

The Keck Awards

The Keck Awards

In 1994, the IIC Council announced the establishment of the IIC Keck Award, generously endowed by Sheldon and Caroline Keck to commemorate their shared lives of distinguished achievement in conservation. The cash award of £2500 is presented every two years at the IIC Congress to -- in Caroline Keck's words -- the individual or group who has in the opinion of the Council contributed most towards promoting public understanding and appreciation of the accomplishments of the conservation profession.

Communicating to the public everything that is involved in the art and science of conservation has always been a skill in itself. We believe that promoting public understanding, storytelling and appreciation of conservation are becoming increasingly important ways to recognise, inspire, and contextualise the work of our profession.

Keck Award 2024 - Call for nominations now open

Open to all formats as well as small projects and those from larger institutions. Many of our past winners have blended in-person and offline outreach but we also welcome applications from all-virtual projects as well. We invite you to nominate projects run by you or your institution - or pass this information along to those whose work you have admired. Projects that reach diverse and underrepresented audiences are particularly welcomed as well as initiatives that increase social impact and inspire creative engagement.

You can read more about the nomination process [here](#).

Deadline for Nominations: 10 May 2024

Past winners of the Keck Award

- [2022 - Game Jam - the National Coordination for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage \(CNCPC\)](#)
- 2020 - Public outreach and guided tours from the Storage, Conservation and Restoration Department – Sport Lisboa e Benfica Cultural Heritage, Portugal
- 2018 - Rode Altarpiece In Focus: the conservation and technical analysis of the altarpiece of the high altar of St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn, Estonia
- 2016 - Blue Whale Project, The Natural History Museum, United Kingdom
- 2014 - the Conservation in Public of a Chinese Freemason Lantern by Lisa Bengston of the Royal British Columbia Museum, Canada

- 2012 - the Acropolis Museum in Athens, Greece, in collaboration with the Institute of Electronic Structure & Laser at the Foundation for Research and Technology in Crete (IESL-FORTH) and to Anglo-Saxon CSI: Sittingbourne in Kent, UK
- 2010 - the 'Painting Techniques of Impressionism and Postimpressionism' project organised by the Wallraf-Richartz Museum and Fondation Corboud in collaboration with the Cologne Institute for Conservation Science at the University of Applied Sciences in Cologne, Germany
- 2008 - The Lunder Conservation Centre Visible conservation labs at the Smithsonian American Art Museum & National Portrait Gallery, United States
- 2006 - The Mariners' Museum for the USS *Monitor* conservation project, United States
- 2004 - Andreina Nardi for the 'Aperto per Restauro' project, Italy
- 2002 - No award was made in 2002
- 2000 - SOS! Save Outdoor Sculpture programme, United States
- 1998 - The Conservation Centre at National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside in Liverpool, United Kingdom
- 1996 - Gaël de Guichen for 'Media Save Art', and the Williamstown Art Conservation Center for 'Altered States', United States
- 1994 - Mary Brooks and Simon Cane for the 'Stop the Rot' exhibition at the York Castle Museum, United Kingdom

2018

The 2018 IIC Keck Award was awarded to the Niguliste Museum / Art Museum of Estonia / Estonian Academy of Arts for their Public Conservation Project Tallinn Rode Altarpiece Close-Up'. This massive, multi-year project centered around the conservation and technical analysis of the altarpiece of the high altar of St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn (1478–1481). The double-winged retable, completed in the workshop of the famous Lübeck master Hermen Rode, is one of the most grand and best preserved examples of late medieval Hanseatic art in Europe. More than forty saints and biblical figures are depicted, and its dimensions (approximately 6 x 3.5 meters) place it among the largest of its type.

From 1975 to 1992 a campaign of restoration was carried out under the supervision of the Soviet Union's Institute for the Scientific Research of Restoration in Moscow (BH??). Upon Estonia's declaration of re-independence in 1991, the ensuing political changes in the Soviet Union prevented completion of the work, leaving most of the sculptures only partially cleaned. In 2013, after more than 20 years, a renewed initiative to continue treatment was launched.

The project represents a significant milestone in the conservation history of the country as well as the wider region and is noteworthy for its interdisciplinary and collaborative approach. The breadth of the examinations and investigations undertaken on the altarpiece brought innumerable specialists to Estonia. But the public-facing components were among the project's greatest achievements, and the deliberate prioritization of outreach activities was indeed successful in capturing popular attention.

[Read the full details of the project here.](#)

2016

In September 2015, the Natural History Museum's conservation team began the work of checking, cleaning and dismantling a 25 metre long, 4.5 tonne blue whale skeleton. The specimen had been on public display in the Mammals Hall of the Museum since 1934, and will be re-suspended from the ceiling of the Museum's main Hintze Hall from the summer of 2017. The whale will take the place of the Diplodocus cast that has stood in the Museum's main entrance for 35 years.

The Blue Whale Project was an opportunity to promote the Museum's conservation work. There had already been a large amount of media coverage about the move, and the team have embraced the project's engagement potential through many channels. This includes paper presentations, installation of a "pop-up" Conservation studio, lectures and informal chats with the public, the use of social media and the museum's film production team as well as international media team producing a documentary. Due to the size of the skeleton the conservation team worked across three sites, including the newly installed pop-up conservation studio in the Museum's Darwin Centre. Visitors are able to watch the conservation work on the individual bones and talk to the team directly about their work. Further signage outside and within the pop-up studio promotes the background story of the blue whale and the conservation work.

[Read the full details of the project here.](#)

2014

The 2014 IIC Keck Award was awarded to the Royal British Columbia Museum, Canada for their Public Conservation Project 'The Chinese Freemason's Lantern'. In 2013, the Royal BC Museum featured the conservation of the Chinese Freemason's Lantern in a temporary exhibit "Tradition in Felicities: Celebrating 155 years of Victoria's Chinatown" as part of an initiative to preserve and represent immigrant history in British Columbia. The exceptional demands of this conservation treatment required a cross-disciplinary approach and lent itself well to a public conservation program.

A modified conservation laboratory was constructed in the gallery, surrounded by text and graphic panels that described and illustrated the process. Under the direction of Project Conservator, Lisa Bengston, a crew of six conservators, three conservation interns, and seven volunteers completed stabilization and restoration treatments as well as materials analyses five days a week for seven months. A remarkable digitally-animated representation of the lantern in pristine condition was created and exhibited on an adjacent computer screen, providing an accurate interpretation of the lit and moving lantern, a state of restoration that was inappropriate for the actual lantern.

The public showed great enthusiasm for the conservation work and asked probing questions, providing an extraordinary opportunity to enlighten a broad audience to the work of conservators.

Visitors were also keen to provide information and anecdotes relating to the lantern, adding to the curatorial record. Surveys completed during the project were extremely positive and encouraging for future public conservation programs. The Royal BC Museum highlighted this public conservation project in its publications and promotional materials as well as online. Lisa Bengston was recognized for her valuable contributions to this project, which was showcased in a poster produced by Lisa Bengston and Kasey Lee at the 2014 IIC Congress.

2012

The 2012 IIC Keck Award was awarded jointly to the Acropolis Museum in Athens, Greece, for the conservation and restoration of the Caryatids with the use of laser technology, in collaboration with the Institute of Electronic Structure & Laser at the Foundation for Research and Technology in Crete (IESL-FORTH) and to Anglo-Saxon CSI: Sittingbourne in Kent in the United Kingdom. IIC's Council in making the award recognised that both institutions had, from their respective status, made a positive contribution to public awareness of the practice and beneficial results of heritage conservation.

The Acropolis Museum

The award relates to the Acropolis Museum's successful approach in providing visitors the opportunity to observe procedures that until recently were undertaken in the conservation laboratories.

The Caryatids are a set of six famous female statues that were used in place of conventional columns to support the roof of the south porch of the 'Erechtheion', regarded as the most sacred part of the Acropolis temple complex. One of the Caryatids was removed by Lord Elgin and was later sold to the British Museum. In 1979 the five Caryatids were moved to the old Acropolis Museum to be protected from the atmospheric pollution and in 2007 they were transferred to the new Acropolis Museum.

In December 2010 the conservation project commenced, for the first time after the removal of the Caryatids from the monument. This project includes documentation of the current condition, the fixing of unstable fragments, structural restoration, removing corrosive factors and the cleaning of black crust and soot deposits by means of laser technology.

The surface cleaning is achieved by means of a custom-made, innovative laser system developed by IESL-FORTH in Heraklion, Crete. The laser is capable of operating at two wavelengths simultaneously (Infrared at 1064nm and Ultraviolet at 355nm) and is able to remove thick pollution accumulations in a controlled and safe way for both the object and the operator. The combination of the two wavelengths ensures that no discoloration or damaging phenomena occur on the original substrate, while revealing its unique surface.

The conservation process is conducted in a laser laboratory platform installed on the balcony dedicated to the Caryatids in the Acropolis Museum. The laboratory is housed temporarily on a specially-designed platform that "embraces" and isolates one sculpture at a time. This platform is being moved to different heights, so that the conservators obtain optimum access along the

surface of the Kore. Following strict health and safety regulations, protective curtains made of special material to block any laser beam surround this lab.

Visitors can follow the work carried out behind the protective curtains via a camera connected to a monitor outside the laboratory platform. When conservators are not working, a recording of this process is displayed on the monitor. Since December 2010, more than 2 million visitors have followed the work of conservators, participating not only in a highly interesting process, but also in unique historical moments.

This collaborative effort of the Acropolis Museum and FORTH to preserve and to rejuvenate the unique cultural Heritage of Greece while demonstrating to the public how culture and technology can be combined is a symbolic union between ancient and modern Greece.

Further information about the project and the video can be found in the following links:

<http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwCNfQh8Woo&list=UU012zDsiS4ojKzerKQZeng...>

<http://www.iesl.forth.gr/research/project.aspx?id=131>

http://www.forth.gr/index_main.php?l=e&c=20&i=288

CSI: Sittingbourne - Conservation Science Investigations

Anglo-Saxon CSI: Sittingbourne is a grass-roots conservation project located in a town centre shopping mall. It consists of an archaeological exhibition in one shop and an investigative conservation lab in an opposing unit in Sittingbourne, Kent. In the exhibition, visitors can learn about the archaeological discovery and see a selection of conserved finds. In the CSI lab, conservators and conservation volunteers work on finds from the 6th to 8th century Anglo-Saxon cemetery site where 229 graves were discovered, many with extensive high status iron, copper alloy, gold, silver and garnets grave finds and hundreds of beads. It is a unique community led heritage conservation project. It allows public access to the conservation techniques involved in treating and investigating objects from an archaeological dig.

The project has been a local initiative involving a Sittingbourne-based conservator (Dana Goodburn-Brown ACR, AMTeC Co-op Ltd), the archaeological excavation organization (Canterbury Archaeological Trust) and a voluntary local museum (Sittingbourne Heritage Museum), combined with the support of local businesses, history enthusiasts and the wider community. The project opened in late 2009 and has had more than 5,000 volunteer hours contributed to it and nearly 20,000 visitors. Conservation volunteers have been trained to work under supervision and discuss the conservation project with visitors.

The project and its relationship to the community has been used as a case study for two different MA student projects focusing on social values of cultural heritage, (University College London and Kingston University). Public engagement with archaeological conservation both before and after the project opened has been examined and visitors comments collected. Reportage from a resident artist reflects on public interactions with the shopping mall exhibition, and many positive communications from visitors to the exhibition and social media sites substantiate a variety of levels of public engagement with the process of archaeological conservation science. The opportunities this type of project presents to the community have been, and continue to be valued. Locating this project within a shopping mall is one of its greatest strengths - as an

unusual 'shop', it raises curiosity amongst shoppers, is central to the town, and offers opportunity to many who might never visit museums/heritage material otherwise. The casual nature of the display and accessibility to the process of archaeological conservation entices many regular visitors who 'pop in' to catch up on developments on a regular basis. The facility was set up largely through donations of redundant exhibition materials, equipment such as an airport X-ray machine and conservation supplies.

Several conservation interns have participated in the project and gained valuable experience both in supervising volunteers and investigative conservation of finds, and in sharing their skills and knowledge with the general public. Local school groups have visited and many children have returned with their family members over the following months. Special events have been organised, such as visitors and volunteers being invited to carve and print lino-cuts of their favourite artefact or conservation discovery. The resulting prints have been used for a fundraising T-shirt design and illustrations for a forthcoming popular book on the project.

Publicity, Publications and Social Media: From the opening event in Oct. 2009, CSI: Sittingbourne has had extensive local media coverage (BBC news, papers, radio) and national press coverage (The Guardian and The Independent); as well as numerous articles in professional and popular magazines. In addition, Dr. Alice Roberts, presenter of BBC's Digging for Britain brought the project national television exposure when her series featured the lab. The project was also recently mentioned as a good example of public engagement with conservation science at a House of Lords Inquiry, and featured in The National Heritage Science Strategy document. The Anglo-Saxon CSI project has a website/blog (www.anglosaxoncsi.wordpress.com), with many interesting comments from members of the public and the conservation profession – including some controversial remarks, which have served to spark much discussion amongst conservation volunteers and interested observers. The project has a frequently updated Facebook page (Anglo-Saxon CSI:Sittingbourne), and a Twitter account with 50 followers in its first few weeks of existence, @CSIsitt.

2010

The 2010 Keck Award was awarded to the 'Painting Techniques of Impressionism and Postimpressionism' project organised by the Wallraf-Richartz Museum and Fondation Corboud in collaboration with the Cologne Institute for Conservation Science at the University of Applied Sciences in Cologne.

The focus of this research project was the investigation of the paintings materials and techniques and also the recording of their state of preservation as well as their restoration history. Examinations were undertaken using incident, raking, transmitted and reflected light as well as the ultraviolet and infrared regions of the spectrum and binocular stereo-microscopes. Where required false-colour infrared reflectography and X-ray examination were put to use. All investigations were carried out using non-inventive, non-destructive examination techniques. Thus pigment analysis was performed applying the non-destructive method of VIS spectroscopy. With the aim of disseminating the results of the research to the widest possible audience, the project included an exhibition, an exhibition catalogue, an international symposium and an online

publication. The exhibition, held in three venues had over half a million visitors; the catalogue sold approximately 23,000 copies in three languages and the symposium had around 250 participants listening to 16 lectures. The online publication and further information about the project can be found at: <http://www.museenkoeln.de/impressionismus>.

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2008

The 2008 Keck Award was won by the Lunder Conservation Centre: Visible Conservation Laboratories at the Smithsonian American Art Museum & National Portrait Gallery

The Lunder Conservation Centre, which cares for the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) and the National Portrait Gallery (NPG), opened in July of 2006. The visible laboratories of the Lunder Conservation Centre (five in total: frames, paper, objects, structural painting, and cleaning/inpainting) are designed to give the museum visitor a glimpse into the work of the conservation staff. The centre is an educational interface where visitors learn the goals, interests, and activities of professional conservators and the importance of collections care.

The Lunder Conservation Centre employs a full time Program Coordinator, whose job is to interpret conservation for the public through the creation and maintenance of public programs, tours, interactive media, and didactics. The Program Coordinator works closely with the seven SAAM and NPG conservators to identify and evaluate the best means of educating the public about art conservation. The public's questions are handled by the Program Coordinator; this, in combination with the museum's late public hours of 11:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m., allows the conservators to work with minimal disruption.

The most common questions asked by the public:

- Who decides what is conserved?
- How many conservators work here?
- Do the conservators only work on this museum's collection?
- Do the conservators mind working behind glass?
- What type of analysis is performed on artwork?
- What training do the conservators have?

Visitors are excited about seeing 'behind the scenes'. Interpretation is of the utmost importance in raising awareness about the field, especially since the public has not often been privy to the functions of art conservation labs. Kiosks, didactics, lectures, gallery talks, tours, student programs, and a website have been implemented for this purpose. The Lunder Conservation Centre kiosks and website www.LunderConservation.si.edu introduce users to the field of conservation through treatment videos, interview clips with conservators from around the United States, 'before-treatment' and 'after-treatment' photographs of artwork, and a glossary of tools used by conservators. The Lunder website acts as a pre-visit introduction to the centre and also as a post-visit follow up; by giving visitors access to content (from the centre's kiosks) on the website, visitors can preview, review, and share their experience.

The Media Wall is an interactive feature comprised of backlit photographs and videos, in three

sections, that explains the intersection of art and science, the Save Outdoor Sculpture project, and the importance of caring for family treasures along with disaster preparedness.

Each month the Lunder Conservation Centre engages an average of 200 visitors per month through tours, lectures, gallery talks, student programs, and Q&A exchanges. This number increases significantly if all visitors to the centre are counted; the centre is open, along with the museums, from 11:30 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., 364 days per year. Public programs have included talks by Tom Learner, Getty Conservation Institute; Mark Golden, Golden Artist Colours Inc & Mark Gottsegen, Art Materials Information and Education Network of the Intermuseum Conservation Association; Leslie Carlyle, Tate; a 3-D scanning demonstration by Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute conservators Mel Wachowiak and Vicky Karas; and a demonstration of 19th-century landscape painting techniques by Ross Merrill, National Gallery of Art.

For many visitors, simply seeing the facilities, equipment, and tools generates a respect for the conservation profession. Introduction to basic concepts and vocabulary of conservation during tours and programs enables visitors to ask sophisticated questions and engage in dialogue. Perhaps most rewarding, people are moved care about and contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage. These efforts to educate the public can have a ripple effect, reaching beyond the Smithsonian to other collections and institutions around the country.

More information about Lunder Conservation Centre can be found on the [Centre's website](#)

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2006

The 2006 Keck Award was won by the the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia for its recent project to conserve the USS Monitor.

The USS *Monitor* was the first ironclad warship to be commissioned by the United States navy. Launched in January 1862, during the American Civil War, she is most famous for her part in the Battle of Hampton Roads in March of the same year. This was the first ever battle between two ironclad warships, the USS *Monitor* and the CSS *Virginia*. Although the USS *Monitor* foundered during a storm in December 1862, its success during the Battle of Hampton Roads encouraged the United States navy to move away from wooden warships and towards the new style of ironclad shipbuilding.

After more than 100 years at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, the wreck of the USS *Monitor* was rediscovered in 1973. Two years later, management of the wreck site was handed over to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and in 1987, the NOAA designated the Mariners' Museum as the repository for artefacts and archives from the USS *Monitor*.

Today, the Mariners' Museum conserves, interprets and exhibits hundreds of relics from the USS *Monitor*. Visitors will be able to see these artefacts undergoing conservation while learning the history and stories behind them when the Museum's new USS *Monitor* Center opens on 9

March 2007, 145 years to the day since the *Monitor's* historic battle against the *Virginia*.

Before the new visitor centre could open, more than 1200 artefacts and parts from the ship had to be conserved. The judges for the 2006 Keck Award were especially impressed by the efforts made by the conservation team to raise awareness of this project, both in the conservation profession and among the general public. Marcie Renner, Chief Conservator for the USS *Monitor* Project, said, *"Every person on this team has dedicated a large part of their time to public awareness and education of the importance of conserving USS Monitor artifacts. We've staged and participated in a number of conferences around the country; authored articles published in industry and trade magazines; participated in documentaries for PBS, BBC, History Channel and Discovery Channel; and partnered with various organizations and institutions including Old Dominion University, Clemson University, Leica Inc. and MAGLEV to name a few. It's an honour to receive such a prestigious award for doing something the team and I clearly love."*

More information about the USS *Monitor* conservation project can be found on the [visitor centre's website](#).

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2004

In 2004 the award was won by Andreina Nardi for the Aperto per Restauro project (Open for restoration) at the Capitoline Museum.

The Capitoline Museum in Rome has two black marble Roman statues -the Young Centaur and the Old Centaur -which were found broken in 1670 during excavations at Hadrian's Villa near Rome. They were then reassembled and, since 1680, have been two of the major exhibits in the central hall of the Capitoline Museum in Rome.

In 2001, a new intervention was scheduled. The project was assigned to the Centro di Conservazione Archeo- logica (CCA), Rome, and directed by Andreina Costanzi Cobau. She saw this project as an occasion to offer the public a unique chance to have a new look at these exceptional pieces, as well as an opportunity to further public appreciation of the work of the conservation profession.

The museum accepted the idea of keeping the room open to the public during the conservation work, and the project was called Aperto per Restauro [Open for Restoration] as opposed to the usual practice of closing off the space where conservation work is going on and putting up a sign saying 'Closed for Restoration' - faced with a locked door, many unfortunate visitors certainly go away discouraged.

A platform 60 cm high was built around the statues in order to provide a protected working area and to facilitate close informal contact between the public, the work of art and the conservation

team. Information panels in English and Italian were distributed around the platform. They contained not only historical, technical and conservation information, but also a calendar of the work, allowing interested viewers to plan future visits to follow the progress of the treatment.

Visitors, especially school groups, were involved in both passive and active ways. Passive: by observing the work in progress; reading the panels; speaking to the conservator-restorers (one of them was always available for this purpose). Active: by taking part in two competitions, a literary contest and a photographic contest to foster understanding of the themes of the intervention and also to stimulate experiences and emotions that contribute to consolidating and preserving the memory of a visit to a conservation worksite.

The launch of the project involved a press conference, a poster campaign on city hoardings and on public transport, and the distribution of 60,000 leaflets to schools and local museums, with direct invitations to schools made in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Some 500 school groups came by appointment; cameras and film were provided to document their visits. At the end, 121 students entered the photographic contest and 95 entered the literary one.

A jury selected five winners in each category. The award ceremony was held in the same room of the museum in the presence of the mayor of Rome and other politicians. All participants received a certificate. All the winning contributions were published in a book distributed during the ceremony. The ceremony was completed by a cultural programme including music, readings and an exhibition of the works submitted for the contest.

Throughout the five-month project, the public was kept informed of the progress of the initiative through five websites. The one that you can still consult is www.cca-roma.org. The work was covered on various TV programmes and in articles that appeared in the main newspapers.

A project like this obliges conservator-restorers to maintain the worksite at maximum standards. Continuous contact with the public obliges the conservator-restorers to keep themselves constantly updated on all aspects of the work in progress in order to be able to answer questions. Team spirit is reinforced, and the conservator-restorers become more attuned to discovering the public's point of view.

In the evolution of the relations between the work of art, the conservator-restorers and the public, the project 'Open for Restoration' has introduced three new elements which have to be stressed:

- The public were encouraged to pass from a passive attitude of observer to an active attitude, including a reflection about the visit, and in their contact with the work of art in the middle of a conservation process
- The museum management realized that involving the public is an integrated structural activity of the conservation project and can be a long-term permanent museum activity which can be easily and cheaply set up
- Political authorities realized that in contributing to the conservation programme there is an important return of image from which they can benefit.

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2002

No award was made in 2002.

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2000

In 2000, the winner was the SOS! Save Outdoor Sculpture programme sponsored jointly by Heritage Preservation (formerly the National Institute for Conservation) and the Smithsonian American Art Museum (formerly the National Museum of American Art) in Washington DC.

The United States is home to more than 30,000 pieces of publicly accessible sculpture that express and commemorate American culture in many ways. More than ten years ago, the SOS! inventory project began to preserve and protect this vast collection. Nearly 7,000 volunteers documented the location, ownership and general health of 32,000 outdoor sculptures in a national survey. Fellows of the American Institute for Conservation were contracted to check the volunteers' judgments about condition. The survey provided important information about the health of America's outdoor sculpture. About half of these sculptures were in need of treatment, and 10% required urgent attention. The SOS! survey reported that most US outdoor sculptures were owned by public government agencies, whose primary mission is not care of collections. As a result, SOS! developed programmes and cash awards to promote the care of public sculpture, assessment, conservation and maintenance. The SOS! maintenance training programme offered owners and concerned citizens the opportunity to work alongside conservation professionals, learning more about proper methods of care. Since 1995, SOS! has offered assessment awards, helping approximately 300 sculptures. A conservation professional is brought to town for an on-site assessment and a written report. Since 1997, SOS! conservation treatment awards have supported preservation of 71 public sculptures in 41 states. Here are just three examples of what has been achieved:

In 1997, fifth-graders in Houston, Texas, raised public awareness and over a thousand dollars to launch a maintenance endowment for the Sam Houston Monument (1925) by Enrico Filberto Cerracchio. The Exxon Company agreed to a three-to-one match for every dollar the students raised up to \$25,000. Three subsequent classes of fifth-graders have added to the fund.

W. Liance Cottrel's Fireman's Monument (1898) in St Joseph, Michigan, commemorates the fire-fighters who gave their lives battling a fire at the city's opera house in 1896. The local arts centre secured the award for this city-owned artwork and will provide maintenance.

The Vanishing Race (1936) by Djey el Djey sits in the courtyard of Thomas Star King Middle School in Los Angeles, California. The school administered the award and included the preservation of the sculpture in creative writing exercises.

Save Outdoor Sculpture has also established the SOS! Patch programme in collaboration with

the Girl Scouts of the USA. To date, six troops in Massachusetts and Virginia have earned the patch, and approximately 70 troops across America are enrolled in the programme.

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1998

In 1998 the award went to The Conservation Centre at National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside in Liverpool.

In the late 1980s, the Trustees resolved to house their growing Conservation Division under one roof. The choice of a city centre site offered the opportunity to open up aspects of museums conservation work to the public on a year-round seven-days-a-week basis. The themes of the display were selected in order to open up the subject to everyone, taking account of the wide age and ability range in any typical museum audience. In particular, the display tackles issues and dilemmas faced by conservators, technical and scientific elements are explained by means of carefully worded text, and Acoustiguides use the recorded voices of conservators to give an insight into their work. Live TV links with conservators at work in their studios, behind-the-scenes tours and a range of hands-on activities led by trained demonstrators are designed both to enhance the visitor experience and to communicate the story of conservation work. Wherever possible, contact has been provided with conservators: Studio Tours offer a chance to see staff at work in their own surroundings. These tours are limited by security and safety considerations to 12 people per tour, so a system of Live Video Links operates to connect one conservator with up to 60 people at a time seated in the auditorium. Not only does the Live Video Link system overcome security problems, it also provides close-up views of the objects undergoing treatment and it allows people with mobility difficulties to take part. Live Video Links are also offered to schools as one of the special session options that have been designed to fit with the UK National Curriculum.

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1996

In 1996, there were two joint winners of the award: Gaël de Guichen for 'Media Save Art' and the Williamstown Art Conservation Center for 'Altered States'.

Almost 15 years earlier, in an article for Museum, Gaël de Guichen anticipated the need to involve the public in the struggle to safeguard our heritage: 'It will be necessary ... to inform the public for whom this work [conservation] is being done. If they understand what they can learn from the past, there will be no difficulty about asking them to support the action undertaken to save the heritage. Conservation should be carried on with the public, not against it'.

Concerned at the scant attention paid in the press to conservation issues, in 1991 he

inaugurated an international public awareness campaign called 'Media Save Art'. This consisted of five international competitions: Press (250 articles published in major American and European newspapers or magazines), Television (documentary and news programmes), Cinema (documentary and fiction features), Visual Documentation (photographs, graphic or pictorial material) and Commercial Information (documentation and information produced by companies which have sponsored conservation or restoration projects). The activities included a poster competition for schools, 13 round-table discussions involving 120 key representatives from the media, political and cultural spheres, an exhibition at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome on new technologies for recovering, safeguarding, documenting and making the best use of the world's heritage.

Other initiatives followed, aimed especially at the younger generation. In 1992, the 100 best school posters from 'Media Save Art' formed a travelling exhibition. An initiative called 'Schools Adopt a Monument' took place in 19 European cities. In Vienna, international schools took up the idea of the poster competition and launched a study programme on the conservation of ancient books. In 1993-94, the school competition was repeated in EU capitals. English Heritage produced a Teachers' Resource Pack on Cultural Heritage Conservation, and in Copenhagen a campaign against graffiti was launched. These events involving schools highlighted the need to promote and introduce cultural heritage conservation in the school curriculum and this formed the theme for a two-day international seminar in Rome for educators. For 1995-96, Gaël de Guichen conceived 'The City Beneath the City', a project on conservation of the urban archaeological heritage which is being implemented in collaboration with the Council of Europe and involves 25 towns.

In the 15 years since Gaël de Guichen first raised his concerns, public awareness, concern and knowledge have increasingly become an integral component of conservation strategies. Reflecting this, in 1995, ICCROM adopted a new statute concerned with developing public concern for and knowledge of conservation of cultural heritage, and the ICCROM General Assembly has now established the International 'Media Save Art' Award for the press.

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Altered States: Conservation, Analysis, and the Interpretation of Works of Art successfully documented the exciting interdisciplinary nature of conservation and is an outstanding example of collaboration between allied professionals responsible for the preservation of our cultural property. This travelling exhibition and accompanying catalogue, jointly organized and compiled by the Williamstown Art Conservation Center and the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, provided a public forum for addressing the practice and ethics of conservation and for recognizing the analytical, scientific, manual and artistic skills required of conservation professionals.

The exhibition focused primarily on the collections served by the Williamstown Art Conservation Center. Founded in 1977 by five museums, this conservation laboratory now serves over 55 member institutions. The laboratory serves as a clearing-house for information on all aspects of collections care and offers a broad array of educational programmes for allied professionals and the general public.

'Altered States', which travelled over the course of seven months to three venues in Massachusetts and New York, drew large audiences, and emphasized the many ways in which modern technology can enable the general viewer to understand more fully the circumstances of

a work's creation and the disastrous changes brought about by deterioration. Also addressed were questions of authenticity, ethical concerns posed by conservation treatment, and recent advances in the field of conservation science such as the use of computer imaging and the development of new materials for cleaning and preservation.

The show used 33 works of art in a wide variety of media to illustrate different analytical methods and treatments. Clearly labelled and beautifully illustrated didactic panels described the wide variety of works represented. Visitors spent hours in the exhibition spaces, reading every word and discussing with enthusiastic interest the many issues presented. One guard whispered his surprise about the length of time members of the public would spend in single galleries. Although the exhibition has been disassembled, the excellent didactic panels remain and are being displayed by cultural institutions (such as the Hyde Collection) and the Williamstown Art Conservation Center. The exceptional catalogue, authored by Wendy Watson of the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum with the assistance of Tom Branchick, David Carrier and James Martin, has sold well and is still available.

A free symposium, 'The Mortality of Things: Issues in Art Conservation', featuring talks by conservation professionals and intended primarily for the general public, was held in New York City in conjunction with the exhibition. A second symposium, 'Dialogue and Discovery: Collaboration between Conservators and Art Historians', featured papers that focused on collaborative projects, contemporary controversies, and specific analyses and treatment. The travelling exhibition, catalogue and related symposia all represent the Williamstown Art Conservation Center's successful outreach activities that have so beautifully and effectively communicated to the public the value of and need for conservation.

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1994

The first IIC Keck Award was presented in 1994 to Mary Brooks and Simon Cane for the 'Stop the Rot' exhibition organized at the York Castle Museum, UK.

The exhibition ran for a year, was visited by more than half a million people and was used as a much admired training resource by conservators, museum professionals and teachers. Visitors learned about the damaging effects of pollution, humidity, insect pests and human interference. They could also take away a leaflet explaining why things deteriorate, what can be done about it, and offering helpful pointers to the correct care and handling of a whole variety of objects. 'Stop the Rot' faced tough competition. The other finalists were Dr O.P. Agrawal, Lucknow; Roberto Nardi, Rome; and the Conservation Department of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. All were praised by the judging committee for their imagination and success in promoting public awareness of the conservation profession and its achievements. The variety of these nominations demonstrates some of the ways in which conservators are making their work accessible and important to the world outside the profession.

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