

# *Program Chair's Foreword*

---

It is with great pleasure that I present the Postprints of the Object Specialty Group, from AIC's 43rd Annual Meeting in Miami, Florida, from May 13–16, 2015. The conference theme of “Practical Philosophy, or Making Conservation Work” provided a forum for the discussion of challenging projects, whereby colleagues might share unique approaches to work that straddles the fuzzy boundary between the ideal treatment and practical concerns. Along with colleagues and OSG board representatives Suzanne Davis and Lara Kaplan, I sought to select papers that not only addressed this dynamic theme but also those that discussed topics of current interest to the membership. Given the OSG's active dialogue through digital communications such as the list-serve, I felt confident that items of wide interest could be identified and selected. Our ultimate roster of speakers met these criteria and much more with thoughtful, well-delivered presentations, followed by active question-and-answer sessions.

These papers follow on the heels of those given at the conference and reflect an extensive amount of work on behalf of their authors. I am deeply indebted to these colleagues, as their contributions to this volume allow their work to carry on past the meeting and reach fellow conservators and scholars who could not travel to attend in person. In this volume, you will encounter discussion ranging from single case studies, such as Ariel O'Connor, Julie Lauffenburger, Meg Craft, and Glenn Gates' well-balanced consideration of a gilt nargile, and Paul Mardikian, Claudia Chemello, and Jerrad Alexander's extensive work on the *Saturn V* rocket engine parts following its underwater recovery, to questions of recently developed techniques, as with Cassy Cutulle and Seoyoung Kim's introduction to dry ice blasting on metals. Sharon Norquest, Amelia Kile, and David Peters bring our attention to safety concerns when handling radioactive objects, whereas Stephanie Hornbeck elucidates the legal and ethical ramifications of the new regulations as related to ivory.

To satisfy the needs of OSG members whose work focuses more on the bench, we arranged for a Tips Session lunch to complement the paper session. Such treatment-focused discussion is easily overlooked at conferences and yet can also be difficult to find in professional publications. I therefore felt that the inclusion of this session was of high priority, and our number of attendees suggested that others shared this view. I am very grateful to include several of these Tips as brief Postprints in this volume.

This conference also marked the first joint sessions held between the OSG and the EMG, and Miami's vibrant contemporary art scene provided a fantastic backdrop for the program. Organized in collaboration with EMG Program Chair Kate Moomaw, EMG Assistant Program Chair Kate Lewis, and with additional support from VoCA Executive Director Lauren Shadford, our stated focus was to invite abstracts that addressed collaborations with artists and artists' estates. As we felt that this topic would solicit a great number of comments and debate during the conference itself, we divided papers into two sessions, with discussion respectively led by Glenn Wharton and Jill Sterrett. I would also like to acknowledge their hard work and efforts at guiding our audience through a constructive dialogue.

Although certain papers were not able to be included in this volume, the majority of presenters have adapted their papers. Honoring both the general theme and our sub-theme, the Postprints here move from the realm of theory, such as Glenn Wharton's examination of the artists' intent, to its integration into actual practice, as in Gwynne Ryan and Steven O'Banion's introduction to the

Hirshhorn's artist interview program, or Céline Chrétien's comparison of ethnographic versus contemporary art conservation. Projects that focused on collaboration with living artists provided an effective contrast to those dealing mainly with estates, as represented by Crista Pack and Mina Thompson's work with artist Tasha Ostrander, or Donna Williams' encounters with artist Chris Burden, versus John Hogan and Carol Snow's discussion of the Sol LeWitt drawings at Yale University.

As with many undertakings, it takes not just a village but a machine to produce a volume of Postprints. I must take a moment to express my deep gratitude to both Kari Dodson and Emily Hamilton, the OSG Postprint Editors, without whose dedicated efforts this volume (and many others) would not exist. Their calm management of the process and highly prized organizational skills are an inspiration to us all. I would also like to acknowledge Suzanne Davis and her past efforts at establishing a peer review process for the OSG Postprints. This process was continued this year, and many colleagues served graciously as blind readers. Their patience and willingness to help their peers, without recognition, is greatly appreciated and helped to improve the content and readability of this volume. It also speaks to the congenial nature of our professional community—which is only strengthened by publications such as this.

*Sarah Barack, Chair of the Objects Specialty Group*