

2011 IIC STUDENT & EMERGING CONSERVATOR CONFERENCE

CONSERVATION: FUTURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

TRANSCRIPTS – 3 of 3

Session 3, Saturday 17th September

“Conservation and the international perspective: possibilities for students and emerging conservators across national borders. How transferable are learning and skills?”

Moderator Stephen Hackney

Stephen Hackney Welcome back. I'm Stephen Hackney, formerly Head of Conservation Science and Research at Tate and recently moved on to higher things. Our session is *Conservation and the international perspective: Possibilities for students and emerging conservators across national borders and how transferable are learning and skills?* We have here May Cassar, Patrick McBride and Alison Richmond and over on Skype we have Jerry Podany and Max Marmor. We will start off with the people in the lecture theatre and with May Cassar, who all of you will know is a Professor of Sustainable Heritage at UCL [University College London] and Director of the Centre for Sustainable Heritage, which she set up at the Bartlett School of Graduate Studies in 2001 when she joined UCL. She leads the Heritage Research Group within the Complex Built Environment Systems research area at the Bartlett School of Graduate Studies and has overall responsibility for research, teaching and consultancy in sustainable heritage. May also has UK national roles as a member of the Science and Research Advisory Committee for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and as the Director of the AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage Research Programme. She also has an international role as a member of the European Union External Advisory Group of the 7th Framework Programme for Research into the Environment including Climate Change and as a member of the Executive Board of the EU Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural Heritage and Global Change.

May Cassar All that's left for me to do is to establish my conservation credentials. I'm an archaeological conservator by training. I trained here at the Institute of Archaeology and I'm also an accredited conservator. I started life at university studying history and I thought at that time, given that we had no career advice when I went to University, that history would take me into a career in conservation and in the museum world and I've never regretted studying history. It was always my first love and the skills that I learned studying history have stood me in good stead. However, I am Maltese by nationality though all of my career has been spent in the UK or in Italy. At the time in Malta we had a socialist government and that is relevant because my first foray into working as a volunteer in museums after I finished my history degree was as a student worker, a very socialist

concept, where I became a cleaner at the museum because that's the way that I was going to get close to objects – and I cleaned showcases from the outside, not from the inside. I kept them clean, got the fingerprints off them of people who came to visit and look at those objects. I eventually graduated to the conservation lab where I helped the only restorer in the Museum of Archaeology with a basic-care re-boxing of artifacts. This was until a lecturer at the University of Malta, who actually got his Ph.D. from this Institute of Archaeology, said to me: 'If you're really interested in conservation, then you really ought to go and study conservation at the Institute of Archaeology.' But you need resources for that and certainly my family didn't have these and so began a long road of applying for scholarships and there were hard fought scholarships: there were over a 100 [applications] for two scholarships a year, 100 applications for two from a tiny island, so you can see the competition. But at the third attempt I managed to get a scholarship to come to the UK and study conservation and that's in effect when my life changed.

Having studied conservation at the Institute, it didn't take me very long personally to realise that I did not want to be a practical conservator. And it was when Garry Thomson from the National Gallery, who will be known to many of you, came and did a very intensive course with us on the museum environment that my whole world changed and I began to see preventive conservation as my field – though it was not a term that was widely used at that time. And I remember the first time I went to the UKIC [United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – now Icon] conference. Roundabout the mid-1980s, I had finished studying at the Institute. It was two years later that I could describe myself as a preventive conservator and I was booed: I was booed by my fellow conservators. The world has changed, it's a very different place now. But this is the mid-1980s, I was booed for calling myself a preventive conservator which put me in a position of [thinking] 'am I part of this group or am I not part of this group? How pluralistic are we? Do we have to be all the same and should we not be thinking about conservation in a rather broader way than we are'? I stuck to my guns and preventive conservation is my field and, although I've gone on to do an engineering degree, I'm still a preventive conservator.

That's what I feel I practise, even now, where I'm based in the [University College London] Faculty of the Built Environment where I'm running an interdisciplinary centre which deals with collections, buildings and sites. The ethics that I apply to my work are preventive conservation ethics and that is what I apply in my work. I resolutely 'face outward' so I think this is the largest gathering of conservators that I've been with for a very long time because there are a lot of people, such as Alison [Richmond] and Patrick [McBride] and others who we've heard of in the last two days, who do really good work within the profession. And I feel that my work is best 'facing outwards': looking at links and connections between conservation and other fields and influencing how we gather the evidence that we need through the research that we do, through the teaching that we do, in order to push the

messages of good conservation. And my work is largely focused at the moment on policy both in the UK and Europe, so my membership of the committee [Science and Research Advisory Committee for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport], which Stephen very kindly mentioned in the introduction, is about promoting conservation through the main committees of government – and that is a challenge, but I really love it. I mean, I really love it. It is really good to come up against blinkered people where you're actually then having to 'unlock'. So that I find really interesting. But also it makes me realise our weaknesses as well as our strengths and while our conservation ethics are very, very strong, our evidence base is still very weak. And I've had many conversations with the chief scientist of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, who has now moved on, Dr. Anita Charlesworth, who came to UCL and gave a lecture last year at which she berated us for not providing the evidence base in order to be able to influence policy. And I think there is a weakness that we have – where we do not share evidence and don't use it in order to make it difficult for policy makers to make the wrong decisions, and I think we really need to do something about that. And the other work that I do is in Europe. So my international work is at the European Commission and with the European Parliament in order to look at the regulatory environment within which conservation operates, how cultural heritage is protected and how funding of cultural heritage both directly, in terms of programmes, but also indirectly through research that is funded, can be sustained – and that is where I focus most of my effort. That's me.

Stephen Hackney Our next speaker is Patrick McBride who is a self-employed paper conservator from the Irish Republic. He runs The Paper Conservation Studio practice in Dublin that specialises in the conservation works of art on paper. Patrick established his practice and has operated it since 1985. In addition, he is currently a PhD student studying with the University of the Arts London. He's also attached to the London College of Communications. Patrick.

Patrick McBride Good afternoon. To start off with, I'd like to give due respect to the person who came up with the idea for this conference, Adam Klupś and his band of merry helpers who made today happen: Kathleen, Marie Louise, Francesca, Liz and indeed all at the IIC and all at UCL. It's one of those ideas which, I think, people wonder why it hasn't happened before now, but which in time people will just take for granted. And I'm also struck by the notion that it's one thing to come up with the idea, I have ideas all the time, but it's another thing to carry it through and to make it happen. So, hats off to Adam and all the gang.

I'm primarily a paper conservator, trained in conservation of works of art on paper, trained at the National Gallery of Ireland and having graduated I set up the Paper Conservation Studio back in 1985. And I was interviewed recently for a blog on the design of the website where I'm based and I looked back and counted up the years, my God, 26, well, I actually said something worse than that, but I've

had 26 years. You slip by very quickly over the past and I've been told to be positive here, I don't want to frighten you off: they'll kill me. So I put in a note here to say 'It seemed like a good idea at the time, setting up a paper conservation studio' and the only other thing that I put in is 'I think that I've loved every minute of it.' There have been a few issues which I can talk about later on if you want, but primarily I loved it all. Over the past eight years I have worked directly with about seven students, three of whom were Irish, two were French, one was Italian and one was from Sweden and they were all people in a similar situation to yourselves, having gone through a course of study and then having to go out into the big bad world and find themselves an internship, paid employment or whatever. The three Irish people had all trained here [in the UK] and did an MA at either Camberwell or Northumbria and currently I have one former student, who graduated this year, Rebecca [inaudible] and she's currently writing around, trying to find and secure an internship in an institution. She's probably watching online, so hello, Rebecca. I've also had experience with two conservators who've gone through that period, have just secured their first full time permanent position and so have 'come out the other end'. So there is life after the internship process, there is life after volunteering and all the rest of it and there will be jobs there in the end if you can just stick with it and be tenacious.

This section is called conservation and the international perspective and Ireland is your closest neighbour and I have a list here of internships that are available within Ireland: paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland; book and paper in three institutions, Trinity College, the National Library and the Chester Beatty [Library], and they are all funded by the Heritage Council in Ireland. That funding process is currently under review and the internships are under review, but I know there are a lot of conservators over there rooting very hard and recommending that it be maintained. The [advertising for the] Trinity College internship has just ended and I think it closed around 7th or 8th of September [2011], so they're currently in the recruiting process. And then there's one other which is the National Archives and they have two privately funded internships (they funded these themselves) where they recruit on an annual basis. All of these come up every year on a regular basis so there are another five or six to add to your lists when you're out there looking and doing research. I will mention the regional museums within Ireland because I have come across a couple of posts that have been advertised. I haven't seen [them] yet, but I'm in touch with people who have been recruited: one is Polish and the other was an archaeological conservator and I think they went in on a short-term contract and then that short-term contract extended into a full time permanent post. So I just mention it in that there are opportunities there as well, although I would say that Ireland has very little money at the moment and there has been huge growth over the last few years in contract positions particularly, but [there is a] lack of resources and there has been a huge contraction and it's very difficult now to get [an] internship and you may have a certain skill, but there aren't posts available.

Once you've completed your MSc, and I know this is a repetition of what I'm going to say here but I think it's important, I have some anecdotal evidence which I think might be useful to you. Once you completed the MSc in conservation, the reality is that you're expected to undertake a period of training. There are really three choices there: internship, volunteering or paid employment. And I've seen examples of all three where it's worked for people and, just to emphasize them, the two problems with securing an internship [is] are that there's a lack of them and, secondly, that all the newly qualified people are up against last year's graduates, probably your neighbour sitting beside you, and short of killing them off there's not really a lot that you can do about the competition.

My advice to you, if you're on your first year out: it's very slim, your chance of getting an internship, it's very slim. But I would advise you to apply for them and don't get upset if you don't get them; use the experience and build up a lot of experience that you can then use: you will succeed at one stage. I have had experience recently of an internship where somebody applied, went through the interview process and was very disappointed not to get the post. I did have contact with the paper conservator who was on that interview panel and they said of this individual that she was wonderful, enthusiastic, she did a brilliant interview – but they knew the job, and the job was extremely boring, extremely manual, very repetitious and they couldn't put this enthusiastic person into this job because it would ruin them and probably put them off conservation for life. So even though you don't get the job, somebody out there is doing you a favour – probably – okay? She was very disappointed, but she could see the plus-side at the end.

The other notion – and I hate the word 'volunteering' for two reasons: I think it's very unfair after you've done such a long period of study that you then are expected, it's almost a norm now, that you would go and give your time for free. The two problems with volunteering are: one, trying to find the collection that is suitable for your skills, but also that's worthwhile in taking your skills forwards; and the second is you don't get paid. And this brings me (if you are of independent wealth, or have a Sugar Daddy or Mummy the next bit is probably a bit boring) to the key piece of advice I would have here for you today, which is: get another skill. The best analogy I can say is I would view you in your current role as akin to actors and in the same way that actors get jobs but that there are long periods between jobs – that may be the reality of what you face. Certainly, if you're going to volunteer, and certainly if you're going to walk your way in through securing paid work or an internship through the volunteer process, you need to be able to sustain yourself in some shape or form. The best example of this I've seen is an individual who is from Holland; his girlfriend was doing an internship in Dublin and he wanted to go off to Sweden to study plastics. This individual had the job of translating from English into Swedish, of putting subtitles on English films for the Swedish markets. That made him geographic- and time-free in a sense that he could work anywhere. He could work at any time and his job literally went around. He had the ability to earn while he also had the freedom to be able to take a

volunteer post or to take up small short-term contracts, and that was sustaining. I've also had a colleague who worked with me for a period of time who spoke 5 languages. Languages were mentioned earlier on. She worked part-time in a call centre and she then also worked within the Paper Conservation Studio for a period of time. She now is back home in Belgium and she's involved with the Belgian state conservation authority that assesses buildings and she goes around and travels. I can draw a direct line to her having 5 languages and being able to sustain herself through, and build up experience, to where she is now, in terms of her career path. It's also true for other private paper conservators. It just doesn't finish when you graduate or when you get your permanent post.

There are two private paper conservators I will mention and had distant contact with. Allyson McDermott is a wallpaper conservator and she's recently given a training session in West Dean [College, UK] - Allyson makes wallpaper and sells it and she also makes paint – and I believe she makes a large profit out of making and selling paint. That profit then sustains her economically and she can move off, and it gives her the freedom to do conservation projects. And the other one is Graham Bignell, who's a paper conservator who's based up in Shoreditch [in London]. Graham prints limited-edition letterpress prints. He's got a lovely set-up within his own conservation studio and the two are a good balance between each other: he creates and sells the prints and that, presumably, produces an income that enables him to also to be a conservator. And finally, the third piece and then I will finish up in a few minutes. The third piece says 'paid employment'; I have seen students come out of a master's course and go straight in to paid employment. It is possible to do it and also not necessarily in the field in which you are skilled. I knew of one oil paintings intern, a student, who graduated and then went on and worked with a frame conservator (again, a lot of these opportunities tend to be 'right place, right time') and they managed to take up a post. She was involved in a very large frame project and her job was literally to strip down frames. And there was a lot of, many many hours of, work but where it worked for her was that she was working with a frame conservator who was also in league with a head of a studio based in oil paintings conservation practice as well. So this builds up contacts and it builds up opportunities and puts you in the way of it.

I've done a fair bit of talking so I'm just going to finish off by saying that 'All this will pass; the period you're going through now will pass'. We sitting up here went through a similar process. But I would ask you to be careful for what you wish for, that permanent job. I have seen many good conservators be utterly frustrated and trying to make progress in institutions which simply won't change. And at the same time and by contrast, I've seen very skilled conservators become very frustrated with not having a challenge within conservation in having done it all and really there's nothing else out there for them to do. So, I know where you're at, at the moment and that probably seems like a little bit of airy-fairy advice which is about way off in the future. But I believe in you all

and that you will get to that point and I think don't jump up the first job that comes your way. Look at it, think about it and if you're not happy within the situation, change. Thank you.

Stephen Hackney Thank you very much, Patrick. Our next speaker is Alison Richmond. Alison is Chief Executive of Icon, the UK Institute of Conservation. Until 2009 she was a Senior Conservator in the Victoria and Albert Museum and Deputy Head of the Conservation Department at the Royal College of Art. Her teaching and research focused on conservation theory, principles, ethics and she has developed decision-making tools for conservators. Alison Richmond chaired Icon's Advocacy Task Force and she has also co-edited with Alison Bracker *Conservation: Principles, Dilemmas and Uncomfortable Truths*. Thank you.

Alison Richmond Thank you, Stephen. Hello everybody and hello everybody out there on the web. This is very exciting for me. I have never before taken part in a webcast, so I just feel wonderful. I also couldn't resist the opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself. So I'm not going to be modest, I hope. But I hope also that I won't sound smug either because I think, to me, that it's a miracle to be in the position that I am today. I wanted to tell you a little bit about my career, which I see as a series of fortunate interventions by other people – and not planned at all. I'd like to acknowledge some of those people. Where did it all begin? Well, John Shearman at the Courtauld when I was a new student on a BA course took us to the British Museum to look at drawings, real drawings, and handle drawings. It was a very exciting moment for me because until that moment, all art history that I had studied had been, well, we were looking at slides and images and not really dealing with the real thing. So I think that was the incredible turning point for me. He also took us in to the Conservation Department at the Courtauld Institute, which in those days was at the bottom of the [Institute's] garden. The two courses never met each other and we were taken down there to look at x-rays and look behind the surface of the Raphael Cartoons, which was just to me an absolute eye opener and really began me on my interest in conservation. Stephen Rees-Jones Sr, who was the head of the Conservation Department at the Courtauld, gave us a lecture, talked to us about paint samples and infrared and that too was just so exciting for me and led me to think about conservation in the back of my mind and keep it in the back of my mind for years.

And after a few years of following my Courtauld degree, teaching art history and adult education, I didn't really feel I had a career and the thought of doing something practical was just so appealing. I think a lot of people go in to conservation because they want to do something practical with art and I was very grateful to Gillian Roy who took me on to the diploma course at Camberwell and actually suggested that I stay on and do the Higher National Diploma, which meant that I had four years at Camberwell which gave me an incredible foundation and practice. Again, that is a long, long time ago and that [form of academic] course is not able to be given to us now. I was incredibly grateful to the

Kress Foundation while I was at Camberwell for giving me funding to go to the IIC Conference in Kyoto in 1988. That was a very exciting experience because it was the first time I came in contact with the international conservation profession, and to be a student at that conference was so great because I could meet people, I could talk to people, I could mix with people and network. And I think it's so important for students to be able to do that and to get the funding from places like the Kress. To do that is just really crucial, I think.

I'm very grateful to Pauline Webber at the V&A who gave me my first student placement. And this was the beginning of my career at the V&A and I think it can't be underestimated. How important it is for students to have the opportunities to work in institutions but also in private practice in – during their course so that they really experience real working environments and they, of course, network as well and that network is so important because when I then went to apply later, a year or so later, for a job at the V&A, they knew me. They knew what I was like and they thought, 'Yeah, she'll be alright, we can have her'. And I shouldn't really admit that because there were many other people who were short listed for that job. Who were more highly qualified for that job than I was, had been out of college longer, had worked in other organisations and I really do feel that it was the fact that I've made the contact that really helped. I think the idea, the need for making these opportunities happens for students and for graduates. It's something that's really central to what Icon is doing. We're trying to support work-based learning at many different levels. Conservation technician qualification is for the technician. We have work-based learning internships which are 6, 12 and 24 month internships. They follow a framework that is tried and tested and actually very valued now. [They have a] framework of recruitment, monitoring, assessment and evaluations and they're very, very clearly defined. I think the biggest obstacle to work-based learning now that we're dealing with, and this is the reality check, is the cost of living.

Unpaid and low-paid internships are really not an option. We have to fund these internships and that is something that Icon is absolutely dedicated to doing. The other economic pressure that we're under is actually making it harder for heritage organisations to offer work-based training and to supervise work-based training – although I was talking to Stephen earlier and Stephen has a longer view than I do. And he thinks that in the last 10 years [there has been] quite a squeeze on training in larger organisations. And so we need to try and find ways of funding organisations to actually provide this training. And I'm a great believer that this role, like teaching hospitals, it's their role, and I think we should also be finding ways of funding private practices to be able to offer training at crucial times in conservators' career-paths. I'm grateful to Nikki DuGane and Keith Holmes who gave me my first job. I actually got two jobs when I left Camberwell. And I don't think Nikki realised quite what she'd taken on until [one day when] she came back from leaving the studio and found that I had smudged an Andy Warhol signature. And that was an introduction to [the fact that] actually, we do make mistakes

and learn from them and it was a crucial moment in my development. I had to make a mistake probably in the first week of the job.

I think I've said that I think if we can help private practices provide training, it's fantastic. And I think private practice is really going to be a place where skills, and particularly practical skills, are going to be held in our sector. Because I think that [institutional conservation employers] may actually become more management-orientated and might be contracting out more and more work. My introduction to the profession was when Meryl Huxtable suggested that I edit the IPC [Institute of Paper Conservators] newsletter. 'Me? Edit the IPC newsletter? No not me, surely not. So what about all these other people? They've been in the profession so much longer.' And that was really important to me to know that somebody had faith in me and it was a very big step for me to take that on. It was a great way of meeting people and networking – and I think Amber said it earlier – how being part of the profession is such a great way to start that going.

I'd like to say a little bit about the environment at the V&A, because when I was at the V&A everyone in the [conservation] department was encouraged to learn presentation skills, to speak, to go to conferences, to write, to research. We were all encouraged in all those aspects. And I think that really is an incredible thing to have in a department, a mentor who is actually encouraging you to do this. And I think mentoring is another thing that I think is so important for us now in your emerging; it's come up before and it's something that Icon would like to help with: providing mentors for emerging conservators. I think the big moment for me was when the Board of Icon [Institute of Conservation] asked me to step in as interim Chief Executive. And that was an extraordinary moment because basically people were saying that a conservator should be doing this job. And this is a moment in time. It hasn't happened before and I think it's a big responsibility. But I feel like it's a great opportunity where I can try and influence and I can – because I come from a conservation background – try and influence within the profession and, as May said, also beyond the profession.

I'd just like to say what I'm focusing on as Chief Executive of Icon just to give you a flavour. In the last six years of Icon we've been trying to shape and refine the professional landscape in the UK. We now have accreditation well-established and respected by employers and our internship framework is the preferred choice of funders. By the end of our HLF [Heritage Lottery Fund]-funded training bursary scheme, we would have had trained approximately 90 interns. This is an incredible shift in the landscape and in itself, I think. Nevertheless, as Jocelyn said yesterday, the situation we are in is extremely acute with economic pressures on both HEIs [Higher Education Institutes] and the heritage organisations who are providing the work-based training. Rob[ert Payton] mentioned that we need a strategic approach to education and training so that we can assure quality and make the best use of resources we have. Icon is drafting, with the help of others in the sector, a national education strategy

for conservation. It's been through two consultation stages and will be published shortly; this is the draft and it's on our website. And it includes everyone who might be interested in learning conservation, not only conservators, and it's about learning at all stages of life. And we will need all of you to be involved in delivering this strategy and to help ensure that we have the knowledge, the skills, the understanding, the expertise to preserve our cultural heritage in the future. So, I'd just like to say here that I'm here to listen and tell me what you need and tell me what you'd like to see in the strategy and I'll do my best to make it a reality. Thank you.

Stephen Hackney Thank you, Alison. Now we come to the first of our web participants and that's Jerry Podany. Jerry is Senior Conservator of Antiquities for the J. Paul Getty Museum and President of IIC; from 1999 to 2003 he was also the president of the American Institute for Conservation. He is an adjunct professor at University of Southern California and a lecturer at Columbia University. And Jerry has developed a series of collaborative conferences on protecting collections from earthquake damage in Turkey, Greece, Japan, Thailand, Italy and the United States. For IIC, he has developed the *Dialogues for the New Century* initiative, which addresses the interplay between heritage conservation and contemporary concerns.

Jerry Podany Thank you very much. I would like to start by recognising all of those who co-ordinated this meeting. It's wonderful to see; I wish I could be there, but it's wonderful to listen to and to see on the web. It's core to IIC's mission to support students and to provide them with a platform that gives them the opportunity to gather together, to explore. I'm going to try to be very brief and start with actually what I thought would be my closing comment: to say that, and to remind all of the audience members that, this is an extraordinarily young field. At the most, as we recognise it today it's about 60 years old or so. And because of that there are boundless opportunities which you can both create and take advantage of, particularly with the assistance of individuals and organisations that can change your life very quickly, as Alison has demonstrated. The sun is just coming up on this end of the world and so in respect to my background I'm going to be really brief. I started as an artist working in a mid-Western museum answering the phones just to pay the rent and keep myself alive through undergraduate school. And while I was answering the phones an itinerant conservator came through to clean a collection of ancient bronzes. And I wandered one day into the makeshift studio and saw all these aquariums with suspended objects bubbling away in electrolytic baths, probably being stripped to the inch of their lives.

While I'd be horrified, of course, today to see that kind of treatment, then I was mesmerised. I knew that this was something that was certainly a strong interest on my part and it remained a growing interest all the way through my graduate years in studio arts. Ironically, once I had finished my graduate work I went back to volunteering and volunteered at the Getty Museum to explore

conservation more and, Patrick, I wasn't independently wealthy. I think you do whatever you need to do to pursue what you love and your interest to them. And at that time it was increasingly an interest in conservation. Now, I think, suffice it to say, that the world of our profession is a very different landscape today than it was in the early and mid-1970s when, indeed, a good deal of our standard reference literature was written. It was still possible then to enter the field through the non-academic route and [that is] something that I think would be discouraged today and probably for very good reason. I'm not sure it was easier to get a job, but I am sure that what is expected of young conservators today and what young conservators expect of the field has dramatically changed. And that's mostly what I'd like to touch on in these introductory remarks: change and then community. Gone, or at least I hope going quickly, is the kind of 'road' approach to treatment and decision making. You know what I mean is that one always does this or that to a painted bronze or a painted surface. That kind of 'magic bullet' solution that requires little thinking and little reasoning is all but disappeared. In other words, gone are the days of recipe books - the days that I started with in the field. That's one of the most dramatic and positive changes in the field, at least since I entered it. The field has opened itself up to a considerably broader range of possible options, customised considerations for each individual situation.

Now, what does that have to do with you, the audience? Well, it's a bit ironic in that that approach, if it's to be successful, requires significant experience to plan and understand the route of action and then be ready to take any number of detours as the road changes right under your feet. How do you get that experience, if to work in the field actually requires experience? And if apprenticeship seems to be an unrealistic demand for someone who's just spent a lot of time and a lot of money in an academic training environment which can convey knowledge, but doesn't really have the time or the structure to provide that needed experience. Internships are great. I'm now on my 26th intern and we hope it changes their lives, but it certainly changes ours with each new intern coming in and it's one of the only routes to experience practical experience at this point, but they're short [the duration of the internships]. Well, I think what there is, perhaps not perfectly but sufficiently for now, is a community that needs to exist and I think is becoming more connected and far more transparent than it used to be, proving that necessity is a good driver.

It's essential, I think, that young conservators add to their tool-kit 'community' - a network they can be part of, use and contribute to. You surely will not know the answer to everything you need once you're handed your diploma, but the community is likely to. And it's up to those of us who've been in the field longer to support that community in a positive way, to assure that its doors are open and appear welcoming and that they don't resemble a kind of trap. But I also need to say that the community should not be used as an excuse or to be spoon-fed an easy answer. It will never be sustainable if it's used this way. It will simply shrink and disappear. I mean by this that you can't

simply stop reading or researching or thinking and just become dependent on someone else answering the tough questions – and all of those questions you’ll face will be tough and increasingly so. I mean that you become as informed as you can about the questions you face, think critically and creatively about them and then contribute. And I mean by that word specifically that you contribute your question to the community. It’s a dynamic road, this idea of casting a question out on to the water and seeing who might bite. But that kind of dynamic is essential to the field today. The field is expanding rapidly. Previous mistakes, some quite devastating but most unintentional, have stilted us a bit and we need to move forward and shed that sense of hesitation with evidence and informed decision making. A large community, beyond the specific members of the profession of conservation, is a good conduit for that kind of community and that kind of dynamic. We’re asked for a closing statement and I think it might be made available to you. Mine was about expanding our field and how it is expanding on its own and opening up, communicating its purpose and its importance more broadly so that we in fact understand its importance and purpose better ourselves. We have in the past treated ourselves as a kind of rarefied activity, as if the admonition of ‘don’t touch’ applies to us, as well as the objects under our care. All that’s coming apart and I think that’s a very good thing and it’s during your time as rising professionals that it’s coming apart. If we’re ready for it, and if we embrace it, it will serve us all very well and serve you well more specifically. I hope you do embrace it and you can start that embrace by building the community around you and branching it out from there.

On a more pragmatic basis, someone asked me recently what I look for when we choose an intern. I can tell you what we look for and what we don’t so much care about. We look for someone with critical and creative thinking skills. We look for enthusiasm, commitment, an open mind, an ability to focus and a well-developed sense of humility. What we don’t care so much about is whether you can calculate the molar value of a solution. It’s nice, but we really don’t look for it. We look for that potential and from the conversations going on and the questions being asked I think that potential is out there in huge amounts. Thank you.

Stephen Hackney Thank you, Jerry. Our next web participant is Max Marmor. Max is President of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in the United States. An art librarian by profession, he started his career as curator of special collections at the UCLA Art Library. He has also been professionally affiliated with Avery Library at Columbia University, the New York and the NYU Institute of Fine Arts Library and the Yale Arts Library, of which he was the director for seven years. Max left Yale to join the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation as part of the planning team for the ARTstor digital initiative, serving as Director of Collection Development in 2001 to 2007. He was appointed President of the Kress Foundation in July 2007.

Max Marmor Thank you so much for that kind introduction and I would also like to thank Graham Voce in the IIC for the kind invitation to participate in this clearly very important conference. I only regret not being there in person, but I have to say I'm depositing my own students into an emerging professional at university this weekend. And that has kept me pretty busy. I have four key things to share with you. Having married a Lutheran 20 years ago, I tend to think in terms of theses where other people might have bullet points. Time does not permit me to share 95 theses or even ten commandments for that matter so I'm trying to distil my few thoughts into four commandments for conservation students and emerging professionals. I will be very brief and I've learned over a long career never to apologise for being brief. I think we'll have a lot of lively dialogue shortly and I'm eager to begin that.

My first commandment toward the students and emerging professionals in the room and on the web is that 'Thou shalt plan thy career – but only up to a point'. It is important, I think, to plan your career, but also terribly important to be open [to] unexpected professional twist and turns. We were asked, all of us, to say something about our own career paths and as you've just heard I'm a bit of a poster child for not planning one's career. I started out in art history 25 years ago and migrated into library as you just heard and stayed there for a better part of two decades and then made a career change at that time profession, in a mid-life crisis a decade ago, and now find myself running a foundation that, of course, cares deeply about conservation. I would not have predicted that outcome and if I take any credit for having such a wonderful job it's only that I was willing to do things I hadn't imagined doing in the past. I should add a little footnote perhaps about the Kress Foundation. It's been very generously mentioned by Alison already, but I don't know how well known it is for this particular audience. I should even say that it was founded quite long ago by American foundation standards, in 1929. Our mission is, broadly speaking, to support the study in preservation of European art of the pre modern era. My children, who are both teenagers now, lament routinely that what I do is totally 'yesterday'. And from your point of view I guess I should be proud of that. We have always focused heavily at the Kress on professional development opportunities for art historians and for conservators. There has been something in the order of 5,000 Kress Fellows to date and I've estimated roughly 2,000 of those have been conservation fellows. So, despite being a fairly modestly-scaled foundation in comparison with, say, Getty or Mellon we've had an impact over a very long period of time. And it's gratifying and I think important to realise that one can have an impact even with relatively modest resources if one is focused and sticks to one's guns.

My second commandment is 'Thou shalt network'. We just heard the importance of that from Jerry and I want to underscore the importance of establishing the kind of network you're working on, basically an ecosystem of students and emerging professionals in the field. I would suggest it should embrace art historians and museum professionals more broadly. I think those are bridges that should

be built as students and young professionals because they are actually quite difficult to build down the road. We all work in a certain kind of isolation professionally within our guilds and to the extent that we can mitigate that from the outset – I think that’s a healthy thing. I actually think you’re all very fortunate. You have social media that, in my youth, we did not have at all and I think they offer an impressive and powerful tool for this kind of networking. I have no doubt that you will take advantage of it.

My third commandment is ‘Thou shalt cross borders’. We’ve heard already a lot about the importance of international collaborations that, of course, underlie the very nature of this convening. It’s my sense that conservation is and should remain a singularly international profession. There are, as I tend to find, a remarkable number of European conservators, particularly conservation scientists, working in North American museums and, of course, many American graduate students have opportunities to do internships or fellowships abroad. And I think that’s both very healthy and terribly important for the future of the field. We have been pretty good at border-crossing at the Kress Foundation. You’ve heard a little about that. Some of you will know that we, for the better part of 40 years now, have offered conservation fellowships conceived mostly as post-graduate, year-long opportunities to work in [inaudible] fashion in the conservation facility whether in North America or abroad. I’ve done a little statistical analysis recently and found that luckily 70 per cent of our fellows have been graduates of North American MA programs in conservation, but 30 per cent roughly have been from outside the US, working often at North American museums and other conservation facilities. In other words, we have a long tradition at the Kress that’s supporting opportunities at European museums and conservation centres for North American students and conversely supporting opportunities in the US and North America for foreign students. We hope to continue that, despite somewhat diminished resources, a lament that I’m sure many institutions share with us. We’ve also done a lot of what I crudely call ‘people moving’ at Kress. We try to help a great deal with international convening such as the present one by helping American conservators attend professional meetings abroad and also by helping European colleagues attend events in North America. Again, I was pleased to hear that that’s been important to the professional development of some of the speakers previously.

Finally, my last commandment is ‘Thou shalt evangelise’. I think it is essential that we step outside our own professional domain to a world-wide audience. We know that the next generation is already singularly attuned to the importance of conserving our *natural* heritage – somehow we need to find another way to help them regard it as equally important to conserve our *cultural* heritage. I’m not sure how we achieve that, but I would like to think that my children and your children will think of preserving the earth and preserving man-made objects as on a par with one another. And I think one of our challenges is to make conservation mean both to the next generation. With that, let me just thank you again and to conveners and invite them to initiate a dialogue.

Question and Answer Section

Stephen Hackney You've heard the five speakers now, so this is your opportunity to ask questions from the floor. We will take answers from the table first and then we will go through to the web participants.

Charlotte Anstis Hi, my name is Charlotte Anstis, I'm a student at Camberwell [College of Art in London] and there's been a lot of talk about volunteering and the importance and usefulness of it over the last two days. I was just wondering, in terms of practicalities, once you have graduated from an institution and you're looking for opportunities is it appropriate to contact institutions yourself – in terms of sort of etiquette – or is it better to wait for opportunities? Is there a feeling about that? I just wanted to know your opinions on that really.

May Cassar I did a lot of volunteering in the early part of my career and I put together a CV very, very early on and kept it up to date – and I did send it off to a number of institutions that I was particularly keen on volunteering at. There's no harm in that. A covering letter that highlights what you can offer and what you hope to get out of it is always a good thing. But I see no problem at all with actually getting a good CV together and sending it, rather discriminately, not indiscriminately, to those institutions that you really would value being associated with.

Alison Richmond When I was at the V&A, we did get a lot of applications from emerging conservators and I actually had to handle those because I was running the internship programme there and I think the key is really, as May says, tailoring your experience or your CV to the particular department or the particular strengths of the museum that you're interested in applying to, so that it really looks like there's a reason why you're applying to this particular one.

Patrick McBride I would see volunteering as being relationship-building. One colleague, one student volunteered at the Stanley Kubrick Archive which is in the [London] College of Communications and she got from the Kubrick Archive, a very, very good end-of-MA project. There were 'notelets' in Kubrick's director's notes and she managed to work on a system [to catalogue those]. The same individual also volunteered at just the Chester Beatty Library for a time. Now, she didn't apply for any of the internships that came up, but if she was to apply, she already has a working relationship with the individuals who are sitting opposite her interviewing her for the post. That's invaluable. As was said earlier on by Jerry, they don't pick the person who's got this absolutely

fabulous CV, they / you pick the person who you know can do the job or you can interrelate with and whose got all the skills we mentioned earlier on. Also, if you volunteered, particularly in an institution, they would be really hard-hearted not to leave you there indefinitely in that unpaid position working for nothing. You generally find that if you've got a skill and that the conservators in post don't do private work, you could ask 'Do you want to do this', or you may find in some cases that they won't take you on unless you get some level of remuneration. I would see it's volunteering's primary value as being relationship building.

Jerry Podany I think it was Patrick who said that it's a lot like actors, and my son is an actor and at this moment, at least 68 per cent of the work that he does is unpaid. And it results in networking and opportunities that arise later and it's true that you can build a good-looking CV, you can meet a lot of people that will help you later, but it's also true in conservation, as in acting, that it trains you, that you have the opportunity to learn. And if you really love this field – and I understand that you still have to pay the rent – I'm a believer that you do whatever you need to do to stay in the field and create those opportunities for yourself.

Max Marmor Well, I think we heard initially some concerns about volunteering being a bad habit in a sense that it undermines the value of one's contribution while also not helping to put meat on the table. That is primarily why we at Kress have focused for so many decades now on trying to provide professional development opportunities that are compensated, albeit on a more modest scale than we might ideally like and I'm always impressed with conservators (and so many have done pre-programme internships) and the commitment of young people to the field is really astonishing to me. But I think our goal should be to try to find opportunities for people to make at least a modest living while learning their skills.

Alison Richmond Could I just follow what Max said; from Icon's perspective, we are committed to paid internships and to defining internships according to our framework and we are very delighted to see that heritage organisations are beginning to move away from unpaid internships, in the UK, I hasten to add. So this is very welcome and something that we are committed to working together on and hopefully attracting more funding so that we can continue to provide this framework for work-based learning.

May Cassar I think, if I could just add something to the whole idea of volunteering, which is that if volunteering is seen as the absence of financial reward, it should be seen as the gain of experience. And I think if you target where you want to volunteer very carefully so that it is not a scattergun and so that you really understand and know why you want to work in a particular place, even without payment, even if it's time-limited – and I think we have to think of it as being time

limited and not open-ended and forever – then I think the experience that you will gain will stand you in good stead for better employment in the future. So you should see it as something of a stepping stone, where you are gaining experience, even if it doesn't give you financial rewards, because that's the nature of volunteering.

Twitter Moderator I just have a couple of questions here from Twitter; there's a couple of questions about travel abroad, on how important that is for young conservators or students: how valuable is it for us to travel abroad and then come back to home institutions or home countries and how much would you recommend that?

May Cassar I think it's got to have a purpose. If there is a goal and you want to work internationally to get experience of different cultures or different types of materials or different types of institutional cultures, then there is a benefit to it. But there's got to be a purpose to dislocation because at the end of the day, if you are based in one country and you're uprooting yourself, for even a short period of time, you may see yourself as losing ground when you come back to your base. So there's got to be a good reason for doing it. And if there is a good reason for doing it, go for it.

Alison Richmond I'd like to answer by saying that, although I've never worked abroad, I did short trips and one of the most profound experiences for me was following the fall of [former President Nicolae] Ceaușescu in Romania going with a team to advise on paper and book conservation – and how I found out what it meant not to have enough light bulbs! And it just changed how I looked at what I was doing in my life and in my conservation work and in my very well-funded museum. So I think even for a short visit, it can really change your outlook. So I really recommend it.

Jerry Podany And that community that we have been talking about is increasingly international and global. Because of opportunities and technology, the ones we're experiencing, if you enter that community without really understanding what those members are going through, what they're like, what they're facing, the challenges that they're facing every day, how they approach the care of their cultural heritage, you're at a disadvantage; so I think that it's good advice to be focused and have a purpose for travel. But I think travel of any kind is not only important but essential in today's world.

Max Marmor I would very much like to second what Jerry just said, but I'd also like to pose a question that will help those of us at present thinking about some of our own programmes [at the Kress Foundation]. We've lately taken to supporting language study on the part of graduate students in art history. And I have wondered whether those opportunities that we're trying to create should be available to conservation students as well. Is it important, in other words, for an

Anglophone conservator to be comfortable in at least one other, perhaps European language or is English so much the Lingua Anglica of the field that it's not essential? I would really appreciate some feedback about that.

May Cassar Most of my work outside the UK is in Europe, Max, and in most European countries, the language of science, and therefore of conservation as well, is now English. I apologise to any Francophones here - they don't like it but it is a fact. Although the two official languages of the European Union are English and French, most of the business is conducted in English. It rather makes us quite lazy actually. It's good to learn another language because often negotiation takes place in the second language because they might think that as an English speaking person, you won't understand. So learn more languages if possible.

Patrick McBride I would add two things, and I take the point about travel necessarily having a purpose, but it's much easier to do it at a younger age than an older age. It would be very difficult for me, because of my commitments, to uproot and to go abroad and to try and gain foreign experience. So, just in terms of a career development and a career path, do it as early as you can. You don't have mortgages, you don't have children, you don't have horses to feed, whatever, you know.

I worked for part-time in the National Gallery of Ireland quite recently. I did a 5-year stint there and came out of it 2½ years ago. And at one stage, I was the only Irish person within the conservation department. The other nationalities were Polish, Welsh, German and Japanese, so it was a full gamut and we communicated through English. They all had two languages. I had one. And we rely heavily on, we speak, that language, English. We have a huge advantage but I do think it's a disadvantage. It should be possible not only to communicate in a different language, but also to interrelate. It's very necessary; you will find yourself in situations where you will be working alongside people from all nationalities and [there will be] occasions that can cause difficulties. And what I think is, back to what was mentioned earlier on: clear communication, being able to communicate across geographic boundaries and to different nationalities.

Alison Richmond I just wanted to follow up Max's question, which made me think about how conservators are educated. And I just wanted to think about it a bit more broadly because I think it's really important that conservators have a broad education and I think language study is part of that education. It's a shame that some universities don't teach languages alongside the other courses. But I do feel that conservators do need to have a real humanities or scientific, or both, of course, education.

May Cassar This actually raises quite an important issue from my point of view and that is whether we're training conservators or educating conservators. And I think if we want in the future

to move into a policy environment, we've got to be educated and not just trained. We have to have a broad formation. We have to understand the issues. We have to be able to argue from a much broader perspective than if we were just trained to do a job. Conservation is a fantastic profession, but we need to look at it in the much broader context if we are to influence others. There are still no conservators in decision-making roles in the mainstream. And if we want to crack that, we have to be educated.

Thomas Cowie Hi, my name is Tom Cowie and I study History of Art and Material Studies at UCL. I know there are lots of people here [who] have come to the UK to study conservation. So, my question is what about education beyond our national borders, say in Europe, like your advice on people who could seek education elsewhere outside our home country. Should we study abroad?

Patrick McBride Well, the two systems I've had direct experience of, because of the interns I've worked with, will be the French system whereby the National Gallery chuck on some interns from an MA programme in Paris, based in Paris. What they do, which I think is very interesting, is that they have to secure placement as part of their MA. I think it's easier to get that placement and it's almost like volunteerism in a different way. But I've seen the institutions being more open to taking on interns who are in college rather than somebody who has graduated and wants to secure a post. And the other one I've had contact with is a colleague of mine who is Polish and she's an exceptional conservator and I've talked to her about how she was trained. And she trained in the conservation and restoration of works of art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, where they specialise in conservation-restoration of books, manuscripts, graphic works of art and historic leather. And according to her, it's a uniform 6-years Master's degree programme of daytime studies. I will list what they do: conservation of books, prints, manuscripts, leather, watercolours, drawings, gouache, pastels, parchment, preventive conservation and environment and management. Bookbinding, gilding, preparing for exhibitions and storage, mounting, complete documentation including pigment and fibre identification, chemistry, philosophy, book and graphic history, art history, photographic, printmaking, drawing, painting and calligraphy. At the end of the second year they're given a project – and if you succeed with the project, you then move on to [the next stage]. Her project was an insect. She got given a bumble bee which she had to reproduce. And she had a photograph – unfortunately we can't show it to you today. She had a photograph which she made of a bumble bee and if they succeed in making [the model] to sufficiently resemble the bee then they would pass. And if they don't, they move on to art history or something else. They've become oil paintings conservators! But that's the two I've had contact with, it's very different and, somebody correct me if I'm wrong here, but I think both those countries also have barriers to conservators from other countries just taking up and starting practice; you have to be licensed or you have to do examinations. So again, very different.

May Cassar There are internship opportunities in quite a number of European countries as Pat has already indicated. And apart from Poland there's Norway, Denmark, the Czech Republic, the new entrants to the European Union. The issue there that arises is: are you looking at the science stream or are you looking at the conservation stream? If you're looking at conservation internships within museums, galleries and archives and libraries, as Pat has been describing, that's the situation. If you're looking at research institutions where conservation science is being practised, then English will be the language that is spoken, so there is less of a barrier. So you would automatically not have an issue there. If you were to seek employment in a country in a public institution, you would need to know the language and our language examination is to be taken apart from others that Pat has already mentioned. So it's whether you wanted to get that international exposure over a short period of time as experience or whether your intention is to actually build your career in that particular country. Then there are the NGOs, the international organization such as UNESCO, for example, that actually do offer internships. So it's well worth looking at the UNESCO websites to see; they don't come up very often but they do exist and that's worth looking at as well.

Patrick McBride I would take one from the points of what May has said. When you do go on your training period, when you do volunteer, the chances are you're going to get a paid position whatever country you're in. And more than likely that's going to be on a contract basis for a period of time. And I would say it's a good idea to have an idea of the contract law, of the employment law, of the country itself, so that you don't get abused, and also you will know what your rights are, but also the rules you have to comply with.

May Cassar But I know for a fact that, in Poland, for you to get a permanent position in a public institution, you need to have mastery of the language. I think it's the same in the Czech Republic but I'm not sure about the others.

Max Marmor I would like to put a slightly different spin on the question if I may. I've noticed recently that there are an increasing number of opportunities for museum professionals outside of conservation, particularly curators, to learn business and administrative skills that position them well for leadership roles within museums. And I have the sense that there's not a lot of that kind of training in conservation programmes, not surprisingly because you all have to learn too many things already from chemistry to art history, but I do wonder whether for young professionals whether there ought to be opportunities, perhaps summer institutes, where one learns financial accounting skills and the sort of business admin skills that administrators and even museum directors need to have these days.

Jerry Podany I can't help but imagine what the student and emerging conservators in the audience are thinking because I think the speakers, and I've been in congresses and discussions like this before, we're all thinking what kind of advantage we would have liked to have had. And so we keep piling on more and more and more of these advantages and opportunities and things that they should do when in fact what they're really thinking is "I want a job", right? So, ultimately, all of these opportunities are wonderful and they should be developed and, yes, we should provide opportunities for learning about business and book-keeping, and PR and, yes, they should know as many languages as possible, and it's probably up to the established conservators and the foundations to make sure that those opportunities are presented.

I think what students and emerging conservators need to keep in mind is that the more you prepare yourself to be attractive to opportunities, the more those opportunities will come your way. And I really like Max's commandments, especially the one that you can plan your career only to a certain point. And beyond that, you just make yourself available and try to enrich yourself as a person. So is it important for you to know another language? Important, I don't know. Is it good for you as a person? Would it minimize the amount of misunderstanding and would you have a greater depth of understanding and more opportunities in a particular country? Absolutely. So if you weigh that, the choice is obvious. But you have limited amounts of time. So as May said, you have to be somewhat strategic about what you invest your time and money into, and somewhat focused. It's completely contradictory in that you have to be focused but you have to be generally open at the same time.

Sadra Zekrgoo Hi. I'm Sadra Zekrgoo from Northumbria University, doing a paper conservation course. So far we've talked about travelling and languages. In your opinion, are there any specific languages that we can learn, or specific countries that we can go to for having more job opportunities or anything?

May Cassar Okay, if I can give it a political direction from the UK /Europe perspective, the big links at the moment are being done with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. It doesn't mean that the politics isn't going to change, so don't invest too much effort in those languages and find that they've gone or disappeared. But, certainly, I think over the next generation I would think Russia, India, China, Brazil, South Africa. South Africa is mainly English-speaking, but I would think the other countries are still going to be pretty strong in terms of rising economies and, therefore, [will have] money to be spent on cultural activities and cultural work.

Elisabeth Geijer I'm from Sweden but I'm studying in Vienna. I'm doing a placement at the British Museum now for three months. I just want to go back to your question about studying abroad and I would really encourage people to study abroad because, first of all, this is a communication

skill. I've learned a fourth language and just met so many people and learned this thing of communication, how important it is. And I feel by studying in Vienna, I met and I've been inspired by the people, the Austrians that I study with, to contact people abroad and to be open, to maybe go abroad and not just stay in Austria and work in Austria. And so I would really encourage people to go abroad; you meet people, you communicate with people who you would never meet if you stayed just in your country or city.

Ana Paula Tanaka I'm from Brazil. And I have to come over here to do a Master's [degree] although I have been a book conservator in Brazil for a few years. And, hopefully, you'd be right, because we don't have jobs in Brazil, we have – all the time – to find ourselves our paths. So I completely agree with Jerry: we have to be focused, but we have to be open and we have to build our future.

Erica Foden-Lenahan I'm from Camberwell studying book conservation. And this goes back to what Patrick was saying: it is about travelling, moving to other places for short or long periods of time. I went to a conference recently and I very much sensed that the education that we're receiving in the UK in conservation is quite different to what is being received in Europe. And I'm wondering, can we continue to compete with non-Anglophone colleagues because our education, our training is so much shorter?

May Cassar The UK is still sitting a little bit outside the Bologna Process [to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications] - is that what you're referring to? [**Erica Foden-Lenahan**: Partly, yes.] We won't go into detail on that, but certainly I think that will change. It may not affect you, but I think there is quite a lot of discussion at university association level with the [UK] Department of Education about the Bologna Process and what needs to happen. There are bilateral degrees being offered by some universities, for example, UCL, on some courses, not conservation. It [UCL] does offer a joint degree with the University of Paris-Sorbonne. So it is beginning to happen. So there are synergies taking place, but, yes, you are right, there are longer courses being run in Europe and we offer shorter courses. That may be an advantage to us. We are still getting quite a lot of international students coming to the UK. What is going to change, I think, is our fee levels; that is what's going to change it.

Erica Foden-Lenahan I can see that and I can see the advantage of having international students coming to the UK to study, but are we not disadvantaging our own students by not providing what's expected for us to be able to go to other countries to study or, if not, to work, even, when our qualification is so much shorter, our training period is so much shorter? Are we going to be recognised in another country, should we decide that we want to move? I am another language

speaker and I would like to [take up] those opportunities, but I feel quite disadvantaged with the training in the UK.

May Cassar I think our institutions and Icon [the Institute of Conservation] need to engage with ENCoRE. (**Alison Richmond**: Absolutely) Because the conservation bodies within countries do tend to throw up walls and I can mention countries I know specifically of where there is absolutely no reason [to block UK-educated people] because although our degree courses are shorter, they are not any worse. But there is a reason, or an excuse, dare I say, for those walls to be raised.

Alison Richmond Well, I think this is a very important issue and I'm very glad you've raised it. I don't have an answer, but I can say that it is part of the education strategy to look at the relationship between European and UK education and to bring together, draw links together, with ENCoRE and with ECCO. So it is on the agenda and I'd be very glad to report to you how we move forward on that.

Max Marmor I just wonder to what extent opportunities abroad, competitive opportunities, are influenced not just by credentials on paper, but also by the networking we were discussing earlier. It's my sense that when an American graduate student or recent graduate from a conservation programme seeks an opportunity, whether domestically or abroad, a big factor in determining their success is their mentor's connections: what kind of testimony they can offer about the student's qualifications, some of which are evident on paper, but some might not be and have to do with human temperament and initiative and drive and imagination. So I think there are intangibles that are relevant to this as well.

May Cassar Max, I think you're right to give the North American perspective. However, I do worry a little bit that what we're getting in some European countries is conservation being enshrined in legislation which is actually being restrictive. It's being used to restrict movement and mobility. And one big problem that there is, [is that] this does not only apply to conservation; I've seen it discussed in committees where there have been scientists from a whole range of disciplines, where if you want to be mobile across your career and work in different countries in your field, you cannot. There is no mechanism whereby your pension in one country counts in terms of continuity of pension provision in another country. And so you end up with a nightmare scenario. You're far away from that. I'm closer to it, believe me. But there is that issue that faces everybody and the European Union is not even thinking about that.

Patrick McBride Can I address the question a little bit more directly? I have had three students through, two of them have been through the Camberwell course and one has been through

Northumbria. And it doesn't matter which course you're on, paper conservation, book, whatever and which college you've gone to, both students have complained about the quality of the course. I know Mark [Sandy, MA Conservation (Art on Paper) Course Leader at Camberwell] well. I know the pressures Mark Sandy and a lot of people are under in terms of providing the course. I would see it as being really an opportunity. You get out of it what you put in yourself. You will have to work hard, but there is another alternative: what if those courses go? Picture a scenario whereby you don't have that training out there: Camberwell doesn't exist. I think, in respect to them, they're doing their best to try and provide as high a grade training as is possible, given the pressures they are under. But I also think the BA [?] students have an ability to be able to push that, to argue for it. At one stage Camberwell used to find placements for second-year undergraduate students and would pay for accommodation – it's true – the college itself found them accommodation and paid for it as part of the degree. Now that's a long-time ago, it's about 12, 15 years ago when they had that in place. So there is a lot of pressure, it is changing but I would celebrate that, in terms of their ability, they are still able to provide as high an education as they actually do.

Erica Foden-Lenahan I wasn't complaining about the quality of education that I'm receiving, I might add another point but it's more a general thing that I was trying to raise.

May Cassar I think it's difficult to generalise. I think it's patchy across the board. You need to look at what country you want to go to and explore it, because it will vary from country to country. Some countries, particularly those in the north part of the Mediterranean, who will remain nameless, make it more difficult and not as easy as northern European countries.

Twitter Moderator I've got a question here from the [IIC] newsblog and it's slightly related to courses in Europe and how, in some of them, you are required to do work experience before you undertake a training course. And we'd just like to know what the panel thinks about undertaking work experience before you enter training programmes, whether that's a good idea, whether you'd encourage that.

Alison Richmond I'm aware of courses in Germany where to study conservation you have to do an apprenticeship – an internship but it's really an apprenticeship in the craft of your subject. So, for example, for furniture conservation you do a year internship in furniture making. People who come off those courses are incredible practitioners. And I think there is great value in that. It's very specific to some countries in Europe. I agree it's not particularly practised here, but it does have value.

Amber Kerr-Allison If I could say something, this is from the US side. We do. Actually the programmes require a certain number of hours of pre-programme experience before you can get

accepted into a graduate programme. And oftentimes the applicants far exceed the minimum hours that are requested but they really do promote the idea of 'Go out there and see if this is for you': actually volunteer in labs. Or, if you can get paid, sometimes there are prepaid (pre-programme we call them) positions where they can get paid. But the idea of it is that there's an ideal version of what a conservator is and you go to school and you find out what it is. And then there's this [other] idea in the [United] States: 'Well, go figure it out a little bit, get that experience, volunteer some time, go to a lab and be around conservators, see what it's like to scrape glue off the back of a painting for months on end under a microscope or something'. This [is the] idea of understanding what the field you're entering truly demands of you and knowing whether or not it's really for you because some people get into a graduate programme, get halfway through and discover 'Wow, this really isn't for me'. That's sad because there is somebody else who didn't get on the programme who is out there, hungry for it and wants to be it. So they try to encourage that in the US: to get out there and get that pre-programme experience, as they call it, and you have to have it before you can even get into graduate school.

Jerry Podany I think Amber raises a very good point, that the conservation community in the United States is trying to address both sides of life before you go into an educational programme, a graduate programme, and after you've come out. So the requirement of pre-programme experience really is rather effective at weeding out people who have an imaginary concept of what conservation is. And the effort to try to promote and to keep alive a very strong programme of postgraduate and professional continuing education has been so important and key to the success of conservators in the United States. And that's something that I would dearly like to see, and look forward to the time when it becomes much more international. There are opportunities right now, but they're relatively limited. If those opportunities of continuing education could be made more international, I think the international community would grow and out of that, make [address] a lot of these other political problems. We certainly not going to solve them overnight but they would influence the solution to a lot of political problems of cross boundary working and permits and more of an effort towards standardisation of what the field accepts as viable approaches to working.

Rebecca Shindel I'm studying paper conservation at Northumbria and I have two questions. The first question is: as potential employers, how do you view CVs that might have one random, really random, experience? I've been a compounding pharmacy technician assistant and actually made medication for people and animals. And I'm wondering, would you find that interesting? If somebody else has something that's really random that they want to do and put it on their CV, would that turn you off or would you want to see that? The other part of that question is, what if when we leave we can only afford to volunteer one day a week, is that still good to see? And then the second question relates to American programmes. Obviously I'm studying over here and I'm American, I was

attracted to the British system because of the style of teaching, because I did an undergrad at UCL in the History of Art Department. And I found that really valuable, but one thing that I think we lack here is I think that the third year internship is extremely beneficial because even if the university isn't responsible for funding the internship, students have such an easier time getting funding than someone who has left school. And I think that's more directed at you, Alison, because you were asking for input there. Thank you.

Jerry Podany Before there are answers from the people who are on the panel or in the auditorium, could I just ask that the person who asked that question to answer her first two questions herself. What are the answers you'd get if you were asked that?

Rebecca Shindel If I was a potential employer, that would set someone out, out of a stack of CVs. But because in the United States when we have resumés we tend to be told 'You should only have one side to a resumé'. And here [United Kingdom] it's two sides to a CV. You feel this limitation on what you should put on your CV – and it all has to be really good. And if you only do volunteer work one day a week, is that acceptable to put on? Or if you've been a manager of a coffee shop and you know how to run labour and run numbers and all of that, is that good as well? But it's a coffee shop so should I put that on, or should I not? I think that it is good, but our tutor sometimes influences us not to, so that's part of my question - to hear from potential employers, really.

Jerry Podany At the risk of coming into conflict with your tutors, when I'm wading through stacks of resumés, it's one of the most depressing times I have in my job because there is such a standardisation of people: being told, 'Do this', 'Don't do that', 'Use this formula', 'Don't use that formula'. And at a certain point you feel like you don't know the person at all. So if you volunteer one day a week, to me that means you're interested, you're committed to the field, you're trying, you may not have half that time for anything else. I'm interested in those kinds of little unusual statements, those experiences that set you apart from other people. Now you can overdo it, that is true, but I really like people who will add on something that tells me more about their commitment and more about themselves, because I think the unintentional result of trying to help people write their resumés, and I don't mean that you shouldn't get help and you shouldn't get guidance, but I think one of the unintentional results is they're all starting to look the same. And we go back to depending, as Max said, on your references and contacting them personally, but I like it when people pack as much as they can into a resumé and into a letter.

Max Marmor I think I'll henceforth simply say 'Ditto' after Jerry says something because I invariably agree with him. I would say the same. I'm not an employer obviously in the conservation field, but we do look at resumes for fellowships and other things. And I do look for what sets an

individual aside, what makes them stand out in some ways. And sometimes it's something that might well seem quirky to a tutor. And again, I don't want to antagonise tutors either, but individuality really does matter. And I think it matters increasingly, because we all begin to look alike as we show up in somebody's inbox [with an e-mail] that says 'Word attachment'. And what makes you stand out as an individual and calls out your strong commitment to what you're doing really does make a difference.

May Cassar Your question rather rings a few alarm bells in my head, particularly if it suggests that conservation is a single discipline. It is interdisciplinary in its own right. We are a kaleidoscope of different applications and approaches to conservation. Yes, we have a strong binding ethos but we do conservation differently – that's why it's so fantastic. So if you were to reduce the richness of your offer by not presenting what it is that you have in terms of your depth and breadth of your own experience, then I think you diminish yourself. I answer that question as both somebody who accepts Masters students on a Master's course in Sustainable Heritage and on a Master's in Preservation and Heritage Science. And we look for depth and breadth of experience and we accept conservators, as well as other disciplines. But also as an employer I want to see somebody that has actually got the guts to move and do different things. That takes courage and I love it.

Alison Richmond I absolutely agree with May and she put it brilliantly. I don't think there is such a thing as random experience. I think all experience has value and I think the life experience is incredibly valuable. So, I agree. We talked yesterday about transferable skills and I think there are so many skills that you learn along the way in different occupations that really we can apply and the interdisciplinary [nature] of our subject and how great conservation is because people come from all different backgrounds, of different skills and different education systems in different countries and so forth. I just wanted to pick up on the volunteering, I think there's huge pressure on all of you now about this volunteering and I really feel we need to pull back a little bit with the emphasis on volunteering. I think it is very, very important but I think we really need to help you, more than we're doing, to get the experience you need and not leave it entirely to you to just find unpaid volunteering. And the sense I get from you is that one day wouldn't be enough. One day would be amazing. It's fantastic that you can give a day of your week to an organisation or to a practice, whichever. I do think this is a very, very important issue that our profession needs to deal with.

Steven O'Banion I am from the Winterthur/University of Delaware programme in Art Conservation. I'd like to start off by thanking Max Marmor and the Kress Foundation for their support of travel and students because it's what has enabled me to come to the UK and do an internship here at the Tate. I'd like to go along with the theme of the global session and kind of switch from the perspective of what Alison has said and us asking what you can do for us and switch, to see what we

can do for you as emerging professionals that will help support your global initiatives and your quest for funding, which would then in turn benefit us again by opening up opportunities for more students. If there's anything that emerging professionals can do or get back to you in a way, you know, to take forward.

Alison Richmond I know, 'This is a position of such privilege, I can't believe it. I'm being offered such a fantastic gift'. I feel that you telling me what you want is your gift to me. But I also feel that this whole area that we discussed this morning about new media and social networking is a scenario that I think Icon certainly needs help with. And I think probably our profession as a whole probably needs support from you. So being able to get the word across in these new ways is incredibly important and I would like to have more dialogue about that. I started to dialogue today with Nicholas. And I'd like to continue that dialogue and make it happen for Icon. So that's the sort of thing that you can do for us.

May Cassar I need two things, write them down! We need the evidence base for the value of conservation, because in talking to policy makers, they're always asking for the evidence, for the data to demonstrate that what we're saying is what is actually happening. It doesn't mean that the decisions are going to flow in our favour because, as we know, decisions are hardly ever based on evidence, but we increase our chances of being heard if we actually have the evidence in place. And the other thing is case studies. Case studies have examples to show the benefit that conservation has on a much broader front. Those are the two things I need, so you've got your homework.

Graham Voce Can I just add something from IIC's point of view. In terms of giving things back to the profession as you've heard and just started to do, the people who have helped organise this very event, and the fact that we're all sitting here, for what is a brand new thing for IIC, is down to people who are just starting out in the conservation profession. You're the next generation, but you've helped us create this. And so I think that it's a very two-way thing: you can [help], whether it's Icon, whether it's AIC in the [United] States, wherever your national group is; at IIC, we depend on volunteers as much as any gallery, any museum, any historic house. And the fact that we've also, sitting in front of us, have had in three sessions, people who have given their own time as volunteers to take part in this. As a non-conservator, I'm amazed at the amount of time that people put into conservation and what people give back to each other. So if you're staring out, you're starting out in a good profession. But again, volunteer with Icon, volunteer with AIC, keep on going with IIC.

Jerry Podany Could I just follow up on Graham's point that the volunteering and the enrichment that you experience from being involved in a national or international professional organisation is legion and important to you, but it's also true, I meant it when I said, this is a very

young field as compared to other professions. Big parts of it are unrecognisable to me since I started but there are parts that are still unfortunately very recognisable. So, you can play a big role in creating the professional world that you're stepping into. And your conduits are these organisations. So, I would really encourage you to get involved a little bit, get involved a lot, but get involved because they're important to your future and to each one.

Larissa Allen I'm a pre-program student at UMass Boston [University of Massachusetts Boston]. I also work for the National Parks Service as a STEP employee. I have a little introduction and a question for everybody else here. A friend of mine who actually lives in Greenwich – and I'm staying at his flat right now – is a Master of Typography student from Reading and he has attended something that they called type camp that happens, I think, once a year in various different locations. I know that they did one recently in India, that was a week-long programme where they went on site visits, they did workshops and lectures, they did a lot of hands-on training and things like that and got sort of a cultural overview for about 25 different students and emerging professionals and I guess my question is, who here would be interested in something like that with a conservation focus and going to another country, just for a week of working and would IIC and Icon be willing to do whatever they could to make that happen and help us out? Obviously like I've never organised anything like that before, but I'd love to go. I don't know that's really a question – it's more of an offer.

Alison Richmond I absolutely support that idea. I think it's fantastic and I know that Gabriela Krist, who is a trustee and a board member of IIC and who is in Vienna, has organised over the past 5 years, conservation in Tibet or Nepal. She would be a very good person to talk to.

Graham Voce From IIC's point of view, yes, we'd be delighted to work in exploring how that could be developed. I think it's very interesting to draw an 'Our end is in our beginning' sort of thing. At this point in Istanbul, [IIC 2010 Congress] Adam Klupś came to me and said, 'When is the next conference?' I said, 'Two years away' and he said, 'Oh, really?' [and started to work on this event]. To keep that impetus going requires that sort of input. And so it's very interesting at this point in this event you've suggested something new again.

May Cassar What we have to do is make these things happen. And as the guys who have been organising this will tell you, there's been an awful lot of work behind the scenes in getting this to happen. So, let's talk about it, let's see what we can do. Can I encourage the three organisations to get together in partnership. This is what will make conservation really fly, this kind of partnership. We talk to each other every day. We need to talk to people who are not like us to understand what we need to do to make conservation more global.

Patrick McBride And you asked what you could do. Ladies and gentlemen, you've just seen a very good example of student-power in action. What you can do for us this side, and we would be passionate about what we do, is to share that passion and to push out anew. It's great to see so many of you here today and giving up your Saturday just to try and advance your careers in conservation. And that's what you can do, be passionate about what you believe in and wherever you end up, wherever your careers end up, that is payment to us.

Stephen Hackney That sounds like a suitably optimistic note to finish on. I would like to thank all our speakers, Jerry, Max, May, Alison and Pat. And I thank all of you for coming along and I hope that all your questions have been raised and that some of them been answered. Thank you very much.