

Photographic Materials Working Group Newsletter



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Photographic Materials Working Group Newsletter Contributors - June 2020
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EDITORIAL

Dear Members,

First and foremost, we hope that you and your loved ones are safe and sound. The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented effects on our daily lives and the global economic scenario is also changing the way we interact with cultural heritage. Many agree that now, more than ever, conservators and allied professionals should unite voices to highlight the relevance of our work and also the role of our institutions as carriers of the world's memory and artistic achievements.

In the hopes of bringing the worldwide photograph conservation community closer, we have been working hard to relaunch the ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group newsletter. We have reworked the design and content areas, whilst continuing the legacy of our colleagues. Let us know what you think, **we welcome content suggestions** that might be of relevance to our field.

In this issue, we are sharing some useful COVID-19 pandemic resources related to health protection and safely managing collections in museum, library and archive settings. You will find a review of the group's last interim meeting in February 2019, a summary of the bibliography project initiated by ICOM-CC and this group's contributions to date. The section *News from Our Community* includes research projects from colleagues around the world, we hope this exchange helps connect professionals with similar interests. The final sections include some events and professional development opportunities. Please be mindful that some of these announcements may be subject to postponements and/or cancellations given the current uncertain times. Last but not least, a reminder on how to become a member and a glimpse into our social media stats.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and look forward to hearing your feedback.

GROUP COORDINATOR



Diana Díaz is Assistant Conservator in the [Department of Photograph Conservation](#) at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, USA. Since 2008, Diana has centered her practice in the conservation and preservation of photographs and has worked with fine art and archival photograph collections in the US, Mexico, and Colombia. She has been involved with ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group since 2010.

ASSISTANT GROUP COORDINATORS



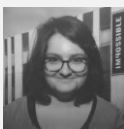
Barbara N. Brown is currently an independent consultant, preservation and conservation of photographs. Prior to this, she was Conservator of Photographs for the [Harry Ransom Center](#) at the University of Texas at Austin. She has also been long involved in the American Institute of Conservation Photographic Materials Group.



Susie Clark ACR, Paper and Photographic Conservator and Consultant, has worked in private practice in the UK and abroad since 1990. She was previously the conservator for the BBC Hulton Picture Library (now Getty Images). In 1996 she was awarded the Museums and Galleries Commission Jerwood Award for Research and Innovation for her work on Wet Collodion Positives.



Estíbaliz Guzmán is a Photograph Conservator who graduated from Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía (ENCRyM) in Mexico City. She has a Master in Education and over twenty years of experience in conservation. She's interested in the evaluation of conservation treatments and the development of sustainable conservation strategies. She has been a researcher and teacher at ENCRyM since 2001.



Lénia Fernandes is an Assistant Photograph Conservator at the [Nederlands Fotomuseum](#) in Rotterdam. She has since 2016 been involved in research related to the conservation of color slide film. Lénia has previously had the opportunity to work in several institutions in Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal, and the US.



Mark Strange is Senior Conservator of Photographs at the [Alexander Turnbull Library](#), in the National Library of New Zealand, Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa. Before joining the Library in 1992, he was Photograph Collections Manager for the National Museum of NZ. His current responsibilities include preservation and treatment of the Library's 4 million photographs, including large-scale projects that integrate rehousing, description and digitisation.

COVID-19 RESOURCES



Tip: Between the [] you can see that the provided references can be read in other languages.

ICOM related:

- Recommendations for the conservation of museum collections [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#)]
- Ensuring cultural heritage security during lockdown: a challenge for museum professionals and police services [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#)]
- Museums and COVID-19: 8 steps to support community resilience [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#)]
- Museums and end of lockdown: Ensuring the safety of the public and staff [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#)]
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and cultural and creative sectors: impact, innovations and planning for post-crisis](#)
ICOM and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Community Engagement during COVID-19 at the House of Memory Museum, Medellín [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#)]
- Summary of COVID-19 impact surveys [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#)]
ICOM and UNESCO

Other sources:

- Caring for Heritage Collections during the COVID-19 Pandemic [[EN](#) | [FR](#)]
Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)
- [Collections Care in the Age of COVID-19](#)
Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC)
- Survey: Teaching heritage conservation amid COVID-19 [[EN](#) | [ES](#)]
ICCROM
- [Recomendaciones sobre procedimientos de desinfección en bienes culturales con motivo del COVID-19](#)
Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte. Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España
- [Back to work safely](#)
sponsored by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)
- Deconfinement of museums: planning for the resumption of activities and the return of audiences [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#) | [DE](#) | [AR](#) | [中文](#)]
Ministère de la Culture (France)
- Culture & COVID-19: Impact and Response Tracker [[EN](#) | [FR](#) | [ES](#) | [中文](#)]
UNESCO

Read more about how conservators are dealing with the COVID-10 pandemic on p. 13 - 16 in

News from our Community

LOOKING BACK AT The 2019 Interim Joint Meeting



Facade of the Bruno Walter Auditorium, NYPL.
Photo: L. Fernandes

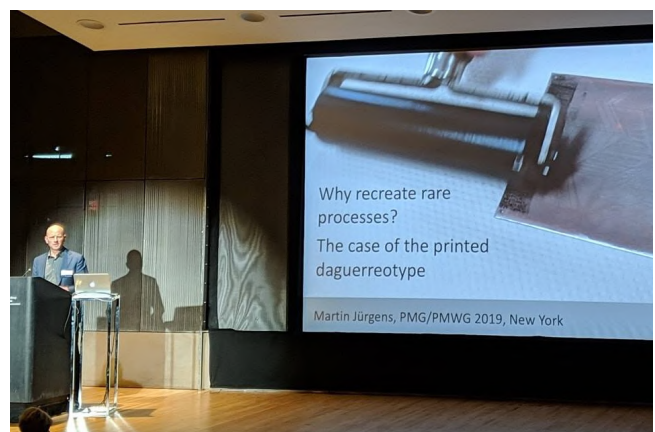


Cover of the Interim Joint Meeting booklet.
Photo: L. Fernandes

How and Why: Photograph Conservation Today was the title of the successful interim meeting of the Photographic Materials Working Group of ICOM-CC in New York City on February 19–23, 2019, hosted by the New York Public Library (NYPL) Center for the Performing Arts, at the Bruno Walter Auditorium. This was the third meeting organised jointly with the Photographic Materials Group (PMG) of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC). You can find the program, abstracts and speaker biographies on the [conference website](#).



Assistant Group Coordinator Mark Strange presenting 'Coming in from the Cold', where he discussed the conservation of a group of nitrate negatives found in Antarctica.
Photo: D. Diaz



Martin Jürgens, Conservator of Photographs at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, in the beginning of his presentation. He has been studying the use of daguerreotypes in early photomechanical printing processes.
Photo: D. Diaz

It was a well-attended conference with a total of 174 international participants registered for the meeting, representing 25 countries. It was a great opportunity not only to meet long-time friends and colleagues but also for newer generations to network and present their projects. A range of topics was covered in 43 lectures, from new methods for housing

daguerreotypes, to the ethics of reprinting contemporary photographs, to mentoring emerging professionals. In addition to two and a half days of talks held at the NYPL, attendees could also choose from 10 tours and 6 workshops. A beautiful reception was held at the James B. Duke House of the Institute of Fine Arts, at New York University.



Natasha Kung, New York University graduate student, presents 'Refining the Daguerreotype Package', as part of research conducted at The Metropolitan Museum of Art to design a new variant on presentation of daguerreotypes for the exhibition [Monumental Journey: The Daguerreotypes of Girault de Prangey](#).
Photo: D. Diaz



Nora Kennedy, Sherman Fairchild Conservator in Charge, in the Department of Photograph Conservation at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, during a tour to the department shows the many components that composed the refined daguerreotype package, and presentation style developed for the same exhibition.
Photo: D. Diaz

Our Assistant Coordinator Lénia Fernandes wrote a [conference summary](#) that is available on the ICOM Netherlands website. An ICOM travel subsidy allowed Lénia to attend, present and chair one of the sessions of this event in New York City.



Interior of NYPL's Barbara Goldsmith Conservation Lab in Long Island (NY).
Photo: L. Fernandes

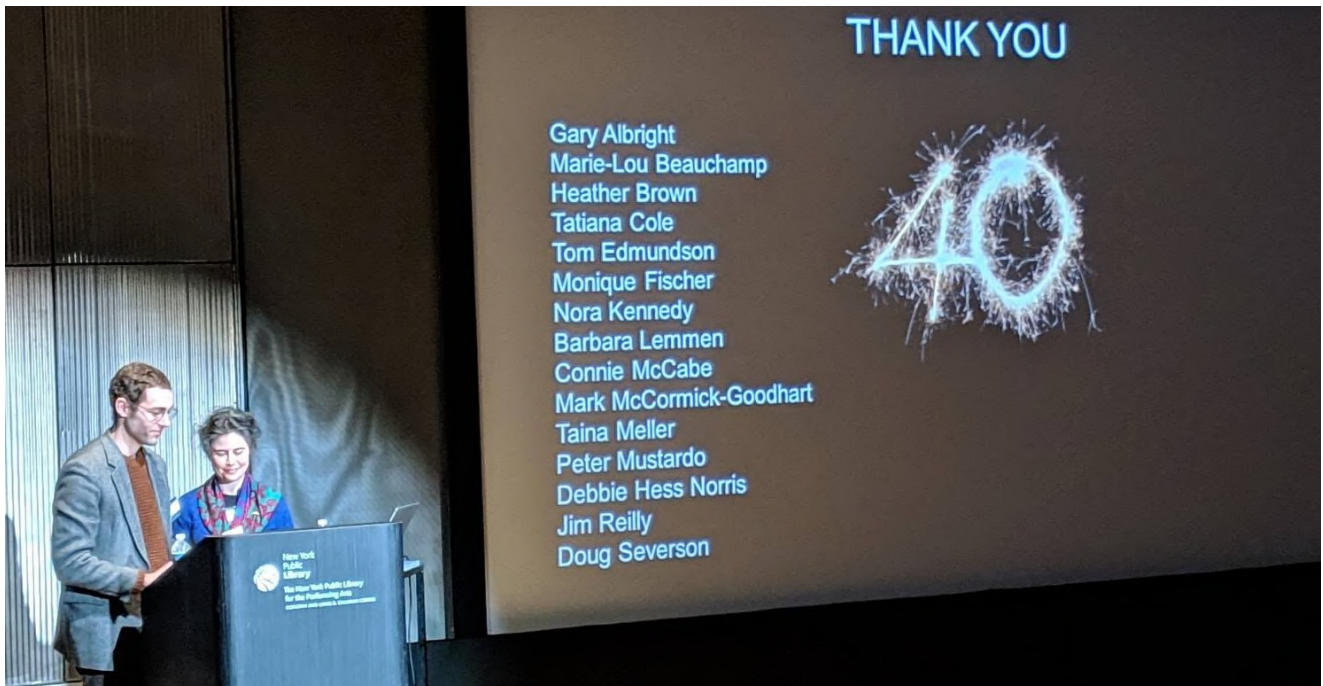


Tour of the MoMA's Erna and Victor Hasselblad Photography Study Center and Cold Storage.
Photo: L. Fernandes

We addressed the following topics during the [ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group business meeting](#):

- Acknowledgments to all those involved in the organisation and funding of the New York meeting
- The (then) upcoming [25th ICOM General Conference](#) in Kyoto (1-7 September 2019). ICOM-CC had a strong presence in the conference, and organised several events with other ICOM international committees. You can download the latest [On Board - News and Reports from the Directory Board](#) to learn more about the conference and other ICOM-CC efforts
- The upcoming [19th ICOM-CC Triennial Meeting](#) in Beijing, originally planned from 14-17 September 2020, now rescheduled to 17-21 May, 2021. Papers and abstracts have been selected, and the preprints schedule remains unchanged
- **Appeal for all members to check if they are officially part of this Working Group.** If you don't have an account, or have problems logging in, contact secretariat@icom-cc.org to set up a web account for you or to help with an existing one. Once you log in you have to choose to join the Photographic Materials Working Group to be officially included in our mailing list
- We asked members about possible venues for the next Interim Meeting in 2022. Suggestions pointed towards Latin America and Europe
- Efforts to relaunch the newsletter: There was a call for content suggestions. These could be in any language with an English translation. The possibility of having a multilingual version of the newsletter in the future was raised
- Update on the group's social media presence. Considerations on how to reach members that reside in countries that censor the social media platforms currently in use by this Working Group





Zach Long and Amanda Maloney concluding their 'PMG is turning 40!' presentation. Photo: D. Diaz

Our conference partners, the AIC's Photographic Materials Group, celebrated its 40th anniversary with an illustrated presentation on its history and pioneers in the field, many of whom also significantly contributed to the formation and expansion of our Working Group.

The ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group would like to thank the AIC Photographic Materials Group for their partnership. Every joint meeting has been exhilarating and informative, full of rich professional exchange, and we look forward to future collaborations!

The meeting reached audiences all over the world through social media using [#PMGPMWG19](#). I encourage you to visit ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group's Facebook page, and AIC and FAIC's [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts to see highlights from the week.

The success of this meeting would not have been possible without our sponsors:
[The Better Image](#) | [New York Public Library](#) | [Penumbra Foundation](#) | [Tru Vue](#) |
[Paul Messier Conservation of Photographs and Works on Paper](#)

Contributing institutions and individuals included:
[New York Public Library for the Performing Arts](#) |
[New York Public Library, Barbara Goldsmith Conservation Lab](#) |
[The James B. Duke House of The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University](#) |
[The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of Photograph Conservation](#) |
[Museum of Modern Art, The David Booth Conservation Department](#) |
[Laumont Photographics](#) | [Alison Rossiter, Artist](#) | [Adam Fuss, Artist](#)

Last but not least, I want to thank our members. Your interests and questions guide and enrich our activities.

Thank you!

Diana Díaz, Group Coordinator

ICOM-CC ONLINE PUBLICATIONS INITIATIVE

and a Brief History of Publications by the Photographic Materials Working Group

In celebration of ICOM-CC's 50th anniversary in 2017, and in conjunction with the 18th Triennial Conference celebrated in Copenhagen that same year, the Committee gave [online open access](#) to Preprints from the 17th and the 16th Conferences in Melbourne 2014 and in Lisbon 2011. In a wide strategy to promote the conservation profession, ICOM-CC also made all the preprints produced from 1972 to date accessible. Each working group is compiling information of all the publications (including papers, compendiums, etc.) created outside the Triennial umbrella.

This has been an interesting project, involving laborious research to track down and locate copies of all of the various publications for reference and bibliographic information. It has provided an intriguing glimpse into the history of the field of conservation, ICOM-CC and its Working Groups – and that of the Photographic Materials Working Group in particular. In the earliest ICOM-CC Triennial Preprints that I found (1978), photographic materials were included under the Working Group titled Graphic Documents and Illuminations. After a couple of evolutions in that group title, Photographic Materials became a separate Working Group with its own session in 1990.

Outside ICOM-CC Triennial Meetings, our Working Group first published papers from two interim meetings held in the mid- and late 1990s, with the support of The School of Conservation at The Danish Royal Academy of Fine Arts ([KADK](#)), thanks to efforts by professor Mogens Koch. And later, through joint interim meetings with the Photographic Materials Group of the American Institute for Conservation, the papers have been included in three different volumes of *Topics in Photographic Preservation*. From the materials located so far, the group counts 165 different authors and co-authors, 72 papers, 41 abstracts, and 6 posters published, with another 19 papers by Klaus B. Hendriks, an important founding member of the Photographic Materials Working Group, included in a memorial publication.

Having papers by our Working Group's members available online will be a great resource for the membership and the greater conservation and preservation community, and speaking on behalf of your team of WG Coordinator and Assistant Coordinators, we are pleased to be able to contribute to this project.

Barbara N. Brown, Assistant Group Coordinator

 **165**
authors

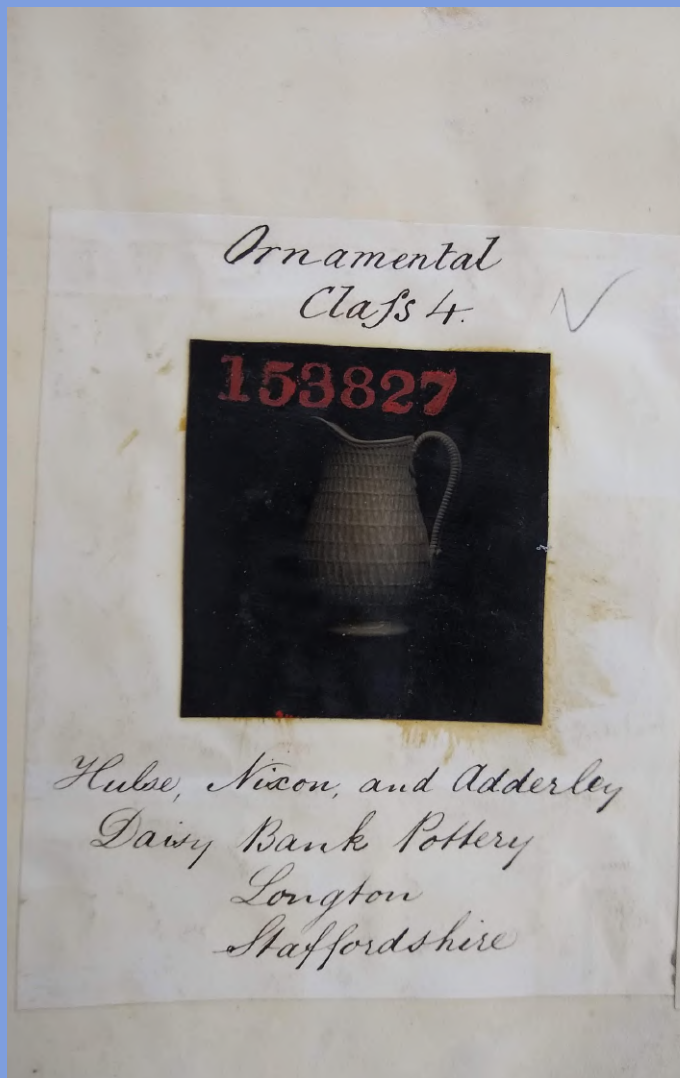
 **72**
papers

 **41**
abstracts

 **6**
posters

You can access the [ICOM-CC Publications Online Platform](#)
and [scanned volumes](#) provided by the Getty Research Institute on the Internet Archive.

Research Projects



Pannotype with applied coating, dated 1862, in a volume of the Design Registers. BT 43/67/153827 © The National Archives

Coated pannotypes

Ioannis Vasallos, Conservator of Photographs and Paper at The National Archives (TNA) in the UK, has been carrying out research on a group of pannotypes found in the Design Registers volumes from the 1860s. The Design Registers are one of the most captivating visual collections in TNA, containing almost 3 million British patterns, designs and trademarks (1839-1990s). Pannotypes are only one type of early photographs in the Design Registers. Their coatings make them particularly interesting due to the damage they cause in adjacent designs and pages.

Ioannis is collaborating in this project with TNA conservation scientists and scientists from the group of Imaging and Sensing for Archaeology, Art History and Conservation (ISAAC) at Nottingham Trent University. The project's aim is to identify the layer structure and coatings on pannotypes, as well as understanding their deterioration. This will potentially enable the reversal or stabilisation of the damage caused by nearby designs and pages.

Prof. Bertrand Lavédrine, [Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle](#), Centre de Recherche sur la Conservation (CRC) in Paris gives an update on his research projects.

Methods of Mitigating Volatile Organic Compounds and Fungi

Acetic acid (AA) is a volatile organic compound (VOC) that can speed up the degradation of cultural artefacts. Housing materials and artefacts, such as cellulose acetate or triacetate base (CA) photographic films, can emit these gases. In the 1990s, Kodak and Fuji introduced the use of zeolites as acid scavengers in housing materials for film collections. Zeolites can absorb air moisture, which slows down film hydrolysis but does not absorb AA as much as expected. More recently developed compounds named Metal Organic Frameworks (MOFs) are a potential alternative. MOFs are hybrid porous solids that combine metal subunits and organic linker molecules. The obtained structures can absorb and trap a variety of gases including AA.

The European Union funded [NEMOSINE](#) project is investigating the use of MOFs for improving the housing of film collections. To better adjust the MOFs to this purpose, it is necessary to first identify which VOCs are produced by films in storage and at which rate.

The use of Proton Transfer Reaction “Time-of-Flight” Mass Spectrometer (PTR-ToF-MS) helped to assess the quantity and type of VOCs produced in the air surrounding 41 CA base films dated after the 1950s. The selected films were both black and white and colour, of several brands and at different degradation levels. In over 41 samples, AA was the most abundant VOC for 27 films reels, while butanol was the most abundant in 6 of them, *N,N*-dimethylformamide (DMF) in 3, formic acid in 2, acetaldehyde in 2 and acetone in 1.

Another research goal was to study the efficiency of essential oils (EOs) in inhibiting mould growth. EOs, such as linalool, were embedded in nanofibers. It was important to evaluate whether EOs interact with photographic materials. Linalool was found to be efficient in inhibiting six different fungal strains. However, in higher concentrations and at 70°C, the same substance reacted with the photographic gelatine and colloidal silver. It is therefore a potentially harmful substance in the long term storage of photographic materials and other EOs need to be tested.

The NEMOSINE project received funding from the EU's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation program under grant agreement N° 760801.

Sustainable Preservation of Glass Plate Negatives in a Tropical Environment

Following an earthquake in 2016, documentation of the Bagan monuments was needed to assist in conservation efforts. This research brought to light a collection of over 5.500 glass plate negatives (ca. 1901-1955) held at the archive of the [Department of Archaeology](#) in Yangon, Myanmar. After years of being kept in a hot and humid environment, their physical condition and long-term preservation needed urgent improvement.

This project involved international collaboration between the [UNESCO](#) offices in Thailand and Myanmar, the Department of Archaeology of Myanmar and the Centre de Recherche sur la Conservation (France). The implemented preservation plan was based on sustainability (e.g. limiting energy consumption, identifying locally available products and developing partnerships) and is in agreement with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This project will be presented at the upcoming ICOM-CC conference in Beijing.



Participants of the glass plate negative conservation workshop in Yangon, Myanmar, July 2019.
Photo: B. Lavédrine

Check the [Recent Publications & Resources](#) section (p. 21) for more references by this author.

Elisa Díaz-González, conservator and lecturer, and Ania Rodríguez-Macié, PhD candidate at Servicio de Análisis y Documentación de Obras de Arte (SADOA-SEGAI), Universidad de La Laguna, Canary Islands (Spain)

[EN] **Management and Conservation of the Telesforo Bravo Photographic Archive**

The [Telesforo Bravo - Juan Coello Foundation](#), established in 2016, is located in Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife and holds the Telesforo Bravo Photographic Archive. The Foundation is committed to the preservation and dissemination of the scientific, cultural and personal legacy of geologists Telesforo Bravo Expósito (1913-2002) and Juan Coello Armenta (b. 1941) and other scientists in the fields of Earth or Natural Sciences who have carried out or are conducting research in the Canary Islands and other volcanic regions.

Telesforo Bravo was recognized for his research on paleontology, volcanology, geology and hydrology, mainly in the Canary Islands. His contributions to science also include the discovery of fauna and flora species, and archaeological sites. He was

[ES] **Gestión y Conservación del Fondo Fotográfico de Telesforo Bravo**

La Fundación Telesforo Bravo-Juan Coello, establecida en 2016, se localiza en el Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, y alberga el Archivo Fotográfico de Telesforo Bravo. La Fundación está comprometida a preservar y divulgar el legado científico, cultural y personal de los geólogos, Telesforo Bravo Expósito (1913-2002) y Juan Coello Armenta (n. 1941), junto con otros científicos en los campos de las Ciencias Naturales y de la Tierra, que realizaron o realizan investigaciones en las Islas Canarias y otras regiones volcánicas.

Telesforo Bravo fue reconocido por sus investigaciones en paleontología, vulcanología, geología, e hidrología, principalmente en la Islas Canarias. Sus contribuciones a la ciencia también incluyen descubrimientos de especies de fauna y flora, y de sitios arqueológicos. Se le conocía por



[EN] Panoramic photo-collages made by Telesforo Bravo | [ES] Foto-montajes panorámicos realizados por Telesforo Bravo
Photo | Foto : A. Rodríguez-Macié

known for always carrying a camera when conducting fieldwork to document all his research and discoveries. These photographs have become core documents of the Canarian natural heritage. They are part of a collection with over 70.000 photographic materials, including B&W and colour prints, B&W and colour film negatives, glass plate negatives in different formats, colour slides and large format glass slides, aerial photos, and panoramic collages made by Telesforo Bravo himself.

The Foundation's director, Jaime Coello Bravo, proposed the conservation of the photographic archive, which involved the collaboration the different departments, especially the Archiving and Documentation Area. Priority was given to the dissemination of the archive by digitizing of 57.441 colour slides.

The next steps of this project include the design of a model to safeguard photographic heritage, and this is the focus of Ania's PhD dissertation, under Elisa's direction. Her proposal gravitates around the archive's identification and diagnosis of its requirements, and is structured in three main sections: archival and cataloguing strategies, conservation measures, and digitization and dissemination of the collection. Elisa and Ania are currently working on the inventory, cataloging and conservation assessment of silver gelatin DOP prints. The PhD research project presents the opportunity to study gelatin binder deterioration, and the application of colorimetry and multispectral analysis to determine, for example, the presence of optical brighteners. The preservation of these photographs will showcase the islands' landscapes, fauna, flora, geological and geographical characteristics, its archaeological, paleontological and ethnographic heritage, as well as an insight into Telesforo Bravo's private life.

siempre tener a mano una cámara para documentar toda su investigación y descubrimientos. Actualmente, estas fotografías son una importante fuente documental del patrimonio natural canario, y son parte de una colección más de 70.000 impresiones en color y en blanco y negro, películas de negativo en color y en blanco y negro, negativos en placa de vidrio en diferentes formatos, películas de diapositivas a color, diapositivas en placa de vidrio en gran formato, fotos aéreas y montajes panorámicos realizados por el propio Telesforo Bravo.

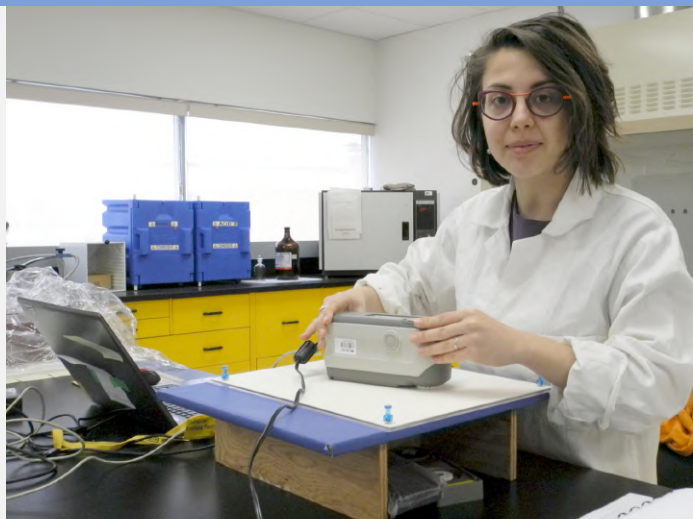
El director de la Fundación, Jaime Coello Bravo, planteó la conservación del fondo fotográfico, lo cual implicó la colaboración de diferentes departamentos, especialmente el área de Archivística y Documentación. Los primeros esfuerzos se centraron en la divulgación del archivo por medio de la digitalización de 57.441 diapositivas en color.

Próximas acciones incluirán la gestión del fondo como modelo de salvaguarda del patrimonio fotográfico, tema en el cual Ania ha centrado su investigación doctoral, bajo la dirección de Elisa. Su propuesta contempla la identificación y diagnóstico del archivo, en tres etapas: estrategias archivísticas y de catalogación, medidas de conservación, y difusión por medio de la digitalización de la colección. Actualmente, su trabajo se centra en el diseño del inventario, y descripción del estado de conservación de los positivos de plata-gelatina de revelado (DOP). Esta tesis doctoral también proporciona la oportunidad de estudiar deterioros en la capa de gelatina, y aplicar colorimetría y análisis multiespectrales para determinar, por ejemplo, la presencia de blanqueadores ópticos.

La preservación de estas fotografías permitirá resaltar los paisajes de las islas, accidentes geológicos y geográficos, fauna, flora, objetos arqueológicos, paleontológicos y etnográficos, así como una mirada a la vida privada de Telesforo Bravo.

Disinfection with water-ethanol vapours

[Chloé Lucas](#), Private Photograph Conservator in Ottawa, ON (Canada), recently completed her research project as a Visiting Professional of the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), in partnership with Greg Hill (Senior Conservator, Archival Materials and Photographs) and Nancy Binnie (Senior Conservation Scientist). This project was funded by the [Carnot Foundation](#) and the American Institute for Conservation Photographic Material Group [Professional Development Stipend](#).



© Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute and Chloé Lucas Conservation

The goal of the project was to expand Chloé's earlier study on the disinfection of photographs with water-ethanol vapours and evaluate the innocuity of the previously tested treatment on dye coupling prints. The results will be presented in English in May 2021 at the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Heritage Annual Conference in Hamilton, ON (Canada), and in French in June 2021 at the Carnot Foundation presentation night in Paris (France).

The final report is available upon [request](#).

Preservation at the University of Botswana Library during the COVID-19 Pandemic

[Thatayaone Segatsho](#), Conservator at the University of Botswana Library (UBL), gives us some insight into the measures to protect people and cultural heritage during this pandemic:

The outbreak of COVID-19 is one of the most devastating Public Health Emergencies of International Concern ever experienced throughout the world and has also become a threat to cultural heritage. Frequently accessed collections are at high risk of being damaged by residual chemicals used in hand sanitizers and soaps. It is therefore the responsibility of cultural heritage institutions to put in place preservation measures concomitant with the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) recommendations provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO). In response to this new normality, the UBL developed precautionary measures to minimize damage to its collections during this pandemic.

In line with the WHO's guidelines, and as mandated by the Government of Botswana, the UBL strictly complies with social distancing, the use of face mask/shields and hand hygiene, as well as carrying out cleaning and sanitization procedures on all furniture (about every 30 minutes). Every person that enters the library goes through screening and triage, as their body temperature is measured, and a Safety Health and Environment officer oversees this procedure. The UBL also assigned a temporary holding room to isolate library employees and visitors showing flu-like symptoms. All library materials accessed and used on location have to be quarantined for 24 hours before reshelfing. When returned, all objects containing metal and/or plastic are quarantined for at least 10 days. Before providing access to Inter-Library Loans (ILL) and new acquisitions, all materials are quarantined upon arrival for 5 days. Packaging materials must be disinfected before being opened.



Signage adopted by the UBL during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Photo: T. Segaletsho



The UBL's Special Collections reading area, after being reorganized to comply with physical distance requirements.
Photo: T. Segaletsho

The Preservation Sub-unit, committed to the wellbeing of UBL's Special Collections, adheres to both COVID-19 UBL prevention measures and general preservation guidelines for collections. In the case of the library's graphic collections, one of the largest risks associated with the IPC recommendations is the potential to leave residues from soaps during handling, which can increase the acidity of paper supports. In the long term, accumulation of these residues could be a disaster, leading to deterioration such as embrittlement, discolouration, morphology changes and chemical destruction of polymeric structures. Therefore, the Conservator inspects all disinfection products used by cleaners, staff, stakeholders and library users, and provides advice when necessary.



The UBL's Special Collections Repository (left) and part of the collections (center and right).
Photos: T. Segaletsho



The UBL's Conservation Studio (left) and Digitization Area (right).
Photos: T. Segaletsho

Visitors accessing the Special Collections are encouraged to wear gloves at times. Whenever possible, fragile materials are digitized and access is given to e-copies alone. Another critical preservation measure taken is related to advocacy and digital outreach: following the National Lockdown, the University of Botswana as a whole developed an induction/orientation programme for all students to take once they return to campus; the Preservation Sub-unit participates by advising stakeholders on the repercussions associated with COVID-19 measures that can affect long term preservation endeavours.

While there is no “pause” button for the UBL’s preservation programme during the COVID-19, the challenges associated with the threat of deterioration by acidity cannot be overemphasized. The Special Collections division usually collects two copies of each acquired item. One preservation copy remains out of circulation, whilst the second copy can be accessed by the public. As part of preventive measures, the Preservation Sub-unit is suggesting embarking on a ‘Stock Taking Project’ to confirm that both copies of all items are on the shelves. Going forward, it is critical to prioritize the preservation of items with currently only one copy, by either digitizing it, acquiring a second copy or making surrogates. In addition, the Sub-unit plans to review its Disaster Plan and add a section on epidemics / pandemics.

Emergency response during the COVID-19 crisis in Paris

Agnes Gall-Ortlik, Stéphanie Ledamoisel and Bruno Namouric, respectively Head of and Photograph Conservators at the Atelier de Restauration et Conservation des Photographies (ARCP) in Paris (France), report on a recent unexpected event:

Do you believe in Murphy's law? An incident rarely happens during work hours. Instead, it frequently occurs during a weekend or at night instead. The ARCP is the caretaker of the photographic collections within the city of Paris and we work on collections of municipal partner institutions. This time we were called as the emergency response team to the historic [Roger-Viollet Photographic Agency](#), a collection that is now part of the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris (BHVP). The photographs are still kept in their original envelopes, boxes and shelves at the historic location on the rue de Seine, in the center of Paris. During a violent thunderstorm on the weekend of May 9th, 2020, in the middle of

the COVID-19 quarantine, rainwater passed over an obstructed gutter, went into the Agency's building and spread out in a cascade over a whole section of a wall, wetting hundreds of boxes. In the middle of these troubled times, we managed to rescue around 18.000 photographs in a very short period of time.

The key to success for such an emergency operation is organization. Before acting, it is better to take time to observe and think. On the first afternoon, four days after the accident, two conservators inspected envelopes with water damage. This was done in order to sort out which photographs had to be placed directly into a freezer; 373 in total, very wet, stuck together or with mold. The remaining ones could be treated on site or sent to the ARCP, specifically when stuck together and already dry. This observation time also allowed us to develop a spreadsheet to record every envelope. Since the objects had no accession numbers, to be able to track materials and follow-up on the operation, we assigned an ARCP number to each item and wrote it down with graphite pencil.

The next 6 days were dedicated to treating the 437 remaining envelopes in the Agency. A team of 9 people was necessary to carry out this project: one preventive conservator as coordinator, two photographs conservators, two information officers, two preventive conservation technicians, one photographer and one driver to bring all the materials and supplies required for the intervention. The assessment results are as follows:

- observed deterioration: photographs stuck together in packs, warping and deformation, mold, stains and ink bleeding, chemical deterioration (coloration and discoloration)
- 373 wet photographs with active mold sent for freezing
- 3.090 photographs dried flat on site. We used polypropylene sheets, blotting paper, non-woven polyester, but also a lot of paper towels!
- 1.929 photographs sent to the ARCP for further treatment
- 11.640 photographs, stored in the original 388 envelopes and kept in 82 boxes, were placed back on their shelves at the Agency

Working during the quarantine forced us to have no more than four people per day on the site, but that was the only inconvenience. All other personal protection equipment was otherwise completely compatible with health & safety measures required due to COVID-19 (mask, gloves and ventilation).

In an upcoming contribution we will describe the treatment of the wet photographs that had to be frozen and that will be treated in the near future.



Boxes and envelopes affected by the disaster and put to dry before the arrival of the ARCP team at the Roger-Viollet Agency.
Photo: A. Gall-Orlik

Examining, Assessing and Protecting Photographs by Svetozar Prodanović of Ivan Meštrović's Sculptures: A Collaboration Between Artists

Martina Bagatin, Senior Photograph and Paper Conservator at the Central Laboratory for Conservation and Restoration - [Croatian State Archives](#), reports on a collaborative project in Zagreb:

Ivan Meštrović (1883-1962) is one of the most respected Croatian sculptors from the late 19th and early 20th century and his work is housed in the [Ivan Meštrović Museums](#) - Meštrović Atelier in Zagreb. I started collaborating with one of the Museum's curators, when invited to examine and document a portion of their photographic collection, and to suggest the most appropriate way to protect and store it. This valuable collection from the Photographic Library of Meštrović Atelier has more than 4000 photographic positives (including photographic albums). I worked with a group that contained mostly silver gelatin photographs, a small number of collodion positive prints, and photomechanical postcards.

Ten images in the group proved to be of historical significance, by providing an overview of the creation of the bronze sculpture *Monument to Gregory Nin* by Meštrović. This artistic process was documented by photographer Svetozar Prodanović. The ten silver gelatin DOP prints ranged in format from 15.5x22 cm to 37.8x48.4 cm. In addition to identification of photographic techniques and mounting methods, I also documented the types of damage had occurred over time. I wrote a proposal describing suitable conservation treatments and the proper storage and protection of the photographs. It is accompanied by general guidelines to ensure a more complete and comprehensive preservation of the one of the most relevant photographic collections in the Croatian cultural heritage.



Storage, Photographic Library, Meštrović Atelier.
Photo: M. Bagatin



S. Prodanović, Monument to Gregory Nin by Meštrović.
After treatment. Meštrović Atelier. Photo: M. Bagatin

In Related News

Photography's role in cultural heritage keeps gaining more recognition. The past year has seen the opening and planning of new institutions that feature photographic materials around the world:

- The Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) will soon open in Bangalore (India)
- The [Musée National de la Photographie](#) / المتحف الوطني للتصوي is now open in Rabat (Morocco)
- [Fotografiska](#) has a new venue in New York City
- The German parliament approves [institute for photographic legacy](#) based in Düsseldorf
- The French Ministry of Culture recently set up 'Le Parlement de la photographie'

Contact us if you'd like to share your news with other Working Group Members.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Conferences | Symposia | Meetings | Lectures

ICOM related:

19th ICOM-CC Triennial Conference [[EN](#) | [中文](#)]

17 - 21 May, 2021 - China National Convention Center (CNCC), Beijing (China)

- This conference, originally planned for September 2020, has been postponed until next year
- Registration is still open

Other:

[AIC's 48th Annual Conference](#)

Several dates, May - August 2020, American Institute for Conservation

- Videos of presentations that have already occurred are available upon registration
- Sessions related to the AIC Photographic Materials Group: 9 June, 15 July and 27 August

[Fotografía: Patrimonio de Todos. Seminario de Conservación, Investigación y Difusión](#)

Several dates in 2020 - Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), Mexico City (Mexico)

- Discussion of the role of photography as part of Mexico's cultural heritage and how the research and use of photographs needs to be integrated with their conservation
- INAH's YouTube channel has recordings of previous sessions, and upcoming ones will be transmitted live on the same platform

[2020 Vision: Current and Future Research in Cultural Heritage Preservation](#)

14 - 15 October, 2020 - Image Permanence Institute, RIT, Rochester, NY (US)

[Photo: Science - Photography and Scientific Discourses \[\[EN\]\(#\) | \[CZ\]\(#\) \]](#)

30 November - 2 December, 2020 - Photography Research Centre, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague (Czech Republic)

- Conference exploring the connection between the history of photography and science
- Was postponed from September 17 - 19, 2020. Might become an online event

[Colour Photography and Film: sharing knowledge of analysis, preservation, conservation, migration of analogue and digital materials](#)

29 - 30 March, 2021 - Organised by the Gruppo del Colore – Associazione Italiana del Colore | Istituto di Fisica Applicata "Nello Carrara" (IFAC-CNR) | Opificio delle Pietre Dure (OPD), Florence (Italy)

- See also the *Call for Papers* section below

AIC Photographic Materials Group Winter Meeting

11- 15 May 2021 - American Institute for Conservation, Photographic Materials Group

- Postponed and with new a location. The meeting will be integrated into AIC's 48th Annual Meeting in Jacksonville, FL (US)

Exhibitions | Festivals | Fairs

PhotoIreland Festival 2020

8 - 19 July 2020 - Dublin (Ireland)

- New program announced with both virtual and in-person events

Photography Fairs [EN | NL]

Several dates and locations around Belgium, starting with 27 September 2020 in Bruges

Paris Photo [EN | FR]

12 - 15 November 2020 - Grand Palais, Paris (France)

CALL FOR PAPERS



Source: Pixabay

ICOM related:

ICOM Voices [EN | FR | ES]

- Open call for submissions

Perspectives on Sustainability in Cultural Heritage Conservation

ICOM Canada

- Submit your abstract until 30 June, 2020

Museum Internacional: Museum Collection Storage [EN | FR | ES]

- Submit your abstract until 15 August, 2020

Other:

Colour Photography and Film: sharing knowledge of analysis, preservation, conservation, migration of analogue and digital materials

Gruppo del Colore – Associazione Italiana del Colore / IFAC-CNR / OPD

- Submit your proposal until 31 October, 2020

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Jobs | Internships | Fellowships | Academic

Masters in Art Education in the Conservation and Restoration of Photographic Heritage

Escola Superior de Conservació i Restauració de Béns Culturals de Catalunya, Barcelona (Spain)

- The first Master's program in Spain focused on the conservation of photographs. Information available in [[ES](#)] and [[CAT](#)]
- Applications for the academic year 2020/2021 are closed

Training | Workshops

Conservation: Together at Home

Several dates, since March 2020 - ICON

- Webinar series from ICON's Book & Paper Group, videos of many past sessions are available
- Includes photographic materials related presentations

Care and Identification of Photographs

20 July - 6 September, 2020 - Gawain Weaver Art Conservation

- Seven week online workshop combined with live chat sessions

Preserving Historic Photographs

24 September, 2020 - Susie Clark ACR, West Dean at the British Library, London (UK)

Advanced Inkjet Preservation Workshop

12-13 / 16-17 October, 2020 - Image Permanence Institute / RIT, Rochester, NY (USA)

- Workshop applications due on 15 June. Check the website for more details

Photograph conservation workshops [[PT](#)]

Several dates, September - November 2020 - LUPA - Luis Pavão Ltd., Lisbon (Portugal)

- Details on lecturers and subjects on provided link

Conservation of colour slides

February/March 2021 - The National Archives, London (UK)

Organised by ICON Photographic Materials Group

- Originally planned for July 2020, this event was postponed. Updates provided on the event page

Would you like to help us and become an **Assistant Working Group Coordinator** in the 2020-2023 triennium?

We are looking for a new member with proficiency in FR and EN.

Send us an email to icomcc.pmwg@gmail.com if you'd like to volunteer for the position.

Contact us to share new opportunities.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES



Source: Pixabay

Articles

A Fast and Safe Method for the Identification of Cellulose Nitrate Film in Collections

B. Lavédrine. 2018. In *Journal of Paper Conservation* 19 (4)

- Method with very reduced sample size and a very limited amount of acid solutions
- Can be used safely when carrying out collection surveys

Metal-organic frameworks for the capture of volatile organic compounds and toxic chemicals

K. Dedecker, E. Dumas, B. Lavédrine, N. Steunou & C. Serre. 2019

In *Metal-Organic Frameworks (MOFs) for Environmental Applications*

- Related to the NEMOSINE project discussed in p. 9 - 10

Spectroscopies and Electron Microscopies Unravel the Origin of the First Colour Photographs

V. de Seauve, M.-A. Languille, M. Kociak, S. Belin, J. Ablett, C. Andraud, O. Stéphan, J.-P. Rueff,

E. Fonda & B. Lavédrine. 2020. In *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*

- Research on Edmond Becquerel's photochromatic images (1848)

Books | Reports

Back to the Future: Riding the Slide Carousel [EN] /

Back to the Future: Im Karussell der Diakonservierung [DE]

B. Sommermeyer & C. van Haften (eds.) 2019. Hamburger Kunsthalle / Kerber Verlag

- Bilingual publication related to symposium & workshop on the conservation of slides in contemporary art collections that took place in Hamburg (Germany), January 2018

Disinfection of photographic materials with ethanol vapours: Evaluation of the innocuity on chromogenic prints

C. Lucas. 2020. Canadian Conservation Institute

- Report available via the author. Check p. 13 for more information

Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition

International Council of Museums and ICOM Kyoto 2019 Organising Committee (2020)

- 25th ICOM General Conference Report

x

The Polaroid Project: At the Intersection of Art and Technology

W. A. Ewig, B. Hitchcock (eds.) 2017. Thames & Hudson

- Catalog of travelling exhibition organized by the Foundation for the Exhibition of Photography

Compilations | Periodicals

Bulletin No. 18 – May 2020

Department of Photograph Conservation, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Quarterly newsletter. Previous issues available upon request

The Classic

- Photography magazine

Topics in Photographic Preservation 18

M.-L. Beauchamp (comp.) 2019. American Institute for Conservation, Photographic Materials Group

- Contains, among others, papers presented at the **2019 Interim Joint Meeting** (see p. 3 - 7)

Databases | Online

AATA Online

- A renewed web interface to search through abstracts related to conservation literature
- You can change the main menu into 25 different languages

Ed is gereed! Restauratie Project Ed van der Elsen [NL]

Nederlands Fotomuseum (2020)

- An illustrated summary of a colour slide conservation project

ICOM-CC Publications Online

ICOM

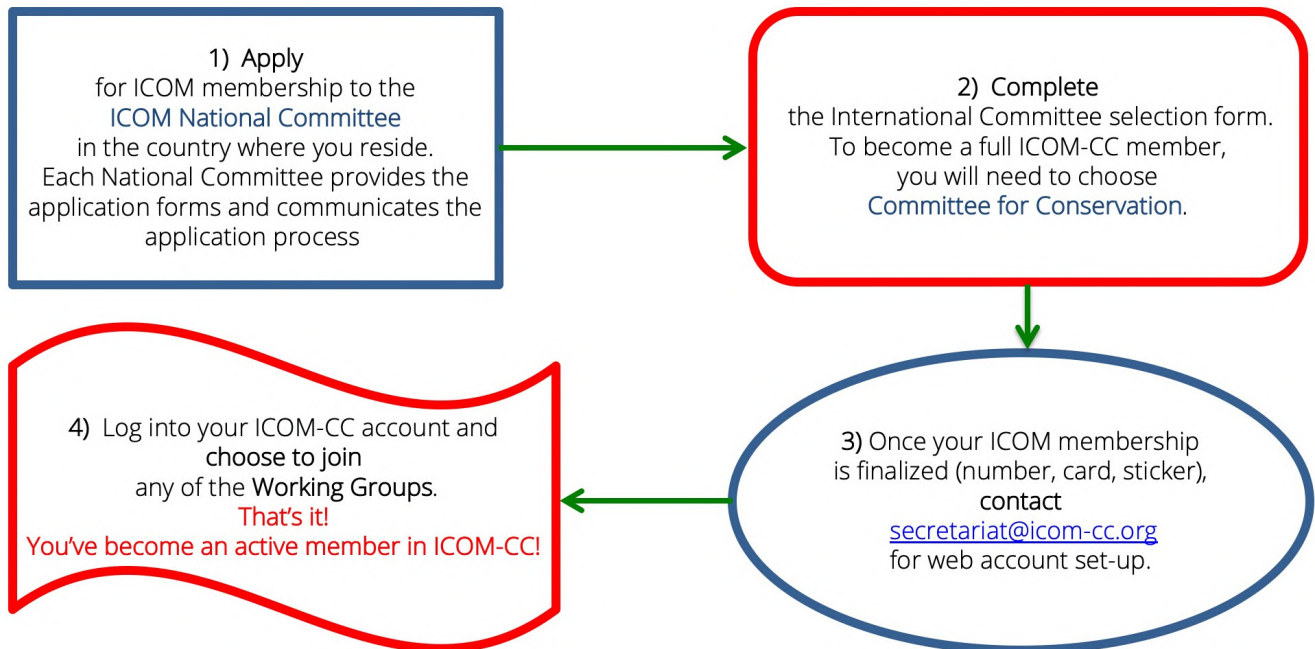


Source: Pixabay

ICOM-CC WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

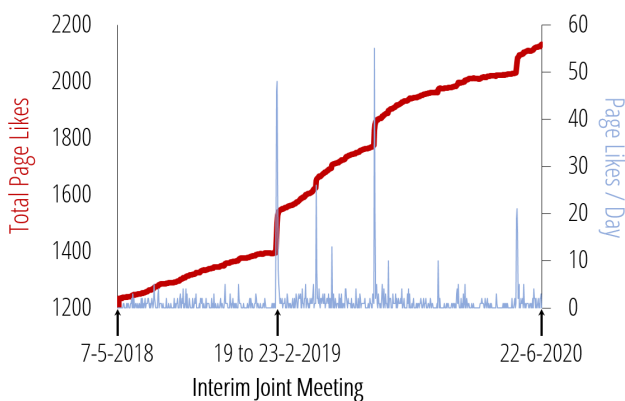
Wondering how to become a member?

Follow the steps in this flowchart and **don't forget to select the Photographic Materials Working Group** as one of your WGs of interest. For more details, see ICOM-CC's [website](#).



A Glimpse into our Social Media

As of 22 June, 2020, this Working Group's [Facebook](#) page currently has over 2.387 followers and 2.130 likes. This last number has almost doubled since 2018, growing with the Interim Joint Meeting in New York.



Posting updates, professional opportunities and links with potential interest on our Facebook page has allowed us to reach people around the world, in over 70 countries.

Our [LinkedIn](#) page currently has 350 members.

Keep in touch



icomcc.pmwg@gmail.com