NEWSLETTER
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Coordinator’s Message

Dear Readers,

First of all I wish you a very Happy New Year with interesting projects and many beautiful days!

As you all know, in 2014 we will have the ICOM-Committee for Conservation Triennial Conference in Melbourne, Australia from 15-19 September. The conference theme is ‘Building Strong Culture through Conservation’. Last year the call for abstracts went out and we received 22 submissions. After reading and ranking the abstracts, the authors were informed whether their proposals were selected or not. Because ICOM-CC is a big committee with 21 working groups, more than 400 abstracts had been submitted. Because at the conference the space is limited, the selection procedure is very strict and out of the 22 textiles abstracts ten made it to the next round. This doesn’t mean the other 12 abstracts were not interesting. This fall we received the written papers...
and at this moment we are in the middle of reading and ranking them. After that, they will go to the peer reviewer and to the directory board for the final selection. We know that not all of the papers will be given a green light to be presented at the triennial conference. Contributors experience this as one of the disadvantages of the whole system, but it should be seen as a way to keep the professional level of the conference as high as possible. I am very curious to know how many textile papers will be presented and I hope for at least eight! Although for many of us Melbourne is far away, hopefully there will be numerous members of our working group attending the conference. I look forward to see you there. This will also be the moment you will vote for a new Coordinator of the Textiles Working Group because my mandate will be due. If you are interested in running for the position, let me know!

This Newsletter contains a variety of items and news. Deborah Trupin wrote reports about the Rijksmuseum Textile Symposium 2013 held in Amsterdam last October and about the North American Textile Conservation Conference (NATCC) that took place in San Francisco in November. There is a call for papers by the Centre for the History of Retailing and Distribution (CHORD) about ‘Textile Fragments: Incomplete Textiles and Dress in Museums and Historic Houses” and a call for collaboration from the American Institute for Conservation of Artistic and Historic Works (AIC)’s Collection Care Network (CCN). Furthermore you can read about new publications and book reviews, exhibitions and news.
I would like to ask your help for our new column ‘Work in Progress’ in which conservators can submit a short report about a project they are working on. Share your work with colleagues. They are interested in it!

Enjoy this Newsletter and thank you Rebecca for editing it!

Elsje Janssen
Coordinator

Conference Reports

Rijksmuseum / ICOM-CC Textile Working Group Textile Symposium 2013
Amsterdam. October 2013

Report by Deborah Trupin,
Textile Conservator at New York State Bureau of Historic Sites, Albany, New York Area

The symposium, conceived of and organized by Rijksmuseum textile curator Dr. Elsje Janssen, brought together 174 “textilians” – textile and costume curators, historians, designers, and conservators -- from about 10 countries. In talking about her ideas for the symposium, Elsje told me she had presented two options to the Rijksmuseum Directory Board – a one day program in Dutch, or a two day program in English. The directors said, “The Rijksmuseum is an international museum, go for the two-day program.” The participants certainly benefited from this decision and from the Rijksmuseum staff who presented their work.
During two days in October, the participants learned about the textiles, costumes, and “textile objects” that the Rijksmuseum curatorial team had selected to display for the re-opening of the Rijksmuseum, and why they had selected them. As the curators talked about their decisions, they provided insight into what the “new” Rijksmuseum is trying to be – a combination of art and history museum. Participants also learned about how the conservation team had conserved these pieces and the decisions they had made during treatment. Running throughout the talks was a distinct thread of collaboration. Listening to the Rijksmuseum staff talk, one did not hear any of the negative views too often expressed from one side or the other. It truly seemed that curators and conservators had collaborated towards the twin goals of interpretation and preservation.

As befits the breadth of the Rijksmuseum’s textile and costume collections, the range of textiles covered was vast-- from Coptic fragments through Ferdi’s 1968 Wombomb; from medieval tapestries through 20th century Japanese kimonos; from 17th century whalers’ hats through 19th century dresses. But the symposium talks were not limited to the Rijksmuseum textile collections, rich as they are. Curators and conservators from the neighboring, and also newly re-opened, Stedelijk Museum gave similar talks on their work. Dr. René Lugtigheid, Lecturer in Textile Conservation for the (relatively new) University of Amsterdam’s MA program in conservation, talked about the structure and approach of the program and two recent students presented two of their projects.

After Rijksmuseum Director Taco Dibbits welcomed participants, Tim Zeedik, the Rijksmuseum’s Head of Exhibitions, presented the Rijksmuseum’s staff’s goals for the building’s renovation. In contrast to almost all recent museum renovations, the Rijksmuseum’s project was not an expansion. Important components of the building’s original design were restored or recreated and the displays were radically re-done. Collections are presented in chronological order, with art and history themes intertwined in each area. The ground level galleries house “special collections” or what is often called “open storage” in the United States.

The program continued with presentations organized by curatorial departments, with many presenters outlining the development of their collections. I will just give the briefest description of the talks, with a bit more detail on those I found most compelling. Please recognize that “compelling” is based on my particular interests and experiences and is not a judgment of the value of the talks.

Tapestries: Elsje Janssen discussed how she had selected the ten tapestries for the inaugural display; three of which are in a dedicated tapestry gallery, while the
other seven are intermixed in the galleries as they fit into the time and cultural period. She is planning to rotate the tapestries on exhibit every other year. The museum will plan a tapestry exhibition when the renovation of its temporary exhibit wing is completed.

Textile Conservator and Head of the Textile Conservation Studio, Suzan Meijer reviewed the conservation treatments of four of these tapestries. Of the greatest interest, because it broke a long-held taboo, was the use of retouching on old tapestry repairs. The textile conservators decided to explore retouching discolored repairs on a Gobelins tapestry after their paintings conservation colleagues expressed surprise that this was not considered. Retouching, called potomage in the carpet restorers’ world, was usually done with water-based paints, thus ruling it out for textile conservators. The Rijksmuseum conservators worked with conservation scientists at the Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE) to test acrylic textile paints on modern tapestry samples. Once they found a stable and light fast paint, they developed a technique to retouch only the most visually disturbing faded repairs. Textile Conservator Mieke Albers presented this work at the 2012 ICON Textile Group Symposium in Edinburgh. The group has made papers from this conference available on line; Albers’ can be accessed at: http://www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2123.

Costume: Bianca M. du Mortier, Keeper of Costume, explained that many costume accessories are displayed in the Special Collections galleries and that the costume department also has a dedicated gallery, in which exhibits will change every six months. Textile Conservator Mieke Albers acknowledged the volume of work this will entail and reviewed some of their techniques for mounting costumes. They have a good number of “Kyoto” mannequins that they find suit their needs, but have developed some good solutions for customizing them. Menno Fitski, Curator of East Asian Art, showed images of some early 20th century Japanese kimonos that are now on display, saying that their designs “intertwined nostalgia and modernity.”

Archaeological textiles: Jan de Hond, History Department Curator, presented the story of 17th century Dutch whalers on the island of Spitsbergen in the Arctic Sea and how University of Groningen archaeologists excavating there in 1979 and 1982 uncovered many burials and cultural artifacts, greatly expanding the knowledge about this piece of history. For his talk, he concentrated on the knit caps found with or on some of the bodies and speculated that the different patterns were how the men recognized one another. Textile Conservator Carola Holz described the conservation and mounting of the hats. It was decided not to try to compensate visually for losses and a mounting system that minimizes
their handling – a single display/storage mount—was developed.

Textiles of the House of Orange: Four papers focused on aspects of two cloaks and one tunic, all worn by 16th century House of Orange royalty. Eveline Sint Nicolaas, History Department Curator, told the story of deaths of Ernest Casimir in 1632 and his son in 1624 and of the survival of their cloaks as relics. Mieke Albers reviewed the conservation and display history of Ernest’s cloak and how conservators and curators decided to conserve and display the cloak now. They found they needed to create a reproduction doublet, similar to what would have been worn under the cloak in order to make its support and presentation correct. Gijs van der Ham, History Department Curator, discussed the story and meaning of the tunic of Prince Frederick-Henry of Orange-Nassau, while Art Ness Proaño Gabor, Material Technological Analyst at the RCE, reviewed the dye analysis he had done on the fringe from the tunic.

Conservation of the Kops Room: Among the highlights for me were the four presentations on the history and conservation of this late-18th century Haarlem salon. I briefly describe the talks here, but urge the collaborators to publish this work. There were more interesting details to the room’s history, de-installation, conservation, and reinstallation than could be captured even in four talks.

Senior Curator of Furniture Reinier Baarsen presented the history of the room and the significance of its Neo-Classical decoration. It is the only furnished historic interior presented in the new Rijksmuseum and, most significantly for “textilians,” retains all of its original fabrics – wall coverings, carpet, and furniture covers.

Furniture Conservator and Head of Furniture Conservation, Paul van Duin, reviewed the previous installation and treatment of the room and described the work that he and his colleagues did to de-install, conserve, and re-install it. They worked with the Rijksmuseum’s architects and engineers to ensure that the systems (HVAC, electric, fire detection) needed in the re-installed room were installed with minimal interference in the historic structure.

Ruth Jongsma, a researcher and conservator for architectural paint in private practice in Amsterdam, worked on contract to study the paint layers in the room. She discovered the original colors and exposed a small area over the entry door. The team decided to conserve the existing (1960s) colors, because it would have been too difficult
to remove all of the earlier paint layers and that adding another layer would have further obscured the carved details.

Textile Conservator Suzan Meijer detailed the work that textile conservators did for the wall, curtain, and furniture upholstery. The team considered replacing the fabrics with copies, but decided against this, partly for technical reasons and partly because they thought that new fabrics would be “out of register” with the aged appearance of the woodwork and furniture frames. Conserving the curtains was their biggest challenge. Because the curtains were much damaged, the conservators felt that they needed an adhesive treatment. After research and then testing, they selected Evacon-R, a vinyl acetate / ethylene copolymer thermoplastic adhesive. Mieke Albers published this work as a poster presented at CCI; the poster remains available online (http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/2011/Poster%20-%20Albers%20-%20English.pdf)

Hearing Rijksmuseum textile conservators discuss their approaches to retreatment of objects, especially when it came to reevaluating 1970s or 1960s adhesive treatments was another symposium highlight for me. As I was “raised up” (in conservation at least) in the era when one either stitched or stuck …and was virulently opposed to the other option, I still find it refreshing to hear candid talks on this subject. Several of the talks acknowledged the challenges of both approaches and discussed some earlier adhesive treatments that had not stood up to time.

Twentieth century textiles: Ludo van Halem, Curator of 20th Century Art, discussed the themes used to organize the third floor 20th Century Galleries. He and his colleagues used these themes (one of which was humans/nature) to select both iconic and unusual works. Visiting the galleries after the symposium, I enjoyed the Art Nouveau and Rietveld pieces, particularly because they made a connection to the collections discussed and seen at the Stedelijk Museum (see below).

It was a treat to see Ferdi’s Wombtomb after hearing van Halem discuss the artist and the piece and Anna Lagana, an independent conservator who worked with the Rijksmuseum staff, discuss its conservation. This piece, made in 1968, was totally unknown to me, but iconic for that era. It is made of “fake fur” filled with polyurethane foam, which, of course, had severely degraded. The conservators surface cleaned the fur and then conducted research to find a stable modern foam. They rejected using expanded polyethylene foam (Ethafoam)-- which would have been my choice-- because they felt it was too rigid. They wanted to convey the softness of the original, even if no one would go into the piece to feel that. They chose to use the stable version of contemporary polyurethane foam, having found by FTIR testing that the diisocyanate used in making the foam will dissipate after some time. Because they did not have time to purchase new foam and let it off-gas before the museum opened, they made a temporary filling from somewhat aged foam. They will replace this with polyurethane foam for which they are monitoring the off-gassing.

Stedelijk Museum projects: After a renovation of nine years the Stedelijk
Museum reopened in September 2012. Because it also has a lot of textiles on display, Elsje allocated some time on the program to the work of the Stedelijk Museum’s curators and conservators. Victoria Anastasyadis, who had worked as Junior Curator of Applied Arts and Design during the Stedelijk’s project, discussed the Stedelijk’s collections. She pointed out that three-quarters of the collection is design. The Stedelijk divides design into three categories: crafts, industrial design, and graphic arts. As with the 20th century galleries at the Rijksmuseum, the objects exhibited at the Stedelijk range from the iconic to the unusual. It was a particular treat to see the work of some unknown (to me) Dutch textile artists.

Netta Krumperman, Coordinating Conservator of Applied Arts and Design at the Stedelijk, talked about the challenges that she and the museum faced in exhibiting lamps. Many of the lamps on display have paper or textile shades, while others hang near or over textile pieces. The Stedelijk wants to display the lamps lit. This presents two problems. The obvious one is the question of light exposure for the surrounding pieces. The other is that some of the lamps have very unusual bulbs that are an integral part of their design. Krumperman discussed the thinking, research, and approaches the museum is taking to resolve these two issues. When possible and appropriate, they are replacing brighter and hotter bulbs with dimmer and cooler ones—often LEDs.

Looking ahead: In the last session, symposium organizers looked to the future. Suzan Meijer talked about the history, present state, and future of the Rijksmuseum’s Textile Conservation Studio. Elsje Janssen and Bianca du Mortier talked about future projects for the textile and costume departments. Both are concentrating on getting more information and images of their collections online. As part of that goal, du Mortier introduced the project she and seven other Dutch curators have been working on— a digital resource for costume collections. They have just received funding to launch this, but “ModeMuze,” as the project is called, already has a presence on Facebook and Pinterest.

Drs. René Lugtigheid, Lecturer in Textile Conservation in the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Program of the University of Amsterdam, discussed the structure and approach of this relatively new conservation training program. The five-year Bachelor’s/Master’s course requires students to acquire a knowledge base as well as hand-, research-, and decision-making skills. Lugtigheid summarized the approach by saying that conservation involves doing and thinking and the program emphasizes that it is most important to think first and then do. Two years of practical experience following the Master’s Degree are an integral part of the program. During these two years, the students are employees of the
University of Amsterdam. They divide their time between practical work (including research for treatments) and teaching lower level students. Following her presentations, two students, Joni Steinman and Marjolein Homan Free each presented one of the projects they did in their final two years.

Visits: As a bonus, participants were taken on guided visits of the design galleries at the Stedelijk and some of the labs and storage areas at the Ateliergebouw. I had the good fortune to tour the Stedelijk with Victoria Anastasyadis, who conveyed her enthusiasm and insights into the collections and display choices. The Ateliergebouw, which comprised the first phase of the new Rijksmuseum, houses the museum’s conservation studios, the University of Amsterdam’s MA in Conservation classrooms, scientific labs for the RCE, and storage for the Rijksmuseum’s costume collection. The tour confirmed the collaborative feeling conveyed by the talks, as staff members talked about how they find it helpful to have colleagues from related disciplines in the same building.

In all, the symposium was most successful and satisfying. The speakers provided a superb introduction to textile collections at the Rijksmuseum. It was a rare opportunity to hear people discuss their work and then see the pieces. This provided a greater understanding of the work and the artifact.

I mentioned above that I would like to see those who worked on the Kops room publish their work. In truth, I would love to see all of the work presented at this symposium published.

Following the symposium, Elsje Janssen said that participants had been asking her if this would be one of a series of symposia. Of course, this was not a question she could answer, but we should all hope that it will be. The Rijksmuseum staff is to be commended for the great work they did and congratulated for sharing it in this symposium.


Report by Deborah Trupin, Textile Conservator at New York State Bureau of Historic Sites, Albany, New York Area

The North American Textile Conservation Conference board and local committee, co-chaired by Denise Krieger Migdail and Beth Szuhay, presented its ninth conference in San Francisco in November 2013. As NATCC Board member Hector Meneses, Chair of the 2011 NATCC meeting in Oaxaca, Mexico, noted in his introduction to the Preprints for NATCC 2013 that the themes of modernity and innovation were appropriate for the San Francisco venue as that city has long been associated with the avant-garde and cutting edge. The two days of presentations included fourteen presentations and eleven posters. Presentation and poster authors came from nine countries; the nearly 160 other participants from sixteen. The Preprints,
Presentations:

Jill Sterett, Director of Collections and Conservation at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art opened the two days of presentation with a thought-provoking keynote lecture in which she discussed how conservators’ engagement with contemporary art and living artists is changing the practice of conservation. The themes of her talk were too complex to capture here, but her lecture is included in the Preprints of the conference. Discussion of the issues of working with contemporary art continued the following day in a panel that Jill led. The panelists, Ana Lizeth Mata Delgado, Josh Faught, Michelle Barger, and Hector Manuel Meneses, included a practicing conservator, two conservation educators, and an artist who uses textiles in his work. This discussion was, for me, the most stimulating part of the conference. It is inspiring to see the field grow as the art world changes, to have a very interesting textile artist participate in a panel, and to learn how students entering the field are learning to work with the art of their times.

Other papers focused more on the physical – the materials used to make pieces or to conserve them:

- Kelly Reddy-Best presented her MA work from the University of Rhode Island in which she collated and summarized damages reported and care recommendations provided by the fabric care (dry cleaning) industry between 1920 and 1999. This information, included in the Preprints, will be valuable to have as a reference.
- Charlotte Gamper, Karen Thompson and Anita Quye reviewed their work on viscose rayon and the challenges of wet cleaning this material. They found that how the rayon was manufactured had serious impact on how it reacted to wet cleaning. Their talk concluded with a summary of their recommendations for conservators working with viscose rayon.
- Joanne Hackett addressed an object type of great interest to many textile conservators – shoes. Illustrating her talk with some fabulous shoes, she discussed the materials and technology of man-made shoes, summarizing the research that she is doing for an upcoming exhibit at the Victoria and Albert Museum.
- At the other extreme of footwear styles, Pia Christensson discussed the analysis and conservation work she and colleagues at the City Museum of Helsingborg have been carrying out on galoshes, boots, and tennis shoes made at the Helsingborg-based AB Tretorn factory. After analyzing the materials, they used heat to reshape some distorted rubber shoes and boots and made acid-free corrugated
board stands to support the shoes in oxygen-free storage.

- Anne Peranteau presented her work on the use of gellan gum, a carbohydrate gel that is used by paper conservators. After tests and experiments on mock-ups, she found that high-acyl gellan gum when used as a gel successfully reduced stains on Maori *kakahu* (cloaks). Many conservators may find it helpful to have this material as an option for challenging stain removal treatments.

- Jane Wild reviewed past and current research and analysis on adhesives to seal leaks in inflatable costumes and objects made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and polyurethane. Through FTIR, it was found that one of the most important pieces was made not of PVC, as had been catalogued, but from polyethylene. Because recent treatments had failed, a review was conducted of possible adhesives and four were subjected to intensive testing and analysis. It was found that all of the adhesives tested were more stable than the plastics used for the objects and that some might be successfully used in treatments. They are continuing to these adhesives and an additional one, so it will be interesting to read the follow up results in future papers.

- The talk on use of 20 denier nylon net for conservation treatments, presented by Renee Dancause, was notable for its description of how the Canadian Conservation Institute’s textile conservators engineered the use of this material in their treatment of two very large flags. The handling techniques detailed may be of use other conservators. This paper was a good complement to the one on the press-mounting of these flags presented at the AIC meeting in 2013.

- Rebecca Summerour talked about Native American beadwork artists’ use of rubberized flannel as a beading support. Because of its ready availability and lower cost, many beadwork artists have substituted rubberized flannel for the traditional leather supports. Rebecca and her colleagues at the National Museum of the American Indian surveyed the contemporary beadwork in their museum and reported on the problems they are seeing as it ages.

The program included several papers that focused on challenges of preserving individual art works, or the work of individual artists:

- Suzan de Groot discussed the work of the Dutch artist Madeleine Berkhemer and its conservation challenges. Berkhemer, who uses nylon (polyamide) tights wrapped around objects and suspended in space for her art works -- many of which are displayed in non-museum settings-- had asked the
RCE (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands) to evaluate the tights. Recognizing that light causes significant damage to nylon, Suzan and her colleagues tested ultraviolet blockers on sample tights. They suggested that she apply one, if it was found that these would be helpful in extending the life of her work. In response to a question from a participant, Suzan noted that an ultraviolet blocker does change the hand of the tights somewhat.

- Using the example of the *Light Vest* by Ulf Rollof, Mariana Lopez, Emmanuel Lara Barrera, and Priscila Villeda Ramírez showed how they had used the *Decision-Making Model* developed by Christiane Berndes for the conservation of contemporary art to decide on a treatment approach. The model incorporates many of the “standard” conservation questions but adds issues and methods for working with a living artist. This talk was a specific example of both some of the questions and issues covered in Jill Sterett’s keynote lecture and the panel discussion.

- Susanna Conti reviewed the research and analysis she and colleagues at the Opificio delle Pietra Dure in Florence, Italy carried out to develop a treatment plan for the “AChrome,” a 1962 piece by Piero Manzoni. The piece, formed of white cotton wool (cotton batting, in US parlance) squares, has changed notably in color and is no longer achromatic. Susanna and her colleagues have been exploring options for treating the piece to bring it closer to its original appearance.

- Robert M. Kelly, a wallpaper historian and installer, presented the work he has done with conservator Alexandra Allard for the leather wall coverings in the MetLife board room in New York City. After reviewing the history of the room, which included two previous replacements of the leather hangings, they decided that it would be best to recreate the original hangings again. They worked Lutson Goudleder, a French firm that specializes in this. Kelly showed a video of the techniques they used. As someone who works primarily with historic houses and the question of what to do with worn fabrics in room settings, I found this talk fascinating.

In addition to the two days of lectures, the 2013 NATCC conference offered two days of workshops, with five workshops, and a day of tours. The lecture days were completed by receptions, one a “moveable feast” hosted by three textile-focused galleries – Peter Pap Oriental Rugs, Arader Gallery, and The Lotus Collection; the other by the Asian Art Museum. These events along with the breaks and lunch hours during the conference, provided attendees with ample time to meet and exchange ideas.
Workshops and Tour reports:

- **Shibori** dying workshop, led by Ana Lisa Hedstrom at The Sewing Workshop (report by Joel Thompson)

  In this workshop textile artist Ana Lisa Hedstrom gave a uniquely personal and deeply professional insight into the ancient art form that has become the focus of her work as a fiber artist. The studio was comfortable and well equipped. It was the ideal venue for this hands-on class. The course began with a presentation of technique as Ana Lisa showed us examples of Japanese *shibori*. She told of her personal experience in studying *shibori* and visiting Arimatsu, Japan, the historic Edo Period center of *shibori* production. *Nui* (stitch resist), *arashi* (pole wrapping), and *itajime* (clamp resist) were types of *shibori* discussed in detail and became the focus of the class.

  The second section was hands-on, with Ana Lisa giving us personal instruction as we created our own samples of these techniques. We each experimented with small samples of each technique on various fabrics in preparation for making two silk scarves: one in *arashi*, using PVC pipes and cording, and the other in *itajime*, using Ana Lisa’s collection of clamps and blocks. After a lovely lunch, we finished our samples and proceeded to dye our works in the venue’s outdoor courtyard. The results were stunning and gave the class a better appreciation for this art form and improved our ability to recognize techniques on historic samples. Working closely with Ana Lisa was more than just instructive; it was an all too brief chance to learn an intimate art form from a master.

- Fiber identification workshop, led by Denyse Montegut at the Lo Schiavo, S.J. Center for Science and Innovation, University of San Francisco (report by Bernice Morris)

  Thirteen enthusiastic textile conservators took part in the Fiber Identification Workshop led by Denyse Montague, Professor and Chairperson of the graduate program in Fashion and Textile Studies at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York and an authority on the use of polarizing light microscopy for fiber identification. The workshop was truly hands-on as each participant was supplied with a microscope and reference slides.

  Denyse packed a wealth of information into the two days in her calm and focused manner. She introduced the structure of the microscope, the key characteristics of textile fibers, refractive indices, and how to mount samples and prepare cross-sections. Denyse also discussed solubility and burn tests. Denyse’s microscope was connected to a computer monitor, which greatly aided in presenting the visual information to the participants. Denyse gave special attention to the
identification of synthetic fibers which can often prove so tricky to identify. We will all be able to tell nylon from polyester with confidence in the future! In the second half of the workshop participants honed their new skills by identifying the fibers in unknown textiles. The workshop demonstrated that, armed with a polarizing light microscope, textile conservators can identify most fibers in their own labs in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

- Aqueous Cleaning Methods for Textiles, led by Richard Wolbers at the Textile Conservation Laboratory, de Young Museum (report by Rebecca Summerour and Cathleen Zaret)

  In the Aqueous Cleaning Methods workshop, Richard Wolbers, Associate Professor in the Art Conservation Program, University of Delaware/Winterthur Museum provided an excellent review of wet cleaning chemistry and an overview of practical wet cleaning procedures. The workshop was informative and inspired us to return to our labs and clean!

  Richard began by reviewing the roles and uses of surfactants, buffers, chelators, gelling agents, oxidation reduction materials, and enzymes employed in wet cleaning. He explained the use of micro-emulsions to clean heterogeneous soils, i.e. soils with both water- and solvent-soluble components, and shared sample “recipes” for micro-emulsions. After the lectures we mixed solutions and practiced reducing solutions and tide lines on samples.

  Richard emphasized the importance of controlling pH and matching the conductivity of cleaning solutions to that of the textiles. He gave special attention to the use of gels to deliver and control the application of cleaning solutions and to the extraction of solutions along with released soils. Attendees left the workshop with recipes for basic aqueous solutions, vials of prepared solutions, gel samples, and suppliers’ contact information. The methods can be immediately applied in any conservation laboratory on various textiles for a multitude of cleaning issues at a minimal cost for supplies. This workshop was well worth the price of admission!

- Working using Fosshape to make distinctive faces and appendages for mannequins, led by Shelly Uhlir, at the Textile Conservation Laboratory, Asian Art Museum (report by Kathleen Kiefer)

  Shelly Uhlir, Senior Staff Mountmaker for the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, DC, began the “Working with Fosshape” workshop with a PowerPoint presentation describing Fosshape. She showed some of the ways it has been used in theater costuming and in the creation of mounts for garments in museum exhibits (including her work for the Circle of Dance exhibit at
The balance of the day was devoted to demonstrations of technique and hands-on experimentation. At three work stations set up to focus on heads, torsos, and hands and feet, Shelly demonstrated techniques for creating three-dimensional shapes by draping, heating and shrinking the Fosshape over forms with the desired shape. We then had time to try our hands with the materials and methods. We had ample opportunity to pursue our own ideas and for discussion and exchange with other participants throughout all portions of the workshop.

The workshop was great fun and provided an excellent opportunity to learn, experiment, and understand the possibilities and limitations of Fosshape, another useful material to have in our textile conservation toolboxes.

- Historic Ribbonwork, led by Candace Kling, at the Sewing Workshop (report by Zoe Annis Perkins)

In the well-organized and fast-paced “Historic Ribbonwork” workshop, textile artist Candace Kling introduced participants to the wide-ranging world of ribbon work techniques. Beginning with basic techniques, Candace encouraged students to create a collection of study pieces in order to explore how different ribbon constructions, color variations, scaling systems, and sewing threads produce diverse results. In addition, she provided images of historic costume with ribbon work to give context to our samples. Her nurturing and enthusiastic approach to this topic made us want to explore this fascinating area of fashion further. She made the mystifying maze of ribbon embellishments understandable for the textile historian.

- East Bay Cultural Tour, led by Joyce Ertel Hulbert (Report by Pia Christensson and Zoe Annis Perkins)

Joyce Ertel Hulbert, textile artist, put together a very interesting program. The first stop was at the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology where conservators Madeleine Fang and Jane Williams showed us the storage facilities and the rare collection of over 7,000 baskets. We had animated discussions about the difficulties of renting storage facilities and getting response to leaking roofs.

The second stop was a visit with internationally known textile artist Lia Cook who works in a variety of media combining weaving with painting, photography, video, and digital technology. She is working on a project in collaboration with neuroscientists in which she is investigating the emotional connections of touch and textile to memories. We had the opportunity to see her studio and...
her jacquard looms as well as several of her works.

The tour continued to Magnolia Editions, where Donald Farnsworth, one of the founders showed us the workspace. Most impressive was the digital printer on which a copy of a Peruvian textile was being printed. Donald also showed a system for hanging textiles that they had developed. It was, however, more suitable for modern textiles than fragile ones.

The day ended at Lacis, a combination museum of lace and store selling traditional and rare sewing supplies and books. After a guided tour of the museum, we had the chance stock up on sewing supplies-- which thrilled all of us.

• Tour of the Archives at Levi Strauss & Co. Corporate Headquarters, led by Lynn Downey (Report by Sarah C. Stevens)

Lynn Downey, Historian for the Levi Strauss & Co. was ready for our group with a large array of historic clothing from the Levi Strauss collection, including the oldest known pair of 501® jeans in the world-- circa 1879. 501s were worn by miners as protection for their clothing, so they left the jeans in the mine for the next work day. If the mine collapsed, the jeans were left behind for archeologists to find. The archive also collects Levi-related memorabilia, including the record cover for Bruce Springsteen's album, *Born in the USA*, which shows the iconic red tag on the right back pocket of true Levis.

There is a small exhibit gallery in the Headquarters, displaying some reproductions of the clothing and some memorabilia. The exhibit includes videos of their archivists at work; these can also be seen on the company website: http://www.levistrauss.com. The website has tips about whether your 501s are collectible. All in all, this tour provided a wonderful view into an iconic brand.

Conclusion:

Many past NATCC conference participants have praised the NATCC for the congenial atmosphere of its meetings in addition to the typically high level of presentations and workshops. That this conference lived up to that reputation could be sensed in the number and tone of questions and comments flowing from the participants in each question and answer session.

The 2013 NATCC meeting left attendees eager for the next, to be held in New York City, in October 2015. The tone for 2015 was set by the terrific video by Emilia Cortes and Sarah Stevens announcing that event.

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Forthcoming meetings:

Centre for the History of Retailing and Distribution (CHORD) Workshop
‘TEXTILE FRAGMENTS: Incomplete Textiles and Dress in Museums and Historic Houses”
June 12, 2014
University of Wolverhampton

The Centre for the History of Retailing and Distribution (CHORD) invites proposals for papers that focus on any aspect of textile and dress ‘fragments’ held in museums, historic houses, archives or other repositories, including private collections. We invite papers both from historians and scholars whose research makes use of fragmentary textiles and dress and from museum professionals who are responsible for their care, interpretation and display. We welcome both proposals that focus on the insights the ‘fragments’ provide on the history of textiles and dress, and proposals that consider their value and challenges as museum objects.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):
§ Patterns and pattern books
§ Re-used and out of context textiles
§ Off-cuts, patches, threads and spare material
§ Incomplete and fragmentary dress
§ Scraps and scrapbooks
§ Representations and uses of textile fragments
§ Samples and swatches

Information:

To submit a proposal, please send title and abstract of c. 400 words to Laura Ugolini at: lugolini@wlv.ac.uk by 7 March 2014.

We are pleased to be able to offer a small subsidy to help cover speakers’ expenses. For more information, please contact: Laura Ugolini at lugolini@wlv.ac.uk

The workshop will be held at the University of Wolverhampton, on City Campus, a short walk from Wolverhampton’s bus and train stations. For directions see http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=6856

For further information, please e-mail Laura Ugolini: lugolini@wlv.ac.uk or Margaret Ponsonby: m.ponsonby@wlv.ac.uk

Or see the workshop web-page at: http://home.wlv.ac.uk/~in6086/fragments.htm

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New Resources

“Safety Measures and Disaster Prevention for Museums, Archives and Libraries
A New Offering for Cultural Institutions in German-Speaking Countries”

The Pilot Project “SiLK – SicherheitsLeitfaden Kulturgut« (Safety Guide for Cultural Assets)” is online: www.konferenz-kultur.de

Cultural treasures in museums, archives and libraries are continually threatened by damage and in some cases by irretrievable destruction. Awareness of this has become particularly acute through disastrous events of the past few years, including the fire at the Duchess Anna Amalia Library in Weimar in 2004.
and the collapse of the building housing the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne in 2009. However, subtle dangers that arise from unfavorable environmental influences or incorrect usage can also have devastating effects on objects.

The Konferenz Nationaler Kultureinrichtungen (Conference of National Cultural Institutions, comprised of 23 cultural institutions considered to be of German national importance located in the former East Germany) is confronting these vulnerabilities with the introduction of SiLK, a digital safety guide for cultural assets. It is the first German-language tool for consultation and advice about safety-related questions available to cultural organizations free of charge. SiLK makes interactive risk analysis possible with recommendations for care and treatment, in addition to offering comprehensive information. Topics will include fire, theft, flooding, pests, pollutants, light, vandalism, damages or loss due to accidents, wear, climate, storms, earthquakes and acts of violence.

Contact: Konferenz Nationaler Kultureinrichtungen
Dipl.-Ing. Almut Siegel, Dr. Alke Dohrmann
knn-sicherheit@ses.museum
www.konferenz-kultur.de

“Online Flemish Tapestry Project”
Directed by Vanessa de Cruz Medina:

All of the Medieval and Renaissance Flemish tapestries on view and display in Spanish palaces, churches and special museums can be consulted at this website which is searchable in Spanish, English and French. The tapestries have been digitized and can be studied in great detail. There are also detailed catalogue entries which explain the series and individual tapestry panels and provide bibliographies. This project was launched by the Fundacion Carlos de Amberes, the Ministry of Culture in Spain and the Patrimonio Nacional in Madrid.

http://www.flandesenhispania.org/tapices/index.php/Portada

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The American Institute for Conservation Collection Care Network

The American Institute for Conservation of Artistic and Historic Works (AIC) has long been committed to advancing “the critical importance of preventive conservation as the most effective means of promoting the long-term preservation of cultural property”. To better support this important aspect of our profession the AIC Board established the Collection Care Network (CCN) in 2011. The CCN endeavors to serve those who are engaged in every preservation profession. Recognizing that both preservation and stewardship rests on the talents and skills of numerous professionals and volunteers it:

• Offers reliable collection care information (e.g. annotated links, bibliographies, best practices, etc.) through AIC’s online platforms.
• Encourages networking between allied collections professionals and related organizations on a national and international basis.
• Provides support for promoting collection care and its practitioners through establishment of best practices.
documents, exchange of advocacy materials, salary surveys, and more.
• Serves as a professional home for all those committed to collection care.
• Conducts preventive care workshops and papers at AIC Conferences.

CCN at the AIC National Meeting in San Francisco, 2014
CCN in partnership with the AIC Sustainability Committee will host the upcoming 2014 AIC national meeting, “Contentious Conservation: Sustainable Choices in Collection Care” to be held 28-31 May 2014 in San Francisco. The program has now been set and is available on the AIC website. http://www.conservation-us.org/annual-meeting#.Un9pkh4o6P4. The conference will highlight collection care issues through three primary themes: Exploring sustainable preservation environments, Engaging communities in collection care and Case studies in sustainable collection care.

Of all the many great sessions, talks, and workshops planned, here are a few items that may be of special interest:

Collection care + HVAC-- CCN has organized a session focusing on successes and failures in modifying ‘traditional use’ HVAC systems to maintain an appropriate, sustainable collection care environment. The speakers presenting in this session come from a wide array of allied preservation professionals—facility administrators, archivists, conservators, and preservation assessors, united to share their experiences on this critical topic.

Integrated Pest Management Panel Discussion-- The Textile Specialty Group program will include a panel featuring Patty Silence (Conservator of Museum Exhibitions and Historic Interiors at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation), Bernice Morris (IPM Coordinator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art), and Rachael Arenstein (Conservator at the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem). After sharing their diverse experiences in implementing IPM programs, the panel will facilitate audience-wide discussion concerning the challenges presented by pests to textile and other collections.

STASH (Storage Techniques for Art, Science and History collections) flash session-- Collection care professionals across the world were asked to contribute innovative, efficient or sustainable storage solutions for consideration. Selected 5 minute talks will be presented in a lightening round “tips” session followed by guided audience participatory discussion on selected themes. Following the conference the solutions will be posted on the STASH website (currently in development, thanks to the generosity of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation). This site will allow users to browse storage solutions contributed by the preservation community. Entries will follow the same general format as those presented in text, Storage of Natural History Collections: Ideas and Practical Solutions, originally published by the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC).

Collaborating with CCN
An important aspect of our work is to foster connections between our colleagues and allied professionals to exchange ideas on collections care. One of the first steps undertaken in 2012 was to survey collection care professionals to
hear more about the activity and needs of the field. Please read the resulting report, AIC CCN Collection Care Staff Survey Report at http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/reports/collection-care-staff-survey-report.pdf?sfvrsn=2. This allowed CCN to understand who comprises our potential audience and what is perceived as our community’s most pressing needs.

Another way in which we wish to engage our preservation colleagues is through the CCN liaison program. By building a network of allied professionals CCN wishes to expand outreach. Liaisons are important in establishing communication among the professions; an important first step toward sharing information, identify best practices, and increasing visibility for the work we do in preventive care.

We hope that ICOM-CC and its Textile Working Group will designate a liaison so that we can expand the network. We are looking for an organizational leader who will:

• Share news, goals, and concerns between their home organization and the CCN by cross-posting on the organizations listservs and newsletters.
• Keep their home organizations’ leadership apprised of CCN activities.
• Identify and participate in projects, publications and conferences shared by the CCN and allied organizations.
• Encourage membership of their home organizations to better understand and address collections care issues.

We hope to hear from you. For additional information about the CCN or to learn more about collection care resources like the AIC Wiki please visit our website:
http://www.conservation-us.org/
Or, contact Gretchen Guidess, Liaison & Outreach Coordinator 2012 – 2015, AIC Collection Care Network
gretchen.guidess@gmail.com

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New Feature ‘Work in Progress’

In this newsletter we launch a new column, ‘Work in Progress’, which publishes short (one or two paragraphs) reports from conservators about projects they are working on. Requests for assistance from colleagues (ex: illustrations for a book, samples for a research project, advice gained through experience) may also be submitted. Here is the first contribution:

“The close examination of textiles”
by Cristina Balloffet Carr

While preparing early modern English secular embroideries for the 2009 Metropolitan Museum of Art/Bard Graduate Center exhibition Twixt Art and Nature, I was struck by the power of close examination under magnification to deliver visual information about an object as a whole. Focusing on a square centimeter of a richly worked, much deteriorated gauntlet, I found myself continually returning to the piece’s overall embroidery with the effects of the multiple reflective planes of the stunning metal thread work embedded in my mind. I was not alone in my fascination. This exhibition and its accompanying catalog ultimately included many fine macro and X-ray images of objects and both were well received by specialist and non-specialist alike.
The use of images in the discussion of objects has undergone a revolution over the past decade as digital technology has become increasingly accessible to both professionals and amateurs. Macro images breathe life into an object by presenting an intimate view of core characteristics. Whether via a unique-time image, a sequence of images, a video, or in the context of a systematic database, digital technology has transformed the perception of material objects. As digital technology further evolves, the visual information these images provide is also becoming familiar and expected. Illustrations are no longer a helpful option in the discussion of an object. They are an important part of the most esoteric theories, and can even wordlessly present an entire argument.

Truly understanding an object involves three-dimensional layered thinking following the path offered within the object itself and drawing from both the visible and the hidden. Thanks to new technologies, conservators now have an unprecedented ability to share information about objects via visual information that can be understood independent of the viewer’s personal experience. In a world of instantly shared images a material object can be shared with transparency, fostering a dissemination of visual information that transcends cultural experience and bridges generations and disciplines.

Cristina Balloffet Carr is a Conservator at the MMA. She joined the Department of Textile Conservation in 1979 as Assistant Restorer. She has worked with textiles belonging to most of the curatorial departments, coordinated the installation of numerous exhibitions, and is particularly interested in seamlessly integrating digital media into traditional museum practices.

New Publications

Ham House. Four Hundred Years of Collecting and Patronage
Edited by Christopher Rowell, Yale University Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780300185409
To mark the 400th anniversary of one of the most famous houses in Europe, eighteen internationally recognized scholars joined National Trust curators in documenting the history of Ham House and its collections. The new discoveries, reattributions, and revelations of the contributors are accompanied by specially commissioned photographs of the house and its contents. An appendix includes complete transcriptions of house inventories for the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries which are published here for the first time.

Book Review
by Elsje Janssen

Tapestries in the Acton Collection at Villa La Pietra / Gli arazzi della collezione Acton a Villa La Pietra (bilingual book English/Italian)
Edited by Francesca Baldry and Helen Spande, Firenze, 2010 (ISBN 978-88-7970-308-6)
Although this book was published a few years ago, I would like to bring it to the attention of those who missed it. If you ever thought that tapestry conservation must be boring, this is a publication you must read. If you know that tapestry conservation can be very exciting, you will be delighted with all the details you can see here!

The book is, first of all, a catalogue of the collection of eighteen European tapestries (dating from the sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century) in the Acton Collection at Villa La Pietra in Florence, Italy. The Acton Collection was left to the New York University in 1994 after the death of Sir Harold Acton (1904-1994), son of the collector Arthur Acton (1873-1953) and his wife Hortence Mitchell (1871-1962). The entire collection is still in situ in the richly decorated villa in Florence. After an introductory chapter explaining what a tapestry is, in the chapter, ‘Collecting in the Acton Home and the Revival of Interest in Tapestries’, Francesca Baldry describes how interior decoration in the 19th century evolved and how the Actons collected and decorated the rooms in their house. Old black and white pictures as well as colour photographs show us how the interiors once looked and what you can see if you visit the villa today.

In this book almost all of the tapestries are published for the first time. In the chapter ‘Tapestry Restoration in Florence and New York University’s Approach to Tapestry Conservation’, Deborah Lee Trupin and Constanza Perrone Da Zara explain how tapestries have been used in interiors and what kind of damage and loss they can suffer from this. They report about what is known of historic treatments, cleaning and repair of tapestries and describe how the Acton tapestries give an insight into the history of tapestry restoration and conservation in Florence from the end of the nineteenth century until today. The chapter is informative and critical and is illustrated with views of conservation studios as well as with details (before and after) of conservation treatments. At the end of the chapter the authors appended a very interesting table about changing approaches to tapestry conservation in Florence from the early 1980s (as taught at the conservation school in the Opificio delle Pietre Dure (OPD) in Alfredo Clignon’s lab), from ca. 1985-1998 (modifications to approach at Palazzo Vecchio under direction of the OPD), to the period 1998-2010 (at Villa La Pietra in collaboration with Susan Ann Mathisen from 1998-2003 and with Deborah Lee Trupin from 2004-2010). It gives insights into the evolution in approach to the removal of previous reweaving and repairs, resewing slits, dyeing of yarns and fabric, rewarping, treatments for missing wefts, support fabrics, lining, hanging and dust covers.
The catalogue (pages 61-199) written by Guy Delmarcel not only provides a description and the history of each tapestry, but also an elaborate explanation about ‘Conservation History and Technical Observations’ by Deborah Lee Trupin and Constanza Perrone Da Zara. This makes the publication so interesting and useful for conservators—although non conservators can benefit from this section too. Each tapestry is illustrated with a full page picture. In most cases, the back of the tapestry is also shown. Several details illustrate the texts. The combination makes you look carefully at the tapestries.

This catalogue not only describes the Acton tapestry collection and its history, but also gives the reader an insight in tapestry conservation problems and how they have been solved. Both students and professionals will benefit from this publication.

Exhibitions

Staatliche Kunstsammlung Dresden
“Parade Textiles for August the Strong Dating from 1697 and 1719. The originals and their thread-by-thread replicas for the Residenzschloss”
November 13, 2013 through February 24, 2014
Special exhibition of the Rüstkammer, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, in association with the state-owned enterprise Sächsisches Immobilien- und Baumanagement

This exhibit presents parade textiles made for August the Strong (1670 – 1733) in connection with his coronation as King of Poland in Krakow in 1697 and for the wedding of the Saxon Electoral Prince in Dresden in 1719. The gold and silver fabrics, velvets in royal blue, crimson and ‘Saxon green’, as well as the heavy gold embroidery and gold passements on display in this exhibition represent the culmination of baroque textile art. The exhibition features both the preserved originals and their thread-by-thread replicas produced by French, Italian and German workshops, thus enabling visitors to fully appreciate their former breathtaking splendor. In the future, both the textiles and the replicas will be included in the displays of the Residenzschloss.

News about ‘Evacon’

According to Paul Garside of the British Library who has done some research on the product, the manufacturer of Evacon changed the formulation when it began to produce larger quantities of the adhesive and Evacon now produces volatile acids. He is working with the manufacturer to change the formulation again. His paper from the CCCI adhesive symposium can be found at: http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/2011/Paper%203%20-%20Stevens%20et%20al.%20-%20English.pdf

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