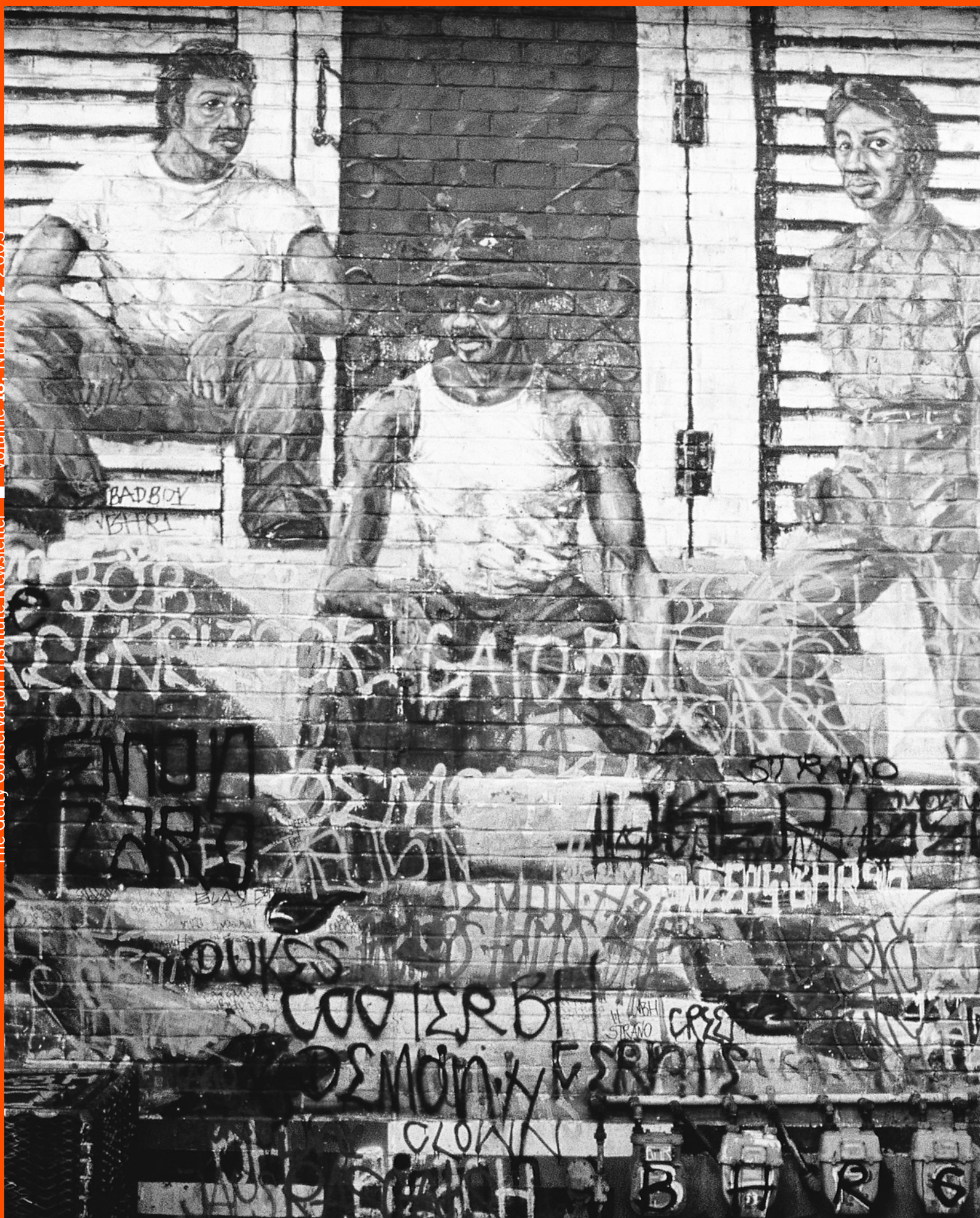
Conservation



The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter ■ Volume 18, Number 2 2003

The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter

Volume **18**, Number **2** 2003

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) works internationally to advance conservation and to enhance and encourage the preservation and understanding of the visual arts in all of their dimensions—objects, collections, architecture, and sites. The Institute serves the conservation community through scientific research; education and training; field projects; and the dissemination of the results of both its work and the work of others in the field. In all its endeavors, the Institute is committed to addressing unanswered questions and to promoting the highest possible standards of conservation practice.

The GCI is a program of the J. Paul Getty Trust, an international cultural and philanthropic organization devoted to the visual arts and the humanities that includes an art museum as well as programs for education, scholarship, and conservation.

Conservation, The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter, is distributed free of charge three times per year, to professionals in conservation and related fields and to members of the public concerned about conservation. Back issues of the newsletter, as well as additional information regarding the activities of the GCI, can be found in the Conservation section of the Getty's Web site.
www.getty.edu

Front cover: Detail of *Ghosts of the Barrio,* 1974, by Wayne Alaniz Healy, prior to conservation. This Los Angeles mural suffered from extensive graffiti damage on the lower section of the work, as well as fading and deterioration of the paint binder in some colors. (For a view of the mural after conservation, please see p. 4.) *Photo:* Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department. *Mural:* © Wayne Alaniz Healy, East Los Streetscapers.

The Getty Conservation Institute

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90049-1684 USA
Tel 310 440 7325
Fax 310 440 7702

Contents

THE CONSERVATION OF OUTDOOR CONTEMPORARY MURALS

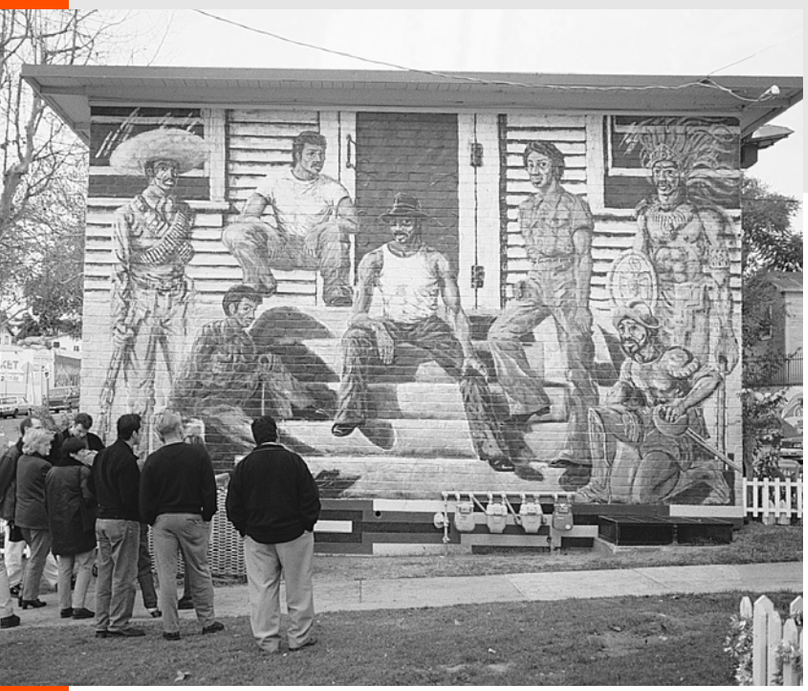
By Leslie Rainer

Feature

MURALS ARE MOST COMMONLY DEFINED as wall paintings, works of art integrated into a specific architectural space. Art historian Francis V. O'Connor has emphasized the importance of a mural's setting, writing that "a mural, unlike portable works of art, is an environmental artifact that was conceived in relation to its natural and/or architectural setting; the original site is an intimate part of its formal attributes."

The word *mural* is derived from the Latin word *murus,* meaning wall. Walls have long provided a direct support for aesthetic, political, and social ideas expressed with paint. Cave paintings could be considered the earliest murals, followed over time by wall paintings in tombs, temples, churches, civic buildings, and a variety of outdoor spaces.

Modern murals grow out of this long tradition. From the beginning of the 20th century, murals have had a significant presence in the architecture of the Americas. Artists like John Singer Sargent created great mural cycles for museums and libraries. The masters of the Mexican muralist movement—Diego Rivera, Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros—produced works for public buildings. In the 1930s, under the auspices of the U.S. Works Progress Administration, artists were employed to paint industrial, agricultural, and social scenes on the walls of post offices, schools, and other public buildings. In the second half of the 20th century, social change, political activism, and the rise of the Chicano mural movement generated new impetus for murals in the United States. Artists gave voice to the Chicano population and recorded their history—otherwise largely neglected in mainstream education. Waves of artists of all backgrounds followed, creating a vast array of imagery around the country on the walls of freeways; parking structures; housing projects; and public, private, and commercial buildings. A large number of these murals are exterior works, created for community outreach and neighborhood beautification. Through redevelopment programs, percent-for-art initiatives that mandate financial support for artworks, and youth training programs, such funding of murals has led to an explosion of public art in cities and towns across America.



Ghosts of the Barrio, 1974, by Wayne Alaniz Healy, after conservation. The mural—located in East Los Angeles—is 1 of over 70 murals painted on the walls of the housing units in Estrada Courts and Ramona Gardens in the 1970s. The mural was conserved in 1999 as part of the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project. (See cover for a detail image of the mural prior to conservation.) *Photo:* Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department. *Mural:* © Wayne Alaniz Healy, East Los Streetscapers.

The Conservation Challenge

Over the past 30 years, a vast number of exterior murals have been created. Philadelphia is home to 2,500, Los Angeles to over 1,500—and there are hundreds more throughout the rest of the country. Today as these murals age, many require conservation treatment if they are to survive. Unfortunately, relatively little thought was given to the maintenance and conservation of these murals at the time of their creation. Maintenance was either not part of the plan, or it was not carried out as murals began to show signs of deterioration. Frequently, little funding is available for maintenance and conservation.

Modern exterior murals exhibit a range of problems that are complicated by the use of modern and untested materials. Artists have used paints and coatings that were not necessarily manufactured for longevity in exterior use; after 20 to 30 years, exposed to harsh outdoor environments, these paints are deteriorating. Compounding these problems is the fact that many murals are painted in places where maintenance is nearly impossible. Made to beautify the cityscape and to bring neighborhoods together, these works now show wear, and in many cases they are targets of vandalism.

A number of cities have begun to inventory and assess their murals. Los Angeles counts over 450 that were made in part or in whole with city funds, sponsored by various city agencies and community groups. These range from paintings in historic public buildings to mosaic, tile, and painted works on walls in schools, housing projects, and freeway underpasses.

Who is responsible for this public art? A city agency that commissioned a mural may lack the resources or interest to maintain it. Once a mural is painted on a wall, it becomes the property of the building owner. At the same time, the image and the copyright belong to the artist. As long as the artist is living, he or she also has a voice in the mural's treatment.

Should conservation follow the strict guidelines used for museum pieces exhibited or stored in controlled environments? The answer, presumably, would be yes. However, with the many voices—community, city agencies, artists, and conservators—that contribute to decisions regarding the fate of a mural, this is a matter of debate. Is the objective to stabilize the paint and ground, or is it more appropriate to restore the mural to its original brightness and intensity, erasing its historic value in favor of a fresh appearance? When artists are still living and can be contacted, should they be responsible for their own work? If artists so desire, should they have the right to repaint their murals? In Chicago, a group of artists has carefully documented their murals from the 1970s and 1980s, and they repaint them when they become degraded. Do those murals, as a result, become new works of art with new dates attached to them?

The Problems

Environmental conditions are a major factor in mural deterioration. Freeze-thaw cycles and capillary rise affect the architectural support of the mural and lead to salt efflorescence, cracking, and lifting of the paint layers if incompatible paints or coatings are used and the mural extends to ground level. Impermeable coatings, like polyurethane (often used as an anti-graffiti coating), can perform badly when applied over a mural on a building that is affected by thermal fluctuations; the coating may crackle and lift, often taking the paint layer with it. Moreover, polyurethane cannot be removed

Before the Game, The Eternal Practice, 1994, by Olivia Gude. Located on the 110 freeway in Highland Park, this mural is one of over 60 murals on the Los Angeles freeway system. It shows extensive graffiti, and areas where tags have been painted out along the bottom section of the wall. *Photo:* Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department. *Mural:* © Olivia Gude.

Detail of *The Runners,* 1983, by Otis College of Art and Design students and Kent Twitchell, faculty. This mural, painted on an underpass of the 101 freeway in Los Angeles, shows a range of damage. Damage includes rust stains down the surface caused by water runoff from above, vandalism that has left the eyes of the runner gouged, and misguided attempts to paint out graffiti, which in turn has obscured the lower half of the mural. *Photo:* Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department. *Mural:* © Otis College of Art and Design.

from a painted surface without simultaneous damage to an acrylic paint layer.

In general, a mural should never be painted on a south-facing wall where direct and constant exposure to ultraviolet rays accelerates binder deterioration and paint fading. A mural painted on a wall with an overhang is likely to be more protected than one fully exposed. Conversely, murals painted on buildings with no overhang—where water may run down the wall with heavy rains—are at risk of water infiltration from above. Water infiltration can also occur with roof leaks, resulting in problems of salts, lifting paint, and drips and stains. Structural failure, too, affects wall paintings. Buildings that have settled or that are in seismic zones may show structural cracks, which can lead to water infiltration, followed by paint flaking and losses.

Acrylic paints used on exterior architectural surfaces break down over time and are not always compatible with their architectural support. These issues are similar to those faced by contemporary art in other forms (see *Conservation,* vol. 17, no. 3), but problems of modern materials are exacerbated when they are used outside. Severe breakdown of the paint binder can be seen on murals after as little as 10 years—especially those works exposed to direct sunlight. Fugitive colors are also a concern, particularly reds that have faded, dimming the intensity of a work. For example, one L.A. mural by Noni Olabisi, *To Protect and Serve* (1995), lost some meaning when the background of deep crimson, symbolic of blood, dulled over time.

Mineral paints are more suitable for outdoor murals—there are exterior wall paintings from the late 19th century made with mineral paints that remain in good condition—but the paints are harder to find, and many artists are unfamiliar with them. As with the fresco technique, these paints are not film forming and do not inhibit the migration of water vapor through the wall. Thus they last longer.

Preventive conservation—such as preparing the wall properly and using high-quality, lightfast, and compatible materials—is fundamental. Other preventive actions (e.g., regular maintenance, graffiti removal, and community awareness) can help preserve murals. Much of the damage seen on murals is due to vandalism and a lack of maintenance. Sadly, regular maintenance is not always a priority. Jack Becker of FORECAST Public Artworks looked at funding strategies for percent-for-art programs initiated in the 1970s and 1980s and found that these programs commonly only began to consider maintenance 10 to 15 years after their founding.

Maintenance of murals is essential to their preservation. Maintenance can be administered by a governmental agency, or it can come from the artist or the community. Increasing the awareness of community members of their murals increases the art's chance for survival, as does early assessment of problems and timely intervention. Everything—from sweeping around the mural and cutting back adjacent gardens to maintaining gutters and repairing wall damage promptly—helps preserve murals and discourages tagging with graffiti. If graffiti is left on a wall for a long time, it seems to signal others that it is a canvas for tagging. Conversely, prompt removal of graffiti usually arrests further tagging.

Dealing with Impermanence

Is the removal and relocating of a mural an appropriate approach to the preservation problems of a mural? According to Paul Philippot—one of the foremost theorists in conservation and coauthor, with Laura and Paolo Mora, of *The Conservation of Wall Paintings*—"a wall painting is always an integral part of the architectural ensemble for which it was created and which in part defines it. The detachment of a wall painting from its architectural support constitutes dismemberment and is to be avoided by principle. The respect for the integrity of the ensemble in situ is the rule."

Museums around the world contain numerous fragments of murals that were removed from their walls and installed in another location, or placed in long-term storage. However, in most places this is no longer an acceptable method of preserving a wall painting. Current practice holds that works should be preserved in situ unless they are threatened with destruction. The Lovejoy Ramp murals, for example—created by Tom Stefopoulos between 1948 and 1952—were drawn and painted on columns of an overpass in

Far left: To Protect and Serve, 1995, by Noni Olabisi, after treatment. The artist and conservators worked together to reinforce the red background meant to symbolize blood. *Left:* Artist Noni Olabisi working with conservators to retouch her mural. Conservators stabilized the plaster and paint layers, and the artist retouched areas in the figures, where the paint had powdered, leaving ill-defined features. *Photos:* Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department. *Mural:* © Commissioned by SPARC. www.sparcmurals.org .

Above: The Lovejoy Ramp columns during demolition of the ramp in Portland, Oregon. In 1952 artist Tom Stefopoulos completed a series of murals at the base of the ramp's columns, seen here protected by sheathing when the overpass was demolished; the mural columns were subsequently removed and preserved. *Right:* Conservator J. Claire Dean carrying out a condition assessment of one of the murals after demolition of the ramp. *Photos:* Courtesy J. Claire Dean.

Portland, Oregon. When the city demolished the ramp to facilitate development of the area, community members and a conservator worked together to preserve the columns, dismantling them and storing them. They are due to be reinstalled as public art on a nearby site.

In the Americas, there have been recent cases where murals have been moved. The options for removing a mural from a wall are either by *strappo* (tearing the paint layer from the support), or *stacco* (removing all or a part of the thickness of the wall with the work on it). Murals painted on canvas and adhered to the wall *(marouflage)* have been removed and rolled up for transport to be treated, stored, or exhibited in another location. In all of these cases, the mural is liable to suffer paint loss, as well as structural damage. Worse, though, it loses its context as part of the architectural ensemble for which it was created; at the same time, the site also loses meaning with the removal of the work.

With the impermanence of many materials being used today and the sheer number of murals on exterior walls, it is not possible to preserve all of them, and many may well disappear. At the time a mural was painted, community members were likely involved in its creation, or at least they had a kinship with it. Over time, though, a new generation comes of age or neighborhoods change, and the community may no longer have the same connection with the mural. Once a mural begins to deteriorate, if it lacks significance for the community, it may become a canvas for graffiti. If it is considered significant by community members or other groups, there is a greater chance of its preservation.

Documentation is one way to virtually preserve murals that are in danger of disappearing and to create an archive for future study. Indeed, with a high-enough recording resolution, documented murals could be reproduced to full size.

Treatment Options

As murals deteriorate, owners and agencies have several treatment options. They may ask the artist to repaint or restore the work, or they may call a conservator who could either treat the mural according to strict conservation guidelines or work with the artist to conserve and possibly restore the work. With contemporary murals, there are many instances of restoration or even re-creation.

Some artists have repainted their murals when they show fading, wear, or vandalism, especially when there is extensive damage that requires interpretation and repainting. Kent Twitchell is presently repainting his mural *Strother Martin Monument,* originally completed in 1972, accidentally painted over in 1987, and repainted in 1988. The current repainting shows modifications with changes in colors and materials—a 2003 version of the original. On the other end of the spectrum from repainting is traditional conservation, which aims to slow deterioration by stabilizing the

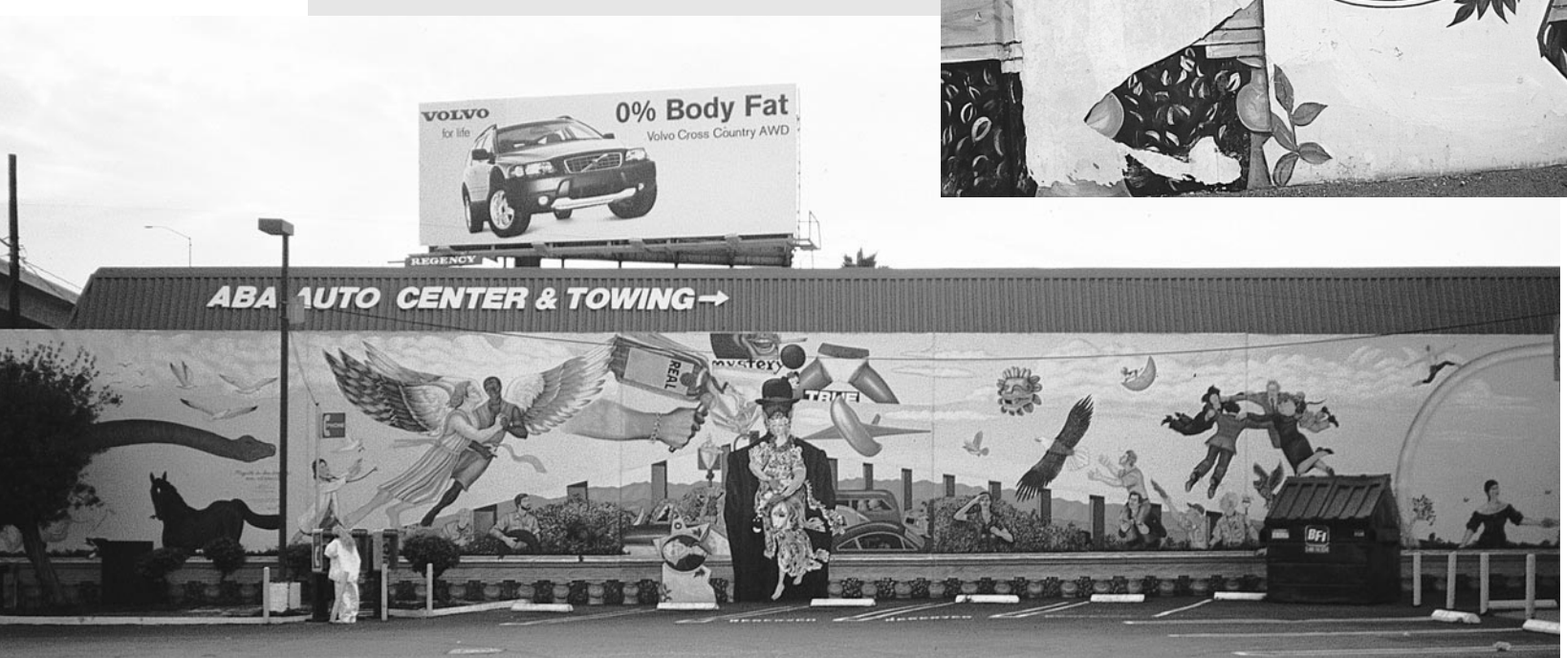
paint layers, cleaning the surface, and minimally reintegrating the image. Significant interpretation of the image is best left to the artist to re-create. In the case of *Magritte in Los Angeles* (1984) by Noa Bornstein, conservators worked with documentation and original artwork from the artist to reintegrate losses in the image.

The conservation of *Dolores del Rio* (1990) by Alfredo de Batuc is a good example of collaboration between conservators and artist that can serve to recapture the vitality of a work. The mural showed structural cracks, overall surface accumulation, deterioration of the paint binder, and fading of certain colors. Conservators filled the cracks, cleaned, removed a failing coating, and consolidated powdering paint. The artist, using lightfast colors, reinstated red and green details that had faded. Together the artist and conservators reinforced the brightness of the mural's sunset.

This kind of balanced collaboration is vital to the conservation of a mural. The artist can provide material and visual information, and the conservator—trained in the analysis and diagnosis of complex conservation problems—can develop appropriate treatments. Several programs around the country—including the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) in Los Angeles, the Wisconsin Arts Board's Percent-for-Art, and the New York Public Art in Public Schools (PAPS)—have brought conservators and artists together from the beginning of the commission process. All require a review of the artist's proposed materials, fabrication, and finishing processes. The MTA has conservator review, and conservation as well as maintenance are taken into consideration in the installation of the work. The PAPS program includes custodial training and emphasizes educating students with initiatives such as Conservation in Context, which PAPS Program Director Michele Cohen states, "underscores the need to contextualize the conservation of public art." In these programs, the issues of conservation and maintenance are addressed even as the mural is being made.

This leads to the question of specialized training. In countries with a long tradition of wall painting, specialized training for artists and conservators is provided in fine arts and restoration schools. Only a handful of U.S. schools have courses in mural painting; artists are often expected to apply their training in easel painting to murals, where the architectural system must be considered. Artists should be familiar with issues of location and exposure, wall preparation, and use of appropriate materials, and courses should address materials and techniques for murals, as well as conservation and maintenance issues.

Training in mural conservation is also lacking in the United States. Conservation programs tend to specialize in works of art in a museum environment or architectural conservation—but not that hybrid of wall painting conservation. Mural conservators must understand systemic problems related to the structural issues of the building, environmental factors that affect pigments and binders, and material degradation of a variety of paints and coatings. They should also be versed in traditional materials and techniques of construction, plaster, and paint. With the number of murals now



Below: Magritte in Los Angeles, **1984, by Noa Bornstein, after conservation. The mural is painted on the wall of an auto body shop, which faces a convenience store parking lot. Heavy traffic in the parking area caused accidental damage along the lower section of the mural. *Right:* Detail of damage on mural, in which a section has been ripped off the wall. Before treatment the mural also showed blisters on the surface where the paint had pulled away from the wall and left voids behind the surface. *Photos:* Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department. *Mural:* © Noa Bornstein.**

at a critical moment when they require conservation, there is a real need for training. But even so, the task of conserving wall paintings often requires a multidisciplinary team made up of architects, engineers, and conservators to successfully address the complex problems facing the wall and the wall painting.

A Holistic Approach

The issues that directly or indirectly affect the conservation of murals must be approached from all sides and at all levels. As some cities are recognizing, there must be an administrative responsibility for maintenance and long-term care, preferably from the conception of the project. This includes keeping a complete inventory of murals, with full documentation, including information on the materials used. Rae Atira-Soncea, Percent-for-Art conservation coordinator of the Wisconsin Arts Board, has stated that "maintaining reliable information is the first step in conservation." Artists can help by providing the appropriate funding agency with original artwork and images of the work upon completion. One way of managing this information is to create a database that can be updated over time that gives full information for every mural in a given city or region. In Los Angeles and Quebec, databases are being developed for the inventory and condition assessment of large collections of murals.

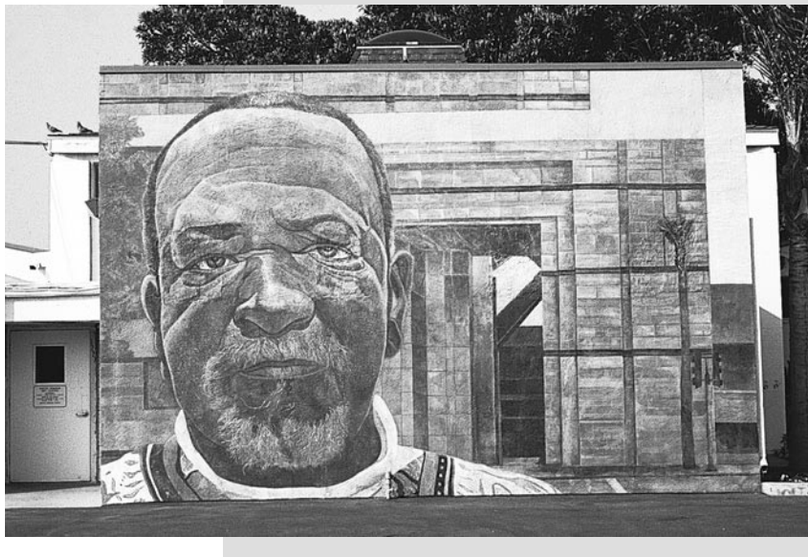
Relationships between artists and conservators should be cultivated and strengthened; arts administrators could encourage this relationship in a formal way, as the MTA does. The collaboration between artists and conservators should start at the time of mural creation, well before the need for conservation arises. Conservators can advise on the best paints to use from a materials standpoint; perhaps they can take this one step further by helping industry to research and develop appropriate materials for use in the creation and conservation of murals. At the same time, it is necessary to train more conservators in mural conservation. Conservation programs could incorporate courses on murals and architectural surfaces into their curricula.

In caring for exterior murals, conservation is not only a scientific and technical endeavor. As Julie Boivin, cocurator for the public art of Montreal, has written, "conservation has become a fundamentally social and cultural activity in the fullest sense. The public art equation in which artist, client, public, and site are indissociable must continually be questioned, evaluated, and perhaps modified. The conservation of contemporary public art might raise some of the most challenging issues and provide opportunities to observe how far we can take those ideas."

Leslie Rainer is a GCI senior project specialist with extensive experience in the conservation of archaeological, historic, and modern murals.

Top: **Detail of *Cecil,* 1989, by Richard Wyatt, prior to conservation in 2001. The mural, located at the Watts Towers Art Center in Los Angeles, showed problems of incompatible previous repair and restoration materials, combined with direct southern exposure that resulted in extensive paint flaking and paint loss. This closeup of the mural shows lifting of the paint layer and paint loss. To address this, conservators surface-cleaned the mural, consolidated and reattached the degraded paint layer, and inpainted areas of paint loss.** ***Middle:*** **Conservation team members inpaint areas of paint loss on mural. Discrete areas of paint loss over the entire surface were retouched with compatible materials.**

Below: **The mural after completion of conservation.** ***Photos:*** **Courtesy the Los Angeles Murals Assessment and Conservation Project, City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department.** ***Mural:*** **© Commissioned by SPARC. www.sparcmurals.org .**



Preserving Art in Public Places

A Discussion about Mural Painting and Conservation

In May 2003, the Getty Research Institute and the Getty Conservation Institute coorganized a two-day symposium entitled "Mural Painting and Conservation in the Americas," with a program that brought together art historians, conservators, and artists (see page 19). **Conservation** *asked several symposium participants to share their perspectives on some of the issues the symposium addressed, which included the social, artistic, and political dimensions of murals, the value they hold, and the rationale and conservation techniques for ensuring their long-term survival.*

Leonard Folgarait, professor of art history in the Department of Art and Art History at Vanderbilt University, is a specialist in the art of Latin America and in European and American Modernism. He is the author of **So Far from Heaven: David Alfaro Siqueiros' *The March of Humanity* and Mexican Revolutionary Politics,** *and* **Mural Painting and Social Revolution in Mexico, 1920–1940: Art of the New Order.**

Ann Garfinkle—with the Washington, D.C., firm of Whiteford, Taylor & Preston—is an attorney whose practice emphasizes representation of artists, collectors, and galleries. She is chair of the Art and Museum Committee of the Washington, D.C., Bar's Art, Entertainment, and Sports Law Section. Among her other publications, Garfinkle authored a work on estate planning for artists and collectors.

Wayne Healy, a native of Los Angeles, cofounded with artist David Botello the mural team that became known as East Los Streetscapers. They have created murals and public artworks throughout the United States, Europe, and Mexico. In 1992 Healy and artist Roberto Delgado were awarded a grant by the Joint Spanish/U.S. Committee for Educational and Cultural Cooperation to paint murals in Barcelona, Spain.

Will Shank was chief conservator at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art from 1990 until 2000. He earned his M.A. from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University, then took advanced training in paintings conservation at Harvard. Shank has restored many paintings and has conducted research on the techniques of artists as diverse as John Singleton Copley, Bruce Conner, Clyfford Still, Diego Rivera, Maxfield Parrish, and Robert Motherwell.

They spoke with Leslie Rainer, a GCI senior project specialist and a wall paintings conservator, and Jeffrey Levin, editor of **Conservation, The GCI Newsletter.**

Jeffrey Levin: *Given the variety of works that could be called "murals," how would each of you define a mural?*

Leonard Folgarait: I would say that a mural is a painting that is indistinguishable from the wall. The fresco technique is the truest example of that. The fresco mural is the only art medium that I know that's so integrally bound to its support system. It adds a dimension to its space by virtue of the figures that are painted, by virtue of the story that it tells, and by how it engages the viewer in that story. It is a form of address to not only the material aspect of the site but also to the social existence of the site.

Will Shank: I think there are other things that can't be separated from their supports, like a watercolor, for instance, or something that soaks into a support, like canvas. I'd probably give a broader definition of a mural. It's paint applied to—or an artwork applied to—a wall.

Folgarait: Can that artwork have been made on a site other than its display site? For instance, can a large canvas be painted in a studio, rolled up, taken to another site, and put on the wall? Would that be a mural?

Shank: Commonly, it's referred to as a mural—although there is a purist school of thought that would say that a canvas painting applied to a wall is not a mural.

Leslie Rainer: *What you said, Leonard, was really a good point—that it's integral to the wall. And I agree with Will that a mural can be a painting or even a tile piece applied to a wall that is integral to that wall and to the architecture. There's the example of John Singer Sargent, who painted his murals for the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in his studio. But they weren't just canvases in frames put onto walls—they were created for a specific space. Wayne, what would your definition of a mural be?*

Wayne Healy: Well, there're many definitions. I agree with your definition of a classical mural—the fresco. But in the 21st century, just about everything is a mural. We were painting on a busy corner once, and one of the local guys comes by and says, "Hey, man, that's really cool. You want to see my mural?" So he takes off his shirt and there's this big old tattoo across his back that he calls a mural. So everybody's got their own definition.

To me, a better mural definition is that it is integrated with the wall. We're doing more and more mural painting in the studio. If it's indoor, it'll be canvas. If it's outdoor, it's fiberglass mesh and inert material. But even though the mural may be done in a studio, it's put on the wall and integrated with the wall. It takes into account the architecture and it talks to the people who see the wall. And, most always, it's edge to edge, top to bottom.

Levin: *I would note that in the case of a tattoo, someone's back is pretty integral to the support of the work of art. Which fits Leonard's definition. Ann, does the law have anything to say with regard to defining murals?*

Ann Garfinkle: Law is really a strange discipline to mix with art. The State of California passed the California Art Preservation Act [CAPA], which went into effect in 1980, but it wasn't until 1991 that an appellate judge ruled that a mural is, in fact, a painting. The argument was made by Shell Oil [which owned a building on which there was a mural] that murals were not paintings and therefore not protected under CAPA.

Levin: *You're referring to murals painted on the exterior walls of buildings?*

Garfinkle: Right. Murals were not an artwork covered by the act until this case was decided on appeal.

Healy: We were the test case.

Levin: *Which work was it?*

Healy: It was called *Filling Up on Ancient Energies,* and it was on a wall at a Shell gas station in Boyle Heights. One day Shell came along and started knocking the wall down. One of my cohorts on that mural was a member of the [Mural] Conservancy, and he went to the next meeting all bummed out, "Oh, man, they knocked down our wall." The legal lady with the Conservancy said, "Hey, let's go get those guys." I didn't know what a torture this legal trip was going to be. We went to the superior court first. The judge ruled against us saying, "You should appeal because you're asking me to rule on something I don't understand." So we went to the appellate court and won. I thought the big petrochemical company would just leave the poor barrio artist alone, but no, they went to the supreme court, which refused to listen to them.

Levin: *So the lower court ruling held?*

Garfinkle: Yes. Murals are now fine art and have been since Mr. Healy's case was decided. A federal law—the Visual Artists Rights Act [VARA]—went into effect in 1990. It basically preempts most of the California statute. Murals would fall under the VARA definition of works of visual art. What's interesting is that the California statute provides protection for 50 years beyond the life of the artist. The federal statute only goes for the life of the artist. The heirs of a muralist have CAPA rights for 50 years after the death of the artist.

Rainer: *So once an artist is dead, anything can happen to that mural?*

Garfinkle: Yes, under VARA but not under CAPA, which gives an additional 50 years. But if the artist kept the copyright, the artist, and his or her heirs, has standing for the length of the copyright—which now is the life of the artist plus 70 years.

Levin: *What place does the outdoor mural movement have within the context of 20th-century art? There's the work created in the 1930s under the Works Progress Administration, and then there's the work created in the latter part of the century, which had a lot of social and political commentary. Are we talking about one mural movement or many?*

Folgarait: Those examples fit into 20th-century art history as an answer to Modernism—the growing abstraction in painting from cubism to the white painting. In the Postmodern period, when we see a return of figuration and narrative, a lot of attention has gone back to murals. Your examples have a strong commitment to the space and to the social reality of the people who make it and view it. I'm a little uncomfortable with using the word *movement,* even with the so-called Big Three of Mexico—*Los Tres Grandes.* Three hardly make a movement, and they had as many disagreements among themselves as agreements. I'm more interested in the term *school,* like the Mexico City school or the Guadalajara school.

Healy: I like the word *movement*. I like the word *school.* "School," in fact, is something I proposed in a recent paper proclaiming the Chicano mural movement, or the Chicano art movement more generally. If you want to bring all these different groups together, it would be under the title of neighborhood or community mural. The late Eva Cockcroft was a great champion of community murals, and she'd look at me crooked if I was doing something for corporations. "You should be doing community murals." So there's a camp established that says, "Well, that's a corporate mural, and that's an abstract mural. We do the real murals that are 'power to the people' and all that."

Folgarait: You jokingly say, "We do the real murals." It seems to me that there may be a sense of ownership on the definition of murals. Some people might say that because they work in the tradition of the Mexican school, they do the real murals. I'd never heard it phrased that way, even jokingly, but I think you've hit on something important.

Levin: *Outdoor murals do seem to lend themselves to political or social commentary to a greater extent than many other art forms. Is that simply because they're public?*

Garfinkle: Among the things that murals have going for them is the lower cost of making them. A community can afford murals where they can't afford large sculptural elements, which are very expensive to fabricate. And because murals are seen by everybody and adopted by a community, they lend themselves to community self-expression.

Folgarait: When you walk down a city street and you happen upon a mural that you weren't expecting, you're in what I'd call a socialized space. You're thinking about shopping, the work you do, your family and relationships—and the mural appears to you in the context of your social life, as opposed to when you walk through a museum, where you are in an aesthetic frame of mind and expect to see framed artworks. When art comes to you within the fabric of everything else in your world, it unavoidably becomes socialized. Some mural artists take positive advantage of that.

Levin: *Wayne, is that part of the consciousness in the creation of outdoor murals? Knowing that you can exploit the dynamic that Leonard just described?*

Healy: Outside, you're like a traffic signal or a bus stop bench—you're part of the scene. It's unavoidable. People walk by and say, "Hey, how you doing?" or "Oh, it's looking good." You get immediate feedback. I think of muralism as the art that's closest to performing art. You're on a stage, you've got an audience. In our case, we have designed most of our murals in the studio, and so we're not liable to make any major changes—but we have. Someone will come by and say, "Oh, that's cool. I've lived in this neighborhood for 99 years, you know…" And they'll tell you the story that, like, damn, fits.

Every now and then a news event takes place, and we feel compelled to include it. Case in point was a mural we painted in 1979 called *Moonscapes.* I picked up the *L.A. Times* one morning, and there's this story on folks digging in Mexico City who hit this big old rock—this gory, beautiful stone carving of Coyolxauhqui, the Moon Goddess. We're painting *Moonscapes* and we think, "Man, that's got to go in there."

"The wonderful thing about street art is that it is so inseparably part of the world that you can take it for granted and then next week look at it."

—Leonard Folgarait

Garfinkle: It's really performance art. It's integrating what's happening right then and there.

Healy: Right. And we're trying to tie it to the community.

Levin: *How different are contemporary mural commissions from the sort of commissions that Leonardo da Vinci received to do a fresco? Weren't his contracts specific as to what was to be painted? In the end, he may not have strictly followed the contract because he was, after all, an artist. But aren't mural commissions a part of a historical tradition?*

Folgarait: It's the concept of a contract. You enter into an agreement with another party that such and such will result, whether it's an artwork or something else. But in art history we pay attention to the exceptions to that—to people who are renegades. That's what makes it interesting.

There's a paradox that's always struck me in studying murals. The community in general walks by and doesn't look at them. The fact that murals are mostly not looked at by the community because they're so familiar with them means something positive. The art has not been raised to a privileged status. It coexists with everything else. The wonderful thing about street art is that it is so inseparably part of the world that you can take it for granted and then next week look at it. It raises the level of the cultural quality of your life in that part of the city.

Levin: *In California we've produced a lot of murals in recent decades, and now these works need conservation attention. If a mural created in 1979 addressed a certain need that isn't there anymore, is it okay to let it go? What concepts should govern what gets conserved?*

Shank: That is the big question. I think it's really case by case. It depends on whether it's a community mural or if it's an icon or the work of a single artist. Ultimately, the one thing we do know is that there is a limited life to the material. And based on that infor-

mation, intelligent choices have to be made about whether to prolong the life of a mural that's deteriorating.

Healy: If a mural is constantly being attacked from the street, it's hard to defend it. You can almost say those are the art critics that are making their commentary on it.

Levin: *What if a work is no longer important to the community but a larger world sees it as being a symbol of a particular period or being an especially important work aesthetically? How do we make those judgments?*

Folgarait: I wouldn't want decisions to be made based on aesthetic value. I'm the sort of person who thinks ideally that every product made by human beings is important simply because it's a marker of history. We'll never know when we need to refer back to that period in history and think, "Oh, that was a benchmark moment, regardless of the aesthetic value."

I would apply very practical criteria. Given all of the opportunities for conservation, I would just conserve the murals that are most in danger. And after that, prioritize according to which ones are not quite at that level and where the damage can still be stopped.

Levin: *But there must be countless numbers of murals that are salvageable. The question is—are the resources really there to do it?*

Rainer: *Probably not. On a project for the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, we, as conservators, looked at all of the city's murals and did condition assessments. The report was then given to a committee made up of an art historian, a social historian, an architect, and an artist. They worked together to rank the significance and conservation priorities of the city's murals according to historic, aesthetic, and community values, as well as artistic achievement and the need for conservation. At that point, the city had enough money to do 12 murals. And one of their criteria was that they had to do one in each council district.*

Shank: I did a condition assessment of all the artwork owned by the City of Santa Monica in California, which included many murals. I talked to their city manager about their expectations, because some of the murals were in extremely bad condition and beyond repair. She said that when they set up a contract with a muralist, the understanding was that after a certain number of years, Santa Monica would assess the condition of the mural and decide what to do about it.

Rainer: *Different cities have different ways of going about this. The City of Los Angeles used to have in their contracts with artists that after 10 years the building owner can decide what to do with the mural. They've now modified that to say that after 10 years, there should be an evaluation of the mural's condition.*

Levin: *Isn't it really the limits of the material that have determined in our minds that this is temporary art? If the materials didn't limit us, wouldn't we treat murals like other works of art and make a continuing effort to preserve them? If this was art in an interior space, then there wouldn't be any question of preserving it.*

Rainer: *I don't think that every piece of art is preserved.*

Levin: *No, but I'm putting murals in a category similar to other commissioned artwork or something obtained by a collector or collecting institution. It was paid for and put into a large area. It had value at a certain point in time.*

Rainer: *But the murals put up on community walls are, as Leonard said, different. They're a part of the whole community and not isolated in that way.*

Levin: *Okay then—if those murals could last 50 years but they lose their significance to the community well before then, does that mean, whether they're deteriorating or not, we should feel free to paint over them? If it isn't a matter of the technical challenge, then is it really a matter of its value to the community?*

Garfinkle: I can tell you what Congress thought when it passed the Visual Artists Rights Act. They exempted the passage of time or the inherent nature of the materials from protection. There is no compulsion under federal law to fix natural deterioration. If something is deteriorating because of the inherent nature of the materials, no one can be blamed for it. Or if it's caused by the elements, nobody can be blamed for it, and under the statute no one can be compelled to fix it. So the answer to your question is, absolutely, this is what Congress was thinking about. Artists testified before

"Law is really a strange discipline to mix with art."

—Ann Garfinkle

“Ultimately, the one thing we do know is that there is a limited life to the material.”

—Will Shank

Congress and stated that Congress should exempt the inherent nature of the materials and the passage of time. You can decide to fix it . . .

Rainer: *But you are not compelled to . . .*

Garfinkle: Nor will anybody be held liable under VARA for the deterioration. The arts organizations that testified before Congress felt that this was reasonable.

Folgarait: If a certain mural is deemed to be beyond salvation, is there an automatic fallback plan to do intense photodocumentation of that image? Is that a standard practice?

Shank: No. If somebody has had the foresight, like Santa Monica or Los Angeles, to hire somebody like us, then of course.

Healy: I don’t know too many muralists who don’t have a good stack of slides of their baby.

Rainer: *It was huge help on lots of projects to have the artists there with photodocumentation or the original artwork.*

Levin: *And is documentation an appropriate alternative to doing conservation work on a mural that may be questionable, either in terms of its value to the community or in terms of its ability to survive?*

Shank: If that’s the only option.

Levin: *One of the other alternatives—which may be problematic—is to move it.*

Rainer: *I wouldn’t say that’s an alternative.*

Levin: *Well, you may not consider it an appropriate alternative, but that’s the question. Is there ever a series of circumstances where it is appropriate to do that? Leonard, since you suggested that a mural is integral to the physical structure that it’s created on, I’d be very interested in your thoughts.*

Folgarait: When I was in Barcelona, I visited the Museum of the History of Catalonia. You walk into an immense space, and inside they have reconstructed the interior murals of at least a dozen small Romanesque churches that were damaged or in great danger of further damage during the Spanish Civil War. The murals were removed and reconstructed inside this museum. In that case, I think they made a very ethical and practical decision. Another example is the Siqueiros mural that was recently moved to Santa Barbara. There’s something that was in a private home where I never would’ve been able to see it, and now it’s in a public space. I’m glad of both those instances.

Rainer: *In my mind, when there’s imminent danger of a mural being completely destroyed, those are the times you do it. I agree with you in the case of the Catalan museum. If the murals were in danger of being bombed, fine. It’s a bit of a shame that they isolated them from their environment, but I understand that.*

In the case of the Siqueiros mural, I think that was a choice. I visited the mural when it was in the private home. Siqueiros really created that mural for that site. It was sited from the house to look out on the garden, and you looked out at eye level to the mural. It was in a protected little patio that kept the mural from any kind of damage, just a beautiful ensemble. At the same time, I agree—you can now see it in a public space, and it is available to the public. But those people who owned it could have opened up their home for interested people to see it, rather than isolating the murals from their original space.

Garfinkle: There is a very odd California case in which one lower court said that all murals can be removed.

Rainer: *But then they’re not murals anymore.*

Shank: A mural without a wall.

Garfinkle: As I said, the law doesn’t quite fit with the reality.

Shank: That has been my big frustration. I’ve been brought into these cases that have not wound up in court and been faced with this absurd position of removing a mural from a wall. And I’ve said, “You can’t remove a mural from the wall.” But people try to prove you can without damage. I say that the flaw is in the law.

Rainer: *You can pretty much remove anything, but you will always damage it. In the Siqueiros mural case, they really limited the damage by moving the entire patio building. And that was probably the best option, rather than cutting the walls into sections.*

Folgarait: I realize that I revealed myself as an art historian when I said that I appreciated the Siqueiros mural being moved because it gave me access to it. But I think that Leslie, in her articulate defense

of why it was appropriate for where it was, changed my mind. After all, when a patron and an artist make a contract for a work of art that is in a private place, it's their right to keep people like me out of it. It was my academic greed that made me say that—and I appreciate your changing my mind about that particular piece.

Rainer: *But there is public opinion that believes it's great that so many people can now see it. There is that trade-off.*

Levin: *Wayne, have you had any experience with the removal of murals?*

Healy: A colleague of mine, David Botello, had a mural on a dry cleaning store in East Los Angeles. The stucco was deteriorating, so they pulled the mural off, rolled it up, and brought it to the studio. David and a worker start to delaminate this thing, and after a couple of hours they'd loosened up just a bit of it. And just observing, I said, "Do you want me to extrapolate how many hours it'll be to get the whole thing off? It'll take the rest of your life." That was all he had to hear. He said, "What am I doing this for? In two weeks I can paint the whole thing again, and it could be brand new." That project stopped and he went back to repaint the wall.

Levin: *Wayne, would you agree that we ought to be doing more with mural artists in terms of educating them regarding conservation issues in order to alleviate some of the problems that their artworks could have 20 years from now?*

Healy: I agree wholeheartedly. We learned the hard way, although we knew a little bit. We knew paint hangs better on clean walls than dirty walls. If the paint is falling off, don't paint over it—get a scraper out. I'm not saying other artists don't know that. It's just that they're in their groove to paint. I've seen artists that have wham, wham, wham, put up this great-looking piece of artwork, and two months later, it's falling off. In their enthusiasm to paint, they didn't take the time to clean and prepare the wall. And so some are self-destructing on their own, and there's nothing you can do.

"We knew paint hangs better on clean walls than dirty walls. If the paint is falling off, don't paint over it—get a scraper out."

—Wayne Healy

Garfinkle: Are most muralists art school educated?

Healy: Not the ones I know. I know several college-educated muralists.

Garfinkle: So the question would be whether that should be taught in art schools or in art departments. I'm a trustee of an art college, Maryland Institute College of Art, and I've been trying to talk the Institute into having conservators come in and explain to the students what will happen to their materials in 5 or 10 years.

I think it is important that the Los Angeles permitting process includes information on materials and the treatment of the wall, and includes a technically proficient conservator on the panel that reviews the murals so, for example, the artists know that they're using the right paint.

Rainer: *L.A. has tried to take charge of this whole maintenance and longevity issue. They recently wrote guidelines for painting a mural that do list materials—and the permits do go through a commission process where a conservator is present along with other disciplines.*

Levin: *It seems that there's no way we can avoid the peculiar challenge that murals present. They're public art, and they're part of a structural support. We're going to have to continually grapple with the impermanence of structures, the durability of materials, and the fluctuating environment in which that work of art exists. Leonard, are these the issues that outdoor murals will always face?*

Folgarait: Absolutely. You just put your finger on how indefinable, ultimately, the term *mural* is. I wouldn't want conservators to get too hung up philosophically on what a mural is in terms of what to do with it. I would rather conservators just approach it as the case at hand.

Garfinkle: The work of art at hand.

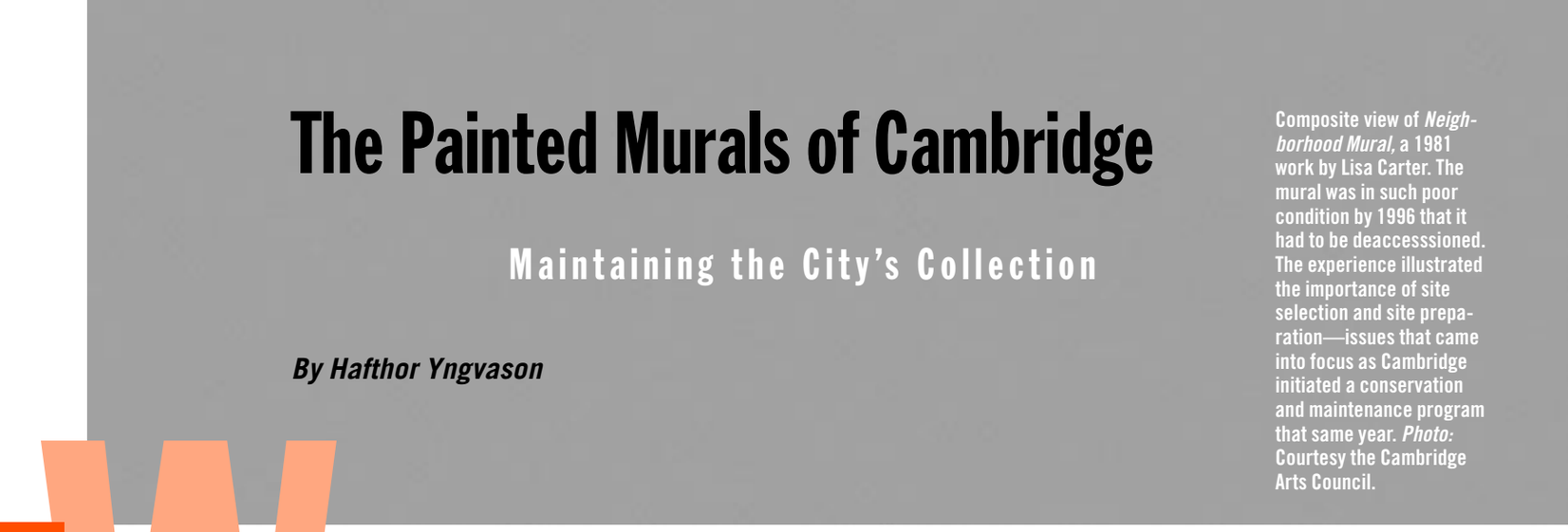
Folgarait: Or not even "work of art." This is material in a certain condition that needs certain attention.

Rainer: *I think you're right. As conservators, if someone comes to us and asks, can you conserve this five-dollar painting from the thrift shop or can you conserve this Rembrandt?—it's not our place to judge what that five-dollar painting may really mean to them. I've worked on murals that I love. I've worked on murals that I haven't loved as much. And that's why, when we did our mural condition survey for L.A., we handed over those documents to historians and architects and the city arts manager to decide. I don't ever feel that I'm the ultimate decision maker. I'm just there to do the work.*

The Painted Murals of Cambridge

Maintaining the City's Collection

By Hafthor Yngvason



Composite view of *Neighborhood Mural,* a 1981 work by Lisa Carter. The mural was in such poor condition by 1996 that it had to be deaccesssioned. The experience illustrated the importance of site selection and site preparation—issues that came into focus as Cambridge initiated a conservation and maintenance program that same year. *Photo:* Courtesy the Cambridge Arts Council.

When the City of Cambridge in Massachusetts adopted a percent-for-art ordinance in 1979 under the auspices of our official art agency, the Cambridge Arts Council, many of its finest murals had already been painted. According to Al Gowan, the Arts Council's first administrator, the mural movement in Cambridge began in the early 1970s, inspired by the success of Summerthing, a city of Boston program that brought the arts to local neighborhoods. By the end of the decade, more than 40 murals were completed in Cambridge—not bad for a city of six and a half square miles.

Murals continued to be commissioned in the 1980s and 1990s, but with the advent of a formal percent-for-art program, more durable materials, such as ceramic tile and mosaic, were emphasized. Only 20 painted murals were commissioned after the 1970s—16 of which still exist. Of the 40 murals painted during the 1970s, only four were extant in 1996 when the Arts Council did the first comprehensive assessment of its public art collection. Today the city's official collection of 135 publicly sited artworks includes only these 20 painted murals; the remaining works are sculpture, stained glass, ceramic, and tile pieces.

Like many public art agencies, the Arts Council, during the first decades of its existence, conserved its artworks on an ad hoc basis. Without a comprehensive view of the collection, some pieces were restored, while others—perhaps more important but lesser-known works—fell apart. Conservation decisions were based on outside pressure and on the availability of funds. No regular maintenance took place. As the collection grew and aged, however, the problems became too demanding for only occasional care. With a city full of murals and sculptures in disrepair, the Arts Council was forced to look for a consistent and sustainable approach. This led to the establishment of a multistepped conservation and maintenance program in 1996.

The first step in our program was a condition assessment by professional conservators of every artwork in the city's collection, followed by restoration of sculptures and murals that were in critical condition, then less-demanding conservation projects, and, finally, routine maintenance for all the artworks. With a small amount of annual funding provided by the city, professional conservators are now hired each spring to inspect the artworks, clean them, remove graffiti, and apply protective coatings. They also provide recommendations for conservation treatment as needed and counsel artists for new commissions.

While the conservation and maintenance program has been of great benefit to the collection, it would be disingenuous to suggest that every step in the process has been uncontroversial or free of compromise.

Problems of the Collection

Many of Cambridge's early murals were developed as temporary solutions to urban blight. Rundown buildings, graffiti-covered security doors, and expanses of brick and cinder block walls were dressed up with brilliant murals without consideration of the works' permanence. In some instances, the instability of the surface was an integral part of the work—as in a dazzling series of mini-murals painted by Andi Dietrich on the crumbling corners of dilapidated buildings—but in most cases the problems were simply ignored. Community-initiated murals were often painted, as the condition assessments have shown, with cheap house paint directly on wood shingles, cinder blocks, and bricks, with minimal attention to durability. No resources were available for expensive surface preparation, such as the repointing of brick walls.

The annual assessment reports also highlighted a pattern of problems with the locations of the murals. Graffiti, chewing gum, bumper sticker adhesive, and paper residues from handbills were found on back wall murals located within arm's reach. In addition, some murals were suggested for placement on a wall with a history of graffiti as a means of deterring the problem. Unfortunately, the result was murals tagged with graffiti. Most of the problems, however, were incidental to ordinary city life—shoe and scuff marks, spatters and abrasions—caused by pedestrians and anything on

wheels, from cars and bicycles to trash bins and pushcarts.

The 1996 condition assessments offered a comparative evaluation of all the artworks so that priorities could be established. In some instances, conservators argued against repainting some murals—if, for example, the substrate needed excessive repairs. But if we had hoped that an independent assessment would provide us with an algorithm for every decision, we had underestimated the complexity of our situation.

We had expected to weigh the murals' physical conditions against a variety of cultural concerns. What we were not prepared for was how frequently the two measures seemed to work together against our interests. Some of the best-loved murals were in deplorable condition, perhaps explained by the spontaneous way they came into being. Many of the works could be "saved" only by re-creating them.

Our basic options may have been clear—often the conservators' recommendations read simply, "deaccession or repaint"—but the choices were not so simple. If a mural is meaningful to a community, should it ever be removed? Should it be replaced with a new one? Should a destroyed mural be re-created? By whom?

Two murals illustrate how the Arts Council addressed these questions. Both are products of the 1970s, inspired by community action, optimism, and changing ideas about citizen involvement in the shaping of neighborhoods.

Two Murals

In 1976 the newly established Arts Council organized a competition for creative, artistic ideas to enhance the city. The winning proposal called for the creation of a mural on a large rear wall of a shopping center. The mural, painted in 1977 by Jeff Oberdorfer and a group of neighborhood residents, is an architectural depiction of triple-decker houses, painted in the style and scale of the abutting residences. It successfully transformed the unsightly wall into an extension of the neighborhood. In 1989 Al Gowan, now a professor at Massachusetts College of Art, and his students added a second mural on the wall, covering 600 more square feet of cinder block with green pastures and a depiction of the estate that had once stood on the site.

A decade later, a new developer bought the building and began renovations. The prospect that the murals would be lost as the wall was repaired was a real concern. With the help of Gowan, the Arts Council was able to convince the new developer to restore the two existing murals and to pay for the addition of a third.

In another Cambridge neighborhood, on the rear wall of a shopping center, is *Beat the Belt*. Painted by Bernard LaCasse, the mural commemorates the citizens who successfully defeated a proposed eight-lane highway project that would have split the city in half. This was one of the great struggles of the 1970s, and it is fittingly represented in a populist image of ordinary people stopping a bulldozer from displacing their neighborhoods.

The mural has been used by the Cambridge public schools to initiate discussion about the importance of an active citizenry and of the freedom to speak out against government action. It is full of lessons about the basic tenets of the social contract, supported by a tangible example that should not be forgotten.

If these two examples illustrate varied functions of murals and varied reasons for retaining them—neighborhood beautification and community action—they also exemplify another complexity of the comprehensive approach to mural conservation. Both murals required conservation far beyond inpainting and consolidation. The Arts Council was left with the question of who was qualified to do the work. One, *Beat the Belt,* was an artist's interpretation of a narrative moment, painted in an accessible but individual style, while the other was an architectural screen of neighboring houses, designed to camouflage an eyesore.

In the first case, we were fortunate to be able to bring LaCasse back to repaint his mural. In the second, we hired a muralist experienced in painting architectural murals of the same scale. An architectural muralist was the appropriate choice, since what

Above: A 1978 minimural painted by Andi Dietrich, one of a series painted by Dietrich on the crumbling corners of dilapidated buildings in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In the case of these murals, the instability of the surface was an integral part of the work. *Photo:* Will Traub. Courtesy the Cambridge Arts Council.

Above right: Bernard LaCasse's 1980 mural *Beat the Belt.* The mural depicts a significant event in Cambridge's recent history—citizen opposition to a proposed highway that would have cut through the middle of the city. After the mural had deteriorated, the city hired the artist to repaint it. *Photo:* Courtesy the Cambridge Arts Council.

Right: A 1977 mural—originally painted by Jeff Oberdorfer and a group of neighborhood residents—is an architectural depiction of triple-decker houses, painted in the style and scale of the abutting residences. The mural, threatened by development two decades later, was ultimately restored by an architectural muralist hired by the Cambridge Arts Council. *Photo:* Courtesy the Cambridge Arts Council.

was important was to maintain the original mural's style. Minor changes in color and graphic detail would not change the meaning of the mural as long as those changes were in keeping with the original.

In addressing the same question with other murals in the collection, we decided, as a general rule, to search for the original artists to repaint their own work. Many of the artists were, fortunately, still active, while others were happy to come out of retirement. Once the artists heard that their works had established an enduring presence in the city, they were eager to bring them back to their original brilliance.

The outcome was not always so successful. *Neighborhood Mural,* a 1981 mural by Lisa Carter on a prominent wall in west Cambridge, was in such poor condition by 1996 that the conservator declared it destroyed. Carter agreed. The brick substrate and the mortar joints were so friable that a new mural would not have lasted through the freeze-thaw cycle of the first winter. The mural had to be deaccessioned, but the experience was educational and illustrative of issues that came increasingly into focus as the conservation and maintenance program developed—namely, the importance of site selection and site preparation.

A Comprehensive Approach

Six years into the conservation and maintenance program, the collection is now in a stable condition, largely because of the comprehensive approach. The benefits of having qualified conservators on board who know the art and monitor its condition from year to year are indisputable. Besides enabling us to respond to vandalism and minor problems in a timely fashion, the cumulative information of their annual assessments has provided a guide to where and how new art would thrive in the city, and this has translated into more careful commissioning practices.

The Cambridge Arts Council now makes the services of professional conservators available to all commissioned artists for advice on materials, fabrication techniques, and preventative measures, as well as on such contextual issues as the work's susceptibility to vandalism, accidental damage, and environmental deterioration. Such measures will not make murals permanent, but they will make the responsibility of maintenance much lighter. Permanence is not the ultimate goal—rather, the goal is reduction of physical deterioration in order to extend the life of a valued work of public art.

Hafthor Yngvason, director of public art at the Cambridge Arts Council, was the editor of* Conservation and Maintenance of Contemporary Public Art, *published in 2002.

Mural Painting and Conservation in the Americas:

A Symposium

By Kristin Kelly

In many respects, murals are an archetypal form of 20th-century art, constituting an important historical record and valued not only as a means of artistic expression but also as a representation of the social and political concerns of individuals and communities. In recognition of the significance of 20th-century mural painting—and the relatively little attention the subject has received—the Getty Research Institute and the Getty Conservation Institute cosponsored a spring 2003 symposium devoted to current research and practice in art history and conservation of 20th-century mural painting in the Americas.

The program of the symposium, which was entitled "Mural Painting and Conservation in the Americas," was organized by Leonard Folgarait, a professor of art history at Vanderbilt University, and Will Shank, former chief conservator of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and now in private practice. Designed to provide a forum for discussion regarding the many meanings and functions of murals, this two-day event, held May 16 and 17, 2003, brought together a variety of disciplines that included art historians, conservators and conservation scientists, muralists, paint manufacturers, community leaders, and legal experts. The group took a holistic and big-picture approach to the subject, with presentations covering the social, artistic, and political dimensions of murals, the value they hold for different constituencies, and the rationale and conservation techniques for ensuring their long-term survival.

As adjunct public programming, a lecture on the conservation of mural paintings in the Chicago public schools opened the symposium on the evening of May 15. The presentation, "Art for the People: The History and Preservation of Chicago's Progressive and WPA-Era Murals," described the long-term Mural Preservation Project, in which the Chicago Conservation Center (CCC) worked to preserve hundreds of murals in the Chicago public schools. Barry Baumann and Heather Becker of the CCC described the hunt for and conservation and restoration of these murals—which are important both as art and as part of the history of Chicago—as well as the partnership forged with the Chicago Board of Education to preserve these historic works. A chance meeting between a teacher at one of the Chicago high schools and Baumann years earlier led the CCC to the project, which has become a model for conservation projects of this type around the country.

This Chicago success story was sharply contrasted two days later with stories of the lack of preservation—and, indeed, deliberate destruction—of many of Chicago's outdoor public murals, as described by John Pitman Weber, a muralist and a professor at Elmhurst College, and Jon Pounds, the executive director of the Chicago Public Art Group. Weber and Pounds attributed the loss of early Chicago outdoor community murals primarily to the short life span of the spaces of urban America and to the murals outlasting the community consensus that they originally reflected and helped to shape.

With the 20th century now history, we can begin to examine with greater perspective the outdoor murals of the century and to discuss the meanings and the values associated with them. Among the symposium topics were interpretation and reinterpretation of well-known and much-analyzed works, the values associated with various murals, analysis of why murals are destroyed, and important current questions surrounding what will be saved and what will not be saved. The symposium's program was organized to achieve a balanced consideration of overarching and philosophical concerns and the more technical and practical issues related to their preservation.

The first day of the symposium was dedicated to the art history of the murals. Anthony Lee, associate professor in the Department of Art and chair of the American Studies Program at Mt. Holyoke College, gave the keynote address, called "Art History. Murals. Boogie," a title intended to convey "something of the lively energy and raucous dance between art history and mural." Focusing on Diego Rivera's monumental composition *Detroit Industry,* painted in the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1932, Lee traced various interpretations of this work through the last three decades, contrasting Realist with Modernist interpretations. He ended by sug-

"Farewell to Rosie the Riveter," a detail from the 1950s section of *The Great Wall of Los Angeles* mural, 1983. *Mural:* © Judith F. Baca and The Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC).

gesting that *Detroit Industry* could be examined in terms of gender, race, and transnationalism, an approach that might lead to seeing the work differently.

Desmond Rochfort, president of Alberta College of Design and Art, discussed "The Aesthetics of Murals and How They Work," drawing primarily on examples in Europe to illustrate his points. Bruce Campbell, assistant professor of modern and classical languages and literature at St. John's University in Minnesota, spoke on "Issues in Patronage: State Sponsorship vs. Grassroots Development," discussing both the legacy of the Mexican school of mural painting and more contemporary mural work. Alicia Azuela, a professor at the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas in Mexico City, spoke on the topic of the "Destruction of Murals," with primary emphasis on David Alfaro Siqueiros and the murals he painted in Los Angeles in 1932, including *América Tropical* (see sidebar).

On the second day of the symposium, Walter Boelsterly Urrutia, director of the Centro Nacional de Conservación y Registro del Patrimonio Artístico Mueble, Mexico City, gave the keynote address, "Mural Technologies: Paintings and Their Conservation." His presentation was devoted to current conservation theory and practice, to legal and ethical considerations, and to the paint materials used to create murals. His comprehensive talk dealt with the history of Mexico's mural paintings, the wide range of media used in Mexican murals, and the many factors that need to be considered in the conservation of murals in Mexico.

Leslie Rainer, a mural conservator and GCI senior project specialist, spoke on "Approaches to the Treatment of Murals in the Americas," putting the conservation of the contemporary murals of Los Angeles in the context of mural conservation generally. Rainer described in detail three approaches: traditional work by conservators, artist and conservator collaborations, and repainting of the mural in part or in toto by the artist (see page 4).

Ann Garfinkle of the law firm of Whiteford, Taylor & Preston in Washington, D.C., spoke on "The Legal and Ethical Considerations of Mural Conservation: Issues and Debates." Garfinkle discussed the U.S. Visual Artists Rights Act and the California Art Preservation Act, highlighted the differences between the two, and placed mural painting and its conservation into a legal context. Garfinkle concluded with advice for muralists and for property owners on how to structure their arrangements in order to avoid a later need for the services of a lawyer.

The final presentations of the second day were made by Mark Golden from Golden Artist Paints, Mame Cohalan from KEIM Mineral Coatings, and V.C. Bud Jenkins from California Polytechnic University, Pomona, who gave presentations on various paint systems used frequently by muralists in outdoor settings.

The impetus behind the symposium was the desire to bring together the many groups invested in the painting and conservation of murals to discuss common concerns and to have the work of each group of professionals involved inform the other groups. By the end of the symposium, the consensus was that this had been achieved.

Concurrent with the symposium, the GCI hosted a meeting of interested conservators, art historians, and nonprofit administrators to consider forming a group dedicated to the inventory and preservation of outdoor murals in the United States, an initiative similar to the one undertaken by Heritage Preservation on outdoor sculpture. It is too soon to know if there will be results from this preliminary and informal gathering, but the symposium did bring new attention and interest to the preservation of this valuable—but somewhat overlooked—segment of public art.

Kristin Kelly is head of Public Programs & Communications at the GCI.

Top: A view of *América Tropical* by David Alfaro Siqueiros shortly after it was completed in 1932. Roberto Berdecio, an associate of Siqueiros, stands in front of the mural. The photograph is part of the Getty Research Institute's collection of materials related to Siqueiros. *Photo:* Courtesy Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Special Collections and Visual Resources, Siqueiros Papers.

Middle: Overall view of *América Tropical* after the removal of the mural's temporary shelter in October 2002. *Photo:* Leslie Rainer.

Right: Kristin Kelly—head of GCI Public Programs & Communications—and Leslie Rainer—a GCI senior project specialist and a wall paintings conservator—examining tar removal test areas in a lower section of *América Tropical*. *Photo:* Bart Bartholomew.

The Conservation of *América Tropical*

The effort to conserve and shelter the 1932 mural *América Tropical,* painted by Mexican artist David Alfaro Siqueiros on the exterior of the Italian Hall in El Pueblo Historical Monument in Los Angeles, took a major step forward in the fall of 2002.

Measuring approximately 18 feet by 80 feet, the mural depicts a crucified Indian amid a tropical landscape of pre-Columbian ruins. One of the revolutionary soldiers in the upper right-hand corner aims his gun at an American eagle, who perches, wings outspread, atop the double crucifix in the center of the composition.

In preparation for a full visual examination of the mural surface to ensure its ability to withstand the construction phase of the project, the previously existing shelter, built of plywood and fiberglass panels, was torn down in late October 2002, exposing the mural for the first time in a decade.

A team of conservators, led by Getty Conservation Institute Senior Project Specialist Leslie Rainer, extensively documented the current condition of the mural and stabilized areas of delaminated plaster. Working with GCI scientists and J. Paul Getty Museum conservators, they collected samples of paint, plaster, metal, and wood for further investigation into the composition of the materials used in the mural and in the painted metal shutters and wooden door that are integrated into the mural design. The samples are being analyzed in the GCI's laboratories. Results from this analysis will help determine methods and materials to be used in the final phase of treatment.

Following the documentation and the conservation work, a team from the Preparation Department of the J. Paul Getty Museum worked with the architectural firm of Pugh + Scarpa to design and install a temporary rigid cover to protect the mural during the construction period.

The Siqueiros mural project is a collaboration of the El Pueblo Historical Monument—a department of the City of Los Angeles—and the Getty Conservation Institute. Funding for this project has been provided by the City of Los Angeles and by generous donations from private foundations and groups of committed individuals—in particular the Friends of Heritage Preservation—as well as by the GCI.

Copán

During the first half of 2003, members of the Institute's Maya Initiative project team continued a variety of activities aimed at developing a conservation strategy for the hieroglyphic stairway at the Maya site of Copán in Honduras. The GCI's work on the stairway—the longest text carved on stone in Central America—is in partnership with the Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia (IHAH).

Through archival research conducted at IHAH, at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University, and at the Laboratory of Anthropology at the Museum of New Mexico, the project team was able to document a large portion of the conservation history of the stairway—from its excavation in the 1890s through its restoration in the 1930s and to its conservation treatment in recent decades.

At Copán, team members carried out treatment trials to test different mortars for repointing (filling of joints between blocks) of the stairway, using mixes of different local limes and aggregates, which have been analyzed in the laboratory at the GCI. The physical characteristics and appearance of the different mortars are being evaluated both on site and in the laboratory, in order to make a recommendation for future repointing of the stairway. Testing of treatments for the surface of the carved blocks was also undertaken to evaluate different cleaning techniques and materials, including those for reduction of previous treatments, as well as several consolidation and stabilization methods for surface flaking and detachment.

In April, the tarp covering the stairway—the fifth since 1985—was replaced by IHAH. Prior to the replacement, the GCI had the opportunity to make recommendations concerning the new tarp and its installation. The removal of the old tarp permitted photographic documentation of stairway condition control blocks in natural light, thereby providing better comparison with earlier and historic photographs.

The conservation of the hieroglyphic stairway is part of the Institute's Maya Initiative, which seeks to advance regional conservation practice and collaboration.

The hieroglyphic stairway at the Maya site of Copán in Honduras, prior to the installation of a new protective tarp shelter in April 2003. *Photo:* Françoise Descamps.

China Principles

The Australian launch of the bilingual translation of the *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China* was held in Melbourne at the Chinese Museum on May 11, 2003. Parliamentary secretary for the environment and heritage of the Australian government, the Honorable Dr. Sharman Stone, officiated. In attendance were Tom Harley, chairman of the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC); Deng Zhonghua, China's cultural attaché in Melbourne; and Martha Demas and Neville Agnew from the GCI.

Following the formal launch, a seminar on the development and application of the China Principles was held in Sydney for local members of Australia ICOMOS. Former AHC Executive Director Sharon Sullivan and Senior Conservation Officer Kirsty Altenburg, key participants in the development of the Principles, participated in the seminar's panel discussion.

The GCI, the Chinese State Administration of Cultural Heritage, and the Australian Heritage Commission worked for several years to develop the China Principles document—national guidelines for heritage conservation practice and management at cultural sites in China (see *Conservation,* vol. 16, no. 2). Workshops held in Australia—where the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter is used extensively to guide practice—played an important role in the process of drafting the Principles.

A publication of China ICOMOS, the bilingual translation was published by the GCI in late 2002. It includes an English-Chinese glossary and extensive commentary on the articles in the charter. As part of the dissemination of the China Principles, copies have been distributed to all national chapters of ICOMOS and to many practitioners and specialists in China and abroad. The bilingual translation is available on the Getty Web site at: www.getty.edu/conservation/resources/china_prin.pdf .

中国文物古迹保护准则

AATA Online

Since its launch as a free online service in June 2002, AATA Online (aata.getty.edu) has undergone a number of enhancements designed to further develop this database as an important research tool for the conservation community.

During the past year, more than 6,000 abstracts have been added, including over 1,900 new abstracts; abstracts published between 1932 and 1955 by the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, and the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution; and over 3,400 abstracts originally published in various *Art and Archaeology Technical Abstracts (AATA)* supplements.

In addition, abstracts from the GCI's annotated bibliography on the management and conservation of archaeological sites—compiled for the 1990 course on the conservation of excavated sites and updated to include literature published through 2000—are being added to AATA Online and will be available as a supplement in October 2003. Source indexes for volume 37, numbers 1–3, are also available and can be found in the "About AATA," "Coverage and Scope" section.

In May 2003, Risa Freeman became manager of AATA Online and Bibliographic Services. Formerly managing editor of *RILM Abstracts of Music Literature,* Freeman will supervise the continuing production of AATA Online while focusing on development of AATA's international network of editors, abstractors, and contributors, in order to extend the database's coverage of worldwide conservation literature. Guidelines for abstractors are now available in Spanish, Italian, German, and French, and they can be found at AATA Online under "About AATA" in the "Contributors" section.

AATA Online, formerly published as *AATA,* is a comprehensive database of more than 100,000 abstracts of literature related to the preservation and conservation of material cultural heritage. This free online resource is a service of the GCI in association with The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works.

RecorDIM Workshop

In May 2003—as part of the GCI's Recording, Documentation, and Information Management Initiative (RecorDIM)—the Institute hosted 12 participants from seven countries at a workshop to develop materials for recording and documentation of cultural heritage sites.

The workshop followed a roundtable held last year at the GCI (see *Conservation*, vol. 17, no. 2), which identified problematic gaps between documentation providers and users. Providers tend to be highly technical practitioners without expertise in cultural heritage, while users are most often conservation managers unfamiliar with current documentation techniques. At the end of the 2002 roundtable, the GCI agreed to take the lead in developing principles, guidelines, and handbooks designed to bridge the information gap between users and providers.

The focus of the May workshop was to clarify the likely users and topics to be covered by the three document types. In the area of principles, participants agreed that an existing document, *Principles for the Recording of Monuments, Groups of Buildings, and Sites,* produced by ICOMOS, adequately establishes the fundamental need for documentation and serves as a useful tool for cultural resource policy makers. In terms of guidelines to aid heritage managers and conservation professionals in making decisions about appropriate documentation methods and in integrating documentation into conservation, workshop participants produced a table of contents and a general outline. The group concluded that technical handbooks focused on specific documentation techniques or topics should be developed by a small team of experts in the specific technique or topic.

The GCI will continue to lead efforts to develop the guidelines and technical handbooks.

The RecorDIM Initiative is a joint project of the GCI, ICOMOS/ISPRS Committee for Documentation of Cultural Heritage (CIPA), and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

Reburial Colloquium

In March 2003, the GCI, the U.S. National Park Service Intermountain Region, and ICCROM organized a colloquium in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the reburial of archaeological sites.

The intent of the colloquium was to gather together professionals from conservation and allied fields who have been involved in planning and implementing reburial strategies or who could contribute to a discussion of reburial as a method of protecting exposed archaeological remains. The colloquium focused on sites in wet-dry environments where fragile substrates, such as earthen and lime plasters and mortars, as well as wood, are subject to rapid decay. The 40 invited participants included professionals from the United States, Europe, Israel, and Mexico.

The colloquium was organized around four themes, ranging from decision making to technical matters. The first theme examined why and how the decision to rebury is made. Case studies on the Laetoli hominid trackway in Tanzania, Chaco Culture National Historical Park in New Mexico, and the Presidio in San Diego, as well as a regional study of policy in the U.S. Southwest, illustrated aspects of the decision to rebury.

The second theme reviewed the status of knowledge on the buried

Participants in a March 2003 colloquium on the reburial of archaeological sites visiting Chaco Culture National Historical Park. *Photo:* Martha Demas.

environment. The objective of the session was to provide insight into the reburial environment in order to inform the design of a reburial and to identify more clearly the research needed to achieve a deeper understanding of reburial conditions.

In theme three, a number of site and regional case studies were presented for discussion, with a view to elucidating how or whether the design created the appropriate environment and responded to the management context. Site and regional case studies included the Rose Theatre in London, Maya stucco friezes in Central America, Bandelier National Park in New Mexico, Catalhyouk in Turkey, and ancient Merv in Turkmenistan. A special panel on the reburial of mosaic pavements was also included.

The fourth theme explored testing and monitoring strategies. Past testing results were presented and proposals for future work offered for critique and discussion. Overviews of monitoring tools and methods and examples of post-reburial monitoring were also presented.

In addition to the sessions, there was a two-day field trip to Chaco Culture National Historical Park and Aztec Ruins National Monument, where extensive planned reburials have been undertaken over the last decade. The site visits were considered important to link theory with practice, stimulate discussion, and bring forth the rationales for, obstacles to, and methods of reburial.

The proceedings of the reburial colloquium will be published in a special issue of the journal *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites,* in cooperation with ICCROM—as were the proceedings of the previous colloquium organized by the GCI, the National Park Service, and ICCROM, *Protective Shelters for Archaeological Sites in the Southwest* (see *Conservation* vol. 16, no. 1). Together these materials will constitute essential references in these two pivotal areas of archaeological site conservation.

Photography Symposium

The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin and the GCI are organizing an international symposium on research related to *View from the Window at Le Gras* (1826)—the world's first photograph—and the work of its creator, Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, to be held at the Ransom Center, November 20–23, 2003.

The symposium—"At First Light: Niépce and the Dawn of Photography"—will include presentations of unpublished results from the first in-depth scientific examination of the first photo (see *Conservation,* vol. 17, no. 2). A number of new research initiatives and ongoing research projects related to the photograph will also be considered. In addition, there will be discussions of the latest historical and art historical research focused on the beginnings of photography.

For further information or to register for the symposium, please visit the At First Light Web site at www.hrc.utexas.edu/AFL , or contact the Harry Ransom Center.

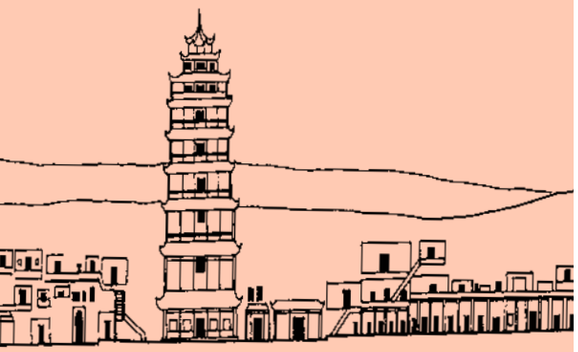
At First Light Symposium
Harry Ransom Center
The University of Texas at Austin
P.O. Box 7219
Austin, TX 78713-7219 U.S.A.
Tel 512-471-9124
Fax 512-232-2152
Email AFL@nora.hrc.utexas.edu

Silk Road Conference Postponed

The GCI and the Dunhuang Academy announce the postponement of *Conservation of Ancient Sites on the Silk Road, Second International Conference on the Conservation of Grotto Sites.* Originally scheduled to take place at the Mogao grottoes, Dunhuang, Gansu Province, China, August 26–30, 2003, the conference has been rescheduled for June 28–July 3, 2004. The post-conference tour to Xinjiang is now scheduled for July 4–13, 2004.

For updated conference information, please visit the Conservation section of the Getty Web site (www.getty.edu/conservation) or contact:

Kathleen Louw
The Getty Conservation Institute
Tel 310 440-6216
Fax 310 440-7709
Email klouw@getty.edu



Getty Graduate Internships

Applications are now being accepted for Getty Graduate Internships for the 2004–2005 program year. The Graduate Internship program offers full-time paid internships for graduate students currently enrolled in a graduate course of study or for students who have recently completed a graduate degree who intend to pursue careers in art museums and related fields of the visual arts, humanities, and sciences.

Internship opportunities at the GCI include:

- learning to organize and implement field campaigns;
- developing laboratory research and its application to practical fieldwork;
- using scientific and analytical tests and equipment to understand processes of material deterioration;
- contributing to the creation of curricula and didactic materials for continuing professional development;
- developing methodologies to identify information resource needs of local and professional communities;
- delivering conservation-related information to a variety of general and professional audiences.

Internships are also offered in the conservation laboratories of the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Getty Research Institute. The application deadline for the 2004–2005 program is January 1, 2004. For further information, including application materials and a complete list of internship opportunities, please visit the Grants section of the Getty Web site at www.getty.edu/grants/education/grad_interns.html . Information is also available by contacting:

Att: Getty Graduate Internships
The Getty Grant Program
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90049-1685 U.S.A.
Tel 310 440-7320
Fax (inquiries only) 310 440-7703
Email gradinterns@getty.edu

Conservation Guest Scholars

In July 2003, the GCI welcomed the first of the 2003–2004 conservation guest scholars.

The Conservation Guest Scholar Program is a residential program that serves to encourage new ideas and perspectives in the field of conservation, with an emphasis on research in the visual arts (including sites, buildings, and objects) and the theoretical underpinnings of the field. This competitive program provides an opportunity for conservation professionals to pursue interdisciplinary scholarly research in areas of general interest to the international conservation community.

Scholars—who are in residence at the GCI for periods of three, six, or nine months—are given housing at a scholar apartment complex, a work space at the GCI, a monthly stipend, and access to the libraries and resources of the Getty. Now in its fourth year, the program has hosted scholars from 19 countries working on wide-ranging projects, indicative of the interdisciplinary nature of conservation.

Applications for the 2004–2005 scholar year are currently being accepted. The application deadline is November 1, 2003. Interested established professionals should visit the Grants section of the Getty Web site at www.getty.edu/grants/research/scholars/conservation.html for information on the program and on application procedures. Information is also available by contacting:

Attn: Conservation Guest Scholar Grants
The Getty Grant Program
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90049-1685 U.S.A.
Tel 310 440-7374
Fax (inquiries only) 310 440-7703
Email researchgrants@getty.edu

2003–2004 Conservation Guest Scholars

Denis Byrne, Manager, Research Unit, Cultural Heritage Division, New South Wales, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Hurstville, Australia

He will conduct research on "Religious Value—Asia and Australia."

January 2004–June 2004

Gerhard Eggert, Head, Study Program "Object Conservation," Department of Cultural Heritage Conservation, State Academy of Art and Design, Stuttgart, Germany

While at the GCI he will work on a textbook entitled *Iron Conservation and Corrosion.*

October 2003–March 2004

Jane Lennon, Adjunct Professor, Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia

She will pursue research on "Cultural Landscapes: Their Designation and Condition Monitoring."

October 2003–December 2003

Alice Paterakis, Head Conservator, Agora Excavations and Museum, American School of Classical Studies at Athens

She will work on "Problems of Bronze Storage in Museums."

December 2003–May 2004

Hans-Jürgen Schwarz, Research Scientist and Project Coordinator, North German Center for Material Science of Cultural Property, Hannover, Germany

He will pursue research on "Salt Damage on Porous Materials."

September 2003–November 2003

Daniel Torrealva, Principal Professor, Department of Engineering, Catholic University of Peru, Lima

He will research "Seismic Strengthening of Stone Masonry in Architectural Heritage."

September 2003–February 2004

Isabelle Vinson, Editor in Chief, *Museum International,* Sector for Culture, UNESCO, Paris

She will work on "The Concept of International Heritage: International Values versus Global Market Forces."

July 2003–August 2003

Antoine Wilmering, Professor, Wooden Objects Conservation, Graduate Institute of Conservation of Cultural Relics, Tainan National College of Arts, Tainan, Taiwan

He will work on "Historic Developments in Furniture Restoration and Conservation."

June 2003–September 2003

Fall Lectures

The GCI announces its fall 2003 schedule for "Conservation Matters: Lectures at the Getty"—a public series examining a broad range of conservation issues from around the world. Lectures are held monthly on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Harold M. Williams Auditorium at the Getty Center. Events are free, but reservations are required. To make a reservation or for further information, visit the Getty Web site (www.getty.edu/conservation/activities/). Reservations can also be made by calling 310 440-7300.

The Retablo for the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels

October 16, 2003

John Griswold, founder of Griswold Conservation Associates, LLC, will provide an overview of the history of the retablo, from its dedication in 1687 in Spain to its current display in the Los Angeles cathedral.

The Impact of Modern Paints

November 20, 2003

Thomas Learner, conservation scientist at Tate, will address issues surrounding the conservation of modern paint materials, which have been available to artists since the 1950s.

A Guide to the Preventive Conservation of Photograph Collections

By Bertrand Lavédrine

More than 30 years of research into the preservation of photographic collections have led to a better understanding of the fragility of these images and the means by which to preserve them. A resource for the photographic conservator, conservation scientist, and curator, as well as for the professional collector, *A Guide to the Preventive Conservation of Photograph Collections* synthesizes both the enormous amount of research that has been completed to date and the international standards that have been established on the subject.

The book, originally published in French, opens with a description of the principal forms of deterioration in photographs. It surveys the variety of containers used to house photographs and the environmental conditions each is meant to improve. The book discusses the maintenance of photographic collections and the precautions that must be taken in exhibiting them. Special attention is given to the digital technology and innovative techniques available to manage a photographic collection and ensure its longevity.

Bertrand Lavédrine is director of the Centre de Recherches sur la Conservation des Documents Graphiques (CRCDG), a research center in Paris dedicated to the preservation of paper documents, prints, films, and photographs.

312 pages, 9 5/8 x 7 1/2 inches
128 color and 15 b/w illustrations
ISBN 0-89236-701-6, paper, $45.00

Personal Viewpoints: Thoughts about Paintings Conservation

Edited by Mark Leonard

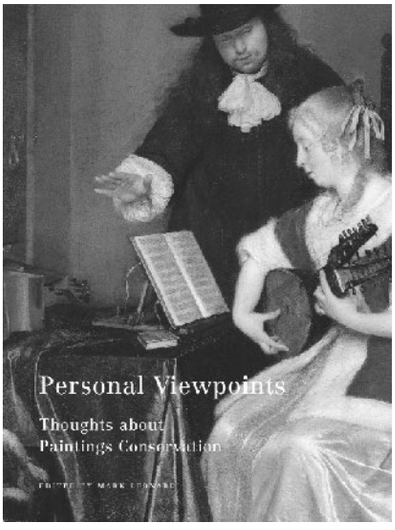
Bringing innovative scientific techniques to an aesthetic endeavor, paintings conservators face countless decisions as they implement a course of treatment for each picture in their care.

The papers in this book—originally presented at a seminar organized by the Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, and the Getty Conservation Institute—explore the values, assumptions, and goals that shape the work of paintings conservators. Six conservators, three curators, and a conservation scientist candidly reflect on the challenges in approaching specific works of art. Each conservator describes a successful conservation effort, as well as a project that, in retrospect, might have been approached differently. Their insights, the responses of the curators and conservation scientist, and the panel discussions contribute to a thoughtful analysis of the ever-evolving art and science of paintings conservation.

Mark Leonard is conservator of paintings at the Getty Museum. Contributors include David Bomford, senior restorer of paintings at the National Gallery, London; Philip Conisbee, senior curator of European paintings at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, director of conservation at the Whitney Museum of American Art and founding director of the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art at Harvard University Art Museums;

Andrea Rothe, formerly senior conservator for special projects at the Getty Museum; Ashok Roy, head of the scientific department of the National Gallery, London; Scott Schaefer, curator of paintings at the Getty Museum; Zahira Véliz, freelance conservator and independent art historian; Jørgen Wadum, chief conservator at the Royal Cabinet of Paintings, Mauritshuis, The Hague; and John Walsh, director emeritus of the Getty Museum.

128 pages, 7 1/2 x 10 inches
53 color and 20 b/w illustrations
ISBN 0-89236-698-2, paper, $29.95



All GCI books can be ordered online by visiting
www.getty.edu/bookstore .

Tribute

Roberto Lopez Bastida

On June 11, 2003, the field of architectural preservation lost one of its most passionate and devoted practitioners. Roberto Lopez Bastida, director of the Office of the Conservator in Trinidad de Cuba in Cuba, passed away in Havana after a rapid bout with bacterial meningitis. He was 45.

Roberto—or "Macholo," as he was known to everyone—was a lifelong resident of Trinidad de Cuba—a Caribbean port town that, together with its surrounding Valley of the Sugar Mills, was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1988. A graduate of the University of Santa Clara and Havana's National Center for Conservation, Restoration, and Museology, Macholo was the region's chief architect and conservator since 1983 and an adjunct professor of architecture at the University of Santa Clara since 2000. Outspoken, gregarious, and kinetic, he was a man whose personal and professional life revolved around the conservation of the cobbled streets and earthen buildings of the city where he was born. He was a staunch proponent of the revitalizing abilities of architectural preservation and an expert in all aspects of his city's culture and history—from the unique African traditions of its slave ancestry, to the composition of its 18th- and 19th-century vernacular architecture. Recognizing the breadth of his knowledge, the GCI invited Macholo to participate in the 1996 Pan American course on the preservation of earthen architecture jointly sponsored by the GCI, ICCROM, and CRATerre-EAG. The following year he was invited back as an adjunct professor.

Macholo—who is survived by his wife, son, and two daughters—will be remembered with affection and admiration by friends and colleagues, and with devotion by the residents of his beloved Trinidad.

William Ginell

In August, William Ginell, one of the GCI's longest-serving staff members, retired from his position as senior scientist. During his nearly 20-year tenure at the Institute, Ginell worked on a variety of projects, including identifying minimally abrasive materials for removal of tarnish from silver, developing a nondestructive method for determining subsurface defects in stone, conducting seismic studies of adobe and stone structures, and determining an acceptable storage environment for the Dead Sea Scrolls. In addition to his scientific research, Ginell was instrumental in the design of the laboratories at the GCI's former Marina del Rey facility.

Ginell intends to spend his retirement traveling, consulting, and working on a variety of long-delayed projects.

Wilbur Faulk

After more than 18 years with the Getty Trust, Wilbur Faulk retired in April. Faulk began his career at the Getty as head of security for the Museum, a position he later held for the entire Trust. For the last three years, he was a senior project manager with the GCI. While at the Institute, he worked with governments and cultural institutions throughout the world on issues of security and disaster preparedness through projects such as the Latin American Consortium, as well as comprehensive security seminars for major cultural institutions in Russia, Germany, and the United States.

He leaves the Getty to enter the private sector, where he will be providing consulting and security services for museums, libraries, and performing arts centers.

David Scott

David Scott, the GCI senior scientist who has headed up the Institute's Museum Research Lab, resigned from his position, effective in August, to accept the post of director of the UCLA/Getty master's degree program in archaeological and ethnographic conservation. Scott will also join the faculty of UCLA as professor of art history and archaeology.

During his 16-year tenure at the GCI, Scott provided analytical and technical support to the conservation services of the Getty Museum. He also conducted research on metals (including Greek, Roman, and Renaissance bronzes) and in areas such as pigments, furniture, and historic photographs.

The master's program in archaeological and ethnographic conservation is a joint effort of the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA and the Getty Trust. For further information, please visit the program's Web site at www.ioa.ucla.edu/conservation.htm .

Mary Hardy

Senior Project Specialist, Field Projects

Dennis Keeley

Joy Keeney

Research Lab Associate, Science

Dennis Keeley

Born in San Diego, the third of 11 children, Mary spent her early years in Hawaii before her family returned stateside and settled in a Los Angeles suburb. As a child she enjoyed literature, art, math, and, later, Spanish. After high school—where she contemplated political cartooning as a career—she entered U.C. Berkeley, the school she had wanted to attend ever since first seeing it at the age of 10. After her freshman year, she lived and worked in France and Spain for a year before returning to Berkeley, where she majored in French.

The year in Europe—and subsequent summers in France—sparked an interest in art history and architecture, and several years after graduating she went back to Berkeley to get a master's degree in architecture. She followed this with a postgraduate program in Siena, Italy, on architecture and urban design for historic cities. Shortly thereafter, she married Michael Corbett, an architectural historian. She took a year off after the birth of her daughter Anna, then worked for several firms, consulting on historic architecture. In 1988 the family moved from Berkeley to New York, where Mary earned a master's degree in historic preservation from Columbia University. In 1990, before returning west, she went to Rome to do architectural conservation at the archaeological site of Trajan's Market.

Hired by the Architectural Resources Group in San Francisco, Mary spent the next five years primarily surveying and assessing historic structures at the Presidio. In addition, she was project conservator for several buildings at Stanford University. In 1992 her role as "mom" expanded with the birth of her son John.

In 1995 Mary joined Siegel & Strain Architects, where she served as the firm's conservation consultant, assessing preservation needs of structures slated for renovation. These ranged from historic farm structures to U.C. Berkeley buildings, including Memorial Stadium. In addition, she worked as a freelance conservator on historic places such as Mesa Verde in Colorado.

Desiring more international work, she joined the GCI in 2001 as a senior project specialist. Early on, she managed the GCI's El Salvador Earthquake Relief Project, assisting authorities in training and planning to stabilize and repair damaged monuments—work she found particularly gratifying. Now the GCI's project manager for Project Terra, Mary is working on the development of a field project component for this collaborative project focused on earthen architecture conservation.

Although born in California, Joy spent the first half of her childhood in Hawaii, which included life on a Kauai commune until the age of three. Her mother, a trained classical pianist, started performing with local bands and ultimately moved Joy and her younger brother back to Los Angeles, where she could better pursue a music career. The move was a culture shock for Joy, but it also brought her closer to her grandparents. Her grandmother, a music professor at USC, and her grandfather, the head of a seminary, gave her both inspiration and encouragement.

Joy had thought she would work in the arts, but at Pierce College in Los Angeles, she discovered that she had an aptitude for math and logic, as well as for geology and chemistry. After transferring to U.C. Davis, she majored in environmental biology and management, and during her last year at college she worked as a soil scientist on a project for the National Forest Service. After graduation, she did a summer internship with the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, working on plant identification and restoration.

During the next year, she was employed part-time as a public school science teacher until landing a full-time job with an environmental laboratory. Over the next two and a half years, she sharpened her laboratory skills, particularly in gas chromatography (GC). When the laboratory closed in 1998, it was her experience with GC that landed her a temporary position in the GCI's analytical lab—a position that ultimately became a regular one.

Since coming to the Institute, Joy has particularly enjoyed working on identification of plant gums and on analysis of binding media in paint samples from the Mogao grottoes in China, research that utilizes her knowledge of plants. She has also enjoyed working with the GCI's science interns, who come from around the world. In addition to her current work on the Institute's modern paint research project, she has developed a research project of her own—working with an artist to try to reproduce the ancient Hawaiian technique of making cloth from bark indigenous to Hawaii.

Joy is earning a master's degree in biology from California State University, Northridge, focusing on the biodeterioration of cultural heritage. In her spare time, she writes poetry, a sample of which was published in a Getty staff publication featuring the literary talents of Getty employees.