
Western Association for Art Conservation

The Western Association for Art Conservation (formerly, the Western Association of Art Conservators), also known as WAAC, was founded in 1974 to bring together conservators practicing in the western United States to exchange ideas, information, and regional news, and to discuss national and international matters of common interest.

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Individual Membership in WAAC costs \$40 per year (\$45 Canada, \$50 overseas) and entitles the member to receive the WAAC Newsletter and the annual Membership Directory, attend the Annual Meeting, vote in elections, and stand for office. Institutional Membership costs \$45 per year (\$50 Canada, \$55 overseas) and entitles the institution to receive the WAAC Newsletter and Membership Directory. For membership or subscription, contact: Michelle Sullivan secretary@waac-us.org

Regional News

Tricia O'Regan
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Alaska

Regional Reporter
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Arizona

Fallon Murphy has joined the conservation staff at the Center for Creative Photography as a technician and will be working with **Dana Hemmenway** until June 2020. **Elodie Loprin** will join them in February for a 6 month internship for her conservation training at the Institut National du Patrimoine. Dana Hemmenway joined the faculty for a week long workshop in Kolkata India organized by the Film Heritage Foundation. The training is focused on the preservation of motion pictures in archives in India and surrounding countries

Marilen Pool has been busy during the holidays catching up on private work including: a Chinese figurine, a Tarahumara olla, an Ojibwe beaded bandolier bag, and several small ceramics. In January she will resume classes at the University of Arizona as well as the treatment phase of the Archaeological Perishables Project at the Arizona State Museum.

The conservators at the Western Archeological and Conservation Center are keeping busy with their exhibit projects mentioned in previous newsletters. New projects include treatments and storage upgrades for archeological objects from Fort Davis National Historic Site and research into stabilization methods for fossils in paper shale matrix.

Regional Reporter
Dana Senge
National Park Service
Intermountain Regional Museum Services Program
Tucson, AZ

Hawaii

Objects conservator **Meg Absolon** recently joined the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum conservation team with conservation assistant **Nicole dela Fuente**. Meg came to the Bishop Museum from the National Gallery of Australia where she was an objects conservator for 8 years working on a wide range of the collection from outdoor sculpture to contemporary objects and installations. She has also spent several Antarctic seasons working on artifacts from historic explorer huts.

Rie and Larry Pace have a large fragment of what is purported to be a 1st-century Roman wall fresco. It fell from it's wall mounting during a house fire and is now in more than 50 smaller fragments. They have also recently treated paintings by Yaakov Agam, Lawrence Carmichael Earle, Hu Chi-Chung, Robert Kobayashi, Herb Kawainui Kane, Tadashi Sato, Paul Petrovits, Charles W. Eaton, Sean Scully, and Dorothy Faison.

Dawne Steele Pullman has been treating disaster damaged paintings by Gustave Courbet and Peter Coker from the Typhoon 10 at the end of last year in Hong Kong as well as from the Malibu fires in California this new year.

Regional News, continued

Shangri La closed its doors to the public from the end of September through end of November to install a new driveway. This project capped a long year of construction that included major work on the swimming pool and landscaping.

During closure, under the guiding hand of curator **Leslee Michelsen** and with the help of consulting conservator **Ann Svenson**, the museum staff (primarily **Chelsea Kaufmann**, galleries and collections coordinator, and **Kristin Remington**, digital assets and collections manager) refreshed a number of galleries, installing new textiles, reworking vitrines, and re-interpreting spaces for a fresh, new look.

Conservator, **Kent Severson**, continued work on a Qajar tile spandrel and made an additional trip to Iraq on behalf of the Nimrud rescue project at the Iraqi Institute for Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage in Erbil. On the way back he stopped in Vienna, and then Toronto, where he was able to meet with colleagues and scholars also working on Qajar tiles.

Earlier in the year, **Thor Minnick** completed an eight month treatment of a highly figured curly koa dresser made by Johann H. Wicke for Hawai'i's King Lunalilo in the 1860s. He recently treated a reverse painted glass diptych *Flame Angel Surgeon* by artist Carol Bennett, a blown glass sculpture *Looking Out from Within* by artist Michael Mortara, and a large and very thin turned kou wood bowl made by Robert Hamada.

He is presently working on a large brass and mango wood sculpture, *Landscape*, by artist Satoru Abe for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Also completed were a pair of badly damaged vitreous enamel and gold King Kalakaua, Royal Order badges.

Regional Reporter
D. Thor Minnick
Minnick Associates
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Los Angeles

Beginning in January, **Noemi Bustamante** and **Martha Ramos** will be starting pre-program internships in the Autry Museum's objects conservation lab. Noemi's internship is through the Mellon Opportunity for Diversity in Conservation. She has a BA in anthropology with minors in classical studies and Native American studies. Noemi is particularly interested in archaeological and ethnographic objects conservation and has recently attended a field school at ancient Lechaion, Greece.

Martha has her BA in anthropology with an archaeology concentration and a minor in art history. Martha has held preservation and collections positions at the Huntington and the UCLA Fowler Museum prior to beginning her journey towards a conservation graduate program.

UCLA library preservation department said goodbye to their fearless leader **Dawn Aveline** this December. They will miss her terribly, as will their LAPNET (Los Angeles Preservation Network) colleagues, but they all take some comfort knowing they will likely run into her at conferences in her new role as manager of projects client relations for Preservation Technologies, where **Bob Strauss** will be showing her the ropes. They wish her the best of luck in her move to Pittsburgh.

The head of audio visual preservation **Yasmin Dessem** and audio visual specialist **Allie Whalen** are planning to travel to Cuba again this spring to continue collaborative work in the reformatting of rare Cuban audio and video recordings. This fall **Chloe Patton** joined the UCLAAV team to digitize the oldest UCLA archival movies ahead of the upcoming centennial celebrations on campus.

Both Allie and Yasmin completed UCLA extension classes this fall, one in programming and the other in advanced audio processing.

Hannah Moshier, registrar and digitization coordinator attended a

workshop in NYC on modern and contemporary materials in library collections. She will complete her first courier trip this January, bringing a manuscript back from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Wil Lin, collections conservator, has been busy training pre-program conservation assistants **Kevin Torres-Spicer** and **Katerina (Kat) Stiller** on how to treat case-bound books damaged in circulation and get them back on the shelf in a timely fashion. Kevin and Kat have been assisting with object movement and handling for Frank Lloyd Wright Hollyhock House archival materials, as well as surface cleaning 18th-century engravings ahead of a washing treatment.

Wil has also been busy hiring new collection conservation assistant **Devin Mattlin** to work on pre-1945 Bruman Historical maps. Devin is a graduate of the Cardiff Wales University with a master's in conservation practice. She holds a BA in chemistry from Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.

Chela Metzger has discovered the joys of using hair silk to secure display pages in book exhibits and shared this with UCLA Library special collections visual materials specialist **Octavio Olvera** for the current medieval manuscript exhibit at the library. She is delighted to see a new fume hood with HEPA capacity and a HEPA vacuum in place for archival processing. This equipment will be incorporated into a future library quarantine area.

Debra Burchett-Lere and **Aneta Zebala** are pleased to announce the publication of *Sam Francis: The Artist's Materials*. The authors present an in-depth scientific study of over forty paintings by the artist. The book will be available from GCI in February 2019.

Madison Brockman from the Winterthur program is currently working in the LACMA paper conservation lab as a third year intern. The Mellon Fellow in paper conservation, **Amanda Burr**, received a book and paper position at the Huntington Library.

Regional News, continued

LACMA assistant conservation scientist **Laura Maccarelli** gave a talk at Brentwood School last December on "What a Conservation Scientist Does in a Museum." She and scientist emeritus **Terry Schaeffer** have two papers in press in *Dyes in History and Archaeology*, based on talks they presented at recent meetings.

Caroline Hoover joined LACMA paintings conservation last October as incoming Mellon Fellow. Caroline is treating a painting by Childre Hassam, *Boston Street Scene* from 1900, which required varnish removal, and she is working with LACMA conservation science on a technical study of Hassam's materials and techniques. Caroline recently examined a group of Hassam paintings at the Smithsonian American Art Museum as part of the project.

Elma O'Donoghue is treating Jacob Adriaensz Backer's 1638 *Portrait of a Young Woman*. The treatment involves the removal of old varnish and restorations, and Elma is studying interesting changes that the artist made to the costume. **Joe Fronck** recently published an article on the techniques and materials found in LACMA's important 18th-century scroll painting from a casta series by Miguel Cabrera, *From Spaniard and Morisca, Albino Girl*. The article is forthcoming in the new online quarterly journal *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture*.

Regional Reporter
Virginia Rasmussen
Los Angeles Museum of Art
Los Angeles, CA

New Mexico

Kathy Flynn, ED, shares with us this news: "A BIG step forward for the National New Deal Preservation Association and New Mexico Chapter: A Memorial #39 was presented in the legislature to create a National New Deal Museum and house it at the National Park Service Building in Santa Fe which is currently under total restoration. The sponsors of the Memorial were Rep. Matthew McQueen, Rep. Brian Egolf and Sen. Peter Wirth. Since there is no

money attached to it legislators still need to vote for it. Then, if it is approved, it will move up to the National Congress to get their support which will need to include money for it in the near future. The state will also need to put money into it probably next year to become a reality, but this a big possibility!"

Long time art conservator and former city of Santa Fe historic preservation officer, David Rasch, became the New Director of the Traditional Spanish Market in Santa Fe last year, and was the subject of an article in *The Santa Fe New Mexican*.

Mark MacKenzie, the Museum of New Mexico's chief conservator, explains in a new article at the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, the new multispectral imaging laboratory located at The Stewart L. Udall Center for Museum Resources. Mark designed (with some help) and built the equipment he uses to carry out pioneering investigations of two renowned Segesser Hide paintings.

Regional Reporter
Silvia Marinas-Feliner
Museum Conservation Program Director
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Pacific Northwest

It was a busy fall for staff at the University of Washington Libraries Conservation Center having hosted the second session of Seattle heritage responders workshop, organized by FAIC and the Seattle Heritage Emergency Response Network. This session focused on incident response management and featured disaster scenarios at the Henry Art Gallery, the Burke Museum of Natural History, and UW's Suzzallo Library.

The UW Libraries also hosted a digital print preservation workshop taught by **Daniel Berge**, senior research scientist at the Image Permanence Institute. This two-day workshop covered the basics of digital print identification, digital printing history and the preservation of digitally printed objects. It was a

rewarding and informative session that was highlighted by an additional evening lecture hosted by the Henry Art Gallery. Staff at the libraries are also preparing to host FAIC's workshop traditional techniques in the conservation of leather bookbindings, taught by **Jim-Reid Cunningham** at the end of July 2019. This workshop will cover a range of topics typically associated with the repair of rare books and bound manuscripts using leather and traditional leather working tools.

In addition to daily treatment, **Justin Johnson** is preparing to conduct interviews for advanced interns from the conservation programs at Winterthur/University of Delaware and SUNY Buffalo. He has also just completed his second year as assistant editor of AIC's *Book and Paper Group Annual*, having just sent Volume 37 to print. In the coming year he will take over as managing editor for **Gwenanne Edwards** (Library of Congress) who will rotate off, and will be seeking a new assistant editor to serve beginning with the completion of the 2019 annual meeting of AIC.

With the support of the WAAC board and the assistance of **Jennifer McGlinchey Sexton**, Justin has also begun work on updating the WAAC website. He will be debuting an early version for review at WAAC's mid-year board meeting in Los Angeles, and is looking forward to sharing that work with the rest of WAAC membership in the coming year.

Claire Kenny is in the midst of conducting a collection survey of more than 300 photographs by Frank Kunishige, a pictorialist photographer and member of the Seattle Camera Club active in the early twentieth century. She continues treatment of European prints from the Henry Art Gallery collection and photographs and works-on- paper from the UW libraries collections.

Claire is also working hard to finalize plans with the Atlas Obscura organization for an upcoming behind-the-scenes tour of the University of Washington (UW) Libraries Conservation Center. In late summer, SAM conservation staff were interviewed by Pacific Northwest radio station KNKX about their continuous work in the Olympic

Regional News, continued

Sculpture Park. The segment was called “The Art And Science of Conservation At the Olympic Sculpture Park.”

Progress on the Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM) renovation and expansion is proceeding as planned. The museum is slated to open its doors again in fall 2019. **Geneva Griswold**, **Marta Pinto-Llorca**, and **Nicholas Dorman** continue their ongoing work preparing the collection for its return to SAAM and for the re-opening exhibitions, and implementing storage upgrades thanks to an IMLS Museums for America grant. **Jane Hutchins** surveyed and treated new acquisitions and works for the SAAM installation in December and the museum continues the planning, and construction process for the new Asian Paintings Conservation Center at SAAM.

As chair of the AIC sustainability committee, Geneva attended the Climate Heritage Mobilization in San Francisco in September, and the AIC Internal Advisory Group meeting in Washington, D.C. in November.

SAM conservation staff joined colleagues from around the region for the second week-long training in emergency planning and response at the University of Washington. The comprehensive training program was funded by the NEH and organized by the FAIC, working with the Seattle Heritage Emergency Response Network.

At the Portland Art Museum, **Samantha Springer** said good-bye to graduate intern, **Karen Bishop**, in August. Karen is now completing her third-year internship for the Buffalo State program in the wooden artifacts lab at the Met in NY. Karen’s work on the Brancusi in PAM’s collection can be seen on the Museum’s blog titled, “All that glitters is not gold... but sometimes it is!”

After Karen’s departure, **Marjan Anvari** joined the conservation team for a short-term project as conservation technician thanks to the funding of a private donor. Marjan cleaned and coated a group of thirty or so 20th-century silver pieces to reinstall in a decorative arts case as a test for a future silver cleaning initiative. In October, the department welcomed a new matter/framer, **Jaxun Doten**. Jaxun comes with experience from the Creative

Center for Photography, in Tucson, as well as the commercial world. This fall also brought four new volunteers, one retired conservator and three pre-program: **Linda Edquist**, retired from the US Postal Museum; **Laura Richter**, working on covers for art books in the print vault; **Rachel Done**, organizing historic conservation documents and entering them into the database; and **Lauren Couey**, organizing incident and touch log data collected by gallery guards on spreadsheets.

Lauren and Samantha have also started collecting FAIC oral histories in the Portland area. They collected their first interview with **Sonja Sopher**, who was a paintings conservator at PAM for 20 plus years. They are now looking for other candidates in the region.

After attending the WAAC conference in September and saying goodbye as a MAL, Samantha traveled to NY in the late fall to participate in the second Materials Working Group meeting assembled under the auspices of AIC. She anticipates this group being able to develop the AIC Wiki Oddy Test Database and its relatively recent links to CAMEO into a stronger resource for the conservation community.

In between travels, Samantha worked on grant proposals and the preparations for some grant funded projects. The largest in scope will be the deinstallation-meaning the excavation from its concrete footing- and repainting of Lichtenstein’s *Brushstrokes*. This will take place out in front of the building next spring and will be funded in large part thanks to Bank of America.

The second is an NEH preservation assistance grant supporting **Jennifer McGlinchey Sexton** to come and teach a workshop next summer that will touch on photography process identification, condition reporting, and UV examination best practices. This project also includes a funded 8-week fellowship to survey the photographs from the Northwest Art collection.

Finally, Samantha and collections manager **Heather Bouchey** sit on a recently reenergized steering committee, called Portland Alliance for Response. It is made up of members from local

collecting institutions, performing arts organizations, and emergency management professionals. Currently funded by a Mellon Performing Arts Readiness grant they are working on a multi-organizational network and mutual aid agreement plan to ensure that all are prepared and potentially can support one another during emergencies and disasters, whether natural or human-made.

Work is somewhat at a temporary standstill with the birth of Alena, **Lisa Duncan**’s second daughter, but work is streaming in for the springtime. The retirement or semi-retirement of several long standing conservators in the region have opened the floodgates for work. She’s been involved in several survey projects with local institutions and has also taken on many fun projects for private clients. She just got a new convex photograph project that she’s excited about working on. Her intern, **Jenni Beetem**, has been busy helping with writing proposals for treatment.

Kjerstin Mackie retired from the Royal BC Museum in October after almost three decades of job sharing the textile conservator position with **Colleen Wilson**.

Kasey Lee presented with **Elisabeth Czerwinski** at the BC Museums Association Conference, sharing the work and spreading the word about the BC Heritage Emergency Response Network. Kasey also co-wrote and **Robert Waller** presented “Impact of Facility Renewal Deferral on Risk to RBCM collections” at the IIC Congress in Turin, Italy in September.

Lauren Buttle attended the IIC conservation of photographs on glass symposium and workshop in Toronto and organized a jam-packed fall meeting of the Pacific Conservation Group at Craigdarroch Castle in Victoria in November. She presented a recap of her experience in the photographs on glass workshop at the PCG meeting.

Lisa Bengston attended a mount making workshop delivered by Jamie Hascall in Seattle in September, along with two other Royal BC Museum staff members. Lisa presented on some of her Japanese tsunami debris research at the Pacific Conservation Group meeting in October. She’s also been investigating organic

Regional News, continued

pesticide use at the Royal BC Museum, working out testing and handling protocols for the Learning Collection.

George Field travelled to London, England for the Sixth International Mount Makers Forum in October. He presented on this experience at the Pacific Conservation Group meeting in Victoria.

Katie McEvoy continues to catalogue new palaeontology specimens and assist in some conservation projects. She has been researching a strange blue cast on some of the fossil matrices and presented that work at the Pacific Conservation Group meeting.

Mary-Lou Florian continues her research and publishing on western red cedar, presenting her latest findings at the Pacific Conservation Group Meeting in Victoria.

Regional Reporter
Corinne Landrieu
Landrieu Conservation
Seattle, WA

Rocky Mountain

Beth Heller completed CAP surveys at the Lorain Historical Society, Ohio, and the Southern Utah Museum of Art, as well as NEH-funded collection surveys for the Melton Legacy Collection, University of Central Oklahoma, and the Denver Botanic Gardens Library. She provided conservation treatment for exhibits and institutions including History Colorado, University of Denver, Colorado State University, and University of Colorado Boulder Art Museum. Some of the more interesting projects encountered were 3 architectural models by Charles Deaton (remember the spaceship house in *Sleeper?*), owned by the Denver Public Library, and a group of letters from John McIlvain to his wife, written from Fort Laramie in 1853, owned by the University of Wyoming.

Teresa Knutson of Rocky Mountain Textile Conservation is treating a U.S. Forest Service flag from the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, Sandpoint, Bonners Ferry, Priest Lake Ranger Districts. It has been removed from a plywood backing board and will be placed in a pressure mount for future display.

Julie Parker recently completed treatment projects for the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and History Colorado's new exhibition *Written on the Land - Ute Voices, Ute History*.

Regional Reporter
Julie Parker
Objects Conservator
Parker Art Conservation LLC
Denver, Colorado

San Diego

Jacinta Johnson accepted the position as associate conservator for the University of Kansas Libraries and the Spencer Museum of Art in Lawrence, KS. Her position is part of a three-year initiative funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to help bridge the conservation efforts between the two institutions and help diversify the field by raising awareness about conservation through various outreach activities and teaching outputs. She joins **Whitney Baker**, **Angela Andres**, and **Roberta Woodrick** in KU's brand-new conservation lab. She hopes WAAC members will come and visit!

Regional Reporter
Frances Prichett
Frances Prichett Paper Conservation
San Diego, CA

San Francisco

The textile lab at the FAMSF welcomed **Jennifer Nieling** in early November to be their first ever costume mounting assistant. She has an MA in fashion and textile studies from FIT/NY and most recently was employed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Nantucket Historical Association. Jennifer will be working closely with **Sarah Gates** and **Anne Getts** on a variety of projects including prepping both the *Contemporary Muslim Fashion* and *Summer of Love* exhibitions to travel internationally and preparing the 500-ensemble Suppes Costume Collection for integration into permanent collection storage. They've been lobbying for this position for 13 years, are thrilled to have Jennifer's expertise at

long last, and hope to make the position permanent.

Beth Szuhay and **Catherine Coueignoux** are finishing a two-year project to conserve *Our Lady of Bethlehem with Child Jesus*, which dates from the 15th century and, as the oldest known statue in California, is the star of the Carmel Mission's collection.

Meg Geiss-Mooney, costume/textile conservator & collections care/management consultant, thoroughly enjoyed working with the staff of the Contemporary Jewish Museum (San Francisco) installing the fabulous costume exhibition *Veiled Meanings: Fashioning Jewish Dress, from the Collection of The Israel Museum*, Jerusalem last fall. She also taught the textile/costume/fibre salvage portion of the FAIC Heritage Responders webinar training series for Houston and Seattle last year. She has been a member of the National Heritage Responders (formerly AIC-CERT) since 2011.

Alisa Eagleston-Cieslewicz is very happy to be moved into SFO Museum's new building. She is enjoying having a dedicated conservation lab in the new facility. SFO Museum has also welcomed **Allion Kelley** as a conservation assistant. She will be working on the conservation of objects for upcoming exhibits and on a large United Airlines cutaway model from the 1960s.

Regional Reporter
Alisa Eagleston-Cieslewicz
SFO Museum
San Francisco, CA

Texas

In November six staff members from the Harry Ransom Center preservation and conservation division attended a regional colloquium on conservation science organized by the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History (EODIAH) at the University of Texas at Dallas and held at the Dallas Museum of Art. The colloquium, led by senior staff of the institute and **Norman Tennent**, visiting conservation scientist at EODIAH, included roundtable discussions about

Regional News, continued

the state of conservation science in supporting the work of practicing conservators and curatorial staff of museums.

The keynote lecture was given by **Robert van Langh**, head of conservation and science at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Examples of collaborations between conservation scientists and conservators were given in presentations by **Jodie Utter**, paper conservator at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art; **Amy Walker**, professor of materials science at UT Dallas; and **Guus Verhaar**, post-doctoral researcher at UT Dallas and the Corning Museum of Glass. The workshop was attended by over 40 conservators, curators and other museum and higher education professionals from North and Central Texas.

The paper conservation lab at the Harry Ransom Center is very pleased to welcome **Claire Valero**, the new Bollinger post-graduate fellow who will work with preservation and conservation division staff and colleagues across the Center over the next year. Claire graduated with a BA and Master's in preservation and conservation of fine arts on paper from ENSAV La Cambre in Brussels. Since graduating in 2015, Claire has held internships at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin and at the Library of Congress.

A major focus of her work at the Ransom Center is the examination, documentation, and research into the treatment of a mid-16th-c. large-format printed world map with hand-applied coloring from the publishing house of Joan Blaeu in Amsterdam. The map is one of a number of historic maps in the collection of the Ransom Center that were purchased in the 1960s from the rare book and print dealer, H.P. Kraus in New York.

Regional Reporter
Ken Grant
Senior Paper Conservator
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Membership

WAAC welcomes the following new members and very late renewals.