

FOREWORD

This is the fifth volume of *Postprints* published by the Objects Specialty Group (OSG), and includes all of the papers presented at the OSG session, June 13, 1997, at the AIC meeting in San Diego, California. It is hoped that this volume will be of interest both to those who were there and those who were not able to attend the annual meeting. Ideally, this publication will serve as a departure point both for further discussion with the individual authors and as a base line against which to measure our progress in the field of objects conservation. The papers were minimally edited for format, punctuation and English usage - there was no peer-review process and readers will notice great differences in individual style. Authors are encouraged to submit their work to peer-reviewed publications such as the *Journal of the American Insitute for Conservation*. The authors retain all reproduction rights to their text and images.

The themes selected for this year's focus - *Inherent Vice* and *Revisiting Old Treatments* - were pinpointed as two ideas which had yet to be discussed after reviewing topics from the previous ten years of OSG meetings. *Inherent Vice* is certainly a concept and a reality confronted by objects conservators on a regular basis. Objects which exhibit "inherent vice" can often benefit from improved environmental, exhibit and/or storage conditions. In this regard, the selection of inherent vice dovetails well with the preventative conservation approach that has become a major part of our efforts. The three papers by Patricia Leavengood and John Twilley, Mary Clerkin Higgins and Lisa Kronthal cover three radically different types of objects - a large outdoor stone sculpture, a glass/stone/shell mosaic panel and donkey skin puppets - all with problems relating to inherent vice (and in the last two cases, additional problems from previous treatments).

The majority of the papers focused on *Revisiting Old Treatments*, which offered an opportunity for the OSG to examine the effects of past treatments (with 20/20 hindsight, of course) and to apply the information gained from this review to the future care and conservation of artifacts. It was a time to seriously reexamine and reflect on the choices conservators have made in the past and to redirect or rethink the choices we will make in the future. The materials are again varied: ceramics (including the special problems of field conservation), stone, metal, leather and skins.

On behalf of the OSG, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Virginia Greene for her dedication to producing this volume of papers from which we will all benefit. I would also like to thank all the speakers for a job well done and for sharing their insights and honest evaluation of treatments with their colleagues. This attention to detail, and ability to reflect on and learn from the past, will help us as we continue to improve the field of objects conservation.

Ingrid A. Neuman
OSG Chair