



Surveying embroidered bookbindings

Also in this issue

Learning experiences at West Dean, Tate, CGLAS and TNA



Details of some of the embroidered and textile bindings from the Bodleian Library's early printed books collection (Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford).

OCTOBER 2022 Issue 102



From the Editor

This is my last issue as editor of Icon News and, indeed, the last issue of Icon News in its current format. A revamp is planned for our members' magazine, which is fitting after seventeen years since its initial launch and many developments over that time in our other channels of communication. Head of Membership Michael Nelles has more information for you about this on page 4.

As I noted in my introduction to the 100th issue, the best thing about the role has been my contacts with so many Icon members. And it has been a special pleasure to be able to trace the careers of newer entrants to the profession over the years: encouraging authors initially with their emerging professional pieces, encountering them again later as Group committee members and then more recently still seeing them in the lists of newly accredited conservator-restorers!

So I am very pleased that for this issue we have three pieces from professionals at the start of their careers, with one in particular showing that determination can win through in the end. Introducing young people to the profession who might not have thought of heritage and conservation as a career is also the subject of a piece from The National Archives. And from the Bodleian we have a piece on another topic dear to my heart, that of collaboration between disciplines.

I look forward to seeing you at future Icon events (without having to badger you for copy!).

With all good wishes and thanks to you all.

Lynette Gill



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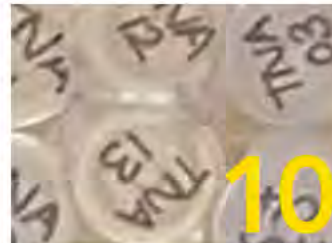
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Two emerging professionals describe their learning curves from a year at West Dean and five months at Tate



Cover image

A binding from the Bodleian's early printed books collection surveyed in 1989 and again in 2022: C18th Italian presentation binding, covered in pale blue silk and embroidered in a range of techniques with coloured silk threads, gold and silver metal threads, and metal spangles and purls (Broxb. 45.14, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford)
© Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

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professional update

From the Chief Executive



Sara Crofts on climate, sustainability and churches

I am writing this article on the 'Glorious Twelfth' in the middle of the second heatwave when temperatures in Buckinghamshire are set to reach 34 degrees and are unlikely to start to drop again until the beginning of the week. The hot weather takes its toll on everyone, whether you are trying to stay cool while working at home or braving a sweltering commute on public transport

to reach your place of work.

Some of us may even be fortunate to have an office with the luxury of air conditioning, but I know that conservation and heritage science colleagues who work in older buildings are finding that some studio and gallery spaces have become unbearable due to overheating. The press reported that the British Museum had to close early during the July heatwave; several galleries on the upper floors of the V&A were also closed.

While the wellbeing of staff and visitors is, of course, the prime concern, it is clear that temperatures in excess of what we have previously considered normal in the UK have the potential to cause harm to objects and collections too. Many museums already remove 'at risk' objects from display during the summer months – the V&A's Michelangelo wax model is a good example¹ – but I suspect that this summer's experiences might result in further changes to display policies.

And it's not just the objects that suffer; it seems that the monitoring equipment that is supposed to be helping to maintain the optimum environmental conditions can't cope either. This has caused some systems to fail in the extreme hot weather, requiring extra vigilance from collections staff and rapid problem solving to devise a remedy.

The hot weather doesn't just have an impact on the objects within our museums, galleries and historic houses of course; the buildings themselves are also adversely affected. At the National Trust's Oxburgh Hall in Norfolk the lack of rainfall meant that the levels of water in the moat dropped noticeably, putting the building at risk. Thankfully, staff were able to find a solution to keep water in the moat, as the clay soil on which the foundations rest needs to remain wet to prevent structural problems arising.

Extreme temperatures also bring challenges for those working on building sites. Scaffolding encased in plastic

sheeting creates greenhouse-like conditions and working with traditional materials, such as lime mortar and plaster, becomes much more difficult in hot weather, as the curing rate needs to be carefully controlled in terms of temperature and moisture to ensure that the repair doesn't fail later.

However, where there is a challenge, there is often also an opportunity. I was delighted to see that parish churches were being offered to their communities as cool spaces for those in need of respite. St Luke's Church in West Holloway, north London, served iced drinks and provided free wi-fi to those in need of shelter, and St Margaret's in Horsforth hosted children from the neighbouring Church of England primary school, after the school asked whether it could move some of the classes into the nave.² Why did these buildings remain comfortable when more modern structures didn't? The answer is that the thick masonry walls of medieval churches provide sufficient thermal mass to buffer the outside temperature and openable clerestory windows help to remove hot air at high level. So, while many worshippers lament that fact that such buildings take a long time to warm up in the depths of winter, this also means that they remain cooler than many other buildings during hot summers.

The relatively stable internal environment of our parish churches is also the reason why their important interior fittings (carved woodwork, decorative ironwork, stained glass windows, sculpture, wall paintings, altar hangings etc.) have often survived in relatively good condition for many centuries despite not being held in the carefully controlled conditions commonly found in our museums and galleries. I should add the caveat that this example of passive control, or benign neglect in some cases, relies on the building fabric being well maintained. If the gutters are not cleared and the roofs are not repaired when necessary, then the risk to the objects within the buildings becomes a matter of serious concern.

However, I do think that reflecting on the inherent resilience of these buildings and their collections can tell us something about how we might have to adapt in order to care for the broad sweep of our cultural heritage in the future. I know that many of those who work in museums, galleries and archives are already asking themselves questions about just how necessary their HVAC systems are, and questioning their approach to risk management in the light of the twin pressures of rising energy costs and climate change.

It seems to me that we are at an interesting moment in time when the challenge of balancing the ideal (best practice?) needs to be weighed against the sustainable (good practice?). I look forward to discussing this topic with members and colleagues in the coming weeks as COP27 once again focusses our attention on the future of our planet.

But, turning back to churches once again, I recently had the pleasure of being asked to be one of the judges of the SPAB's John Betjeman Award³ for repair or conservation of historic faith buildings that remain in use for worship. Our merry band of three visited the four Scottish churches on our

shortlist and were privileged to talk not only to the guardians of these important places but also the conservation professionals who had delivered the projects. We quizzed our hosts on their research as well as their conservation philosophy and how this had informed their approach to the repairs, and were deeply impressed by the sensitive and thoughtful decisions that had been made.

It was a timely reminder of the value of the technical skills, knowledge, and judgement that architects, craftspeople and conservators offer to their clients. We were also reminded of the many other aspects of professional practice that contribute to our development as competent conservation professionals. All of the professionals that we met displayed

the ability to navigate the tangled paths of grant funding, to communicate well with their clients and other stakeholders, and to present solutions succinctly in a non-technical manner. It was deeply encouraging to witness the rapport between clients and consultants and to see how this generated a positive outcome for the buildings.

1 <https://www.vam.ac.uk/blog/caring-for-our-collections/climate-resilience-for-museum-collections> Accessed 12.8.22

2 <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2022/22-july/news/uk/churches-offer-cool-sanctuary-in-heatwave-britain> Accessed 12.8.22

3 <https://www.spab.org.uk/about-us/awards/john-betjeman-award> Accessed 12.8.22

POLICY CORNER

Labour Market Intelligence

At the end of June we published the results of our Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) research. The aim of the research was to understand the shape and extent of the conservation sector in 2022. This work was based on the Heritage Labour Market Intelligence Toolkit developed by Icon with input from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and financial support from Historic England.

The executive summary and full report are available on our website¹ and will be used to inform our workforce-related policy activity over the coming months to ensure that we can provide effective advocacy and support for conservation and heritage science. We have shared the report with our colleagues across the sector including AIM (Association of Independent Museums), Historic England, the Museums Association, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Our LMI work is also supporting our growing collaboration with the trade union Prospect, and was included in their new campaign: *World class heritage, second class pay* (<https://prospect.org.uk/heritage/>).

Heritage Sector Resilience Plan

As a member of the Historic Environment Forum, Icon was invited to take part in a sector foresight day that took place in mid-June. The objective was to formulate ideas and actions to support the delivery of the *Heritage Sector Resilience Plan 2022-24*² which has five key themes: skills; strong governance; climate change; diversity and inclusion; and embedding heritage in wider public policy. Sara Crofts facilitated the discussion on skills, as this is the specific area of concern and interest to Icon.

The *Plan* states that a resilient heritage sector will have the following attributes:

- Heritage careers are respected, recognised and appropriately waged, with demand for heritage skills high.

- Sufficient skilled workforce to increase understanding, inform decisions and manage heritage assets in the long term

In order to support the delivery of a resilient heritage sector a number of interesting suggestions emerged:

- Develop a new, cross-sector forum to bring the many ongoing conversations together, to discuss ongoing skills challenges, trial new approaches, and maintain a close overview of the changing picture.
- Reconvene the Heritage Skills Demand topic group, with a view to developing a prioritised plan of action to both increase awareness of the cost, efficiency and quality benefits of employing heritage expertise, and improve the ease of access to heritage skills.
- Share resources for training effectively and find a way to help smaller organisations work together to train their staff i.e. by helping organisations to jointly commission a training package to address a shared need.
- Co-create new training programmes and initiatives with employers to make sure that they will work in practice i.e. start with the practical and not with the policy.
- Tackle the existing data / knowledge gaps and increase the granularity of existing data sets to better understand skills gaps and insights about the heritage jobs of the future.

There was broad enthusiasm for these ideas, and we hope to work with our sector colleagues to ensure that the conservation profession benefits from this endeavour.

National Lottery Heritage Fund strategic consultation

Anyone with an interest in lottery funding will be aware that the NLHF is reaching the end of its current strategic plan but given the lack of any noticeable fanfare heralding the opening of the consultation process for the next plan it would have been easy to miss the opportunity to feed into the thinking. The online survey had a very low-key launch in the middle of holiday season in August, with invitation to a

select number of sector bodies to attend an online workshop following shortly afterwards.

The survey covered a number of areas of but we made a point of making a strong case for dedicated funding for skills:

- helping to ensure that skills gaps are understood and taking action to ensure that skills at risk are not lost
- supporting intergenerational knowledge transfer and mentoring
- tackling the socio-economic barriers that prevent people from entering the conservation profession
- facilitating skills exchanges between organisations e.g. placements etc.
- providing support for apprenticeships in fields where the numbers of practitioners make it difficult to use the existing infrastructure

We also suggested that NLHF should help grant applicants better understand the need to engage specialist professional services at the appropriate point in their projects and encourage high standards of conservation work by championing accreditation where it exists in the sector.

Pro-actively helping clients to be good clients by providing learning and resources at the pre-application stage and not just concentrating on those organisations that have secured a grant would also improve heritage outcomes across the sector.

1 <https://www.icon.org.uk/resource/icon-publishes-conservation-labour-market-intelligence-report.html>

2 <https://historiconenvironmentforum.org.uk/hef-activities/resilience-task-group/>

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Archaeology Group

We are planning our year of lunchtime lectures which will include talks on coin hoards and archaeological textiles. We are very keen for members to offer talks – any project small or large is welcome. The recent session on archaeological glass sparked discussion on adhesives and showed there is a real need for opportunities for members to discuss practical techniques and ideas.

Please email us on archgroup.icon@gmail.com to discuss your idea or to suggest topics we could cover.

At this year's AGM we thanked our outgoing members who left the committee –Vicky Garlick, Ellie Rowley-Conwy, Alaina Schmisser and Emma Smith. Their contributions, some serving for a number of years, were much appreciated. We welcome two new members, Reed Hudson and Riva Boutylkova, both emerging professionals.

COMMUNICATIONS

Coming soon: new year, new agency, new magazine

This year Icon decided that the time had come to give our long-running member magazine a complete revamp to ensure that it remains dynamic, relevant, and engaging amidst fast-paced changes in the world outside.

The emerging vision for the revamped magazine has been underpinned by member views from our readership survey this past June. Following this, a competitive process was undertaken that saw eight agencies bid to help us take the project forward.

Now the winner can be announced!

Icon has appointed CenturyOne, a well-regarded communications agency, to take on the task. The first issue of the new magazine is set to land on member doorstops this January.

Bigger issues, less frequent

After this, our member magazine will appear quarterly, rather than bi-monthly. It will be bigger, with a wider range of content and a greater visual emphasis than its predecessor. Our goal is to focus on the people behind conservation projects and research, to lead discussion across our sector, and to unravel what makes conservation professionals tick.

Each quarterly issue will have a strong theme to focus discussion and provide synergy between what's in the magazine with what's on our website and on social media. Stay tuned to find out more about what the Editorial Team has in mind for the first edition of our new magazine – and to be inspired to contribute your ideas!

A triumphant run

As the first issue of the new magazine takes shape, we bid farewell to *Icon News*: this October issue – number 102 – will be the last.

And as if one major milestone wasn't enough, the October issue marks another – the retirement of our indefatigable longtime editor Lynette Gill, who retires after putting together every single issue of *Icon News* since its inception. 'I've really enjoyed it, but the time seemed right to hand over the reins,' she said.

Lynette will definitely be a tough act for any editor to follow – but CenturyOne are up for the challenge. They will be taking on the Editorial function for the new magazine, with the aim of uncovering the stories that make conservation so compelling and dynamic.

Michael Nelles

Head of Membership

There are vacancies on the committee so do contact us if you would like to discuss joining. Please watch Iconnects and Twitter (@ICONArchaeology) for Group announcements and tag us in your posts!

Charlotte Wilkinson ACR
Icon AG Communications Rep
Ceramics & Glass Group

Nigel Williams Prize: Call for Submissions!

Have you or your team completed an exciting project in conservation of ceramic, glass, or a related material in the past three years? Did it present some interesting challenges, technically and/or ethically, perhaps requiring some lateral thinking which might be of interest to others in the profession? If so, consider applying for the 2023 Nigel Williams Prize.

We are now accepting submissions! For more information on the prize and submission, please visit the Nigel Williams Prize page on the Icon website.

Stay in touch with us at:

Twitter: @ICONCGG

Facebook: [ICON Ceramics and Glass Group](#)

Instagram: @iconcgg

Marisa Kalvins
Ceramics & Glass Group

Icon Scotland Group
Training and events

We are pleased to announce that our annual Plenderleith lecture will take place on Thursday 24 November. We are planning a hybrid event, with a physical venue in Edinburgh and an online joining option. Our speaker has been confirmed as Dr Richard Mulholland, who is a Senior Lecturer for the MA Conservation of Fine Art course at Northumbria University. By the time this goes to print tickets will be available through the Icon website, and we will have a title for Richard's talk!

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Icon Scotland is also partnering with Edinburgh Collections Response Network, Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Council on Archives to deliver a salvage-focused network building and knowledge sharing day at the Engine Shed on October 27. Places are available to book via the Icon website.

Other happenings

The committee provided some comments to assist Sara Crofts with submitting an Icon response to a Scottish Government consultation: Budget scrutiny 2023-24: Funding for culture - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space

Committee vacancies

As noted in our previous update, we are currently on the lookout for a new Secretary, and one or more Events Assistants. We are also recruiting for a second Social Media Officer, as Marta Pilarska is stepping down from her role. We are so appreciative of all the enthusiasm and hard work she has put in over the last three years in this role. If you are interested in getting involved and would like more information, please email Gwen Thomas at admin@iconscotland.org.



Ecological insect control & biocide decontamination in collections

PHOTO
Madonna and Child: Southern France, c. 1700
Copyright of Edward Bigden Fine Art Ltd

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Contact and keep in touch

We are always delighted to have new members in the Group, but remember that all you need to do in order to receive the emailed Scotland Group Iconnects is to ensure you've ticked the Scotland Group option in the 'My Account' area of the Icon website.

You can also see our latest updates on social media: our blog is at <https://iconscotland.wordpress.com>, our Facebook page is <https://en-gb.facebook.com/iconscotlandgroup> and our Twitter feed is [@icon_scotland](https://twitter.com/icon_scotland). Our general email address is admin@iconscotland.org and comments and suggestions for events can be emailed to events@iconscotland.org.

Stained Glass Group

The SGG Committee started a conversation with members about Stained Glass Conservation Documentation. Interested parties joined a session where Aimee Jin was able to feedback the conclusions of her excellent MA thesis *Documentation of Stained Glass Conservation, Current Practice and Future Developments Towards an Open Digital System*. This webinar was supported by Icon Documentation Network and it is hoped that the Group will hold future conversations about developing documentation in our field.

On 29 October, the SGG will be holding their Annual Meeting and AGM. It is hoped to meet in person at the Artworkers' Guild, Queen Square, London. The programme will include talks in the morning, with the opportunity to visit Lincoln's Inn and the John Soane Museum in the afternoon. We are delighted to welcome Sarah Brown as our keynote speaker, who will present about the stained glass of Lincoln's Inn Chapel.

Please keep an eye on the Stained Glass Group webpage for further details about the programme and to book a place: <https://www.icon.org.uk/events/icon-stained-glass-group-meeting-2022.html>

Once again, the SGG is seeking nominations for election to the committee, as three current members (including the Chair and Treasurer) are due to step down in October at the end of their elected terms. The results of the election will be announced at our AGM in October.

We are always delighted to welcome new members into our Group. Please log-in and ensure you've ticked the Stained Glass Group option in your subscription preferences in the 'My Account' section of your profile in the Icon website.

If you have any suggestions about how we can develop the Stained Glass Group and support Icon members, please get in touch at iconstainedglass@gmail.com

We hope to see you all in October!
The SGG Committee

Textile Group

A Thank You Message from the Group

We are sad to hear of Lynette's decision to step down from her role as editor of Icon News. We have had the pleasure of working with Lynette over many years and her support and expertise has been invaluable. The Textile Group sends many best wishes and special thanks for all she has done, and we wish her well in her future adventures. Thank you Lynette.

Latest News

The textile committee are currently working on plans for the 2023 Spring Forum, if there is a particular theme that you would like us to focus on, please do get in touch. We are also forming a plan for in-person and online events for next year, if there is anything you would like us to feature, or you would like to put yourself forward for an 'in conversation with' online talk, contact the committee direct, details below.

Forthcoming Textile Group Events

'Archaeological Finds at Oxburgh Hall' – an online talk given by Anna Forrest and Helena Loermans, 14 November, 7pm – via Zoom®

'Couriering in Post-Covid Times' – an online talk given by Elizabeth-Anne Haldane ACR & Lara Flecker (V&A), date TBC

Please check our Textile Group section of the Icon website for event updates, alternatively see our Twitter or Facebook page (details below).

Other Textile Related Events

DATS (Dress & Textile Specialists) - 2022 Conference: 20-21 October 2022. The 2022 DATS conference will be held at Bristol M Shed & live via Zoom®. The subject for this year's conference is: '*Skeletons in the Closet: The Legacies of Dress & Textiles Collection Practices*'.

Costume Society - 2022 Conference '*Clothes Maketh the Man*': 22 October, 26 October, 29 October and 2 November 2022. The provisional schedule for Saturday sessions is 13.00 - 15.00 UK time and for Wednesday sessions is 19.00 - 20.30 UK time.

New England Rug Society (NERS) – Webinar Series: Various dates from October 2022 onwards. Sign up for free to hear various speakers talk around topics relating to rugs, carpets and kilims. Visit their website (ne-rugsociety.org) for more details.

In This Issue

In July, Chair of the Textile Group Committee, Ksynia Marko ACR co-curated and led a two-day course on the '*Care of Historic Carpets: Understanding Structure, Surveys & Cleaning*', joined by professional carpet cleaner Glyn Charnock at the Museum of Carpet, Kidderminster. A review of the course is featured in this issue of *Icon News*, written by Daisy Graham, Textile Conservator at the Textile Surgery, London.

Keeping in touch with the Textile Group

Due to publication deadlines, it is not always possible to mention all events so please check the Icon website, Facebook page, Twitter feed and Iconnect for details. If you have anything that you would like mentioned in our communications please contact the Textile Group's News Editor: Terri.Dewhurst@nationaltrust.org.uk

Textiles Group Email: icontextilegroup@gmail.com

Twitter: [@ICON_Textiles](https://twitter.com/ICON_Textiles)

Facebook: [Icon Textile Group](https://www.facebook.com/IconTextileGroup)

NIGEL WILLIAMS PRIZE 2023

Call for applications
deadline 1 February 2023



For more info
please visit Icon's Ceramics&Glass group pages
or email nwp@icon.org.uk

Welcome to these new members

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in June and July 2022. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon!

James Armstrong
Pathway

Mervyn Badiali
Student

E Barham
Associate

Toby Buckley
Supporter

Kim Alexandra Davies
Associate

Shannon Deans
Student

Catherine Dussault
Student

Kathryn Edwards
Associate

Elizabeth Freshwater
Associate

Michael Galardi
Associate

James Harris
Pathway

Paola Marie Valentin Irizarry
Student

Luciano Johnson
Associate

Marie Kaladgew
Associate

Sarah Laing
Associate

Yingzhen Liu
Student

David McIntosh
Supporter

Deirdre Mulley
Supporter

Diane Newell
Supporter

Andrew Pearce
Associate

Sofia Perkins
Associate

Emily Phillips
Associate

Rada Popova
Student

Heather Pusey
Student

Tui Russell
Student

Anna Standing
Student

Emma Thomas
Student

Holly Trant
Associate

Antia Dona Vazquez
Associate

Melanie Anne Washeim
Student



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Notice of 18th Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Conservation will be held online at 5.00pm (UTC+01:00) on Thursday 1 December 2022 to consider the following business:

Ordinary Resolution 1: To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2022.

Ordinary Resolution 2: To authorise the Trustees to appoint the auditors to serve until the end of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Trustees to decide the remuneration to be paid to the auditors.

A member of the Institute of Conservation who is entitled to attend and vote at the meeting (being a paid-up Accredited, Associate, Pathway, Student or Emeritus Member) is entitled to appoint a proxy, who need not be a member of the Institute of Conservation, to attend and vote instead of them. Proxies may be appointed via the web portal or to the registered office so long as they are received before 5.00pm (UTC+01:00) on Tuesday 29 November 2022. Those received later will not be counted.

If you are eligible to vote you will be sent an email by our election support provider Mi-Voice inviting you to access the Proxy Notice enabling you to register your instructions online. If you do not have an email address, please phone the Mi-Voice office at 0845 241 4148.

Dr Michael Nelles
Head of Membership

10th June 2022

THE KICKSTART SCHEME

Holly Smith ACR and Katerina Williams of The National Archives describe their experience of the KickStart scheme where two selected individuals were given the opportunity to contribute to a large-scale survey of limp parchment bindings

INTRODUCTION

In 2020 the UK Government launched The Kickstart Scheme, an initiative aimed at increasing and supporting the employment of young adults, aged 16 to 24, on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. Participants in the scheme were referred from Jobcentre Plus and given the opportunity to select a six-month placement from a myriad of fields, with cultural heritage being one of them.

Inclusivity and diversity are integral values held within The National Archives' Collection Care Department's (CCD) 2022 – 2025 Business Strategy. As such, the KickStart placement hosted by CCD provided a strategic framework for offering paid work within the heritage sector to those with an interest but few opportunities to gain practical experience.

CCD was planning a large-scale survey of several bindings within the collection and wanted to use the KickStart scheme to bring in two new members of staff to contribute. The scheme provided a meaningful opportunity to bring in contract staff while also fulfilling the department's wishes to diversify our workforce. In addition to working on the survey, the individuals would gain insight into the symbiotic nature of the archives, via a series of days spent with departments of their choosing.

Our goal as a KickStart scheme host was not only to introduce individuals to the field of cultural heritage, but to act as a steppingstone into the workplace and to facilitate the implementation of work-based skills. The team would also receive 'wrap-around training', organised by English Heritage, the lead representative within the heritage sector for the KickStart scheme. English Heritage organised a third-party organisation to work with the participants individually, on career-building skills such as timekeeping, and building their CVs.

THE LIMP PARCHMENT BINDING SURVEY

The six-month placement centred on a survey of 13th to 16th century limp parchment bindings. The limp parchment structure is a historical bookbinding style commonly used for accounting and notable for its very flexible cover and varied structural components. The goal of the survey was to create a searchable collection of features and characteristics unique to this style of binding, within the time period. Data on the bindings was collected via a bespoke digital survey form. In addition to this, working in collaboration with the Beasts2Craft project, samples were collected from the parchment covers to allow for their biological information to be analysed for the purpose of biocodicological study¹. The project team were trained in taking non-destructive samples from the bindings based on Beasts2Craft's sampling protocol.



A sample of a variety of limp parchment bindings from The National Archives' collection TNA E 101/189/9; E 101/517/28; E 101/419/5; E 101/83/2; E 101/171/1; E 101/124/8; E 101/430/2; E 101/83/2, E 101/127/10, E 101/14/22

As the KickStart-ers had no prior experience in the field of book conservation or more broadly speaking, cultural heritage, the placement began with a series of informal presentations, quizzes and workshops. They were given a general overview on the history of the book as an object and its evolution through time, focusing specifically on the stationery or account book style. The KickStart-ers were also given instruction in identification of key materials used in the collection, such as paper and parchment, the materials' history, preparation methods and means of their identification. A series of study models were made by the KickStart-ers to aid in the understanding of the construction of the bindings and the terminology needed for the survey form. This crash course in book terminology and codicology helped to provide a general starting point for the beginning of the survey by the KickStart-ers.



One of the KickStart-ers non-destructively sampling the surface of a parchment cover using a small eraser, as per Beasts2Craft's sampling protocol

During their six months contract the KickStart-ers surveyed just shy of two hundred bindings. In the process, the team gathered a huge wealth of understanding of the construction and materiality of a group of extraordinarily complex bookbinding structures. The data collected also allowed for a greater understanding of the collection, and the multitude of variations found in the binding processes.

It was very fulfilling to overhear their discussions held in the studio on the different structural elements found during the survey and debates on whether a particular material was paper or parchment, or if the cover was attached in a certain way. These discussions showed not only their growing knowledge in the binding style and construction, but also their interest and curiosity in delving deeper into the material being surveyed.

REFLECTION

For the department, the KickStart scheme provided a great opportunity to diversify the workforce by hiring those with a different background of experience, as well as to receive financial support to provide a learning opportunity to those in need. We also gained two temporary members of staff who could contribute to a major project, ensuring its progression and adding to the artefactual understanding of our collections.

On the flipside, we were able to offer the KickStart-ers the chance to experience work in the heritage sector, and more specifically a collection care department. They gained very specific knowledge of the history and construction of limp parchment bindings, albeit quite niche; but they also gained experience in project management, data handling, public speaking and several days of experience with other departments within the archive.

The KickStart-ers also gained the transferable skills of independent learning, writing and applying knowledge gained from specialists to practical work. This experience gave them a wider, more holistic sense of how archives work as a whole and perhaps a sense of what areas they may want to pursue in the future.

It was a mutually beneficial framework and we found it to be for the most part successful. However, hosting the KickStart placements was not without its challenges too and these are worth mentioning. In ensuring that the candidates selected would have the potential to gain the greatest benefit from this opportunity, there was a natural draw towards those with the least experience within the sector, or even the workforce in general. In turn this meant that the individuals required more input, guidance and general supervision than other colleagues or the institution's more conventional heritage volunteers.

Another challenge was the need to boost and maintain the interest and enthusiasm of the KickStart-ers. Understandably, survey work can become monotonous, and as a result, methods were devised to provide them with a platform on which they were able to share their experiences and obtain a certain level of gratification in their experience and knowledge sharing. The unfolding of the past six months has pushed us as a department to challenge and reevaluate our own preconceived expectations of future placements/ volunteers, especially those not from a heritage background.

As mentioned earlier, to provide the KickStart-ers with sufficient working knowledge to undertake the survey, it was essential to identify various approachable teaching styles, such as the labelling of illustrations of book structures and encouraging sketching of the bindings and their features. Whilst time-consuming, this could also be seen as an opportunity for the department as a whole to develop skills that could be used for future volunteers or work placements. The teaching 'syllabus' and material created for the KickStart scheme will provide an asset in the organisation of volunteer/ placement-based resources.

This project was not only a learning opportunity for the KickStart placements, but for the conservators too. The structural complexity of the bindings being surveyed provided a real challenge to record, as they are difficult to capture in a clear and straightforward way. Within this collection, there are a series of common characteristics or features, but they are compiled with an infinite number of variations. For both the untrained and trained eye, this raised questions as to the exact definitions of the terminology being employed and brought about the question as to how certain elements should be documented, especially those of which we were uncertain. As a result, the team was regularly

having discussions around the exact definition of specific terminology and how to apply this within the constraints of the survey form.

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, the KickStart scheme was discontinued in 2022. Whilst the department will no longer be able to participate specifically with this scheme, it has opened many doors for providing further learning opportunities.

Overall, we believe the scheme to be a successful one. It provided a learning opportunity to those in need, while introducing those without a background in heritage to the sector. When reflecting upon the scheme, the KickStart-ers have expressed an interest in pursuing careers within the heritage sector and said that their time in the scheme has shown them what path they might follow to achieve this.

It also provided a learning opportunity for us as a department and has shaped how we will approach these kinds of opportunities going forward.

We look forward to taking on board all that we have learned from this experience and using it to help further diversify our workforce and provide learning opportunities as part of other projects in the future.

1. For more information on Beasts2Craft and their work in biocodicology: <https://sites.google.com/palaeome.org/ercb2c/home>

About the authors

Holly Smith, ACR is Senior Conservator for book and paper materials at TNA where she has worked since 2014 in a variety of roles. Katerina Williams is a graduate of West Dean College and a book and paper conservator at TNA since 2021.

TNA's Kickstart-ers Naimah Kamal and Sean Slammon-Minas. The roles of surveyor and data documenter were swapped every day, to mitigate any potential personal bias and for a more well-rounded experience. (Photo used with the individuals' permission.)



A 'STUMBLE STONE' IN SOHO

Morwenna Blewett organised the laying of the UK's first Stolperstein for a victim of Nazi terror

The Stolperstein Project was founded over twenty-five years ago by German artist Gunter Demnig. It has a vast reach -- the largest decentralised Holocaust memorial in the world, with over 100,000 plaques in twenty-six countries-- but each and every stone is an intimate memorial for a single victim. The aim is to return the names of victims to their homes, or last place of choice. Thus, they appear in out-of-the-way rural villages, as well as large urban centres throughout former Nazi-occupied Europe.

The stones commemorate all victims of Nazi persecution: 'Jews, Roma, Sinti, homosexuals, dissidents, Jehovah's Witnesses and victims of euthanasia who were deported and exterminated.' They are called 'stumbling stones,' but in fact they are flush with the paved or cobbled surface. Artist Demnig wishes that passers-by will 'stumble with their hearts and minds.'

The first Stolperstein in the UK was laid on 30 May this year and commemorates Ada Van Dantzig, a young, Dutch, secular Jewish woman, learning her trade as a paintings conservator in a studio in Soho, London. My motivation for

organising its placement comes from a sense of a shared career, and a common, adopted city as home. Ada was like me and every student or intern I have ever encountered in my professional life.

We all worked on similar, challenging conservation problems. We all took delight in the intellectual and practical effort it took in solving them. We were all dedicated to developing our skills and forging our careers in London and then further afield. Our training cohorts were international and filled with affection and support. Across time, we were and are, all united in the common quest to improve the physical lot of a precious object made by another, admiring its original author's skill, and its place in history and ensuring its ongoing contribution to our culture.

Ada came from the Netherlands in the late 1930s, by choice, as a young woman with a bright future to study under a renowned paintings conservator Helmut Ruhemann, a German Jew who had fled Berlin after being sacked from his

German artist Gunter Demnig installing the stolperstein in Golden Square, London

An undated photo of Ada van Dantzig



post at the Kaiser Fredrich Museum in 1934 under the antisemitic restoration of the civil service laws. He operated a private studio in Soho to supplement his low pay as consultant restorer at the National Gallery.

The placing of the Stolperstein says nothing of Ada's career or her place in conservation history, but it does put her name outside the address of her work place in Golden Square. This was one of her last places of choice - before she became a victim of Nazi terror-and this dictates the location of the Stolperstein. This was an address where she made firm friends in an environment where she became accomplished.

Ada had come to London long before her home country was invaded by the Nazis but as the regime crawled over Europe closing in on the Netherlands, her family became endangered and Ada returned to be with them as they mounted a plan for the whole family to escape to Switzerland. Her London studio colleagues fruitlessly attempted to dissuade her from leaving the UK. It is not known, prior to Ada's departure, if her family made attempts to come to England to join her, where they had other connections with family members and friends.

Ada was murdered along with her brother, sister and parents at Auschwitz in 1943. She was survived by a younger brother, Hugo, who had managed to escape to Switzerland a little earlier with other family members. Hugo's family have supported the placing of this memorial and over a hundred people from across the world have made donations to fund the project and because it exceeded its target by some way, the remaining money has been donated to the Wiener Library in Russell Square where Ada will also have a plaque installed.

About the author

Morwenna Blewitt trained as a paintings conservator at the Courtauld Institute of Art and has worked and taught conservation at major institutions and galleries around the UK and USA. Her recently completed PhD charts conservation under the Nazi regime. She is now working in a legal investigative capacity outside the conservation field

The UK's first Stolperstein dedicated to Ada van Dantzig



STARTING OUT

Drawing on her own experience as an early career conservator, Charlotte Okparaeke offers advice and encouragement to others coming into the field



I graduated with a BA in the conservation of wood, stone, plaster, and decorative surfaces at City and Guilds of London Art School (CGLAS) in 2020.

BACKGROUND

I came to conservation as a returnee to full time work after a long stint raising a family including caring for a disabled child. My previous career was in office admin,

but I'd never particularly enjoyed this. I was raring for a new challenge doing something I was passionate about, but my confidence was low and I hadn't really had to apply for any jobs or attend interviews since my twenties. So I approached my local carers centre (that's carers not careers, though the other may also be helpful!) for support and joined their Working for Carers scheme which was incredibly helpful.

EDUCATION

Initially conservation was just a vague notion in my mind. Once I started researching, I found the Icon website really helpful. Having first been attracted to textile conservation I realised there was no training available locally (I needed something nearby as I still had a child in primary school).

Applying a laponite poultice containing ammonium carbonate to the Memorial to Joseph Wade at St Mary's Rotherhithe (a Grade II* Listed Building) in south east London. Wade, c.1664 -1743, was Master Ships Carver at the Royal Dockyards in Deptford and Woolwich



When I learnt about the course in the Conservation of Stone, Wood and Decorative Surfaces at City & Guilds of London Art School (CGLAS) with its strong emphasis on craft skills I was sold. It was three years of extremely hard work but absolutely incredible!

PATHWAY TO WORK

Graduating in a pandemic wasn't the best, but I still had a great sense of achievement at completing my degree. I quickly found work with a contact I had made during my time at CGLAS and started work as a freelancer on a refurbishment of a historic property. A few weeks later the UK entered its second lockdown and the project shut down. This began a seven-month period of being out of work (I was also home schooling for some time).

It was incredibly demoralising and took its toll on my mental health. However, I kept trying, contacting every conservation company and individual I knew of and joining online events such as those put on by Icon, and eventually it paid off and I was offered two jobs in the same day! I managed to do both by spending a few weeks on the first project before joining Cliveden Conservation with whom I still work almost a year later.

My work so far has included decorative painting and gilding and lime mortar plastering and repairs. I enjoy constantly developing my skills; in every job I learn something new.



Charlotte representing the Conservation Department of the City & Guilds of London Art School, at the Historic Buildings, Parks and Garden Event in 2019

CHARLOTTE'S TOP TIPS

- Having been out of education for a long time I did a ton of (mostly free) short courses especially MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) in the year leading up to my enrolment at CGLAS.
- There is support out there if you need financial or practical help getting back into work or study whether it's charities, adult education centres, family centres (if you have a child in school) ... I financed my course through a student loan supplemented by bursaries. It's a lot of work applying for these and there can be quite a bit of competition for some awards but ask around for help in applying if you need it.
- Be open and friendly and network constantly! Conservation is a small field, but people are mostly friendly and encouraging. There were many opportunities to forge friendships and make useful contacts during my period of study. I recommend attending as many conservation related events as possible. I'm an introvert so I know that can feel awkward but do it anyway! And when looking for work don't give up. You'll get something eventually.
- Don't worry about starting out freelance even if a permanent museum post is your aim. Just get started, as all experience is valuable. Once you're in work keep an ear to the ground for opportunities in your preferred area. I believe you can get where you want to with determination.
- Join the various conservation bodies, organisations, and email lists so you are in the loop for events and job vacancies. Consider social media, particularly LinkedIn. Instagram can also be worthwhile.
- You may 'land' in a very different area to what you imagined. I started off thinking I'd want to work in a museum. Whilst I rule nothing out for the future, I've found myself mostly working on building conservation projects – working within the wider construction industry, and I absolutely love it!
- It may be worth getting a CSCS card (for working on building sites) and PASMA (scaffold towers) certification.

A STITCH IN TIME

Assistant book conservator Alice Evans and textile conservation intern Katica Laza on an interdisciplinary study day at the Bodleian Libraries

TEXTILES IN LIBRARIES

Since the autumn of 2021, the Conservation and Collection Care team at the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, has been working on an exciting project to explore the many places textiles appear across our library and archive collections. The scope of the *Textiles in Libraries* project has been wide, from embroidered bindings and end bands, to banners, tapestries and t-shirts.

As a team of book, paper, and preventive conservators, we come across textiles in our work every day, and thanks to a

One of the bindings from the early printed books collection examined as part of the survey: Seventeenth century English embroidered binding, decorated with 'petit-point' flat tapestry stitch in coloured silk and silver gilt threads on a canvas background and long green silk fore-edge ties. (C.P. 1630 e.3, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford)



Bodleian Libraries,
University of Oxford

very generous donation we have been able to embark on this project and focus on developing the knowledge of our team in this area. This has allowed us to get to know our collections much better, and given us many opportunities to share these objects beyond our team and connect with conservators, students, and academics from across many disciplines.

EMBROIDERED BINDINGS AT THE BODLEIAN

It is impossible to say how many textile bindings there are in the Bodleian's collections, as many textile elements such as velvet, book cloth or silk ties are not listed in the catalogue descriptions for these objects. However, the embroidered bindings in our early printed books are some of the most well-catalogued types of textiles appearing in our collections and have been of much interest to readers and researchers for many years.

In 1971, a small Bodleian Picture Book publication shared thirty black and white images of a selection of the most treasured textile and embroidered bindings in this part of the collection. The publication included an introduction by Giles Barber (librarian and book historian) who had undertaken work at that time to produce a list of textile and embroidered bindings in the collections, but sadly the incredible colours and scale of these bindings - some tiny pocket sized volumes and some huge and grand - could not be fully realised. So the demand to see these objects in real life remains high, to fully appreciate their intricate design and tactile materiality, and they continue to be frequently requested for study and display in our reading rooms and exhibition spaces.

Research interest in the collection varies from looking at them from a craft and design perspective to an interest in their context and what the use of textiles could tell us about their history. Often an elaborately embroidered cover indicates that the binding had a wealthy or important owner, as such fine craftsmanship would not have been cheap to produce. Other more simple designs can suggest a more personal domestic activity or act of religious devotion, as seen with pocket Bibles.

Over the past year our Rare Books colleagues have been able to add even more textile and embroidered bindings to Barber's original list. There are now two hundred and twenty-eight textile bindings listed in the collection, of which at least sixty-seven are embroidered, while others are beaded or covered with woven textiles. This figure does not of course take into account the textiles present in our archives, early and rare manuscript collection, or Oriental collections, and the continual acquisition of books and

objects with textile elements means the exploration and study of textiles across the Bodleian's collections will certainly carry on being an area of much interest to our team.

REVISITING THE 1989 SURVEY

At the start of the Textiles in Libraries project, the Bodleian conservation team looked at the historic records of the department to see if any work had been done specifically on textiles in the collections. We discovered a survey carried out in 1989 by textile conservation students studying at the Textile Conservation Centre, which at the time was at Hampton Court Palace. The students looked at nine bindings from the collection and produced a condition survey of them, which included object descriptions and treatment proposals. We realised what a fascinating resource this was, capturing not only the condition of our bindings at that time but also the teaching and contemporary trends in the field of textile conservation.

We were keen to take a look at the bindings again, thirty years on, and got in touch with the tutors at the current MPhil Textile Conservation programme, now at the University of Glasgow, to see if a collaborative study day looking at these bindings with current students might be possible. We saw the opportunity to share our knowledge of bindings and their context in a university research library with the students, who may not have come across textiles in this format before. It was also a chance for our team to continue to develop our textile knowledge and learn a bit more about what the current approach to any practical textile conservation treatment might be.

ROAD TRIP FROM GLASGOW TO OXFORD

The Glasgow course has a deep focus on textile objects and during the second year students gain a basic understanding about how to handle other materials that are often associated with textiles, such as metals, gelatines, waxes, glass beads, and wood. However, the treatment or analysis of books through a textile conservation lens is rarely discussed, unless it is to do with textile pieces mounted in books, such as samples in dye manuals.

So everyone agreed the proposed study day at the Bodleian was a great addition to the course and in April this year seven students travelled to Oxford to visit the library and re-survey the nine bindings selected for the original survey. The visit provided an excellent opportunity for the students to see textiles functioning in a very different way and to learn more about the construction and conservation of these complex mixed-media objects from both the Bodleian's book conservation team and Sue Stanton ACR, textile conservator at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, who also joined the group for the day.

CARRYING OUT THE 2022 SURVEY

The aim of the day was to resurvey the bindings and compare the findings with the original survey, so the group began by visually assessing and discussing the variety of embroidered

and textile bindings, before writing binding descriptions and suggestions for treatment options.

The selected bindings ranged from velvet-covered manuscripts decorated with cord, to printed books with covers intricately embroidered in metal and silk threads, to those still with their long and very fragile fore-edge tie attached. The group was struck by the minute scale and detailed craftsmanship in the decoration of many of the bindings. Not only did the techniques used on each binding vary greatly but so did their condition. Some of the bindings were in good condition, suggesting they were appreciated as a decorative object rather than being heavily used for their texts. By contrast, others exhibited loss of fabric along the spine, splits in the covering textile along the joints, and damage to fore-edge ties, if they were still present! The fragile condition of these bindings greatly limited the amount they could be

Another of the surveyed bindings: C17th English binding, covered in cream silk with applied decorative motifs worked in polychrome glass beads threaded with silk thread. (Broxb. 42.8, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford)



Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford



Students from the University of Glasgow examining the bindings with Sue Stanton ACR, textile conservator at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

safely handled and also meant that access to the text block inside was restricted. During the assessment of each binding it was particularly fascinating for the students to see how the use and handling by the reader was directly visible from the damage on them, particularly in areas of high stress and movement such as the joints and fore-edges of the boards.

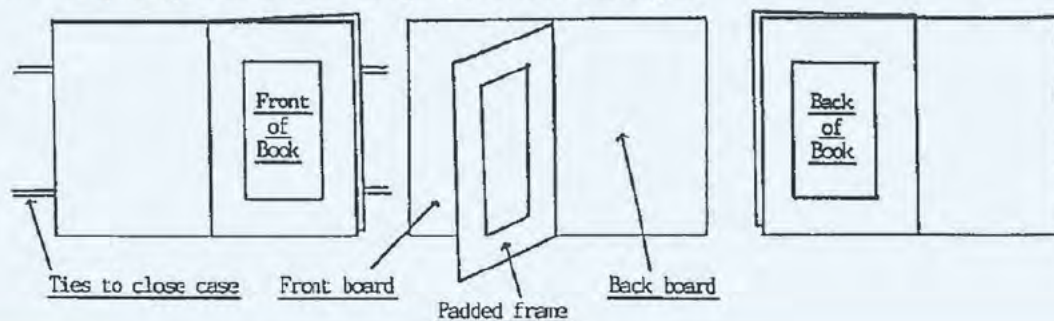
Whilst examining the books the Glasgow students were asked to compare their observations and assessments to those made in the original 1989 survey. What struck the group most about the earlier survey was the highly interventive treatments recommended for bindings that were in relatively stable condition. The earlier suggestions ranged from designing protective cases to reduce direct handling, to covering books in protective netting, through to completely removing and wet or solvent cleaning the covering textiles on the bindings. This last, and very interventive treatment option, was quite popular in the original survey, and the

Glasgow students noted that this could be due to a contemporary case study article written by Mary Lampart in 1987, which described a similar treatment and could have influenced the students' thought processes at the time.

It was particularly useful for the students to be able to undertake the survey with the help of the Bodleian team, so as to be guided in specific book terminology and to gain a better understanding of the approach of book conservators when considering such complex objects. The students were used to working with objects destined for display or storage in museums; but here, by contrast, despite the books being notable for their design importance, it was emphasised that they must be considered as working objects when held in a library collection. Accessibility to the text block is essential for their study. So the treatment recommendations the students had to propose felt even more challenging, as they would need to both support and protect the textile covers while also providing safe access to the text block.

Diagram of proposed mounting system for Broxb. 85.13 from the 1989 survey

The proposed method of storage involves use of a sandwich of three separately padded and fabric covered acid-free boards. The middle board would be as thick as the book. It would be cut to form a frame, slightly larger than the book itself. By opening from different sides, both faces of the cover could then be examined, without handling the book. The object could also be removed by lifting the frame, so avoiding any abrasion of the edges.



Diagrams detailing damage:



Fig 1. Left board



Fig 2. Spine

Key





-  Missing ties
-  Damaged Corners
-  Abrasion of pile
-  Split in fabric
-  Missing fabric

Diagram of damage on binding from 2022 survey (*University of Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Broxb. 85.13*)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The study day was valuable in giving the students a better understanding of the difficulties conservators face every day when dealing with complex and fragile mixed-media objects. The experience of working in a multi-disciplinary team to look collaboratively at objects greatly complemented their studies thus far, and showed how effective it can be to bring together a mixed team of experts to give multiple perspectives on a project.

Having the opportunity to discuss these mixed-media objects in a group also emphasised the lack of current published research and case studies in the area of conservation of textile bindings. From discovering the intriguing influence of Lampart's 1987 article on the earlier survey, it was noted by the group that there has been relatively little written in this area since - something that the recent interest in this area of interdisciplinary conservation work will hopefully change.

Overall, the study day was a rewarding and engaging learning experience for all involved. The Glasgow students were able to practise their observation skills and widen their knowledge of textile-related objects, while the Bodleian team were able to enhance their understanding of these complex objects in the library's collection.

Revisiting the 1989 survey and looking at the same objects emphasised the continuity of care for these objects in the

Bodleian's collection, and created a link back to past students on the textile conservation programme allowing the current University of Glasgow students to engage with, and continue, the legacy of the course in its various iterations.

With thanks to Nicole Gilroy ACR, Joanne Hackett ACR, Sue Stanton ACR, Sarah Wheale, Jo Maddocks and the MPhil Textile Conservation student group.

About the authors

Alice Evans is an assistant book conservator at the Bodleian Libraries, where she works on the practical treatment and preservation of objects from across the collections. Over the past year, she has been leading the Bodleian's *Textiles in Libraries* project looking at textiles found in library collections in both expected and unexpected places.

Katica Laza is a former textile conservation student at the University of Glasgow and was one of the study day group of students. She is currently undertaking a one year internship at the Bodleian Libraries as a T.A. Barron intern. She also runs the social media for Icon's Emerging Professional Network.

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WORKSHOPS

STAIN REDUCTION

Icon Ceramics and Glass Group
London 2-5 August 2022

During the first week of August, the Stain Reduction Workshop organised by the Ceramics and Glass Group finally got underway!

This workshop has been a long-time coming and there have been a number of people involved in its organisation. The event was first discussed between **Dana Norris ACR**, our former Chair, and **Bruno Pouliot** (1957-2018) from the University of Delaware, Winterthur Museum in February 2017. Bruno's colleague, **Lauren Fair**, worked with Dana on the joint ICOM-CC, CGG conference held in November 2019, when the idea of a UK Stain Reduction Workshop was discussed between them. **Dean Sully** from University College London offered the

Archaeology Labs as a venue and **Lily Griffin**, then a UCL student, joined the CGG committee as Student Representative and took on the role as the contact between CGG and UCL.

However, world events in the shape of Covid conspired against the plans and it became clear that it was not possible to hold the workshop as planned in 2020, or even in 2021. In November 2021, after **Ros Hodges ACR** took over as CGG Chair, Lauren delivered a virtual version of the Stain Reduction Workshop in the form of an online lecture, which attracted attendees from around the world and gave us all a taste of the stain reduction research being undertaken at Winterthur. Finally, at the beginning of August 2022, we were able to hold this event in person. With limited places available, and a high level of interest, the event sold out rapidly.

On Monday 1 August, Lauren Fair, Lily Griffin, Ros Hodges and two UCL Students,

Maxim Cheshnokov and Freyer Sackville West, met to set up the workshop and pre-mix the solutions needed for the practical work. Two sessions of two-day workshops were run with thirteen delegates and a UCL student attending each. Lauren's lecture was delivered clearly and precisely with excellent slides explaining the theory of stain removal and the science behind why certain solutions work in combination and most importantly how they affect the stain material.

Putting theory into practice, each delegate had access to some sacrificial stained ceramics, with a variety of stains presented and different surface conditions. We tested a range of chelators, different poultice materials and bleaching agents. Although time was limited, the attendees were able to see progress in stain reduction on the objects following Lauren's guidance. At the end of each day, feedback sessions were held to discuss our experiences and other possible treatment options for our objects.

The event has been a really positive experience and allowed for the sharing of established research, exchange of ideas, and networking among colleagues. We are glad to receive positive feedback from our attendees:

'The Stain Reduction workshop was a welcome professional development opportunity for experienced Ceramics Conservators. Lauren Fair presented a range of case studies that demonstrated what can be achieved by repeating tests throughout the stain reduction process, and with perseverance over time. The practical element complemented her presentations, making it easier to understand the subtleties of application. It was great to see different types of stains in a range of ceramic bodies brought in by the attendees. Lauren guided us through spot testing, making poultices, bleaching, and rinsing. It was helpful to see all the different approaches put into action across different examples and the results. Thanks very much to the CGG committee, UCL, and Lauren Fair for putting this workshop together. I look forward to trying out new materials we used and putting these techniques into practice.'

Dr Dana Norris ACR, Watt and Norris Conservation

'I got involved with this workshop as a student volunteer from the MSc Conservation for Archaeology and Museums course at the Institute of Archaeology. This was the first Icon workshop that I have attended, and I had a lot of fun helping to prepare for it and getting to know the organisers (and, later, the other participants). It gave me the

The Ceramics and Glass Group's Stain Reduction workshop





The Jacquard Willard loom at the Museum of the Carpet in Kidderminster

chance to experiment with a range of previously unfamiliar materials for stain reduction in ceramics, and I found the open exchange of ideas and experiences particularly valuable. I am excited to apply what I have learned to my work, and look forward to getting involved in future events! Thank you!' *Maxim Cheshnokov, student at UCL*

The event has also been a wonderful opportunity for the CGG Committee to meet each other in person for the first time! This has been a true team effort to deliver a high-quality event, which will hopefully lead to a spin off working group 'All Things Staining' where we will continue to share our experiences and ideas. CGG would like to thank Lauren once again for delivering such a fantastic workshop, as well as the staff at UCL, especially Lab Technician Timea, for their help during the week.

Ros Hodges ACR, CGG Chair

Han Zhou (Rose) CGG Event Coordinator

BACK TO BASICS: Care of Historic Carpets, Rugs and Woven Textile Floor Coverings

Icon Textile Group
Kidderminster, July 2022

The Icon Textile Group hosted their first 'in person' course since the outbreak of the pandemic, covering the care and conservation of historic carpets at the Museum of the

The Spool Axminster loom at the Museum of the Carpet in Kidderminster





Claire Cuyaubere reveals some of the successful reconstructions of glass damaged in the 2020 Beirut explosion



Carpet in Kidderminster. The course was led by **Glyn Charnock**, a former director of the National Carpet Cleaners Association who has over twenty years' experience in the commercial carpet cleaning sector, and **Ksynia Marko ACR**, former Textile Conservation Adviser to the National Trust and current free-lance consultant. This resulted in a brilliantly informative and practical approach to carpet conservation taught through theoretical and hands-on sessions, which was much appreciated by the mix of preventative and textile conservators in attendance.

On day one, we covered carpet types and construction – how to tell handwoven from machine-made, asymmetric knots from symmetrical and Axminster from Wilton. We then looked at fibre types, agents of deterioration, health and safety, the behaviour of carpets in use and the merits of druggets and underlays. On the second day, the focus was on conservation – cleaning, handling, packing, pest control, surveying, and an overview of basic repairs.

With a large selection of carpets available for examination, we were able to put our learning to the test, identifying how the carpets had been woven, the direction of the weave, the condition, how they should be rolled and stored, and give conservation recommendations.

We also looked at a range of cleaning equipment from budget friendly flexible tamping bats and rubber pet brushes to the more expensive Sebo professional vacuum cleaners. As a freelance textile conservator, I

appreciated the consideration given to showing a variety of options. Understandably, much of the focus of the course was on the care of collections of carpets in historic houses, but it was easy to see how these methods could be adapted to smaller one-off projects.

Enjoyment of the course was enhanced by the setting in the Kidderminster Museum of the Carpet. As well as a fascinating exhibition on the history of carpet production in Kidderminster, the museum has two historic working looms – the Spool Axminster loom and the Jacquard Wilton loom. We were lucky enough to see these in action, demonstrated ably by knowledgeable volunteers who formerly worked in some of the many carpet factories that once dominated this area.

Many thanks to Glyn, Ksynia, the Textile Group, and all the staff and volunteers at the Museum of the Carpet for this uniquely illuminating and enjoyable event.

Daisy Graham
Textile Conservator
The Textile Surgery, London

TALKS

CONSERVATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL GLASS

Icon Archaeology Group
Online June 2022

Inspired by the UN International Year of Glass (www.iyog2022.org), the Icon Archaeology Group held their virtual AGM on 23

June in conjunction with a number of interesting talks on the subject of archaeological glass, with some presenting from far-flung corners of Istanbul and Portugal and some having pre-recorded their presentations. The benefits of zoom! We were delighted to reach capacity with around one hundred people signing up for these talks; delegates were sent the link to the recorded version. This is also available on our Group website page along with the abstracts.

We were treated to a wonderful variety of subjects. A selection of interesting case studies and problem-solving from the field to the lab was presented by **Dana Goodburn Brown ACR** (DGB Conservation) while useful 'take aways' were supplied by **Luisa Duarte ACR** (Museum of London) on nylon gossamer

The conservation nightmare of a face-down showcase



© American University of Beirut

fills and **Saray Naidorf** (British Museum) who discussed the re-conservation of a poorly restored Roman blue glass jar using epoxy sheets, including the creative use of Lego for mould making. It was good to revisit the conservation process on a beautiful millefiori bowl by **Liz Goodman ACR** (MOLA), and to hear that it has been selected for the new Museum of London. We are all now looking forward to seeing it around 2025!

A presentation from **Claire Cuyaubere** and **Duygu Camurcuoglu ACR** (British Museum) shared the patience and skills demonstrated in the conservation of items damaged at the American University of Beirut Archaeological Museum in the explosion of August 2020. Those face-down showcases and scattered pieces were an emotionally gut-wrenching sight even for those who didn't witness the carnage first hand. To hear about the successes in reconstructing many of the vessels and the ongoing collaboration between the Beirut Glass Project partners

was awe inspiring. For more details see the British Museum website.

A lively discussion surrounding the benefits and uses of different Paraloid solutions followed – who knew it was such a hot topic?!

We would like to extend thanks to all the speakers, members of the committee who organised and hosted the event, and to our delegates for attending.

Claire Woodhead ACR

COLLOQUI/01: Reflections on cultural heritage conservation and on the contemporary meaning of a conservation theory

ENGIM (Ente Nazionale Giuseppini del Murialdo)

Hybrid event (Vicenza, Italy/online)
15 July 2022

This event featured **Dr. Salvador Muñoz Viñas**, Professor of the Department of Conservation and Restoration at the

Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain, and author of the well known publication *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*. As the organising body ENGIM is a professional training provider, students actively engaged with his theory during a Q&A session moderated by **Erminio Signorini** and **Laura Martini**. Thanks to the real-time YouTube broadcast and English–Italian translations, I was fortunate enough to have been able to join virtually from Tokyo.

Dr Paolo Cremonesi opened the meeting by calling into question the view that cultural heritage sectors in Italy have been single-mindedly focussed on the theories of Cesare Brandi, the legendary Italian art historian of the last century. Thus, this meeting aimed to propose another insight to get the direction of 21st-century conservation.

Based on his dual expertise in art history and conservation, Muñoz Viñas' unique lecture, entitled 'The Battle of Clio and Euterpe',

Salvador Muñoz Viñas describing attitudes towards conservation over the ages. The figures categorised under the muses are as follows (from left to right, from top to bottom): *Between Euterpe and Clio*: E. Viollet le-Duc; *Clio*: John Ruskin, Camillo Boito, Georg Dehio; *Urania*: Rutherford Gettens, Helmut Ruhemann; *Crypto-Euterpians*: Alois Riegl, Cesare Brandi



illustrated how conservation has evolved through the changes in our perspectives when looking at art.

Muñoz Viñas employed the metaphors of Greek mythology to highlight the distinctive motivations for art conservation: feelings and truth. Euterpe, the muse of music and pleasure, referred to altering the appearance of an object for enjoyment. One famous example of this was the Laocoön sculpture, where the missing arm was repeatedly added and removed. By contrast, Clio, the muse of history and knowledge, predominated from the 18th century onwards, brought to the fore by the Enlightenment and the emergence of academic disciplines. Authors in the second half of the 19th century criticised past treatments as deception whilst seeking the truth of the object. The modern notion of conservation established at that time thus lacked the Euterpean perspective.

The scientific conservation that has become the standard from the 20th century onwards was symbolised by Urania, the muse of science. In the view of Muñoz Viñas, Brandi's theory was formulated in resistance to Urania because Brandi emphasised that the aesthetic value of an artwork should take precedence over the scientific approaches. All the theoretical positions up to the end of the 20th century can be summarised with this metaphor of the muses, as illustrated.

Muñoz Viñas pointed out that the battle of Clio and Euterpe, and that of Urania, lacks views from outside of Western contexts. With multiculturalism in mind, contemporary theory, including his own, stresses the importance of social value, which has regard to the feelings and expectations of communities. One notable conclusion of the lecture was that the Euterpean approach, which had been paid less attention to in the past several centuries, has made a comeback by acknowledging social value.

The fruitful Q&A session went on further to delve into Muñoz Viñas's theory. It was interesting to see how each proposed notion was intertwined as a unified whole. The topics discussed included impacts of his book, feelings versus science, conservators' responsibility, sustainability and aesthetic experiences affected by digital technologies. What fascinated me was that the notion of sustainability was associated with his view of minimal intervention. According to Muñoz Viñas, sustainable conservation refers to passing as much information as possible on to future generations rather than being solely concerned with ecological and economic resources. As compromises should always be made where there is

conflict among people's feelings, the information of the object could be lost to some extent. Therefore, minimising the loss of meaning for every community involved is key. This leads to his idea of 'balanced meaning loss', which is an alternative to the concept of minimal intervention.

Whilst the biggest criticism of his publication was the lack of step-by-step recipes for practice, Muñoz Viñas responded that theory could only deal with general questions. It seems to me that discussions between theorists and practitioners will run in parallel unless we accept that the goals are different. However, I also feel that thinking about the meanings of the object is the way to place conservation in the real world. It would indicate to us what it actually means to our identity that cultural heritage is damaged as a consequence of contemporary issues such as political factors and climate change.

Muñoz Viñas's humorous talk was an absolute cause for joy, as if it resonated with his sympathy for the Euterpean attitude. There were various examples of treatments

and ample quotations from the authors presented. These shed light on the broad picture of the history of conservation theory.

Thanks to the professor and all those who put so much effort into organising this amazing event. It is with much gratitude that Cremonesi hoped this meeting would be the beginning of a journey to discuss complex topics with Muñoz Viñas further. I am very keen to keep an eye on the ensuing activities.

Yuka Okawa

Associate fellow, Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Japan

VISITS

LAMBETH PALACE LIBRARY TOUR

Independent Paper Conservators Group
London July 2022

It was with great joy that a number of conservators, mainly of the book and paper persuasion, met at Lambeth Palace Library on a sunny July day for a tour of the new and impressive collections storage, reading room

The Conservation Studio across the pond viewed from the Reading Room at Lambeth Palace Library



and collections care studio. It was perhaps the first time many in this group had met since the pandemic, so thanks to **Clare Prince ACR** for arranging the event.

Our host was the irrepressible **Lara Artemis ACR**, senior conservator at Lambeth Palace Library. She explained that the new building had been ten years in planning and is now known as The National Library and Archive for the Church of England. Wright and Wright architects were engaged to design the building and its most important function is to bring together disparate collections, the Church of England Record Centre - over 10km of material held in a large warehouse in Bermondsey - and around 7km of collections held across some twenty spaces on the Lambeth Palace estate; additional modern records have been sent to the Cheshire Salt mines. The new building aimed to create one single entity that would provide significant protection to the collections, whilst providing better public engagement opportunities in the understanding of the history of the Church of England.

Not only is the building large enough to house the vast collection, it has enough expansion for 15-20% more within its beautifully handmade brick walls. The design, although not as ornate as the Palace, feels in keeping with its surroundings, largely due to the use of materials, Tudor-style brickwork and clever details that nod to its



Inside the conservation studio

function and context. Inside the foyer, hanging from the ceiling is a lit circular halo – a reminder of the ecclesiastical setting and nature of the space.

Did you know that there is a large function room at the top of the building which can

host lectures and gatherings? Our first stop was the outside terrace next to this room which boasts an almost panoramic view of the London skyline. On your way up to your meeting on the top floor you can tarry a while in the foyer and second floor which have a few informative screens and exhibition cabinets showing collection items.

We were treated to a visit to the archive areas (plan and box storage) as well as storage for the printed book collection, including Sion College material, in the new permanent shelf storage in the stacks. The team are now busy on conservation projects but in readiness for the move they undertook the boxing of over 40,000 books and archives, as well as the cleaning of thousands of them. An initial condition survey has been developed to help understand the priorities and future housing requirements, which is what the team are currently working to and expanding on.

The five floors of seven storage stacks are state of the art, with many significant experts consulting on the build project, such as Tim Padfield and Beryl Menzies on minimising risks around fire and environment. The building is continually monitored by sensors that report to both the Collections Care studio and the Facilities Management team. The building is environmentally managed using a part HVAC system with a passive kick-in. The beauty of this is that the environment can be controlled passively

Some of the visiting group on the roof terrace of the new Lambeth Palace Library with Lara Artemis on the left



most of the time and only occasionally needs the HVAC system to be activated when outside conditions are unusual.

The building has already received a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellence Award. There is no gas into the building, so the energy efficiency is already being felt in terms of costs, where 50% of the energy is provided by solar panels on the roof, realising a more efficient approach to managing our carbon off-set. This, for a large library and archive on one of the busiest roads in London, is a model of excellence in terms of cutting down energy consumption and energy waste.

The Collections Care studio was, of course, our ultimate aim and it did not disappoint. Our first brief glimpse of it, seen from above the reading room, shows it set near a wildlife pond with large windows and discrete ground floor access. Going into the studio, it is more of a series of rooms, each with a specific purpose: a quarantine room for new acquisitions; preservation room with a Zund

Box-making machine, encapsulation and mount-cutting; a low-light exhibition space and then the entrance into what felt like a welcoming hub surrounded by height adjustable benches alongside a workshop (dirty room) and laboratory. At the entrance to the large studio is a break-out area with comfy seating and reference materials leading to a larger space for outsize projects and training, with a formidable (and my personal favourite) wall-mounted vertical light box.

The details in the space are carefully thought out and Lara was keen to point out that the architects had really listened to the needs of every member of staff. Integral to the studio specifications were three areas - good access, wide and different spaces for varying functions, and a range of lighting options. This means that the benches are positioned in front of the windows where the light is excellent, the floor is non-slip, the windows are triple-glazed and UV filtered, some doors open on proximity, and the access to the loading bay is next to the Collections Care studio. Even the fixtures and fittings are

thoughtfully mobile where needed and modular for flexibility. Plenty of ceiling power sockets means that there is little chance of creating dangerous trip hazards. Needless to say we were all in awe of this cleverly produced space and started to envy the lucky conservators who get to work there.

Our thanks to **Meagen Smith ACR**, **Maria Martinez-Viciano**, **Fiona Johnston**, and **Talitha Wachtelborn**, who demonstrated their conservation projects to us and engaged us in how they were maximising the use of their new working environment. Thanks also to Lara Artemis, who along with librarians and archivists and Lara's predecessor, Janet Atkinson, masterminded the move and have had such a positive input into the new stacks and studio. It is a joy to behold!

Ruth Stevens ACR

<https://lambethpalacelibrary.org>

Relaxing on the Thamesis Dock floating pub after the visit



the emerging professional



A YEAR AT WEST DEAN

Duncan McCall on his year at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation studying the conservation of ceramics

About me

In September last year I commenced a Graduate Diploma in Conservation Studies at West Dean College of Arts & Conservation, specialising in ceramics and related materials. That course ended in July, and I have recently decided to complete a Master's degree in the same subject at West Dean this coming year.

This is the start of a second career for me, having previously worked as a barrister in London. I had no previous background in conservation, but my love of ceramics and my wish to do something practical after many years working at a desk-based job pointed me in the direction of the conservation of ceramics.

Author at West Dean College
© West Dean College of Arts & Conservation



The Ceramics Conservation Workshop at West Dean College, June 2022

West Dean College

The College provides a wide programme of education in conservation and art, with a focus on craft skills with vocational application. It is an inspiring place to study, set in a beautiful 6,400-acre estate in the South Downs National Park, with the imposing neo-gothic mansion West Dean House at its centre. Students have access to a well-stocked library, a state-of-the-art conservation science laboratory, and leisure facilities include a swimming pool and the inevitable student bar.

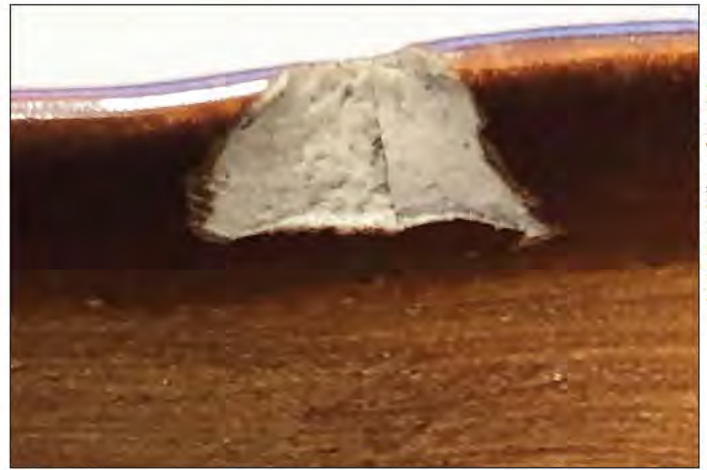
The course

The Graduate Diploma course is one-year, full time. It is workshop-based and centred on the development of practical conservation skills, but in tandem with the practical work we have weekly lectures on conservation science and on wider aspects of cultural heritage, collections care, and the ethics of conservation. As the course progressed, I began to see how these various strands have been carefully planned to be of practical relevance to my chosen specialism.

Some of my projects

As we were taught skills in the workshop, we were given objects of increasing complexity on which to practise them. We started off with flowerpots which we broke, re-bonded and gap-filled; but as our skills gradually developed, we were given real objects to work on which either belong to West Dean or to other institutions or private owners. All of our practical conservation work is carried out under the supervision of our tutors, so the risk to the objects is minimised.

I quickly learnt that sometimes an object that looks easy to treat may be far from straightforward. A good example of this was a salt glazed stoneware jug made by James Stiff, London, between 1870 and 1900. It arrived in the workshop with a shallow loss to the side of the neck and another to the internal side of the rim. I found it relatively straightforward to colour-fill those losses with bulked epoxy resin, but achieving the right balance between the texture and lustre of the salt glaze was a real challenge.



The loss to the internal rim of the jug



The shallow loss to the side of the jug neck

The jug after treatment





The 2,000 year old flagon as received in the workshop

The course has given me the opportunity to carry out detailed research into the objects I worked on. One of the most satisfying examples was a 2,000-year-old flagon, belonging to the Novium Museum in Chichester, which was excavated from the St. Pancras Roman Cemetery in the city. I received the flagon in eight sections, with its handle and some fragments around the neck and rim missing.

On close inspection, the losses around the rim and neck and the loss of the handle appeared to be of ancient origin. My research revealed that other flagons excavated at the cemetery had similar damage around the necks, which may suggest

that the flagon was buried in such a way that its mouth was left protruding from the ground to allow libations (offerings of wine or other substances) to be made. I therefore decided, in consultation with the Novium Museum curator, not to replace

Supporting the flagon whilst the adhesive sets



Bonding the flagon with Paraloid B72





Spatulating Prestia Alpha plaster into the foil-supported void, using a thread to allow pressure to be applied against the support. The author then refined and retouched the fill away from the object.



The bonded, filled and retouched area of the flagon

the lost handle and missing material around the neck as those losses may have been intrinsic to the purpose of the object. Leaving those areas in their damaged state respected that purpose and the possible ritual significance of the flagon.

My treatment of the flagon therefore concentrated on bonding the remaining sherds together and filling and retouching one large void in the centre. The filling process required a good deal of practical problem-solving: the narrow neck limited access to the interior to support the fill I needed to make to improve the stability and aesthetic appearance of the flagon.

Another pleasing project was a Chinese earthenware wall vase in the form of a cicada, one of a set of six similar objects received in the workshop. My cicada was disfigured by a

broken left wing. My treatment for it involved bonding with Paraloid B72 and filling the gap with Flügger acrylic putty. I then retouched the fill with acrylic paint before polishing this area to resemble the gloss of the original glazed wing.

One of my most challenging projects over the year has been the ongoing treatment of a 200-year-old Chinese porcelain lidded jar, which arrived in the workshop in seventy-four sherds (including many which had been previously bonded). The task of cleaning the sherds and dismantling previous bonds took several weeks. Key to that process was identifying the old adhesive that had been used, which I did with the help of an infrared spectrometer (FTIR) in the science lab. Once that had been identified, I could decide what solvent to use, and the task could proceed.

1. The cicada with its broken wing. 2. The cicada during treatment. 3. The cicada upon completion of treatment





Some of the larger sherds of the Chinese jar – only a fraction of the total number

Due to issues similar to those I encountered with the Roman flagon - a narrow neck and lack of access to the interior - my decision in this case was to bond the object in two sections, to allow fills to be made with temporary supports, then to bond the two sections together. At the time of writing this I had reached the stage of partially bonding the main sherds, and once that stage is finished the filling and retouching can proceed.

Reflections on the year

This has been an amazing year, and I have done so much that in my previous professional life I would never have imagined I would be doing. It has been a real privilege to be given access to work on wonderful ceramic objects of so many different types. I now look forward to continuing with my Master's degree before, with luck, finding work as a professional conservator.

Work in progress on the Chinese jar - two sections bonded and placed in good alignment while the adhesive cured



the emerging professional

An Internship at Tate

Merry Chow outlines her placement experience

In early 2022, I started a five-month internship at Tate as part of my final year of postgraduate training in object conservation at University College London (UCL). It was an invaluable opportunity to apply my training in practice and gain work experience. I have learned a lot from my colleagues in the Sculpture and Installation Department. It is a pleasure to work with such a warm and welcoming team.

In my first month, I was able to familiarise myself with the workflow, documentation, and various activities related to the display and exhibition at Tate Modern. Through shadowing the work of my supervisor and participating in the installation of the exhibition *Surrealism Beyond Borders*, it gave me an overview of the post-COVID daily operations of the conservation department in a museum.

As I gradually gained confidence in collaborating with different parties and stakeholders within the museum, I was then given more tasks assisting other areas of conservation activities within the department, such as acquisitions, loans, and international programmes. Towards the end of my internship, I was also given the opportunity to be involved in the outdoor sculpture maintenance at the Barbara Hepworth Museum in St. Ives for a week. Working across Tate sites and in different conservation roles has challenged me to become a more versatile conservator. I have to be mentally prepared to 'switch hats' and readily transition into different roles in a dynamic working environment.

The *Liquid Modernity* project

Throughout my internship at Tate, I undertook a research project looking into crude oil and its alternatives for the artwork *Liquid Modernity* by Andrei Molodkin. *Liquid Modernity* is a large-scale installation composed of two rectangular, cage-like structures placed side-by-side with machinery,

Dusting and condition checking Cecilia Vicuña's *Quipu Womb* during deinstallation at Tate Modern





Dusting of artwork on display in Tate Modern

pipes, and oil cans in between them. One cage is made of clear Perspex tubes where refined crude oil is circulated from the oil cans and into the tubes at a frequency similar to a human heartbeat using air compressors and diaphragm pumps. Another cage is made of white translucent Perspex tubes with white fluorescent tubes inserted within. The artwork addresses the monopoly and geopolitics associated with fossil fuel production in conflict zones and comments on the indispensable role of crude oil in modern life and the world economy.

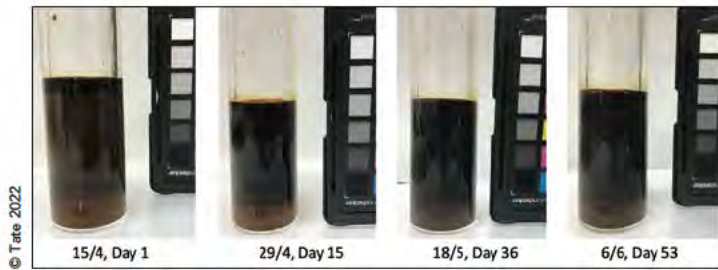
The research aims to allow safe display and longevity for the artwork, whilst attempting to keep the authenticity of the artist's intent. The project involved the investigation and comparison of crude oil and various alternative solutions, such as soya sauce, in terms of viscosity and other parameters, the costing for maintenance and waste disposal, and compliance with health and safety regulations.

The experiment was conducted in two parts: a Perspex® tubes mock-up test and a corrosion test, with the main parameters as follows: physical properties, change over time, pH level, cost, ease of cleaning, and sustainability. A COSHH sheet for each material and risk assessments were required.

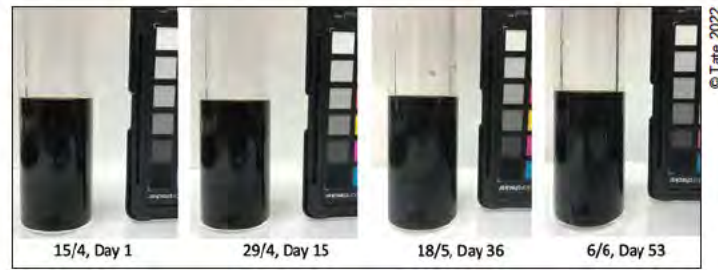
Before the mock-up, ten samples were monitored in glass test tubes over twenty-one days and compared against visual

The installation at the *Liquid Modernity: Grid and Greed* exhibition at Orel Art in London in 2009

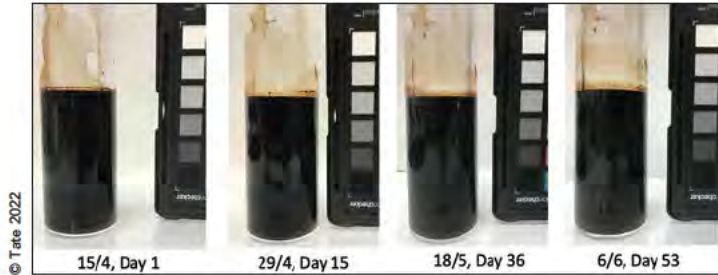




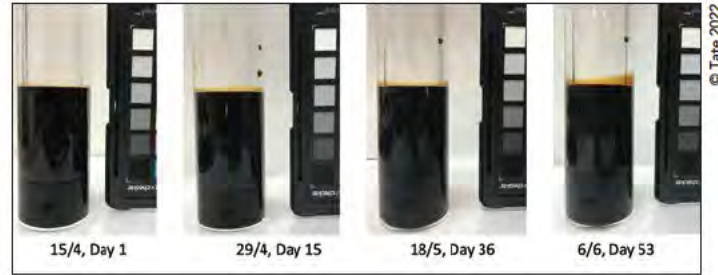
Left to right: **coffee** in Perspex tube on day 1, day 15, day 36 and day 53. No significant colour change to solution. Slight surface staining on tubes. Precipitation darkened in colour.



Left to right: **Van Dyke Brown** in Perspex tube on day 1, day 15, day 36 and day 53. No significant colour change to solution. Significant surface staining that forms brown precipitation on tube's wall over time.



Left to right: **dark soy sauce** in Perspex tube on day 1, day 15, day 36 and day 53. No significant colour change to solution. Slight surface staining.



Left to right: **balsamic vinegar** in Perspex tube on day 1, day 15, day 36 and day 53. No significant colour change to solution. No surface staining.



Steel strips at stage 1 (start date on 15 April) corrosion test after 1 month. 1 - instant coffee; 2 - Van Dyke Brown crystals in DI; 3 - Dark soy sauce; 4 - Balsamic vinegar; 5 - Engine Oil (for testing solvent cleaning only)



Steel strips at stage 1. Corrosion test after 2 months. 1 - instant coffee; 2 - Van Dyke Brown crystals in DI; 3 - Dark soy sauce; 4 - Balsamic vinegar; 5 - Engine Oil (for testing solvent cleaning only)



Steel strips at stage 2 (start date on 7 Jun) corrosion test after 2 weeks. 6 = Glycerin + Van Dyke Brown in DI; 7= Glycerin + Van Dyke Brown in DI + dark soy sauce



Steel strips at stage 2. Corrosion test after 1 month. 6 = Glycerin + Van Dyke Brown in DI; 7= Glycerin + Van Dyke Brown in DI + dark soy sauce

references of similar works by Molodkin. Four samples were eventually selected as possible alternatives to be monitored in the Perspex® tubes and observed for eleven weeks.

As a kinetic artwork, the liquid will be moved around the artwork and come into contact with metal components, so understanding the corrosive nature of the solutions was

required. The corrosion test was conducted in two phases using cold-forged steel strips (21mm x 30mm x 12mm) in the sample solutions in glass test tubes. The Perspex® tubes and steel strips will then be analyzed against reference by the Conservation Science Department.

Baloji's Mortar Shell

Accommodating a fast-paced, intensive display and exhibition schedule also implies conducting treatment within a compressed timeframe. Setting an acceptable end goal for conservation treatment is extremely important. In preparation for Baloji's installation work *802. That is where, as you head, the elephant danced the Malinga. The place where they now grow flowers*, currently on display at Tate Modern, I was assigned to conduct a condition check and treatment of the mortar shells within two weeks.

The thirty-eight shiny bronze mortar shells of assorted sizes were collected by the artist and used as planters for plants commonly found in botanical gardens across Europe which were indigenous to Central Africa. Apart from light scratches and tarnishing, most mortar shells are structurally sound and in good condition. Some of them have localised corrosion spots disguising the elaborate carving by soldiers of the First and Second World Wars. One mortar shell was covered by severe reddish brown corrosion possibly due to the use of bubble wrap packaging before it arrived at Tate.

Most of the reddish-brown corrosion was eventually removed by the abrasive clean paste Pre-lim Surface Cleaner and a super fine and soft copper bristle wire brush.

Cornelia Parker Exhibition at Tate Britain

Shortly after the treatment of the mortar shell, I started an intensive three-week installation of the Cornelia Parker exhibition at Tate Britain, working closely with technicians and art handlers for the installation of two large-scale artworks *Cold Dark Matter* and *Thirty Pieces of Silver*.

Unlike historical artworks which are less variable in nature, installation art can have various forms depending on the exhibition site or context, to re-create an intended experience or interaction with the viewer. A dynamic, collaborative process with the living artists is often required to conserve the diverse characteristics and working properties of the artwork. Apart from documentation of previous installations, the installation process of this exhibition relies on close collaboration with Cornelia Parker and the experiences of senior art handlers and technicians who have developed long-term relationships with

Before and after treatment. A mortar shell of Baloji's installation work *802. That is where, as you heard, the elephant danced the malinga. The place where they now grow flowers*



© Tate 2022

the artist and are familiar with setting up these artworks. It is a unique learning opportunity to be involved in a project working with the artist as a conservation intern.

Overview

My internship at Tate provided me with the opportunity to gain experience working with a wide range of materials in different areas of conservation within a museum setting. I am grateful for the guidance and help from the team in transition from training to emerging professional conservator.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the Sculpture and Installation Conservation team for their support in my development, particularly Deborah Cane ACR, Sculpture and Installation Art Conservation Manager, as well as Elisabeth Andersson, Elizabeth McDonald, Pilar Caballe-Valls, Gates Sofer ACR, Carla Flack ACR, Alice Watkins, Manuela Toro, Karin Hignett, Libby Ireland, Melanie Rolfe, Roger Murray, Tom Duggan, and Demelza Watts. Finally, I would like to thank my tutors from the Institute of Archaeology at UCL, Dr Dean Sully, Dr Caitlin O'Grady, and Dr Jill Saunders for their guidance throughout my studies.



The mortar shells of Baloji's 802. That is where, as you heard, the elephant danced the malinga. The place where they now grow flowers on display at Tate Modern

© Tate 2022

Polishing a bronze
surface for re-lacquering
Hepworth's *Four-Square*
(Walk Through)
© Tate 2022





Close-up of a treated mortar shell
© Tate 2022