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## Volume 35 Number 3 WAAC Newsletter

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### REGIONAL NEWS

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### HEALTH & SAFETY

Chris Stavroudis

### ARTICLES YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

Susanne Friend

**COPY EDITOR** Wendy Partridge

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### Internet

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### Deadline

Contributions for the January *Newsletter* should be received by the Editor before **December 15, 2013**.

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## Regional News

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*Katie Holbrow*  
*column editor*

### Alaska

**Ellen Carrlee** presented a paper on PEG basketry treatment results, co-authored with **Dana Senge**, at the ICOM –CC Istanbul Conference on Wet Organic Archaeological Materials. She has moved to a temporary lab space in anticipation of museum demolition next spring, and is working with Getty student **Madeleine Neiman** and pre-program volunteer **Lisa Imamura** to treat hundreds of wet shipwreck artifacts. Preparation to move the collection continues, as well as planning for major conservation treatments including a locomotive, a lighthouse lens, a snow machine, and several watercraft for the new museum exhibits.

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# Western Association for Art Conservation

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**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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New Memberships  
Publication Orders

Claire Gerhard

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Payments

Chris Stavroudis

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Chris Stavroudis

membership@waac-us.org

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Donna Williams

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## Regional News, continued

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**Scott Carrlee** has been working with two conservation interns at the Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park in Skagway. Intern **Kelly McCauley** just completed her 1st year at the Winterthur Delaware conservation program and **Nicole Peters** will be entering the Buffalo conservation program this fall. This is the second summer of work on a 3 year project to prepare hundreds of objects for reinstallation in the Soapy Smith's Parlor Museum.

**Monica Shah** has been treating and mount-making for a new exhibit, *Dena'inaq' Huch'ulyeshi: The Dena'ina Way of Living*, the first major exhibition about the Alaska Native people who first inhabited the area around Anchorage and Cook Inlet. The fish trap conserved by Getty student Madeleine Neiman was finished and mounted for exhibition. In addition, Monica has been mounting clothing – including modern and older bear gut parkas, feather headdresses, and quill decorated gloves – which are some of the more unique items in the exhibit.

*Regional Reporter:*  
Ellen Carrlee

## **Arizona**

**Chris Del Re**, former senior conservator at the Milwaukee Public Museum, has recently relocated to Scottsdale, AZ. She is available to do on-site contract work for objects, surveys, preservation planning, and grant writing.

After organizing a successful 2013 Angels Project for Costume Society of America in June, Textile/Costume Conservator **Martha Winslow Grimm** is back examining and treating everything from flags, Buddhist scrolls to major league historic baseball jerseys. What a great way to spend summer.

**Brynn Bender** and **Dana Senge** at the National Park Service conservation lab worked with conservators Martha Winslow Grimm, **Theresa Voelinger**, **Mark Andersson**, and **Paulette Reading** to acquire condition surveys for the textile and paper collections of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

Dana traveled to Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Park in Texas and Timpanogos Cave National Monument in Utah to survey collections. These visits provided insight into the museum collections in small parks in the West and exposure to natural resource conservation- including a evening up close and personal with bats at Timpanogos Cave! Back in the lab Dana has enjoyed treating decorative silver lamps from Scotty's Castle at Death Valley National Park.

**Maggie Kipling** assisted with final packing of fragile artifacts at Mesa Verde National Park. The trip was just in time for the grand opening of their new Visitor and Research Center, a LEED facility that also houses over 3 million objects.

**Audrey Harrison** surveyed and rehoused the basketry collection of Casa Grande Ruins National Monument. Interns **Bailey Kin-sky** and **Paige Hoskins** are working on quillwork repairs for a remarkable collection of pipe bags from Grand Teton National Park.

**Nancy Odegaard** and **Teresa Moreno** have supervised the completion of

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## Regional News, continued

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construction-renovation for the new climate-controlled Arizona State Museum Basketry Vault and the completion of insulated window panels and glass repair for the entire first floor of the museum.

Nancy and **Marilen Pool** have developed a treatment strategy for pine pitched baskets and Marilen continues to lead the condition survey process that has included over 4000 entries.

Nancy and **Landis Smith** presented at the Association of Tribal Archives, Museums and Libraries (ATALM) meetings on the expanded role of conservators in tribal museums. Nancy is working with the Table Mountain Rancheria staff on their basketry collection and lectured at the UA archaeology field school on conservation in the field.

**Gina Watkinson** has created a clever photo documentation stand and efficient protocol for documenting the basketry collection. Nancy, **Martina Dawley**, **Jae Anderson**, **Werner Zimmt**, and **Joy Farley** presented results of the arsenic removal research project at ATALM.

The ASM lab welcomes **Crista Pack** as the new Kress Fellow, **Madeleine Neiman** (UCLA/Getty) as a third year advanced conservation intern, **Katie Belton** as a pre-program intern, and **Stephanie Watson** as a visiting chemist from Scotland.

*Regional Reporter:*  
Brynn Bender

### Hawaii

No news reported

*Regional Reporter:*  
D. Thor Minnick

### Los Angeles

LACMA paintings conservation head **Joe Fronck** is continuing his research with conservation scientist **Charlotte Eng** and paintings conservator **Elma O'Donoghue** on the technical examination of paintings for the updated catalog of gifts of the Ahmanson Foundation.

**Elma O'Donoghue** presented a talk on the materials and techniques of Mexican colonial paintings at the annual WAAC meeting in Seattle.

In September **Morgan Hayes** graduated from the Winterthur/University of Delaware training program and began a Mellon Fellowship in paintings conservation at LACMA.

**Natasha Cochran** will be traveling to NYC in September to oversee deinstallation of the final exhibition of "Ken Price: A Retrospective" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**Lily Doan** recently traveled to Tokyo for deinstallation of the traveling exhibition *California Design*. After returning, she joined the LACMA Watts Towers Conservation team for a brief period to help kick-start this summer's educational program, where conservators are mentoring high school graduates from the Watts community.

**Siska Genbrugge** presented a paper titled "Lost Line: Documenting Contemporary Art at LACMA" for the conference Performing Documentation in the Conservation of Contemporary Art in Lisbon, Portugal in June. She is currently focusing on organizing and establishing protocol for preserving the time based media collection at LACMA.

**Silviu Boariu** carried out an extensive treatment on silver shrine doors from India which are a recent addition to LACMA's permanent collection.

The Objects lab welcomed three summer interns, **Marije Meddeler**, **Breana Latty**, and **Jacklyn Chi**, who all

worked on various interesting treatments ranging from outdoor sculpture to glass and wooden artwork.

Last August, **Laura Maccarelli** joined the conservation research section at LACMA for a 6 month internship. Laura recently graduated from the University of Bologna where she studied science for cultural heritage. She will be working with Post-Doctoral Mellon Fellow **Diana Rambaldi** on developing new methods for identifying natural and synthetic dyes.

**Rosa Lowinger & Associates** has recently been awarded the contract to serve as the consultant for public art conservation for the cities of West Hollywood and Inglewood, CA. Recently named a Fellow of the AIC, RLA Principal Rosa Lowinger is curating an exhibit at the Coral Gables Museum in Florida. Titled *Concrete Paradise: Miami Marine Stadium*, the exhibit chronicles the history of an iconic 1963 modernist building by Cuban architect Hilario Candela and the nationwide efforts to halt its demolition by neglect.

RLA Operations Director **Alison Tisue** has been named a Professional Associate of AIC.

**Yadin Larochette** has just completed lining a large (14 by 18 feet) 16<sup>th</sup>-century tapestry with **Sarah Gates** at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, and they are about to line another (see San Francisco section of the Regional News for more details on this). Between lining projects, she attended ICOM in Rio de Janeiro, and traveled to several other Latin American countries, visiting conservators and other museum professionals as part of an effort to help Tru Vue establish connections and share information about their glazing products.

Interspersed among temporary exhibits and collections projects at the Natural History Museum, **Tania Collas** is reconstructing a very large sea urchin specimen from the northwest coast. She is also resuming work on main-

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## Regional News, continued

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taining an oxygen-free display case for a geological sediment core specimen in the Natural History Museum's *Age of Mammals* exhibit.

*Liz Homberger* is excited to announce that she is devoting herself full time to her private practice in objects conservation in Los Angeles. She is experienced in materials of all kinds and welcomes new projects..

**Donna Williams** has recently restored Los Angeles artist Chris Burden's very large installation work *A Tale of Two Cities*, which belongs to the Orange County Museum, in preparation for its inclusion in the New Museum's survey of Burden's work in New York City.

The first step in the process involved demonstrating that the 32 year old piece could be effectively restored after decades of deterioration of the work's cardboard substrate which, when installed, is covered with damp sand. The poor condition of the work had led the artist to contemplate exercising his contractual option to alter the work via the "nuclear option" - blowing up the installation as a final performance piece.

Over 5000 models and toys, many collected by the artist as a child, were fully restored, remounted on honeycomb aluminum panels, and packed into 16 custom-made crates. "I'm really pleased," Burden remarked, "that it has been brought back to life."

Along with **Tom Learner** (GCI), **Bronwyn Ormsby** (Tate), and **Richard Wolbers** (Winterthur/UofD), **Chris Stavroudis** was a co-instructor at the fourth CAPS (Cleaning Acrylic Paint Surfaces) sponsored by the GCI and hosted by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and **Tiarna Doherty**.

Chris also gave a 3-day MCP workshop at the INP (Institut National du Patrimoine) in Paris in July, covering aqueous cleaning techniques, Pemulen and emulsions. (Thanks to **Nathalie Palmade-Le Dantec** and **Emilie**

**Masse** of the INP, **Laetitia Desvois**, and **Anne Baxter**, who translated.)

On his way back to LA, Chris presented the full, week-long MCP workshop which was cosponsored by VCA (Virginia Conservation Associations), VMFA (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts), and FAIC, in Richmond, VA. (Thanks to **Carol Givens** and **Sheila Payaqui** for organizing and gathering the supplies for the workshop.)

In October, he presented a 3-day workshop for the conservators at the Guggenheim. (Thanks to **Carol Stringari** and **Hillary Torrance**.) While in New York, he visited the studios of **Daria Keynan** and **Sandra Amann / Elizabeth Estabrook** chatting informally about new developments in cleaning systems.

Also, while in New York, he was able to attend the opening of *Chris Burden: Extreme Measures* at the New Museum with Donna Williams and drop in, unannounced, at the opening of a one-man show by one of his artist clients, surprising the heck out of the hyper-realist painter Davis Cone.

As part of the Research into Practice Initiative at GCI and in support of the CAPS (Cleaning Acrylic Paint Surfaces) workshops, the Getty Conservation Institute has released a series of nine short videos. The videos show topics such as calibrating pH and conductivity meters, measuring surface pH of paint surfaces, preparing pH adjust water, preparing a Pemulen emulsion and preparing microemulsions based on silicone solvents and mineral spirits.

The videos were produced by **Sean Charette** and Tom Learner, filmed by **Peter Kirby** of Media Art Services, and are presented by Chris Stavroudis. Links to the videos can be found at <[http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications\\_resources/teaching/conserving\\_modern.html](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/teaching/conserving_modern.html)>[http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications\\_resources/teaching/conserving\\_modern.html](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/teaching/conserving_modern.html)

*Regional Reporter:*  
Virginia Rasmussen

## New Mexico

Conservation Solutions, Inc. (CSI) has been busy this summer on a wide range of projects across North America. Highlights include their role in providing conservation oversight for the West Block of Parliament façade restoration in Ottawa, Ontario, preparing the Atlantis Space Shuttle for display at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, treatment of bronze features at the US Capitol, and conservation of four Alexander Stirling Calder statues from the I Miller Building in New York City.

CSI Senior Conservator **Joe Sembrat** presented a paper on CSI's work on the Atlantis Space Shuttle at the 2013 Big Stuff conference in September in Ottawa, ON.

Senior Conservator **Justine Posluszny Bello** recently presented on the subject of "South Florida Fountain Conservation" at the NPS Fountain Fundamentals conference in Kansas City, MO, in July. She will also be leading a workshop as part of the Association for Preservation Technology International (APTI) conference in NYC on instrumental analysis of decorative finishes on modern metals.

CSI conducted a tour of the exterior masonry conservation work that is being performed on the Canadian West Block of Parliament as part of the Heritage Canada Foundation's 40th Anniversary Conference held at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa in November.

*Regional Reporter:*  
Silvia Marinas-Feliner

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## Regional News, continued

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### Pacific Northwest

In April and May **J. Claire Dean** carried out field work at two rock image sites in the Giant's Castle area of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site, South Africa, as part of her on-going work with the Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

In May Claire was part of a panel discussing the conservation of rock image sites as part of the International Federation of Rock Art Organization's convention which took place in Albuquerque. She is now back at the Hibulb Cultural Center, Tulalip, Washington, where over July and August she will be working with summer intern **Caitlin Mahony** (UCLA/Getty Conservation Program 3rd year student).

**Nancy Thorn** of Portland OR is a senior conservator on the *Salon de la Tremoille* Period Room project at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. She and several other conservators are restoring the carved and gilded architectural elements. The reinstallation begins in November with final elements installed for the opening at the beginning of 2014. Nancy is traveling back to Portland every Friday to attend to her business and expects to be in S.F. through December of this year.

At Fine Art Conservation, **Rebecca Pavitt** remains immersed in the chemistry of iron, reducing agents, chelators, and antioxidants. She is now refining a system of treatment options which will be safe for paper that may contain iron, sharing ideas and information with **Ekaterina Parnak** (paper conservator at the Kode Art Museum in Bergen, Norway) who is working on the same subject.

Rebecca is also putting the final touches on her revamped website under the able direction of the most patient web designer in the world, **April Kite**. These forays into chemistry and coding have been balanced by the pleasures of actual conservation treatment, working on eclectic mix of pastels, watercolors,

prints, drawings, textiles, and archival materials.

**Corine Landrieu** has been busy this Summer working along with **Tiffany Hedrick** of the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs on *The Story of North Island*, an historic Haida totem pole. Next week she will be undertaking the annual conservation of *Skip to My Lou* by Ursula Von Rydingsvard, on the Microsoft campus.

At the Seattle Art Museum, objects conservator **Liz Brown** is undertaking the customary intensive summer conservation program at the Olympic Sculpture Park, including orchestrating structural work on a Rickey mobile, taking X-radiographs of sculptures in the park, and replacing graffiti films on Teresita Fernandez' *Seattle Cloud Cover*, which spans the complete width of the BNSF rail tracks.

**Tami Lasseter-Clare** and her team from Portland State return to Seattle to undertake further research into degradation of coatings on outdoor sculpture, a project funded by the National Science Foundation.

Conservation technician **Tim Marsden** is assisting at OSP and organizing the stripping and waxing of SAM's other major public work, Henry Moore's *Three Piece Sculpture: Vertebrae*.

SAM's current intern, **Josh Sumner**, is busy investigating a painted sculpture by Claes Oldenburg. **Marta Pinto-Llorca** recently accompanied one of the treasures of the Japanese collections, *Scenes from the Life of Gensei Shonin*, to Studio Sogendo in Alameda, where it will be treated thanks to a generous grant from the Sumitomo Foundation.

Chief conservator, **Nicholas Dorman**, has been very busy completing treatment of Jackson Pollock's *Sea Change*, assembling the schedule for the WAAC meeting in Seattle. He has also been a guest conservator at the J. Paul Getty Museum paintings conservation studio, where he is currently examining a painting by Bernardo Daddi. Everyone

at SAM was delighted to welcome the WAAC membership to the 2013 meeting this September.

*Regional Reporter:*  
Corine Landrieu

### Rocky Mountain Region

The conservation lab of The Buffalo Bill Center of the West is bustling with 7 interns this summer. **Benjamin Regel** is a British objects major in the University College London program. **Tania Desloge** is an American objects major in the University College London program. **Laura Villar** is a Spanish paper major who recently graduated from the conservation program in Madrid. **Tiia Yli-Kankahila** is a student in the Helsinki Metropolia Program in Applied Sciences.

Pre-program interns currently treating rare books, Plains Indian artifacts, and other collections include: **Allison Rabent**, **Joesphina Maldonado**, and **Stephanie Carrato**.

The theme for the 29th Annual Rocky Mountain Book and Paper Fair was "To Have and to Hold," which addressed the preservation of collections. Speakers included: **Barbara A. Johnson**, art objects conservator; **Karen Jones**, book and paper conservator; **Christopher W. Lane**, print, map, collections expert for the *Antiques Roadshow*; **Paulette Reading**, textile conservator; and **Camilla Von Vooren**, painting conservator.

The fair was hosted by the Rocky Mountain Antiquarian Booksellers Association (RMABA). It has built a reputation as one of the nation's leading antiquarian book fairs. The RMABA is an organization of used and rare book dealers in the Rocky Mountain west area.

The **Denver Art Museum** conservation staff wishes to extend a hearty congratulations to **Michal Mikesell** who just started her graduate training

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## Regional News, continued

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at the Buffalo Art Conservation program. They will miss her enthusiasm and exceptional talents but wish her success in school and thereafter.

**Caitlin Whaley** will continue in a pre-program capacity in the lab. **Kate Moomaw** and **Steve Osborne** have been busy with outdoor sculpture conservation. In August, they cleaned the surfaces of *Big Sweep*, by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. Kate also worked with an outside contractor for restoring abrasions and losses to the painted metal surfaces.

Objects conservator **Judy Greenfield** expertly removed accumulations of wax build up from several ornately carved bamboo objects. They, among dozens of other bamboo pieces, will be exhibited in the museum's dedicated Lutz Bamboo Gallery. Steve has also been busy fabricating custom mounts for this installation.

A collaborative effort to conserve a highly decorated, French sedan chair is underway. The chair's components consist of painted leather, painted canvas, and textiles on a wooden frame structure replete with gilded parts. Objects conservator, **Gina Laurin**, paintings conservator, **James Squires**, furniture conservator, **Mark Minor**, and textile conservators **Allison McCloskey** and **Paulette Reading** will clean, stabilize, repair, and consolidate, this ornate object. Please visit the Denver Art Museum website for upcoming blog entries on its conservation.

The sedan chair will be exhibited in the *Passport to Paris* exhibit, which opened in October. For the same exhibit, **Sarah Melching** is busy treating a collection of lovely French drawings ranging from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The Denver Art Museum conservation lab is delighted to welcome **Courtney Von Stein** as a third year intern from the University of Delaware/Winterthur program. Courtney will work with both Gina and Kate on a range of objects treatments, from the traditional to the modern and contemporary.

**Julie Benner** is also coming on board, working with Allison as the museum's first Mellon Fellow in textile conservation.

**Victoria Montana Ryan** recently gave a presentation on the murals of the historic Velino Herrera belonging to the Koshare Indian Museum as part of its 80th Anniversary celebration. Alumni and young Koshare dancers were enthusiastic to learn about the murals, their care, and future conservation plans for the museum's art collection.

**Judy Greenfield** reports the sad news of the death of **Dick Beardmore**, architect for A&E Designs, Fort Collins, CO. He was a CAP assessor for historic homes with whom she worked on a number of CAP surveys. He was extremely knowledgeable about mechanical systems, the special challenges of historic homes-turned-museums, and the anatomy and care of historic structures.

July saw some nice musical instruments march through **Mark Minor's** studio, including the full rebuild of a 1932 Gibson L-00 guitar, some major work on a 1918 Gibson mandolin, and some tricky cosmetic work on a 1969 Gibson Les Paul gold top. Mark is very pleased to be treating two pieces for an upcoming exhibit at the El Pueblo Museum on the tragic events around the CF & I strike at Ludlow, Colorado in 1914. (He wonders: Can it be Anarcho-Syndicalist conservation if the State pays for it?)

*Regional Reporter:*  
Paulette Reading

### San Diego

**Jacinta Johnson** was accepted into the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation, Class of 2016. She is very thankful for the internship opportunities, support, and guidance of many WAAC members.

Regional Reporter:  
Frances Prichett

### San Francisco Bay Area

**Susan Roberts-Manganelli** is now the Director of the Art + Science Learning Lab at the Cantor Center at Stanford University. The Cantor Center received a generous gift from Frances and Professor Emeritus Theodore Geballe that will provide four years of seed funding for the Lab.

The Lab will significantly expand the Cantor's efforts to integrate its artistic program with Stanford's curriculum, building on intermittent projects conducted over the past several years that brought together scientists, students, and museum professionals in the study of Cantor collections objects.

It will also offer research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate science students to study art objects in the Cantor collections and provide technical and analytical assistance using scientific equipment at the Cantor and elsewhere on campus.

The year has flown by for the SFMO-MA conservation department, which has participated in packing and moving the entire collection, as well as its operations, to South San Francisco while the museum begins a major renovation and 10 story expansion.

During the construction, the staff will be as busy as ever with exhibitions travelling to local sister institutions. Just before the museum closed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Michelle Barger**, **Paula De Cristofaro**, **Martina Haidvogel**, and **Jill Sterrett** gave talks at the AIC conference in Indianapolis, where the topic was *The Contemporary in Conservation*.

Another milestone was the recent launch of the Rauschenberg Research Project, part of the Getty funded OSCI (online scholarly research catalogue initiative). The online catalogue, lo-

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## Regional News, continued

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cated on the museum's main website is a result of four years of research across departments, including conservation, and revealed many notable findings and discoveries.

**Yadin Laroquette** has joined **Sarah Gates** at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco to line two important sixteenth-century tapestries: *The Triumph of Justice* from the *Triumph of the Seven Virtues* series and *The Resurrection* from the *Redemption of Man* series. The latter is an especially large challenge being 27 feet wide and taking up most of the floor space of the main area of the de Young Textile Lab. Yadin's contract work is being funded by two awards: the McNeil Volunteer Award that went to senior lab volunteer Barbara Arthur last year and an unexpected gift from the FAMSF Auxiliary.

**Meg Geiss-Mooney**, textile/costume conservator in private practice, taught an all-day workshop "Collection Care Strategies for Textiles" at the Museums Association of Montana annual conference held in March. She also participated in the panel discussion "Storage On A Budget" and held an "Ask The Conservator" session at the same conference.

She thoroughly enjoyed teaching in the Big Sky state and hopes to do so again in the future. She also participated in the Angels Project held during the Costume Society of America annual meeting and national symposium held in May. She demonstrated how to make a torso form from buckram to the other participants and museum volunteers at the Boulder City Museum, the Angels Project site.

**Mark Fenn** accepted a two week Professional Placement with the Staffordshire Hoard Conservation Project at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in England. He finally got up close and personal with the early medieval metalwork he has admired in photos and through exhibit cases for decades, examining and cleaning recently excavated early Anglo-Saxon sword fittings and as

yet unidentified objects.

At SFO Museum, **Rowan Geiger** and **Alisa Eagleston-Cieslewicz** have been working on a number of exhibits, including shows on maritime folk art, Philippine baskets, contemporary art made by the artists in residence at the Recology recycling center, the history of plastics, Shaker furniture, and the America's Cup yacht races.

**Antoinette Dwan** traveled to New York in October where she gave a lecture at the Morgan Library for staff and NYU paper conservation students. She also visited and spoke at the Brooklyn Museum. She discussed aqueous use of ammonium citrate dibasic and sodium borohydride in paper conservation (an expanded version of her presentation at the Seattle meeting) and presented material on aesthetic mending using Western papers in lieu of Japanese tissues.

*Regional Reporter:*  
Alisa Eagleston-Cieslewicz

### Texas

**Jill Whitten** reports that this past fall Whitten & Proctor Fine Art Conservation hosted a studio tour for visiting collectors during the Houston Contemporary Art Fair. **Nathan Sutton** of Sutton Greene Conservation in Kansas City, has been working with us on a suite of 12 large oval paintings depicting the apostles and **Catherine Williams** of Silver Lining Art Conservation, Austin, Texas performed objects treatments in the studio several times in the past year.

Whitten & Proctor Fine Art Conservation was awarded a Samuel H. Kress Conservation Fellowship for 2012-13. Jill Whitten and **Robert Proctor** welcome their new Fellow, **Gabriel Dunn**. Gabriel is an active member of

the conservation staff and is assisting in research on the development of new adhesives in a collaborative project with Rob, **René de la Rie**, and Christopher McGlinchey of the Museum of Modern Art. As part of the 2013 AIC Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, Gabriel presented her research on Matisse from her time at the Straus Center and Rob participated in a lively panel discussion.

Jill and Rob also welcome **Utah Snyder**, their new studio assistant. Utah has reorganized the digital archive to make it easier and more efficient to share information. He has made digital files keyword-searchable and accessible remotely in addition to installing a central server system for storage.

This fall Jill and Rob will be lecturing on picture varnishes with René de la Rie at the Instituto Superior De Conservación y Restauración Yachay Wasi in Lima, Peru.

**Melanie Sanford** reports on a recent lecture presented in Dallas entitled: "Recent Conservation Projects By Alton Bowman." The *North Texas Association for Art Conservation and the Dallas Museum of Art* were happy to host a lecture by Alton Bowman, September 9, 2013. Mr. Bowman, a fine art conservator from Flower Mound, Texas, specializes in French, English and American furniture. He has a long history of working with museums and private collectors on some very important pieces of furniture, such as the Rosedown American Goth Bed on exhibit at the DMA. His lecture, Recent Projects: Frames, Chairs, and a Desk, highlighted several new projects, and discussed the various conservation treatments he used on them.

*Regional Reporter:*  
Ken Grant

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## Mark David Gottsegen 1948-2013

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It is with great sorrow that I write of the death of dear friend Mark Gottsegen. Mark was the founder and director of AMIEN, a highly valued online technical service for artists, a long time professor of art and materials education at the University of North Carolina – Greensboro, and the author of *The Painter's Handbook*, regarded as the standard painting manual for the contemporary artist. And, of course, Chairman of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), Committee D 01.57, Artists' Paints and Related Materials for many years.

But none of these positions and accomplishments describe the sometimes maddening, other times uproarious character whose great passion, in a nutshell, was to give artists “the tools to distinguish... quality art materials from junk.” And he pursued that passion with blunt words, ferocious wit, the joie de vivre of a balloon-popper, and hard fastidious research.

To both friends and enemies, he could be cantankerous, corny, generous, wise, abrasive, sentimental, brash, fearless, supportive, authoritative, authoritarian, and almost always brilliant. We are all creatures of complex parts that most of us tend to hide. Mark wore his complexity as an exoskeleton. He let it all out. To me he was one of a kind, a great influence, an unforgettable friend whom I will greatly miss (along with his personal pepper shaker that he always took to restaurants with him).

Richard Frumess

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## Victoria Blyth Hill

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I've yet to meet anyone who was able to balance such professional seriousness with total immersion in the most exuberant moments and pleasures of life.

Victoria and her husband, Charles Christopher Hill, constructed a full and extremely active personal life, packed with trips, social events, multiple friends, and most of these activities had some connection with the art world.

A few of her personal traits will be

impossible to forget. When Victoria was completely relaxed, she would sometimes break into a focused and personal dance, often sparked by music from the 60s to 80s, a familiar blues or popular song. I'm sure that many others will remark on another endearing quality, her infectious laugh. She also had a strong sense of personal taste, outfitting her studios and home with carefully selected objects, sometimes products of California design – pottery, Bakelite, textiles, or artworks traded with friends and local artists.

Victoria's dedication to the field of conservation was her constant source of joy. She worked with many types of works on paper, expanding her practice into Asian art in order to treat the wide-ranging collections at LACMA. Charles identified her interaction with Tibetan material as the most gratifying part of her practice.

After she retired from her position at LACMA, she was invited to undertake a survey of the holdings of the Dzongsar Temple by the Bhutanese lama and filmmaker Dzongsar Jamyang Rinpoche. Recognizing an opportunity to contribute to the preservation of these materials, she authored *Care and Handling of Thangkas: A Guide for Caretakers* (2008 and 2010). This was a non-copyrighted collection care document meant to be inexpensively and widely distributed to the monks and monasteries of Tibet, China, Nepal, Bhutan, and Japan to aid with the preservation and care of these National Treasures. Once the project was completed, she embarked on a remarkable trip to India to launch the guide and insure that it would be widely distributed.

Victoria was an exceptional friend and colleague, someone I will remember for the remainder of my life.

Debra McManus

(Victoria was also the first editor of the WAAC Newsletter. Ed.)

Victoria and I met at the wonderful Japanese screen symposium directed by Takashi Sugiura in 1984. We became close friends and colleagues, and as we overlapped on projects and traveled together, often with Charles, I came to appreciate how astute and well versed she was as an observer and as a conservator and how wide ranging were her interests.

I once happened to mention that I recollected her wearing glasses for the presentation she made at the 1982 AIC conference in Milwaukee on Leonardo's Hammer Codex, but that she never seemed to wear them since (at least at that time) - she confessed that they were frames with plain glass lenses worn only to make her look, in her opinion, more clever and serious! I've think of her a great deal and cherish that special place that only she could occupy in the lives of her many friends.

T.K. McClintock

One day, maybe around 1974, I got a call from Ben Johnson, who was head of the conservation lab at the LA County Museum of Art. He explained that someone on his staff was really hungry for opportunities to talk shop and expand her knowledge in the area of paper conservation. We agreed that she would come to San Francisco from time to time to participate in the work of our paper lab. So it was that one day Victoria Blyth-Hill walked into our paper lab, and a happy day it was! Vicky -- as she immediately insisted she be called -- had a simply unparalleled enthusiasm for almost everything, and her excitement over being with us, rubbing shoulders with other paper conservators, was contagious. Vicky's infectious laughter will always remain one of my fondest memories of her.

Roy Perkinson

I remember in the 80s when Victoria had intensely red hair. It was so startling and looked so great on her. It seemed to go with her delightfully outrageous personality. I told her I really liked it and, with a generosity so typical of her, she presented me with some Egyptian henna from her special source. I'd never done anything like that before but I applied it full strength and turned myself into a redhead too for a time. I don't know if I really wanted the red hair; maybe I just wanted some of Victoria's style!

Debbie Evans

Years ago...I was talking to Victoria about an up-coming Museum event. I asked if it was a typical little black dress event. She launched into her description of her attire and how tired she was of the typical boring little black anything at events. She was having an outfit made for her in red so as not to be missed. Entirely in RED LEATHER! I can imagine her in it today. It must have been amazing! Red hair, red suit, amazing laugh. She was a woman of style in so many ways.

Leslie Kruth

Victoria showed Bob and me great generosity personally and professionally from the very beginning of our relationship. She offered friendship and help, and she made good on her offers. She was very dear to us.

Mark Watters and Bob Aitchison

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One of my fondest memories of how Victoria was always able to handle any situation with grace and dignity was how she saved the life of Dr. Armand Hammer.

Well she didn't really but he certainly acted as if she had.

When I first was hired at LACMA the old labs were on the top floor, and objects would get to it via a large freight elevator. Conservators often worked late at night, and that's how we did private work that involved Trustees and VIP collectors. Well there must have been a meeting one night, and Dr. Hammer inadvertently got into this elevator and managed to turn off the light by accident. In total darkness he couldn't find the light switch nor the buttons to move the elevator. So he began pounding on the sides of the elevator which were just steel sheets and sounded like huge kettle drums. Alarmed, Victoria came running out, opened the door and switched on the lights. Hammer was profusely thankful, remarking that "Young lady, You saved my life!"

Victoria told me about this the next day. Although she never got a hefty financial reward for saving his life, over time the Hammer Foundation was very generous to both of us in encouragement towards conservation research.

Jim Druzik

In the 1980s Victoria invited a group of conservators (in town for a conference) to share a meal at her home. Between the main course and dessert, husband Charles took us on a tour of his studio. Eight visitors, completely committed to conservation, unwittingly marched around on top of artwork that had been strategically strewn on the floor for the express purpose of accelerating the aging process. Charles later revealed that this was the necessary final step in the production of his latest work. Interesting to him was that conservators, in particular, would provide the desired patina. Victoria understood and accepted that the best in artistic expression can require deviation from convention; that artistic creation and decay and sometimes irony must be considered as essential parts of the same picture.

Bob Futernick

Working with Victoria taught me that just as a good work ethic and dedication were important, so was keeping family and friends close and finding ways to play.

Victoria and Charles were great in the department of finding and creating adventures. She was a great hostess and loved to have people come together and enjoy wine and food – preferably pork. They built a 40 foot lap pool for her new found love of water aerobics, but really I think it was another way to have people come together for pool parties and hooping (hula hooping was another love).

She was also a master of costumes. For Halloween whether she was a Tibetan demon, a Monet lady, a slinky tiger, or a character from the song by the Black Eye Peas "Shake it Like a Polaroid Picture," she owned the character and added a festive feel to the party with wine, laughter, and dancing.

Chail Norton

Victoria and I met in the early 1970s before either of us was involved with conservation. She loved to tell the story of how we became acquainted at Sotheby Parke Bernet. We didn't know each other and were both applying for different positions at the auction house. Independently, we both arrived each wearing a long knit maxi dress, boots, and sporting the then-fashionable shag hair cut. We were both interviewed and hired by James Lally on the same day, and as Victoria would always say, "he certainly liked a type!" She stayed at the firm for about one year, then left to open a blues bar called "Rick's Bar" in Venice and continue collecting vintage cars and furniture from the 1930s and 1940s.

We became and remained fast friends, a bond that was further strengthened by our close connection through conservation.

About 15 years ago Victoria and her husband, Charles, enthusiastically took up cross-country skiing, and I would often accompany them on outings to nearby mountains. After a somewhat cautious start, Victoria's skiing became very bold and I remember watching in amazement as she took off down quite a steep hill, laughing and screaming all the way down.

Victoria was an extremely dedicated, serious, and conscientious conservator always searching for the best solution and outcome for her projects. Her enthusiasm was contagious (as was her well-known laugh), and she was my inspiration to begin a career in conservation, as I'm sure she inspired many others that she encountered during her long and productive career.

Tanya Thompson

