



ICOM COMMITTEE FOR CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP "THEORY AND HISTORY OF CONSERVATION-RESTORATION"

**NEWSLETTER NO.12
APRIL 2006**

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This newsletter has been prepared for a large part by Rebecca Rushfield, coordinator of this Working Group during the triennial 2002-2005. It has been completed by the present coordinators.

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ICOM-CC 14th Triennial Meeting The Hague, 12 – 16 September 2005

The following message was sent October 7, 2005 to all participants of the 14th Triennial Meeting of ICOM-CC 'Our Cultural Past – Your Future!':

Dear ICOM-CC members,

The 14th Triennial Meeting of ICOM-CC 'Our Cultural Past – Your Future!' in The Hague, the Netherlands (12-16 September 2005) was a big success. Almost 900 professionals in the field of conservation from over 75 countries came together to discuss and exchange new ideas and research results.

During the congress a newspaper, which gives an overall view of the successful meeting, was made. We present it to you in the enclosed pdf.file. (See attached file: ICOM-CC2005-Congress-Newspaper.pdf)

Our website also gives you the opportunity to read the full text of the plenary speeches. The main subject was the exploration and design of different strategies and methods aimed at involving the public in issues surrounding Cultural Heritage, its preservation and emergency situations.

Please open the following page on our website for the full text:

www.icom-cc2005.org/programme/programme_at_a_glance/

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For those who did not attend the meeting in The Hague and who are interested in receiving the pdf.file with the congress newspaper, please contact Floortje Kok.

New Directory Board

At the plenary business meeting held on Monday September 12, 2005, the following people stood for election to the Directory Board:
Marie-Claude Corbeil, Vinod Daniel, Kathleen Dardes, Christian Degriigny, Bent Eshaj, Gael de Guichen, Françoise Hanssen-Bauer, Marian A. Kaminitz, Bertrand Lavedrine,

Sharon Little, Michel Menu, Thea B. Van Oosten, Diane Van der Reyden, and Jan Wouters.

Report of the Working Group "Theory and history of conservation-restoration" Triennial September 2002- September 2005

By Rebecca Rushfield

In the triennial that ended with the meeting in The Hague in September 2005 Rebecca Rushfield (USA) acted as Coordinator and Alison Bracker (England) and Hans-Christoph von Imhoff (Switzerland) as Assistant Coordinators of the "Theory and history of conservation-restoration" Working Group. During this time, the Working Group published two long newsletters- No.10 (October 2003) and No.11 (October 2004).

The Working Group held an interim meeting in Bratislava, Slovakia on December 10-11, 2004. The meeting was organized by Zuzana Bauerova who had obtained partial funding for it in the form of a grant from the Ministry of Culture SR. The presentations at the meeting included informal papers by members of the Working Group and Sybille Schmidt (Germany) on the VDR's (German conservators association) approach to oral history. Hans-Christoph von Imhoff presented the work of ICOM and its Committee on Conservation, in particular, the Working Group on Theory and History of Conservation to the Czech and Slovak conservators who themselves provided insights into the functioning and structure of the conservation profession on the national level in both countries.

Working Group members submitted twenty-nine abstracts for the September 2005 Triennial Meeting. Twelve were accepted—one of them if reworked as a poster. Nine of the authors submitted full texts. (Two papers were withdrawn for personal reasons.) Seven papers will be published in the Preprints.

Individual Working Group members were productive. Hiltrud Schinzel published a book, Touching Vision: Essays on Restoration Theory and the Perception of Art (VUB Brussels University Press, 2003). Hans-Christoph von Imhoff presented a lecture "Conservator-restorers of material cultural heritage—their profession and legal situation in non-legal terms" at the Bregstein Foundation colloquium "Art and Law" which took place in Amsterdam on October 10, 2003 and was published in a slightly edited form in the ICOM-CC-THC Newsletter no.11 (2004). Alison Richmond and Alison Bracker recently began work on a book of essays on conservation ethics for which we encourage input (*see p. 31 of this newsletter for the blurb of the book*).

Papers Presented at the Working Group "Theory and history of conservation-restoration" Sessions of the 14th ICOM-CC Triennial Meeting

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Clare Hucklesby, “Changing values. Exploring the aetiology behind the nature of conservation amongst different cultural groups”.

Zuzana Bauerova, “Aesthetical and ethical issues of conservation in Central Eastern Europe: museum, ideology, society and conservation (Case study: Czechoslovakia 1928 – 1960s)”. (Not in preprints, but text published below, p. 10).

Alison Bracker and Rachel Barker, “Relic or release: Defining and documenting the physical and aesthetic death of contemporary art”.

Krysia Spirydowicz, “Archives under attack. The preservation of European documentary heritage in World War II”.

Jilleen Nadolny, “ A problem of methodology. Merrifield, Eastlake and the use of oil-based media by medieval English painters”.

Joyce Hill Stoner, “The Legacy of William Suhr: From Berlin to New York”.

Friday, September 16, 2005 Friday, September 16, 2005

Isabelle Brajer and Ida Haslund, “Questions of authenticity after six re-restorations of wall paintings”.

Frankline Barres, “Les peintures transposes du Musee du Louvre. Etude des techniques de transposition en France de 1750 jusq’ a la fin du XIXeme siecle”.

Extra (not in preprints, but text published below).

At the end of the Meeting on Thursday, Dr. Cornelia Weyer reflected on Oral History as an instrument to research the history of our profession and she presented some ideas on how to proceed in the future. We publish her full text below and we have inserted her ideas into the programme for the next triennial (see p. 8):

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Dear colleagues,

The announcement of my contribution on "an international oral history project" might have arisen expectations that I am not able to fulfil in the forthcoming few minutes.

“A project” promises to be something real, whereas, on the contrary, I shall talk to you about something that so far is no more than a mere wish, a lot of planning, and good will. Of course I hope that what I have to say is of some interest to you nevertheless.

Those of you who have followed the “Theory and History”-Working Group’s activities for a longer period yet, might remember a project planned back at the time when Françoise Hansen-Bauer and Mireille te Marvelde coordinated the group. Françoise, Mireille and a small number of active members including myself designed a complex structure that was supposed to organize future oral history documentation on conservation. The envisaged documents were to consist mostly of interviews with conservators as interviewee and members of the working group as interviewers. That’s why the project was given the title “conversations on conservation”. It was published in Newsletter 8, p.6/7 in 2002. But in spite of our intensive preparation work the plan never came into being. The reasons were, probably, a lack of time with everybody involved and a lack of funding not enabling us to hire professional support. I guess the project was also too ambitious for a loose network such as ours.

Nevertheless: the idea was from that moment on implanted into the ICOM-CC Theory and History Working Group. Group members spread it as well to other groups and found some encouraging resonance. In Germany, for example, the VDR Theory and History Working Group, when being confronted with the idea of doing oral history work in order to preserve knowledge on our professional development, favored the task and prepared first steps towards realization – which once again proved to be difficult to materialize. Furthermore E.C.C.O., the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers’ Organizations, was contacted. E.C.C.O. signaled that they were willing to support an ICOM-CC initiative as well as national (European) initiatives on the subject – on an idealistic, immaterial level.

Whenever Rebecca Rushfield and I were in contact during the last three years, we consented in finding the Oral History Project on Conservation important and worthwhile promoting. That’s also why I am talking to you today.

But what can I say more than just: “It is indeed an important task for conservator-restorers to collect information about our professional history, information that otherwise might get lost very soon, to do interviews with those who have taken an active part in the development”?

Besides appealing to your responsibility I want to put forward some ideas and propositions on how to proceed in the future.

We have, of course, the American example - Joyce Hill Stoner just gave an impressive demonstration about it. Furthermore, some of us have gathered experience in another context, for example, as I did in the INCCA project (INCCA: International Network on the Conservation of Contemporary Art). In the course of this European cooperation we did interviews with artists and developed a guideline on “Good Practice in Interviewing Artists”, that you might consult on the INCCA website, if you are interested. A one day

seminar on oral history was given to the INCCA partners in March 2002 in Bilbao by Dr Robert B Perks from the British Oral History Society, London, which was offering much valuable information on what to expect from interviews, how to do them and, not to forget: how to proceed with the material gathered. (A closer look to the Oral History Society' website <http://www.ohs.org.uk> is indeed also worthwhile!).

From what I learnt there as well as from own experience, I feel that Oral History is an instrument that needs a good deal of exercise to be used in an adequate, fruitful way.

Videos, tapes or transcriptions of interviews are documents, source material. As with any other sources it's a precondition to use that material with care – in addition though, different from other sources, that come into existence without our involvement, much care in producing them is essential too.

Before interviewing it is important to clarify, why we gather information and what kind of knowledge we want to get from that. A pre-condition for anybody who wants to lead an interview is to not only have questions but to have quite a bit of knowledge about the context as well. This means the interviewer should have studied the historical background, researched into the biography of the interviewee, and thought about the interest that our generation – and in form of hypothesises – future generations want to have commented by the person we intend to approach.

The preparation of the contents is at least as important as the preparation of the technical equipment and good organization of the interview procedure. Furthermore, before the interviewee is even contacted, the work following the interview itself should be considered, that is: to secure the editing process of the primary interview material – if not so the value of the document can be doubted in many cases. Experience shows that there is quite some time investment to be taken into account for these tasks!

Please believe me, I do not at all mean to discourage anybody and strictly prevent him/her from becoming an interviewer. It's just inconsiderate enthusiasm that I hope to stop, when bringing all this to your attention.

As a member of the ICOM-CC Working Group on Theory and History of Restoration, I ask myself what should we do in our group to promote good use of oral history being such an interesting but also demanding instrument?

I personally would not aim again at a project in the real sense of the word. We have learnt that the loose network we all form is not a basis strong enough for that kind of a challenge. What we might instead want is to concentrate for the next triennial on a subject that covers among others the idea of oral history in conservation. This subject might be called: "Studies on Recent Source Material". I propose that we share theoretical reflection as well as practical experience in research dedicated to the last decades. In the period between this and the next triennial meeting, we could also have an interim meeting on the whereabouts of oral history, on interviewing techniques as well as on oral history criticism.

I would be pleased if this proposition was considered in the business meeting which is the next subject on today's agenda.

Thank you for your attention.

WG Programme 2005-2008

After the presentation of the papers we had a Working Group's discussion on the programme for the next triennial 2005-2008.

In general we can say that our Working Group continues to research the developments of the profession in its theoretical and practical aspects. We sent in the following catalogue to the Board (sent to the members in an e-mail of 13-1-2006), which is based on the Working Group's discussion (members and coordinators), of work undertaken in the past and present, as well as project proposals presented to this WG during the ICOM-CC Meeting in The Hague in September 2005. During these sessions the WG evaluated the projects that they believed merited continuation. These projects are:

-Studies on the principles of conserving contemporary art, especially regarding knowledge and documentation of techniques, materials, meaning, and authenticity.

-Studies into the culturally determined development of ideas and 'trends' in conservation according to the different regions of the world. There are considerable differences according to the cultural context: Taking inventory of these differences and the reasons underlying them.

-Continuation of the collection of references for a bibliography on ethics.

-Oral history project:

Redefinition of this project, which was started by Francoise Hanssen-Bauer in 2002 under the title "Conversations on Conservation".

How to make oral history part of a larger framework, combining it with the study of related sources and other studies. This subject might be called: "Studies on recent source material in conservation history".

How to use oral history: Oral history is in fact just one of the tools for obtaining knowledge about more recent conservation history, its theoretical background, and its practice.

-Studies that take the art work as a basic source of information, and relate that information to written sources and analytical studies.

Like oral history, the gathering of information from the art works themselves is one of the tools to build the corpus of the history of conservation.

-Further studies into the history of methods and materials used in conservation and restoration:

the presumptions and context that were the origin of their development, their use and the consequences of their use.

*-Collection of annotated literature on the history of conservation under the topics of:
The use of methods and materials in conservation;
The transfer and change of traditions in the use of materials and methods, and the ideas
from which they originate.*

-Collection and publication of unpublished documents that are of interest for the field.

ESSAYS

"Aesthetical and Ethical Issues of Conservation in Central Eastern Europe: Museum, Ideology, Society and Conservation" (Case Study: Czechoslovakia 1918-1960's)

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Abstract

This paper looks at the museum as an institution, how its selection of artworks influenced conservation theory and practice, and the status of the conservator within political, cultural and social conditions in Central Eastern Europe, especially Czechoslovakia. It will pay attention to gallery policy via installations, chosen artworks, and their interpretations and presentations, which influenced methodological and ethical approaches in conservation. Conservation has also formed the perception and reception of art objects within art history, as well as having created the methodological theories and categories that became objects of interest for another historical discipline: historiography. History of conservation is therefore a part of the history (and) reception of art (Schiesl 2000).

Introduction

In 1953 and 1956, the founder of modern conservation in Czechoslovakia, Bohuslav Slansky, published a book entitled *Technique of Painting*, which influenced the conservation ethics in his home country, as well as in neighboring countries. His theory and methodological approach was based especially on the importance of artistic interpretation by the conservator, or the importance of retouching as the conservator's interpretation. Since his conservation activities in the national cultural institutions were influenced by the state official policy, we can trace the inter-relation and inter-action between art historical methodologies and those of conservation in his conservation methodological approaches. The case study presents the main conservation methodological issues and their historical qualities in order to prepare the basis for further interpretations of conservation theory and practice in post-war Czechoslovakia (after 1945).

Methodological approaches – Art History and Conservation

Methodological approaches applied in historiography, as well as their interpretations and presentations, together with the new possibilities of the materials and technologies, have a strong impact on the conservation of artworks, especially on the ethical issues within conservation. Theoretical categories, such as authenticity, originality, identity of the artworks, secondary additions, conservation responsibility, its measure and the position of the conservator, are being re-evaluated according to postmodern philosophical approaches as well. As a result, the preservation of cultural heritage is defined in a wider theoretical and practical perspective.

Conservation intervention is based on theoretical instruments that define all the methodological approaches and the physical interventions on the material. Visual material itself represents at the same time a spiritual message and a physical entity. The artwork 'lives its life' just on the crossroads between 'two cultures' (Snow 1959, Skaug 1999). Therefore, conservation requires a balance between 'scientific' and 'humanistic' approaches, respecting both visual and aesthetical requirements equally.

Philosophical and aesthetical roots of contemporary interpretations in Czechoslovakia

Historical, philosophical and ethical issues at the beginnings of Czechoslovakia's methodological approaches to, and theories of, conservation can be interpreted through three main bodies: the gallery as an institution, the gallery's director as the holder of the collection, and the conservator. It is important to focus on the problem of how conservation was introduced in the Czech and now Slovak lands, its social and professional status, and how different ways of artwork selection influenced conservation treatments.

Although it is generally accepted that the ideas of the Venice Charter, together with the Central European origins of modern preservation, created the ethical principles in the Czechoslovak conservation practice, we must not forget the influence of the earlier Czech philosophical, methodical and methodological approaches to art, its history, and its maintenance, as introduced within the Slovak context after World War I and the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918. On the verge of the 20th century, the Czech art historians brought the ideas of the Vienna School to Slovakia.

As the science-based methodological approach to the history of art was imported, the conservative and purist approach of the Hungarian Monarchy vanished. Riegl's definition of art history as science was instrumental in the creation of theoretical ideas and their methodologies. With Dvorák's notion of spiritual value (Dvorák 1924) and transformation of its identity into the continuity of history of art, the interpretation of the spiritual message in the visual form (Kant) entered the Central Eastern European region. As a consequence, values of monuments (Riegl 1903) were accepted in theory and practice by both Czech and Slovak preservation systems.

Historical background

Theories of art history were naturally accompanied by museum practices, which also reflected the historical activities of the national cultural institutions, dating back to the late-18th century. After World War II, the National Gallery in Prague became the most important Czechoslovak institution for conservation theory and practice. It was here where cooperation between the director – art historian and conservator was introduced, thereby leading to the implementation of conservation theory into practice. The reason why this happened in the National Gallery can be found in the history of this institution.

The initial stages of the National Gallery in Prague can be traced back to the Age of Enlightenment, when the group of patriotically oriented nobility established the Society of the Patriotic Friends of Art (Vlnas 1995). This Society, as a founder of the Gallery in Prague, as well as of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design (1799), also located in Prague, established the only ‘national’ artistic collection since the demolition of the former Royal collection from Prague Castle (mainly during fights of the 1620s). Mid-19th century political matters introduced the ideas of nation and national politics, both of which intended to use national culture as the main symbol and mediator of all nationalistic ideas in the political fights. Public activity around the construction of the National Theatre symbolized the era, together with other cultural institutions. The 19th century exposition of the gallery presented a main overview of art production from the Middle Ages to 19th-century art, but focused on the ‘golden age’ of European paintings and the ‘national art school’. As a result of romantic nationalism, the works of art were selected according to their national character and provenance. Chronologically organized and lined up according territory, the expositions also introduced monographic groups dedicated to foremost artists, or artistic schools.

Following the practice of the time, the first most important presentation system, which continued until the 20th century, was created: the history of 19th-century Czech art, together with a description of the groups and organizations that supported ‘home’ art production and national creativity (Archive). During this late-19th century period, the most important works of art – Gothic panel paintings - were acquired into the collection. A new system of humidity and light control was introduced in the expositions (especially during 1877 – 1897, when Viktor Barvitius was the Gallery inspector). Hand in hand with this example of innovative preventive conservation, a new approach in conservation was introduced as well. Archive materials reveal the origins of professional conservation treatment back to this era, when the artworks were treated by painters who were employed by the Gallery as conservators or restorers (in the 19th- century sense). Their role was to clean the paintings, and to repair the main substance problems, using traditional materials with no special considerations for their quality.

The social pressure of the general political changes and atmosphere between the 1890s and 1916 forced the general inspector of the Gallery – restorer and art historian Paul Bergner - to change the exhibition in 1917. The presentation and exposition of the institution's artworks at this time implemented the advice of foreign experts, such as Wilhelm von Bode, Max Friedländer and Joseph Neuwirth, representing national art production from the Middle Ages through the Baroque period. The “Project” became known as Nostic’s program of exposition and, later, was taken on by Vincenc Kramar.

The founding of Czechoslovakia in 1918 offered both nations – Czechs and Slovaks - independence and responsibility for their own politics and culture, including national cultural institutions. Thus there was strong pressure on the Gallery to ‘produce’ a representative Czechoslovak national institution housing central artistic collections of the state. Taking this into account, the Gallery had to change its position within society. It became the sole property of the whole Czech nation and, as such, received massive media coverage. The Gallery was donated to the state in 1937. According to Law N. 127, collections became the property of state and were no longer dependent on those in Vienna. Last but not least, its financing was fully included into the Czechoslovak state budget.

With the re-establishment of the collection in 1930’s the gallery’s director, Vincenc Kramar, based his art historical research on the technical and technological expertise arising from conservation and restoration treatment and research. This scientific approach encouraged conservation and restoration activities, as well as their presentations. Mr. Adolf Belohoubek, the founder of the conservation studio at the Gallery, supported by holders of the collection, organized the first exhibition of treated objects in 1937. The founding of the conservation studio in the Gallery was also symbolic for Kramar’s attempt to change the Prague Gallery from a provincial museum into a modern European gallery, comparable with the big state galleries in Vienna, Munich or Berlin. At this point, all conservation activities became the part of the state responsibility. The status of the profession changed; conservators became employees of the state. Together with the gallery's conservator, Bohuslav Slansky, Kramar published the first conservation theory (Slansky 1931) in the Czechoslovak context, based on Vienna’s school principles and enlarged by the artistic approach. At this point, Bohuslav Slansky, later the chief conservator, entered the Nat. Gallery in Prague (1934).

Bohuslav Slansky and his idea of a conservator after 1945

Bohuslav Slansky had a very clear idea about the conservation profession itself, as well as the main methodological principles in the conservation of works of art. He also presented his only scheme related to the conservation profession: ‘...[the] Restorer has to present well-trained craft skills, as well as scientific approach, but the most important is his/her artistic feeling that allows him to approach the work of art with all creative understanding. Therefore, it is only this ability that allows the restorer to choose the proper conservation-restoration quality and the limits of treatment in order to complete especially the aesthetical and stylistic values of treated objects. It is not enough to be only a scientist, a historian or a hand-crafter. But all the professions have to be linked together with creative talent. ...’ (Slansky 1956). As one of the very close colleagues of the director and holder of the collection, Vincenc Kramar, he finished a large number of very successful investigations and conservation or restoration projects, most of them on the Gothic Panel Paintings that were the highlights of the expositions. The majority of them was published in various art historical magazines and newspapers, and therefore became well-known among art historians, conservators and the general public.

After WWII, the question of conservation education became a topic. Bohuslav Slansky's main effort was to introduce the conservation profession into the academic system of Czechoslovakia, which went through several reforms after WWII. The political tendencies of socialism regarded artists as an important social group of the 'new society'. This pressure was strengthened after 1948, and continued in the 1950s.

The responsibility for the professional growth of conservation lay within two Prague institutions - the Academy of Fine Arts and Design (AFAD) and the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design (AAAD). Both artistic schools intended to introduce conservation studies within their curriculum. By 1945, conservation became the part of the educational system of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design and, in 1946, Bohuslav Slansky became its full-time professor. This marked not only the change of the conservation profession from craft into the position of artistic creativity (from AAAD to AFAD), but also a shift from gallery employee to academic professor. Since Slansky became a full-time and first class university professor, it was not only his professional status and social hierarchy, but also the general acceptance of the profession itself that were evaluated more highly. Conservation became a sovereign artistic profession that required university education.

On 4 July 1945, Bohuslav Slansky introduced a syllabus for his Special school for conservation and technology. The study program was divided into practical exercises in the studio and theoretical lessons, and was structured into three years. During the period of study, the student was asked to prove his/her ability to approach the object of art and to finish all basic interventions (from treatment of supports to applying varnish layer). The student had to be aware of specific historical technologies and historical and modern conservation materials, as well as a variety of specific treatments, (e.g. rentoilage, parquetage, petrification, transfer, etc.). Slansky based his didactic syllabus on the knowledge of materials, as well as the technical equipments, such as RTG, UV, IR, microscope, microanalysis, etc. Theoretical subjects were included in the practical lessons and were planned, in addition to the practical problems being solved by students.

Motivation and inspirations of Bohuslav Slansky

Bohuslav Slansky graduated from the Prague Academy of Fine Arts and Design in 1924, studying under Max Pirner and Max Svabinsky. During his studies, he obtained two school awards and an Italian scholarship. From his international study trips and scholarships, it is possible to abstract the whole school system that he introduced at the Prague Academy: From Munich (1930), he gained the importance of painting technology and materials, old masters' techniques, and copying of the old masters' techniques and technologies. From Vienna, he improved his knowledge of scientific methods of investigation and analysis during his scholarship at the special school of Professor S. Mauer (1931). His trips to Dresden (1931) and Haarlem (1931) prompted his discovery of specialization in different conservation problems. Professor Slansky introduced a profile of the student that, today, remains valid in Czech and Slovak contexts: an independently operating professional who is talented and trained enough to finish all the steps of conservation-restoration intervention, performs research, and undertakes analytical work including final documentation.

Changing perspectives in the conservation of works of art – case study from Slovakia

The situation after World War II in Slovakia was slightly different from that mentioned in the Czech lands. The new generation of art historians of Slovak origin, who were educated in Prague, focused mostly on the interpretation of art in the Slovak territory, and replaced Hungarian chauvinism with the idea of the sovereign Czechoslovak society. Since there was a lack of professional conservators in Slovakia, the Czech help was both needed and welcomed. This was the challenge for the conservator Karel Vesely (of Czech origin), formerly the conservator in the National Gallery in Prague, and a student of Bohuslav Slansky. He came to Bratislava in 1949 when the Bratislava Academy of Fine Arts was founded. Within the Academy, he founded the Department of Conservation, based on the ideas and principles of the Prague restoration school.

Also in 1949, the Slovak National Gallery was established as the cultural institution intended to collect, preserve, interpret and present Slovak art. Its first director – Karol Vaculik, who had studied at Prague Charles University and worked at the Prague National Gallery - adapted the gallery's activities according to the political pressure of the government and introduced new socialist ideology in terms of finding the 'Great Period' in Slovak art history and its main representatives: key, or 'hero,' artists. The art of the 19th century was chosen especially for these purposes. This was the reason why the original plans of the organization of exhibitions of Gothic art were changed into the 'political' exhibitions of 19th century art. The newly established tradition of the presentation of ancient Slovak art (exhibitions in 1937 in Prague and 1949 in Bratislava) had to be forgotten for a long period of time.

These historical circumstances enabled the two – Karel Vesely and Karol Vaculik - to meet in Bratislava and to work together during the foremost years of the cultural institutionalization 'movement' of 1949 - 1960. Karol Vaculik, as art historian and Director, was responsible for the conservation of works of art, identifying the objects, and their art historical evaluation. On the other hand, he was not able to get rid of the positivistic approach of the Vienna School, present especially within his topographically oriented documentation of cultural heritage in Slovakia. His methodological approach was characterised by his effort to identify the authentic intent of the artist/creator and presenting the stylistic authenticity of the artwork. He also used the results of conservation investigations (such as X-ray, UV, IR). Under the pressure of ideology and of Vaculik's positivism, conservation work became a routine. It can be characterized especially by the mechanical application of the treatment, followed by a conservation category of interpretation/retouching that relied more upon skilled application than artistic sensitivity. Although Karel Vesely stressed the ethical conditions of the profession, historical (social and political) circumstances made him re-interpret them in the simplest way and thus formed his conservation practices, which were accompanied by documentation of very low value (no information about the techniques, technology, materials that were used, or conservation dilemmas).

Conservator's status within ideological circumstances

The implementation of new Communist ideology into the culture (especially after 1948) influenced the position of state cultural institutions within society. They turned into political tools in the hands of the ideological establishment. Communist aesthetic and philosophical ideologies forced the institutions to change their way of presenting their collections, and therefore introduced an ideologically based selection of artworks. The conservator, as an academically educated professional, was fully engaged in the process of an artwork's interpretations. Acting upon political requests, the conservator, along with a responsible art historian or collection custodian, had to accommodate his/her conservation ethics and fulfill the idea of presenting the heroic past of the nation in the politically acceptable way. This meant the implementation of an artistic approach that highlighted the genuine artistic ability of the conservator, as demonstrated by greater emphasis on retouching, and the completion of missing parts and lacunae. Conservation interpretation experienced dualism and tension between theory and practice in its methodological approach: the artistic creation of a conservator took precedence over the ethical rules of respecting works of art as an entity. As such, he/she became a more acceptable figure to society.

Conclusion

The historical background allows us to identify the ethical and aesthetic issues that influenced the decision making process of all conservation treatments in the national galleries in Czechoslovakia. It has explored a background for the analysis and interpretation of the situation in two of the Central Eastern European countries in the preservation of their movable cultural heritage. As a result, the differences between their interpretations of basic approaches to conservation become visible. Understanding conservation's past helps us to clarify the reasons for false mystifications and create a platform for wider conservation interpretations in the future.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the International Visegrad Fund (www.visegradfund.org <<http://www.visegradfund.org/>>), which gave support to this research. IVF promotes the development of closer cooperation between Visegrad Four countries (the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Hungary, and the Republic of Poland) through development of common cultural, scientific, educational projects, exchanges between young people, and cross-border cooperation.

Special thanks to Alison Bracker and Hans-Christoph von Imhoff for their comments and editing of the text.

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"Contemporary Art and Conservation Theory"

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I. The present situation

Conservation's technical and theoretical problems with contemporary art demonstrate that we lack an up-to-date conservation theory covering theoretical problems and answering practical questions. These problems are complex, as contemporary art trends are very diverse, and the contents of some seem to contradict those of others or even themselves.

The complexity of contemporary art can be shown by the fact that:

1. anything can be art (unlimited expansion of art material started with ready-mades like *Fountain*, and *Bottle Dryer*, first exhibited by Duchamp in New York in 1917);
2. different arts, such as music, literature and the visual arts, mix together (starting with the Fluxus movement in the 1960s and having been amply spread up till now - recent example the work of Laurie Anderson);
3. deconstructive self-reflection is taking place in the visual arts, through the integration of philosophy and sociology, and through socio-cultural and institutional criticism, as in the work of Marcel Broodthaers, Michael Asher, and Joseph Beuys;
4. new media adapt compositional and other characteristics typical for traditional art. For example, Cindy Sherman's staged photographs, or Gilbert & George's conceptual photographs;
5. traditional media adapt compositional and other elements invented and/or made possible by new media (the influences of all new media on painting);
6. quotations from different artists in different media. Copying, a long-standing habit, is spreading in all media, the 'reviews' usually showing less skill than the works being imitated.

Apart from the resulting material problems, this complex mixing, mangling and, consequently, dissolving of categories reflects contemporary life and its conflicts. The restorer for the first time in history is forced to think deeply about his competence to treat the art of his own time.

Examples:

1) Mass media-art and reproducibility

A) The given facts

A lot of contemporary artists want to address a mass public. This is done by using mass media instrumentation, such as the technologies of advertisement and information and communication media. Most new media is attached to photography: film, TV, and video. In all mass media art, traditional *handicraft* is substituted by *machine-craft*, by the medium's technology. All have problems of short material duration due to material or technological instability (an example is video) and/or speedy development (an example is digital technology). This is generally linked with easy reproducibility. All have in common an ever-growing technical complexity.

B) Consequences for conservation

When visual art said 'welcome to the machine', it generally did not mind the consequences. Some artists may even intend to apostrophize the short-lived nature of our time. Because of their continuous updating, contemporary technologies are in temporary limited supply. Therefore, even substituting the whole work is often not regarded as problematic by artists.

Still, from a conservation point of view, these technically produced artworks are of the same cultural importance as works with traditional, more stable technologies. Furthermore, the artistic contents and meanings of such works usually are far less short-lived than their media, materials and technology.

Consequently, art museums collecting and exhibiting such works have to face new problems. From an exhibitory point of view, technique has to be updated very often, but from an historical, collecting and storing point of view ideally neither material nor technique should be changed.

Installation of such artworks for exhibition according to the artist's concept is more dependent on thorough documentation than traditional art. But also the storage of the 'authentic thought' behind medium, material and technology needs a lot of documentary support. The problems contained within reproducibility always lead back to questions of how originality and authenticity, and the artist's copyright, can be defined and how their temporal context can be preserved.

2) So-called Ephemeral Art

A) The given facts

Many art products like installations or performances have no material permanence. The short-term process, event or exhibition is the one and only issue. Here too the aim in most cases is communication, addressing an audience as large as possible, including people not used to conventional art surroundings. Therefore, such art is often exhibited or performed in other locations than the traditional museum and/or gallery. On the one hand, short-term art is antagonistic to traditional conservation/restoration aims. On the other hand, problems connected with such artistic intentions cannot be solved with traditional conservation methods.

B) Consequences for conservation

The conservation treatment of this kind of art does not include the problem of reproducibility but, even worse, that of the mere existence of the work. It may be questioned whether these works fall under the conservator's care at all, because here much traditional responsibility is neither existent nor asked for.

On the other hand, documentation is getting much more important, and often from a historical point of view has to replace the matter of the original. The documentary 'substitutes' of the artwork, the historical archival material, needs care for its survival too. Here information is lacking whether and how far conservation is responsible for such documentary relicts of artworks. Commonly accepted methods, how to treat them from an historical as well as an ethical point of view, have yet to be developed. Critical analyses of different documentation media are lacking too.

II. *Status of conservation today*

As traditional methods often cannot be used and terms linked to conservation/restoration no longer bear their original meaning for recent artworks, uneasiness concerning ethical conservation treatment is spreading. For international communication and collaboration apt technique is available, yet data exchange has but limited practical consequences due to the fact that we lack exact definitions of decisive terms and their adaptation to up-to-date conditions and problems.

In my opinion, conservation today has reached a point of no return, ready to mutate into and be appreciated as a very complex synthetic science that is dependent on research and results of numerous other sciences. It is leaving its historical cocoon in which the restorer

was regarded as craftsman and/or artist, notwithstanding that technical skill and empathy for art and culture are preconditions for conservation practice. An optimal outcome of these changes is vital for the profession's future, last but not least in view of the globalization of education. Necessary for an academic basis will be research on up-to-date theory.

III. *Updating conservation theory*

Apart from the texts of Cesare Brandi, not yet available in all languages as far as I know, we lack a systematic collection of data related to basic reflections and an international exchange, as well as cooperation on such conservation concerns. Many important historical professional terms and theories, for instance those developed by Alois Riegl, are little known.

The problems with contemporary art as described above could build a framework insofar as they directly lead to and even caricature problems that cannot be solved without general theoretical considerations preceding conservation practice.

Examples:

1. Reflecting concepts of time in conservation

This topic concerns the relation of material and content, I.e. the mind and matter problem. Both partly remain stable, and partly undergo changes in time. The constant as well as the changing material and textual components of the artwork come to the fore and are made conscious by its adaptation to the contemporary viewer during conservation treatments. Conservation resembles the actual summing up of the work's material state as well as its contents at the moment of restoration implementation.

While 'summarizing,' the restorer is forced to select which remnants of time he/she chooses to conserve and to what degree this should be done. For this selection he needs the help of the scientist and the historian. An unbalanced selection is arbitrary. More commonly acceptable guidelines are needed primarily for the handling of contemporary art.

2. Updating the dual system: aesthetics versus history

Since Cesare Brandi's research started dominating conservation theory, an historical or aesthetic view of the object is apostrophized dialectically and the question of which one has priority has remained a subject for discussion. On the one hand, Brandi's concept of aesthetics is difficult to apply to many modern works, such as performances, conceptual art and works like ready-mades, where material authenticity is no longer given, due to the fact that they are manufactured by others. On the other hand, even science has lost the belief that historical facts and concepts can be grasped objectively, due to self-critical reflections in the humanities and by artists. 'In science the concept of truth is in a crisis' says Wilem Vlusser, a well-known media theorist. Contemporary artworks that self-critically reflect terms like 'aesthetics' and 'history' could widen our consciousness.

Brandi's theories and methods are based on literature and its research. This is documented by the fact that his vocabulary stems from philology. The most quoted

example is his comparison of an artwork with the fragmentary 'text' of a document, whose 'legibility' should be regained by restoration. Missing parts are regarded primarily formally, namely as an interruption of the meaning of an interpretable design.

Consequently, art that is not narrative - i.e. many important art forms since Dada (1913) - are excluded from his contemplations.

Brandi's methodical and scientific reference to philology has already been criticized.

Contemporary culture is more guided by and oriented on images than was the case in the middle of the 20th century, when Brandi developed his theory. Cooperation with scientists in the last decades have led to broader research on materials and technology and a rising consciousness of their importance for the artwork. Yet the network of interaction between technology, content and perception of an artwork still lacks the fundamental consideration and treatment that is necessary for the development of restoration theory, methods, and practice adequate for our time.

3. The digital dilemma

A) Change of place - the second-hand enjoyment of art:

Reflections on time in conservation can be useful as long as reproducibility is not as big a problem as it seems to be now. A vital fact in this context is that, with digital technologies, the image can travel to the viewer. Materialization like a print is no longer necessary from an information point of view. From a sensual, and consequently emotional perspective, digital techniques provide a very special appearance, because of the fact that the images are constructed by pixels.

B) Perception of screen images

The factual as well as illusory space produced by applied techniques, and building up the images, sets them apart from pictorial space and from all other more or less 'flat' surfaces of traditional artworks. Other technical art media, like analogue photography's material, consists of flat layers too. Still, because of its visual appearance hiding electronic vibration of smallest pixels, for sensual perception the computer screen is more similar to Op Art than to analogue photography. Space on the computer screen depends upon the resolution of the image by pixels, but also on the illuminated screen.

Lighting is an important commonly aesthetic, as well as a specifically illusion-producing element in an artwork's appearance. It usually is directed from outside onto the art object. Exceptions include slides, neon- and fluorescent lights and tubes, film and video. In these cases the surroundings usually are dark or darkened to accentuate the inner lightening. In digital computer hardware, light comes from behind the screen and from the outside as well. Through this kind of inner and outer lighting, the screen's surface contours are not perceivable; they are hidden. The distance between the screen, its images, and the viewer seems no longer to be measurable visually, even if the screen is not far away from the viewer, such as on a laptop. Real distance somehow dissolves in the double light. This kind of lit image must have a very special attraction. If there is a screen in a public location, people tend to look at it, regardless of its content.

The lighting effect of the screen is linked with another aesthetic quality, differing from that of traditional artworks: its tactility. The computer screen generally should not be touched; therefore, any possible tactile components of the screen image are not accessible to the viewer. If there exists a touch-screen, the touching is meant and necessary to produce further images, including information and/or functions like providing money with a bank machine/automatic teller. The touching is not intended to explore tactile qualities of the screen's surface; it includes no perception of sculptural space. The screen has some family resemblance to the mirror in Alice in Wonderland: one can presume behind it hidden, abstruse realities in a miniature world of chips, bits and bytes. Of course, such hidden treasures awaken the artist's gold-digger curiosity. The restorer, on the other hand, can imagine an aggressive Queen of Hearts behind the screen, crying furiously 'off with the heads' at the view of anything touchable and real.

Because of its generally not being touched, as well as being very homogenous and lit, the viewer's real distance to the screen glass is somewhat hidden, and consequently his relation to the images becomes somewhat unclear. This, and the perfect flatness of the screen's surface, reduce the possibility of a realistic and stable visual and perceptual relationship between screened image and viewer. Here, the opposite of trompe l'oeil, namely distancing of the viewer from the image by mystic lighting and its implicit glorification - a kind of hypertrophy of the content - may be intended and take place. Often this leads to a kind of transcendence of very banal objects, as in billboard advertising. Contrasting with such expansion are miniature screens on hand-held games and digital cameras. The effect here is the playing 'down' of reality to a kind of 'Gulliver-view'. Both changes of real size produce illusions.

Digitally produced illusionism, because of the qualities of the medium's own material and technology, is itself very forceful. At the same time it may adapt and integrate any other kind of the historically developed illusionism of other media, for instance the multiple perspectives one finds in painting. The medium's aesthetic potential is therefore enormously complex, yet at the same time unique.

C) Use in conservation

The aesthetic, sensual, and emotional perception of the artwork is an important element for our notion of originality. To regain a work's most authentic aesthetic experience has to be kept in mind in conservation. Apart from documentation, digital technology already begins to be used to simulate imagined past states of a work. Furthermore, it can simulate different possible models of integration for their virtual comparison, and help restoration practice to decide which one would be the best for factual (including zero) treatment of the art-object. Here one has to be critical of, and detached from, this aid, as far as the ability of such images to correspond to the perception of the material as such from a sensual, aesthetic, phenomenological, and ontological point of view is concerned. Such differences are usually recognized and respected by artists as documented in their choice of media. Conservators have to recognize and respect such differences in their facilitating measures and equipment to document and treat artworks too.

4. Reviewing vocabulary

It certainly will be illuminating to further contrast 'materialized realities' from a conservation point of view to 'virtual' and other realities, which can be provided by modern technologies. In this context it has to be considered critically in how far the traditional meanings of terms like originality and authenticity can be applied to contemporary art. Analysis of the differences between the term 'original' and its 'relatives' like replica, copy, multiple, serial art, fake, forgery, pastiche, substitute, fragment, and ruin will be necessary to clear up matters.

A glance at archaeology shows that this science had to face problems similar to those conservation has with contemporary art, and that most of the terms mentioned above have been in use in archaeology already for a long time. 'Kopienkritik' (critique of copies) dealt with the differences of Roman copies from the Greek original. In case this last one is lost, the research can be compared to that, which may be the future task of conservation in dealing with digitally documented ephemeral and reproducible art.

For visual as well as other kinds of documentation, archaeology has developed methods and rules that have been tested in a longer tradition than conservators have had with the documentation of contemporary art, and could therefore be a guideline.

The reconstruction of antique works and the presentation of group 'environments' whose contexts have been lost (Ex: Bernard Andreae's research in the Polyphem group of Sperlonga) has a long tradition too. It is continually adapted to new research outcomes as well as to contemporary reconstruction, reproduction, and exhibition techniques and fashions. Here, too, conservators could compare problems concerning presentation and documentation of installations and environments with archaeological ones with a longer tradition, in order to learn from archaeology's historical errors (famous examples are the Aegina figures and the Barberini faun in Munich).

IV. *Conclusion*

The problems coming to life in the conservation of temporary art are linked to the development of artistic technologies. Technique is helpful and dangerous at the same time, due to its ambivalent characteristics - as a useful tool it may simultaneously pose unexpected problems.

On the one hand, the result is a complexity in all areas that led to specialization in any field of life and/or profession, which can no longer be overlooked. On the other, new technical tools make work easier, seemingly so easy that the layman is tempted to do much that in former times was left to the specialist. Of course, this concerns the artist's profession too. A paradigmatic, involuntarily humorous, example of the resulting confusion can be found in some utterances of the glamorous Swiss artist Sylvie Fleury, who exhibits ready-mades of contemporary glossy equipment like designer shopping bags and their content. Fleury admitted in an interview in German *Vogue* (10/2003), 'Anything can be styled in order to become an art-object. My constant question is: where is the borderline? For, sometimes, I have to take a toothbrush into my hand to do nothing else than to brush my teeth with it.'

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

"33rd Annual Meeting of the American Institute for Conservation"

Minneapolis, MN, June 8-13, 2005

At the General Session on Thursday June 9th, the following papers were presented:
"The History of Conservation Documentation at the Worcester Art Museum", by Morwenna Blewett
"One Hundred Years of Conservation Documentation at the Newberry Library", by Susan Russick and Giselle Simon.

"Questioning the Boundaries of Ethnography: The Presentation and Collection Care of Ethnographic and Folk Material".

Institute for Conservation, Ethnography Section Annual Forum,
Museum of Welsh Life, St. Fagans, Cardiff, Wales
May 16, 2005

The papers looked at: the salient issues that should be looked at when deciding how to interpret, conserve and display ethnographic/folk/local history collections; projects which looked at setting or developing standards in the conservation and display of these types of collections; attempts to challenge traditional viewpoints and boundaries around the issues of presentation and collection care of ethnographic and folk material.

"Authenticity and Conservation"

Glasgow University
Hunterian Art Gallery Lecture Theatre
March 24, 2006

"Changes in appearance: degradation effects in Rembrandt's Simeon song of Praise, 1631", by Petria Noble, Mauritshuis, The Hague.

"Forensics and Authenticity", by Paul Biro, Forensic Studies in Art, Montreal..

"Marble sculpture in Kibble Palace", by Graciela Ainsworth.

"Aelbert Cuyp: material aspects in the rendering of light, approaching the original intent of the artist", by Arie Wallert, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

"The value of restoration in recovering authenticity in stained glass", by Mark Bambrough.

"A 17th Century portrait: authenticity, appearance, context and conservation", by Nicola Costaras, Victoria and Albert Museum.

"Authenticities and the contemporary artwork", by Tina Fiske, Art History Department, Glasgow University.

"Is she Royal, a Commoner or a Copy? The technical examination of Lady Jane Grey and other royal portraits: how much can it help in identifying the sitter?", by Libby Sheldon, Art History Department, UCL.

"Authenticity reconstructed", by Rene Hoppenbrouwers, Limburg Conservation Institute.

"Authenticating Whistler: canvas or conjecture", by Margaret MacDonald and Erma Hermens, Art History Department, Glasgow University.

"Decision time: Systematic methods in authenticity studies", by Nicholas Eastaugh, The Pigmentum Project.

"Theory and Practice in Conservation - A tribute to Cesare Brandi"

Lisbon, May 4-5, 2006

Object: Conservation interventions in cultural objects require an attitude of criticism and a deep theoretical background. Theory is an essential support to practice and not just an explaining tool.

The Seminar will address these important issues and aims at discussing how pertinent and instrumental they are to modern conservation. The Seminar is organised as a tribute to Cesare Brandi, in his centennial year, for his role in raising the standards of modern conservation practice.

Concept and themes: The seminar will consist of paper presentations and of a certain number of invited lectures by international experts in the field, followed by extensive discussions. The lecturers will be specialists known for their competence and background, coming from institutions from all over Europe. The major domains of conservation (paintings, architecture and archaeological remains) will be addressed from the theoretical and practical points of view. The Seminar will conclude with a panel session that will provide an opportunity of interaction between the experts and the audience.

The Seminar will deal with the following themes:

- Interactions between theory and practice;
- Theoretical concepts and scientific research;
- Deciding between theory and practice;
- Are there still unsolved theoretical questions?
- Other issues related to theory and practice in a broader sense.

Language: The presentations will be in English. No simultaneous translation will be available.

Participation: The Seminar is open to everyone. The theme is of particular interest to architects, engineers, art historians, cultural managers, scientists, and practitioners working in the field of conservation. A certificate of attendance will be granted.

"Teoria do restauro": During the Seminar a new Portuguese translation of C. Brandi's "Teoria del Restauro" will be released.

Organisation: The Seminar is organised by LNEC- Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil (National Laboratory for Civil Engineering)- as a networking activity of the EU-ARTECH project: "Access Research and Technology for the Conservation of the European Cultural Heritage"

For the programme and list of invited speakers see: www.eu-artech.Inec.pt/index/htm

"Theory and semantics of Installation Art"

Thursday 11 May 2006

Bonnefanten Museum
Avenue Céramique 250, Maastricht
The Netherlands
Phone +31 [0]43 3290190
Fax +31 [0]43 3290199
www.bonnefanten.nl

The seminar is part of the European project Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art*. It has been organised by the Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (SBMK) in collaboration with Instituut Collectie Nederland (ICN) and is kindly hosted by the Bonnefanten Museum.

To attend, please send the reply form by Monday 1 May to Paulien 't Hoen, SBMK coordinator. To obtain the reply form: info@sbnk.nl

Pre-seminar drinks Wednesday 10 May, 8 - 10 pm

Join us for a pre-seminar welcome drink at the Bonnefanten Museum restaurant. All participants are welcome.

Installation works of art are distinct from traditional art objects and demonstrate specific vulnerabilities in terms of both the contexts and the technologies on which they are dependent. To safeguard these works for future generations, traditional approaches to long-term conservation, documentation and presentation are being challenged by professionals in the field.

One of the most difficult theoretical (and practical) issues of installation art is the notion of 'the original'; particularly in the case of sitespecific installations.

- What is essential to determining origins and authenticity of the work?
- What parts of it should be preserved, transformed or re-created?

- How to identify the 'original' work when reproducible media are involved, such as video, and the artist is using (parts of) the original work in future editions?

Other questions that arise are:

- How to identify 'craftsmanship' where new technologies are being used in contemporary art?
- How to identify the public's (interactive) participation when the work undergoes changes in the course of time?
- What is the museum's role when it interacts as intermediate between the artist and the public?

Another problem is the lack of a 'common language' to describe installation art. As with contemporary art in general, new concepts are being introduced and new ways of thinking are developed rapidly. This 'sliding semantic scale' presents a challenge to the international conservation community who recognises the need for exchanging knowledge and information.

These and other issues will be explored by experts from diverse professional backgrounds, in the form of lectures, 'statements' on specific themes and a panel discussion. Speakers include:

- Martha Buskirk, M.I.T. lecturer in art history and criticism and author of *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*, on authenticity and authorship in modern and contemporary art.
- Marga van Mechelen, University of Amsterdam lecturer and has published widely on conceptual, performance and installation art since the late seventies and on issues concerning historiography and visual theory in general and visual semiotics and psycho-semiotics in particular.
- Pip Laurenson, Senior Conservator, *Time-Based Media*, Tate
- Cornelia Weyer, Conservator and Director, Restaurierungszentrum Düsseldorf
- Artist Suchan Kinoshita will discuss her experiences in regard to research that has been carried out within the *Inside Installations* project on two of her works.

* *Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art* started on 1 June 2004 and is a research project initiated by Instituut Collectie Nederland (ICN) into the management and conservation of installations. It is supported by the European Commission's Culture 2000 programme.

Thirty complex installations (many multimedia) will be re-installed, investigated and documented. By sharing their experience the partners work together to develop guidelines for conservation, re-installation and documentation of installation art. ICN is coordinator of the project which is co-organised by: Tate, London; Restaurierungszentrum, Düsseldorf; Stedelijk Museum for Modern Art (SMAK), Ghent; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid and the Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art (SBMK) in The Netherlands. The project runs through May 31, 2007.

"4th Special Focus Symposium and Workshop on ART AND SCIENCE"

IIAS - 2006

Call for papers

Note that, although the announcement says that proposals for papers should be sent in before March 25th, you can still send a proposal if you would want to!

Papers and discussion contributions are invited for presentation at a Special Focus Symposium and a Workshop on Art and Science that will be a follow-up of the last year meeting in Baden-Baden. This Symposium will be a part of the 26th Annual Meeting of the International Institute for Advanced Studies in Systems Research and Cybernetics, which will be held August 7 – 12, 2006 in Baden-Baden, Germany in conjunction with the 18th International Conference on Systems Research, Informatics & Cybernetics.

CHAired BY

Prof. Dr. Em. Karel Boullart
IIAS/University of Gent
Belgium, Europe

and

Dr. Hiltrud Schinzel, Mag. Artium
IIAS/Düsseldorf
Germany, Europe

THE SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZERS PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING THEMES AND ISSUES FOR REFLECTION AND DEBATE:

1. Contributions pertaining to the clarification of the relationship between art and science, their structural and functional similarities and differences. Papers on specific themes and problems on the interface between both are welcome too. The aim is to help determine how art and science can learn and benefit from each other.
2. Papers may also focus on analysis of examples and on case studies concerning practical collaboration between artists and scientists. This includes the potential of technology or technological evolution to stimulate *„rapprochement“* between art and science.
3. Papers concerning the question whether or not and in what measure art and science are conducive to promote or to establish harmonious relationships between people: Either by their putative impact and effect due to their intrinsic properties or by mental and behavioral attitudes due to the psychological and sociological mindset they presuppose. Theoretical papers and case studies are equally welcome.
4. As we live in a dynamic universe characterized by evolution at all levels it will be interesting also to have contributions concerning the evolution in science and in the arts, their interface, their relation to society, etc.
5. The four points described are linked and sometimes cannot be separated. Therefore papers combining the set focus and in general, creative and innovative contributions are welcome as well.

Interested persons please contact:

Prof. Dr. Karel Boullart, Symposium Chair
Londonstraat 74, B 9000 Gent, Europe

E-mail: karel.boullart@UGent.be

and

Dr. Hiltrud Schinzel, Symposium Chair
Mülheimerstr.7, D 40239 Düsseldorf, Europe
E-mail: hiltrud.schinzel@t-online.de

The Paper Submission Guidelines, the Copyright Transfer Form and the Conference Registration form are available at the Home Page of the IIAS at:
<http://www.iias.edu>

Paper Proposals/Abstracts should be submitted as soon as possible, but not later than March 25th, 2006. All submitted papers will be refereed. Those selected will be scheduled for presentation and published in Conference Proceedings.

Important Dates

Abstract due:	March 25, 2006
Notification of Acceptance:	April 9, 2006
Final Paper due:	May 9, 2006

The full papers should be submitted to Symposium Chairs Prof. Karel Boullart and Dr. Hiltrud Schinzel by May 9th, 2006 at the addresses above. The full papers should also be transmitted electronically to

Prof. George E. Lasker,
Conference Chairman
C/O IIAS
P. O. Box 3010
TECUMSEH, ON N8N 2M3, Canada

E-mail: lasker@uwindsor.ca

The Special Focus Symposium is sponsored by The International Institute for Advanced Studies in Systems Research and Cybernetics and Systems Research Foundation.

Further information about the Conference is available at: <http://www.iias.edu>

"The Object in Context: Crossing Conservation Boundaries"

!!! NEW DATE !!! (changed February 13, 2006)

The 21st IIC international congress will take place in Munich, Germany, 28 August - 1 September 2006, at the invitation of the Doerner Institut and its parent-organisation, the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen.

The congress will examine the way that the context in which an object was conceived and created, and in which it has been kept or displayed, affects conservation decisions.

The list of speakers has been chosen. For registration and to see the abstracts:
www.iiconservation@org The program will follow shortly.

Local arrangements in Munich: accommodation, tours, receptions and congress dinner, are described on the website of The Doerner Institute: www.doernerinstitut.de

19th Annual Congress of the "International Association of Empirical Esthetics"

On the occasion of the 19th Annual Congress of the "International Association of Empirical Esthetics" to be held at the University of Avignon in August 2006, the Laboratory for Epistémology of Conservation-Restoration initiated by the ESAA (École Supérieure d'Art d'Avignon, Departement of Paintings Conservation) offers a one-day symposium to share the privileged experience the conservator-restorers have in treating paintings. Date, Program and Abstracts of the about 11 contributions will be sent shortly in a separate e-mail to all the members of the WG.

"Conservation Legacies of L'Alluvione"

November 2-3, 2006, Villa la Pietra

On Thursday and Friday November 2-3, 2006, Villa la Pietra, New York University with the Institute of Fine Arts Conservation Center will host "Conservation Legacies of L'Alluvione", a two-day symposium in Florence, Italy that will bring together more than a dozen of the Americans, Britons, and others who participated in the rescue and restoration effort after the Florence flood of November 1966. They will attempt to construct a definitive history of what took place and will consider how the lessons learned from the Flood recovery effort have been applied in disasters as recent as Hurricane Katrina. The symposium will begin a week of meetings, lectures, exhibits, tours, and events commemorating the flood. A formal announcement of the program and speakers will be made at the beginning of 2006. For further information, contact:

Rebecca Rushfield
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PROJECTS/ COURSES

Online Course: "Restoration Theories and Methods from the Mid-20th Century Until Today"

Hornemann Institute, Kardinal-Bertram-Strasse 36, D-31134 Hildesheim, Germany
April 4- May 29, 2005

This German course, taught by Prof. Dr. Ursula Schadler-Saub of the Department of Conservation and Restoration of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts focused on the history of restoration as explained through the different restoration theories and their practical application in Italy and elsewhere since the late 1940s. It also dealt with color theory in order to provide a better understanding of the practical application of retouch methods. Commentaries regarding the most important international charters on conservation and restoration were utilized to question the present view of restoration. For information, contact service@hornemann-institut.de

Hornemann Institute

Database of Electronic Publications

As of October 1, 2005, the following documents will be available free of charge through the Hornemann Institute website university papers, essays, conference reports, project documentation and the complete texts of recent theses. For information concerning the database see www.hornemann-institut.de

Forthcoming book on the principles of conservation – working title: “*Hang Them Up to Let Them Season: Conservation Principles Re-examined.*” Dr. Alison Bracker & Alison Richmond

This book is a multi-perspective critical analysis of the ethics and principles that guide the conservation profession. It fills a gap in conservation literature, and is aimed at a readership of conservators, conservation students, art historians, curators, and other museum professionals. Although it builds upon the theories and knowledge presented in recent texts exploring conservation theory, such as those by Nicholas Stanley Price et al., Salvador Muñoz Viñas, Caroline Villers, Chris Caple, and Elizabeth Pye, it focuses specifically on the issue of conservation principles. Authors from around the world will be invited from the fields of conservation, museology, history, ethnography, and philosophy in order to ensure wide-ranging coverage of issues and disciplines, and to enable readers and authors alike to make comparisons across subjects. Whilst probing theories of conservation, the book will also interrogate the application of principles in decision-making. In fact, exposing the considerations, aims, and values that inform decision-making will thematically unify the book's content and outlook. Though not a textbook, we intend it to be useful as a teaching/learning tool.

Our preliminary structure for the book includes essays that will explore the following issues:

What Are Principles? What Are Ethics? A Philosopher's View

What Are Principles? What Are Ethics? A Conservator's View

Historical Development of Values in Western and non-Western Art and Artefacts

Historical Development of Conservation Principles in Western and Non-Western Cultures

Reversibility/Retreatability/Recoverability
Minimum Intervention
Integrity of the Object & Authenticity
Buildings, Monuments, and Sites
Standing Archaeological Remains
Intangible Heritage; Intangible Values
Sacred/Religious Objects
Human Remains
Local Traditions, Local Rites
Documentation and Artists' Certificates: Guarantees of Integrity?
Artists' Intent
Artists' Involvement in Conservation Treatment

We would welcome applications of interest for chapters from professionals in the fields listed below, and aim to provide translation for authors who wish to write in their native language.

Since it is crucial that the book probes these issues from a wide geographic, cultural, and philosophical perspective, we would like to invite contributions from authors from around the world. We aim to recruit authors from within and beyond the field of conservation, to include curation, ethnography, philosophy, anthropology, and art history in order to prompt much-needed discussion between these disciplines. We invite members of the conservation profession to contact us if they wish to discuss a possible contribution to the book. Moreover, we would be grateful if they were to disseminate this information, and/or put us in touch with colleagues and associates in other disciplines who may be interested in participating in this project.

Dr. Alison Bracker
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Alison Richmond
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“V & A Ethics Checklist Updated”

Alison Richmond, Conservation Department, Victoria & Albert Museum, London SW7 2RL, England

Ten years ago, the Conservation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum drafted an “Ethics Checklist”. It grew out of discussion about the principles upon which conservators were basing their practice at that time and an expressed desire on the part of Department staff for guidelines on decision-making. After wide consultation a working group produced a practical tool that aimed to provide a common set of criteria for decisions. The Checklist was not intended to supplant professional codes, but to be complementary to them. The document was originally developed for use at the V& A, but has since been circulating informally in the conservation world.

A research project considered the effectiveness of the original Checklist by means of surveys and focus group work in the light of changes in the working context of the V & A and developments in the conservation profession's ethical and professional framework. A revised Checklist was piloted in the Department and its effectiveness evaluated. It may be of interest to anyone involved in the conservation of cultural property. It is now available in both pdf and Word formats through the V & A's website at:

http://www.vam.ac.uk/res_cons/conservation/advice/policies/index.html

An article on the revision process appeared in the Summer 2005 issue of the V & A Conservation Journal (no.50). For further information, contact Alison Richmond at a.richmond@vam.ac.uk

"Restorers from the past", a series of articles in the Dutch Conservation Magazine 'Cr'

From June 2006 on a series of articles will start in the Dutch conservation and restoration quarterly 'Cr'. The first article will be an introduction to the series, explaining the importance of the subject. The next three articles will each deal with a different Dutch restorer from the past: Jan van Dijk (about 1690-1769), who can be seen as the prototype of the professional restorer in The Netherlands, W.A. Hopman (1828-1910) and P. Hermesdorf (1923-1991). All three were important, influential painting restorers in their own time. Hopefully the series will continue in 2007 with articles about other restorers from the past. Among painting conservators there is a growing awareness of their profession's history. It is our hope that the series will trigger a response from other conservation disciplines also, to look into their own history and to collect and write down information on restorers from the past.

Esther E. van Duijn: estherevanduijn@hotmail.com

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Basile, Giuseppe, ed., **Brandi's Theory of Restoration**, Istituto Centrale per il Restauro, 2005. An English translation of the 1963 work accompanied by articles by Giuliano Urbani, Giuseppe Basile, and Paul Philippot, and supplementary readings by Giulio Carlo Argan and Cesare Brandi.

For purchasing information, see www.nardinirestauro.it

[Note: Brandi's Teoria del restauro has already been translated into Spanish (1988 and 1999), Romanian (1996), Czech (2000), Greek (2001), French (2001), and Portuguese (2004). German and Japanese translations will be published later this year.]

Clarke, Mark et al. eds, **Art of the Past. Sources and Reconstructions**, Archetype, September 2005, 156pp.

Papers presented at the first ATSR conference on the role of source research and the use of reconstructions in the field of art technological research. Recipe books, treatises and manuals on artists' materials, tools and methods.

For further information on this and all Archetype books, see www.archetype.co.uk

Eastaugh, Nicholas, Walsh, Valentine, Siddall, Ruth, and Chaplin, Tracey, **The Pigment Compendium**, Archetype, 2004.

Three parts: 1. A Dictionary of Historical Pigments 480pp.

2. Optical Microscopy of Historical Pigments 452 pp.

3. Pigment Compendium CD-ROM

Munoz Vinas, Salvador, **Contemporary Theory of Conservation**, Archetype, 2004, 240pp. Brings together much of the recent thinking in conservation theory, analyzing it in a structured manner. Chapters include: what is conservation; the objects of conservation; truth, objectivity and scientific conservation; the decline of truth and objectivity; a brief excursion into the real world; from objects to subjects; the reasons for conservation; sustainable conservation; from theory to practice: a revolution of common sense.

Restaurateurs ou Faussaires des Primitifs Flamands, Archetype, 2005, 159pp. (Out of print)

This book, written in French was published to coincide with the exhibition Fake or not Fake which confronted the issues of restoration and falsification. A major part of the exhibit and of the book is concerned with the work of the painter, antiquarian and restorer Joseph Van der Veken, considered one of the forefathers of Belgian restoration of Old Master paintings.

Schinzel, Hiltrud, **Touching Vision. Essays on restoration theory and the perception of art**, VUB Press, Brussels, 2004

This book, that has been announced in ICOM Theory History newsletter 10, 2003, has to be ordered now directly from Gent university:

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Toscno, Gennaro and Jamois, Fabien, **Victor Hugo et le debat patrimonial:actes du colloque**, Paris, 5-6 decembre 2002, Somogy Editions d'art, 2003.

The proceedings of a conference marking the bicentennial of Victor Hugo's birth provides an in-depth exploration of his ideas on cultural property, conservation and restoration, and their influence on current ideas concerning heritage.

Van Eikema Hommes, Margriet, **Changing Pictures.Dsicolouration in 15th to 17th Century Oil Paintings**, Archetype, 2004, 264 pp. (ISBN: 1873132395)

The five chapters include those on determining the intentions of painting methods and recipes and painters' methods to prevent colour changes described in 16th to early 18th century sources on oil painting techniques.

Yow, Valerie Raleigh, **Recording Oral History, Second Edition. A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences**, Alta Mira Press, 2005, 416pp. (ISBN 0-7591-0655-X)

Includes new material on using the internet, an examination of the interactions between oral history and memory processes, and analysis of testimony and the interpretation of meaning in different contexts.

ARTICLES OF NOTE

Bollettino dell'ICR, Vol.8/9, June 2005 (all articles are in Italian):

-Anna Valeria Jervis, "Stratigraphy and reintegration. Cesare Brandi's theory as a starting point for observations on treating lacunae in artworks on paper".

-Angela Cerasuolo, A propos of the study seminar "The body of style. Restoration culture and understanding in contemporary experience".

-Maria Ida Catalano, "A definition that comes from afar. Beginning to 'dissect' Cesare Brandi's **Teoria del restauro**".

Joyce Hill Stoner and Michael von der Goltz, 'The Heritage of Adolph Goldschmidt and Johannes Hell in the History of Twentieth-Century Conservation', *Studies in Conservation* 50 (2005), pp. 275-283

ICCOM Newsletter, No.31, June 2005

Gamini Wijesuriya, "Conservation practices in the ancient literary sources of Asia".

Rachel Barker and Alison Bracker's article "Beuys is Dead: Long Live Beuys! Characterising Volition, Longevity, and Decision-Making in the Work of Joseph Beuys" has been published by **Tate Papers** (Autumn 2005) and can be read online at <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/05autumn/barker.htm>

The paper expands upon the authors' previous research into Beuys' 'Felt Suit,' which they discussed at ICOM-CC's 14th Triennial Meeting, and considers how Tate in London, and

the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt, are mediating damaged, decaying, and ageing Beuys works through collaborative discussions with conservators, curators, and the artist's estate, thereby engendering sensitive decision-making.

INFORMATION, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Bracker Fiske Consultants

Dr. Alison Bracker and Dr. Tina Fiske announce the launch of Bracker Fiske Consultants, providing essential documentation and decision-making counsel on the presentation and maintenance of unconventional or impermanent works of contemporary art for artists, collectors, and institutions.

In order to facilitate and sustain the creation, collection, and care of non-traditional or short-lived works of contemporary art, Bracker Fiske offers critical documentation and advice support. They cooperate with artists, conservators, private and public collections, gallerists, and other art professionals to protect the integrity of their works of art by supplying audits, object/installation descriptions, installation/dismantling/reinstallation instructions, maintenance documentation, professional development packages for individuals and groups engaged in the curation and care of contemporary art, seminars & workshops addressing the collection, curation, and care of contemporary art, and referrals for those seeking conservation or legal advice. They are experienced at working closely with noted artists and prestigious collections.

Alison Bracker is an art historian who specializes in the theoretical and practical issues arising from the collection, curation, and conservation of non-traditional and impermanent materials in contemporary works of art. She lectures and publishes internationally on this subject, and has conducted interviews with over 80 artists, conservators, curators, museum directors, collectors, and gallerists on issues arising from the creation, acquisition, and maintenance of objects comprising unconventional materials.

Tina Fiske received her PhD in the History of Art from the University of Glasgow for her thesis entitled *Taking Stock: A Study of the Acquisition and Long Term Care of 'Non-Traditional' Contemporary Artworks by British Regional Collections 1979 – Present*. She is currently teaching undergraduate and postgraduate courses on 'Collecting and Conserving Contemporary Art' at the University of Glasgow, introducing students to some of the philosophical, historical, and practical issues that attend the collection and conservation of non-traditional contemporary works of art.

Bracker Fiske Consultants welcomes enquiries from artists; local, national, and international institutions; private and corporate collections; and arts agencies. Their website is www.brackerfiske.com.

Oral History

(The following is an excerpt from an article by Rasheedah S. Young, "Oral History at CHF" from the Summer 2005 issue of Chemical Heritage 23:2. It deals with oral history in the chemical industry, but it is applicable to conservation.)

In their attempts to reconstruct the past, historians have traditionally relied on personal

correspondence, diaries, journals, newspapers, and government documents as primary sources. These were adequate in a world where travel was difficult, electronic communication nonexistent, and except for face-to-face conversations, people could communicate only in writing. Technological innovations since the late 19th century changed the nature of communication and the content of written records.

As a result, as historians find traditional written sources insufficient for their research, they turn increasingly to oral history. An oral history is a transcript of a carefully edited interview with a person of historical significance.

Scientific, technical, and business careers are most often measured in terms of the bottom line, meaning the experimental results and technological innovations that are usually preserved for posterity in journals and books. But these documents record only the public face. The rich history of the everyday life of the chemical sciences and technologies—the social networks, patterns of patronage, and the “messy vitality” of the laboratory, library, and production plant-- is thus rarely fleshed out in the documentary record.

Interviews provide autobiographical accounts that supplement material already available in the written record. Most notable, they are a primary source for interpretive works such as published books, magazine articles, Web modules, and educational materials.

ORAL HISTORY LINKS (Provided by the ICOM- ICME)

Oral History Society UK www.oralhistory.org.uk

Oral History Association US <http://omega.Dickinson.edu/organizations/oha>

Canadian Oral History Association www.ncf.carleton.ca/oral-history

International Oral History Association www.ioha.fgv.br

Smithsonian Institution archives www.siris.si.edu

National Library of Australia Oral History Collection www.nla.gov.au/oh

University of London Institute of Historical Research www.ihr.sas.ac.uk

CONS-SPIRITUAL is a distribution list (with a web archive) that considers the ethical issues regarding artist intent and spiritual beliefs. The discussion group intends to develop a dialogue between conservators and others with a focus on the religious and spiritual dimension of the creation and conservation of material culture.

Join the list at www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cons-spiritual

More information is available from John Greenwood, Senior Lecturer Conservation and Restoration, University of Lincoln, Chad Varah House, Lincoln LN1 3BP, United Kingdom

Membership

Many of you, registred as members of the Working group "Theory and history of conservation-restoration", are non paid-up members. The policy of the Directory Board is that access to ICOM-CC services should be covered by a status of membership and, hence, by a financial contribution. It is important to emphasize that ICOM-CC needs members in order to be able to continue rendering services and organising meetings in the way it has done in the past and to try to do even better in the future. So, becoming a registered member means giving support to our professional network.

We need to get a sense of how many people on our WG lists have problems to become a paid member of ICOM, have trouble to become a voting member of ICOM-CC, have problems to become a friend of ICOM-CC, and so on. The problems may vary: the fee for bank transfer may be way over the registration fee for becoming a student or friend of ICOM-CC; ICOM national committees in some countries may have strategies which may make becoming a member of ICOM difficult for conservation professionals, etc.

If you are not a paid member yet and would like to remain a member of the WG, please let us know before the end of May and let us know what the reasons are that you are not a paid member yet. By knowing the reason we will be in a better position to try to solve the problems.

Newsletter

The newsletter cannot be made without the help of the members! We would like to ask you members to contribute whatever you consider pertinent for our newsletter, be it full-size papers, information, dates, books, or hints and sources. You can send your contributions to one of the coordinators (e-mail addresses at front page).

Thank you in advance!

The 15th Triennial Meeting of ICOM-CC

The 15th Triennial Meeting of ICOM-CC will take place in 2008 in Delhi, India!