



International
Committee for
Conservation

ATSR Newsletter 01/2013

Letter from Stefanos Kroustallis.....	1
Letter from Sigrid Eyb-Green and Kathrin Pilz.....	2
ATRS 5 Brussels: Interim Meeting Report.....	3
Announcement of ATSR6 Interim Meeting	6
Announcement and call for contributions: Painting Techniques, History, Materials and Studio Practice	7

Letter from Stefanos Kroustallis

Dear friends,

First of all I would like to wish you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As you probably know I decided to step down as coordinator of ATSR. I was debating about this for some time but I could not make this decision earlier because of the several running issues we had to take care. The successful 5th ATSR Interim Meeting in Brussels last November made me think that this would be the best time for a change that, I am sure, will drive to a further growth of our group. According to ICOM-CC bylaws and the Manual for ICOM-CC Working Group Coordinators, when a coordinator steps down during the triennium period, the assistant coordinator can take automatically his/hers place, if of course agrees to do so, until the end of the period. Fortunately Sigrid accepted to coordinate the group and I have to say I was quite happy as she demonstrated excellent organization and communications skills during the organization of ATSR Vienna meeting and as assistant coordinator of ATSR.

I would like to thank you all for these years of working together. I really appreciate your friendly cooperation, the motivating feedback and your active participation to ATSR events.

Best wishes,

Stefanos Kroustallis

Letter from Sigrid Eyb-Green and Kathrin Pilz

Dear Friends,

As some of you may already know, I will be the next coordinator of the ATSR group until the next ICOM-CC triennial meeting in 2014.

I graduated at the Institute for Conservation and Restoration at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in 1999, where I was trained as a paper restorer. After graduating, I worked at a free-lance paper conservator in New York and later in Vienna. Since 2002, I have been teaching paper conservation at the Institute for Conservation and Restoration where I also presented my PhD thesis on a fresco series by the Austrian artist Leopold Kupelwieser, focussing on art technological aspects of his work. My first contact with ATSR was at the Glasgow meeting in 2008 where I presented some aspects of my thesis. I have been involved with the group since and organised the Vienna meeting in 2010.

I would first like to thank our coordinator of the last three years, Stefanos Kroustallis, who lead the group through a very difficult adaptation period after ATSR had joined ICOM-CC as their 21st working group at the New Delhi ICOM-CC triennial meeting. In addition, Stefanos generously offered to assist during my initial phase as coordinator. Let me also express warm thanks to Ad Stijnman who offered to co-organise the next Interim Meeting which is planned for June 2014 in Amsterdam (more details will be given). In my tasks as a coordinator I will be helped by assistant coordinator Kathrin Pilz.

Kathrin has a degree in the conservation and restoration of paintings from the Cologne University of Applied Sciences (2007). She was involved in the HART-Project making historically accurate reconstructions of oil paints (2004/05) in Amsterdam, where she also had the chance to attend the very first ATSR-meeting in 2004. After graduating in Cologne she returned to Amsterdam, to explore the 19th century German source Technische Mitteilungen für Malerei for the Netherlands Cultural Heritage Agency (2007/08). Since 2007 she has worked as a paintings conservator and researcher at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam specialising in paintings by Van Gogh from his late French period.



Sigrid Eyb-Green



Kathrin Pilz

I would like to encourage you to visit our ICOM-CC website <http://www.icomcc.org>. The website has two levels: (1) is for the general audience; and (2) for paying members only. If you are an ICOM member but have no password yet for the member's section, please contact ICOM (<http://icomcommunity.icom.museum/en/contact> or contact Joan Marie Reifsnnyder: secretariat@icom-cc.org). Full papers of the Triennial Meeting will be available for five weeks from the date they are posted at level one where after they will be moved to level two.

ATRS 5 Brussels: Interim Meeting Report

The 5th Interim Meeting of the ICOM-CC Working Group ATSR took place on November 22nd and 23rd 2012 at the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA, <http://www.kikirpa.be/>) in Brussels. The meeting was very well coordinated by Helene Dubois and her team to whom I would like to express our warmest thanks for all the hard work in advance of and during the meeting! Fourteen posters and eighteen papers were presented by participants from The Netherlands, France, USA, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Great Britain, Australia and the Philippines; additionally, ATSR members from other countries joined the meeting, giving a very international turn out. The program posted on the ICOM-CC website was followed, with one exception: Agnes LeGac's paper was withdrawn. The symposium followed four previous venues in Amsterdam 2004 (Approaching the Art of the Past: Sources and Reconstructions), Madrid 2006 (Art Technological Source Research: Towards a New Discipline), Glasgow 2008 (Study and Serendipity: Testimonies of Artists' Practice) and Vienna 2010 (Technology and Interpretation. Reflecting the Artist's Process). The theme of the Brussels Meeting was „Making and transforming art: changes in artists' materials and practice“.



2012 Interim Meeting of ATSR in Brussels 2012: Organizers and Speakers

The venue was introduced by Marta Ajmar who talked about trans-materiality and material mimesis in Renaissance Art Objects. She interpreted a wide range of interconnected written sources and challenged the conventional distinction between “fine” and “decorative” arts. Research on Maso di Bartolomeo’s bronze working techniques – based on his still preserved record books - presented by Tru Helms was a perfect example of the point made: in his Florentine Quattrocento workshop sculptures, candelabra, but also bronze bombards were created. Another example of cross-boundary objects are harpsichords which bear the intrinsic duality of being both musical instruments and works of art. In his presentation Jean-Philippe Echard described the transformation of harpsichords since the 18th century in order to adapt to the changing musical tastes and practices. His study combined written sources such as music sheets, aesthetical and technical treatises and notary documents with close observations of instruments.

Several presentations broached the issue of pigment or dye production: Sylvie Neven talked about the preparation and use of anthocyanin colorants in Medieval European illuminators’ workshops. A revised edition of the Strasbourg text was used to provide the data for performing historic reconstructions of recipes. Stefanos Kroustallis presented a comparative study of the manufacture of artificial vermilion from the 8th to the 16th century. Jilleen Nadolny led us into the 19th century with her interpretation of documentary sources for the industrial preparation of synthetic ultramarine and zinc white pigments. Alan Phenix’ outstanding lecture allowed some insight into his long-time and in-depth research on the history of distilled oil of turpentine. This study constitutes a perfect example of a truly art technological source research project focussing on an issue that can only be approached using source literature.

Two lectures discussed medieval and 17th century manuscripts per se respectively: Arie Wallert and Mark Clarke again raised the question whether written technical treatises and recipes reflect contemporary workshop practice or whether they were works of general intellectual interest. Rica Jones introduced a note of caution to the reader of the De Mayerne manuscript, arguing that the information on artists' practices and techniques described in the manuscript must not be taken literally in all cases; a point well supported by comparing analysis of van Dyck's paintings with the technical information in the manuscript.

A brief excursion into the history of conservation opened up new vistas: Delphine Steyaert introduced us to her ongoing PhD research on Adriaan Hubert Bressers-Blanchaert and his son Léon Bressers, two painters who have re-polychromed many medieval religious sculptures in Belgium in the 19th century. Sketchbooks, drawings and tracing papers kept at the Bressers-Blanchaert archives represent a rich source of written and graphical information documenting their work.

Other sources presented at this meeting included Artist's estates ("Hans Heysen's Art Materials: an Investigation into Supply, Knowledge and Choice", presented by his great-granddaughter Rosemary Heysen), parish books ("The Baclayon Parish's Book of Income and Accounts (1856-1909): Documentary evidence to investigate art material supply and paintings practice in the Philippines" by Nicole Tse) and ephemera, photographs and documenting the self-destruction of Jean Tinguely's kinetic artwork Homage to New York. (Reinhard Bek: "A destructive happening and its relicts: Jean Tinguely's Homage to New York").

Two presentations outlined research projects carried out at the Doerner Institute in Munich. Both deal with painting techniques of the 19th and early 20th century, examining paintings by German artists such as Franz von Stuck, Arnold Böcklin, Franz von Lenbach and Wassily Kandinsky. Patrick Dietemann focussed on the role of historic sources in the understanding of the materials and techniques of oil and tempera painting around 1900. Comparing results of binding media analyses with written documents, contradictions became evident and, consequently a new scientific model for tempera paints (based on colloid chemistry) was developed. Wiebke Neugebauer posed the question whether varnishes used by Franz von Stuck and Wassily Kandinsky were in fact a reception of Medieval varnish recipes which were at the time studied intensively by chemists, art historians and artists in Munich.

During the meeting it became increasingly clear that, having embraced new types of sources such as account books, film material, letters and sketch books, there is a general impression that ATSR in the future needs to focus on its core competence, the interpretation of written sources such as artists treatises and manuscripts in order to raise its profile and not let its field of study become too arbitrary and random. Thus, it was decided to dedicate the next symposium to ATSR's "centrepiece" and go "back to the roots".

This leads me to the

Announcement of ATSR6 Interim Meeting

Sources on Art Technology: Back to Basics

After five earlier successful symposia in Amsterdam, Madrid, Glasgow, Vienna and Brussels the biennial ATSR symposium returns to Amsterdam in 2014 for discussion about the working group's base: the art technological sources themselves and their research. Background for this symposium is the large collection of art technological sources (texts and images) from the middle ages until today in the library of the Rijksmuseum. The preceding symposia showed that the profound disclosure of this material is of main importance for both art historical as well as material-technical research. A better understanding of source material and the kind of research needed for that is therefore basic to all further study of art objects.

Symposium Details:

Title: Sources on Art Technology: Back to Basics

Concerns: biennial international symposium of the ICOM-CC working group ATSR

URL: <http://icom-cc.org/21/working-groups/art-technological-source-research/>

Place: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Period: June 2014

Theme: art technological sources and their research

Discussions about: practical treatises, studio interiors, workshop inventories, trade in artists' materials, databases for documentation, reconstructions of techniques, machines and workshops

Presentations: oral paper, poster, demonstration, book presentation

Language: English

Number of participants: 100–150 persons

Delegate fee: € 180, early registration € 150; students € 60, early registration € 40

Speakers: do not pay for registration, get their travelling and hotel costs reimbursed in as far as possible

Lunches: included in the delegate fee

Conference dinner: € 40

Publication proceedings: Archetype Publishers (with reservation)

A call for papers will be sent out soon.

We would also like to forward the following information:

Announcement and call for contributions: Painting Techniques, History, Materials and Studio Practice

Painting Techniques, History, Materials and Studio Practice
International Symposium
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam 18-19-20 September 2013

The beautifully renovated Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam will open its doors to the public in 2013. To celebrate this event the Rijksmuseum will host a three-day Symposium on Historical Painting Techniques.

The central theme of the Symposium will be the technical study of historically used painting techniques, the historical painting materials, their origin and trade, and their application in the painters workshop.

This symposium will be the fifth in a series of very successful meetings that started in Prague in 1993, followed by a meeting in Leiden in 1995, and continued by the IIC congress in Dublin in 1998 and the National Gallery meeting in London in 2009.

As considerable developments continue to take place in the field of 'technical art history', we hope to show the advances that are being made in the study of the material aspects of paintings. The Symposium will provide a podium for the effective dissemination and fruitful discussion of new work. We strongly encourage interdisciplinary collaboration between art historians, conservators, and scientists. Contributions discussing technical findings, documentary evidence and analytical results, in relation to art historical questions are particularly encouraged. We emphatically invite art historians to contribute, but also welcome relevant contributions from other disciplines, such as source research, conservation science, the history of science and technology, history of trade and trade routes, historical mining, metallurgy, pharmacy.

The program should prove of interest to academic scholars and students as well as museum professionals, curators, conservators, art historians and scientists.

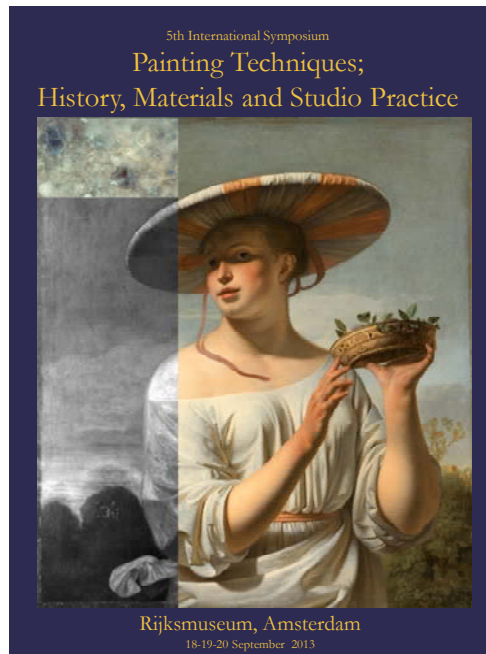
Contributions to the Symposium are considered, either as oral presentation or as poster, on the assumption that they are not being considered for publication elsewhere. They should be original material that has not been published. Contributions should be related to the materials and methods of painting from the Middle Ages until the beginning of the 20th Century. Contributions on works of art in other media which have a direct bearing on painting will also be considered for inclusion in the Symposium programme.

If you wish contribute a paper to the Symposium, please address to our website:

<http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/painting-techniques>

The deadline for submission of abstracts is Friday 29 March 2013. Abstracts should be no longer than 500 words and include title, names and addresses of authors, and have no references, images or graphs.

The oral and poster presentations held at the Symposium may be published as Postprints in both electronic and printed form. All contributions will be anonymously peer-reviewed by members of the reviewing committee.



Best wishes for an inspiring 2013,

Sigrid Eyb-Green and Kathrin Pilz