Leather and Related Materials *Working Group*

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2012

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Edited by: Céline Bonnot-Diconne

FROM THE COORDINATOR

Dear members, dear colleagues,

As you know, I had the honor of being elected coordinator of our working group in Lisbon during our last triennial meeting. I will be assisted in this task by two recognized and experienced colleagues: Jutta Göpfrich from Germany (DLS) and Carole Dignard from Canada (ICC).
You already received our program for the next triennial period (soon available on the ICOM-CC website http://www.icom-cc.org).
In this first newsletter, you will notice that news is rich. There are congresses and courses that may interest you.
Several books and articles have been published recently concerning the field of leather. The Leather Conservation Centre is reporting a summary of the research project carried out together with the University of Northampton on treatments against acid-deterioration.

And of course, it is with a great pleasure that I invite you to attend our next interim meeting to be held in Offenbach from the 29th to the 31st of August 2012. It will be the opportunity to visit the new rooms of the Deutsches Ledermuseum Schumuseum reopened in March of last year (see article below). Please send your abstract no later than the 16th of March so that we can propose you the program at the end of spring !

With my assistant coordinators Carole and Jutta, we send you our best wishes for the New Year,

Sincerely yours,
Céline Bonnot-Diconne

ICOM-CC TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Cultural Heritage / Cultural Identity.
The Role of Conservation

The 16th Triennial Conference was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 19 to 23 September 2011.

The three papers presented and published for leather group were :

Research study on support materials and adhesives for the restoration of gilt leather: first results
by Sara Iafrate, Manuela Andreano, Marcella Ioele, Anna Valeria Jervis, Mariabianca Paris, Ulderico Santamaria.

Presence of indigo in the paint layers of gilt and painted leather artefacts
by Marcella Ioele *, Anna Valeria Jervis, Mariabianca Paris and Lidia Rissotto

Leather figures at Lytes Cary Manor, the National Trust, UK
by Theo Sturge

Preprints CD and Book of abstracts can be ordered from the publisher Critério :

http://www.criterio.biz/icom-cc-preprints-2011/

NEXT INTERIM MEETING

CALL FOR PAPERS & POSTERS
OFFENBACH - 29-30-31 AUGUST 2012

Our 10th Interim Meeting will be held in Offenbach, Germany. The Deutsches Ledermuseum Schuhmuseum last welcomed our group in 1989. It is a new opportunity to see the collections and the new exhibition rooms. There will also be an opening (together with the reception on the 29th) of a small exhibition about "Leather Conservation" at the DLM (29.8.2012-12.1.2013).

The 2 day conference (+ 1 day excursion) shall provide a forum for leather conservators to discuss issues and challenges of interest to the field of leather conservation in general, ranging from rawhide and semi-tanned skins to leathers, including wall hangings, upholstery, bookbindings, ethnographic art, archaeological artefacts, etc.

This meeting will focus on presenting an overview of the current state of research, practice and progress in the field of conservation and restoration of leather and related materials.

Abstracts of no more than 500 words should include the title, authors' names, profession, institution, e-mail and address of the corresponding author.
It should be submitted to the coordinator of the Working Group **by the 16th of March 2012.**
Preference will be given to ICOM members.
E-mail : cbonnotdiconne@aol.com

Papers should be given in english or in french. No simultaneous translation is provided. We kindly request all submission be proof read by a native English or French speaker.

NEWS

Reopening of the German Leather museum/German Shoemuseum
Offenbach am Main, Germany
By Jutta Goepfrich and Nina Frankenhauser.

On March 13th, 2011, after a year of rebuilding, we had the great pleasure to reopen the first new collection of the German Leather Museum / German Shoe Museum. Presently on a surface of 4000 square meters the museum enlarged the space for its collections of the Museum for Applied Art, Handicraft and Industry (focus on leather), the North America-, Africa- and Asia Collections, the Shadow drama discs-collection and the Shoe-Collection with footwear from Europe and all over the world.

New is the Treasure room, the so called Wilhelm Düncher-Gallery (named after a local manufacturer of leather goods) with the most valuable objects of the museum: love boxes ("Minnekästchen") of the Middle Ages, Renaissance caskets and cabinets as well as gilt-leather wall hangings from the 17th and 18th century. Also the Fashion-Gallery was renovated. In summer 2011, the second step will be the opening of the new exhibition about the history of the famous leather industry in the Offenbach area. In 2012, the new departments of the China-, Tibet- and Japan-Collections will follow.

In the course of the preparations for the new exhibition some conservation and restoration had to be done, as many of the objects were taken from the storage rooms and are now shown for the first time. Concerning the new display of leather clothing, new mannequins had to be constructed for some costumes. The aim was that the mannequins would be as invisible as possible.[1] For this purpose body casts were taken from commercial mannequins using plaster bandages. Torso, arms and legs, were each moulded as single forms. These moulds were adapted to the cuts of the original costumes and then covered with Polyester-fleece. A simple high-grade steel construction supports the moulds. To render the arms movable tubes of gooseneck-lights were applied. At the waistline Ethafoam discs were located to increase the stability and for the headdresses a mounting system was used with frames made of Plexiglas and Ethafoam. The advantages of these mannequins for leather clothing are: light weight, inexpensive production and the possibility for the leather to adapt to climatic changes.

The conservation of the Samurai armours made of leather, metal and Urushi-lacquer is presently underway. Due to the combination of different materials, appropriate solutions for the treatment have to be found.

Jutta Göpfrich & Nina Frankenhauser
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Investigation of Acid-Deterioration in Leather Leading towards Finding a Suitable Product for Treatment

By Y. Fletcher, A. Lama (The Leather Conservation Centre), A.P.M. Antunes and J. Guthrie-Strachan (The University of Northampton).

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Introduction

The purpose of the research was to carry out further investigation into acid-deterioration in leather in order to develop a product that can treat acid-deterioration with prolonged durability.

The two year research project into acid deterioration, with the aim of developing a new treatment, was carried out at The Leather Conservation Centre (the Centre) and the University of Northampton, both based in Northampton, UK. The University has an established leather technology degree programme. The project was a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) - a UK government backed scheme which links business and an

[1] C.P. Iannuccilli. Buckram Mounts for Children´s Fashion; in: M. Brunn, J. White (ed.), *Museum Mannequins*, Alberta (2002), 93-96.

academic institution enabling the business to access skills and expertise to help development of the business, in this case conservation of leather. Funded in part by the Centre and part by the UK's Technology Strategy Board.

Acid-deterioration in leather, occurs in vegetable-tanned leathers that were predominantly manufactured from the mid-19 Century onward. Acid-deterioration has been observed in a variety of leathers such as bookbindings, gilt leather, screens, wall hangings, upholstery and luggage. The deteriorated leather shows a lower pH (≤3.0)(1) and lower thermal stability (2). The visible changes usually include a powdery surface (often reddish/brownish, hence this particular deterioration is known as red-rot) and a complete or partial loss of the grain layer (the outer layer of leather); an acrid odour is also sometimes present.

However, care needs to be taken to ensure that a leather object does have acid deterioration and that the visible signs are not for other reasons.

For example, at the Centre we have been shown/given articles purporting to be suffering from “red rot” but which did not in fact have acid deterioration but had other deterioration mechanisms:

- heavy wear and tear - which had worn away the grain surface
- deliberate removal of grain surface - where much of the pigmented surface finish had cracked and flaked away, there had been a deliberate attempt to remove all the surface to give an even, though sueded, appearance to the leather surface
- delamination of the grain surface - a common deterioration mechanism in sheepskin
- suede and nubuck bookbindings - either a flesh split, or the surface had been deliberately abraded
- over application of leather dressings - causing blackening of surface with consequent flaking

It has long been accepted that both changes in the leather manufacturing processes and environmental pollutants (such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide) are believed to be responsible for the acid-deterioration. There were considerable changes in leather manufacturing processes in the 19th Century to meet the increasing demand for leather; additionally, emission of sulfur due to the burning of coal gas at the time is also considered to be responsible for rapid deterioration. (3,4)

Conservation of acid-deteriorated historic leather has long been a concern due to the lack of suitable products for the treatment of acid-deterioration. The purpose of the research was to undertake further investigation into acid-deterioration in leather in order to develop a product that will delay the progress of the decay in acid-deteriorated historic leather.

For conservation purposes, it was decided that the ideal product should have collagen-stabilising properties, acid-buffering capacity, be capable of providing a long-term conservation effect to the acid-deteriorated leather, together with the fact that it would cause no damage to the leather or any other materials on a leather object with which it may come into contact. In addition any product should be safe for the conservators too (with correct use of any necessary PPE).

Materials and Methods

Desk-based research was conducted to review the products used in the past for the treatment of acid-deterioration. Based on the research and personal communication, various compounds were selected and trialed using new mimosa-tanned leather, artificially-aged mimosa-tanned leather and acid-deteriorated leather. Experiments were carried out using Mimosa-tanned leather (new and artificially-aged) and acid-deteriorated historic leather. Artificial ageing was carried out by exposing the leather samples to a concentration of sulfur dioxide (40-80ppm) and nitrogen dioxide (20-40ppm) at 40°C and 30% relative humidity for six and 12 weeks. Analyses were carried out at 2, 4 and 6 weeks for

the six week trials, and at 3, 6, 9 and 12 weeks for the twelve week trials.

Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC) was used to determine shrinkage temperature (TS) which indicates changes in thermal stability of collagen and a pH test was used as an indication of acidity in the leather (new and artificially aged mimosa-tanned leather and acid-deteriorated historic leather) samples.

Reagents Trialed
The following chemicals were trialed:

- Aluminium diisopropoxide acetoacetate ester chelate (9.6% w/w Al) - the term aluminium alkoxide is used in this paper.
- 5-Ethyl-1-aza-3, 7-dioxabicyclo[3.3.0]octane - the term Organic Stabiliser is used in this paper.

A preliminary experiment was then carried out to determine the effects of the reagents on new mimosa-tanned leather. The products were then trialed on new mimosa-tanned leather that was previously artificially-aged for 6 weeks and on acid-deteriorated historic leather.
Shrinkage temperature (TS) and pH of the treated samples were determined. TS and pH of the corresponding untreated samples were also determined.

Solvents
White sprit is a non-polar organic solvent and so reduces the probability of solubilising polar components (salts and water soluble tannins) in leather when applied. White spirit is proven to be a safer solvent option and has been used in cleaning of historic leathers and therefore was chosen as a diluent for the purpose of this study.

Determination of shrinkage temperature (TS)
The leather samples were cut into small pieces (≈3 mg), placed in deionised water for a minimum of 16 hours at 20±2°C. The following day the excess of water was removed using Whatman No.1 filter papers and 5-10mg were placed in aluminium crucibles (40µl). The samples were analysed using Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC) (DSC822e, Mettler-Toledo, Switzerland). The initial and final temperatures during the analysis were 0°C and 100-150°C respectively at a ramping rate of 5°C/minute. The onset temperature of the denaturation process was recorded as TS.

Determination of pH
The pH of aqueous extract was determined following a British standard method (British Standard Institution; BS1309, 1974)(5). A leather sample, 0.25±0.002g was placed in 5ml deionised water (pH: 6-7; adjusted using diluted sodium hydroxide) and agitated mechanically for 24 hours using a shaker at 20±2°C and 65±2% relative humidity. The following day the pH of the aqueous extract was measured using a standard pH meter.

Results and Discussion
Aluminium diisopropoxide acetoacetate ester chelate (aluminium alkoxide) was first introduced by Calnan (1989) (6) for the treatment of acid-deterioration and investigated further during the STEP(7) and ENVIRONMENT Leather Project3 , and was recommended as a treatment for acid-deterioration in leather. However, the effectiveness and longevity of this treatment were in doubt and the mechanisms of aluminium alkoxide against acid-deterioration are not entirely clear.

Earlier trials carried out at the Centre (8) showed that aluminium alkoxide both increased the TS and pH of the new mimosa-tanned leather, artificially-aged mimosa-tanned leather and acid-deteriorated historic leather. The increase in TS and pH of new mimosa-tanned leather following the application of aluminium alkoxide indicates that the product has a collagen stabilising effect and an acid buffering capacity.

Research carried out at The British Museum (9) showed that treatment of acid-deteriorated leather using aluminium alkoxide increased the pH from 2.7-3.0 to 4.6. However, it was reported that the pH of the treated leather decreased from 4.6 to 3.0-3.4 after 11 years. No information was found on the thermal stability of the experimented leather. As metal alkoxides are moisture sensitive, the replacement of an alkoxy group (O-R; R=alkyl group) through

chelation is usually undertaken to reduce the hydrolysis rate (10,11,12). Aluminium alkoxide, although chelated, may hydrolyse completely over a period of time and therefore be unable, when applied on its own, to provide long-term protection against acid-decay.

The research showed that the aluminium alkoxide has an acid-buffering capacity and collagen stabilising property, as it increased the TS and pH of new mimosa-tanned leather, artificially-aged mimosa-tanned leather and acid-deteriorated historic leather. Retanning vegetable-tanned leather with aluminium is known to increase the thermal stability of vegetable-tanned leather (13). In this study, it appears that the Organic Stabiliser in the formulation reacts with alkoxide to enhance formation of stabilising matrix. The formulation may be creating a similar effect to retanning vegetable-tanned leather with aluminium.

A stabilisation effect on the artificially-aged mimosa-tanned leather and acid-decayed leather was obtained regardless of whether the Organic Stabiliser was applied before, after or in combination with aluminium alkoxide. However, increase in TS was found to be the highest when the Organic Stabiliser was applied in combination with aluminium alkoxide on artificially-aged mimosa-tanned leather.

A formulation containing aluminium alkoxide and the Organic Stabiliser was found to be the optimal treatment for acid-deteriorated leathers. The study showed that the developed formulation not only buffers the acidity, but also increases the thermal stability. The stabilisation effect of the developed formulation on leather is higher than aluminium alkoxide when applied alone. Additionally, after artificial ageing in an acidic environment the artificially-aged mimosa-tanned leather and acid-deteriorated leather that were treated with the developed formulation exhibited a higher TS and pH than the respective untreated control samples (See Table 1).

The results of the trials, all carried out with the same method as given above showed that the new formulation reduced acidity (as evidenced by raised pH) and stabilised the collagen structure (as evidenced by raised TS) consistently.

During the study, it was observed that the higher the initial TS of leather, the higher the additive stabilisation effect conferred by the developed formulation. This suggests that treating acid-deteriorated leather at an early stage of deterioration could be beneficial.

It is expected that detailed results will be published in a peer-reviewed journal.

A change in appearance and firmness may occur due to the treatment. It was noted that on several samples the leather became darker and felt firmer/stiffer. Conservators will have to decide whether it is more important to retard the deterioration than to retain the colour and feel of the degraded leather. It should also be noted that acid-deteriorated leather is generally less firm and more flexible when compared to the new leather due to degradation, and the colour may also become lighter as a result of the decay. Therefore, it may be argued that the firmness and darkness observed after the application of the developed formulation may actually be bringing the leather closer to its original feel and appearance.

Humidification tests on a number of treated samples showed that the leather can be humidified after treatment to improve flexibility if required.

Any objects treated for acid deterioration with this new treatment will, almost certainly, need further remedial conservation treatment.

CONCLUSION

The benefits of the developed formulation are summarised as follows:

- Increase in pH
- Increase in thermal stability
- Capable of providing long-term protection against artificial ageing
- Once applied, further conservation treatments can be carried out.

- If necessary the leather can be consolidated (Cellugel was used in trials) before or after the Organic Stabiliser is applied.

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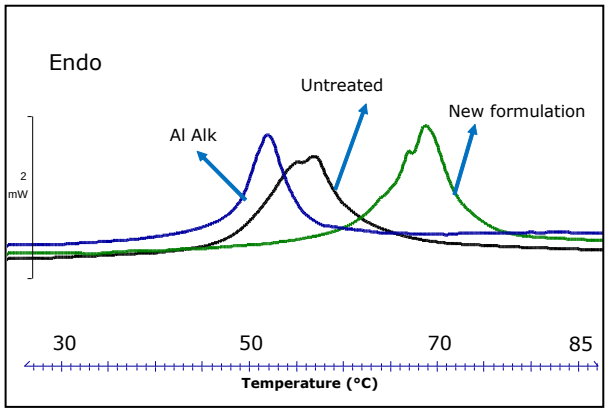
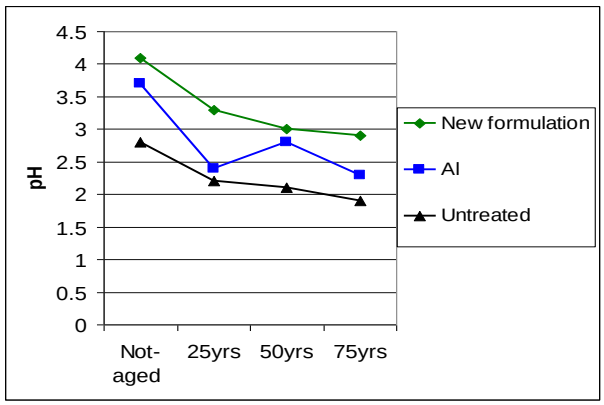
TABLE 1

TYPICAL THERMOGRAPH SHOWING TS ON ACID DETERIORATED LEATHER
AFTER TREATMENT AND ARTIFICIAL AGEING (APPROX 75 YEARS EQUIVALENT)



TYPICAL GRAPH SHOWING pH OF ACID DETERIORATED LEATHER
AFTER TREATMENT AND ARTIFICIAL AGEING
(UP TO APPROX 75 YEARS EQUIVALENT)



PUBLICATIONS

Cuoi d'oro. Corami da tappezzeria, paliotti e cuscini del Museo Stefano Bardini.
by Rossignoli, Guia

Editor : Noèdizioni
Year : 2009
Prefazione di Antonella Nesi.
Firenze, br., pp. 158, ill. b/n col., cm 17x24.

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Leather Tanneries: the Archaeological Evidence
Papers from the Archaeological Leather Group's conference at Walsall Leather Museum in 2008, entitled "Have we got a tannery?"
By Thomson, R. and Mould, Q. (Edts)

Editor : Archetype Publications, London
Year : 2011
ISBN: 9781904982616
Binding: Paperback
Dimensions: 244 mm x 172 mm
Pages: 198
Illustrations: 85 colour, 48 halftone

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Goldleder zwischen 1500 und 1800 – Herstellung und Erhaltung
Arbeitsheft 17 des Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege Sachsen, Dresden 2011
by Andreas Schulze

Editor : Sax-Verlag
Year : 2011
E-Mail: info@sax-verlag.de
Web: www.sax-verlag.de
ISBN 978-3-86729-093-7
25,00 €, zzgl. Porto

Content

- Rosmarie Pohlack, Vorwort, p. 9.
- Ingrid Möbius, Grußwort des Staatlichen Schlossbetriebes Moritzburg, p. 10.
- Christine Kelm, Einführung, p. 11–13.
- Andreas Schulze, Goldleder zwischen 1500 und 1800 – Herstellung und Erhaltung, p. 14–264 and Annex on CD-ROM.

Abstract

A detailed knowledge of the original techniques of manufacture and of the used materials is essentially for the development of suitable strategies and methods for the preservation of cultural heritages. In the case of gilt leather these skills had been lost completely at the end of the 18th century. The aim of the presented work was the rediscovery of the lost knowledge. For this purpose 27 written sources about the different aspects of gilt leather production from Spain, Italy, The Netherlands, Great Britain, France and Germany had been analysed. The emphasis of these researches was placed on the period of flowering of gilt leather between the beginning of the 16th and the end of the 18th century. Nevertheless some medieval art technological sources to the early roots or predecessors of the “classical” gilt leather have been included into account. The results of these researches have been verified in practice by the reconstruction of the historic descriptions for all steps of gilt leather manufacture and compared also with the results of the scientific examination of the original gilt leather wallhangings of Moritzburg castle and similar objects. Another important aim of this work was it, to use the rediscovered art technological knowledge, which could be obtained by the examination of the historic sources and of the original objects, for the development of complex strategies and concrete methods for the conservation-restoration of gilt leather objects in general.

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Leather Trades in medieval Lisbon

By Franklin Pereira

Editor : LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing GmbH & Co. KG
Year : 2011
b.chaton@lap-publishing.com
www.lap-publishing.com
ISBN 978-3-8473-2769-1

This study compiles and comments old documents scattered throughout the centuries, concerning leather and its artisans, starting in the reconquest of Lisbon from the Muslim domain. In Lisbon, capital of the new-born kingdom of Portugal, leather trade was quite important, whether for day-to-day activities or to supply luxury goods to the wealthy and the royal household; artisans – organised in the trilogy of master-journeyman-apprentice - participated in the government of the city as well. The ordinances of the makers of saddles, shoes, leather shields, bags, belts, wall hangings and upholstery are studied, showing obligations regarding meetings of their masters, mastership exams, quality control of the production, sale of items and religious activities; archaic methods and fashions rooted in the Islamic heritage, to be slowly substituted by the trends of the Renaissance, are also taken into account.

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Leather filigree: a close look into a vanishing technique.

By Franklin Pereira

Somerset: The Tool and Trades History Society
Year : 2011 - Autumn
Newsletter 114 Pages 17-22

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Some clear-up about gilt leather and goat skin.
By Franklin Pereira

New Zealand: Leather Artisan
Year : 2011 - June
Newsletter 139 Pages 15-16

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Tannins characterisation in new and historic vegetable tanned leathers fibres by spot tests.
By Lina Falcão & Maria Eduarda M. Araújo

Journal of Cultural Heritage
Year : 2011
Number 12(2) Pages 149-156
doi:10.1016/j.culher.2010.10.005

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Ilustrações lavradas – a figuração nos espaldares em couro lavrado das cadeiras portuguesas/Carved illustrations – the figures carved in leather upholstery of Portuguese chairs.
By Franklin Pereira

Papers from the 3rd International Seminar Memória e Cultura Visual/Memory and Visual Culture - AGIR – Associação para a Investigação e Desenvolvimento Sócio-cultural .
Year : 2010 - September
Newsletter 139 Pages 91-114

Abstract
In early 17th century, Portuguese leather carvings got free from the Mediterranean style owning its aesthetics to Iberian Muslim heritage. The chair started to substitute the former "sitting in the Moorish way", on tapestries and cushions; in its early stage, the chair was kept to be used by the lord of the palace or the figures of the Church, and slowly its use got democratized. In Portugal, the Moorish/mudejar taste kept the use of cowhide in upholstering, carved with a sharp "V" gauge in its initial style and, later on, by non-sharp chisels and ornamented punches.
With the Renaissance coming into the decorative arts, leather carving started to include other elements, to be developed by Baroque and Rococo styles. Besides the high quality of the chisel carvings and plenty of stylized foliage, birds, double-headed eagles, coats-of-arms, and young lads, several examples do show us parts of History or stories of the dominant class, whether illustrations of daily life, aspects of meetings with other cultures, or as metaphors of Power and Love. This series of figures adds more to Portugal visual culture, and gives prominence to a seat that became famous in Portugal and in Europe as well, in the Baroque times.
The research covered all country, in museums and private collections, which allowed me to write a few books and articles. This talk is centered in a particular aspect of the matter that asks for a specific attention.

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Os couros de arte e a parede ornamentada: contaminação estética e cultural/ Leather art and the ornamented wall: aesthetical and cultural contamination.
By Franklin Pereira

ARTIS/magazine of Art History. Institute of the Faculty of Letters/University of Lisbon
Year : 2010-11
Number 9-10 Pages 279-289

Abstract
In this paper the author studies the ornaments displayed on walls, either by painting or by fixing a temporary or seasonal draperies; the author gives particular importance to the gold leather/guadameci, using inventories of rare medieval and Renaissance examples and paintings on board. Other aesthetics parallels are made with leather carved Mudejar lineage of the oldest Portuguese chairs.

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Research on materials appropriated for restoration - impacts of ancient and modern tanning techniques on leather character.
by B.Trommer, A.Schulze and G. Hilsky

ALCA Journal
Year : 2010
Volume 105 Number 5 Pages 160-171

Abstract
Investigations on leather decay and its effect on cultural heritage exist in large number; however appropriated and sustainable sources of restoration leather are missing. Simple test methods and agreements regarding the quality assurance of commercial products are not available. Many of the outstanding properties of ancient leather like long-term stability are attributed to the kind of manufacture and the auxiliaries common for the period of origin. The pure replication of the ancient techniques in detail is neither possible nor economically viable. Every step of tannage causes an anticipated step of collagen degradation. Is it possible to obtain a restoration leather of outstanding quality also under modern conditions? The Saxon States Authority for the Care of Monuments, the Research Institute for Leather and Plastic Sheeting (FILK Freiberg) and the Department of Conservation & Restoration of Moritzburg Castle co-operate in research on material appropriated for restoration of baroque leather wall hangings. The paper presents different characteristics of ancient and modern tanning techniques, practical experiences, test methods and recommendations for the manufacturing of restoration leather.

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Le pelli della corte : arredi di corame alla corte estense con qualche appunto mantovano / Court skins : Embossed Leather Furnishings in Este Palaces, includine Notes on Mantua.
by Alessandro Della Latta

DecArt. Rivista di arti decorative/A magazine for the decorative Arts
Year : 2005
Number 4 (autunno/autumn 2005) Pages 3-23

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The Artifact, Its Context and Their Narrative. Multidisciplinary conservation in historic house museums

Call for papers

Los Angeles (USA) 6-9 November 2012

Research, materials, and treatments for Architecture, Landscape, Furnishings and Collections.

ICOM-DEMHIST, the international committee for historic house museums, and three ICOM-CC working groups Sculpture, Polychromy, and Architectural Decoration, Textiles, and Wood, Furniture, and Lacquer are collaborating in the organization of a conference to be held in November 2012. This four day conference will be hosted by The Getty Research and Conservation institutes in Los Angeles.
Past conferences organized individually by ICOM-DEMHIST and ICOM-CC working groups have already focused on conservation of collections, structures and settings and the importance of a multidisciplinary approach. In this new collaboration we aim to promote the concept of multidisciplinary conservation within the specific context of historic house museums.
The theme of the symposium will focus on managing the inevitable deterioration of structure and materials in historic house museums, while balancing the need for public access with current standards of practice in conservation. Historic houses remain in constant use throughout their lifespan and their interiors consist of diverse materials often altering dramatically due to change imposed by society, their environment and function. The proper care for historic interiors and their edifices draws from many conservation specializations as well as from many other fields. Therefore it is essential to approach each project in a holistic manner using a multidisciplinary collaborative approach involving all stakeholders. It is intended that posters and papers selected for the upcoming symposium will focus on the following key issues:

• The Historic House Museum as an artifact: This theme relates to all issues encountered when the house itself is a significant historic artifact and how to balance public access with current standards of practice in conservation.
• The artifact within its context: This topic concerns the historic house museum as a vessel in which a collection is presented. Focus will be given on balancing the individual conservation needs of solitary objects within the context of an integrated collection and its setting.
• Conservation and the "narrative" of the Historic House: This theme will delve into how conservation and its discoveries can play a role in engaging and educating the public, both in the narrative presented on public tours and by demonstration of conservation techniques

Authors are invited to submit abstracts related to these topics by the 1st March 2012 to the following email address:
Artifact.Context.Narrative@gmail.com
All work submitted must be original and not have been published elsewhere. Abstracts of no more than 500 words should include the title, authors' names, profession, ICOM registration number and relevant committee / working group, e-mail and address of the corresponding author. We kindly request that all submissions be proof read by a native English speaker.
Selection will be based on the relationship to the theme of the meeting, with an emphasis on an Interdisciplinary approach, originality, and addressing the context of historic house museums. We encourage the submission of papers that result from collaborative projects that echo the multidisciplinary approach of the conference. Preference will be given to ICOM members.
All final papers and posters will be peer reviewed by an editorial committee prior to the conference.
Selections will be made by the 1st April 2012, authors will be informed accordingly.
Proceedings of the symposium will be made available to delegates and members of ICOM-CC & ICOMDEMHIST.

Program
Presentations will be held over three days and delegates will be given the opportunity to continue the theme of the discussions during the excursions. Posters will be exhibited during the symposium and a dedicated poster session will highlight their content. The language of the symposium and proceedings will be English.

The venue
The Getty Research and Conservation Institutes are located at the Getty Center in Los Angeles California (USA) and are world renowned institutes dedicated to furthering the knowledge and understanding of visual arts on a theoretical and technical level.

More information on:
http://www.icom-cc.org//54/document/demhist--icom-cc-joint-interim-meeting-2012-the-artifact-its-context-and-their-narrative-multidisciplinary-conservation-in-historic-house-museums/?id=1057

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IIC 2012 Congress. The Decorative: Conservation and the Applied Arts

Call for posters

10-14 September 2012, Vienna
The twenty-fourth IIC Congress will be held in Vienna in conjunction with the Universität für angewandte Kunst (the University of Applied Arts) from 10th to 14th September 2012 and will focus on a topic that is uniquely well-suited to Vienna's wealth and scope of decorative and applied arts heritage. Ornamentation and the decorative have been evident in human endeavor since the beginning of recorded history, ranging from the bold clarity of Ancient Egypt to the clean-lined, discreet styles of the 1930s and the exuberant revivals of today. Whether civilizations have grown in Europe, Asia, the Americas or Australasia, many of their forms of cultural expression can be considered 'decorative' or 'applied' arts. The conservation of this heritage, tangible or intangible, is thus the conservation of much of human endeavor and as such is central to our cultural life.
The range of work that this IIC congress will cover is very broad: architectural decoration and styling; ceramics from pottery to porcelain; glassware, including painted and stained glass and studio glass;

furniture; hardstone carving, including *pietra dura* work and engraved gems; metalwork in all its forms; jewelry ; ivory and bone carving; textiles including tapestries, embroideries and costume; mosaics; painted decoration; wallpapers and wall coverings; work in terracotta; plaster work; bookbinding and leatherwork. This is by no means an exclusive list.

Call for Posters

Poster presentation is particularly well suited to material with a strong visual impact. Posters are displayed prominently throughout the meeting and during the week there will be a dedicated session, giving delegates the opportunity to speak to poster authors. An extended abstract will be published in the conference papers to provide a permanent record and point of contact. A pdf-format file of your copyright-cleared poster would also be welcome at a later stage to enable display on the IIC website.

If you would like to present a poster, please use this link:

http://www.iiconservation.org/conferences/vienna2012/send_abstract.php

The deadline for electronic submission of proposals is 3 February 2012. The total word count will be 800. The choice of posters for display will be made by 2 March 2012 and final texts and image will be required by 30 March 2012.

COURSES

Understanding of the Parchment in the Medieval Manuscripts

21st – 26th May 2012, Horn, Austria

Further education course held by Jiří Vnouček, conservator, The Royal Library Copenhagen.

Workshop

Parchment is one of the oldest and also most durable writing materials. To be able to secure its proper preservation or eventual conservation it is very important to understand its complicated structure and way of the behavior. Experiments with practical parchment making can help to learn more about parchment in medieval manuscripts and even more to recognize different types of imperfection and defects coming already from its production so they are misunderstood with damage coming from later use and way of storage of the manuscripts.

Structure of the course

Practical parchment making workshop which will cover all basic steps in the parchment making: dehairing, cleaning of the flesh side, stretching on the frames, dry shaving and pouncing, final surface treatment, preparation for writing of the manuscript.

Theoretical lectures about the history of the parchment-making and different types of the parchments for writing purposes and the way of their preparation.

Lectures about the visual examination of the parchment in the medieval manuscripts and interpretation of their damage and imperfection coming from the manufacture of the parchment (based on personal experience of this parchment-making course)

Practical visual examination and identification of different damage in real historical manuscripts. Duration of course 5 days of theoretical lectures (morning) and practical parchment making (afternoon) will include at least half day of excursion to nearby archive or library where would be possible to study historical parchment material.

Course is designed for the conservators of parchment who have already some knowledge about parchment and good practical experience with its conservation and want to learn more

about writing parchment made for medieval manuscripts. But the course could be also found interesting for codicologists or curators of manuscript collection. The course main target is to understand the parchment and not parchment conservation. On another hand certain discussion about conservation of parchment will be raised by understanding of its special characteristics and behavior which come from the way in which is produced.

The course language will be English. The deadline for application is one month before the course starts. The course fee plus accommodation (5 nights) is 700.00 € plus 10% VAT. The number of participants is restricted to 7.

The venue is the Renaissance castle housing the European Research Centre for Book and Paper Conservation-Restoration.

Accommodation during the course is within the building and is included in the price.

After application you will be provided with further information.

Please, see more under
http://www.buchstadt.at/Courses.164.0.html

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The Understanding and Analysis of Organic Materials in Art

Capita selecta: proteins; natural organic dyes and pigments.

3rd – 7th September 2012, Horn, Austria

Further education course held by Dr. Jan Wouters

Short description of the course

A short introduction will be given to understand why the analysis of organic materials in art requires an approach different from the analysis of inorganics. It will explain that the key features of organic analysis are analytical and spatial resolution. It will lead to suggesting logical sequences of hyphenated analytical approaches.

Proteins

The course on proteins aims at improving the understanding of the diversity of proteins present in materials used for the creation of objects of art and culture as well as for their conservation. The traject of understanding starts from the elementary building blocks, amino acids, and ends with the smallest observable morphology. The clarification of the scanning electron microscopic morphology of a collagen microfibril and of its properties is taken as an example. The multi-level spatial configuration of proteins will be explained and will be at the basis for understanding protein degradation and enzyme activities.

The potential of calibrated amino acid analysis with high-performance liquid chromatography will be illustrated with a series of examples within a heritage context.

Practicals include the making of models of amino acids and small peptides to illustrate optical and position isomerism and to understand spatial configurations; the calculation of the isoelectric point of some amino acids will improve the understanding of this important parameter.

Natural organic dyes and pigments

The course on natural organic dyes and pigments aims at explaining why the enormous diversity of these materials should be considered an advantage for contributing to the understanding of heritage, rather than a disadvantage. Nowadays, the analysis of organic dyes and pigments should stretch beyond the mere reporting that such a material is present, without any further specification. The course will give a detailed overview of organic colorant chemical classes. It will report on the structure of a relevant research project. It will show the potential of high-performance liquid chromatography coupled to a diode-array and a mass detector for identifying up to seven

biological sources, used to perform one single coloration in the past. Several other examples will show how detailed organic colorant analysis may contribute to the understanding of heritage. Practical includes dyeing experiments with natural organic colorants to illustrate the main dyeing processes.

The course language will be English. The deadline for application is one month before the course starts. The course fee plus accommodation (4 nights) is 830.00 € plus 10% VAT. The number of participants is restricted to 12.

Accommodation during the course is either within the building (guesthouse) or in a close hotel (hotel conditions) and is included in the price.

Please, see more under
http://www.buchstadt.at/Courses.164.0.html

NEWSLETTER NOTES

Submissions welcome

The various sections of the newsletter are open to the collaboration of everybody. We are counting on your active participation reporting news, information and contributions concerning technologies and conservation of leather artefacts and the professional aspects on this field.

Please send your submissions, not exceeding 1300 words, to:

Céline Bonnot-Diconne
E-mail: cbonnotdiconne@aol.com

Jutta Goepfrich
E-mail: j.goepfrich@ledermuseum.de

Carole Dignard
E-mail: Carole.Dignard@pch.gc.ca

Newsletter on line

This newsletter is available on the ICOM-CC website:
http://icom-cc.icom.museum/WG/LeatherRelatedMaterials/

THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER WAS FINALLY REVIEWED ON 12TH OF JANUARY 2012