
Western Association for Art Conservation

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

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

Modular Cleaning Program Mini-Workshop

Taught by Chris Stavroudis

September 8, 2014

We are pleased to announce this pre-annual meeting workshop, hosted and co-sponsored by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco – de Young.

The focus will be aqueous cleaning theory and methods, including working with Pemulen and making a silicone microemulsion. Applications to paper and textiles in addition to paintings and objects will be discussed. (Please note that this is a lecture and demonstration workshop only due to constraints of time. There will be no hands-on component nor will participants get the “MCP kits” that are normally prepared in the full workshop.)

If you haven’t had the time or opportunity to take the full Modular Cleaning Program (MCP) course, here’s your chance to take an abbreviated one! If you’ve already taken the MCP, this will be a welcome and economical refresher.

The fee for WAAC members is \$75, for non-members \$115 (workshop fee + \$40 WAAC membership), for students (up to one year after graduation) \$50. Registration details will be announced.

Regional News

Catherine Coueignoux
column editor

Alaska

Helen Alten is enjoying her work as Director of the Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center in Haines, Alaska. She planned and installed her first exhibit - *Strung Up and Reconfigured: Puppetry from Haines and Beyond*. Now she is preparing for an architectural assessment in order to improve the museum’s storage, light levels, and environmental controls, using sustainability and ADA as the prime reasons for the building upgrades. In a recent children’s spring camp at the museum, Helen spent a day teaching preservation concepts, culminating with the children stringing necklaces of UV sensitive beads and comparing how they looked inside and outside the museum.

Scott Carrlee continues to lead a crew of talented museum professionals in the de-installation of the exhibits at the Alaska State Museum. The demolition of the current museum building this summer will make way for a brand new Alaska State Museum in 2016. Some of the large artifacts on display such as a 49 foot skin covered boat and large totem poles required special rigging to get them safely out of the building.

Ellen Carrlee is looking toward artifact treatments and product testing for the new museum exhibits once the Alaska State Museum collection is evacuated from the old building. Large treatments will include a Bristol Bay Double Ender fishing boat, a Baldwin electric locomotive, a Haida canoe, several kayaks, and a “Wonderwall” of natural history specimens.

Sarah Owens has been preparing objects for exhibits, specifically *Riskland: Remembering the 1964 Alaska Earthquake*, and undertaking preventive conservation work throughout the museum. For the remaining year, her focus will be curating and preparing an exhibit on the topic of materials. As part of this exhibit she plans to increase the public face of conservation at the Anchorage Museum.

After a full January preparing art and installing the exhibit, *Gyre: the Plastic Ocean*, **Monica Shah** has been focusing on increasing access to the collections by researchers and artists. Both Monica and Sarah were able to spend a week each in Juneau helping Ellen pack, move, and prepare collections - a great opportunity to learn from and help colleagues.

Regional Reporter:
Ellen Carrlee

Regional News, continued

Arizona

Dana Senge is working with Aztec Ruins National Monument and the American Museum of Natural History to treat prehistoric collections for new exhibits at the park. Dana traveled to Zion National Park for a treatment in early February and highly recommends that time of year for a visit.

Maggie Hill-Kipling is treating collections from Manzanar National Historic Site in California for exhibit. **Audrey Harrison** continues her work to rehouse the metal collections of Fort Davis National Historic Site in Texas that are currently stored in Tucson.

Brynn Bender recently developed a recovery plan for a prehistoric artifact in the archeological context located in the backcountry of the desert mountains. Brynn and Dana traveled to Rocky Mountain National Park to begin an extensive condition survey of their museum collections. Interns **Bailey Kinsky** and **Paige Hoskins** are continuing with treatments to ethnographic collections from Grand Teton National Park.

Martha Winslow Grimm went on the Costume Society of America's study tour to Japan where many different ways of decorating fabric were demonstrated and displayed. Martha is continuing to work with the *Hollywood Costume* exhibit, which originated at London's Victoria and Albert Museum, located now at the Phoenix Art Museum.

Nancy Odegaard will begin a year-long sabbatical beginning in July 2014. She plans to travel, research, write, and try to relax. Nancy completed two trips to Iraq at the Iraqi Institute for the conservation of Antiquities and Heritage to teach Collections Management Systems (repositories, inventories, archives, and data management) to administrators and middle managers of archaeology.

Teresa Moreno is completing condition assessments for the second phase of the E.J. Curtis exhibit *Curtis Reframed* and evaluating the new HVAC museum environment she and Nancy presented at AIC. Teresa is presenting silver adornment and jewelry research at Historical Metallurgical Society meetings in Birmingham.

Marilen Pool, Gina Watkinson, Crista Pack, Mike Jacobs, and Nancy have completed several important phases on the massive basketry preservation project. They presented papers at Society of American Archaeology meetings, AIC, and ICOM-CC.

Jae Anderson, Martina Dawley, Joy Farley, and Nancy have completed an arsenic removal project; Crista and Nancy have developed a storage method for plaque baskets; **Christina Bisulca, Brunella Santarelli**, Marilen Pool, **Madeleine Neiman**, Gina Watkinson, and Nancy have developed a treatment for damaged pitched baskets; all were presented at AIC.

Madeleine Neiman and Nancy are completing the challenging treatment of opening a wintercount painting on a fused oilcloth tablecloth using a Peltier cooling plate.

John Keck, Werner Zimmt, and Nancy have completed a magnetic measurement study on various sherds from several sites in the Mediterranean to identify vessel association. **Ron Harvey, Dave Smith**, and Nancy developed recommendations for the safety and cleaning protocols for cleaning a large panorama of over 100 natural history specimens.

Marilen Pool was featured in the *Arizona Republic* for her work on the 14 ceramic Stations of the Cross sculptures at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Phoenix. Brunella Santarelli has received an NSF dissertation grant for her research on lead glaze in Pueblo I culture ceramics.

Elyse Canosa has received a Fulbright award for study in The Netherlands for "A New Strategy for Daguerreotype Corrosion Remediation and Prevention."

Regional Reporter:
Brynn Bender

Hawaii

Rie and Larry Pace remain very busy working on numerous projects in the islands.

Flux Hawaii published an article by Shangri La's collections manager, **Maja Clark**, who discusses the relevance of Shangri La's Syrian interiors in the context of current events in Syria and provides an overview of the work of conservator and former Shangri La scholar-in-residence **Anke Scharrahs**, including her extensive experience with 'ajami interiors in Old Damascus that are now threatened by the destruction of civil war.

Thor Minnick is presently treating a mid-19th-c. *koa* wood sideboard, a giltwood picture frame, and yet one more *kou* wood umeke (calabash). A severely salt/moisture compromised rosewood, ebonized wood, and ivory inlaid portable table was returned to Shangri La after a successful two month long treatment.

Regional Reporter:
D. Thor Minnick

Los Angeles

Joe Fronek visited Azusa Pacific University last April as a guest lecturer and presented a workshop to students on conservation. **Morgan Hayes** will be starting a new position as assistant conservator at the Balboa Conservation Center this June.

Jennifer Kim is away on maternity leave from the Autry Museum until July.

Yadin Larochette of Larochette Textile Conservation LLC has moved into a bigger (and better) studio. **Elizabeth Homberger** of EKH Conservation LLC has joined Yadin to share the space (both businesses are run separately under the same roof). Yadin has been working on the installation of the Mike Kelley retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, as well as on treatments of various textiles for private collectors. Liz recently completed a project involving the assessment and cleaning of a collection of more than 120 plastic and composite objects damaged in a fire. In March, Liz attended INCCA's Artist Interview workshop, hosted by the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Regional News, continued

The Natural History Museum welcomes assistant conservator **Elizabeth Drolet**, a graduate of the UCLA / Getty Conservation Program, where she received her master's degree in 2012. Since starting work at NHMLAC in February, Elizabeth has assisted with the treatment of a 17-foot long Pre-Columbian feathered serpent fresco to prepare it for loan and has undertaken the condition documentation of a collection of rare ornithology books, in addition to other collection and exhibit projects.

Lalena Vellanoweth has returned to LACMA as a part-time senior textile conservator, to work on historical men's garments in preparation for the *Reigning Men* exhibit. She is also working on projects for the Autry National Center and private clients.

Donna Williams recently completed an NEA-funded condition assessment of sixty outdoor artworks at the Laumeier Sculpture Park in Missouri. In conjunction with the local county Parks Department, the park exhibits and maintains a collection of over sixty-five medium- to large-scale sculptures on a historic property on the outskirts of St. Louis.

Regional Reporter:
Virginia Rasmussen

New Mexico

Whitney Jacobs graduated from the NMSU Museum Conservation Program in Fall 2013 and is one of two Americans to be accepted in the next cohort of the Erasmus Mundus Master's Program. Jacobs will study for a Masters in Archaeological Materials Science for the Study and Conservation of Cultural Heritage Materials.

Another NMSU museum conservation student, **Josefina Maldonado**, has been accepted for an internship at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum for summer 2014. Thanks to the great work done by several former students, like **Lyndy Bush**, the museum requested for two years in a row now to send more applicants from NMSU's Conservation Program for this summer.

This year's accomplishments by NMSU Museum Conservation students add to the many other past accomplishments in previous years, e.g., internships at the Library of Congress, the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of Natural History (Botany Department), both of the Smithsonian Institution, and the Georgia O'Keefe Museum of Santa Fe, NM, just to name a few. Museum conservation students have also served as interns or worked in local museums all over the country.

Connie Silver oversaw the restoration of the frescos inside a kiva at the former Kuaua Pueblo, currently the Coronado Historic Site, north of Albuquerque, NM. The kiva had been reconstructed 75 years ago by Zia Pueblo artist Ma Pe Wi.

Susan Barger recently participated in a session on Emergency Planning and Preparedness at the joint meeting of the Texas Association of Museums and the New Mexico Association of Museums in Lubbock, Texas.

Regional Reporter:
Silvia Marinas-Feliner

Pacific Northwest

Along with intervals of rock image site field work, **J. Claire Dean** has been busy at the Hibulb Cultural Center, Tulalip, Washington, developing the schedule and program for the upcoming, back to back symposium "Poles, Posts, and Canoes: the Preservation, Conservation and Continuation of Native American Monumental Wood Carving" and hands-on workshop on totem pole maintenance, July 21st - 26th, 2014.

These gatherings have turned into international occasions with presenters and attendees coming from Europe, Canada, and New Zealand. Claire is also gearing up to welcome UCLA/Getty Conservation Program student **Betsy Burr**, as this year's summer intern at the Hibulb Cultural Center.

At Vancouver's Fine Art Conservation **Rebecca Pavitt** has been kept busy flattening prints by a variety of artists that were crushed by a variety of packers and shippers, repairing a William McElcheran paper mache sculpture chewed by a dog (described in the latest edition of *Preview: a Gallery Guide*), reducing discoloration on several WJ Phillips and Sybil Andrews block prints as well a ship's painting with amazingly detailed rigging and sails, and stabilizing by minimal tear repair two utterly charming illustrated stories by a young Emily Carr. Cyclododecane, cyclomethicone, calcium phytate, and agar gels remain this conservator's best friends.

Lisa Duncan of Art Conservator, LLC is taking on several new projects. She is putting together documents for a photograph identification workshop in Seattle with local appraisers. She is also going to the San Juan Islands to give a workshop on removing historic wallpaper.

In Portland, Oregon, **Marie Laibinis** and **Nina Olsson** are joining forces for the study and upcoming treatment of the Astor Column, located on Coxcomb Hill in Astoria, Oregon. Materials research will take place in the summer of 2014, while on site treatment of the monument's surfaces, including the sgraffito frieze painted in 1926 by Attilio Pusterla, will take place in the (sort of) dry months of July and August of 2015. The column's mural was restored in 1995 by a team of conservators, local artisans, and conservation interns under the supervision of **Frank Pruesser** and has held up quite well in the nineteen years of harsh NW coastal exposure (compared to previous restoration campaigns).

At the Seattle Art Museum, the conservation department was delighted to receive a second installment of a grant from the Sumitomo Foundation to fund completion of treatment of *Scenes from the Life of Gensei Shonin*, an important fourteenth-century scroll that is being conserved at Studio Sogendo. The SAM conservation and curatorial departments are also collaborating on an exciting Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-funded project that will lead to a complete survey of their Japanese paintings, along with organizing curatorial visiting

Regional News, continued

appointments and addressing other collection and program priorities.

Nicholas Dorman and **Liz Brown** taught a collections course at the University of Washington Museology program. Liz has been undertaking a lot of work in preparation for the installation of Jaume Plensa's monumental sculpture *Echo* at SAM's Olympic Sculpture Park, and she is now preparing for a trip to Vienna with curator **Julie Emerson** to do an XRF study on a set of Meissen figures.

Nick completed treatment on and installation of Pollock's *Sea Change* and is working on an interpretive tablet display for the galleries. He is currently at the J. Paul Getty Museum paintings conservation studio completing treatment of a Daddi from the Samuel H. Kress collection at SAM.

Corine Landrieu has kindly been assisting the SAM team with weekly care of art at the Olympic Sculpture Park since **Tim Marsden** moved on to manage collections care for Sound Transit.

Intern **Josh Summer** worked on a Claes Oldenburg wall relief and is just wrapping up treatment of a sculpture by Pacific Northwest sculptor Philip McCracken, and department coordinator and organizing star of last year's WAAC meeting, **Lauren Barach**, gave birth to baby Sol.

Regional Reporter:
Corine Landrieu

Rocky Mountain Region

Conservation interns at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West this spring included **Shelly Buffalo Calf** and **Robin Allison**, both students in the University of Oklahoma Master's Program of Museum Studies, and also pre-program physicist **Laura Siegfried**.

Beverly Perkins is the Local Arrangements Chair for the Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums 2014 annual meeting in Cody.

Teresa Knutson of Rocky Mountain Textile Conservation in Kalispell, Montana is currently preparing four costume pieces from the Montana Historical Society for exhibit. Objects include an interesting electrified bathrobe and booties from 1908, a Standard Electro Thermal Coat which seems to have been used for medical heat treatments, and a Western Athabascan buckskin coat from 1860.

WCCFA conservators, **Hays Shoop**, **Yasuko Ogino**, and **Camilla VanVooren** are working on two mural projects in their Denver studio. The first project consists of two large oil on canvas murals that Hays and **Carmen Bria** removed from the old Central High School building in Oklahoma City last year. This building is now a National Historic Landmark and is being renovated by Oklahoma City University to be used as their new law school.

Both murals are by Olinka Hrdy, a Swedish born artist who lived and worked in Oklahoma most of her life and who was commissioned to paint them for this building in 1928. When the renovation is completed this fall, WCCFA will reinstall these murals.

The second project is a multiple canvas panorama (total width, 35 ft) titled *View of the Big Horn Mountains* by White Crow, a Native American artist who worked in the Sheridan, Wyoming area. This mural will be installed in the Historic Sheridan Inn once the conservation treatment is completed. Pre-program intern **Laura Ganyard**, is assisting with this treatment.

Camilla travelled to Little Rock, Arkansas in March to treat a large tempera on panel painting by Andrew Wyeth.

Yasuko has recently completed treatment of three paintings by Swedish-born Kansas painter, Birger Sandzén: two landscapes and an early floral still life.

Jude Southward reports that in February 2014, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science opened its new Rocky Mountain Science Collections Center, where the Museum's 1.5 million collections will be consolidated in a state-of-the-art preservation facility for the first time in

the museum's one-hundred year history.

The two-level, underground center maximizes preservation and security while improving access for both researchers and the general public. There was much to consider during the design of the new facility in order to protect against threats. Filtered lenses and LED fixtures eliminate damaging ultraviolet light; timers help reduce the duration of visible light. Water runs through a set of double pipes with leak detectors. Floor and other finishes are light colors without textures or patterns to help easily monitor for pests. Specifically designed zones of temperature and relative humidity maximally safeguard collections while minimizing energy use. Besides the new storage spaces, workshop labs give collections staff, volunteers, and guest scholars more room and updated equipment to conduct research.

Tara Hornung has been working in private practice providing conservation services for museums and private collections in the Rocky Mountain region. Tara continues to work with several museums in Wyoming developing and implementing preventive conservation strategies. Last year, Tara assisted **Claire Dean** of Dean and Associates Conservation Services with graffiti mitigation from a petroglyph site located on the Snake River, Idaho. In March, Tara worked as conservation assistant for **Ron Harvey** of Tuckerbrook Conservation, cleaning and assessing over 200 taxidermy objects at the KU Biodiversity Institute in Lawrence, Kansas.

Regional Reporter:
Paulette Reading

San Diego

No news reported

Regional Reporter:
Frances Prichett
Paper Conservator
San Diego, CA
fprichett@yahoo.com

Regional News, continued

San Francisco Bay Area

Rowan Geiger and **Tegan Broderick** from SF Art Conservation have been working on objects by artist Ruth Asawa owned by the San Francisco Arts Commission. A large relief panel split in two by the 1989 earthquake is undergoing extensive treatment and will be reinstalled in Boedekker Park, San Francisco in June.

Regional Reporter:
Alisa Eagleston-Cieslewicz

Texas

The Menil Collection's chief conservator, **Brad Epley**, and assistant paintings conservator, **Katrina Bartlett Rush**, were intently involved in organizing a symposium on the Surrealist artist Rene Magritte, which took place this spring. They were eager to share fresh insights into the artist's working methods, materials, and techniques, which they learned while studying and preparing paintings for an upcoming exhibition.

This daylong symposium titled "Magritte: Beyond the Image, Beneath the Paint" was designed to give museum visitors a deeper understanding of the artist. Presenting at the symposium was an international mix of conservators, curators, and scientists.

In May, **Cheryl Carrabba**, **Mark van Gelder**, and **Catherine Williams** were the invited speakers on the Conservators Panel at the 12th Annual CASETA (Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art) Symposium on Early Texas Art, held at St. Edwards University in Austin.

Regional Reporter:
Ken Grant,

Membership

Chris Stavroudis
membership secretary

WAAC Publications

Handling Guide for Anthropology Collections

Straightforward text is paired with humorous illustrations in 41 pages of "do's and don'ts" of collection handling. A Guide to Handling Anthropological Museum Collections was written by Arizona State Museum conservator Nancy Odegard and illustrated by conservation technician Grace Katterman. This manual was designed to be used by researchers, docents, volunteers, visitors, students, staff or others who have not received formal training in the handling of museum artifacts. Paperbound and printed on acid-free stock.

Price: \$8.85

(\$6.60 copy for orders >10 copies)

Back Issues of WAAC Newsletter

Back numbers of the *Newsletter* are available. Issues Vol.1 - Vol.14, #3 (Sept. 1992) are \$5/copy. Issues Vol.15 - Vol.29, #3 (Sept. 1997) are \$10/copy. Issues Vol.30 (Jan. 2008) and after are \$15/copy. A 20% discount will be given to libraries seeking to obtain back issues to complete a "run" and for purchases of ten copies or more of an issue.

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