

2012 OSG Program Chair Foreword

This volume contains a selection of papers presented at the Objects Specialty Group and the joint Research and Technical Studies/OSG Sessions at the 2012 AIC Annual Meeting in Albuquerque. Commemorating AIC's 40th anniversary, general sessions in the theme "Connecting to Conservation: Outreach and Advocacy" brought new innovations in presentations, such as panel discussions, debates and intensive interaction between presenters and their audience. OSG's sessions reflected some of these newer styles, with a sing along (really), videos (and video as a significant part of one postprint), and through Research and Technical Studies' posting of some papers in powerpoint form. This postprints volume will be the first OSG volume sent to an outside publisher for final formatting, as well, which should streamline the editing process in future meetings.

Included in this volume are a selection of papers from all sessions three OSG sessions: the OSG Outreach Luncheon Session followed by the joint RATS/OSG session, both on Wednesday, May 9, and the OSG session on Friday, May 11. The joint session with RATS focused on collaborations between conservators and scientists, while OSG papers were solicited on the conference theme. As always, however, papers on other topics were submitted and were too tantalizing to pass up.

OSG session kicked off the meeting with its Outreach-themed luncheon session featuring Vanessa Muros and Allison Lewis for a discussion of their experiences with outreach and education about the conservation of a Columbian Mammoth. Muros described both the conservation of the mammoth in California, and then the journey leaving remaining work with non-conservators. Suzanne Davis and Claudia Chemello shared the results of their in-depth survey of archaeologists to determine their level of familiarity with conservation. This presentation represented the second part of a two-part project, the first of which was presented in the AIC annual meeting in Philadelphia in 2011. Aside from the high level of professionalism and fascinating insights into our profession – passing it onto others and as seen by others – each presentation had a definite cool factor: conservation of an Ice Age mammoth (who doesn't want to hear about that?), followed by Davis' intermission sing-along of Dire Straits "So Far Away".

Luncheon concluded, signaling the beginning of the joint OSG/RATS session, which was co-chaired with RATS Vice-Chair Jason Church, Materials Conservator at National Center for Preservation Technology and Training. Presentations reflected upon outreach, collaborations between scientists and conservators and general materials and treatment research. Patricia Hill, Professor of Chemistry at Millersville University, presented for Cheminart: Chemistry in Art Scholars, wherein scientists at participating universities help students and art historians understand the science in art (www.cheminart.org). Emily Kaplan shared the most current research conducted by several conservators on the long-term Qero Project. Elizabeth Nunan discussed the AMNH conservation staff's journey to develop new methods for recoloring faded taxidermy in their decades-old displays, and Laura Kubick presented her analysis of protective coatings for marble sculpture at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. This project was necessary due to the unfortunate fact that at least one museum visitor took it upon [herself] to kiss a statue. Cindy Lee Scott discussed her research and experiments using Agar as a solvent

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gel for treating a variety of condition problems, while Paul Benson shared his impressive wealth of knowledge on where sulfur lurks in museum collections – both in the artwork and in the museum itself.

Unfortunately not all of these joint session presentations are in the OSG postprints. Most, however, may be found in powerpoint form on the RATS Publications and Resources webpage on the AIC website: <http://www.conservation-us.org/publications-resources/specialty-group/research-and-technical-studies#.UvQAnxaRJLQ>

Friday morning, May 11, was the final OSG session and contained a healthy variety of conservation topics, including analysis and treatment of modern, ethnographic and ancient art. Teresa Moreno opened the session with an update of her dissertation work on the analysis of American Indian Silver Jewelry. Season Tse presented on behalf of CCI's Carole Dignard and Amanda Salmon, who described the treatment of a Mi-kmaq Box made from birchbark, porcupine quills and iron-dyed spruceroot. This treatment involved the use of many techniques more traditionally associated with paper conservation, such as the use of easy iron spot-test papers commonly used to assess iron gall ink to gauge the level of degradation in the quills. Kate Garland presented her collaboration in the treatment of an Egyptian Mummiform Coffin with conservation scientists and mechanical engineers, and the use of a Leica scanner to record the dimensions of the inner coffin when laid flat and then vertical, providing a baseline for comparison of wood compression (or lack thereof) for the future. Rachel Rivenc, the project leader "Art in L.A." at the Getty Conservation Institute, summarized the extraordinary contemporary works, and GCI's analysis of, the "Finish Fetish" artists. While her paper is not included here, more information on the project can be accessed through GCI's website: http://www.getty.edu/conservation/our_projects/science/art_LA/index.html

The session closed with a lovely presentation by Santa Clara Pueblo artist Nora Naranjo-Morse, NMAI Collections Manager Gail Joice and NMAI objects conservator Kelly McHugh. I allowed this session to go on beyond its deadline because I couldn't pass the opportunity to continue the excellent Q & A between the artist and the audience. Naranjo-Morse's actively, intentionally deteriorating sculpture in the Washington Mall challenged many conservators' notions of conservation. This paper was shown in part in video form, which are available as links in the postprint volume here.

I was honored to chair these fantastic papers and to represent the Objects Specialty Group in general. I would like to thank all the speakers and authors who made the sessions successful, and those who submitted their papers to this volume, especially. I thank Jason Church and RATS for co-chairing the afternoon session and Corina Rogge for posting the presentations online. A special thanks to Sanchita Balachandran and Carolyn Riccardelli, 2011 and 2010 Program chairs, respectively, for their invaluable guidance and insights throughout the year. Christine del Re generously offered her advice for copy-editing, and Emily Hamilton and Kari Dodson have spent innumerable hours formatting the papers included in this volume, without whom this would not have been possible.

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