

September 2015

Volume 37 Number 3

President's Letter

Catherine Coueignoux

Hello WAAC!

Somehow another year has come and gone, and with it an amazing annual meeting on the beach in Pacific Grove.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to be there thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. We got sticky with melted marshmallows while chatting around a bonfire, enjoyed drinks overlooking

the beach, munched popcorn in our jammies during Movie Night, and celebrated a VIP's tenth birthday. There were walks on the beach (nobody tell Asilomar they are short a few seashells) and all sorts of weather, including some much-needed rain! We had visits from raccoons, lots of deer, and even a (temporarily) hungry coyote.

Of course, there were plenty of serious, educational goings-on as well. Every single presentation was fabulous, starting with our captivating keynote by Seth Bergstein of PAST Consultants, who gave us a history of Monterey Bay adobe architecture and its conservation challenges. Not only did Seth's talk inspire a number of us to go see some of the buildings he mentioned, but it also awakened us to the danger these historic buildings are in today.

Our California art and history themed talks continued with Patty West's presentation of a huge California Mission project to restore a polychrome and gilded Christ. Elma O'Donoghue showed us the examination and clever treatment of some gorgeous paintings from New Spain with fascinating themes (and very large fruit). Rachel Burch and Pam Rosser, speaking about particular CA and TX missions, respectively, presented their very different and wonderful discoveries of hidden original interior wall decorations. Pam's dynamic presentation closed our opening day with a bang!

The rest of the talks covered enormous ground, which kept our minds active and engaged. We had two fortuitously complementary presentations on monitoring the environments around artwork: Vincent Beltran spoke about the Getty's research on the transport environment, and Mark MacKenzie presented his ingenious solution to tracking multiple environmental variables.

We also became intimate with two pieces of outerwear: Anne Getts taught us about Arctic bird-breast parkas while Tracy Hudson unraveled the mystery of a Northwest Coast Haida tunic.

The metallic among us were treated to Irmak Yüceil's systematic approach to treating hundreds of religious objects at the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul; Martin Remmen's entertaining and culturally sensitive presentation of his treatment (and 3-D reproduction) of a German rangefinder from WWII; Arlen Heginbotham's complex journey into coatings for copper alloys; Julie Wolfe's breathtaking CO2 treatment (pun intended) of a lovely Barbara Hepworth, and Jena Hirschbein's painstaking scrutiny of tool marks on silver.

Problem solving, an activity we all love, was humorously addressed by Mark Gilbert, who spoke about the complexities of maintaining a huge kinetic sculpture at LACMA and by Debbie Evans, who regaled us with tales from her three-decade's long experience heading the de Young's annual Bouquets to Art extravaganza. Seth Irwin took us on a close-up and informative tour of the complicated world of stereomicroscopes, and Tammy Zavinski showed us how she creatively employed magnets (and humidity) to flatten a crinkled, buckled vellum document.

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President's letter, continued

Other talks took us around the world. Geneva Griswold described a group of incredible wall paintings from Herculaneum. Karen Bonne took us into the wacky world of the Belgian painter James Ensor. Lesley Bone brought us to France to look at the painted walls of an 18th-century period room and then shot us south to contemplate the powerful materials used in African sub-Saharan figurative objects.

The Angels Project at the Carmel Mission was particularly timely, given the vandalism that occurred on the grounds the previous weekend in response to the Pope's canonization of Father Junipero Serra, the mission's founding father. Not only did Angels coordinators Anne Getts and Geneva Griswold do a fantastic job of leading our Angels through our original group of objects, but also helped the mission deal with some of the new damage.

John Rexine, registrar at the Monterey Museum of Art, shared his challenges in caring for a collection housed in two buildings with very different issues. His candid presentation encouraged an open discussion that benefited everyone.

Carolyn Tallent and Susi Friend ran the most successful Silent Auction ever. Some great stuff was on offer, although the most eye-catching item was a hot-pink, skull-embellished T-shirt advertising next year's meeting in Tuscon, AZ!

With that, it is my moment to bow out as WAAC President and reluctantly hand over the post to Terri Moreno of the Arizona State Museum. It's not that I'm power-hungry, but rather that being a part of this board has truly been an extraordinary experience. A warmer, more supportive group of people just doesn't exist. I'm sure our out-going members-at-large, Sue Ann Chui and Yadin Larochette, who we thank for their service, would echo that sentiment.

Onward and upward! In her (former) capacity as VP, Terri has already added some real star power to the board. WAAC welcomes Christina O'Connell, senior paintings conservator at the Huntington Library, Art Galleries, and Botanical Gardens; and Seth Irwin, the paper conservator for the University of Hawaii Library at Mānoa as members-at-large. Our incoming VP is Randy Silverman, head of preservation at the University of Utah's Marriott Library.

As I mentioned above, next year's meeting will be held in Tuscon and be hosted by Terri's institution. A born-and-bred Tusconian, Terri will organize an excellent conference. Watch this space for more information, and start planning a little trip to the sunshine!

And with that, I bid farewell to the front page of the *Newsletter*. It's been wonderful.

Cat

Membership

Chris Stavroudis
membership secretary

WAAC welcomes the following new members and late renewals.

Sally R. Andrew, Vincent Beltran, Jennifer Burger, James Bernstein, Karen Bonne, Kellie Boss, Devon Browning, Elizabeth Burr, Giulia Corrada, Julie Creahan, Gerry Crofts, Elizabeth Drolet, Miranda Dunn, Debra Evans, Melinda Flatsker, Lisa Forman, Kiernan Graves, Kathryn Harada, Laura Hartman, Jena Hirschbein, Tracy Hudson, Vicky Karas, Diana Komejan, Kamila Marta Korbela-Dunigan, Dawn Kriss, Cynthia Lawrence, Jose Luis Lazarte, Mary L. Levkoff, Iliana Lopez Salado, Rosa Lowinger, Mark MacKenzie, Emanuelle Mallet, Ian G. McClure, Courtney VonStein Murray, Musée du Quai Branly, Douglas Nishimura, Kathleen Orlenko, Penn Museum Conservation, Natasha Rebrov, Martijn Remmen, Pamela Rosser, Ieva Rozentale, Randy Silverman, John Slavin, Magdalena Solano, Spectra Company, Samantha Springer, Kristen St. John, Elisa Stewart, Sabina Sutherland, Kim Taira, Dana M. Tepper, Serena Urry, Christina Varvi, Alison Walker, Paul J. Wells, David D. Wilson, Julie Wolfe, Irmak Gunes Yüceil, Cathleen Zaret, Tammy Zavinski, and Aneta Zebala

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Internet

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Deadline

Contributions for the September *Newsletter* should be received by the Editor before **January 5, 2016**.