
Annual Meeting Abstracts

The 2013 WAAC Annual Meeting was held September 18 - 20 in Seattle, Washington

The papers from the meeting are listed below along with summaries prepared by the speakers.

Preserving Our Human Heritage: How Curating and Conserving Kennewick Man Has Influenced the Care of Human Remains in Cultural Institutions

Nancy Odegaard, Laura Phillips, Jennifer R. Richman, Megon Noble, Peter Lape, Vicki Cassman, Chris Pulliam, and Michael K. Trimble

It has been nearly two decades since the remains known as Kennewick Man, or the Ancient One, were accidentally discovered. Four Northwest tribes (Yakama, Colville, Nez Perce, and Umatilla) fought in court for reburial under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The remains are among the oldest and most complete ever found in North America. In 2004 a federal appeals court found the bones to NOT be Native American because they were too old and lacked sufficient archaeological detail to assign membership genetically or culturally to any modern tribe.

The Burke Museum at the University of Washington houses the remains under a curation agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers which is the responsible agency. After submitting a study plan, several sessions of study including over 37 researchers were granted access to study the remains in great detail. At the request of the Department of Justice and curatorial experts with the US Army Corps of Engineers, conservators were included in these activities since 1998. While it was argued that the collection had immense value to the scientific community and the public, most of the study findings have yet to appear in scholarly journals for scrutiny and discussion. There is expectation for a book by the researchers to appear in 2014.

This presentation offers a discussion on the important role the Kennewick Remains have had on the advancement of curation and care for human remains. The enhanced participation of conservation as part of the study sessions inspired new techniques and

approaches that in turn had significant influence on other projects that followed including the Lucy Remains from Ethiopia, the Chinchorro Mummies in Chile, and important collections at the British Museum as well as collections throughout the United States. Specifically, the conservation field has been compelled to reevaluate our approach to the care and handling of human remains in activities related to teaching, curation, examination, and reburial.

How Maastricht Brought Venice to Denver

Sarah Melching

In the fall of 2011, Denver Art Museum Director Christoph Heinrich, received an invitation from the Chairman of the European Fine Art Fair - more commonly referred to as TEFAF - inviting a proposal for the TEFAF Restoration Fund. This was to be the first award of its kind, marking the 25th anniversary of the organization. After review of the guidelines and in conference with museum staff, the decision was made to submit a grant request for the painting *Venice: The Molo from the Bacino di San Marco*, by the 18th-century Italian artist Canaletto. The proposal requested funds for conservation of as well as the interpretation of the process. In January, 2012, the DAM was notified of its successful application. With the intent of inspiring others to apply for funding from TEFAF, this talk will give an overview of the planning, implementation, and outcome of the DAM's project.

Extreme Makeover: Florence Edition: The Restoration of a Small Maestà by Taddeo Gaddi

Sue Ann Chui

In preparation for the exhibition *Florence at the Dawn of the Renaissance: Painting and Illumination 1300-1350* shown at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, and at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, several paintings were treated and studied by the Paintings Conservation department of the Getty Museum. One of these paintings was the central section of a triptych by Taddeo Gaddi representing the Virgin and Child with Ten Saints: Maestà. Painted around 1330-34 by Giotto's pupil, this small panel was donated to the New York Historical

Society in 1867 and has resided there ever since. The main goal of the treatment was to improve the aesthetic presentation of the Maestà as the old restorations were rather broad and had discolored to an unacceptable level. Original fragments were uncovered during the cleaning which helped in the reconstruction of key parts of the composition that had largely gone missing. For the exhibition, a pair of shutters from a private collection was identified as the possible companions to the Maestà, and the three paintings were displayed together in a hypothetical reconstruction of the triptych. A technical study done in collaboration with the Getty Conservation Institute was carried out on the paintings to compare their materials, technique, and structure to try to determine if the paintings belonged to each other. X-radiography, infrared reflectography, and x-ray fluorescence were used to analyze the paintings.

A Preliminary Investigation into Conservation Methods and Materials for Smoking Automata

Brittany Cox

This presentation will detail research focused around a case study object, concluding with future research recommendations and considerations. The case study research involved the investigation of suitable materials that may be used to replace deteriorated bellows coverings in smoking automata, specifically those automata made in France between the period of 1848 and 1914. Three materials were determined suitable for testing here based on discussions with trade restorers, museums, and materials scientists: Type 14 Tyvek, Zephyr, and alum-tawed skin.

Among the different test methods involved, a machine was constructed that was capable of running three sets of bellows simultaneously. The bellows were designed to be identical to those inside the case study object, a Vichy Huntsman smoker automaton. The machine was set up so that the three bellows on test consisted of one covered in each of the three test materials. The three bellows smoked one pack of cigarettes each, running at the same speed as the bellows in the Vichy automaton.

Infrared spectroscopy, tensile testing, and temperature monitoring were used for further analysis.

The conclusions drawn from this research demonstrate how problems arise when tangible and intangible qualities are in direct conflict, and why these problems are difficult to address in the case of dynamic objects, especially automata.

Use of Ammonium Citrate Dibasic in Paper Conservation

Antoinette Dwan

There are numerous advantages for using ammonium citrate dibasic in paper conservation. It can successfully be used as a substitute for “dry cleaning”; for pre-treatment; and for stain reduction. It is possible to reduce stains while removing unwanted metallic particles prior to other treatment procedures. Often this will be the only treatment step needed to completely eliminate stains or it will significantly reduce the stain so that less bleaching is required. It is possible to achieve significant cleaning at a neutral pH and low concentrations. Ammonium citrate dibasic can be used successfully as a grime removal agent either applied locally or in a bath. Especially significant is its advantage working on colored papers as it reduces stains without lightening the paper as typical bleaching agents do. Finally, ammonium citrate dibasic is very safe for paper artifacts, easily rinses, and reduces many stains as a substitute for more invasive oxidizing or reducing procedures. Additional treatment steps using dilute sodium borohydride are demonstrated.

Pedro Ramirez: An Examination of 17th-century Spanish Colonial Painting Techniques.

Elma O’Donoghue

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art has an extensive and diverse collection of Latin American art ranging from pre-Columbian, through to contemporary. Since 2006 however it has focused on acquiring 17th- and 18th-century Spanish Colonial works, becoming one of the principle repositories of such art in the United States. These acquisitions and their conservation treatments have provided LACMA’s conservation department with a rare opportunity to examine the materials and techniques of artists from New Spain.

The author’s treatment and research of a large panel painting by the 17th-century

Mexican painter Pedro Ramirez is the focus of this paper. While Ramirez is known to have exemplified Sevillian chiaroscuro and to have influenced a younger generation of artists, the painting’s compromised condition made it difficult to appreciate his power. The analysis of paint cross-sections however, in addition to the treatment of large areas of lifting paint and selective removal of extensive overpaints helped reveal the sophistication of his style. Ramirez’s techniques were essentially Spanish and closely related to established 16th- and 17th-century methods described in treatises by Nunez, Pacheco, and Palomino y Velasco. These techniques and those of other first generation Mexican painters will be discussed as will the rigid guild system which controlled and monitored the arts and the economy at the time in Mexico.

Larger 17th-religious paintings such as this panel by Ramirez were often part of huge and elaborate Baroque altarpieces. Created in highly organized workshops headed by maestros who were Spanish or of Spanish descent, they were commissioned by the wealthy elite and the church in Mexico. Over the years many of these altarpieces were overcleaned, overpainted, and eventually dismantled. The rarity of surviving works from 17th- and early 18th-century Colonial maestros has necessitated an interesting shift in museum attitudes towards accepting paintings from New Spain that are often in less than ideal condition.

The Treatment of Three Nineteenth-Century Ship Figureheads

Corine Landrieu

Three figureheads: a man from the four-masted *William T. Lewis*, a woman from yacht *Yolanda*, and a woman from an unknown vessel found off the coast of Australia, were donated to the Museum of History and Industry, Seattle in the mid 80s. They hung in the museum’s stairwell for more than 25 years, and by 2011 they were in poor condition. The museum was preparing to relocate to South Lake Union, and the figureheads presented a unique challenge due to their large scale, significant weight, and potential fragility.

Hansen Brothers Moving Company, who was readying the museum for their move, was charged with the daunting task of removing the figureheads from the stairwell,

moving them into the collection storage, and placing them in such a way that Corine Landrieu could start the conservation process. This involved exploratory work to determine the interior structure of the figureheads, the various causes of damage, and communications with Richard Hunter, Figurehead Historian in South Yorkshire, England. This presentation will describe the process, and put it in context with traditional figurehead restoration. A brief history of ship figureheads will also be presented.

The Whitney Museum’s Collection Documentation Initiative (CDI) from the Conservators’ Perspective

Claire Gerhard, Megan Berkey, and Matthew Skopek

The Collection Documentation Initiative, or CDI, created and implemented by staff at the Whitney Museum of Art in New York is described from the perspective of painting conservators who worked on the painting collection portion of the initiative. The initiative’s rationale is “to update physical and non-interpretive information by cataloguing, confirming media, creating a standardized conservation assessment, and entering acquisition, provenance, and curatorial notes directly into the Museum’s data system” for all works of art on paper, paintings, and sculpture in the collection. (From the CDI Manual.) Sources of damage to the painting collection are prioritized and trends in painting conservation and in artist materials as seen through the collection discussed.

Development of a Field Monitoring Technique for Protective Coatings on Outdoor Metal Artwork

Alice H. England and Tami Lasseter Clare

A non-destructive technique for rapid, onsite evaluation of coating performance on outdoor metal artwork is developed. Electrochemical Impedance Spectroscopy (EIS), a common laboratory method for characterizing the barrier properties of protective coatings, is adapted for outdoor measurements by utilizing flexible electrodes that can be applied to non-uniform surfaces in any orientation. For the electrode material, a novel conductive hydrogel was synthesized and then characterized via

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swelling capacity, conductivity, and impedance in a variety of electrolyte solutions to determine the optimal conditions for electrode performance. The effects of cell geometry were investigated to establish a normalization procedure with standard liquid cell EIS spectra, allowing for comparison to the existing collection of impedance studies on coating degradation.

Hydrogel EIS results from test plates in an ideal laboratory setting will be presented to introduce basic impedance concepts and spectral interpretation for diagnosing coating performance. Usage of this method to detect coating failure in the field will then be discussed with preliminary measurements from the Olympic Sculpture Park (Seattle, WA). Because outdoor EIS experiments are subject to other complications such as electrical and vibrational noise, a limited frequency range will be used. Additionally, restricting the field measurements to several representative frequencies allows for less complicated instrumentation, faster data acquisition, and simplified interpretation. All of these factors contribute to the utility of this technique for efficient, real-time analysis of coating performance.

One from LA: The Story behind De Wain Valentine's *Gray Column*

Tom Learner, Rachel Rivenc, and Emma Richardson

De Wain Valentine was one of a number of artists during the postwar era in Los Angeles who adopted new materials and innovative fabrication processes, some of which were appropriated from aerospace, boat, automobile, and even surfboard industries. He pioneered the use of colored polyester resin, which he cast into simple shapes, then sanded and polished to create striking, highly-finished, large-scale sculptures that interact intensely with the surrounding light. No commercially available polyester resins could be cast in large volumes—anything more than a thin resin layer would crack during curing due to high levels of heat released. Through trial and error, Valentine developed a new resin that allowed him to create luminous art of imposing scale. One of his largest polyester pieces was *Gray Column* of 1975-6. 12 feet in height and 8 feet wide, it weighs over 3500 pounds.

Although polyester appears to be a relatively stable material, the resin continues to move after curing, and so the pristine surface of his work—so crucial to its function—is difficult to maintain. To date the artist has preferred pieces to be re-sanded and re-polished prior to display, recovering an un-blemished effect but at the expense of removing its surface. As such, his work offers an excellent example of the common conflict faced by conservators between honoring an artist's intent and preserving the integrity of the original materials. To help tell this story—and as part of the Pacific Standard Time initiative, the GCI organized the exhibition, *From Start to Finish: De Wain Valentine's Gray Column*, to raise public awareness of the technical studies and conservation thinking that conservators routinely undertake with modern and contemporary art.

This talk outlines the conservation story behind *Gray Column* and ways in which this information was presented in the exhibition. *Gray Column* will be part of the *9 from LA* exhibition at the Virginia Wright exhibition space in Seattle, where WAAC will enjoy its opening reception, with a separate gallery dedicated to showing accompanying, didactic content produced for the GCI's original PST exhibition. A 25 minute documentary, produced as part of this project, will also be screened at the Seattle Art Museum on Friday.

Everything under the Sun: The Conservation of Artifacts for an Exhibit on the History of Los Angeles

Liz Homberger

Marking the end of the multi-phase, 8-year Museum Project to reinvigorate the museum's aging halls, the NHMLAC recently opened its new history hall. *Becoming Los Angeles* aims to address the interplay of the environment and culture as the city has developed over the past several hundred years.

Conservators at the museum prepared and installed hundreds of historic and cultural artifacts—ranging from shell beads to religious implements to an oil pump to Hollywood props—for the exhibit. This paper describes the conservation and installation of the diverse objects that tell the story of LA, with the diversity of the treatments

mirroring that of the objects and the varied history of the city they represent.

Bell, Irwin, Kauffman, and McCracken: The Innovative Materials and Processes of Four from LA

Rachel Rivenc

In the 1960s, a group of LA based artists embarked on a reductive process that led to the creation of a distinct aesthetic, one featuring simple forms and highly polished surfaces and often referred to as West Coast Minimalism. Critics and art historians have identified the use of innovative materials and processes, often borrowed from the industrial world, as one of their defining elements. This talk will focus on four pioneers of this group: Larry Bell, Robert Irwin, Craig Kauffman, and John McCracken, all of whom used synthetic paints and/or resins as well as industrial processes to create objects that were both painting and sculpture, and all of whom have work showing at the *9 in LA* exhibition, at the Virginia Wright exhibition space.

Larry Bell used a process called vacuum deposition of thin films to coat plate glass with micron-thin films of material that altered the way the light is absorbed, reflected, and transmitted by the glass. Craig Kauffman employed vacuum-forming, a process usually reserved for commercial signs, to form acrylic sheets that were then reverse-painted with a spray-gun. John McCracken perfected a thorough process in which plywood was coated with fiberglass and spray-painted with countless layers of automotive paints, and later replaced the automotive paints with poured polyester resin to achieve a greater degree of surface perfection. Robert Irwin spray-painted with the finest colored mists discs of hammered aluminum or vacuum-formed plastics, and later developed with his fabricator, Jack Brogan, methods to glue and polish his column of cast acrylic plastic.

The study represents the accumulation of technical analysis, archival research, object examination, and oral history accounts initially undertaken by the GCI as part of the Los Angeles-wide Pacific Standard Time initiative, which has also investigated some of the issues associated with the conservation of the work of these four artists, which are often emblematic of issues in the conservation of contemporary art in general.

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Sakyamuni on the Lion Throne: A Case of a Weeping Sculpture

Liz Brown and John Twilley

Sakyamuni on the Lion Throne, a sculpture in the collections of the Seattle Art Museum (SAM), is an invaluable Kashmiri artwork relating to Buddhism's dissemination in the 8th Century. In 2009, as the Seattle Art Museum prepared for masterpieces from its collection to travel in a multi-venue exhibition in Japan, it was discovered that a prior corrosion problem was once again active. Large, moist drips of zinc hydroxyl chlorides and carbonates associated with discoloration of the metal surface that had first been identified and treated in 1988 had reappeared.

A better understanding of the problem and improved treatment were sought through more comprehensive analysis. Radiographs of the casting were obtained and analyses of the alloy and corrosion products were undertaken using optical metallography and Scanning Electron Microscopy with elemental analysis by X-ray spectrometry. The sculpture is a rare example of high zinc brass from the region where archaeometallurgical research has identified the earliest sustained production of this material in the world. The alloy, a leaded brass, was found to lie in the two-phase region of the copper-zinc alloy system, a composition that is vulnerable to preferential chloride corrosion of the beta-phase, leading to the development of interconnected pores through the casting. Copper, also liberated in the corrosion process, is responsible for a salmon-colored hue that accompanies the emergence of deliquescent zinc chloride on the surface.

This phenomenon was reproduced on modern brass of similar composition. The source of the chloride is uncertain but appears to lie with the casting core, much of which remains inside. Complexing of the zinc chloride and corrosion products with acetonitrile posed certain advantages as a means to remove them. Local applications were tested as concerns about its potential to expand clays in the casting core precluded its use by immersion. Ultimately it proved possible to halt the process through housing in a microclimate at 10% RH. As a part of the project, this research was shared with the public in an exhibition when the sculpture returned to Seattle.

University Partnerships: Building a Professional Education Program for Afghan Cultural Heritage Conservation

Nancy Odegaard, R. Brooks Jeffery, Suzanne Bott, Atifa Rawan, and Noorullah Dawari

The University of Arizona has begun a cultural heritage conservation education project with Kabul University in Afghanistan. The project is funded from US Embassy-Kabul's Local Grants Program whose stated purpose is "[increasing] the scope, capacity, and participation of non-governmental organizations and other citizen's groups to support and develop Afghan voices and new leaders capable of countering extremism, and that support civil society and boost institutional capacity."

The current project is the implementation phase for a comprehensive long-term project to build educational capacity in Afghanistan that protects and preserves its cultural heritage. The overarching goal is to develop a long-term professional education program. Previously, a series of outlines, bibliographic references, and web-based content information were created. The purpose of the project is to build educational institutional capacity in Afghanistan that will protect and preserve its cultural heritage for future generations. Objectives include:

1. Identify and select Kabul University faculty for initial training cohorts
2. Provide specialized Heritage Conservation education program at University of Arizona
3. Develop Heritage Conservation curriculum program for Kabul University
4. Initiate Heritage Conservation curriculum at Kabul University
5. Provide ongoing curriculum development support at Kabul University
6. Establish Afghan Cultural Heritage Consortium.

Early Chinese Lacquer Artifacts from the Asian Art Museum: Analysis and Testing of Some pre-Han Lacquered Wood Cups

Katherine Holbrow

A group of badly deteriorated Chinese lacquered wood cups from the Warring States period (400-200 BCE) is currently under-

going analysis, with the goal of eventually treating the objects. Radiography, Py-GCMS, and other methods have been used to investigate the structure and to characterize the materials used in this very early example of decorative lacquerware. While the treatment is still in the testing phase, the project has provided an opportunity to evaluate earlier lacquer treatments, identify degradation issues, and test possible alternative solutions.

Glass Bead Deterioration on Native American Objects: Evaluating Change and Treatment Procedures

Robin Ohern

How has the condition of deteriorating glass beads changed when stored at stable relative humidity and temperature for fourteen years? Are there long term differences in the effectiveness of different cleaning techniques for beads with glass disease? Glass deterioration occurs when hygroscopic components of the glass migrate to the surface where they form a crust and leave behind cracks and voids in the glass. The process is affected by environmental parameters, glass composition, contact with other materials, and other factors.

This paper will reevaluate ideas about glass deterioration on beads and reconsider cleaning techniques for glass beads. It will begin with a brief overview of the glass bead history and previous research done at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). Objects originally identified by Kelly McHugh and Scott Carrlee [Carroll] in 1999 as displaying glass disease are being re-surveyed to evaluate condition changes and increase documentation of glass disease present on the object. Results from the re-survey will be discussed, including which colors, manufacturing techniques, or substrates were most frequently associated with glass deterioration.

A second part of the research project will reassess treatment procedures for objects with glass disease by evaluating the current condition of objects that were previously cleaned with different techniques. Results will be presented from a survey of objects with red beads that have previously been treated for glass disease using water, ethanol, 1:1 water and ethanol, and mechanical cleaning. This project aims to identify types

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of beads that are most susceptible to deterioration and cleaning techniques that have better long term results to enable a more targeted use of conservation resources for glass bead preservation.

Celadonite and Vivianite: Green and Blue Pigments on the Northwest Coast

Melonie Ancheta

In a field where much has been studied and written about the artform styles and history, the subject of pigments and paint technology of NW Coast Natives has only been given very brief comment. With only four colors used (black, red, and blue or green), the materials used for black and red are common knowledge. Green, an iron silicate called celadonite has only been recently identified in NW Coast art and there has, as yet, been no scholarship or literature about its use in this region. And blue, the use in this region of an iron phosphate mineral known as vivianite, has only been identified by myself and is a mineral unknown by contemporary NW artists and scholars alike.

I have been able to establish through radio carbon dating, scanning electron microscopy, and X ray fluorescence analysis the use of celadonite as early as 3500 – 4000 years ago by the Coast Salish. Through the same methods I have confirmed the use of vivianite on a number of NW Coast Native artifacts as well. With the technology available I am able to begin building a database of deposits to which samples from artifacts can be matched providing museums and collections with the ability to more closely determine the point of origin and possibly dating for artifacts. There are significant implications for museums and private collections regarding identification of celadonite and vivianite in cases when the pigment has altered color due to environmental factors or natural decay of the minerals, as well as appropriate storage, conservation, and restoration of Native artifacts which bear these pigments.

Collection Assessment: Statewide Publicly Sited Artwork

Janae Huber, Jessica Kottke, and Peter Malarkey

In late 2011, conservator team Peter Malarkey and Jessica Kottke performed a

unique assessment of the Washington State Arts Commission's (ArtsWA) state art collection, one of the largest and oldest collections of public art in the United States. The collection includes 4,500 artworks located at K-12 public schools, colleges, universities, and state agencies across Washington. Their assessment—of works that range in scale from 2D works on paper to major landscape installations to technology-based artworks—answered the fundamental question: what resources are needed to care for this large, diverse, and geographically spread out collection?

Malarkey and Kottke devised a rigorous method for evaluating a collection for which they could not feasibly view every artwork. Their careful analysis of a statistical subset of the state art collection, when applied to the collection as a whole, gives ArtsWA a picture of the needs of its large and vulnerable group of artworks. Malarkey and Kottke's report has been the foundation for numerous management decisions and has resulted in additional resources allocated for the collection's care.

This session will cover the methodology employed in this assessment, its advantages and disadvantages, the resulting recommendations, and the outcomes.

Good Vibrations: The Role of Monitoring in the Development of Treatment Protocol at the Watts Towers Conservation Project

Mark Gilberg, Frank Preusser, Sylvia Schveri-Dorsch, and Blanka Kielb

Since January 2011, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has worked under contract to the City of Los Angeles on the conservation of the Watts Towers, a National Historic Landmark sculptural site. Created by Sabato Rodia between 1921 and 1954, the Towers include three towers, the tallest measuring 99.5 feet in height, and eight additional sculptures constructed of scrap iron covered in Portland cement and ornamented with scavenged glass and tile fragments, sea shells, stones, and other material. LACMA's mandate is to update the site's conservation and maintenance protocol through written guidance, as well as provide daily preservation maintenance.

The Towers are subject to deterioration in-

cluding mortar cracking, loss of ornaments, and corrosion of the steel elements, due at least in part to Rodia's non-traditional construction methods. Cracks often reoccur in areas of past restoration. Past restorers assumed corrosion played the leading role in deterioration, and replaced original armature and mortar in many treatments. In order to understand the various causes of deterioration, LACMA is engaged in thermal, vibration, and corrosion monitoring.

Preliminary data indicate that the deterioration of the Towers is more complex than previously thought. Conservation materials have been identified in view of requirements for flexibility and improved adhesion. Polymer modified mortars, elastomeric crack fillers, and a range of adhesives are being tested onsite, and evaluated in terms of performance and aesthetics. By utilizing materials better suited to the unique conditions of the Towers, it is hoped to minimize the need for more aggressive structural intervention in the future.

The Conservator's Approach to Fountain Water Treatment

Robert Krueger

No matter the size or design, the one common element in all fountains is water. This talk addresses the need for monitoring and maintenance of the water chemistry in fountains and outlining a straightforward maintenance routine. The fountain's water chemistry can have the most degrading effect on an associated artwork, or the basin and mechanical system. No matter the material composition of the fountain, its mechanical system, or the type of artwork, common basic approaches should be undertaken for the optimum fountain performance in regard to appearance and preservation.

Often the curatorial and maintenance focus is limited to keeping the water clean and free of algae. Managers of fountains often believe the publically accessible body of water must be treated as a swimming pool. Ignoring or not understanding the potential damage that can be caused by a specific course of treatment, or lack of treatment can be detrimental.

While killing algae may seem straightforward, the effect of algacides and algaestats

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on the artwork, water basin, and mechanical systems is often overlooked. In 2007 a rusting stainless steel sculpture in a fountain was studied to discover the cause of the corrosion, which ended up being the additives meant to keep the fountain free of biological growth. The following year the Noguchi Fountain at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art was examined to resolve an issue of reoccurring algae growth on the basalt surface. A method of treatment was needed that would not harm the artwork or the stainless steel elements of the fountain. Knowing that standard pool chemistry was problematic, a literature study of water treatment methodology was undertaken with a goal of finding a routine maintenance plan that was also practical and easy to follow.

Continued research on this topic has resulted in an approach to maintain fountain water so it is clean, safe, and chemically benign for the artwork and other surfaces in contact with the water. The suggested maintenance will require about 20 minutes per week to care for the water in a fountain. Although the chemistry may seem complicated, the maintenance is not. Testing tools and additives for maintaining fountain are readily available. This approach takes into consideration issues such as stopping unwanted biological growth, averting unpleasant odors (from poor water quality or added chemistry), corrosion and degradation of artwork or fountain mechanicals, and staining of surfaces.

The Great Divide: Public Art in Edmonton

David Turnbull

The City of Edmonton's Public Art Collection includes approximately 250 artworks; nearly 200 of these were acquired since the city adopted a Percent for Art policy in 1992. The Edmonton Arts Council, a not-for-profit society funded by the City of Edmonton, coordinates the management of the collection. In 2008 a Public Art Master Plan was created; one of its recommendations to the city was the implementation of a conservation program to work with existing artworks while integrating it into the acquisition process for newer public artworks. Case studies will examine some of the challenges of working with older works in the collection and some of the procedures put in place moving forward.

Conserving Art at the Seattle Art Museum's Olympic Sculpture Park

Liz Brown and Nicholas Dorman

In 2007, the Seattle Art Museum opened its third museum site, the Olympic Sculpture Park. Established on a former industrial site on one of the last undeveloped parcels of property on the Seattle waterfront, the park rapidly became renowned as a multiple award winning piece of urban planning and a fine location for the presentation of modern and contemporary sculpture.

In this tour, after half a dozen years of park operation, SAM objects conservator, Liz Brown, and chief conservator, Nicholas Dorman, will conduct a tour of the sculpture park, discussing conservation policy and the care of particular pieces from the collection as they go.

Please wear comfortable shoes for walking and bring two singles and two quarters for the bus fare (each way) to OSP. We will be going straight to the pavilion for the banquet following the tour of the park.

Fashioning Felted Fiber Fills: A Case Study in Needle Felting

Anne Getts

Needle felting is a fiber art technique used to create three-dimensional shapes from wool roving. It has been recently introduced into the repertoire of textile conservation as a method for filling holes in felted or fulled wool garments (*JAIC* 48(1): 25-36).

After an examination of the felting process - required materials, tools, and techniques - as well as a brief literature review, the focus of this paper will be the conservation of a mid-nineteenth century cashmere suit, cut and embroidered in India for the European market. Both the trousers and jacket were sprinkled with moth holes, and the main aim of treatment was to employ the technique of needle felting to create small fiber plugs that completely fill each loss. Because one can control the exact shape of the felted fill, every plug can be tailored to the shape and depth of each unique loss, while remaining completely reversible. Needle felting is easy to learn, time-efficient, and can be successfully used in a conservation context.

RAAdICAL: Conservator/Scientist Team-Building Workshops for the Study of Asian Lacquer

Arlen Heginbotham, Sean Charette, Michael Schilling, and Nanke Schellmann

A workshop series titled Recent Advances in Characterizing Asian Lacquers (RAAdICAL) has been developed by the Getty Conservation Institute and the J. Paul Getty Museum that explores newly developed analytical and sampling procedures for acquiring detailed compositional information about Asian lacquer.

The RAAdICAL workshops are designed to:

- demonstrate particular protocols, and the kinds of information that can be gathered using these approaches and methods

- provide participants with tools such as the Py-GC/MS marker compound database and an Excel evaluation form

- highlight the benefits that collaboration between scientists and conservators can provide

- identify pressing analytical and conservation issues and problems in the field, and priorities for future research.

Two workshops have been held to date. The first in October 2012 at the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the second in July 2013 at the Center for Conservation and Preservation, Yale University. The next workshop is planned for July 2014 at the Centre de recherche et de restauration des musées de France in Paris.

Public Outreach: Where, When, How?

Jan Cavanaugh

There has been an ongoing debate in the DistList and elsewhere over the proper place and content for the dissemination of knowledge about art and artifacts conservation outside the established university programs. While detailed treatment instruction may be deemed inappropriate for layman use, at the same time there is a growing call for public outreach to a general audience with an increasingly sophisticated awareness of and interest in art conservation due in no small part to the media coverage of international controversies and other issues.

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This paper will focus on one venue for public outreach that has received very little attention: the general university course. Historically, rather than being part of the academic system, the development of the profession of modern art and artifacts conservation has taken place through museums, beginning when chemists were first employed at museums in the late nineteenth century. In North America, the incorporation of art conservation as a field of study at universities has been limited largely to a few masters level training programs. Undergraduate courses are most likely to be found where there is a close connection between a museum and university with a museum studies program. This paper will discuss some exceptions to the rule and consider both the obstacles to and advantages of the general university course as a form of public outreach.

LACMA on the Road: The Role of Conservators during Travelling Exhibitions

Siska Genbrugge and Natasha Cochran

The director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Michael Govan, defines the increased international visibility of the museum as a strategic priority. In order to raise its profile, LACMA is engaging in ambitious and diverse programs of exhibitions at home, coupled with a far reaching international touring schedule. Implementation of this demanding schedule requires timely and efficient approaches from the conservation staff regarding condition reporting, documentation, and installation.

This presentation will discuss the changing function of the conservator in assisting the touring of LACMA-organized exhibitions abroad over the past two years. Conservators have travelled recently with exhibitions to the furthest places, from Doha (Qatar) to Paris (France). Our conventional role as bench conservators, carrying out in-house treatments, has changed into an adaptable globetrotting museum worker who wears many hats.

As conservators we have specific tasks during the four phases of the process: before the exhibition, during the installation, during the de-installation, and upon return to LACMA. The installation of LACMA

exhibitions abroad have affected our way of condition-reporting. This has been streamlined into a fully digital and portable process, with the assistance of software such as ArtStudio, Notability, and Dropbox on a tablet. Furthermore, during each installation the travelling conservator prepares essential devices such as travel toolkits, installation manuals, and installation templates. The revised process has also compelled greater collaboration between different conservation laboratories, since due to working constraints, installation of 200+ artwork exhibitions frequently need to be managed by a single conservator (who needs to be instructed by conservators from other specialties). Moreover, as conservators we are also prepared to take up the role of registrar, art handler, installer, and crate refurbisher whenever needed.

Each traveling exhibition has taught us new things, and we are constantly adapting our approach to make the process of future travelling exhibitions even more efficient.

Condition Documentation with the iPad

Yosi Pozeilov

Museum and cultural institutions today embark in the very busy and fast paced borrowing and lending of art works for the production and curation of exhibitions all over the world. A key element in the communication among institutions is the documentation generated regarding the condition of an art object at the time of arrival and/or departure while on an exhibition tour.

Traditionally condition reporting of the artwork, through narrative and images (documentation), has been produced on paper using photographs or image facsimiles like photocopies to mark and map areas of interest on the object so that the two parties, the lending and the receiving, can agree on the artifact's current state. With the growing digitization of images and documents, as well as with recent enhanced electronic communications, the traditional way of condition reporting has become outdated. In an effort to revolutionize and simplify this aspect of the borrowing experience, Yosi has developed a protocol using the iPad and third party apps to carry out the condition reporting task in a fully digital environment that mimics its analog counterpart.

Membership

Chris Stavroudis
membership secretary
