seed Funding Grants (up to £750) for Fellows and Institutional Members

Applications submissions for the current round of grants are now open and will close **10 March 2024**

CLICK HERE
to find more
information
and apply to
the IIC
Opportunities
Fund.

JILLEEN NADOLNY

By Joyce Townsend

Dr Jilleen Marie Nadolny sadly died in December 2023 only a few weeks after diagnosis of a serious illness, in effect in the middle of her career. Jilleen's unusually broad knowledge of materiality and practice is best characterised by the term 'technical art historian', and in recent years this had been her full-time occupation. Her untimely and unexpected loss will sadden many people in many countries. The contributors of memories for this obituary have mentioned her generous support of the research of others, her willingness to share her wide knowledge of western art from the mediaeval period to the twentieth century, and her charm and natural elegance.

Jilleen grew up in Massachusetts, USA, and studied fine arts at the Pratt Institute, New York, then history of art and art conservation at New York University. Living after that between Paris and London as an independent scholar and researcher, she held a research fellowship in the Scientific Department of the National Gallery, London, and in 2001 was awarded a doctorate in the Conservation and Technology Department at the Courtauld Institute, London. Her research centred on recipes for, and production of, applied relief brocade decoration on polychrome sculpture of the earlier mediaeval period, as used in many northern European countries. Her language skills in German and French, and reading skills in an impressive number of other European languages including their mediaeval variants, served her well for this. In 2003 she moved to Norway to join the staff of the conservation programme at the University of Oslo as an associate professor where she taught history and ethics of conservation, technical art history, examination techniques for works of art, and contributed to research projects on Norwegian painted churches and other buildings. She continued to publish in this area after she moved

to London in 2010 and joined Art Discovery, a private company specialising in direct examination and imaging of objects and scientific investigation techniques to support authentication and attribution studies. She was first a senior research associate, again employing her languages in documentary studies related more often to 20th-century art and the Russian avant-garde in particular, then principal investigator, and latterly director of the UK branch until her departure in 2023. She had intended to return to more academic studies.

Over the past two decades, Jilleen participated in many projects in a number of countries. Jilleen was an active member, an assistant coordinator for some years, and a very regular contributor to conferences held by the Art Technological Source Research Group (now a working group of ICOM-CC). She was author of several academic publications. She contributed chapters to the magisterial *Conservation of Easel Paintings* (edited by Joyce Hill Stoner and Rebecca Rushfield, 2012 and 2021), as the principal author of the chapter on art technological source research, and as the author of the history of early scientific examination and analysis of painting materials as well as the history of visual compensation for paintings. Her publications have been very thorough and detailed, and have added to knowledge of technical art history, but the profession has now lost the books that she would have been well placed to write in her later career, including the coverage of her doctoral research. She was always an active communicator as well as a researcher who taught and regularly lectured, not only to the conservation and art history professions, but also to wider audiences of curators, collectors and dealers.

Jilleen is survived by her daughter Chloé Schneider and by her parents, brother and sister.



Jilleen on holiday in the south of France, summer 2023.
Image by Leslie Carlyle

CONFERENCE NETWORKING: BUILDING BRIDGES AND ALLIANCES TOWARDS CONSERVATION SUCCESS

By Carlota Vieira, Phedra Komodromou and Mariana Onofri

Over the past five years, the worldwide reality of COVID-19 restrictions has greatly affected the next generation of conservation professionals. Students and emerging professionals between 2019 and 2022 felt discouraged from developing their networking skills due to a lack of group project collaboration and in-person conference participation. While these unprecedented circumstances did encourage an increase in international broadcasting of conferences online, virtual settings did not compel one to engage in conversations beyond “Greetings from...” As a result, there have been concerns regarding confidence in the rising generation of conservators’ social skills and their ability to enter the job market confidently.

When COVID-19 restrictions were finally lifted, in-person conference settings began to resume. However, after years of social disruption, many found this experience daunting and overwhelming. For that reason, conferences targeting emerging conservators and students have had a pivotal role in promoting the improvement of networking skills within the profession.

By the end of 2023, two such conferences took place that allowed the next generation of conservators to meet individuals within similar career stages. The first was the 7th Conservation-Restoration Luso-Brazilian Meeting, 2-4 November, at the NOVA School of Science and Technology in Lisbon. This event takes place every two years between Portugal and Brazil. The second conference, the 7th Students and Emerging Conservators Conference (IIC-SECC) entitled *Testing the Waters*, took place 16-18 November in person at the University of Amsterdam. Notably, this conference had an online modality. Although both events focused on the same professional field, the purpose of the meetings was different. The first was an academic event with presentations on research and case studies, while the other conference was aimed specifically at students and emerging conservators with a more practical agenda including discussions about the challenges of professional life.

While both conferences offered fascinating and thought-provoking presentations, their most rewarding component was the in-between session coffee breaks which provided casual environments for group reflection, discussion and opinion-sharing of experiences and struggles inherent in the world of conservation. Topics of discussion included the





From left to right: Carlota Vieira, Tereza Moura, Katharina Maracajá, Laura Gomide, Mariana Onofri, Paulo de Sande, Isabella Gama, Tiago Gomes, Giulia Alcântara and Rita Correia at the Carmo Convent, Lisbon. Photo courtesy of Mariana Onofri and Carlota Vieira.



Mariana and Phedra at IIC-SECC "Testing the Waters" in Amsterdam. Image courtesy of the authors.

"While we should continue to encourage the pursuit of mentors, let's also champion the idea of seeking guidance from peers who have recently trod the same path. Their firsthand experience of current challenges and emerging trends makes them invaluable allies in our collective journey toward successfully launching a career in conservation."

regulation of the profession, democratization of the heritage field, decolonization, low-budget conservation, salary disparity, public investment, sustainability within documentation and digitization, conservation in times of conflict, disaster control, personal ethics, health and safety, and social media outreach.

The IIC-SECC also organized Institutional tours which were a great way for attendees to meet people from various professional environments (academic, governmental, and private settings) allowing them to reflect on their career path and their current institution of employment.

Networking continued beyond the formal setting of the conference halls in the form of ice-breaker activities. The Luso-Brazilian conference included spontaneous dinners and tours of Lisbon. The IIC-SECC conference included a pop quiz. International friendships were formed allowing for cultural exchange, future travel opportunities, and the ability to participate in future projects beyond borders. How delightful it was to hear success stories of recent graduates finding employment and even successfully opening their own private practices!

In the dynamic world of conservation, where passion meets purpose, the journey becomes more rewarding when shared. Embarking on the path of conservation is not just about acquiring knowledge, but is also about building meaningful relationships. Beyond the confines of conferences, it is fundamental to actively participate in events, engage with fellow enthusiasts, and forge connections that extend beyond the duration of these gatherings.

Networking with peers can have many advantages: it can be the answer to many struggles; it can provide the opportunity to meet others with similar problems and work through a solution to those problems; it can also lead to new and exciting projects like the writing of this article, for example. Networking can also lead to international connections which contribute to cultural enrichment, help raise awareness of what characterizes the profession in other countries, and encourage more tolerant behavior.

One of the benefits of networking is that it doesn't have to end when the conference doors close. Online platforms offer a continuous avenue for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and support. Let's take advantage of these virtual spaces to extend our network,

exchange ideas, and stay connected long after the physical events conclude.

Conservation students and early career professionals are always encouraged to find mentors. While accomplished mentors are very helpful in building a career, peer relationships can be just as important to one's career development. Students and recent graduates would have many shared experiences and lessons to learn from those who have attended a degree program or who have started their career journey during COVID-affected years. Conversations with peers on their training experiences, struggles, and current trending topics—which resulted from these unique circumstances—within the field may help in developing a path and even a contingency plan for a successful career journey.

So, while we should continue to encourage the pursuit of mentors, let's also champion the idea of seeking guidance from peers who have recently trod the same path. Their firsthand experience of current challenges and emerging trends makes them invaluable allies in our collective journey toward successfully

launching a career in conservation. Let's build bridges, form alliances, and create networks that not only support our individual growth, but that also contribute to the collective advancement of conservation. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the world we are dedicated to preserving.

Click the **BONUS CONTENT** button to read the article in Portuguese



Carlota Vieira graduated in Conservation and Restoration at NOVA University in Lisbon and is currently completing a master's in painting conservation and restoration at the same institution. She is currently an intern at the painting conservation studio of the National Museum of Ancient Art (Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga) in Lisbon, Portugal.



Phedra Komodromou is Greek and Cypriot, raised in Belgium. She acquired an MA in classical studies from the University of Edinburgh and an MSc in conservation from Cardiff University. She recently joined the Cyprus Department of Antiquities as an objects conservator helping prepare the collection which will be exhibited within the New Cyprus Museum. She is also an IIC Emerging Professional Committee member.



Mariana Onofri is an art conservator currently working on a master's degree researching the conservation of acrylic painted surfaces at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), in Brazil. She is content producer at @marianaonofri.restauro and an IIC Communications Team member.



“THE EVID
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Image of the National Library of Scotland
© National Library of Scotland.

“THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR. THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM THE CLIMATE CRISIS, AND IT IS NOT GOING AWAY”

—THE RESPONSE FROM THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

By Marina Herriges,
Editor for Reframing Conservation Through Sustainability

Following the [United Nations Paris Agreement](#), and the [IPCC Special report ambition to keep global temperature rise below 2°C](#), the [National Library of Scotland](#) (NLS) has committed to making a difference in the climate race. The library has taken their leadership role and are contributing to the [Scottish Adaptation and Mitigation around the climate crisis](#) as well as internationally.

The pledge is to become net zero by 2045 at latest, and in the short term, the institution is aiming for a 72.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emission by 2025, recycling 70% of their waste, reducing the amount they send to landfill to 5% and fully decarbonising their fleet by 2025. The library's work has been widely recognised by becoming the Ambassador for [zero waste resource efficiency](#) in Scotland and gained Platinum status in resource management by Zero Waste Scotland.


I spoke with Julie Bonn ACR FIIC, the National Library of Scotland's head of collections care since 2019, who explained to me the work their team has been developing around carbon literacy, specifically focused on libraries. As an institution, the NLS acknowledges their influential role in society and are promoting resources to help improve climate literacy, providing

information for individuals and communities to respond to the climate crisis in their own lives.

Their collections care team commissioned an audit of their working practices, mostly in the conservation studio but also in their box-making unit. Lorraine Finch ACR, who is certified carbon literate and is an accredited [carbon literacy](#) trainer, was appointed not only due to their knowledge around carbon literacy, but also because Lorraine is an accredited conservator specialising in the conservation and preservation of archives focusing on photographs, film and sound. The main idea was to become a good example for the rest of the library and potentially for the wider sector, based on the conservation studio's ability to set the example, slightly shifting work practices and routines.

One of the recommendations that came out of the audit was for the team to undergo carbon literacy training. In Julie's words, "It's not just about what you do at work. It's about your lifestyle. All the choices that you make, and it's very much around personal choice and personal impact."

During the pandemic, the NLS created a [Climate Action Plan](#) that was a collective effort from different departments. Everyone was given a different



responsibility and were encouraged to give feedback to the Plan's management team. The collection care department decided to invite the Plan's management team to join the carbon literacy training, and at the end the group had to make personal and group commitments to make changes.

The group commitment was to adapt the [Carbon Literacy for Museums Toolkit](#) and make it more bespoke to better fit the Library's model. The funds that supported the project came from the CILIPS Green Libraries Scotland Grant Fund as well as the National Librarian's Innovation Fund. Laragh Quinney, one of the map librarians, and Megan Veitch, a security advisor, joined Julie as project coordinators, which made for an interesting mix of perspectives for the project.

The project garnered interest from other libraries in the UK who joined the effort to create a toolkit that is relevant to many libraries. The toolkit is built on what others have done, what they have tried and how it's worked. According to Julie, the team wanted to make sure that they had a wide pool of ideas and access to case studies. Therefore, having

this steering group meant that they could pull from a larger pool of contacts and demonstrate all the good efforts toward sustainability already happening in libraries.

At the moment, the group is working towards submitting the toolkit to the Carbon Literacy Project to get accredited. Once completed, the toolkit will be freely available to download online. The plan for the future includes training library staff to deliver the toolkit, advocate and advertise, with the Carbon Literacy Project as a model.

Julie emphasised the benefit of having a steering group: "It can be quite overwhelming [without the group] when you are looking for good examples, there is so much information out there, but trying to carve out the time to find the good examples, and speak to the right people, get permissions, and all of that is actually quite challenging. So, by bringing in people through the steering group, we're able to kind of spread the load of that a little bit."

Progress has been made, and the Climate Action Plan has helped the team to focus on their tasks and

bring different professionals to contribute to sustainability. Conservation has a particular role to play on this according to Julie: “[What] I find really interesting is, libraries are a sustainable model in and of themselves in terms of what they are and what they are set up to do: share knowledge, share information. And it is the antithesis of our throwaway culture: we spend time to care for these items and make sure that they are preserved and can be shared. Our core function is to preserve the knowledge and make it accessible.” Julie complements it further:

“We are really well placed to lead on a lot of the sustainability agenda. I see it happening across lots of cultural heritage organizations where conservation is taking a real strong lead on this, working by example, demonstrating by example what you can do, and thinking differently.”

The team hopes to have the course signed off by the Carbon Literacy Project by April 2024 so that they can start to deliver training to the sector later this year. Keep an eye out for that; it promises to be a good share.

TALKING ABOUT CARBON LITERACY...

There are a few examples that we can look at around museums and conservation professionals in how we should respond to climate change. I recently came across [the Museum Carbon Project](#) that is led by the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea.

This programme is a series of multidisciplinary events that evaluate the environmental costs of putting together an exhibition. The main drivers for the project are the questions, ‘what are the perspectives and attitudes we must adopt to face this problem?’ and, ‘how can we transform our concerns into action?’

The project suggests that “we see climate change and carbon emission as a process of addressing problems about the human community and expanding the ways we sense the present time.” It is a place to share concerns and learn from others, as the project is constantly being updated. It is worth checking out.



Julie Bonn ACR, the National Library of Scotland's head of collections care. Image © National Library of Scotland.



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Marina Herriges is an object and textile conservator based in Glasgow, Scotland. Marina is a PhD student at the School of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow, where she researches the interconnection between heritage conservation, climate change and colonialism. She is a guest visiting lecturer at the MPhil Textile Conservation, University of Glasgow. Marina is Regional Programme Manager for IIC and has worked in a range of different heritage and conservation organizations in Brazil, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

WHAT IS BLACK ART?

Reviewed by LaStarsha McGarity

What is Black Art?
Edited by Alice Correia
Penguin Books LTD, 2022
Paperback / 352 pages / £10.99
ISBN-9780141998213

Recognizing significant gaps in her art history education and the lack of diversity in British art exhibitions in the 1990s, Alice Correia began exploring what has been coined the British Black Art Movement in the 1980s. This research led Correia to tackle a deceptively simple question, "What is Black Art?," through the examination of forty-one artists' statements, articles, reviews, exhibition essays, interviews, and speeches spanning the decade.

These writings reveal layers of intellectual thought, highlight cultural complexities, and humanize the racialized struggles of a rapidly diversifying 1980s Britain. If one is reading this book hoping to get a singular correct answer, expect to be sorely disheartened and frustrated.

Even the definition of Black in 1980s Britain was not as straightforward as one may imagine. Black held dual, often conflicting, definitions: one in overarching foil to whiteness and one centering the dispersed descendants of Africans. Black had been used to describe any person or community deemed not white and was used specifically in Britain to other those of African, Asian, or Caribbean descent. For example, Correia notes that "in Europe, the term 'Black' as a racial signifier has a long history dating back to fifteenth-century encounters between Portuguese and Spanish traders and Bantu peoples in sub-Saharan Africa... In Britain during the late 1960s and 1970s, 'Black' was commonly—but not always—understood to include people of African, Asian, and Caribbean heritage. Cross-cultural allegiances were fostered by organizations such as the Universal Coloured Peoples' Association..." (Correia, pg. x)

Black was reclaimed during the 1960s by the descendants of the African diaspora to define themselves as a collective whole, first in the United States, by groups such as the Black Panthers and leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, and later by the British Black Panthers. The latter usage closely resembles the modern term, Person of Color (POC), with its issues of cultural erasure and the lack of nuance alongside its cross-cultural unification and solidarity. As cultural theorist Stuart Hall puts it, "the term [Black] came to provide the organizing category of a new politics of resistance among groups and communities with, in fact, very different histories, traditions, and ethnic identities." (Correia, pg. x)

Correia expanded on the "collective definition of 'Black'" as the encapsulation of "strategic alliances and coalitions undertaken by a broad spectrum of people working in opposition to the marginalization, discrimination, and racism they faced in white-majority Britain." (Correia, pg. x-xi) This overarching definition is the definition that Correia relies on throughout the book, although some of the authors disagree and favor the narrower definition of Black. To add a layer of interpretation, the definition of Black Art could vary

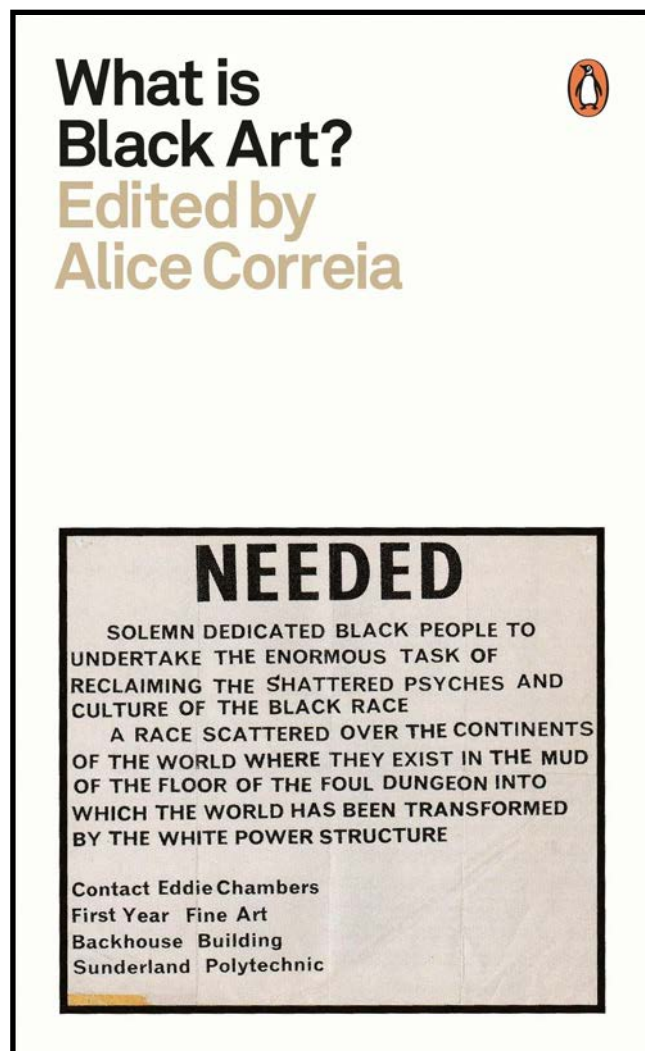
from any artwork by a Black artist, about Black people, or by a Black (specifically African descendant) artist working through a politically influenced Pan-African lens. Additionally, some of the authors do not consider works by Black artists that do not center their race in their work to be Black Art but instead label them as blind mimicry and reproductions of white British cultural heritage. Given the compound definition of personal and group identities and artistic classifications, this book has quite the intellectual ground to cover.

Correia masterfully introduces each of the forty-one writings, most presented in their entirety and their original formatting (except when necessary to edit for length, obvious typos, and spelling errors that inhibit reader understanding). Organized chronologically (or as closely as is possible for vague publication dates) from 1981 to 1989, the works document the shifting, imposed, and self-assigned identities of artists living and working in Britain, their collective efforts to increase representation in museums and galleries, criticisms of inauthentic or token representation in museums and galleries, their efforts to control the narrative surrounding their work, and their experiences living in a Britain openly struggling with diversification.

The authors include John Akomfrah, Rasheed Araeen, Imruh Bakari, Homi Bhabha, Sutapa Biswas, Frank Bowling, Sonia Boyce, Chila Kumari Burman, Eddie Chambers, Allan deSouza, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Coco Fusco, Paul Gilroy, Sunil Gupta, Lubaina Himid, Bhanu Hanjan, Gavin Jantjes, Rohan Jayasekera, Mumtaz Karimjee, Rita Keegan, Yasmin Kureishi, Errol Lloyd, Keith Piper, Ingrid Pollard, Colin Prescod, Samena Rana, Salman Rushdie, Lesley Sanderson, Amanda Sebestyen, Adeola Solanke, Marlene Smith, Maud Sulter, and Gilane Tawadros. Many of the listed authors are themselves artists and are currently receiving renewed curatorial focus and authentic interpretation of their artworks in recent exhibitions along with well-deserved professional accolades.

This book will be an invaluable resource to curators and conservators wishing to understand the context

surrounding the contemporary British art field and the interrelations between Black artists, their art, their writings, and the organizations and galleries they formed. Although the contained writings were often not conceived as a discussion with the other included writings, this book reads as a long and enjoyable conversation between intellectual friends.

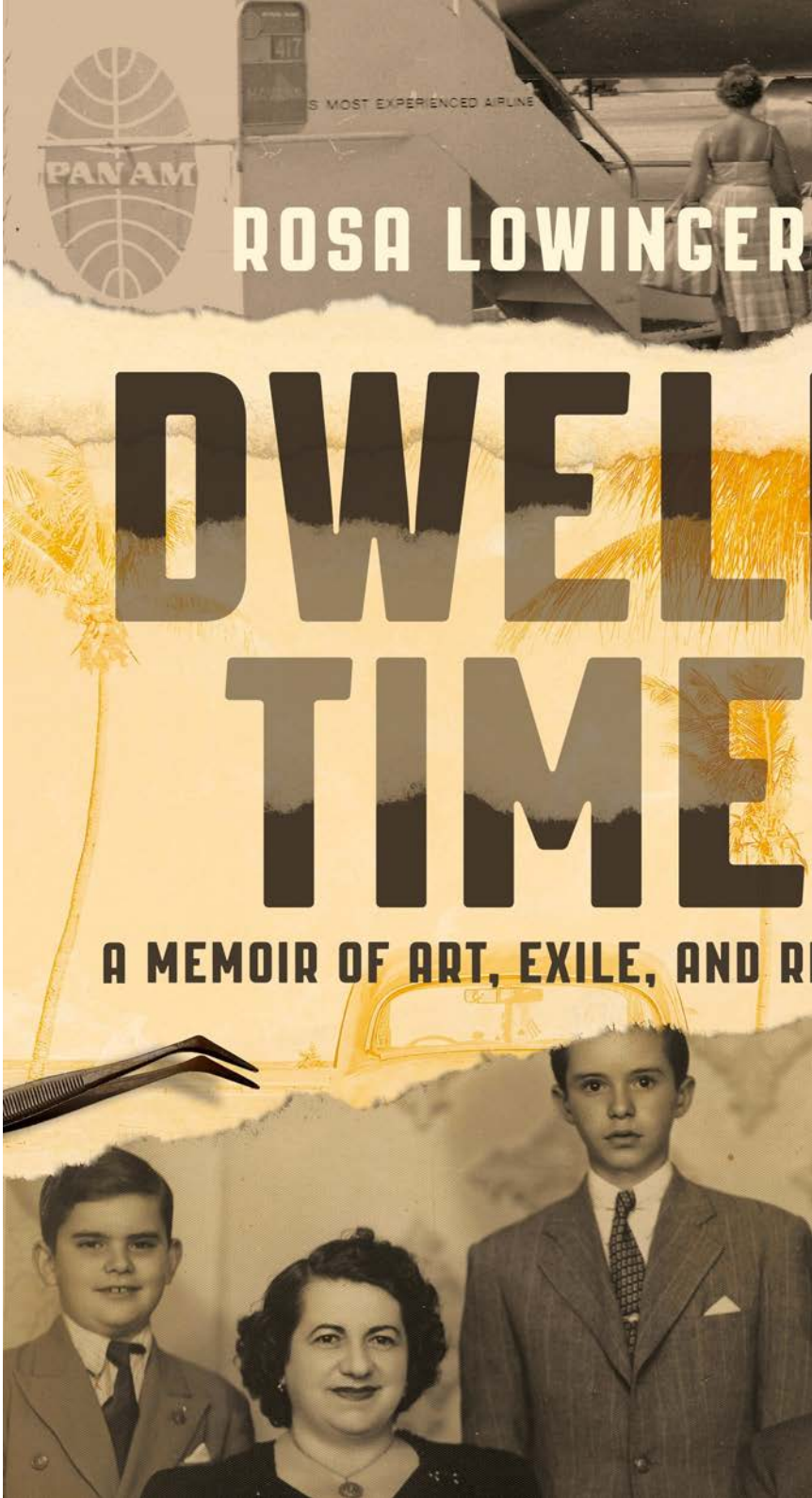


Book cover for *What is Black Art?*
Image courtesy of Penguin Books LTD



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LaStarsha McGarity (she/they) is the preventive conservator and director of the Legacy Museum at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama, USA. She is also a 3rd-year Ph.D. student in the Preservation Studies Program at the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation. Contact: ldm.objcon@gmail.com



DWELL TIME

Reviewed by Mariana Onofri

Dwell Time: A Memoir of Art, Exile and Repair

By Rosa Lowinger
 Row House Publishing (October 2023)
 360 pages
 Hardcover \$27.99 (USD)
 Audiobook \$29.89 (USD)
 ISBN13: 9781955905275

Image on left page and detail on following page):
Dwell Time book cover
 image. Courtesy of Row
 House Publishing.

In his 1889 essay, "The Decay of Lying", Oscar Wilde suggested that life imitates art much more than art imitates life. In *Dwell Time: A Memoir of Art, Exile and Repair*, writer and conservator Rosa Lowinger presents us with another perspective, different from Wilde's notion in 1889. She posits that life not only imitates art but also mirrors conservation-restoration much more than conservation-restoration imitates life.

According to Lowinger, the concept of "dwell time" in conservation signifies a chemical activity, allowing an ample period for the chemical processes involved in conservation to consolidate. This time is deemed essential not just for the preservation of objects but also for cultivating connections and relationships. What are the consequences of neglecting the time and attention needed in areas beyond conservation treatment? We must nurture our human bonds too. Lowinger links, with brilliant metaphors, the conserving of objects to healing relationships, prompting the reader—whether a conservator or not—to reflect.

In this book, we not only trace the author's journey through her personal and professional life but also through that of her family. *Dwell Time* commences with the stories of Lowinger's parents, Hilda and Lindy, both natives of Cuba and children of Jewish immigrants, who sought refuge from Nazism on the Caribbean island. Hilda, orphaned after the death of her mother, spent part of her childhood in a Havana orphanage due to her father's intermittent care caused by his struggles with alcohol. On the other hand, Lindy, Lowinger's father, hailed from a more traditional family. When the two met, Lindy's parents were against the idea of marriage due to Hilda's unstable financial

situation. However, despite the odds, the two lovers got married. Shortly after, Lowinger and her parents departed from their residence in Havana, relocating to Miami to evade the dictatorship in Cuba. The country, once deemed by Lowinger's grandparents as a welcoming and pleasant environment, was changing. Cuba had become authoritarian and without the glamour of the old days. Suddenly, this Cuban family found themselves on American ground, adapting to new habits and cultural nuances.

The chapters, each named after a material conservators handle daily, intricately connect with routine actions. In the first chapter, "Marble", we delve into Lowinger's mother's childhood, exploring her time in an orphanage after her mother's demise and her familial struggles. In

"Lowinger links, with brilliant metaphors, the conserving of objects to healing relationships, prompting the reader—whether a conservator or not—to reflect."

this setting, little Hilda cleaned the marble table and removed the left-over bread. Years later, Lowinger, the author and Hilda's daughter, would also engage in the task of cleaning marble, this time in the form of sculptures, as part of her professional vocation.

Throughout the memoir, Lowinger weaves together events involving both her personal and professional life. Almost effortlessly, she provides insights into the physical and chemical properties of the materials mentioned in the chapter titles, ensuring a smooth and engaging reading experience. We follow Lowinger on her journey from selecting conservation as her course of study at university, navigating



Click on the BONUS CONTENT button to read the book review in Portuguese.

the start of her career and its challenges, to her trips to Cuba where she had the opportunity to learn more about her family's history, culminating in the contemporary period, shortly after the Covid-19 pandemic.

When I came across this unique work on conservation and the narratives of a professional in the field, I was captivated by its non-academic approach. It marks the first time I have read a conservation related book that goes beyond the boundaries of the specialised field, making it an accessible read not only for conservators but also for those eager to gain insights into our profession. I identify with many aspects of the book, be it the Latin American perspective or the clarity in elucidating facets of our profession

to laypeople. I came across similar questions from those outside the field (e.g. 'do you work for the CIA?', or 'what else is there to restore in a city that is barely a hundred years old?') when I was working in Brasilia conserving modern and contemporary art. I initially attributed these encounters to my cultural background. However, I now realise these are universal queries that cross countries and continents.

As a conservator, I've grown accustomed to addressing these kinds of questions; of course, I would prefer it if people already knew about my profession. Nonetheless, I'm glad to see people interested in the preservation of cultural heritage and in preserving their own memories, just as Lowinger does in *Dwell Time*.



Mariana Onofri is an art conservator currently working on a master's degree researching the conservation of acrylic painted surfaces at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), in Brazil. She is content producer at @marianaonofri.restauro and an IIC Communications Team member.

Reviewed by
Sara Prica

*The Story of Art
Without Men*
By Katy Hessel
Imprint: Hutchinson
Heinemann (2022)
Hardback / 512 pages
£30.00
ISBN: 9781529151145

THE STORY OF ART WITHOUT MEN

Several years ago I found myself overseeing our museum's front desk during an after-hours event when a woman exited the main exhibition space. This exhibition spanned 8,000 years of Hellenic history, commencing in the Neolithic Period, and as she walked out, she animatedly and firmly repeated the following question to a male colleague: *"Where are the women?"*

I am not entirely sure what prompted this specific question, especially considering the persistence with which she was addressing him. I do remember hiding a smile and quietly agreeing with her, but the question itself stayed with me. When we examine art history, where exactly *are* the women?

This is how the art historian Katy Hessel opens her debut book, *The Story of Art Without Men* (2022).

In her introduction, Hessel shares that the first jolt of inspiration for what would later become this book occurred when she visited an art fair in 2015 and realised that out of the thousands of works on display, not a single one was by a woman.

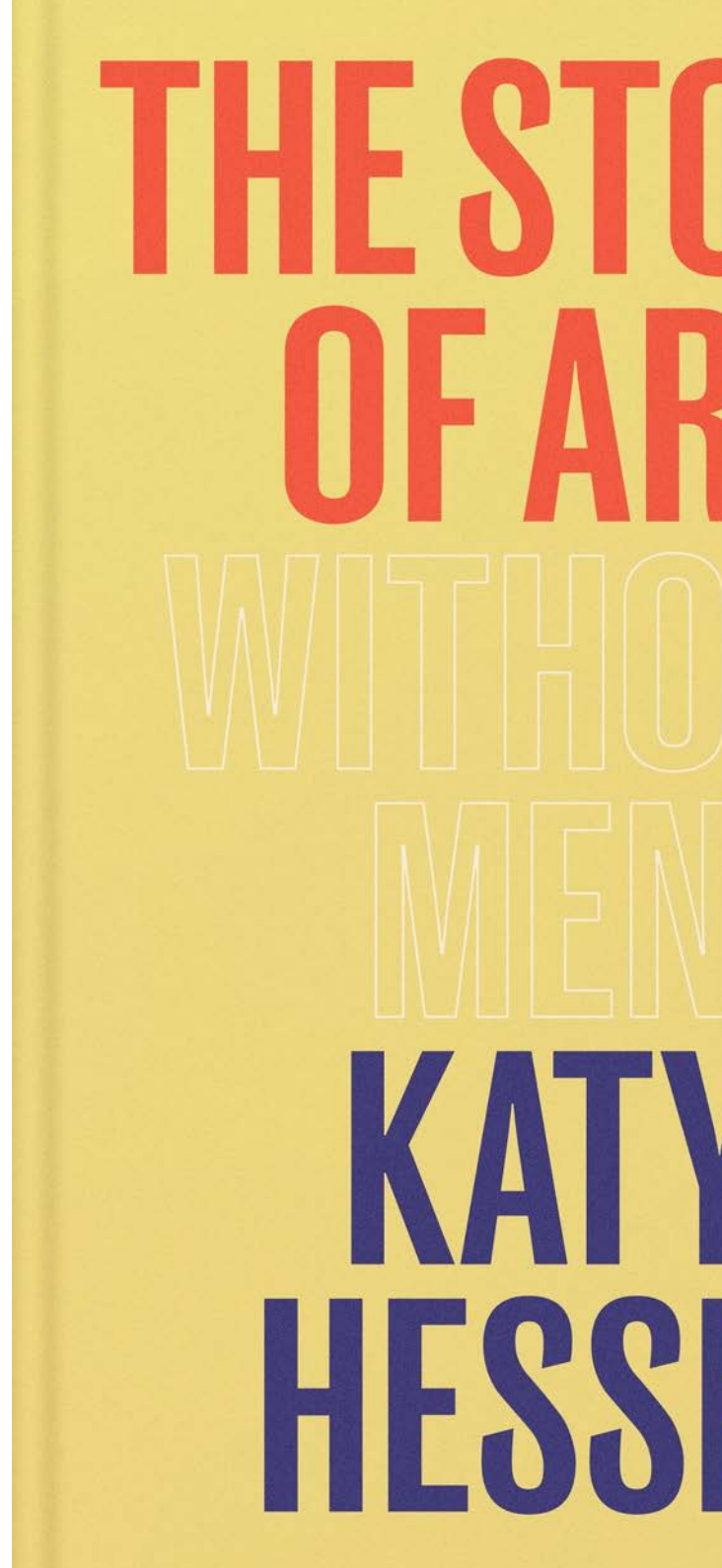
Frustrated and eager to introduce women artists to the world, Hessel started her Instagram page [@thegreatwomenartists](https://www.instagram.com/thegreatwomenartists) with the intention of providing accessible

education. It was this approach that ultimately materialised and is echoed throughout the book discussed here.

The publication takes its name from the art historian E.H Gombrich's *The Story of Art*, first published in 1950. Intended for young readers as an accessible introduction to the visual arts, the book, preceding the aforementioned art fair, had one noteworthy flaw: it didn't include any women artists. Unimpressed, Hessel took the essence of the book and flipped it, presenting us with a 500-year tour-de-force survey of *only* women artists.

The book is divided into five parts and 18 chapters, commencing roughly in the 1500s with the tail-end of the European Renaissance (Plautilla Nelli, Lavinia Fontana), and moves in an approximate chronological order through time into the present day, tracing time through the Baroque (Artemisia Gentileschi) to Spiritualism (Hilma af Klimt) to Bauhaus (Anni Albers) to Pop (Marisol) to Figuration (Jennifer Packer), and every "ism" in between. Hessel acknowledges the overlaps of the various art movements, preventing a straightforward chronology, and frequently recalls both movements and artists to clarify those following and identify links between them. At the back of the book, there is a multi-page timeline resembling a mind map with several artists situated between different styles; this helped to illustrate the often-confusing divisions within art. The book inevitably leans heavily on modern women artists, as their inclusion within the art world only gained momentum from 1900 on. Simultaneously, and unsurprisingly, these new movements broke away from the canon and allowed for greater, more inclusive, participation. One wonders how many others have been lost to history.

Each section and chapter begins with a general overview, introducing the political, social and cultural context of the given era that precipitates and informs the artists and their works. The chapters narrow to a range of even more specific themes, from early botanical photography to performance art to a series of Experimentalism examples.



Book cover of *The Story of Art Without Men*. Image courtesy of Hutchison Heinemann.

As with her online platform, Hessel's writing style is casual and intentionally non-academic; free from jargon, anyone can essentially pick this book up and read it unimpeded. Reading it felt like I was being taken on a gallery tour by a very knowledgeable friend. Many of the works she mentions are accompanied with her own opinion and interpretation, encouraging the reader to form their own. This is strengthened by the generous quantity of images included within (some as delightful double spreads); there are few artworks that are mentioned but fail to make an appearance. Interestingly, a medium that was not mentioned was street art, which is currently very male-dominated, and I find myself curious about Hessel's take on this movement.

As for the artists included within the book, there are many despite the book including only a fraction of existing women artists—some we meet briefly, others we linger on, and more still are included in closed brackets (which inspire further investigation). While the content is not biographical in the traditional and full sense, the artists feel like rounded individuals with lives beyond whatever society may have relegated them to, even if circumstances did not afford them their due. Details like Clara Peeters quietly painting miniatures of herself into her work, or the various self-portraits by women over the centuries, facilitate our understanding of history through new (i.e. largely ignored) perspectives and feel like they are reaching through time and saying, "Here I am".

There is undoubtedly a strong Western focus on the artists presented, particularly within Britain (where Hessel hails from). Hessel does make an effort to include and explore non-Western and non-white artists (Harriet Powers, Nampeyo, Pan Yuliang, Tarsila do Amaral, Faith Ringgold, Frida Kahlo), weaving them through the book and highlighting how their contributions furthered art. Similarly, a chapter was dedicated to queer artists, and they too (Gluck, Romaine Brooks, Tamara de Lempicka, Hannah Höch) were also woven throughout, illustrating just how rich, varied and intersectional art, and the world it reflects, really is.

Overall, the book was engaging, timely and reflective of the culture we are living in but also striving to create. It speaks, directly and indirectly, to issues that continue to resonate with the subjective and biased nature of those who decide what art is, to the ongoing insular, elite and male nature of cultural institutions that is slowly changing. Hessel points to the fact that people *do* have an interest in this subject, and that art is, ultimately, by and for everyone.

I will end as Hessel began, with a quote from Artemisia Gentileschi:

"I'll show you what a woman can do."

Yes, please.



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Sara Prica is assistant curator at the Hellenic Museum in Melbourne, Australia, and has previously worked in the archaeological field. She holds a BA in Ancient Cultures and Honours in Archaeology from Monash University, Melbourne.

AMSTERDAM HOSTS 7TH STUDENT AND EMERGING CONSERVATOR CONFERENCE

'TESTING THE WATERS' - DIVING INTO CRUCIAL CONSERVATION CHALLENGES FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

By Magdalena Wsół

The 7th edition of the Student and Emerging Conservator Conference (S&ECC), Testing the Waters, was hosted in Amsterdam, 16-18 November 2023. The S&ECC series began in 2011 in London, and continued in Copenhagen (2013), Warsaw (2015), Bern (2017), Cologne (2019), and Lisbon (2019).

This year's conference took place in the Library Singel of the Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA), nestled in the heart of historic Amsterdam. A committee of 11 UvA conservation students (directed by Mariana Escamilla-Martinez, and Charlotte Hoffmann), each specializing in different fields, organized the event. The three-day conference hosted 53 (in-person) students and emerging conservators from at least 17 countries, including Brazil, Cyprus, Australia, England, Poland, Germany, and more. In addition, over 200 participants registered to join the conference online via the IIC Community Platform. The conference unfolded across four sessions, each punctuated by insightful and reflective panel discussions among the panelists and participants.

The conference commenced with six guided technical visits to institutes and private studios, including UvA Studios, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), Amsterdam City Archives, Foto restauratie Atelier, Hoving & Klusener Meubelrestauratie, and Atelier Jurjen Creman.

Testing the Waters centered on reflecting and evaluating the initial steps in our conservation careers. The event featured four sessions with captivating talks, inspiring panel discussions, and enriching exchanges of ideas and insights during coffee breaks. Two social events aimed to foster connections among participants: the first, Skills for Tomorrow, was an online session connecting participants and IIC Fellows, focusing





Magdalen Wsól and Laura Valean during the first session, Surface Tension: Starting a career. Photo by Wyke Valkema © IIC

on equipping individuals with skills to future-proof their careers. The second in-person event, Trivia Night, was a quiz with three prizes organized by Paul Kisner, hosted by Kirby Martino, and sponsored by Schmedt.

The first session, Surface Tension: Starting a Career, moderated online by Claire Richardson, focused on initiating the first steps in our conservation careers. The discussion delved into the challenges we encounter and the diverse paths we can choose to pursue. The initial online speaker, Caitlin Southwick—founder of Ki Culture, Ki Futures and Sustainability in Conservation (SiC)—shared her journey and transition from passionate conservator to entrepreneur advocating for environmental awareness and change. She provided empowering insights on the power of networking, overcoming a scarcity mindset, acknowledging our value, openly discussing money, and shared her experiences in establishing both non-profit and for-profit ventures.

The second speaker, Lucas Mantel, initiated his conservation practice in 2022, establishing Restauratieatelier Mantel in Leiden. As a former conservation studio owner, I resonated deeply with his presentation on the pivotal role of transparency and communication among conservators addressing shared challenges. He generously shared comprehensive data about his studio, offering financial insights and addressing

potential risks, making it an invaluable resource for aspiring conservation entrepreneurs in the future.

The third speaker, LaStarsha McGarity, a preventive conservator and head of conservation at Tuskegee University, and a Ph.D. student at the University of Delaware, shared insights on sustainability, accessibility, and diversity in the conservation field. Addressing current challenges faced by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) individuals, she bravely discussed her personal experiences and key moments of her career. She detailed the steps that shaped her career including acknowledging her privileges, advocating for herself, and proactively creating opportunities for internships and future job positions in conservation.

The concluding speaker for this session was Debra Hess-Norris, chair of the Department of Art Conservation and professor of photograph conservation at the University of Delaware. She imparted her extensive life experience in preserving global photographic heritage, emphasizing advocacy, promotion, and education for the future generations of conservators. She discussed the cultural significance and fundamentals of photograph conservation.

The second panel session, Uncharted Waters: Ethics in Difficult Times, moderated by Duygu Çamurcuoğlu (senior conservator at the British Museum), explored the ethical challenges of aligning idealistic scenarios

During the speech of Lucas Mantel, founder of Resturatieatelier Mantel.
Photo by Wyke Valkema © IIC



with conservation practices during periods of conflict. Recognizing the sensitive and potentially emotional nature of the topics discussed, organizers provided two dedicated space-holders at the back of the room for conversations.

The inaugural online speaker, Sarah Stannage, IIC executive director and conservator at Lincoln University in the UK, addressed the theme of heritage at risk, emphasizing the crucial role of IIC in this domain. Commencing with her appreciation for conservators worldwide navigating hostile and challenging conditions, especially in crisis-stricken areas, she underscored the ethos of "do no harm". Sarah delved into the IIC's support for disaster response, collaborative initiatives, and the provision of moral and practical assistance.

Rachel Tabet, preventive photographs conservator at the Arab Image Foundation, shared the challenges during her innovative work on discovering safe, sustainable, and accessible storage methods for deteriorated cellulose acetate and nitrate film supports. Providing insight into the ongoing economic crisis in Lebanon and the shifting priorities of the people, she outlined the action plan for storing the

photographic collection, navigating challenges and adjusting it in response to the 2020 explosion in the Port of Beirut, which significantly impacted the entire project. Nimalka Passanha and Frederick Thomson from Cultural Emergency Response (CER) provided an overview and discussed case studies on emergency support. Emphasizing creative adaptation to local realities and sustainable solutions, they shared experiences in mobilizing networks and collaborating with diverse organizations.

Professor Jane Henderson, professor of conservation at Cardiff University and secretary-general of the IIC, delivered an insightful talk on the impact of emotions in conservation practice. Exploring our emotional responses to projects and their influence on our work, she emphasized the value of understanding and harnessing emotions. Professor Henderson highlighted the importance of self-reflection, acknowledging privileges, and recognizing the value of conserved objects. She shared significance assessment toolkits for conservation projects, offered tips for effective collaboration and consultation management, concluding with a

thoughtful exploration of decision-making criteria.

The third session, *One Droplet After Another: Building Community*, was moderated by Marteen van Bommel and delves into fostering connections and community with the public, institutions, colleagues, and related fields, highlighting the significance of collaboration between conservators and diverse disciplines.

Cristina Duran Casablanco, a book and paper conservator at Amsterdam City Archives, emphasized the crucial role of conservators in collaborative projects. Sharing her experiences and challenges working with a diverse team of conservators, engineering students, and a digitalization company, she discussed how they successfully collaborated to produce a final product acceptable to all parties. She underscored the importance of considering others' perspectives during dialogue.

Professor Robert G. Erdmann, associated with the Rijksmuseum and UvA, presented a multidisciplinary project on utilizing artificial intelligence for identifying silver hallmarks. Collaborating with co-authors Ellen van Bork and Tamar



Davidovitz, the presentation explored the innovative application of technology in this context.

The third speaker, Thea B. van Oosten, a conservation scientist specializing in plastics, discussed the evolution of research, conservation methods, and education in her field. She outlined how she expanded her community, eventually building her own scientific network. Using the case study of Zuccaia by Piero Gilardi, she highlighted the collaborative efforts of numerous professionals involved in the project, discussing both successes and challenges.

In the final keynote address, Adam Klups shared his engagement in the care of churches in England, providing reflections and tips on cultivating a supportive community. Stressing the importance of making connections, effective communication, and interdisciplinary collaboration, he shared valuable insights for advancing in conservation careers.

The conference's final day started with in-person demonstrations and presentations by Turtle presenting the most innovative, safe and sustainable crates for art works in the world, and Michelle Vergeer, Vice

President of Restauratoren Nederland. After an inspiring presentation by the organization, I made the decision to sign up as a member and eagerly anticipate participating in their future activities. The final session, *Still Waters Run Deep* moderated by Sharra Grow, delved into diverse approaches for communicating conservation practices. Christel van Hees, head of conservation, and Paulien t'Hoen, art historian, showcased Boijmans Van Beuningen's Depot building, the world's first publicly accessible art storage facility. Employing various communication strategies, it offers a unique behind-the-scenes experience. They also discussed

conservators' transparency and collaboration within an interdisciplinary network involving conservators, artists, curators, and others. Their collaborative discussions resulted in the conference and publication *Modern Art, Who Cares?*

The second speaker, Mariana di Giacomo, natural history conservator at the Yale Peabody Museum and chair of the Shared Conservation Laboratory at Yale's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, discussed the significance of communicating conservation through social media. She shared her experience in

managing social media and promoting natural history conservation, offering valuable tips for conservators navigating social media in institutional settings. As a conservator trying to manage my own personal social media, Mariana's presentation deeply resonated with me, inspiring new ways to balance my social media presence while working at another conservation studio.

Bart Devolder, chief conservator at Princeton University Museum of Art, discussed his role as on-site coordinator and full-time conservator during the Ghent Altarpiece Project. He shared insights into their interactions with the public,



Right: curious questions from the audience during the panel discussion. Photo by Wyke Valkema © IIC

Left: engaging panel discussion during the third session. Photo by Wyke Valkema © IIC

presenting a simple communication model. Devolder highlighted challenges faced by restorers during public visits and the adjustments they made to enhance the visitor experience.

Beatriz Haspo, executive director of ApoyOnline, provided a brief introduction to the organization's mission and activities. Her presentation emphasized fostering connections between people. Participating in an IIC-SECC conference provided an

excellent opportunity for networking, professional growth, and fostering valuable connections. The experience allowed me to share insights, build new friendships, and potentially pave the way for future collaborations and projects. It significantly contributed to a deeper understanding of the conservation profession and highlighted the importance of open, honest conversations among emerging conservators.

You can learn more about the 2023 IIC-SECC and past events [HERE](#)



Magdalena Wsól, a 2019 MA graduate in conservation from Cracow's Academy of Fine Arts, founded Pracownia w Ramach, her Polish conservation studio (2021-2023). She has been a co-organizer of workshops for Polish conservators at Eukon Conservation since 2021 and is currently a fellow at Studio Redivivus in The Hague, the Netherlands. Her expertise and collaborative spirit reflect a deep commitment to preserving cultural heritage through her multifaceted contributions to the field.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALLS FOR PAPERS

5th International Conference on Integrated Pest Management for Cultural Heritage
18-20 September 2024 (papers due: 15 Feb 2024)
Berlin, Germany
For more information visit [HERE](#)

International Colloquium on Vibration & Conservation
7-8 November 2024 (papers due 15 March 2024)
Paris, France
For more information visit [HERE](#)

CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIUMS

Managing Collection Environments: Research, Tools and Practice
Courtauld, London (UK)
12 February 2024
To register visit [HERE](#)

Charting New Discoveries of the Manuscript Map of the Dagua River Region (Lecture)
13 February 2024
Online/Library of Congress, Washington DC (USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Coffins in Context
22-24 February 2024
Cambridge (UK)/Hybrid
For more information visit [here](#)

Green Museums Summit
26-27 February 2024
Virtual Conference
For registration and information visit [HERE](#)

INCCA Café: Student & Early Career Research
14 March 2024
Online
To register and learn more, visit [here](#)

Circularity in Arts and Heritage: Practice, policy & research (Annual MACCH Event)
15 March 2024
Maastricht, NL
For info, write: c.rasterhoff@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Transformation Digital Art 2024
21-22 March 2024
Rotterdam and Amsterdam
For more information visit [HERE](#)

The Arctic throughout History: Visual and Cultural Conceptions

5 April 2024
New York Public Library, New York (USA)
For more info, write to: arcticsymposium@nypl.org

Archiving 2024
9-12 April 2024
Washington DC (USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Common Ground: the role of museums in divided communities (2024 ICOM UK Conference)
12 April 2024
Ulster Museum, Belfast, Ireland
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Archaeology of Colour. The production of polychromy in sculpture up to the 16th century
17-18 April 2024
Online
For more information visit [HERE](#)

AGO (Art Gallery of Ontario) Frame Symposium
1-2 May 2024
Art Gallery of Ontario, Ontario (Canada)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Public Art Inside Out Symposium
7-8 May 2024
Hybrid format
For more information visit [HERE](#)

American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo
16-19 May 2024
Baltimore, Maryland (USA)
For more information and registration visit [HERE](#)

52nd AIC Annual Meeting: Salt Lake City
20-24 May 2024
Salt Lake City, Utah (USA)
For information and registration visit [HERE](#)

8th International Architectural Finishes Research Conference: Past Forward, from Paint to Finishes
29 May-1 June 2024
Amsterdam
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Macro X-ray Fluorescence (MA-XRF) and Reflectance Imaging Spectroscopy (RIS)
4-7 June 2024
George Washington University, Washington DC (USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Papyrus Curatorial and Conservation Meeting
6-7 June 2024
Rijksmuseum (NL)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

37th Biennial Congress of the International Paper Historians (IPH)

9-14 September 2024
Oslo, Norway
Send questions to: kari.greve@nasjonalmuseet.no

IIC 2024 Lima Congress: Sustainable solutions for conservation: new strategies for new times
Lima, Peru
23-26 September 2024
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Resilience: How we adapt heritage-preservation to future challenges
3-4 October 2024
Copenhagen, Denmark
For more information visit [here](#)

MUTEC 2024: International Trade Fair for Museum and Exhibition Technology
7-9 November 2024
Leipzig Exhibition Centre, Germany
For more information visit: <https://www.mutec.de/>

International Round Table on Polychromy in Ancient Sculpture & Architecture
18-21 November 2024
J Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

COURSES, WORKSHOPS

Changing Climate Management Strategies: Sustainable Collection Environments and Monitoring Object Response Workshop
5-8 February 2024
London, UK
For info, visit [HERE](#) or contact: MCE@getty.edu

Greenart Workshop 2024
12-14 February 2024
Online
Send request to register here: salcala@mfa.org

Introduction to Corrosion of Metals & Alloys (IAP)
14 February 2024
Online (UK)
For info, visit: [HERE](#) and for registration visit [HERE](#)

Writing Clearly for Conservators (Part 1)
21 February 2024
Online
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Preventive Conservation: Care of archives, art, and artifacts
21-23 February 2024
Online and in-person (Georgia, USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Documenting Collaborative Conservation
26 and 28 February 2024

Online
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Writing Persuasively for Conservators (Part 2)
28 February 2024
Online
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Tag der Restaurierung 2024
11 March 2024
Universalmuseum Joanneum, Austria
More information [here](#)

Respect in museums: inclusive practices, co-creation, restitution and more (ICOM-ITC)
Beijing, China
17-25 April 2024
For more information on application visit [HERE](#)

Preventive Conservation: Care of archives, art, and artifacts
15-17 May 2024
Online and in-person (Georgia, USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

PREVENT—Mitigating Flood Risk for Heritage
22 June-1 July 2024
Hybrid (Trogir, Croatia and online)
For more information visit [here](#)

Identification of Manual Prints
24-25 June 2024
Berlin, Germany
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Identification of Photomechanical Prints
27-28 June 2024
Berlin, Germany
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Fusion 2: Asian-Pacific minimally invasive methods for the conservation of paintings' textile supports
Workshop sessions between July 2024-January 2025
Online/Sydney, Australia
For more information and application visit [here](#)

2024 Papyrus Conservation Summer Seminar
12-23 August 2024
University of Michigan Library, Michigan (USA)
For more information write to: marieka@umich.edu

Managing Preservation Storage Environments
17-18 September 2024
Image Permanence Institute, Rochester, NY (USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)

Practical Introduction to Mechanical Analysis of Cultural Heritage Materials
15-17 October 2024
Image Permanence Institute, Rochester, NY (USA)
For more information visit [HERE](#)



NEWS IN CONSERVATION

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC WORKS

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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
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