

# *Program Chair's Foreword*

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The theme for the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Institute for Conservation was **Conservation 2.0—New Directions**. I interpreted this inspiring topic to mean a call for new ideas and innovative treatment approaches, a way to share the frontiers and ground-breaking research of our craft. I was looking for specific details on how treatments were accomplished using new techniques or innovative approaches to old techniques and materials. In some cases, the conservation treatment was relatively well-known, such as laser cleaning, but the material isn't as well represented in our literature, such as lipstick and aluminum and feathers.

We also tried to incorporate some changes and innovative new approaches to how the objects session was organized. For the first time we had a luncheon with a tips session, similar to the popular luncheon annually provided by the Paintings Specialty Group. Also, another first, we split our papers over two days, sharing one day with the Wooden Artifacts Specialty Group, so there was less overlap between the two sets of papers. The chosen papers naturally separated into four categories: Modern Polymers, Ethnographic Materials, Archaeological Metals, and Fine Arts Metals.

On Wednesday, May 20, 2009, we began the meeting with a two-hour luncheon and tips session. The tips were short, 15-minute presentations with a lot of time for questions and discussion. A useful online tool for communicating with clients was presented by Candis Griggs Hakim and her husband Mather Hakim. He had developed The Faculte "Broadcast," a web-based multimedia communication platform available at minimal cost (currently free) that easily creates a mini "movie" for an online treatment proposal a client can view. In the second tip, Gretchen Anderson showed how her museum had retrofitted Delta Design cabinet drawers so that they sealed tight with a Plexiglas lid for low relative humidity metals storage. Finally, Nancy Fonicello shared her tips for cleaning feather bonnets, which led to a lively discussion about feather cleaning and handling. Of these three tips, only one, Gretchen's cabinet retrofits, is in this postprint. Nancy and Candis' presentations were blogged by Ellen Carrlee.

Our session started with Modern Polymers. L. H. (Hugh) Shockey, Jr. showed another example of a carbon dioxide snow cleaning technique, this time showing the specifics of how it was done and how it could be used to take the bloom off a deteriorating polymer sculpture. He showed a video of the process, which clearly illustrated the noise as well as the speed of the technique. Anna Comiotto introduced a new tool, the plasma pen, for improving polymer adhesion. The session concluded with Elizabeth Homberger and Carl Patterson's presentation on lipstick-coated objects that were sweating and gathering dust. All three of these papers are provided in this postprints volume.

After a break, Cap Sease chaired the session on Ethnographic Materials. This session was dedicated to Ginny Greene and her life-long support of the Objects Specialty Group and conservation. Ginny, retired conservator of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, trained many pre-program and program objects interns. Ginny also served as the OSG Publications Chair for many years, selflessly compiling printed volumes of each year's talks. A special publication of papers by her former interns and students was compiled as a retirement gift for Ginny. Meg Loew Craft's presentation, "Examination of an

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Egyptian Corn Mummy,” which launched our ethnographic session, appears in Ginny’s memorial publication, and is not included here. She discussed the mummy’s history, construction and analytical results, including a CT scan. Nancy Fonicello and her colleagues continued the ethnographic session with a summary of analytical work on painted hide robes at the Ethnological Museum in Berlin. Dyes and pesticides were identified using HPLC and FTIR. Quillwork dyes were compared with known local dye plants prepared by Nancy. The ethnographic session concluded with “It Takes Guts,” presented by Kelly McHugh, Kim Cullen Cobb, Michele Austin-Dennehy, and Landis Smith, giving an excellent history of gut and its cultural uses. The paper also explores the philosophy of repair, and emphasizes Native stewardship and values, something conservators sometimes neglect to consider. The latter two talks are published here.

We returned on Friday, May 22, 2009, for the Archaeological Interest Group Breakfast followed by three talks. Howard Wellman introduced the Archaeological Metals speakers. Alice Peterakis launched the session with an update of conservation work at Kaman-Kalehöyük, focusing on a student metals storage project that nicely complemented Gretchen Anderson’s presentation two days earlier. Gretchen Anderson returned with Giovanni Fregni to give an overview of digital imaging techniques and how they might be used to benefit conservation activities and reduce object handling of fragile archaeological metals. The session concluded with “Connecting Materials Science and Engineering with Archaeological Conservation” presented by Paul Mardikian. The iron ship *H. L. Hunley*, excavated from a marine environment, has been used in research to improve and speed-up iron desalination. This paper is not presented in this volume. Again, look to Ellen Carrlee’s blog of this session for more information.

The morning ended with some fascinating papers on metals. None of those papers have been submitted for publication, nor were they blogged, which is unfortunate. Michael Barrett, Mark Lewis, and Scott Nolley’s “The Laser Cleaning of Anna Hyatt Huntington’s Aluminum Sculpture *The Torch Bearers*” showed how a much publicized cleaning technique could be used on a less well-publicized material, aluminum. Curtis Desselles, Mary F. Striegel, and Jason Church showed how eddy currents could help clarify inscriptions and makers’ marks in “Innovations in Eddy Current Analysis of Metals for Heritage Preservation.” The talks concluded with John Scott’s presentation, “Biotechnology for Objects Conservation,” discussing some of the formulations he has been using on outdoor sculptures.

As Program Chair, I am grateful to the guidance of my predecessor, Howard Wellman, as well as the rest of the OSG committee chairs, other specialty group program chairs, and AIC staff, all of whom helped to ensure this was a stellar program. In particular, Susanne Grieve and Vanessa Muros chaired the Archaeological Interest Group breakfast, and Cap Sease and Chris Del Re took the lead on the ethnographic session honoring Ginny Greene. Special thanks to all who submitted papers. Finally, special thanks to Ellen Carrlee, who documented many presentations in her well-written blog. To see her comments on the papers that were not submitted for publication in the OSG Postprints, go to <http://ellencarrlee.wordpress.com/2009/05/>.

**Helen Alten, OSG Program Chair 2009**