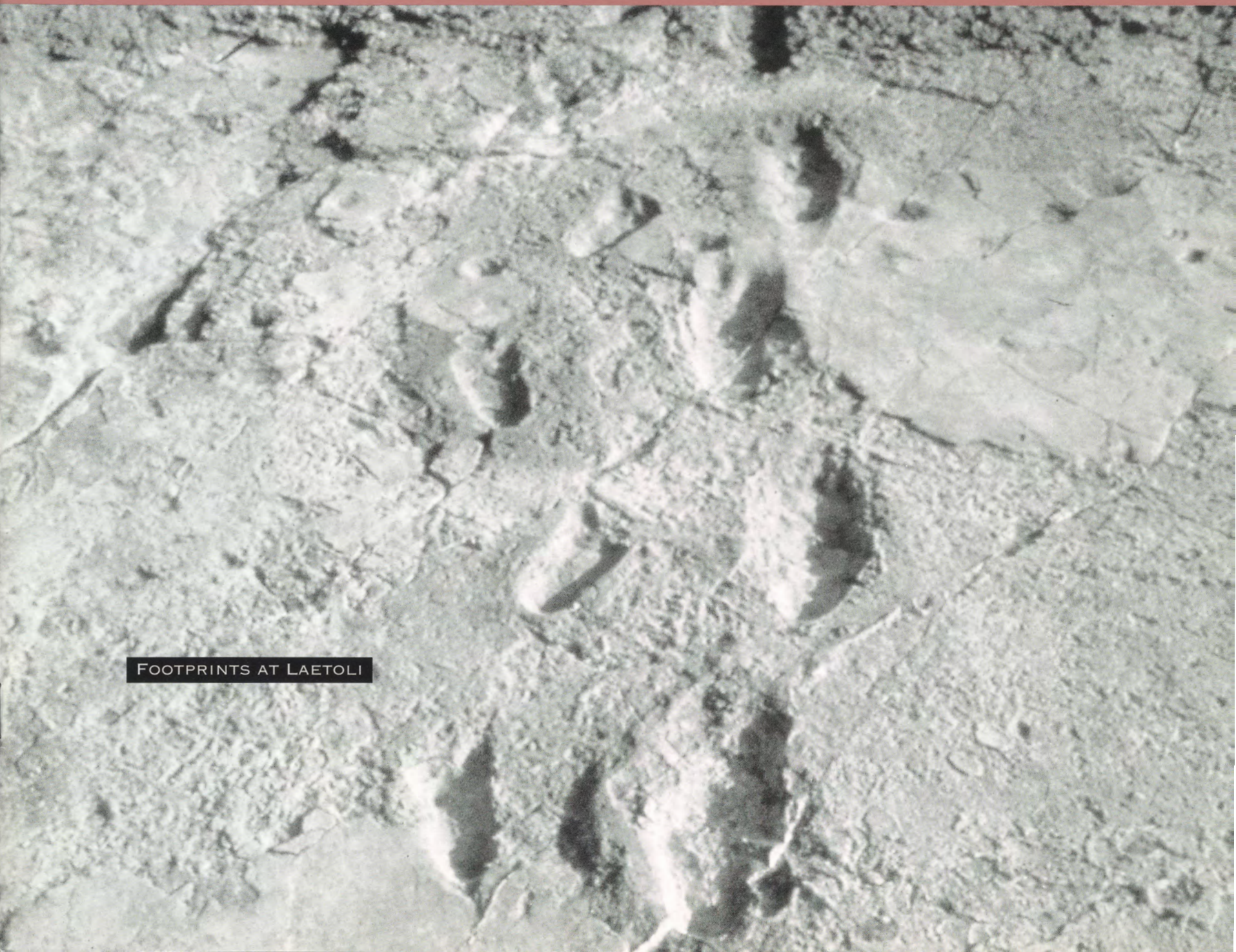


Volume x Number 1

CONSERVATION

The GCI Newsletter



FOOTPRINTS AT LAETOLI

The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter

Harold Williams President and Chief Executive Officer, The J. Paul Getty Trust

THE GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

Miguel Angel Corzo Director
Neville Agnew Associate Director, Programs
Rona Sebastian Associate Director, Administration
Marta de la Torre Training Program Director
Martha Demas Special Projects Acting Director
Margaret Mac Lean Documentation Program Director
David Scott Scientific Program Acting Director
Jane Slate Siena Head, Institutional Relations
Mahasti Afshar Program Research Associate

CONSERVATION, THE GCI NEWSLETTER

Jeffrey Levin Editor
Joe Molloy Graphic Designer
Westland Graphics Lithography

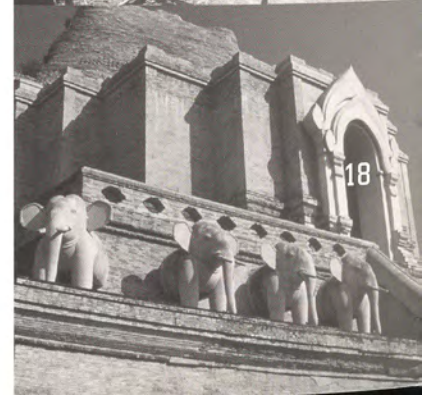
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Conservation, The GCI Newsletter is distributed free of charge three times per year, in English and Spanish, to professionals in conservation and related fields, and to members of the public concerned about conservation. The GCI works to develop a broad constituency for conservation and to promote an international appreciation of the value of our cultural inheritance and our shared responsibility for its preservation.

THE GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE
4503 Glencoe Avenue, Marina del Rey, CA 90292, USA
Telephone: 310-822-2299 / Fax: 310-821-9409

Front cover: The fossil footprints of an extinct human ancestor, discovered in 1978 at the site of Laetoli in Tanzania. Photo: © John Reader. Back cover: Globe photo by Dennis Keeley.

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When the fossil footprints of an extinct human ancestor were discovered in 1978 at Laetoli in Tanzania, scientific and public attention was immense. In addition to being the most ancient traces yet found of humanity’s ancestors, the footprints contributed important evidence to one of the great debates regarding human evolution. Unfortunately, since its discovery the Laetoli trackway has been threatened by vegetation and erosion. In response, the GCI and the government of Tanzania have launched a series of field campaigns in an effort to protect this unique site.

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CONSERVATION AT THE CROSSROADS

by Jeffrey Levin

The 1970s and 1980s were a time of tremendous growth for cultural heritage conservation in the United States. In a twenty-year period, the membership of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) increased sixfold, and thousands of cultural institutions added staff members responsible for collections care. Within the same decades, the availability of outside conservation services expanded. In 1969 there were but two regional conservation centers offering conservation services for U.S. cultural institutions. Today 13 centers provide service to more than 2,400 museums and collecting institutions.

While conservation is increasingly a part of managing museums, libraries, archives, and historical societies — as well as archaeological sites and historic structures — the challenges to conservation rise to match the efforts. Testing the scientific skills and knowledge of conservation professionals are more and bigger collections, growing numbers of sites and structures, and a greater variety of materials requiring conservation, such as modern art materials, color photographs, and industrial items. And while the needs seem to increase geometrically, the resources do not.

The diversity of what institutions seek to preserve is staggering. Everything from paintings to airplanes, ethnographic objects to government documents, and buildings to books have come to be part of the nation's artistic and historic heritage.

Do those who shoulder the primary burden of caring for this heritage share a common body of problems? Are, for example, the concerns of a state archivist similar to those of the head of conservation at a fine art museum? Is there a common interest between an administrator at a museum of natural history and someone faced with the task of preserving historic properties?





Above: Ruins of the Anasazi settlement at Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico. Archaeological sites such as this pose complicated conservation problems that remain inadequately addressed. Photo: Guillermo Aldana.
Above right: Drayton Hall, an 18th-century plantation house and National Historic Landmark in South Carolina. Many U.S. historic properties like this one depend upon volunteers to perform basic maintenance. Photo: Ron Blunt. Courtesy the National Trust for Historic Preservation.



These were the kind of questions put to over 20 experts in conservation management at a gathering last November at the Getty Conservation Institute. In a two-and-a-half-day meeting organized by the GCI and the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property (NIC), conservators, museum officers, archivists, preservation administrators, and site managers from around the United States discussed a variety of management issues and a collective approach that could be taken to deal with them.

“From our founding, interdisciplinary action has been a fundamental part of what the Getty Conservation Institute is about,” explained GCI Director Miguel Angel Corzo. “With the Institute celebrating its first decade as an operating program of the Getty Trust, we thought this an appropriate time to initiate a broad-based review of conservation management.”

The goal of encouraging different disciplines to work together was one shared by the NIC, said its President, Larry Reger. He considered the meeting an opportunity to “look at the big picture” and to talk about the larger problems in the field.

The November meeting was probably the first large multidisciplinary gathering of its kind to explore in depth administrative issues surrounding conservation; included were administrative, curatorial, and conservation perspectives. Those attending came

from a range of institutions: fine art and natural history museums, conservation departments and laboratories, historical societies, libraries and archives, and historic properties. While not every concern was shared by all, there was, in the end, remarkable unanimity on where the priority for action lay — increasing the public’s support for conservation’s work.

Selling Authenticity

Public awareness, in fact, was the first issue discussed at the meeting’s opening session. Barclay Ogden, Director of the University of California Preservation Program, led off the session by asking participants to deal with the fundamental question of conservation’s necessity: Why is it important to save cultural property? What purpose does it serve?

Instability “comes when societies cannot see themselves reflected in their institutions,” Mexican author Carlos Fuentes has observed. A major function of cultural property, suggested Mr. Ogden, is its role in preserving cultural stability by transmitting values. Whether it is the material or the form or the process by which a cultural object was created, “what we are saving is some expression of authenticity.” Authenticity is the heritage community’s great asset — but it has had difficulty selling it.

Interdisciplinary Meeting

List of Participants

Gary Burger, *Director*
Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, Inc.
Williamstown, Massachusetts

E. Blaine Cliver, *Chief of Preservation, Assistance Division*
National Park Service
Washington, D.C.

Don Duckworth, *President & Director*
Bishop Museum
Honolulu, Hawaii

Robert Futernick, *Chairman of Conservation*
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
San Francisco, California

Lila Goff, *Assistant Director for Library and Archives*
Minnesota Historical Society
St. Paul, Minnesota

Deborah Gribbon, *Associate Director and Chief Curator*
The J. Paul Getty Museum
Malibu, California

Peter Hassrick, *Director*
Buffalo Bill Historical Center
Cody, Wyoming

Clara Sue Kidwell, *Associate Director of Cultural Resources*
National Museum of the American Indian
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C.

Diane Nester Kresh, *Director*
Preservation Directorate
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Ross Merrill, *Chief of Conservation*
National Gallery of Art
Washington, D.C.

Debbie Hess Norris, *Associate Professor and Assistant Director*
Art Conservation Department
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware

Nancy Odegaard, *Conservator*
Arizona State Museum
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona

Lawrence Reger, *President*
National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property
Washington, D.C.

Carolyn L. Rose, *Senior Research Conservator*
National Museum of Natural History
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C.

Frank Sanchis, *Vice President, Stewardship of Historic Properties*
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington, D.C.

Christine Ward, *Chief of Archival Services*
New York State Archives and Records Administration
Albany, New York

The Getty Conservation Institute

Miguel Angel Corzo, *Director*

Neville Agnew, *Associate Director, Programs*

Rona Sebastian, *Associate Director, Administration*

Marta de la Torre, *Director, Training Program*

Meeting Coordinators

Janet Bridgland, *Consultant*
Monticello, Minnesota

Barclay W. Ogden, *Director*
University of California Preservation Program
Berkeley, California

Robert J. Strauss, *Preservation Planner / Consultant*
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Others agreed that for the public, authenticity has drawing power.

"People are riveted by the real thing," said Frank Sanchis, a Vice President at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For most people, he pointed out, personal objects such as letters, jewelry, and photographs have the greatest meaning in their original form. In a similar way, people do not want substitutions for authentic cultural objects or places. "Their attitude is 'If I can't see the original, then why did I bother to come?'"

Still, interest in the original does not necessarily mean an appreciation of efforts to preserve it. Conservation remains an invisible process to the public. Museums have visitor education programs but these typically lack a conservation component, remarked Ross Merrill, Chief of Conservation at the National Gallery of Art and NHC Board Chairman. The same is true at the nation's historic buildings and archaeological sites. Visitor tours are not used as a vehicle for educating the public about preservation, in part because the guides themselves know little about conservation.

Public interest in conservation is also inhibited by the profession's apparent ex post facto character. "Viewed from the outside, conservation seems to lack the excitement of activities that involve discovery or creativity," explained Neville Agnew, the GCI's Associate Director for Programs.

There are times when the broad public has rallied in support of a preservation effort, perhaps the most notable instance being in the mid-1980s when the American public contributed tens of millions of dollars toward the restoration of the Statue of Liberty. But the Statue's preservation effort in some ways was the exception that proves the rule. In this case the survival of a national icon was at stake. Most conservation is performed on objects lacking that status and tends to be considered by the public as more "ordinary" and therefore less worthy of attention. In addition, the Statue's cultural appeal is broad, encompassing people from diverse backgrounds. Because the character of the U.S. population is so multicultural, such national consensus on a cultural object's or site's importance is perhaps less easily achieved than in countries whose citizenry is more homogeneous.

For all these reasons, conservation of cultural heritage has yet to elicit significant public support — or even attention — in the United States.

“Conservation is a hard sell,” observed Don Duckworth, President and Director of the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. “It’s hard to get those regular public dollars for ongoing conservation.”

Other Concerns

The two and a half days of discussion covered a variety of other topics, among them the criteria for selecting objects to conserve, the conservation of materials intended to deteriorate, the application of cost-benefit models to conservation, the interpretation of professional conservation standards, the use of nonconservation staff for conservation work, and the handling of personnel shortages.

Those in charge of conservation management continually face choices about what will receive conservation treatment. At museums, the factors determining treatment can include an object’s use, condition, and value. As Robert Futernick, Chairman of Conservation at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, noted, a complicating factor is calculating the benefit received for the resources expended. “Some objects can benefit a lot from a little conservation. Other objects require a lot of resources to achieve only modest results.” For historic properties, managers frequently must choose between giving attention to a building or to the collection housed by the building. Typically the building’s preservation receives priority.

Unfortunately, at many archaeological sites, conservation is not even a consideration. Benign or purposeful neglect is more typical. Since these sites are among the most popular drawing cards for tourists, this neglect is extremely short-sighted, given the public interest, cultural treasure, and economic value these sites represent. NIC President Larry Reger noted that the problems of archaeological site conservation clearly deserve greater attention.

While those in conservation know well the limits of their resources, those outside the profession do not. Gary Burger, Director of the Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, believes it

important that the public appreciate the choices the profession faces. “We ought to let the public know that we have been forced into a triage situation.”

“We have to come to grips with the question ‘Can we save everything?’” said Blaine Cliver, Chief of the Preservation Assistance Division at the National Park Service. It is a question that some outside the conservation field may well understand. As Clara Sue Kidwell of the National Museum of the American Indian humorously noted, “I have a friend who believes that the North American continent will collapse under the weight of stored copies of the *National Geographic*.”

The deterioration of materials is a problem that faces a variety of collections. Ethnographic and natural science collections commonly confront this, but the problem also extends to modern materials. The Smithsonian Institution, for example, has had to grapple with preserving materials used during space missions, materials whose endurance beyond the mission was not a factor in their design. At the Library of Congress, it is simply not feasible to preserve all of the countless paperback books that are part of the massive collection. “I’m interested in keeping them,” explained Diane Kresh, Director of the Library’s Preservation Directorate, “but not in repairing them with Japanese paper.”

Ms. Kresh also provided another example of the kind of problem conservators in various fields confront: the issue of the intent of the creator. When the library came into possession of a collection of Sigmund Freud’s papers — papers that Freud himself had torn up and thrown away — there was serious discussion as to whether the papers should be preserved with or without the tearing. “If intent is the issue,” said Ms. Kresh, “we know what Freud thought of them.”

In a society where the public seems increasingly interested in having its institutions apply the business principles of cost-benefit analysis to their activities, conservation professionals must find a way to define the benefits of the work they do. “In the profit-making world, benefits are quantifiable,” remarked Marta de la Torre, the GCI’s Training Program Director. “In the conservation world, they are not.” As several at the meeting suggested, the conservation field must work at informing the public



Above: A 1991 exhibition at the J. Paul Getty Museum on antiquities conservation. Museum visitors had the unusual opportunity to learn more about the actual process of conservation. Photo: Louis Meluso. Courtesy The J. Paul Getty Museum.

Facing page: The Statue of Liberty on July 4, 1986, during the celebration marking its restoration. Perhaps no other restoration project in U.S. history received as much financial support from the general public. Photo: © Nancy Kaye.

of conservation's qualitative, if not quantitative, benefits. These can include not only protecting the monetary value of a unique collection or site, but also its educational and research value and, importantly, the public's access to it.

Many believe that tying conservation to public access is key. Indeed, for some institutions, access is a major part of their mandate. "The biggest piece of my pie will go to collections care because the mission of my institution is public access," said Christine Ward, Chief of Archival Services for the New York State Archives and Records.

The emphasis on collections care by many institutions has increased the importance of non-conservation staff — administrators, curators, technicians, and others — to the work of preservation. "There's a growing recognition that conservators can't do it all by themselves," remarked Carolyn Rose, Senior Research Conservator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. Ms. Rose and others see this as an opportunity to develop the collections care field. Conservators have to reach out within their own institutions to get their colleagues to take steps with them to improve the environment in which collections are housed.

Debbie Hess Norris of the University of Delaware Art Conservation Department and President of the AIC said that to encourage more dialogue, additional opportunities must be developed for the active participation of collections care professionals (such as managers) within the conservator-based AIC. Meeting participants also endorsed the concept of developing conservation management training, as well as enhancing professional development of conservators, education and training in holistic approaches, and promotion of cultural diversity in the profession.

A related issue is what many consider a shortage in conservation personnel, particularly in certain specialized areas. Smaller institutions and historic properties are especially dependent on volunteers to perform basic tasks that help preserve collections or structures. At National Trust properties, for instance, 80 percent of the collections are staffed by volunteers who perform much of the general maintenance. This situation, though, can have positive aspects. According to Frank Sanchis of the Trust, using volunteers is "a wonderful way to get the public involved in what we do."



Creating a Market

At the end of the meeting, the participants returned to the issue of public awareness and support for conservation. Overwhelmingly the group agreed that collectively their efforts were best directed at promoting conservation, both to the public at large and within their own institutions.

A first step favored by a majority of the group was initiating a market research project that can help conservation achieve the kind of general support the environmental movement enjoys today. Market research might suggest ways that conservation could sell itself by capitalizing on those aspects of its work that have the greatest public appeal. One goal of that research would be identifying segments of the market — from museum visitors to museum managers — that could be targeted.

"Conservators need education on the promotability of what they do," said Gary Burger. He and others urged that thought be given to the kinds of elements that could help conservation connect to the public, whether through an emotional and personal response to objects or places or through controversy, a sense of discovery, or the threat of loss or deterioration that can rouse public concern (as in the case of the Statue of Liberty).

It was the hope of the group that work with marketing experts would lead to a promotional campaign for conservation, one that could utilize the media, well-recognized spokespeople, and perhaps the creation of national or international awards for outstanding achievement in cultural heritage preservation. At the same time, there was strong support for a program to integrate the concept of heritage preservation into education, based on the belief that the best way to create a constituency for conservation efforts in the long term is by reaching out to children. It was felt that marketing research would also help in developing educational programs.

The need to integrate preservation into the programs of cultural heritage institutions was also considered a priority. Action here would include outreach to directors and boards of institutions (and to research professionals), symposia on collections care, and increased communication within institutions.

For each of these areas — marketing and promotion, education, and institutional integration — working groups were formed to develop the actions suggested.

Left: Paintings conservator Andrea Rothe cleaning Adoration of the Magi by Andrea Mantegna. Photo: Louis Meluso. Courtesy The J. Paul Getty Museum. Below: Participants in Save Our Sculpture (SOS) survey the condition of George Lundeen's Ben Franklin at the University of Pennsylvania. SOS is a national volunteer program with the goals of inventorying U.S. outdoor sculpture and increasing public awareness of the need to maintain these works of art. Photo: © Gary McKinnis. Courtesy of Fairmount Park Art Association.



By the meeting's end, what seemed to unite the participants was a desire to help those outside their profession understand the fundamental choices conservation faces and the consequences of those choices — as one attendee put it, making people imagine for a moment “what life would be like without monuments,” without the artifacts of our historic and artistic past. What united participants, too, was the recognition that garnering public support for the “preservation of the authentic” was possible, but it would require a collective effort, one in which new tools would have to be employed.

At the opening session of the meeting, one participant spoke of the need to “work together to create new conservation models,” while another expressed the view that the gathering was an opportunity not only to “focus on the values we share” but also to consider a reevaluation of conservation. “We should,” he said, “periodically reinvent conservation.”

At the meeting's conclusion, Miguel Angel Corzo echoed these sentiments in suggesting a “reengineering” of the way conservation professionals connect to those outside the field. “If we're trying to sell a product — the preservation of our heritage — we ought to look carefully at the way we reach out.” Now, he said, was the time to do this, and he closed the meeting with an admonition attributed to American baseball great Yogi Berra: “When you come to a fork in the road — take it.”

The GCI and the NIC are now at work translating the meeting's discussions into action by guiding the development of proposals for both a marketing research project and approaches to education. Elements of the proposals ultimately may include studying the successful strategies of environmental groups to increase public awareness, exploring marketing campaigns related to cultural property, conducting research on a targeted segment of the public, and bringing together marketing experts with representatives of cultural property institutions to begin charting a course for the future. In education, efforts may concentrate on working with museum education departments, as well as exploring long-term strategies for reaching out to young people.

Jeffrey Levin is the Editor of Conservation, The GCI Newsletter.

Pushing the Conservation Agenda: A Conversation with Lawrence Reger

Since 1988 Lawrence L. Reger has been President of the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property.

He was Director of the American Association of Museums from 1978 to 1986, after serving in several senior policy positions, including General Counsel at the National Endowment for the Arts from 1970 to 1978.

He has consulted with a range of foundations and cultural organizations on management, fund-raising, and long-range planning.

Mr. Reger holds a law degree from Vanderbilt University, and from 1964 to 1970 he practiced law in Lincoln, Nebraska.

He spoke with Jane Slate Siena, Head of Institutional Relations at the Getty Conservation Institute.

■ *Jane Slate Siena: Your commitment to the arts at the national level began in 1970 when you came to Washington to help run the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).*

■ Lawrence Reger: It was early in the Nixon Administration, just six months after the appointment of Nancy Hanks as NEA Chairman. It was a dynamic and pivotal time in American culture. The Abstract Expressionist movement had happened, dance was flourishing, and there was a sense that the federal government could play a role in stimulating exciting artistic activity. We took advantage of this convergence of creative activity and dynamic political leadership to bring the Endowment close to its present plateau in terms of budget and scope of programs.

What do you think motivated the Nixon Administration to establish a central role for federal funding of the arts?

It was of course understood that other countries provide major support for the arts at the national level. But more importantly, the idea that the federal government could encourage businesses, foundations, state and local governments, and individuals to increase giving took hold quickly. We thought that the Endowment could bring people together from various disciplines and develop programs with modest amounts of money that would leverage additional contributions from other sources. This produced an explosion of support for cultural programming just at the time when artistic activity was at a peak.

During an eight-year period, we increased the Endowment's budget by over 400 percent and instituted a range of programs that comprehensively covered the arts. For example, we added programs for museums, symphony orchestras, and opera and instituted the "challenge grant" concept that sought to leverage large investments from additional sources. We also expanded the Endowment's reach into diverse communities.

Was conservation included in the original museum program?

Conservation was one of the program's highlights and somewhat radical at the time. Funding was made available not just for treatment of objects but for professional training and, if you can imagine, upgrading museum storage areas. There was consensus that the NEA should not fund capital construction, so we had a heated debate over providing funds to renovate storage areas. But we were able to make the case that by doing so we could help preserve the cultural heritage, which anticipated the movement toward the preventive conservation approach that we promote today.

From these various debates, does a form of national policy emerge?

Absolutely. There are two ways to develop policy. One is the legislative approach — you write the policy into law. The other is through practice by looking at what people actually do — what we call the "case method" in the law. If you examine what people are doing, then you will see that the NEA helped establish a national policy based on program priorities such as institutional development, conservation, exhibitions, and so forth.

How would you characterize the development of cultural programs in the United States over the past 20 years?

At the federal level, the approach has been to identify needs in specific fields, avoid being the only source of funding, leverage the federal investment with partnerships, and function on a peer-review system. The peer-review process was quickly perceived by businesses and foundations as the right mechanism for project review, and it stimulated additional funds. So a relatively small amount of government money has generated enormous support from other sources.



Since leaving the federal government in 1978, you have served as the chief executive officer of two major organizations: the American Association of Museums and the National Institute for Conservation. At both you expanded the base of support, developed a strong vision and program, and stabilized operations during difficult financial times. How?

Leadership in any organization is critical, and I've been fortunate to work with elected boards who have exercised leadership. At the AAM, we established priorities at a time when the organization was defining a long-range plan and mission. In priority order, we decided to: 1) improve professional standards; 2) advocate the importance of museums both professionally and among the public; and 3) publish a regular newsletter, magazine, and, when possible, landmark studies. By emphasizing professional standards, we helped the museum community define itself through accreditation and assessment programs, and develop a code of ethics. This gave us a core group of accredited museums that could make strong statements to both the Congress and the public. In the process, membership grew by over 200 percent, services to the profession increased radically, and a diverse funding base evolved

Several of the landmark studies you undertook at the AAM during the 1980s have had a defining impact on conservation.

Yes. At the AAM, we launched the Commission on Museums for a New Century which looked at museums in their broadest aspects. The care of collections emerged as a preeminent concern. We took this finding to Congress and urged the development of new funding for museum conservation at the Institute of Museum Services. We also did a quantitative study for the Congress on conservation needs. This helped define the scope of the country's collections and their conservation problems. Concurrently, we worked with the National Endowment for the Humanities and codified, for the first time, the concept of "collections care."

What are your priorities for the National Institute for Conservation?

Again, I came to an organization engaged in significant reflection about its future. The board leadership was highly committed and motivated, and we set out three goals: 1) to increase public awareness of conservation; 2) to make conservation and collections care an integral part of museums, libraries and archives, and historic preservation organizations; and 3) to help coordinate conservation and preservation activities at the national level.

What are some of your most significant projects?

In the area of public awareness, we have had enormous success with the Save Outdoor Sculpture program. With a start-up grant from the Getty Grant Program and a strong partnership with the National Museum of American Art, we have a program essentially implemented with volunteers to conserve and maintain public sculpture across the country. This grass-roots effort has stimulated public awareness, improved the condition of countless outdoor sculptures and monuments, and leveraged the initial Getty seed contribution of \$409,000 into \$5.5 million. It's resulting in important documentation, on a community-by-community basis, of significant sculpture, creating a new database of information at the National Museum of American Art. We also published *Caring for Your Collections* with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., which is the first book on conservation geared toward collectors.

NIC's second priority seems to stem from your earlier experience in professional standards at the AAM.

In this area, we have worked with the Getty Conservation Institute to publish *The Conservation Assessment: A Tool for Planning, Implementation*. It has been of signal importance in helping guide assessments of objects and buildings with a holistic view of conservation. This work laid the foundation for our very successful Conservation Assessment Program which provides support to small and mid-sized museums across the country. Our third priority — to coordinate national projects — includes two other projects with the Getty Conservation Institute: the National Summit on Emergency Response [see page 12] and Interdisciplinary Cooperation in Managing the Conservation of Our Cultural Heritage [see page 4].

In your 25-year experience working with national cultural organizations in the U.S., how has the role of conservation changed?

Conservation was really a minor interest in most institutions 25 years ago. An awareness of conservation flourished as overall cultural programming grew. Today we are much more enthusiastic about conservation and the need to protect our past. As we enter a new century, I think people are going to be reflecting on the value of their heritage and how it enriches our lives. It's important that we find a way to translate that interest and energy into the support and resources needed for cultural heritage preservation in this country. The NIC will take a leadership role in doing just that.

When Disaster Strikes: A National Response

by Jane Long

In recent years the United States has endured disasters of unprecedented scope and severity. During the first 11 months of 1994 alone, 41 states experienced disasters serious enough to warrant presidential declarations. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, and wildfires inflicted billions of dollars in damage on communities. Cultural institutions and historic structures suffered as well.

Until now the conservation and preservation communities' attempts to help in these crises have been almost entirely ad hoc. Efforts are often duplicated and limited resources strained. A survey of 30 national cultural organizations conducted last year by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) and the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property (NIC) found that all groups believed they had done "too little, too late."

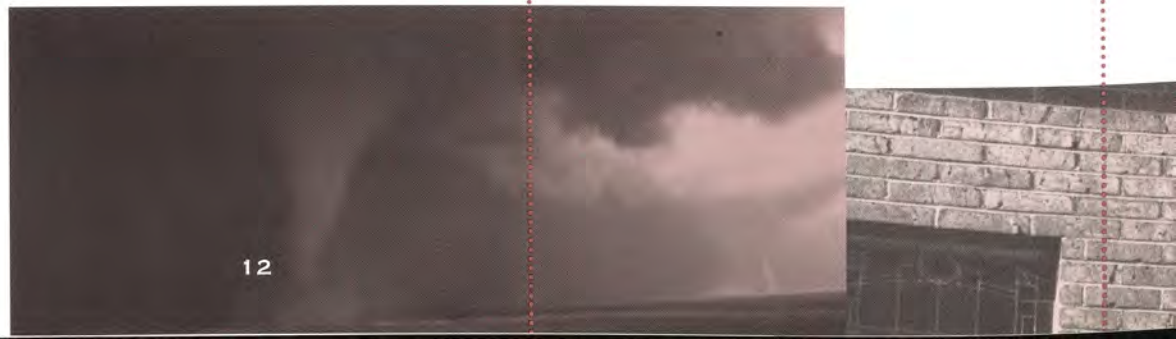
Now things are changing. Under the leadership of the GCI, the NIC, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the components of a national emergency infrastructure are being developed so that future emergencies, wherever they occur, can ultimately be met with a focused response.

On December 1, 1994, the GCI, the NIC, and FEMA convened a meeting in Washington, D.C., of more than 80 representatives of national cultural and historical service organizations and federal agencies. Their overriding goal was to ensure that in future disasters, cultural institutions better anticipate problems and quickly find the help necessary to speed recovery. Called the "National Summit on Emergency Response: Safeguarding Our Cultural Heritage," the meeting provided a rare opportunity for cultural leaders and government officials to join forces. Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, called it an "unprecedented gathering, long overdue."

Speakers sounded several basic themes: the significance of cultural heritage in American life, the need for a cohesive response to disasters, and the value to the public of preservation and conservation services during emergencies. Throughout the day speakers and panelists — representing the breadth of the cultural community — pledged to work with FEMA and one another. GCI Director Miguel Angel Corzo urged the adoption of a unified, interdisciplinary strategy: "For too long we have been reinventing the wheel each time a disaster strikes. We need a national partnership to create an emergency infrastructure that can provide help in a coordinated way."

In his keynote address, FEMA Director James Lee Witt challenged his audience to "commit your organizations to a national effort to reduce the future impact of natural disasters on our cultural and historic institutions. . . . FEMA is committed to working with you to develop such a program." To the delight of participants, he sealed FEMA's commitment by proposing a series of public service announcements (PSAs) offering useful information on salvage and recovery measures.

Public service announcements were among several initiatives generated by the summit. The GCI prepared an edited video of the proceedings as an advocacy tool. During the January flooding in California, the NIC and the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) disseminated through the Internet *Ten Tips for Homeowners*, advising on the care of family heirlooms damaged by floodwaters. FEMA then published the guidelines in a press release and later produced them as their first "cultural heritage" PSA on both its radio network and disaster assistance hotline. With the help of AIC and other groups, the NIC assembled and mailed a flood response packet to cultural institutions and agencies in 34 California counties.



The major recommendation coming out of the conference — and the one that can have the most far-reaching consequences — was suggested by Richard Krimm, FEMA Associate Director for Response and Recovery, who proposed establishing a national committee of cultural and historic preservation leaders and federal officials. Acting on this recommendation, the GCI, the NIC, and FEMA convened in March the National Task Force on Emergency Response. With 25 members, the task force embodies the wide range of federal agencies and private organizations represented at the summit. Its objective is to coordinate for the first time a national approach to disaster response for cultural heritage.

At its first quarterly meeting in March, the task force selected three basic areas as priorities: information and training, on-site assistance, and funding for recovery. Major initiatives include the development of a fast, efficient system to disseminate information on response and salvage measures to cultural institutions; a computer mapping project that includes the National Register of Historic Places and other cultural heritage sites; and the training and organization of conservation “SWAT teams.”

Other projects FEMA has proposed to the task force include: creating a cultural heritage component for the training FEMA regularly conducts for disaster assistance professionals; adding conservation and preservation experts to FEMA’s damage assessment teams; developing a more comprehensive policy for FEMA on the conservation and treatment of art and artifacts damaged in disasters; publishing articles by conservation and preservation experts in *Recovery Times*, a bilingual newsletter distributed by FEMA following disasters; and establishing a model state-federal agreement regarding response and recovery for historic buildings.

For the Getty Conservation Institute — which along with the NIC is providing staff and administrative support to launch the task force, as well as facilitating communication among its members — the work of the task force represents an important advance in its efforts to help cultural institutions cope with disasters. Since its inception in the mid-1980s, the Institute has been engaged in disaster preparedness and response, including researching mitigation measures and organizing emergency response activities in the United States and abroad. As GCI Director Corzo declared at the Washington summit, the time had arrived for action on the national level: “After nearly a decade of involvement, we have come together with FEMA and other agencies to put cultural heritage on the national disaster response agenda.”

Jane Long, a consultant based in Washington, D.C., served as the coordinator for the National Summit on Emergency Response and directs staff work for the National Task Force on Emergency Response.

Members of the National Task Force on Emergency Response

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

American Association for State and Local History

American Association of Museums

American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works

American Institute of Architects

American Library Association

Association for Preservation Technology

Association of Regional Conservation Centers

Cooperative Preservation Programs Group

Department of the Army

Federal Emergency Management Agency

The Getty Conservation Institute

Library of Congress

National Archives and Records Administration

National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

National Emergency Management Association

National Endowment for the Humanities

National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property

National Park Service

National Science Foundation

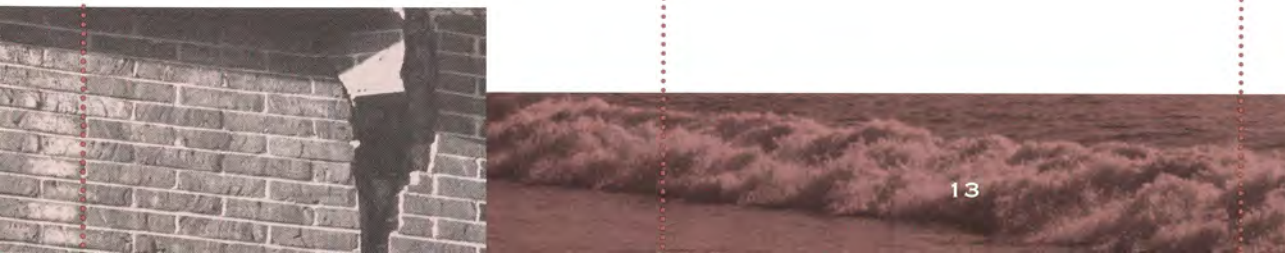
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Small Business Administration

Smithsonian Institution

Society for Historical Archaeology

Society of American Archivists



The Footprints of Laetoli

by Neville Agnew and Martha Demas



Above: One of the hominid footprints at Laetoli, preserved in hardened volcanic ash 3.6 million years ago. Photo: © John Reader.

Facing page: The southern portion of the Laetoli trackway as it appeared during excavation in 1979. Photo: © John Reader.

Who has not walked barefoot on a beach of crisp sand and, bemused, examined the trail of footprints, paused, then looked back to see the tide wiping them away? So ephemeral are the traces of our passing.

Yet, astonishingly, the tracks of extinct animals have survived for aeons under unusual circumstances of preservation, recording a fleeting instance millions of years ago. Preservation of such traces occurs under conditions of deep burial whereby the sand or mud into which the prints were impressed is changed into stone, later to be exposed by erosion.

When, in 1978, fossil footprints of an extinct human ancestor were discovered during a palaeontological expedition led by Dr. Mary Leakey, scientific and public attention was immense. The prints, partly exposed through erosion, were found at the site of Laetoli, to the south of the famed Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, where Louis and Mary Leakey did their pioneering work researching human evolution.

The footprints at Laetoli, dated at around 3.6 million years, resolved one of the major issues of contention in palaeoanthropology (the study of early mankind), a field characterized by fierce rivalries of discovery and interpretation. At Olduvai, Laetoli, and other sites in Africa and beyond, the search for evidence regarding human development has focused on the discovery of fossilized bones. But while fossils have been the primary means of understanding our past, they cannot yield all the answers to the great debates that have beset the study of human evolution. One debate has been over the development of the brain in relation to our ancestors' ability to walk upright. Since Darwin's time it was thought that once upright posture and bipedalism had developed, the hands were then free to evolve manipulative skills. Stone toolmaking, it was supposed, was the critical factor in the emergence of early man. This view, however, was not universally accepted. Some believed that the brain, not erect posture, led the way. Although functional analysis of hominid bones from Africa pointed to early bipedalism, the fossils themselves could not provide the definitive answer.

The Laetoli trackway settled the issue. Excavated by Mary Leakey and her team in 1978 and 1979, the trackway consists of some 70 footprints in two parallel trails about 30 meters long, preserved in hardened volcanic ash. The best-preserved footprints are unmistakably human in appearance and yield evidence of soft tissue anatomy that fossil bones cannot provide. It is significant that the earliest stone tools known are about 2.6 million years old, made nearly a million years *after* the footprints at Laetoli. The Laetoli hominids were therefore fully bipedal well before the advent of toolmaking — an event considered to define the beginning of culture — and the traces they left behind provide evidence that the feet led the way in the evolution of the modern human brain.



The Conservation Problem

The footprints at Laetoli, recorded by the Leakey team using various techniques including molding, casting, and photogrammetry, were reburied in 1979 as a means of preservation. After the trackway's reburial, the site revegetated. Although its condition was not known, nor was it visited frequently because of its remoteness, it was feared that the trackway might be deteriorating because of the impact of root growth, especially from acacia trees.

Following a request to the Institute by the Director of the Tanzanian Antiquities Unit, Dr. Simon Waane, for assistance in conserving the site, a GCI-Tanzanian team undertook a preliminary investigation in mid-1992. The team opened a three-by-three meter trench, which confirmed fears that root growth had caused damage, though the full extent could not be determined (this will only be known when the tracks are fully reexcavated in subsequent conservation campaigns). Where root growth had not affected the tracks, preservation was excellent, validating the Leakey team's decision to rebury the site and confirming a practice increasingly adopted by archaeologists to conserve excavated sites.

In 1993 field-testing was undertaken by the project team, and last year trees were poisoned, the site mapped, and measures taken to prevent erosion. In addition, the original cast of the trackway, stored at Olduvai since 1979, was remolded and new casts made with the assistance of staff from the National Museum of Tanzania. Since the trackway itself is now too fragile to be remolded, a new master cast will provide the most accurate replica possible. The new casts will also guide reexcavation in the field, and be used for museological displays in Tanzania and elsewhere.

An eight-week campaign is planned for July and August of 1995, during the dry season, when it is possible to reach the site by four-wheel-drive vehicle. A team of specialists from the Institute and Tanzania will reexcavate half of the trackway, record its condition stereophotographically, extract dead roots, stabilize the surface, and rebury it using synthetic geotextile materials layered into the overburden of sand and soil. These fabrics provide protection against root penetration yet allow the trackway surface to "breathe" — that is, to maintain moisture equilibrium between the subsurface of the trackway and the atmosphere. For a short period during the fieldwork, the section of the site undergoing conservation will be open to palaeoanthropologists for further study. Because of its fragility, the site can only be exposed for a very limited period. A similar campaign in 1996 will complete the project, after which a monitoring and maintenance program will be implemented by the Tanzanian authorities to ensure the long-term survival of the tracks.

Many opinions have been voiced as to the best method to save the tracks, and the strategy of reburial has been debated at length. Other ideas have been proposals to uplift the entire trackway (or only the individual footprints) and move it to a site under cover, such as the National Museum in Dar es Salaam, or to build a shelter over the site and open it to the public. The former assumes that the tracks have scientific value only and thus overlooks their cultural significance. The latter is impractical, at least for the moment, because of the site's remoteness and difficulty of access and the lack of infrastructure for displaying, staffing, and securing the site.

The Laetoli footprints are the most ancient traces yet found of humanity's ancestors. To move the site in toto or, worse, to remove only the prints, would be contrary to the widely accepted ethic of conservation in context. The prints were impressed in volcanic ash in that location 3.6 million years ago, in sight of the Sadiman volcano 20 kilometers away, whose subsequent ash falls buried them under 30 meters of deposit. Over the aeons the landscape eroded, until now, less than a few feet of soil protects the fragile surface. Powerful arguments can be mustered for every effort to save the site in its original context. The Tanzanian authorities themselves are committed to this approach.

It is indisputable that burial is an effective preservation measure, if other requirements such as vegetation control through maintenance are also met. Only if these criteria are not achievable should other options be considered. While lifting the tracks is doubtless technically possible, it would be enormously costly, require much research, and risk damage or loss. For these reasons, the decision to rebury the site has been made, and if future conditions allow the site to be opened to visitors, it will have been saved.

Transcending Time

The footprints at Laetoli represent an immense distance in time. While we are used to bandying about terms like *a million years*, we cannot really comprehend them on a human scale. We are comfortable with one or two thousand years. They are within the frame of recorded history, spanning the last hundred human generations. The Laetoli tracks are of another dimension, taking us back perhaps more than one hundred and eighty *thousand* generations.

The question has been asked why the Getty Conservation Institute, whose work is preservation of the cultural heritage, should be involved in saving a fossil site, even one of immense significance in the study of evolution. The answer to this question will be clear to those who have trod the beach and pondered their own trail of footprints, for there can be scarcely anything so evocative as the Laetoli trail marking humanity's long, wondrous, and mysterious journey. As a nexus between cultural heritage and science, so often uncomprehended in today's world of big science, the footprints are a poignant reminder of our ancient origins. Let Mary Leakey have the last word in talking of one of the hominids who made the trail: "At one point, and you need not be an expert tracker to discern this, she stops, pauses, turns to the left to glance at some possible threat or irregularity, and then continues to the north. This motion, so intensely human, transcends time. Three million six hundred thousand years ago, a remote ancestor — just as you or I — experienced a moment of doubt."

Neville Agnew is Associate Director for Programs at the GCI.

Martha Demas is Acting Director of the GCI's Special Projects.



Above top: The roots of acacia trees growing on the site threaten the tracks at Laetoli. Photo: Guillermo Aldana. Below: Ron Street of the Metropolitan Museum of Art removes the new silicone mold from the existing 1979 cast of the southern part of the trackway. Photo: Tom Moon.



G C I NEWS

RECENT EVENTS

Thailand Conference

An international conference on "The Future of Asia's Past" was held from January 11 to 14, 1995, in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Organized by the Asia Society, the Siam Society, and the Getty Conservation Institute, the conference was attended by nearly 350 people from 28 countries who met to discuss the urgent need to shape effective policies for the preservation of Asia's architectural heritage in the context of the region's rapid economic development. An important goal of the gathering was to bring together scholars, government policymakers, private developers, and tourism officials to exchange ideas and to begin creating a framework for more coordinated preservation efforts.

In her remarks to the conference, Vishakha N. Desai, Vice-President for Program Coordination at the Asia Society, observed that Asia's dynamism derives from "a powerful, enduring impact of values, religions, and aesthetic systems that have thousands of years of history." She asked those gathered to consider two important questions: "Why must we care? And can we make the collective commitment to addressing the challenge of the future of Asia's past before it is too late?"

The 48 speakers at the conference addressed a variety of subjects, including preservation policy in Asia, site management, vernacular architecture and the colonial legacy, public and private partnerships, threats to architectural sites, and the endangered heritage program of the World Monuments Fund.

A publication containing the conference's proceedings is expected to be available later this year.

Speaking at the closing session of the conference on "The Future of Asia's Past," GCI Director Miguel Angel Corzo remarked upon the uniqueness of the cultural heritage and on its nonrenewable character: *We cannot plant another monument when an old one dies. The world is producing new forms of the cultural heritage that reflect our present values, but it is only by preserving the old forms that we are able to create a sense of identity with our cultures and civilizations, that we establish the roots of our spiritual development, and that we can firmly plant new forms in the ground to grow and flourish and bear fruit.*

These are difficult times for everyone: rapid population growth, increasing urbanization, inflation, and pollution are what make the headlines today. But this is also a time for commitment. A commitment to our social well-being, a commitment to our enduring values, a commitment to protecting our past. Halfway measures or timid solutions will not succeed in the present world. We need to be bold and imaginative. We need to plan and we need to act . . .

We, in this generation, have benefited from being able to look at our past and wonder, to look at our past and learn, to look at our past and dream. . . . Let us ensure that these great privileges of the cultural heritage remain for future generations, for our children and our children's children, so that they also may revel in the richness of the past.



Picture L.A. Exhibition

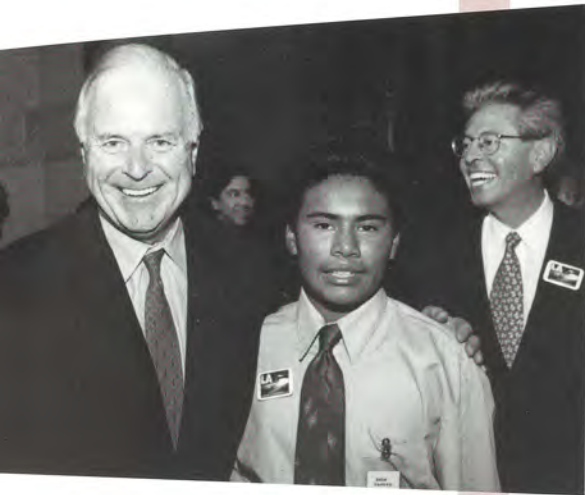
The GCI-organized exhibition *Picture L.A.: Landmarks of a New Generation* had its opening December 6, 1994, at Los Angeles City Hall's Bridge Gallery. The exhibition included the photographs and commentary of eight young people, aged 10 to 18, who were asked by the Institute to photograph what they considered landmarks of their own human and physical environments, as well as designated historic sites. The resulting collection of images, dramatic in content and powerful in feeling, challenged traditional ideas about the nature of landmarks.

At the opening, attended by nearly 600 people, each of the young photographers was presented with prints of his or her photographs, a copy of the exhibition catalogue, and a video about the project. They were also each given a certificate of commendation from the Office of the Mayor. Among those in attendance at the opening were Mayor Richard Riordan, Deputy Mayor Sofia Garcia Conde Zuckerman, and Getty Trust Board Chairman Robert Erburu.



GUILLERMO ALDANA

Left: GCI Director Miguel Angel Corzo and Getty Trust Board Chairman Robert Erburu with Picture L.A. photographer Osofu Washington. Photo: Ron Mesaros
Below: Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan with Picture L.A. photographer Luis Castro and GCI Director Miguel Angel Corzo. Photo: Ron Mesaros



Picture L.A. received extensive coverage from the local print media and television. A story on the project was also run nationally by the Cable News Network (CNN). The exhibition has now moved to the Los Angeles Central Library, where it will remain through May 1995 before traveling to the Chicago area.

On the evening of February 1, the Midnight Special bookstore in Santa Monica hosted a special event on the *Picture L.A.* project. Images from the exhibition were shown, and the photographers spoke and signed copies of the exhibition catalogue.

The catalogue for *Picture L.A.* recently received a design and production award from the Rounce & Coffin Club — an organization with an interest in fine printing and the art of the book, which since 1938 has sponsored an annual exhibition of its award winners. (To order the catalogue, please see the information on Getty Trust Publications on page 21 of this section.)

Collaboration and Conservation in Belize

In February 1995 the Department of Archaeology of the government of Belize and the Getty Conservation Institute coorganized a three-day workshop, “Planning for the Future: Site Conservation and Management.” Focusing on the ancient Maya site of Xunantunich — where the GCI has been collaborating with archaeologists and government authorities to address the problems of conserving archaeological sites in humid tropical zones — the workshop marked a new approach to the planning and management of Belize’s archaeological sites.

The 35 participants in the workshop included representatives of various Belize government departments, tourism and guide organizations, residents of the neighboring village of San Jose Succotz, and the UCLA archaeology team currently excavating at Xunantunich. For the first time in Belize, individuals with a broad spectrum of interests met to collaborate and cooperate in the development of a Conservation and Management Plan for a site. This was the first time as well that the country’s Department of Archaeology invited public participation in the formulation of policy.

By the end of the workshop, a spirit of collaboration was established and the framework for the Conservation and Management Plan outlined. Participants offered recommendations in a number of areas, including site development and administration, local community involvement, finance and education, and protection of the natural environment. As a result of the workshop, the Department of Archaeology has initiated a plan of action for Xunantunich and gained a new network of support for the site’s future care.

Because of the success of the Belize program, the GCI is evaluating the potential for applying this participatory planning model to other cultural sites.



RECENT PROJECTS

Display Cases for the Constitution of India

In 1992 the Getty Conservation Institute was asked by the National Physical Laboratory of India (NPL) to provide technical assistance in designing display cases to house the original manuscripts of the Constitution of India. For several years the NPL, at the request of the Parliament Library in New Delhi, had been engaged in developing a suitable device for preserving the manuscripts. Because of the GCI's extensive research on display cases — in particular its work developing a prototype case for the storage and display of the royal mummies in the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo — NPL sought the Institute's assistance.

In March 1994 Neville Agnew and Shin Maekawa of the Institute traveled to New Delhi to install two hermetically sealed display cases designed for the long-term preservation of the Constitution of India documents. The cases were installed at the Parliament Library in India's Parliament House, where the original, hand-written Constitution (in Hindi and English) is kept. Instrumentation for monitoring the cases' performance was also put in place, and NPL staff were trained to maintain the monitoring system.

The technology utilized in these nitrogen-filled cases is independent of electrical power and provides a cost-effective and practical way to preserve fragile organic materials. An official ceremony marking the acceptance of the Parliament Library cases is planned for later this year, following the completion of the in situ testing by the National Physical Laboratory.



UPCOMING COURSES

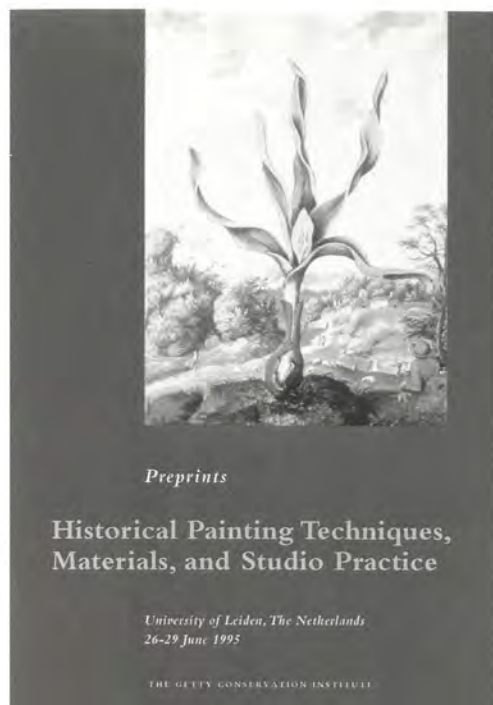
Preventive Conservation: Museum Collections and Their Environment

November 6 to November 24, 1995, Oaxaca, Mexico

The Getty Conservation Institute, in cooperation with the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), will be offering this course for conservators and conservation scientists who have worked in museums in Latin America. The course focuses on the technical and organizational factors that affect implementation of preventive conservation. It combines technical information on the museum environment with a review of strategies for working with museum colleagues and other specialists to integrate preventive conservation into museum policies and operations. With the assistance of an advisory group of Latin American conservators and scientists, the GCI has adapted the curriculum of this annual GCI course to reflect the needs of museums in the region.

Course topics will include: how the museum building functions as a buffer for the collections; historic and contemporary buildings as museums; monitoring and controlling temperature, relative humidity, and light; controlling external and internal pollutants; integrated pest control; preventive conservation in exhibitions and storage; packing and transit; and management and implementation of preventive conservation policies. Instruction will be in the form of lectures, case studies, discussions, demonstrations, and exercises.

For further information, please contact Kathleen Dardes of the GCI Training Program at 4503 Glencoe Avenue, Marina del Rey, CA 90292, USA. Telephone: 310-822-2299 / Fax: 310-821-9409.



Historical Painting Techniques, Materials, and Studio Practice

*University of Leiden, Netherlands, June 1995 Preprints
Edited by Arie Wallert, Erma Hermens, and
Marja F. J. Peek*

Bridging the fields of conservation, art history, and museum curating, this volume contains the principal papers from an international symposium titled "Historical Painting Techniques, Materials, and Studio Practice" at the University of Leiden in Amsterdam, Netherlands, from June 26 to 29, 1995. The symposium — designed for art historians, conservators, conservation scientists, and museum curators worldwide — was organized by the Department of Art History at the University of Leiden and the Art History Department of the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science in Amsterdam.

Twenty-five contributors representing museums and conservation institutions throughout the world provide recent research on historical painting techniques, including wall painting and polychrome sculpture. Topics cover the latest art historical research and scientific analyses of original techniques and materials, as well as historical sources, such as medieval treatises and descriptions of painting techniques in historical literature. Chapters include the painting methods of Rembrandt and Vermeer, Dutch 17th-century landscape painting, wall paintings in English churches, Chinese paintings on paper and canvas, and Tibetan thangkas. Color plates and black-and-white photographs illustrate works from the Middle Ages to the 20th century.

Arie Wallert is an Associate Scientist with the Getty Conservation Institute, Erma Hermens is a Research Scientist with the Department of Art History at the University of Leiden, and Marja F. J. Peek is Head of the Art History Department of the Central Research Laboratory in Amsterdam.

268 pages, 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, 64 color plates
125 black-and-white illustrations
ISBN 0-89236-322-3, paper, \$50.00
available June 1995

Research Abstracts of the Scientific Program

Edited by James R. Druzik

This third edition of the *Research Abstracts of the Scientific Program* presents a detailed overview of the Getty Conservation Institute's Scientific Program research covering the period from 1984 to 1994. It summarizes 68 different projects, including environmental controls in museums, the use of protective materials and analyses in the conservation of cultural objects and archaeological sites, and the use of new technologies for monitoring, documentation, and analysis. Summaries are organized into four major branches: Museum Environment, Materials and Methods, Architectural and Archaeological Conservation, and New Technology and Analytical Techniques. The volume includes five appendices and a comprehensive subject index.

James R. Druzik is Programs Conservation Scientist, extramural research, at the Getty Conservation Institute.

275 pages, 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches
ISBN 0-89236-244-8, paper, \$15.00

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or (in the U.S. or Canada) 800-223-3431*

New Director for Scientific Program

Alberto Tagle has been appointed Director of the GCI's Scientific Program. He will join the Institute on July 1, 1995.

Dr. Tagle is presently Professor of Advanced Conservation Science at the University of Pennsylvania and Museum Scientist at the Winterthur Museum in Delaware. Previously he taught at the University of Havana and served as Director of Investigations at the National Center for Conservation, Restoration and Museology. He received his Ph.D. in atomic spectroscopy from the Technische Hochschule at Leuna Merseburg in Germany, where he also did his undergraduate work. He has authored a number of publications and is the recipient of several awards.

Until July 1, David Scott will serve as Acting Director of the Scientific Program. He took up these duties on January 3, 1995. Dr. Scott has been with the GCI since 1987, serving as Head of Museum Services, which provides analytical and technical support to the conservation services of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Dusan Stulik, who was serving as Acting Director of the Scientific Program, has returned to his post as Head of the Analytical Section.

New Director of Special Projects

Giora Solar has been appointed Special Projects Director at the GCI. Presently Director of the Conservation Section of the Israel Antiquities Authority, he has been site architect and conservator at the Citadel in Jerusalem and at a large number of sites in Israel.

Mr. Solar studied at the Faculties of Architecture of the Milan Polytechnic and of the Technion in Haifa, where he obtained his degree in Architecture and Town Planning. An active member of a number of professional societies, he is now Secretary General of the ICOMOS International Training Committee. He has published in his field and taught at Tel Aviv University in the master's program in conservation. In recent years he has collaborated with the GCI on projects and participated in GCI Training Program courses in Israel and elsewhere.

Mr. Solar will gradually assume his responsibilities as Special Projects Director, and he will join the Institute full-time on December 1, 1995. Until then Martha Demas will continue to serve as Acting Director of Special Projects.

Special Assignment in Washington

During 1995 Jane Slate Siena, the GCI's Head of Institutional Relations, is on special assignment in Washington, D.C., where she is devoting her attention to the development of the St. Petersburg International Center for Preservation. The Institute is joining with the Russian Academy of Sciences and the city of St. Petersburg to create the Center, which will provide conservation expertise for the region and serve as a resource for those addressing the problems of deterioration of the city's cultural heritage.

The Center is incorporated in the United States, and Ms. Siena will be temporarily based in Washington to work closely with its founding chairman and board members, the U.S.-Russia Business Council, and a number of other organizations working on the Center's establishment.

STAFF PROFILES



Erica Avrami

Program Coordinator, Training Program

It may have been the presence of so many historic buildings in her hometown of Morristown, New Jersey, but for whatever reason, Erica Avrami's interest in historic architecture dates to childhood. She began studying drafting at age 14, and by 17 she was employed by a local architecture firm.

After receiving her bachelor of arts in architecture from Columbia University, she spent a summer in Great Britain as a US/ICOMOS intern with the National Trust documenting historic cottages and farmsteads throughout Devon. Returning to New York, she worked for two years at the city's Department of Ports and Trade, managing projects involving historic waterfront properties.

In 1990 Ms. Avrami traveled to Malaysia, where she spent a year as a Henry Luce Foundation Scholar at the Heritage of Malaysia Trust. While there, she worked on the conservation of a landmark Malay house and surveyed indigenous housing and colonial structures throughout the country. Returning again to New York, she attended graduate school at Columbia and worked part-time for the architecture

and planning firm of Jan Hird Pokorny. After earning her master's degree in historic preservation, she continued with the firm full-time as a project manager and architectural conservator.

In May 1994 Ms. Avrami joined the GCI as a coordinator in the Training Program. She is working on a variety of Institute projects, including a feasibility study of potential training activities in tropical sites conservation and the development of a course on archaeological site management in Tunisia. As part of an Institute-wide initiative, she is involved in a joint venture with UCLA to establish a master's program in archaeological and ethnographic conservation. She is also coordinating a Latin American course on the conservation and management of adobe sites.

Ms. Avrami has found that her own views on conservation correspond well to the philosophy of the GCI — a philosophy that calls for conserving not only materials but traditions and cultural values as well.



Jan Shipman

Senior Receptionist, Administration

A native of the American Midwest, Jan Shipman was born and raised in Rochelle, Illinois. She attended North Illinois State Teachers College for several years, then, along with her parents, decided to try life in California. The move west proved agreeable, and the family made Los Angeles their permanent home. Ms. Shipman enrolled at an executive secretary school in Beverly Hills and upon graduation was hired by a midtown Los Angeles savings and loan. She worked there for nine years, then resigned to raise her two sons.

Eighteen years later she decided to return to work part-time. In August 1985, a few months after the GCI moved into its Marina del Rey facility, she was hired as a temporary receptionist. Six months later she was working full-time — something she thought she would never have the patience to do — and by August 1986 she was officially a Getty employee.

Since then she has remained the first person employees and visitors see each day when arriving at the Institute. Meeting people, particularly GCI visitors from around the world, is one of the pleasures of the job for her. She also enjoys the education in art that simply being at the Institute provides. It has been interesting for her to watch the Institute's projects develop, and she finds it exciting to be part of an organization that she sees making a difference in the world.

What she also finds exciting are cars. For many years she and her husband have been automobile collectors, and they are founding members of the Delorean Car Club, as well as members of the Maserati and Porsche car clubs. Indeed, the presence of a bright red 1987 Porsche in the GCI parking lot is a sure sign that Jan Shipman will be at the front desk to greet you when you walk in.



IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GCI'S CONCERN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

THE GETTY
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4503 Glencoe Avenue
Marina del Rey
California 90292-6537
Phone 310-822-2299
Fax 310-821-9409