

Report by the Secretary-General 2018

This is a very brief report on IIC's activities during the last financial and membership year, 1st July 2017 to 30th June 2018, brief because you can read about them in the Annual Report and Accounts, which, depending on your stated preferences for receiving things by post or not, you will have received in the mail or we have invited you by email to download them from the website. For a rather prettier account, and one at greater length, the illustrated Annual Review is available for download from the IIC website at <https://www.iiconservation.org/about/core-documents>.

This has been the first full year for our newest member of staff, Executive Director Sarah Stannage, who found herself very busy due to unforeseen complications associated with the establishment of the new design to our website and also with the requirements of complying with General Data Protection Regulation. This meant that she had to learn about internal IIC processes very quickly, but in doing that she has tightened and rationalised them and we will undoubtedly see the benefits.

One advantage of GDPR was that we had to contact all of you and I am happy to say that we have re-established contact with some members with whom we had lost touch. Sometimes we lose touch with members because we do not have up to date contact details, when, for example, a member has changed jobs and has not updated the information on the member's personal page. So please update your information and if you can no longer log in to the website for one reason or another, please contact the office for help.

I'm delighted to say that we have welcomed over 50 new IIC Fellows this year, from Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America – international indeed and too many to list here, but the full list is in the Annual Review. Perhaps you would like to propose somebody for Fellowship or would like to be a Fellow yourself, in which case you need a Fellow to propose you, together with four supporting Fellows: all the details are on the website at <https://www.iiconservation.org/about/membership/fellowships>.

The principal event of the year was the fourth Student and Emerging Conservator conference, held at the Hochschule der Künste Bern, HKB – Bern University of the Arts – in October 2017. As with all these conferences, the students themselves chose the title and the theme which, inspired by the work of the Swiss educational philosopher Joachim Pestalozzi, was *Head, Hands and Heart*. These formed the subjects of the three sessions, 'Head' asking how scientific research and conservation science applied to the conservation profession, 'Hands' discussing the development of practical and theoretical skills during the conservator's career and 'Heart' being devoted to responsibilities and self confidence: how to communicate with an employer and how to work in a team. As the presentations were held in the form of collaborative web broadcasts, speakers and participants could join the conference on line, as well as in person. The students also organised the whole conference, including preparation of the budget and organisation of visits before and after the conference, with very little help from IIC, a very useful learning exercise for their future careers. IIC would like to thank the Principal of HKB, Stefan Wülfert, for his support of the conference and, of course, the student-run Local Organising Committee headed by Isa von Lenthe, as well as those who most generously sponsored the conference. These included Tru Vue, who have consistently supported the Student and Emerging Conservator Conferences

This year also saw the third of the courses held at the IIC International Training Centre for Conservation (IIC-ITCC) at the Palace Museum in Beijing, this time on textile

conservation. The training centre is hosted and funded by the Palace Museum and I would like to record our thanks to Dr Jixiang Shan, Director of the Palace Museum, Dr Jirong Song, Deputy Director and Head of the Conservation Department and all those in the Conservation Department for their hospitality, and particularly Katherine Xiaoji Fang for her work on the organisation together with their most efficient secretariat. Training is provided primarily by IIC Fellows, on this occasion Sarah Staniforth, Austin Nevin, Dinah Eastop, Mary Brooks and Diana Collins, with Dr Jirong Song, Ningchang Shi and Yong Lei (also IIC Fellows) from the Palace Museum. As with the previous courses, half the 23 participants were from China; the remainder were from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, Egypt, Finland, France, New Zealand, Serbia and Vietnam. The course notes and, where possible, the PowerPoint lectures are available for download as PDF files from the IIC website at <https://www.iiconservation.org/archives/6329>. We are also most grateful to the other half of the secretariat, in the person of Casey Liu at the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in Hong Kong, who for the past few years has dealt with all the administration of the participants who are not from China.

The course was followed by a two-day symposium on textiles and thangkas, *Unroll and Unfold: Preserving Textiles and Thangkas to Last*, held at Hong Kong Polytechnic University and organised by the LCSD Conservation Office on behalf of IIC, the Palace Museum, Beijing and the Hong Kong Leisure and Cultural Services Department itself. Papers were given to the audience of about 280 people in either English or Putonghua (standard Mandarin Chinese), with simultaneous translation between the two. We would like to thank Michelle Li, Director, and Shing-wai Chan, Deputy Director of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Evita Yeung, Head of the Conservation Office and all our colleagues in the Conservation Office at LCSD for their hospitality and their superb organisation.

We held another in our series of Professional Development seminars in October 2017, this time on sustainable museum storage, following on from the IIC and ICOM-CC publication of environmental guidelines in 2014. This seminar, held at the Dana Library and Research Centre of the Science Museum, London, in front of a specialist audience, was devoted to permanent storage, with the aim of creating guidelines in the future. A summary of the proceedings together with PDFs of the presentations will be made available on the IIC website.

The subject matter of this Professional Development seminar could also be linked to that of the 27th IIC Congress, *Preventive Conservation: The State of the Art*, held in Turin in September 2018. This took place outside the year under discussion, but it is impossible not to record something about it here: what a wonderful event it was, with a capacity audience and beautiful warm weather! You will have to wait until next year to read about it formally, but I would like to thank our partners in Turin for all their help in the organisation: the IIC Italian Group, IGIIC, represented by Elena Spoldi, the Secretary-General, Daniela Rullo, the Executive Secretary, and its President, Lorenzo Appolonia (also an IIC Council member); the City of Turin, represented by Luisa Medri and Fortunata Armocida; the Centro Conservazione Restauro (CCR) "La Venaria Reale", represented by Elisa Rosso, Elena Bozzo and Valentina Torcello; and Turismo Torino, represented by Roberta Tealdi and Francesca Sibilla.

As always, IIC depends for its efficient functioning on the office personnel and we are grateful to Graham Voce, IIC's Executive Secretary, Tina Churcher, the Membership Secretary, and Mary Breading, who was with us until October 2018 as book-keeper and Finance Secretary.

This AGM is also my last as IIC Secretary-General. After over nine years, it is time to hand over to someone else with different and new ideas. I am pleased to say that I am handing an organisation in a good and healthy shape to my successor and I am delighted to introduce her to you: Jane Henderson. I am sure she will have as good and interesting a time as I have in the job and I wish all my IIC colleagues, friends and members the very best.

Jo Kirby Atkinson, Secretary-General