

Group Chair's Foreword

As Objects Specialty Program Chair for the 45th American Institute for Conservation's 2017 annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois, May 28-June 2, 2017, I am very pleased to present the Postprints for the Objects Specialty Group session. The meeting theme was Treatment 2017: Innovation in Conservation and Collection Care, and the talks presented reflected the OSG's increasing focus on practical, treatment technique and materials-based information. The program was organized and papers selected by OSG Assistant Program Chair Ariel O'Connor, myself as Program Chair, and Group Chair Laura Lipcsei.

Thanks are due to our speakers for taking the time to transform their talks into full, peer-reviewed papers for publication. These presenter/authors have taken the time and care to distill and present their knowledge, skills, and thoughts for us all to learn from. Individually and cumulatively, these meetings, talks and papers are the engine of the forward progress of our specialty group, which itself embraces the widest spectrum of materials and types of objects imaginable. Equally important has been the continuing efforts of the OSG Postprints Editors, Kari Dodson and Emily Hamilton, and the group of peer reviewers that aid them in bringing these papers to completion and publication. Remarkably, this entire process is voluntary, from the presenter's willingness to be "out there" on the podium, to the editors and reviewers shouldering the task each year of coaxing busy authors into timely completion, lining up volunteer reviewers, organizing visual material into completed documents.

This OSG annual meeting program focused on the practice of treatment: the materials and techniques, the what, how, and importantly the why. Included in the session was a special group of seven talks focused on the Conservation of three generations of the della Robbia family and related workshops. Two complementary della Robbia talks were given in the General Session and RATS groups, and another in the Poster session. Over the past dozen years, there has been a tremendous interdisciplinary interest in these works among conservators, scholars, curators, and private collectors which culminated in the exhibition *Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the National Gallery of Art. The exhibition, the first ever devoted to the della Robbia in the United States brought together 46 works from 21 American collections, as well as several important Italian loans.

Outside of the della Robbia initiative, the talks were also highly practical while also considering the ethical considerations of the treatments undertaken. Materials addressed included the novel use of resins, adhesives and fill materials, the structural uses of carbon fiber and paper, and coatings and waxes for outdoor sculpture. Cleaning and stain reduction were featured in several talks, focusing on marble and ceramics and included chelation, poultices, lasers, dry ice blasting, and others. The diverse object materials and treatment-based papers focused on glass invertebrate models, modern furniture, wax sculpture, ancient wood coffins and human remains, and the ethics of conserving modern sculpture made of mud! The tips session was also rich this year, with updates on familiar materials, and the introduction of several new techniques and tools. These papers should be considered required reading for the practicing objects conservator. Congratulations to all involved!

Tony Sigel, 2017 OSG Program Chair