

Program Chair's Foreword

This volume contains papers given at the Objects Specialty Group (OSG) session of the 2010 AIC Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and makes up the 17th Volume of OSG Postprints. The theme of the Annual Meeting was “The Conservation Continuum: Examining the Past, Envisioning the Future.” For the OSG program, the call for papers requested papers that focused in on a particular aspect of the meeting’s overall theme: “Treatment Revisited.”

In the autumn of 2009, there was a flurry of discussion on the OSG-L about complicated issues in contemporary art—topics ranged from preservation of lemons to potential substitutes for syllabus in an artwork. These lively discussions led to the development of a joint OSG/Electronic Media Group (EMG) lunchtime session called “Case Studies in Contemporary Art.” I joined forces with EMG chair Christine Frohnert and program chair Fletcher Durant to plan the session. Gwynne Ryan, who was the Chair of the Program Committee of the International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art, North America (INCCA-NA) and committee member Kendra Roth were involved with planning the luncheon, and helped us arrange to have INCCA-NA board member Jay Krueger introduce and moderate the session.

The OSG session began with the OSG/EMG joint luncheon on Wednesday May 12, 2010. Andrew Smith presented the first paper of the day which described the treatment of an Anish Kapoor powder-pigment sculpture. Mr. Smith discussed the difficulties with these extremely fragile objects and the process he developed to re-apply pigment to the surface without introducing binding mediums. Tin Ly described the installation and maintenance of an artwork consisting of 3 lasers pointed at a low vantage point across a large area of grass in a public park. The final presentation at the luncheon was given by Anne Turner Gunnison who described how a team of conservators and scientists determined the appropriate preventive conservation measures for a large mobile composed of brightly colored plastic luggage. The first two papers in this volume come from the OSG/EMG Joint Luncheon, “Case Studies in Contemporary Art.”

Following the luncheon, the first two papers of the OSG session continued with the contemporary art theme, with a focus on revisiting past treatments. Robert Krueger presented a new approach to maintaining water features and eliminating re-occurring biological growth outbreaks in a Noguchi fountain. Next, Objects Conservator Margo Delidow and Paintings Conservator Cynthia Albertson presented their research and collaborative treatment approach of a Claus Oldenburg soft sculpture. The remaining presentations on Wednesday were devoted to re-evaluating previous treatments. Mina Thompson and Conor McMahon reviewed the history of conservation practices in the Museum of New Mexico System. Katrina Posner discussed the issues related to interpreting the original surface of two bronze Henry Moore Sculptures in the J. Paul Getty Museum’s collection. I then presented recent research examining pinning materials for marble sculpture; the aim of which was to re-think the conventions of sculpture repair techniques and to take a less invasive approach. The final paper of the day was presented by Suzanne Hargrove who spoke about the treatment of David Smith’s 2 Circle IV, the painted surface of which had undergone several campaigns of treatment over the years.

The second part of the OSG session took place on Friday May 14, 2010, and continued with papers looking back on old treatments, or considering new ways of looking at treatment techniques, with a focus on archaeological and ethnographic materials. Kathleen Garland began with a discussion of the examination and treatment of an Egyptian limestone relief with a long and varied treatment history. J.P. Brown presented his work with Escal barrier film to create micro-environments for unstable archaeological metals. Paul Mardikian then illustrated the innovative techniques he used to recreate individual tools from the remains of a cluster of tools that had fused together in a marine environment. After the refreshment break, the session continued with Dana Senge who presented an overview of past treatments of waterlogged basketry from the Pacific Northwest. Finally, Renee Stein described how she used 3-D prototyping to create fragments to help reconstruct a fragmentary Greek kylix. Unfortunately the authors Smith, Hargrove, Mardikian, and Stein were not able to submit their talks for publication in this volume, I expect their research will be published in another format.

It was an honor to serve as the OSG program chair in 2010. I would like to thank all of the speakers for presenting their work in Milwaukee, with special appreciation to the authors who contributed to papers represented in this volume. The help of the EMG officers, Christine Frohnert and Fletcher Durant, as well as and INCCA-NA members Gwynne Ryan and Kendra Roth was indispensable pulling together a very successful luncheon. I would also like to thank Jay Krueger for moderating the luncheon. I owe a debt of gratitude to my fellow officers who helped guide me through the planning process: Chair Helen Alten and Treasurer Julia Lawson. For her patience and perseverance in helping to pull together the OSG Postprints, I am especially thankful to Chris Del Re.

Carolyn Riccardelli, OSG Program Chair 2010