

## FOREWORD

The 14<sup>th</sup> volume of *Postprints* produced by the Objects Specialty Group includes papers presented on April 19<sup>th</sup> in the morning ADG session and at the all-day OSG session on April 20<sup>th</sup> at the 2007 AIC annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia. The first ever Archaeological Discussion Group special half-day session was organized by Howard Wellman and included eight papers on the theme of Illicit Trade of Archeological Objects. The following day fourteen papers were given at the Objects session primarily on the general meeting theme of Fakes, Forgeries and Fabrications, although several papers outside the theme were also presented.

Perhaps due to the fact that most of the speakers invited to participate in the ADG session were not conservators, this group did not submit written versions of their papers for the Postprints with the exception of Sanchita Balachandran who submitted an abstract about the removal of Chinese wall painting to the Fogg Art Museum in 1924. It is unfortunate that this first ADG session will have no better written record.

Twelve of the papers presented the following day at the OSG session are included in this volume. Of the two missing Carol Grissom preferred to submit her paper, *A Plaster Gladiator, Battered but Still Beautiful*, to a professional journal read by curators. The paper, *A Progress Report on the Oceanic Galleries Reinstallation Project at the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, by Amy Jones, Beth Edelstein and Linsly Boyer was not submitted due to time constraints.

The enthusiastic response to the topic of fakes and forgeries, evinced both by the number of unsolicited proposals received and by comments of meeting participants indicate that this topic could and should be presented on a regular cycle at AIC meetings, perhaps once every five years or so. Although the papers in the OSG session covered a lot of ground including the consideration of fakes in the especially difficult areas of African and Pre-Columbian art as well as in the decorative arts and sculpture and medieval and Renaissance art, there is clearly room for much more. Highlights included Jane Bassett's practical assessment of the use of thermoluminescence dating for European sculpture during the past 22 years at the Getty Museum as well as Katie Holbrow's report on her study of the quarry provenance of Houdon's marble busts. The important role of connoisseurship in detecting forgeries was emphasized in several papers. The range of materials covered was broad: bronze, terracotta, marble, wax, silver and gold, enamel, wood and plaster yet many other materials were not addressed. It became clear that there is a large gray area populated with objects that are not intentional fakes yet can't be considered authentic either. This whetted the appetite of some participants for further opportunities to address fakes and forgeries.

Room was made in the program, however, for papers outside the theme. Annual meetings should allow a forum for presentation of current studies or projects regardless of theme. Conservators who are excited about their current work should be encouraged to present it in a timely fashion before the enthusiasm wanes. Thus, papers are included here on a new method of cleaning for marble, the treatment of a large topographical map and the documentation of endangered stela in Mongolia with computer models.

Many thanks to Howard Wellman for his good work organizing a terrific ADG session that should

be a model for the future. Helen Ingalls was invaluable for moral support. Sadly, this is Virginia Greene's last volume as *Postprints* editor. She has been ably assisted by Pat Griffin and Chris Del Re and therefore leaves us in good hands. The OSG owes an enormous debt to Ginny for all her time and talents. She will be missed.

Ann Boulton, OSG Program Chair 2007