Regional News

Alaska

Helen Alten and staff at the Haines Sheldon Museum attended the American Association for State and Local History online conference in mid-September. This was their first time attending a national conference “virtually.” It was an experience well worth having and will be part of annual staff training in the future.

The Haines 50 exhibit—highlighting 50 objects from the Sheldon Museum collection—has received extremely positive feedback all summer, with many requests that a book be created from the exhibit. A number of large stone sculptures have been added to the museum’s grounds. Two arrived in the spring and seven more at the end of September. The sculptures were made by local Haines stoneworker Judd Mullady.

Ellen Carrlee led an Angels Project for a dozen museum participants to help the Sealaska Heritage Institute rehouse more than 20 Northwest Coast textiles. She also led a spruce root basketry conservation workshop at the Museums Alaska conference, and co-presented a discussion of the treatment and exhibition decisions for a historic Bristol Bay fishing boat.

Tingat weaver Anna Brown Ehlers has been in the conservation lab restoring a Chilkat robe from the Alaska State Museum collection. Buffalo State graduate student Paige Schmidt will be spending her internship year “20-day option” working on an open-skin boat (umiaq and angyaq) project.

Scott Carrlee has been providing conservation and museum assistance for small museums in Port Alexander, Haines, and Skagway; supporting four museum studies interns in the field, as well as spending some personal time supporting the remote and rugged Cape Decision Lighthouse Association with historic renovations in an epic week-long work party.

Lisa Imamura just graduated from the conservation program at Queen’s University and completed her internship with the Royal BC Museum in Victoria, British Columbia with Lisa Bengston. Imamura did her pre-program work at the Alaska State Museum and is back again working across various departments.

Nicole Peters just graduated from the conservation program at Buffalo State and completed her third-year internship with Nancy Odegaard at the Arizona State Museum. Peters has settled in Skagway, Alaska with a private practice and will be assisting the Anchorage Museum with its new gallery renovations as well working on the U.S. NPS on the historic Proenneke Cabin in Lake Clark National Park & Preserve.

Monica Shah, along with Sarah Owens, conservation technicians Elissa Meyers and Claire Sumner, and collections staff de-installed over 1,500 objects from a 30-year-old exhibition. Some of the best of the Anchorage Museum collections were exhibited in this gallery, as well as some of the largest – a 4,000 lb. boat and 6,000 lb. section of a pipeline, both of which had to be craned out of the building’s second story. Most of the objects were then installed in a visible conservation lab and storage space, where they will be examined and treated over the next year. Monica also was able to attend the statewide museums conference in Juneau and attend a spruce root basketry conservation workshop taught by Ellen Carrlee.

Regional Reporter: Ellen Carrlee

Arizona

Marilen Pool recently completed a preservation plan for the historic properties of the South Rim Xanterra Resorts at the Grand Canyon, and has also conserved the Fulton furniture collection at the Amerind Museum. At the Arizona State Museum, Marilen continues treatment of selected ethnographic baskets. She will be continuing on as project conservator for another IMLS project to work with the archaeological perishables collections there.

Dana Senge recently had the opportunity to travel to Yellowstone National Park to help de-install a very large wood veneer map from Mammoth Hotel and transport it to the lab in Tucson for a maintenance treatment while the hotel undergoes building renovations.

The whole WACC conservation team came together to vacuum and inspect over 500 textile objects from Fort Davis National Historic Site after a clothing web moth infestation was discovered at the park!
Regional News, continued

On April 18th Nancy Odegaard was awarded an Honorary Doctorate degree at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden for her contributions to conservation. Nancy’s colleague and host, Elizabeth E. Peacock in the Department of Conservation said of the award, “The appointment of Professor Odegaard as honorary doctor at the University of Gothenburg will lead to future collaborations, in particular with the University of Gothenburg-sponsored Centrum for Critical Heritage Studies.”

In August, Nancy was also a discussant at Gordon Research Conference, an international forum for presentations and discussions of frontier research in the biological, chemical, and physical sciences.

Also this fall she presented at Western Museums Association (WMA) and Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) conferences, as well as the Penn Symposium.

Teresa Moreno coordinated plans for the WAAC meeting in November in Tucson. She also recently helped install the Pieces of the Puzzle exhibit. Gina Watkinson has been accepted into the School of Anthropology at the University of Arizona and started this fall where she plans to research archaeological fibers. She participated in the WMA and ATALM conferences.

Marilen Pool continues work on the basketry conservation project and participated in the WMA, ATALM conferences and the Penn Symposium.

Wendy Lindsey was awarded a PTT grant to research non-destructive methods for the analysis of residues.

Nicole Peters completed her 3rd year graduate internship and now resides in Alaska.

Victoria Kablys completed her graduate summer internship and has returned to Queens University. Elyse Canosa completed a repatriation testing and documentation project and has finished her doctoral dissertation on the corrosion of daguerreotypes. Leah Bright joined the lab as a third year graduate intern from Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC). Betsy Burr just began as the Kress Post Graduate Conservation Fellow after a three-month contract with the National Park Service in northern Arizona.

Regional Reporter: Dana Senge

Hawaii

As of June 30, 2016 Margo Vitarelli is off enjoying the first phase of her retirement from The Manoa Heritage Center.

At Doris Duke’s Shangri La in Honolulu, Hawai’i, Elizabeth Asal just finished a six-month pre-program internship; we wish her all the best in her future studies. With support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Honolulu Museum of Art is redesigning the Islamic art galleries, and the new installation will feature works from Shangri La. Conservator Kent Severson, with help from technicians Lynne Najita and Gilbert Martinez, has been busy treating three dimensional objects, while local contractor Larry Pace prepares two oil paintings on canvas for the exhibit.

Working on an Alain Le Yaouanc painting done in the 1970s for a client in London, Dawne Steele Pullman will soon be back in Hong Kong for work that awaits her arrival.

Thor Minnick recently completed an anoxic treatment of a near life-size 15th-century polychromed wooden statue of St. John the Evangelist for the Honolulu Museum of Art, and is currently treating a 19th-century Islamic, Indian (Goa) carved wood, ivory, and ebony inlaid wood table for the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art at Shangri La.

Regional Reporter: D. Thor Minnick

Los Angeles

RLA Conservation has been involved with several new initiatives related to conservation in Cuba. Rosa Lowinger was a featured speaker on the topic of Havana’s historic nightclubs and their preservation at Palm Springs Modernism Week and at the American Institute of Architects Spring 2016 Committee on Design conference held in Havana, Cuba. Rosa served as co-curator of the exhibit Promising Paradise: Cuban Allure, American Seduction that ran at the Wolfsonian Museum in Miami Beach from May 5-August 15, 2016. It will be traveling to a West Coast venue in early 2017. Stay tuned!

RLA senior architectural conservator Kelly Ciociola spoke on “Steel in Public Art” at the 2016 MIT Architectural Iron and Steel conference and on the “Miami Marine Stadium” together with John Fidler at the Getty Foundation’s “Keeping it Modern” concrete conservation symposium in London.

RLA senior architectural conservator Christina Varvi’s work to conserve historic tile fountains at Santa Barbara’s Casa del Herrero was featured in the museum’s March publication. RLA has made several new hires: conservators Jane Ashburn (Clemson/ College of Charleston) and Yenny Cabrera (Havana Instituto Superior de Arte) have joined the East Coast office and technicians Nelson Hallonquist and Noe Martinez joined the Los Angeles studio.

Dawn Jaros and Caitlin Jenkins of the Margaret Herrick Library’s Conservation Department of the Academy of Motion Pictures of Arts and Sciences extend a warm welcome to their new conservation technician, Courtney Azzara. Courtney started mid-August and has already worked on several projects at the library, from poster treatments to 35mm slide rehousing. The lab is very much looking forward to working with Courtney on the library’s unique and challenging projects.

Tania Collas and Marina Gibbons from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County are working on the international exhibit loan of a collection of early Hollywood
artifacts related to the life and works of Carl Laemmle, founder of Universal Studios. The artifacts include fascinating movie props like a bat from *Dracula* (1931), a papier-mâché quarter-side of beef from *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930), and a spool of mummy wrappings from *The Mummy* (1932), among many others.

At the recent IIC Congress in Los Angeles, LACMA conservation scientist Charlotte Eng gave a presentation, “Reflections on Light and Modern Conservation: Evaluation of Museum Lighting Options for Modern and Contemporary Art.” Terry Schaeffer and Frank Preusser were coauthors on the work.

Conservation science Mellon Fellow Laura Maccarelli was coauthor of a poster, “The Dilemma of Fading Food,” on the light sensitivity of Ruscha screenprints made with inks prepared from food materials. Laura also presented a talk on some results from her HPLC dye analysis project at the 35th meeting of Dyes in History and Archaeology this October in Pisa, Italy.

Rebecca Pollack, current Mellon Fellow in paper conservation at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, taught a one-day intensive workshop on watercolors for LACMA paper conservators, which is, of course, the primary colorant used in paintings on paper. She also provided a comprehensive list of pigments suitable for a paper/photo inpainting palette, with detailed information on binders, fillers, and sheen. Rebecca instructed LACMA paper conservators on how to make pan colors that are not commercially available. LACMA paper conservators are now developing several new sets of watercolors specifically for color compensation of photographs and contemporary prints and posters.

Rebecca developed a comprehensive knowledge of artists’ materials during her years as manager and technical advisor for Kremer Pigments Inc. in New York, and has given various workshops on manufacturing historical and contemporary paint materials to artists and conservators.

Erin Jue, with colleagues Naoko Takahatake and Charlotte Eng, published, “The Examination and Conservation of a Chiarscuro Woodcut,” as online publication by Taylor and Francis.

LACMA paintings conservators completed several projects over the summer and early fall. Joe Fronek restored Gerrit Berckheyde’s *The Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal with the Flower and Tree Market in Amsterdam*, in preparation for the National Gallery of Art exhibition, *Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt*.

Elma O’Donoghue treated a recent acquisition, a large colonial painting on copper by Nicolás Enríquez, *The Visitation and the Birth of Christ*. The painting joins two others from a series by Enríquez in LACMA’s collection.


Miranda Dunn completed the graduate training program at the University of Delaware/Winterthur and is continuing her second year at LACMA as a Mellon Fellow in the paintings lab. Miranda will be working on a large Spanish panel by a follower of Andrès Marzal de Sas, *Saint Michael Fighting the Dragon*.

This spring at the UCLA Library, Audio/Visual materials specialist Yasmin Dessem was awarded a $40,000 grant from the John Randolph Haynes Foundation to complete preservation measures and digitize rare home movies from the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance company, many of which are now online. Shani Miller, a graduate of the UCLA Moving Image Archives Studies, is working as a much needed assistant on this project.

Kimi Taira was snatched out of LA to join the staff of the Asian Art Museum conservation department in San Francisco. LACMA will miss her but the conservators look forward to her visits!

Hannah Moshier is continuing her invaluable work as a conservation assistant at UCLA Library and has been making headway with the backlog of complex circulating materials conservation treatments. She recently created a very useful decision-making tool for handling a large and complex digitation project related to the library’s Hebraica collection.

Preservation officer and department head Dawn Aveline traveled to Cuba again last summer to collaborate with colleagues there as part of the UCLA Library International Digital Ephemera Project. This trip focused on creating 1,300+ high-resolution images of cinema posters at the Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos.

In September, Chela Metzger and Duke University Library senior book conservator Erin Hammeke, presented on historical Pennsylvania German bookbinding characteristics at the Guild of Book Workers Standards of Excellence Seminar in Charleston, SC.

UCLA Library’s Buffalo State Art Conservation Program third year intern, Amanda Burr, started in October after completing a short internship in Leiden where she worked with Karin Scheper on Islamic books.

The lab is pleased to announce that UCLA Library’s application for a Kress/FAIC Conservation Fellowship grant was awarded, so they are now recruiting for a Kress Assistant Conservator for a limited-term appointment this fall.

Finally, UCLA Library closed down the lab for a couple months while they moved to a new location at Powell Library. After years of trotting between buildings, the lab is excited to be in a space on campus closer to the library’s collections which also reunites the staff with the preservation officer, Dawn Aveline, and audio-visual specialist Yasmin Dessem.

Leslie Rainer and Susanne Friend organized and led a downtown mural
walking tour in collaboration with the LA Conservancy as an activity during the IIC 2016 Los Angeles Congress. They were helped by Kiernan Graves, Rachel Burch, Marie Svoboda, and Lori Wong for tour planning and implementation.

The tour covered nearly 100 years of interior and exterior murals in LA, with a visit with artist Eloy Torres, who was conserving his mural, The Pope of Broadway, on the Victor Clothing Building. Completing the tour was a bonus visit to the Siqueiros mural, América Tropical on Olvera Street.

Regional Reporter: Virginia Rasmussen

New Mexico

Conservation Solutions Inc. (CSI) recently completed projects that include a three-year project providing conservation oversight at West Block on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, ON; the de-installation, cleaning, and reinstallation of a rooftop copper weathervane; laser cleaning of the U.S. Capitol’s north exterior; conservation consultation at the Old Post Office building in Washington, DC; an assessment of an historic chemical hearth at University of Virginia; the stabilization and restoration of a steam launch boat in Ottawa, ON; and conservation of the granite and bronze National War Memorial in Ottawa, ON.

CSI’s current projects include the treatment of historic horse-drawn hearses in Champlain, ON; the assessment and development of a conservation plan of a public art collection in Calgary, AB; laser cleaning of exterior masonry and bronze elements at several iconic building in Washington, DC; the assessment and treatment plan development of five missile prototypes in Baltimore, MD; and treatment of several Army Museum artifacts including cannons and tank barricades faced by soldiers during D-Day. CSI conservators presented a workshop entitled, “Conservation of Metal Finishes in Modern Architecture” at the National Trust Conference in Hamilton, ON on October.

M. Susan Barger, the online community coordinator for Connecting to Collections Care (www.connectingtocollections.org), a program that provides no-cost resources, assistance, and professional development opportunities for smaller cultural institutions, reports that the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation (FAIC) has been awarded a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for the continued support of the C2C Care program.

Regional Reporter
Silvia Marinas-Feliner, M.A.

Pacific Northwest

The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) conservation department welcomed Geneva Griswold as their new associate conservator. Geneva will be working on SAM’s historic objects collection and one of her first tasks will be the preparation of collections for a major storage move at the Asian Art Museum (AAM), which will undergo seismic and HVAC renovations next year.

Marta Pinto-Llorca and Nicholas Dorman are both working on art move logistics and storage upgrades in association with the renovation project. In August, Peter Malarkey and Jennifer Myers surveyed 60% of the museum’s paintings in preparation for the storage move. Planning is also underway for a new conservation studio at AAM for the treatment of Asian paintings, and Nick has developed an outline for expanded conservation operations there thanks to a planning grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Earlier this summer, Nick, Liz Brown, and Ria German-Carter treated several important modern works of art for the Big Picture exhibition which celebrates the donation to SAM of Virginia and Bagley Wright’s collection. Liz also completed work this summer on Beverly Pepper and Tony Smith sculptures at the Olympic Sculpture Park.

Exhibitions continue to drive the work of the Royal BC Museum Conservation Department. The public conservation exhibit on fire recovery at the U’Mista Cultural Centre has been a resounding success, mainly through the efforts of George Field. Also assisting on that project were Lisa Bengston and contract conservator Rachel Stark.

Unfortunately, SAM recently said goodbye to Rachel so that she could pursue another opportunity at a shipwreck site in Sicily. Congratulations Rachel!

The conservation staff were extremely happy that Lisa Imamura joined SAM’s lab from the Queen’s University Art Conservation Program over the summer to assist with the rest of that project. Also now on board is Valeria Carrillo from Mexico City’s Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauracion, y Museografia. Valeria has undertaken the last of the conservation work on the U’Mista artifacts, as well as helped prepare objects for next year’s Families exhibition.

Tara Grant travelled to Victoria to spend time with Kjerstin Mackie setting up wet archaeological basketry treatments. SAM is indebted to Tara and to the Canadian Conservation Institute for their assistance with this project.

Kasey Lee is working with Heidi Swierenga from the University of British Columbia’s Museum of Anthropology and Elisabeth Czerwinski from Burnaby Village Museum to develop a regional emergency response network based on a proposal submitted by Heidi to the Federal Government. That work is now supported by a Museums Assistance Program grant and will involve a disaster recovery workshop later in the fall.

Colleen Wilson and Betty Walsh are heavily involved with artifact condition assessments of textiles and archival materials for the Families exhibit next spring.

Corine Landrieu has been busy working on outdoor sculptures for local city and state agencies, which included a Tlingit pole in Pioneer Square, for the city of Seattle. The pole was treated in
collaboration with Tiffany Hedrick from the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs. She is now completing treatment on a series of plaster tiles from the ceiling of the Chinese Room, located in the historical Smith Tower.

Lisa Duncan gave birth to Irma Rosina Goedecke on July 6, 2016. Mom and baby are in good health, and Lisa is enjoying a bit of maternity leave while keeping a toe in the lab.

Regional Reporter
Corine Landrieu

Rocky Mountain Region

Camilla Van Vooren performed a condition survey of the paintings in the collection of the Anchorage Museum in June in preparation for the upcoming rehanging of the main gallery and the opening of galleries in a new wing. Yasuko Ogino treated a group of paintings on site at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City in July in preparation for the opening of their remodeled galleries.

At that same time, Carmen Bria treated a small mural by famed Utah artist Lee Greene Richards at a private residence in SLC. The home was built by the artist’s brother in 1918 and the mural painted in 1920.

Carmen also performed a condition survey at the new Topaz Museum in Delta, Utah that is dedicated to the art and the people who spent time at the Japanese internment camp located nearby during WWII. Interestingly, there was an art school of sorts at that particular camp near the Topaz Mountains outside Delta.

D. Hays Shoop performed a condition survey of murals in the Montana State Capitol in Helena in August.

At the Center of the West the conservation interns this summer in the lab included 4 pre-program university graduates: Nicole Schmidt, Allison Rosenthal, Vanessa OMayar, and Michael Tusay. Allison Rosenthal, with the assistance of many of the interns, completed a comparative XRF study of the Center’s Proctor bronzes.

Allison, who is currently a student in the North Bennet Street School book program, taught the interns the basics of book conservation so that they could carry out treatments on rare books in the Center’s library.

Three university students, Dee Rudolph, BYU ceramicist, Luisa Walter, painter at NWC, and Tyler Loveless, student in the gunsmithing program at Trinidad State College, plus two Cody High School students, Effie Clark and Clair Pfister joined the conservation team in carrying out many conservation treatments including working on a 150 million year old ichthyosaur fossil. In all, the interns completed over 50 treatments!

Lauren Gottschlich, third-year graduate intern in the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation and currently at the Denver Art Museum visited the lab of the Center of the West and acted as a mentor and information source for the lab’s interns.

Beth Heller is celebrating 5 years conserving works of art on paper and historic documents in the Rocky Mountains and is happy to have rejoined WAAC after an inexplicable absence. She was lucky enough to attend the Voices in Contemporary Art conference in Denver, which was inspiring and highly recommended. Current work includes the completion of a 6 year collections management project for the American Alpine Club, conservation of a group of 17th-century Christopher Wren architectural drawings for the Cherokee Ranch and Castle in Colorado Springs, a two-sided, large format irrigation map for the Colorado State University Water Library, and a series of 18th-c. botanical illustrations from the oldest seed company in France.

Beth assisted James Squires in teaching an undergraduate conservation course at the University of Denver this past spring and will give a lecture this fall to art history students at the University of Colorado Boulder Art Museum regarding a group of Baroque drawings she recently conserved.

Julie Parker recently completed treatment of a large painting on leather in collaboration with Camilla Van Vooren, and is grateful both for Camilla’s expertise and camaraderie on the project.

The Colorado conservation community welcomes Jennifer McGlinchey Sexton who recently relocated to Colorado Springs from Boston, where she worked with Paul Messier. Jennifer has opened a private practice specializing in paper and photographs.

Regional Reporter: Julie Parker

San Diego

No news at this time.

Regional Reporter: Frances Prichett
Paper Conservator
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San Francisco Bay Area

The textile conservation lab at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF) is getting ready for its version of San Francisco’s Summer of Love with an exhibit that will include some 50 costumes — most from local lenders — that is slated to open in April of 2017. Treatment has been expedited because there is an exhibition catalog, and those fringed, embroidered, patched, beaded and sequined costumes need to be at their accessorized best for photography!
Regional News, continued

In addition, Anne Getts is preparing to collaborate with Beth Szuhay of Chrysalis Art Conservation, on the in-painting treatment of a 16th-century verdure tapestry in the permanent collection. This will involve using Lascaux Sirius Primary watercolors on previous and stable repairs that are currently disfiguring the woven images.

This is an unusual treatment in the museum conservation world, but one that has been thoroughly researched, undertaken, and published by Mieke Albers of the Rijksmuseum (Icon Textile Group 2012). A time-lapse video of the treatment will be created to be shared with colleagues and the public.

Following her fellowship at the Getty, Ellie O’Hara joined the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco objects lab and has been busy working with Tracy Power and Molly Lambert to conserve the statue **El Cid Campeador** outside the Legion of Honor.

Regional Reporter:
Alisa Eagleston

Texas

Anne Zanikos attended a masterclass on loss compensation for paintings presented by Laura Fuster-Lopez in Lisbon, Portugal. The workshop covered the latest research in fill materials and their impact on the original painting structure.

Earlier this summer, several representatives from the Menil Collection Library conservation department in Houston participated in a two-day disaster response and recovery workshop hosted by the Texas Cultural Emergency Response Alliance (TX-CERA) at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, in order to advance their training and preparation for disasters within the Houston area.

The Menil Collection assistant paintings conservator, Katrina Rush, who has recently joined the TX-CERA steering committee, presented at the workshop and helped instruct participants on procedures for handling water-damaged paintings.

Meaghan Perry, a second year student in the Art Conservation Department at the State University of New York College at Buffalo, joined the Menil’s Assistant Objects Conservator Kari Dodson for an eight-week internship this summer. Meaghan focused on the treatment of several complex sculptures by Ed Keinholtz and George Herms in preparation for exhibition this fall.

Additionally this summer, Taylor Bailey, a senior at Southwestern University, joined the department as a pre-program intern.

In July, Jan Burandt (conservator for works of art on paper), Grace Walters (paper conservation technician), Desi Peters (Mellon Fellow), and summer interns Meaghan Perry and Taylor Bailey presented on the pathways to a conservation career by sharing their various professional and educational experiences with a small audience in the conservation studio as part of the Menil’s “Noontime Talks” membership series.

Regional Reporter:
Ken Grant, Paper Conservator

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 Odegaard 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: $10.00
($8.00 copy for orders >10 copies)

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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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