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**CONSERVATION
PERSPECTIVES**
THE GCI NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023
THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE
FOR COLLECTIONS

A Note from the Director



Photo: Anna Flavin, GCI.

Heraclitus, the ancient Greek philosopher, is quoted by Plato in one of his Socratic dialogues as saying, “Everything changes and nothing stands still.” In our own time, we are experiencing rapid climate change, an accelerating digital revolution, and the rise of artificial intelligence—not to mention the ramifications of a multiyear global pandemic. These are combined with events more common to history, such as political upheavals and war. Our world is indeed changing—and at a lightning pace.

Change is coming too, to the world of cultural heritage. Collecting institutions must contend with challenges related to reaching new and more diverse audiences, the push for the restitution of objects, and new limitations on resources. In some places institutions are grappling with war. In many places they confront climate change itself. And in the face of all this, the skill sets necessary for those in collections care need rethinking and retooling.

In light of these circumstances, we sought with this edition to examine how the landscape in the care and presentation of cultural heritage collections is changing and the implications of those changes for conservation. In her feature article, Alison Heritage of ICCROM focuses on strategic foresight and how the cultural heritage sector and the conservation field can use it to anticipate and respond to evolving needs by incorporating approaches, tools, and skills that help envision possible futures. Accompanying the feature is a short article by Stavroula Golfomitsou, the head of GCI Collections, describing the new approach our Col-

lections department is taking in response to this changing landscape. Stavroula also worked with *Conservation Perspectives* editor Jeffrey Levin as a guest coeditor on this edition.

Our three shorter articles encompass a range of topics, all connected to challenges in heritage care. Elis Marçal, president of the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers’ Organisation and a private conservator, describes recent European efforts to reconsider and more clearly delineate the skills, knowledge, and attitudes of those working in the heritage sector. Terence Besaka, coordinator of Collections in Storage at the National Museum of Cameroon, outlines in his article the ways that conditions at his institution exemplify some of the issues many museums in Africa cope with. And Ihor Poshyvailo, director of the Maidan Museum in Kyiv and cofounder of the Ukrainian Heritage Emergency Response Initiative, describes the heroic efforts to preserve and protect his nation’s cultural heritage in the face of the Russian invasion, which has included intentional targeting of heritage.

Finally, our roundtable features a lively and provocative exchange among Sujeong Lee (head of the Research and Development Office at the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites), Wayne Modest (director of content of the Wereldmuseum, the Netherlands), and Marina Pugliese (head of Public Art and director of the Museum of Cultures of Milan). Their conversation drives home the challenge—and absolute necessity—of envisioning a different future regarding what we preserve, how we present it, and how conservation as a field can do more to help us understand the value and meaning of what we collect.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Whalen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Timothy P. Whalen

John E. and Louise Bryson Director

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VOLUME 38 • NUMBER 2 • FALL 2023



ON THE COVER

A section of *Our Colonial Inheritance*, a permanent exhibition at the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. The exhibition looks at the Dutch colonial history and presence in Indonesia, Suriname, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, and many other countries, showing how colonialism shaped the world today, and how people endured it. By presenting colonial history as an unfinished past, the exhibition aims to contribute to public debate. Photo: Kirsten van Santen. Courtesy of the Wereldmuseum, Amsterdam.

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HERITAGE AND FORESIGHT

Engaging with the Future through the Past

BY ALISON HERITAGE

Heritage conservation is founded on the belief that its purpose is to safeguard and transmit heritage for the benefit of current *and future* generations.¹ This commitment to people not yet born forms the bedrock of conservation's ethical principles and is used to confer moral authority to its practice. And yet, given how much time is spent discussing conservation principles, extraordinarily little time is devoted to thinking deeply about future generations: what the world might be like for them, what their needs and preferences might be, and what the very notion of heritage might mean for them.

The shift toward a more teleological perspective of heritage focuses on ways it benefits people and contributes to sustainability. This much-needed and important development moves matters beyond values-based and people-centered considerations of *what*

to preserve and *whom* to involve, and toward outcomes achieved by doing so—focusing attention on the ends as well as the means of conserving heritage. Connecting heritage to sustainability explicitly places these ends in the future as well as the present.

Much has been said about how heritage contributes to environmental sustainability, but we should not underestimate the value of its fundamental contribution to social sustainability, as it is here, through underpinning a sense of our common humanity, that heritage has much to offer. Sustainable development depends on the ability of people to collaborate as a global community, since no one country or community can address the challenges we face in isolation. This is encapsulated in the United Nations Agenda 2030's guiding principle: "Leave no one behind."² As the embodiment of our collective memories, cultures, and values, cultural heritage in many ways strengthens and binds diverse societies together, helping to support a sense of belonging, mutual understanding, and trust. Therefore, safeguarding our cultural heritage in all its diversity is vital to achieving sustainability. Indeed, from a futures perspective, preserving cultural heritage's potential to be (re-)created, (re)used, and (re)interpreted afresh is key so that it can inspire and sustain future generations in new ways. However, in a rapidly changing and uncertain global environment the task of conserving heritage requires long-term thinking to build sustainable strategies. Hence, we need foresight.

1. In many foundational conservation texts, emphasis is placed on future generations as beneficiaries. For example, the Venice Charter preamble (ICOMOS 1964) states: "The common responsibility to safeguard them **for future generations** is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity." Similarly, the 1972 World Heritage Convention refers to future generations with regard to the responsibilities of state parties: "the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation, and transmission **to future generations** of the cultural and natural heritage" (UNESCO 1972, Article 4).

2. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

3. It is important to distinguish between foresight and the more commonly known practice of forecasting, which attempts to make definitive future predictions based on past trajectories. Forecasting typically only considers short-term horizons as it relies heavily on assumptions that things will stay the same or will evolve in predictable ways.





WHAT IS FORESIGHT?

Foresight is a philosophical and practical approach to examining the future. It seeks to look out over the longer term in a systematic and structured manner, extending time horizons from decades to even a century ahead. Critically, foresight is founded on the premise that the future is unknowable and multiple, as it can unfold in countless different ways in different contexts (for this reason, foresight literature typically refers to plural “futures” rather than a singular “future”). Consequently, foresight does not seek to predict the future, but rather to raise awareness of *different possible* futures and to stimulate deeper thinking that can lead to new insights. In this way, foresight strengthens our capacities for anticipation and preparedness for change.³

Foresight sits within the wider domain of *futures studies* within which two key branches are particularly relevant to heritage: *strategic foresight* and *critical futures*.⁴ Strategic foresight is primarily concerned with the study of the future for planning purposes. Although not mainstream, it is well established, with origins dating back to the Second World War. Since then, it has been used by governments and corporations to develop policy and strategy. Its primary aim is to reveal a wider set of possibilities than those normally considered in day-to-day operations, for the purpose of

guiding decisions and actions. Hence, strategic foresight is well suited to strategy development, helping organizations be more proactive toward change beyond simply responding to threats. It employs a wide diversity of methods, the more well-known of which include horizon scanning, Delphi consultations, SWOT analysis, visioning, driver mapping, and scenarios.⁵

By contrast, critical futures is a more experimental, inventive approach that explores how we think about the future and why. By diving deeper into our underlying worldviews and assumptions it exposes the peculiarities of our thinking, such as presumed universals and the entrenched nature of some of our perspectives.⁶ Futurist scholarship also studies the history of the future—specifically, the ways our ideas of the future have changed over time.⁷ Thus, futures studies can contribute to our understanding of both the future *and* the past. In challenging our thinking and offering opportunities to creatively explore the future, both strategic foresight and critical futures allow new possibilities for heritage—to emerge.

FORESIGHT PRACTICE IN HERITAGE

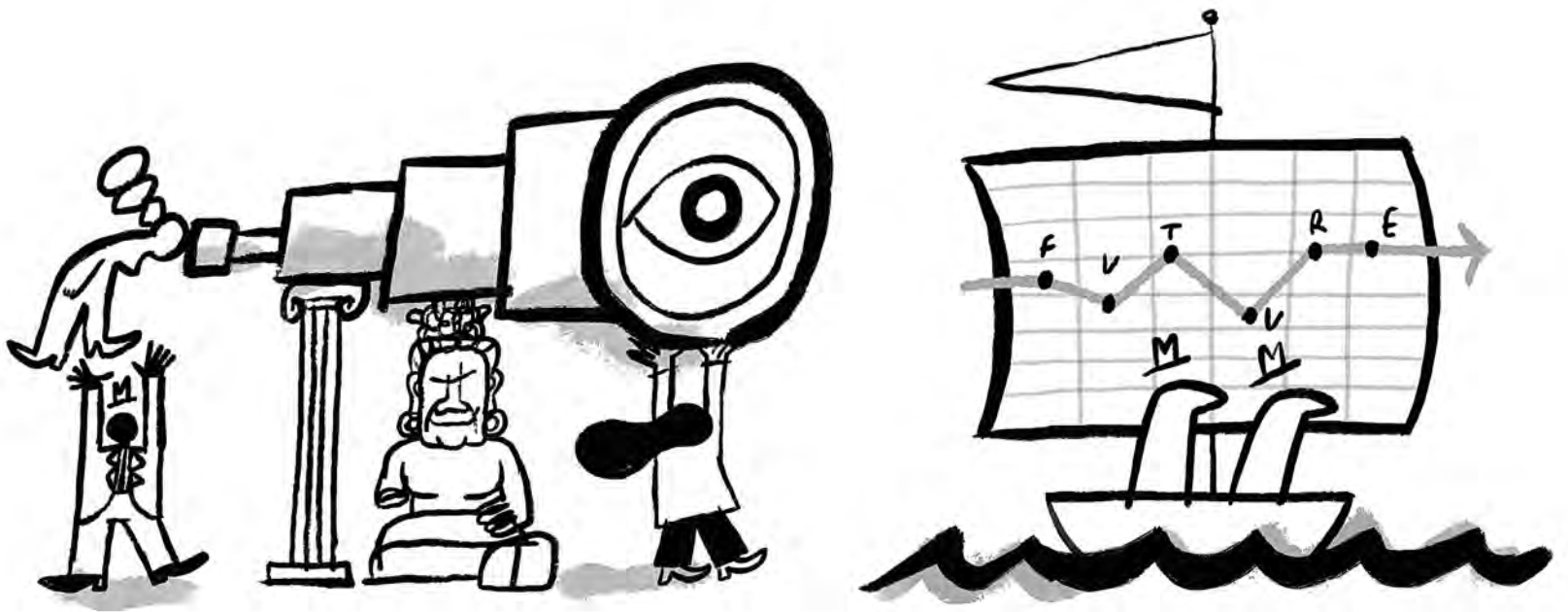
In recent years we have seen the establishment of the UNESCO

4. Richard Sandford and May Cassar, “Heritages of Futures Thinking: Strategic Foresight and Critical Futures,” in Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Högborg, eds., *Cultural Heritage and the Future* (London, Routledge, 2020), 245–63.

5. A good description of these and other techniques can be found in United Kingdom Cabinet Office and Government Office for Science, *The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight Across UK Government*, Edition 1.0 (2017), 28: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/futures-toolkit-for-policy-makers-and-analysts>. See also: <https://foresightguide.com/foresight-glossary/>; John M. Smart and the Foresight U and FERN teams, *The Foresight Guide: Anticipating, Creating, and Leading in the 21st Century* (Foresight University, 2023): <https://www.foresightguide.com/>

6. Sohail Inayatullah, “Co-creating Educational Futures: Contradictions between the Emerging Future and the Walled Past” in *Education Research and Foresight Working Papers 27* (UNESCO, June 2020): <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373581>

7. Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Högborg, “Introduction: Cultural Heritage as a Futuristic Field” in Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Högborg, eds., *Cultural Heritage and the Future* (London: Routledge, 2020); Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Högborg, “Why Cultural Heritage Needs Foresight” (*Heritage for the Future, Science for Heritage*, 2022): https://www.foresightresearch-hub.eu/app/uploads/2022/05/HOLTORF_Hogberg.pdf



Some of the steps in engaging in foresight include looking toward future opportunities, mapping out possibilities, and considering alternative futures. Graphics: © ICCROM.

Chair on Heritage Futures at Linnaeus University, Sweden, and the Chair of Heritage Evidence Foresight and Policy at the UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage, University College London, as well as foresight activities such as the Heritage Futures project⁸ and strategic foresight work commissioned by Historic England.⁹ All these developments indicate foresight as an emerging field in heritage conservation.

In 2021 ICCROM launched its Foresight Initiative to explore how foresight techniques can improve organizational strategy development, with a view to embedding foresight thinking and processes within ICCROM’s organizational planning and culture. A preliminary internal “Foresight Audit”¹⁰ highlighted key foresight competencies and deficiencies, and revealed what might be common for many institutions in the not-for-profit sector—that while the organization has notable strengths in visioning, and substantial networks for information gathering, structural processes were lacking to integrate foresight within long-term planning.

As a follow-up, a global horizon scan was undertaken to gather a heritage-relevant evidence base on which to build a more systematic organizational foresight approach. The scan explored the potential future impact of major external factors spanning political, economic, environmental, societal, technological, and legal dimensions over a fifteen-year horizon. The outcome of this exercise will inform the development of ICCROM’s next strategic cycle.¹¹

A further project has explored how different fields are using strategic foresight. We have conducted a review of future-oriented literature spanning sectors, such as the environment, economics,

health, and education, as well as arts and culture, and heritage. This study, undertaken as part of the EU Alliance for Research on Cultural Heritage in Europe (ARCHE) project, is being used to develop a new strategic heritage research and innovation agenda in Europe.¹²

THE VALUE OF FORESIGHT

These explorations into strategic foresight have been eye-opening. While the Foresight Initiative is in an early stage, it is already clear that in addition to bringing insight, rigor, and structure to organizational planning, foresight offers other significant advantages. First and foremost, it helps us engage better with uncertainty by enhancing our ability as individuals and as organizations to confront change. The future is unknowable, which makes thinking about it not only intellectually challenging but somewhat unsettling. However, in providing a structure for such thinking, foresight helps us address our fear of the unknown and encourages us to engage with the future in a creative and even playful manner.

Through probing assumptions and underlying worldviews, foresight can also help us realize ways of doing things better, revealing deeper conceptual barriers that may hold us back. The creation of ontologies helps make the world appear less confusing and more manageable, but it is important to recognize that these are intellectual constructs. A notable example is the conceptual and administrative division between cultural heritage and the natural environment, which is now gradually being replaced with a more holistic culture/nature perspective. Further examples are the ways

8. Rodney Harrison et al., *Heritage Futures: Comparative Approaches to Natural and Cultural Heritage Practices* (London: UCL Press, 2020).

9. See <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/threats/foresight-and-the-historic-environment/> and the *Strategic Foresight Toolkit* commissioned by the American Alliance of Museums: <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/toolkits/strategic-foresight-toolkit/>

10. This was done using an adapted version of the Foresight Alliance’s *Foresight Maturity Model*, focusing on leadership, scanning, planning, and visioning. See: <http://www.foresightalliance.com/resources/>

11. Alison Heritage, A. Iwasaki, and G. Wollentz, *Anticipating Futures for Heritage* (ICCROM, forthcoming).

12. For information about the ARCHE project see: <https://www.heritageresearch-hub.eu/homepage/arche/>. Publication of the ARCHE foresight study results, via the ICCROM website, is anticipated by next year.



heritage is often considered separate to contemporary culture, and the distinctions drawn between humanities and sciences within conservation research. It is clear that we operate within many, perhaps unrecognized, self-created boundaries. While not the only means to look beyond accepted norms, foresight can be useful for seeing and doing things differently.

By nature, we are all conditioned to see and interpret the world according to our biases, the majority of which we are often unaware of. It is only through confronting our perspectives with those of others that we start to realize the peculiarities of our worldviews. For this reason, the success of any foresight exercise rests on the people it engages, and in particular, on their dissimilarities. For example, our experience was that the possible futures imagined by a diverse group revealed creative links and different scales of analysis, switching among the local, national, transnational, and global in a manner not possible with a homogeneous group. This is useful for envisioning a broader role for heritage—particularly regarding well-being and sustainable development. We also discovered that placing discussions in the future provides a less confrontational space for thinking creatively around what might be possible, moving beyond the constraints that typically arise when conversations are rooted in the present and are prey to rigid thinking. In this way, foresight offers a constructive route to reevaluating the status quo. Indeed, foresight is inherently about the present. A trope often encountered is the statement that foresight helps us “shape the future.” However, given that we can only act in the present, it is more accurate to view foresight as a way of using the future to shape the present, informing the decisions and actions we take in the here and now to drive transformative change.

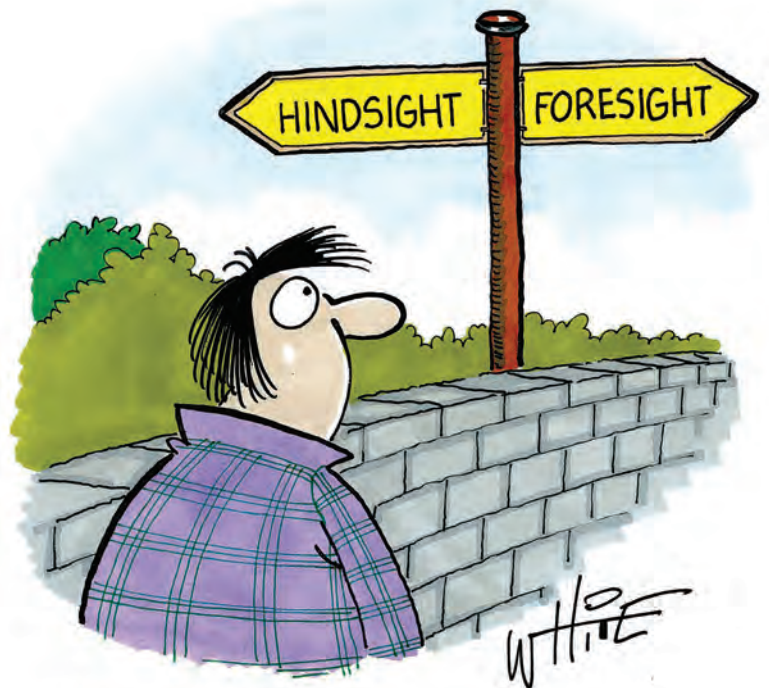
Taking action is vital. The heritage sector needs to engage seriously with foresight for two reasons: to make good on its expressed commitment to the future through genuine, critical reflection; and to build the resilience and future viability of heritage organizations so that they can play their part in contributing toward more desirable futures. However, to integrate

futures thinking into heritage practice requires leadership, notably by organizations willing to trial methods and share their experiences. This would not only provide inspiration for others, but also help develop foresight resources tailored to the heritage context. At the same time, training is needed to build capacities for such futures leadership, as well as research—particularly in critical futures—to expand horizons in heritage thinking and practice. This is particularly important for heritage conservation to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world. Finally, strategic outreach to futurists beyond heritage will be key, not only to enrich heritage futures work, but also to integrate heritage perspectives into wider foresight practice, since this contributes to shaping policy and strategy in other areas such as education, health, and the environment.

ICCROM launched its Foresight Initiative not only to trial foresight methods for its own purposes, but also to explore the wider potential of futures thinking for the heritage sector. Our hope is that sharing this experience may inspire others to embark on their own foresight journey, encouraging its embrace within the heritage field. Taking the long view expands horizons, and foresight is key to becoming more connected to what heritage can offer society and how we can best serve current and future needs. In doing so, we not only abide by conservation’s guiding principles, but put these into practice to proactively shape more positive futures through heritage.

Alison Heritage is project manager of Strategic Planning and Research at ICCROM in Rome.

Acknowledgments: The author expresses her thanks to the many colleagues who have fed this thinking and contributed to the ICCROM Foresight Initiative.



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THE EVOLVING GCI COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

BY STAVROULA GOLFOMITSOU

THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE BROUGHT INTO SHARP focus the need for transformative change across all sectors of society. Within the limits of conservation practice, where our remit remains largely connected to the preservation of culture through its material manifestations, some challenges are easier to address than others. Relaxing environmental regimes in museum exhibition and storage spaces can contribute toward efforts to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. However, entrenched socioeconomic issues, such as poverty, inequality, and the legacies of colonialism, are areas in which we can and should do more, starting with reeducating

ourselves—and reconsidering the larger picture. The notion of what a museum is and does—its role in society and its educational mission—is changing. In turn, we also need to reexamine conservation practice, to place it within the bigger context, and to align its goals to address current and future societal needs.

In line with GCI's mission to advance conservation practice, we have begun reflecting on the ways we consider, conserve, access, and use museum collections. How can we be better in what we do? Are we focusing on pressing or emerging priorities, and how are these meaningfully identified? Since I joined GCI Collections in September 2022, we have embarked on a journey of understanding how to address these questions.



A gallery in *Our Colonial Inheritance*, an exhibition at the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. The exhibition's focus is on the Dutch colonial past and how it still resounds today in social inequity. With the exhibition, the Tropenmuseum aims to help raise awareness about the social structures and relationships that were introduced alongside colonialism, informing visitors and inspiring them to contribute to a more just world. Photo: Kirsten van Santen. Courtesy of the Wereldmuseum, Amsterdam.

GCI Collections sits at the intersection of the natural and social sciences, engineering, the creative arts, and the humanities. As an evolving department, the notion of interdisciplinarity and collaboration will underpin our future directions, to be strengthened as we diversify our knowledge base and cultural perspectives. With this as an objective, the Collections department will focus on knowledge generation through research, but also on connecting and building knowledge through different types of activities—think tank meetings, workshops, and formal and informal explorations of traditional practices and new approaches. Through innovative projects and new collaborations with individuals and organizations from areas outside our usual sphere of work, we will endeavor to enrich our perspectives and seek to identify wider overarching themes for our work that will allow us to reduce the silos that exist within the conservation field, fostering increased awareness of the shared issues that cut across conservation’s diverse subdisciplines. These themes include diverse approaches to the care and use of collections from emerging to established; traditional and unconventional collections that can reach wider audiences, public art collections, archives, and libraries; and the role and meaning of conservation practices within different

cultures with different traditions. These primarily research-based approaches aim to strengthen the dynamic relationships between collections and their diverse stakeholders. Within this, sustainability is a core theme, envisioned in all of its dimensions to encompass environmental, economic, *and* social sustainability.

Collections ground us in an understanding of our evolution and humanity and give us insight into who we are as human beings. Collections can bring people together and be a vehicle for exploring humanity’s commonalities instead of its differences. They can be utilized to bridge perspectives across cultures, communities, and people. Accordingly, conservation also needs to go beyond the current professional boundaries to enrich and facilitate the use of collections by different audiences. Conservation, as a wider field of inquiry with active networks of professionals and communities alike, has a positive role to play in enhancing the participatory interpretation of cultural heritage—and the GCI Collections department will engage vigorously in that effort.

Stavroula Golfomitou is head of Collections at the Getty Conservation Institute.



A section of *Global Milan: The World Seen from Here*, an exhibition at MUDEC, the Museum of Cultures of Milan. A relatively new museum, MUDEC’s mission includes “the research, the collection, and the preservation of non-European cultures,” the “public participation in the enhancement of the past, present, and future heritage of the museum,” and “the promotion of an active dialogue with all the involved communities.” Photo: Carlotta Coppo. Courtesy of MUDEC.

RETHINKING TRAINING IN CONSERVATION PRACTICE

Contributions from a European Perspective

BY ELIS MARÇAL

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, THE EXECUTIVE ARM of the EU, is investing in a series of research initiatives to address emerging, changing, or evolving sectors, focusing on assessing professional challenges and skill needs. These are the Blueprint projects,¹ to be built on previous initiatives and evidence of sectoral change; they aim at providing recommendations for upskilling and re-skilling the European workforce and to set professional requirements.

Heritage is among the sectors, and CHARTER²—the European Cultural Heritage Skills Alliance (2021–24)—is part of this initiative. Its purpose is to “work towards creating a lasting, comprehensive strategy that will guarantee Europe has the necessary cultural heritage skills to support sustainable societies and economies.” The stimulus for CHARTER was not only an alignment with EU initiatives, but also societal dynamics expressed in humanistic studies and expectations of professionals in the field.³ This evolution was evidenced by celebration of the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018.⁴ From policymaking to social action and engagement, cultural heritage in Europe had attained a critical role as an indispensable resource for sustainable development and as an asset in international relations, as EU states strive towards common values and respect for the pluralistic traditions and cultures of the pan-European community.⁵

The 2005 Faro Convention, the Council of Europe’s framework on the value of cultural heritage for society,⁶ was a milestone in this paradigm shift. It sought to ensure that cultural heritage was recognized as a contributor to sustainable development, that policies acknowledged the values and meanings of cultural heritage, and that the sector and its professionals had recognition and support. Of late, the broader scope of heritage led to inclusion of the environmental dimension, recognizing the inseparability of human and natural environments. This has become the bedrock of European cultural policymaking.

Heritage—tangible and intangible—is foremost values based and values driven. Grounded in our sense of belonging and place,

it is neither static nor immutable, being constantly redefined by our actions and framed by our contemporary values. The Faro Convention echoed UNESCO’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights by stating “rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life,”⁷ acknowledging and advocating for participation in defining and managing cultural heritage by individuals and communities. This holistic integration of cultural heritage into public life⁸ entails increased public involvement in the care and use of heritage. This, in turn, benefits both heritage and society, as it releases, realizes, and enhances its agency.

THE TASK OF THE HERITAGE PROFESSIONAL

As heritage has come to be understood as people-centered and values-driven “infrastructure,” increasing its value to society has become a core goal of its care. Current challenges to that care range from climate change to scarcity of resources, globalization and migration waves, diverse and sometimes conflicting lifestyles and values, governance that fails to achieve social cohesion, and rapid technological shifts that increase apparent connectedness but not necessarily equality and opportunities. In a world where we sometimes feel besieged, our heritage may offer us lessons, inspiring us on how to move forward. The heritage sector’s professional expertise is seen as essential in realizing these benefits, while fulfilling its obligation to preserve heritage for present and future generations.

The cornerstone of CHARTER is the Faro Convention’s concepts and principles. Because the purpose of the heritage sector is to contribute to the quality of life of citizens and communities, heritage should be sustained through a participative and holistic approach, where metrics of success are its enhancement of social cohesion, economic development, and knowledge sharing and education.⁹

How can this be done in a way that supports professionals *and* the management and care of heritage?

Among other things, CHARTER designed a matrix describing the sector¹⁰ so that professionals could delineate their skills and competences and assess their needs. Although the work is ongoing, there are some preliminary outcomes.

1. *EU Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills*: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1415&langId=en>

2. <https://charter-alliance.eu/about-us/>

3. *Mid-Term Results—Matrix and Methodology Assessment* (CHARTER Report D2.3): https://charter-alliance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/D2.3-Mid-term-results-Matrix_and_methodology-assessment_FINAL.pdf

4. <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-takes-stock-of-a-successful-european-year-of-cultural-heritage-2018-and-the-impact-assessment-report>; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0548>

5. *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council towards an EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations*: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JCO029> and *Council Conclusions on an EU Strategic Approach to International Cultural Relations and a Framework for Action*: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0607\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0607(01))

6. Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*. Council of Europe Treaty Series no. 199 (2005): <https://rm.coe.int/1680083746>

7. Council of Europe, Article 1.

The matrix follows the UNESCO description of the cultural cycle,¹¹ delineating its phases from creation to consumption, and representing clusters of activities performed by professionals and others. CHARTER proposes a circular value chain to represent the heritage ecosystem, the goal of which is the common good.¹² The matrix has six interconnected functions corresponding to key moments of realization and amplification of cultural value. The model depicts the cyclical nature of generating and regenerating value because those who “author” cultural heritage—by recognizing something as meaningful and of value—are the same people who “consume” it by access and use. The more its value is recognized and realized, the more it is amplified, nurturing the system in a continuous cycle of cultural practice without exhausting the resource.

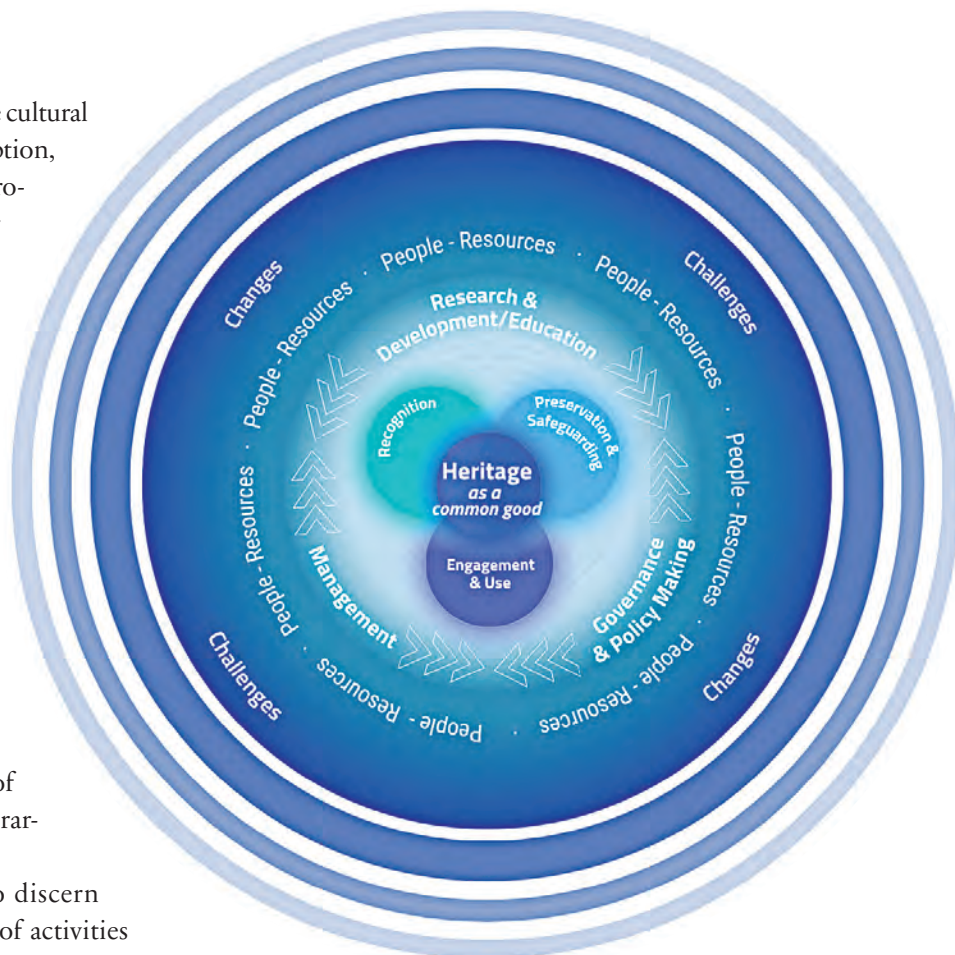
The model has three core heritage functions and three systemic functions that support the workings of the ecosystem, all operating in an integrated nonhierarchical manner.

Identifying these key functions is essential to discern what is needed for them to occur. They are clusters of activities sharing a purpose, where professional practice takes place and public participation can happen. Hence each function includes sets of activities necessary to achieve its purpose. To carry out these activities, skills, knowledge, and attitudes are required. Simply put, to achieve the purposes of each function, people need to have specific technical, scientific, humanistic, legal, cognitive, or manual competences to perform these activities. It is recognized that for each function core professions may exist, carrying out its main purposes. However, the critical assumption is that *all* working in the heritage sector share some level of awareness of each of the six functions, and this enables a cooperative and integrated approach. These competences are expressed in different levels of knowledge according to fields of expertise, each requiring appropriate education and training.

CHARTER developed a tool applying the functional model onto a diagram for professional self-assessment. This “spiderweb” tool¹³ captured professional competences using eight levels of knowledge to describe their qualifications and skills. Its full application is still being tested.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS IN HERITAGE PRACTICE

Besides the more technical expertise each function requires, CHARTER identified some specifics considered essential for all



The model created by CHARTER—the European Cultural Heritage Skills Alliance. The model is animated by the potential of heritage to be a force for societal well-being, with the common good being the core that all functions serve. The interconnectedness and cyclical nature of the system are critical for a well-functioning heritage ecosystem. Graphic: Courtesy of the CHARTER Consortium 2021.

heritage professionals, regardless of their role or level of expertise. Briefly, they are:

- recognizing heritage in all contexts and for all stakeholders;
- valuing heritage as a common good for stakeholders;
- appreciating different, evolving, and even conflicting views on heritage;
- interacting and collaborating with a wide range of heritage actors;
- implementing norms and protocols to prevent specific risks for heritage.

The above were drafted following consultations and workshops with stakeholders. They mirror principles expressed in many of the policies mentioned, but most importantly they represent the fundamental skills and attitudes heritage professionals see as mandatory for themselves and their colleagues. They might be even more critical for those in the front line of heritage care, such as conservation professionals.

So, what does this mean for conservation professionals?

8. European Commission, *Towards an Integrated Approach to Cultural Heritage for Europe—Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions* (2014): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0477&from=en>

9. Another EU initiative where Faro principles are inscribed and used in a holistic, citizens-led framework for public action in heritage is the *European Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century* and its three components: social (cohesion), territorial and economic development, and knowledge and education development. They are essential in the development of cohesive, sustainable, democratic, and innovative communities through action in heritage: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/strategy-21>

10. *A New Landscape for Heritage Professions—Preliminary Findings*: https://charter-alliance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/D2.1-WP2-FINAL_V3.pdf

11. *2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics*: https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/unesco-framework-for-cultural-statistics-2009-en_0.pdf

12. The principle is at the core of CHARTER work in alignment with EU policy documents and scholarly research, where heritage is seen as a resource shared by all society, in the interest of all and beneficial to all.

Recognition	Preservation & Safeguarding	Engagement & Use	Research & Development / Education	Management	Governance & Policymaking
Refers to all activities necessary to identify and recognize cultural heritage through identification and advocacy.	Refers to the activities that need to be put in place to ensure the long-term survival and care of cultural heritage, from maintenance to conservation, preventive conservation, restoration, and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.	Refers to all activities necessary to access and open cultural heritage, make it understandable, make it available for consultation and use, raise awareness, and use it as a resource by all stakeholders. Includes activities that add value beyond the action itself as it impacts society.	Refers to all activities that are necessary throughout the process that go from the recognition of cultural heritage to the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage.	Refers to all activities that go from strategic planning to everyday administration and management. It includes organizational development, human resources management, funding, legal aspects, marketing and communication, risk management, and quality control.	Refers to decision-making for cultural heritage in the wider domain of cultural heritage policy at local, regional, national, and international levels.

The six major functions delineated by CHARTER, along with their core activities. Graphic: Courtesy of the CHARTER Consortium 2021.

The answer is not a clear-cut list of scientific subjects, applications, or methods. The critical change might reside in acknowledging and embracing this co-creative, participative, and holistic approach in the care and management of heritage.

First and foremost, heritage conservation must be informed by the meanings and values attached to the heritage and in line with its current uses. *Why* we are conserving, and *for whom*, must be discussed and agreed upon early in the process to guarantee public benefit in meaningful ways. Complete agreement on these questions at the outset is unlikely, and so achieving consensus should result from a dialogue where all voices—experts and communities—are heard and considered. Participatory management and democratic decision-making must be applied. In this context, essential heritage skills, although resembling interpersonal soft skills, are fundamental in facilitating a healthy dialogue.

The model with the six functions indicates areas for capacity building, as professionals need to communicate and understand each other across functions; some common knowledge, awareness, and language must be present. What may be a transversal skill to some professions is, in fact, core for others. These requirements for competences may also vary according to each job context (e.g., private or public sector) and role (e.g., senior or young professional, manager, or practitioner). The functional approach is also useful to preview career paths, making visible functional areas where professionals wish to improve their competences or evolve professionally. Notwithstanding, the potential and diverse professional profiles across the six functions have yet to be recognized in official professional

classifications such as ISCO¹⁴—they represent current reality missed in more traditional views of heritage practice.

AN ERA OF CHANGE

The heritage sector is undergoing a tremendous evolution. Beyond the mega trends affecting society, specific changes might cause transformation in any specific heritage environment. It can be a technological demand in archive management, climate change impacting built heritage conservation, or multicultural communities agreeing and supporting conservation measures despite differing views on preservation priorities. Each situation will necessitate different kinds of capacity building. It can be knowledge in new material sciences or in traditional building techniques, training in digital survey tools and database searching, or learning mediation and intercultural interpretation skills. The development of these skills is dependent on the particulars of a heritage context and the functions we are called upon to carry out. Ultimately, we must return to the beginning, and ask *why* and *for whom* we are conserving.

We must bring long-term perspectives and insights, as well as foresight, to our work. With our training and professional experience in heritage conservation, we can facilitate the dialogue between people and their respective values, and bridge current needs and uses of heritage with preservation for the future. These are, in fact, skills that can be learned.

Elis Marçal is president of the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisation (ECCO) and a conservator in private practice in Portugal.

13. The spiderweb is still an empirical tool that connects the functions of heritage practice with the required competences and level of qualifications of those working. It enables the visualization of professionals' profiles having different levels of knowledge across the six functions displaying core and transversal areas of expertise in each profile. S. Corr, B. Lagerqvist, E. Marçal, A. Mignosa, and M. Sani, *Factsheets: Families of Competences*. CHARTER Consortium (2022): https://charter-alliance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/D2.2-Factsheets-Families_of_competences_FINAL.pdf

14. ISCO (International Standard Classification of Occupations) describes professional profiles according to the activities and tasks performed, indicating expected skills level and areas of knowledge, as well as transversal skills, attitudes, and level of autonomy.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CAMEROON

Challenges and Opportunities in Collections Care

BY TERENCE BESAKA

THE CONSERVATION AND CARE OF COLLECTIONS for many museums in Africa pose a particular set of challenges, not unique to the continent but perhaps more pronounced in countries south of the Sahara. Among them are the effects of climate change, inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and insufficient trained personnel. These challenges are exemplified by those faced by the National Museum of Cameroon, home to approximately six thousand objects comprising wooden, ceramic, metal, bone, paper, textile, and stone items—a collection faced with issues related to climate, storage management, and lack of environmental control, to name a few. It is no exception to the difficulties faced in the region in terms of conservation and collections care.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CAMEROON

The National Museum of Cameroon, located in the capital city of Yaoundé's administrative center, is a state-owned nonprofit institution with the mission of acquiring, conserving, exhibiting, and interpreting the rich and diverse tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Cameroon.¹ The building, a place of memory and history, was constructed in 1930 and served as the residence of French colonial administration in Cameroon, then later as the palace of the first president of the Republic of Cameroon. In order to create a new, attractive, and promising cultural landscape, the former presidential palace was transformed in 1988 into the National Museum to strengthen social cohesion and national unity. The collection was the result of numerous donations from private individuals and traditional chieftaincies, as well as collection missions launched throughout the nation by the ministry in charge of cultural heritage. The National Museum's current organizational and functional structure was established in 2014, and it officially reopened to the public in January 2015, with the appointment of its pioneer director and deputy occurring in 2016.²

With five thousand square meters of built space and fourteen permanent exhibitions in twenty-eight halls, the National Museum showcases the four cultural areas of Cameroon: the Grassfields, Fang-Beti, Sawa, and Sudano-Sahelian. Furthermore, the museum goes beyond national borders with exhibitions on ancient Egypt and on a set of polyptych paintings from Congo-Brazzaville.



A display of Royal Palace Guard statues at the National Museum of Cameroon. Photo: Courtesy of the National Museum of Cameroon.

The collections donated, purchased, or bequeathed include statues, calabashes, masks, arms, furniture, musical instruments, jars, clay pots, tools, and scrapers, among other things. In addition, some objects are on loan from individuals and institutions. These collections—particularly the wooden objects—are exposed to agents of deterioration owing to inappropriate or inadequate storage facilities and conservation methods, and poor environmental conditions.

With support from UNESCO's multisectoral regional office, the first inventories and digitization of the collections in storage occurred in 2017 and 2018. The inventories revealed that the collections in storage had been subject to attack by biological agents (termites), climatic action due to high humidity (mold and biodeterioration), and human action (cracks and breaks), the result of poor storage and handling. The high temperature and humidity in the storage spaces, as well as the lack of monitoring and ventilation, contributed to these problems. In response, modern and traditional conservation treatment methods were used to desiccate and disinfect the objects—exposing the objects to the sun, cleaning (dusting), and

1. Décret N° 2014/0881/PM DU 30 APR 2014 *Portant organisation et fonctionnement du Musée National* (2014).

2. Hugues Heumen, "Réouverture du Musée National du Cameroun: Expositions, fonctionnement et perspectives," *African Humanities II & III* (September 2017).

applying insecticide to eliminate the insects and to prevent future infestation. To ensure effective preservation of the objects, some metal shelving was constructed and used to store and protect these objects from further contamination.³

CHALLENGES OF COLLECTIONS CARE

Climate change is among the most significant and fastest-growing threats to people and their cultural heritage worldwide. Yaoundé, where the National Museum is located, is within the equatorial rainforest area. The effects of climate change, including high temperatures and humidity, along with increased precipitation, have affected the collections, especially organic objects of wood and bone, as well as some inorganic materials, such as ceramics and metal. These changes in environmental conditions favor the growth, reproduction, and spread of insects, mold, and corrosion in and on objects on display and in storage. These are the most common agents of degradation found within the collections.

Infrastructure is problematic, as the building housing the museum was constructed as a residence. The storage areas have limited access to natural air and light, a condition that favors the growth and spread of mold. Access to collections and easy circulation within the storage areas are difficult because of the building's physical layout. These inadequacies negatively influence the way collections are cared for and conserved.⁴

Collections care and conservation require the kind of resources generally in short supply in Africa. As a young, growing museum in a developing country, the National Museum—funded by state subvention and revenue from visitor entry fees and the renting of spaces—lacks sufficient financial, material, and technical resources to ensure the proper conservation and care of its collections. Current needs include equipping the conservation-restoration department with complete sets of working tools and more specialists, especially in restoration, infrastructural adjustments, and preventive conservation practices. The museum would benefit from technical expertise and the kind of financial and material assistance obtained through partnerships and cooperation with national and international institutions. These can provide funding to realize projects and offer the expertise necessary to preserve and conserve the objects.

As elsewhere in Africa, the shortage of qualified staff is a challenge at the National Museum. Currently, the museum needs training opportunities for staff to enhance their competences in key domains, such as collections care (documentation and conservation), programming, curating, and web designing. This insufficiency is due to limited financial resources to recruit new young graduates and seasoned museum professionals. In fact, in the past there were few formal training institutions in the country offering courses in fields of specialization like museology. Nevertheless, there has been some progress in terms of academic and professional training programs in the domain of museum studies.

3. Expertise France, *Rapport de mission d'assistance pour l'aménagement des réserves par 2021* (2021).

4. Simon Lambert, "RE-ORG: A Methodology for Reorganizing Museum Storage Developed by ICCROM and UNESCO," *CeROArt* 6 (2011). <http://journals.openedition.org/ceroart/2112>



The National Museum of Cameroon, located in the capital city of Yaoundé. Photo: Courtesy of the National Museum of Cameroon.

OPPORTUNITIES

Regardless of the limitations that a lack of resources creates, there are efforts to enrich people's skills with training opportunities. The increase in online workshops and seminars offered by international cultural organizations in recent years has been of value for many African institutions. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, online training opportunities utilizing Zoom and Microsoft Teams were employed frequently for distance learning. These online opportunities, which have been very beneficial for the professional development of staff, have enabled trainees to put into practice new knowledge and skills for collections care and conservation.⁵ Still, on-site training (with instructors and in person) is essential to build the skills and competence in these collections care areas that are practice based.

Another area of opportunity is in partnering with national and international institutions to improve training and modernize museum processes based on needs and scientific knowledge. At the national level, the National Museum is cooperating with professional training institutions, such as the technical high schools, the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management, the Department of Arts and Archaeology (University of Yaoundé 1), and the Institutes of Fine Arts (in Foumban and Nkongsamba), as well as other higher institutions of learning. The hosting of interns,⁶ generally for three to six months, has proven beneficial. The interns bring with them fresh knowledge in their respective areas of specialization, and through their work they contribute to the museum while making progress on their dissertation projects. These interns are under the direct supervision of senior museum staff.

At the international level, the National Museum has benefited since 2017 from the French Debt Relief program (C2D), which has provided technical assistance for the modernization of the museum, with a focus on restructuring the storage areas and on conservation and restoration of the collections. In addition, the National Museum is involved in the initiative to increase partnership between African and European museums growing out of the 2022 Humboldt Forum in Berlin. The April/May 2023 follow-up conference of museum directors held in Dakar, Senegal, agreed to establish an international network to implement an ambitious long-term multilateral

5. Ecole du Patrimoine Africain (EPA); International Council of Museums (ICOM); United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC); International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM); and International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

6. For academic and professional internship programs.

program for empowerment, restitution, digitization of collections, and mounting exhibitions in Africa and Europe.⁷ Meanwhile, the National Museum has been exploring opportunities for cooperation and partnerships with cultural institutions in the United States, China, India, and South Korea through sessions with their respective diplomatic missions in Cameroon.

Following the establishment of the interministerial committee in charge of the restitution of Cameroonian cultural properties illegally exported abroad, the Ministry of Arts and Culture and the National Museum in particular are playing key roles. As the coordinator of the permanent secretariat of this inter-ministerial committee, the National Museum director has been piloting the technical team in charge of inventorying and negotiating the restitution process. The commission is financed from the state budget.

An area in which there has been growth in Cameroon is in the creation of academic programs and professional training opportunities in museum and cultural studies. The University of Yaoundé 1 Department of Arts and Archaeology and the University of Ngaoundéré Department of History were primarily in charge of training in this area until 2010, when other institutions began engaging in the effort. As for areas of specialization in conservation, the Institutes of Fine Arts (Nkongsamba and Foumban), the Higher Institute of the Sahel (Maroua), and the Department of Tourism and Cultural Heritage (Université des Montagnes in Bangangté) now offer theoretical and practical courses for bachelor's and master's degree programs in cultural heritage management, documentation, archival

A RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTIONS

Even though the main consideration of some museums in Africa today is shifting from the care for objects to the care for people, conservation is an integral part of almost all museum activities. Museums have an ethical responsibility to protect and care for the collections entrusted to them, for which preventive conservation is an important tool achieved through environmental control, appropriate handling and maintenance, safe storage, and emergency preparedness and response. Developing countries of the Global South face a number of challenges in conserving and caring for their collections; as noted, the National Museum of Cameroon, like many other museums, confronts the challenges of climate change and insufficient technical, human, material, and financial resources to adequately address collections care.

Conscious of these challenges, there is increasing awareness and effort by the state, museum owners or proprietors of museums, and museum personnel to better care for their collections. This has led to collections-oriented policies and practices recommended and implemented by conservation specialists and most museum institutions at the decision-making level—policies that include prioritizing indigenous conservation with the use of herbs and other natural ingredients to prevent object deterioration, and reinforcing cooperation and partnership ties through exchange programs and assistance. There is therefore a need for the National Museum to engage in more cooperation and partnerships with other institutions, especially for technical expertise exchange



Left: A museum exhibition on the Grassfields, one of the four cultural areas of Cameroon. Photo: Courtesy of the National Museum of Cameroon.

Center: Rust on some of the museum's bronze objects—a result of climate change. Photo: Terence Besaka. Courtesy of the National Museum of Cameroon.

Right: A view of a museum storage area. Following museum inventories in 2017 and 2018, some metal shelving was constructed to store museum objects and protect them from further contamination. Photo: Terence Besaka. Courtesy of the National Museum of Cameroon.

management, and architectural designs.⁸ In addition, some cultural organizations in Cameroon like La Route des Chefferies⁹ are also contributing significantly to training and in sponsoring conservation projects through scholarships and sponsorships to professionals in heritage studies and capacity building in the heritage professions and the cultural and creative industries. Dedicated degree programs in conservation of cultural heritage are yet to be established.

programs, project development assistance, and capacity building with staff through online and on-site programs. These methods would include bringing in trainers, hosting interns, and offering scholarships and fellowships for museum personnel.

Terence Besaka is coordinator of Collections in Storage at the National Museum of Cameroon.

7. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/05/02/african-and-european-museum-directors-pledge-to-cooperate-at-dakar-conference>

8. Mahamat Abba Ousman, 2018. "Les musées au Cameroun: État des lieux et besoin en formation" (Ponsero: UNESCO, 2018).

9. This association is responsible for cultural and tourist development programs in Cameroon. Its mission is to "safeguard and enhance the cultural, natural, and creative heritage" of the country.

IDENTITY WAR IN UKRAINE

The Power of Cultural Resilience



The Museum of Ukrainian Antiquities named after Vasyl Tarnovsky (now the Regional Youth Library) in the city of Chernihiv. Built in 1896, it was registered on the architectural monuments list. It survived World Wars One and Two, only to be destroyed in March 2022 by Russian bombing. Photo: Bohdan Poshyvailo, Maidan Museum/HERI.

BY IHOR POSHYVAILO

IN FEBRUARY 2022 EXPLOSIONS WOKE ME IN KYIV. Russian airstrikes, missile shelling, and tank attacks targeted not only my family and my nation. They also targeted Ukraine's cultural identity—our centuries-old heritage.

After Crimea and part of Donbas were occupied by Russia in 2014, it was crucial that cultural activists in Ukraine gain greater knowledge of various aspects of emergency response in order to create resilience in the cultural sector, build capacities, strengthen communities, and inspire them with hope for the future. Unfortunately, Ukraine was not prepared to effectively protect its cultural heritage in early 2022. There was a lack of relevant knowledge, resources, coordination, and—most importantly—awareness at the highest decision-making levels that Ukrainian identity itself was a target in this war, squarely in the crosshairs of Vladimir Putin's terrorist regime.

CULTURAL RESISTANCE

Nevertheless, after the large-scale invasion, the Ukrainian cultural sector quickly self-organized. Newly created public and volunteer initiatives strove to protect museum collections, monuments, and historical sites, and helped coordinate efforts at different levels, providing support to individuals, institutions, and government. Thou-

sands of cultural activists turned public spaces into cultural barricades, sheltering monuments and sculptures, facade decorations, and other artistic and historical objects with OSB plywood panels and sandbags. Ukrainian museums, libraries, and archives also responded to the military threat to the best of their abilities. Some initiated the evacuation of their cultural heritage materials, but for others it was too late, as their territories were quickly occupied by Russian forces.

At the Maidan Museum where I serve as director, we managed to prepare an emergency response. Our staff created groups to prioritize and package up the collections, which, after the approval of authorities, were transported to safer locations in western Ukraine. Being highly motivated to protect our heritage, we did everything ourselves, despite limited resources. Such was the case with colleagues at hundreds of other cultural institutions.

Of course, there were some museums and archives that were unable to respond in time or got no approval to move staff and collections far from the front lines, and many of these collections were damaged. There are stories of real heroism when some museum directors or curators, endangering their own and family members' lives, stayed in the occupied territories trying to find a way to evacuate the most valuable parts of their collections. At least two museum directors were killed by Russian shelling while organizing the evacuation process.

Evacuating cultural materials out of the most endangered territories under the constraint of time, and a lack of human and financial resources—right at a moment when all of Ukraine was under missile shelling and there were no safe shelters for heritage objects—was not the only challenge. Museum collections that were moved needed special handling, especially under conditions that included electricity blackouts, a shortage of curators and conservators, and a lack of space, staff, funding, and protection equipment. In this situation, the National Conservation Center of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine offered assistance. With support from the Smithsonian Institution and other international partners, they got funds for mobile conservation missions all over Ukraine to monitor the condition of the movable heritage and to provide some conservation measures.

ATTACK ON CULTURE

The efforts of the Ukrainian cultural sector were critical, given that the desire to “reboot” the cultural identity of Ukrainians was at the core of the Kremlin’s policy. The impact of this policy speaks for itself. During the year and a half of full-scale war, over 1,700 places of cultural infrastructure in Ukraine were damaged, and over 600 were destroyed, according to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy. This list includes 755 cultural centers, 211 historical and architectural monuments, around 300 religious buildings, 598 libraries, 84 museums and galleries, and 26 theaters and philharmonic halls.

The scale of destruction shocked US President Joseph Biden, who in May 2022 called the war in Ukraine brutal and stressed that Putin was not only trying to take over Ukraine but was also “trying to wipe out the culture and identity of the Ukrainian people.”¹

The official statistics of destruction are dramatic but incomplete, as Ukraine has no access to temporarily occupied territories

and cannot assess the degree of the war’s impact there.

Satellite facilities in the United States and the United Kingdom help monitor the condition of cultural sites, providing information from regions temporarily not controlled by Ukraine, and of intentional attacks on heritage. As an example, satellite imagery from the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab at the Virginia Museum of Natural History documented the intentional missile hit on the Ivankiv Museum in the Kyiv region—which hosted a unique collection of naive paintings, including those of the world-famous Maria Prymachenko, whose artworks were admired by Pablo Picasso—as well as on the Hryhorii Skovoroda Museum in the Kharkiv region.

A few more facts about cultural destruction. In October 2022 missiles attacked a dozen cultural institutions and museums in downtown Kyiv, within the UNESCO heritage list zone. In July 2023 massive missile shelling damaged and destroyed many heritage sites in Odesa’s historical center, also inscribed on the UNESCO heritage list; the damage included museums and the city’s largest Orthodox cathedral, which dates from the late eighteenth century.

LOOTING

The war crimes against Ukrainian culture include looting and illegal trafficking of cultural objects from museums and private collections to non-Ukrainian-controlled territories and the Russian Federation. The cases include the looting of collections from the Art and History Museum, the Kuindzhi Art Museum, and the Museum of Medallion Art in Mariupol.

In occupied Melitopol, Russian forces hunted for Scythian gold and archaeological artifacts of the fourth century BCE at the local history museum. Its employees were kidnapped and interrogated with torture.² As a result, historical weapons and 1,793 items made of silver and gold were looted by Russians and taken from Ukraine.



Left: Documenting and rescuing artifacts from the wooden Church of the Nativity in the village of Viazivka, Zhytomyr region. Built in 1862, it survived World Wars One and Two but was damaged by Russian shelling in March 2022. **Right: The author retrieving damaged artifacts from the Church of the Nativity.** Photos: Bohdan Poshvailo, Maidan Museum/HERI.

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/28/biden-says-putin-trying-to-wipe-out-ukrainian-culture-as-prospect-of-retreat-looms-in-east>

2. <https://osce.usmission.gov/the-russian-federations-ongoing-aggression-against-ukraine-50/#:~:text=Outside%20military%20forces%20were%20immediately,car%2C%20only%20to%20then%20subsequently>



A gospel dating from 1707 in the collection of the M. V. Sibiliev Museum of Local Lore in Izyum, damaged during battles in the Kharkiv region. It was rescued and currently is under conservation at the Kharkiv branch of the National Scientific Research and Restoration Center of Ukraine. Photo: Bohdan Poshyvailo, Archive of the Maidan Museum/HERI.

Russian occupiers looted hundreds of thousands of exhibits from museums in the Kherson region. Among them are seventeenth-century icons and almost all the paintings from the Kherson Art Museum, including the most valuable works, which date from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Some of the stolen items were taken to temporarily occupied Crimea, where they were identified at the building of the Tavrida Central Museum in Simferopol. The Kherson Museum of Local Lore lost about ten thousand artworks from its collection, including lapidary, archaeological, and historical jewelry.

THE HERITAGE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INITIATIVE

Ukraine's Heritage Emergency Response Initiative (HERI) was launched shortly after the invasion to respond to the crisis. We have created a wide network of museum, archive, and library partnerships, coordinating activities with national and international governments and NGO groups.

Since then—with international support from the EU, UNESCO, ICOM, ICOMOS, ICCROM, ALIPH, the Prince Claus Fund/CER, the Smithsonian Institution, the US Ambassadors Fund, the World Monuments Fund, the Global Heritage Fund, Europa Nostra, and many others—we have provided rescue operations, organizational assistance, and consultations to more than three hundred museums and cultural institutions from twenty-two regions and carried out several exhibitions, along with educational and training programs.

The struggle to preserve national identity is impossible without the support of people who take care of national heritage. Since the beginning of the large-scale war, many of them have found themselves in particularly desperate situations, losing their workplaces and forced to leave their homes; some have risked their safety to preserve objects of national heritage, and many have been completely absorbed in volunteering and assisting their cultural heritage colleagues.

Now we are engaged in various processes to promote and contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage during war-time. These include coordination of aid initiatives, assessment and documentation of losses and damages, rescue of collections and recording oral stories from the ground, museumification and memorialization of the war, preparation for postwar recovery and the modernization of the cultural and heritage sectors, and increasing resilience in the face of emergencies.

Many challenges remain. We need better coordination of policies and actions within the country and from abroad, a crisis management system and leadership in emergency management, strategic planning for crisis response and postwar recovery, and strategies for restitution and repatriation of cultural objects and bringing those responsible for cultural crimes to justice.

At the same time, we must respond to the fact that the war continues. There is uncertainty about the situation and what actions are possible for employees of cultural institutions in the occupied territories. The social vulnerability of cultural workers and their forced emigration are increasing. They also experience fatigue, exhaustion, and burnout. But the Ukrainian cultural and heritage fields still display energy and action. Museums have reopened their exhibitions and educational programs and have enlarged their collections with new objects and stories connected to the war and the nation's resistance. They have, as well, exchanged exhibitions and programs with colleagues abroad and participated in numerous granting and exchange programs.

LESSONS LEARNED

The day will come when Ukraine—after testing international approaches, models, and practices in cultural heritage protection in times of war—will share its unique experiences. Already it is clear that there is a need for updating international laws (including the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols), developing effective mechanisms of imposing sanctions upon aggressors to stop the destruction of heritage and of bringing war criminals to justice, establishing international and national cultural emergency response management and systems, digitizing and providing wide access to world-level cultural heritage, enhancing law enforcement mechanisms in cultural property protection, and raising public awareness of the importance of nations' cultural heritage and its protection in times of crisis.

In the meantime, we look to the future with hope, holding a strong belief that these challenges can be met successfully and turned into important lessons for making the world's cultural heritage more protected and resilient.

Ihor Poshyvailo is general director of the National Museum of Revolution of Dignity (the Maidan Museum) in Kyiv and cofounder of the HERI and ACURE (the Agency for Cultural Resilience, which is the legal entity of the HERI).

A CULTIVATOR OF HUMANITY

A Conversation about Rethinking the Role of Museums in Society

SUJEONG LEE is the head of the Research and Development Office at the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites, which is under the auspices of UNESCO and located in Sejong, South Korea.

WAYNE MODEST is the director of content of the Wereldmuseum, the Netherlands, and professor of Material Culture and Critical Heritage Studies in the faculty of humanities at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam.

MARINA PUGLIESE is the head of Public Art and director of the Museum of Cultures, both in the city of Milan; she is also on the faculty of the California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

They spoke with **STAVROULA GOLFOMITSOU**, head of Collections at the Getty Conservation Institute, and **JEFFREY LEVIN**, editor of *Conservation Perspectives*, *The GCI Newsletter*.

STAVROULA GOLFOMITSOU The world in which museums and collections operate has undergone—and continues to undergo—great changes. These include climate change, resource constraints, changing attitudes of audiences, and even war. I'd like to start by asking your thoughts about the way in which these conditions challenge the missions and operations of museums, and the role they play in society.

SUJEONG LEE I think the concept of heritage as only historical evidence has changed. We now understand collections as a generational inheritance and an essential resource in our society. Heritage is not a thing, or an object, but a cultural process. Such a process includes various types of activities—understanding the heritage's meaning and values, conserving those meanings and values, and seeking the participation of our audiences. This is a key area we really must think about with regard to the mission and the operations of the museum.

MARINA PUGLIESE The current war in Europe, the years with COVID, and social unrest have pushed us to reconsider everything, including cultural institutions and their future. In moments of crisis, you have to make choices—and the choices are representative of society, and the values we have. What *are* the values we

want to preserve for the future? These are super interesting years, tragic and interesting at the same time. The whole concept of the museum and heritage is changing, along with society.

WAYNE MODEST My response to this question is to think of what our current moment demands of us and of the museum. For me, it is a demand to push beyond narratives of heritage and preservation and toward practices of care—a care for life, a care for community, and a care for futures. This means a different orientation to what heritage is, and how it is entangled with life. The orientation toward care I'm interested in requires we acknowledge that in our world today the right to life is unequally distributed. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that we live in a world where there isn't a universal right to life. Life for some people is far more precarious than for others. That is historically and fundamentally entangled with colonialism and the racialized calculus central to colonialism, which lives on. I'm from the Caribbean. I cannot see museums outside of how they are bound up with the history of race. The challenges we face are not just challenges of today, but challenges of long histories of racial violence, of planetary extraction, and destruction—histories of expansion and growth, and caring for some life and not for others. Museums need to think about a reorientation to life, to caring for all life. This requires thinking about how heritage infrastructure and practices have sustained a world that cares less about some people and about how some people's heritage may be important for sustaining life.

What might a museum look like in the future—caring for life, and not just focused on the preservation of objects? And what is the role of conservation in thinking about such forms of care beyond preservation? For me, conservation is fundamentally a humanities discipline, and, I would hope, a humane science, that must imagine itself as existing to fashion a more equitable distribution of dignified futures for all life. I'm interested in that kind of museum. That is the challenge for the future because it requires imagining the museum as fundamentally political, setting humanity and the equality of humanity at its center—not one that is invested in a kind of woolly conversation that starts with Europe's understanding of itself.

PUGLIESE In some ways what Wayne said reverberates with my own ideas. I don't believe the future of the museum is so much



How can we deliver critical narratives, and who is going to decide what kind of message we should have in presenting our collections, under the principle of equity?

SUJEONG LEE

based on conservation of heritage in terms of its material aspects, but rather as being a place for conservation of memories and ideas in a broader sense. I do believe that we have to invest in training students and cultural institutions in preserving memory in a critical—and not only material—way. Traditionally, considerable amounts of money have been invested to conserve single objects. Conservation is a concrete and at the same time symbolic act of selection, which in the long term has other concrete and symbolic outcomes. This process of selection is one we must consider. Museums have always been places of power, and as such they represent a society and its politics. What kind of image do we want to pass on to the future?

LEE I totally agree with Wayne’s ideas about equity, but I also believe that every region has a different context and exists in a different stage of the progress and thinking. In different contexts, some ideas may not be easily applied at that stage. We do need more discussion about the future of our cultural institutions, and of how they choose and what they choose. The role of museums in different countries totally depends on the perspectives of their communities.

JEFFREY LEVIN All that, of course, is true. But at the same time, there may be certain challenges for collecting institutions that are universal. And if there *are* universals, what are they?

LEE As I said at the beginning, the concept of heritage is changing, and the philosophical issues connected to the mission of museums are probably a kind of universal. But regionally there are differences in resources, funds, expertise, equipment, and policies and procedures. Every region has a different context, and that makes for different ways of positioning the role of museums. But conceptually, we do have universal challenges in that we have to reconsider the mission of museums.

MODEST The distinction is important. The question is how will the reform of museums affect the global governance of heritage and global governance institutions, such as ICOM? If we accept that there are universals, my question is, “From where are these universals drawn or defined?” And how do universals look when they are informed by strong doses of the particular? How do we address the frictions between the universal and the particular? For example, I’m interested in how the divide between the universal and the particular affects use of terminologies like “capacity building” within discourses of development. When does the philo-

sophical approach emerging from East Asia start to influence how we understand our philosophical approach to heritage?

One thing I struggle with is the unequal way in which different regions of the world with different philosophical orientations or means—or even climate—influence both the intellectual and the practical infrastructure of our heritage industry. That means very often that Jamaica couldn’t borrow an object from a museum in Britain because it would never meet the standards that a British museum thinks is necessary. British people do not need a visa to go to Jamaica and see Jamaican heritage, but Jamaicans must get visas to come to Europe to see a Picasso, a Gainsborough, or even Jamaican heritage. If one thinks of heritage—and especially in the restitutionary mode we are in—as part of a politics of redistribution of resources, then something else needs to happen to make it possible.

PUGLIESE I’m thinking of the paradox and the differences between private and public institutions in a country like Italy. We are a public museum, and our resources are very limited, while next to us are various private museums or private enterprises that produce incredible and incredibly expensive exhibitions. Yes, there’s a contrast, of course, between different countries and different economies, but also, in the same economic realm, between the public and the private. And so the idea of ownership and distribution is extremely complicated. And to me, that has a lot to do with accessibility to education at first, and that heritage is something that comes somewhat later.

MODEST I do not believe in hierarchies of suffering, and so I take your point. It aligns with one of the critiques of concepts like the “developing world”—many of the places we call developed, like the US or Italy, suffer the same challenges of so-called developing countries. But we also must attend to the fact that the unequal distribution in the world is still fundamentally a nation-to-nation issue, and that this emerges out of colonialism and racism. Even the politics of passports and the unequal distribution of the right to move are part of the afterlife of colonialism and are still part of a racial economy. As I mentioned, Jamaicans can’t just go to Britain, but the British can simply get on a plane and go to Jamaica. In Italy or in the Netherlands, there’s also poverty and inadequate access to education, of course, but Western Europe is still one of the richest places in the world, in part because of colonialism, and it is in many ways the European who defines much of what we understand of heritage and preservation.



The future museum for me is one that brings the world back together and participates in healing not just the wounds of the past but also our wounded conception of life.

WAYNE MODEST

PUGLIESE When I was talking about education, I was also considering my personal experience, with my family and my children, in the US where the level of education differs incredibly depending on where you live, your background, and your economic status. When we talk about museums and conservation, one of the most challenging aspects of many countries, including the United States, is that to study and work in museums you have to be incredibly lucky in getting a grant or can afford it financially. I agree with you that the world of museums and conservation still reflects political aspects and past history, but even within the so-called Western world, there are incredible contrasts. You cannot talk about education in the US or other Western countries and assume that it's equal and accessible to everybody.

LEVIN I'd like to pivot on the topic of education generally and put it into the museum itself. In the context of the changing role of museums, how important will education be in the future mission of these institutions?

LEE In the future, presentation of collections will be one of the key missions of the museum—what we would like to show, how we would like to display, and what kind of knowledge we would like to share. What are the interests of the public, and what would they like to know? Of course, collecting will remain an important mission, but presenting will be more important in the next twenty years. Many museums have already started to study and develop how to present their collections and how to use their collections in the educational system. We have developed the skills, tools, and methodology of displaying and presenting objects, but what has not been studied much until now is the message and the narrative we deliver to audiences. How can we deliver critical narratives, and who is going to decide what kind of message we should have in presenting our collections, under the principle of equity? Selecting the message, the narrative, and the voices is an area that we will have to focus on in the next twenty years.

PUGLIESE I agree with you. The power of display is, of course, focused on the narrative you give it. But we also have to think about temporary exhibitions. There's something we have not discussed. We've focused on museum displays of collections because those are the prevalent narrative, but temporary exhibitions are the places where the economic power goes and are a more profitable

activity rather than an occasion for study. I wouldn't underestimate the problematic contribution of exhibitions.

MODEST I increasingly question the real educative role of museums. And by that I don't question whether or not they should be educative, but rather how much education we actually do as institutions in relation to the amount of money we put into exhibitions. I want the museum to be more fundamentally committed to being cultivators of humanity, to quote Martha Nussbaum. And that is a fundamentally educative role—to educate us into being humane, to educate us into that commitment to dignified life for all, and to being there for each other. As Sujeong suggested, that demands a different way of thinking about how we present and what we present, and thinking about how to participate in the development of more pluralistic understandings of the world in which we live.

I'm going to be quite old-fashioned and say that I hope in twenty years we'll still be able to enchant people with the beauty of things. That people actually still love objects. Sometimes I literally miss just the possibility of looking at an object and saying, "Whoa, that is so sweet. That was so nicely made." That commitment to a certain kind of enchantment in the world is something that needs to happen as well. It's based on an idea that we create things and things create us, and that we're interested in understanding what that might mean in the world. I hope in twenty years we still hold on to that and cultivate a generation of young visitors who believe in that as much as they believe in the narratives that these objects hold.

The museum of the future must also be able to push against the divided and broken worlds that museums of the past did. By that I mean that we've taught people that there's something called natural history, and something called art history, and something called ethnography. But life doesn't happen in such brackets. We need to go to the kind of philosophical spaces where an interconnected life is much more acceptable. The future museum for me is one that brings the world back together and participates in healing not just the wounds of the past but also our wounded conception of life.

I want to suggest one other thing. I don't think the blockbuster exhibitions will go away. It's a stubborn fact that we're ensconced not in an educational economy, but in an entertainment economy. What I hope, in terms of exhibitions, is that even if the blockbuster continues, we don't lose the level of criticality we've developed over the last few years, and that we don't lose the ability to challenge visitors. As nationalisms have increased over the last

ten years, I've seen museums retreat into a curation of self-love and a non-criticality that reinforces visitors' understandings of themselves—narratives of national pride—rather than demanding that our visitors think critically about themselves. I'm interested in a kind of criticality in these exhibitions, rather than just pushing everything that people want, because it makes them happy.

LEVIN My sense is that for many years the field of conservation has been grappling with this changing landscape for collections. So where does conservation fit in today? How does the conservation field adapt to these changes and connect to the altered missions of museums?

LEE Conservation does not merely provide the techniques or skills to conserve the collections. I believe it contributes to each activity of the museum. And if it doesn't, then we have to reposition conservation so that it is part of each museum's process and their public role. Conservation can play a very important role in collecting, in better understanding the meaning and value of collections, and even in public education and participation. For example, last month the Korean Cultural Heritage Conservation Science Centre had a three-day opening event for a four-year conservation project of a nationally designated Buddhist embroidered robe. The project was about to end, but before it did the center opened itself up to the public to share what they had found scientifically and historically, and to honestly share their dilemmas in conserving the different materials and using different techniques. It was an opportunity for the public to be part of the conservation process. Conservation should be part of public education, everyone's joy of new knowledge, and our life stories.

PUGLIESE I believe that conservation in the future will have more to do with issues of selection and accessibility. I'm referencing a book by Ariella Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism*, in which she talks about accessibility to archives. I agree with Wayne that we have to downsize, but we will also have to make choices. I would go back to the idea of the contrast between materiality and immateriality. On the one hand, conservation is crucial because it helps us understand the value and meaning of materials in the arts. On the other hand, we will have to focus more on sustainable ways of accessing heritage.

MODEST My hope for conservation is that it will emancipate itself from some of its strictures and structures and hold on to the futures that it has already started to create. I would also like to see conservation help us to think more critically about the planetary crisis we're in and to participate in our understanding the world of material conservation. I want conservation to be able to take more seriously the conservation of skill and not just the conservation of materials—for me, this is a commitment to life. I want conservation to be committed to the fact that the death of an object might be important for the life of a community. When I was in Jamaica, I kept an object alive that should have died. And as a result, the community had a whole lot of infighting. Seven years after that, insects destroyed the object, so it just died “a natural death”! I like this as a metaphor of how our commitment to preservation can go against a commitment to community flourishing.

I would also say that in speaking of communities, I tend not to use the term diversity because I think diversity is self-evident. We *are* diverse. What we need to commit to is the *flourishing* of diversity. And that is something conservation can help with.

GOLFOMITSOU People in our field, especially in academia, are certainly discussing and intellectualizing new ideas about collections and conservation, but we are yet to see their application in practice. How far do you think we are in terms of having some of these ideas implemented in museums?

MODEST We may be very far away. The reasons are multiple. Some people just don't want to change, although I don't think that's a lot of people. Also, our training programs are not often oriented toward some of the critical conceptual work that is being done. Going from the conceptual to the practical is hard. How do we make the concept of decolonization not just theoretical, but have practical steps to do it? That translation is often difficult for the many people working in a museum doing conservation. One reason is simply time—they don't get the time to address these questions. Another is resources. We often don't have the money to implement some of the ideas. We never really have the resources to care for or to document the collections as well as we would want to, despite telling ourselves that this is one of our primary tasks. One reason is that in form and in practice, museums are over-determined by exhibitions, and not by conservation, documentation, and preservation—or by care. One thing I say to people is, “What if we did one or two fewer exhibitions each year?” And what if we gave that money to projects geared at community flourishing? Or gave the money for an exhibition to documentation so that we could increase the accessibility of the collections? How would that reorient us as museums? We're slow to respond because of the complexity of the challenge—and I will quote Ariella Azoulay as well, Marina. She says that to decolonize the museum, one needs to decolonize the world. That there is the challenge. Probably what we should do is to organize small workshops where we take these concepts and draw up models and work them out. We then present those as practical solutions that can also be taught in museum studies programs. We need to unlearn many of the things we've come to learn. We don't learn in many of our programs how to think de-colonially.

PUGLIESE Yes, we should teach students, the future generations of conservators, to make choices—choices, say, to make accessible some delicate artworks that for conservation reasons should stay in storage but instead, at that moment, should be accessible for other important reasons. We must take risks and accept the fact that the life of an object can come to an end, and develop alternative ways of memorializing things. I think of Romi Crawford and the book she edited, *Fleeting Monuments for the Wall of Respect*. She studied the history of this 1967 collective mural in South Chicago, which represented the Black community and was lost in a fire, and she promoted the idea of keeping the memory of this artwork alive by asking other artists to develop ephemeral artworks in response to it. I found all this beautiful. There is this polarity between the mate-



I don't believe the future of the museum is so much based on conservation of heritage in terms of its material aspects, but rather as being a place for conservation of memories and ideas in a broader sense.

MARINA PUGLIESE

riality, at least in my culture, and the ephemerality in other cultures. So I do think we have to develop alternative ways to memorialize not only things, but also social representations and activities and so on. I think the field is getting to be super interesting. But of course we should not forget the importance of materiality and skills. Wayne, you talked about the conservation of the skills, right? This is crucial because you can lose some abilities in working with some materials. It's a fine balance between the importance of materiality and the development of alternative ways of conserving and memorializing.

LEE What is coming to mind for me is the research we did last year on interpretation and presentation. What is the relationship between the two of them, and how does that work in a heritage context? We defined interpretation as a "meaning-making process," and I really like the term "meaning-making process" because that suggests that interpretation can be open to anyone who would like to understand the heritage—not just experts but also people who have different ways of looking at heritage. So to respond to Voula's question, if we have to go back to ICOM's definition of conservation, that defines our skills and activities into narrow areas. I think we really have to broaden our activities and roles and be backed up with the needed resources and procedures. It's a step-by-step process to solve those kinds of issues practically.

GOLFOMITSOU We have been discussing ephemerality and the selection of what needs to be conserved, but at the same time, conservation is fundamentally a profession to preserve the object, including its material, meaning, and significance. Could some of these ideas be threatening for museums and collections care?

PUGLIESE In terms of conservation, I come from contemporary art, which has a lot to do with the conservation of ephemerality and conceptual artworks and so on. I would say in the area of contemporary art conservation we're more used to confronting challenging theoretical issues. But I wouldn't be surprised that this kind of approach towards ephemerality might be perceived as a threat. I do believe that the profession must become more and more engaged in the overall framing of *what* we want to preserve and what it means to preserve. Preservation and conservation have to do with the future. And if you think about the future, you have to be imaginative and daring too, right? You cannot just look at the past. You must be projecting toward the future even as you have an eye on the past.

GOLFOMITSOU Assuming that the people in the future will want the objects we amass in our museums today, right?

MODEST Part of the beauty of working in a museum is knowing that the person who comes after you is going to criticize you and is going to tell you that you did useless things. For me there is some joy in knowing this. Because, if one were to think naively, it highlights a commitment towards better. They're going to believe in some things you did, but certainly not everything. But to your question about these ideas being threatening, I do think that the last couple of years have felt threatening to the museum as institution. You can see that anxiety in the recent debate within ICOM over the definition of a museum. You see that in the restitution debate. The museum as a whole is going through one of its most beautifully challenging times, trying to think through what the future museum could look like. And in that sense, many people are afraid. The curators are afraid because their expertise is being challenged, and for the conservator, it is no different. My hope is that we don't see this so much as a threat but as a particular moment that opens up different possibilities for the future. It is a threat, but it is also an opening toward reorientation. And I want to say with Marina that it is still very important to have conservators who just simply like paint—and they like doing old-fashioned stuff because we have a lot of old-fashioned stuff that needs to be preserved. What we should not do is to leave conservation to do only that, because then it stands the risk of not being prepared for the future. We need to tie the complexity of thinking about the futures of materials—the future of the past in a certain way—while opening ourselves up to the wealth of new thinking about other possible futures and other possible pasts that need to be conserved and taken into the future. That's where the challenge is going to be. We need to be training other kinds of conservation specialists.

LEE I totally agree with Wayne and Marina that we should not think of these things as a threat, but more as an opportunity for us. It will probably be a kind of painful process to be reborn as a conservator with a different perspective and a different mission with different challenges, but once we go through that process, I think we will find our own way to flourish and to contribute not only to the museum's activities, but to society in general. But to do that, we need to rethink. We need to revisit what we do, with all the complexity that faces us. Yes, it is challenging—but even more, it is an opportunity.

RESOURCES

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR COLLECTIONS

ONLINE RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONS

American Alliance of Museums Center for the Future of Museums Blog:

<https://www.aam-us.org/category/future-of-museums/>

Art Charter for Climate Action: <https://www.art2030.org/projects/art-charter>

Association of Critical Heritage Studies: <https://www.criticalheritagestudies.org>

Climate Action 8x8: <https://www.museumsforclimateaction.org>

Galleries Commit: <https://www.galleriescommit.com/climateaction8x8>

Gallery Climate Coalition: <https://galleryclimatecoalition.org>

Heritage Futures: <https://heritage-futures.org>

Joint Commitment for Climate Action in Cultural Heritage: https://www.iiiconservation.org/sites/default/files/news/attachments/11206-joint_commitment_for_climate_action_in_cultural_heritage_final_for_release_in_oct_2021.pdf

Julie's Bicycle: <https://juliesbicycle.com>

MuseumNext: <https://www.museumnext.com>

Museums and the Art of Environmental Sustainability: <https://www.museumnext.com/article/museums-and-the-art-of-environmental-sustainability/>

Partners for Arts Climate Targets (PACT): <https://www.visualartspact.org>

STICH (Sustainability Tools in Cultural Heritage): <https://stich.culturalheritage.org>

BOOKS & JOURNALS

“Affirming Change in Participatory Practice of Cultural Conservation” by Hélia Marçal and Farideh Fekrsanati, in *Participatory Practices in Art and Cultural Heritage—Learning through and from Collaboration*, edited by Christoph Rausch, Ruth Benschop, Emilie Sitzia, and Vivian van Saaze (2022). Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 127–41.

“Affirming Future(s): Towards a Posthumanist Conservation in Practice” by Hélia Marçal and Rebecca Gordon, in *Posthumanism in Practice*, edited by Christine Daigle and Matthew Hayler (2023). London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 165–78.



Participants in the Changing Climate Management Strategies Workshop—co-organized by the GCI and the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) in Australia—engaging in an activity about object damage, change, and value during a walk-through of an NGV gallery. Photo: Narelle Wilson.

“Beyond Lifetimes: Who Do We Exclude When We Keep Things for the Future?” by Jane Henderson, in *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* 43, no. 3 (2020), 195–212. DOI: 10.1080/19455224.2020.1810729

Condition: The Ageing of Art by Paul Taylor (2015). London: Paul Holberton Publishing.

Curated Decay: Heritage beyond Saving by Caitlin DeSilvey (2017). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

“Decolonizing the Past, Empowering the Future: Community-Led Heritage Conservation in Ifugao, Philippines” by Stephen Acabado and Marlon Martin, in *Journal of Community Archaeology & Heritage* 7, no. 3 (2020), 171–86. DOI: 10.1080/20518196.2020.1767383

Heritage for Global Challenges, A Research Report by PRAXIS: Arts and Humanities for Global Development by Francesca Giliberto (2021). Leeds, UK: University of Leeds. <https://www.changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/110/2021/02/Heritage-for-Global-Challenges-Report-2021.pdf>

“Heritage Futures: A Conversation” by Cornelius Holtorf and Annalisa Bolin, in *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCHMSD-09-2021-0156>

Heritage Futures: Comparative Approaches to Natural and Cultural Heritage Practices by Rodney Harrison, Caitlin DeSilvey, Cornelius Holtorf, Sharon Macdonald, Nadia Bartolini, Esther

Breithoff, Harald Fredheim, Antony Lyons, Sarah May, Jennie Morgan, and Sefryn Penrose (2020). London: UCL Press. <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.9781787356009>

“Heritages of Futures Thinking: Strategic Foresight and Critical Futures” by Richard Sandford and May Cassar, in *Cultural Heritage and the Future*, edited by Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Högberg (2020). London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315644615>

Matters of Belonging: Ethnographic Museums in a Changing Europe, edited by Wayne Modest, Nicholas Thomas, Doris Prlić, and Claudia Augustat (2019). Leiden, Netherlands: Sidestone Press.

The Metabolic Museum by Clémentine Deliss (2020). Berlin: Hatje Cantz.

“Museums in a Changing Context” by Marco Tregua, Tomás López-Gúzman, and Francesco Bifulco, in *Handbook of Research on Museum Management in the Digital Era*, edited by Francesco Bifulco and Marco Tregua (2022). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-9656-2>

The Object of Conservation: An Ethnography of Heritage Practice by Siân Jones and Thomas Yarrow (2022). London and New York: Routledge.

Plural Heritages and Community Co-production: Designing, Walking, and Remembering by Christopher Whitehead, Tom Schofield, and Gönül Bozoğlu. (2021). London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003042075>

“Seven Ways Museums Are Responding to the Climate Crisis” in *The Art Newspaper* (November 2021). <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2021/11/04/changing-climate-changing-museums>

“Welcome to the Museum of the Future” by Sanchita Balachandran, in *Hyperallergic* (July 2021). <https://hyperallergic.com/659942/welcome-to-the-museum-of-the-future/>

For more information on issues related to the changing landscape for collections, search AATA Online at aata.getty.edu

New Project

MEETING WITH FRENCH FURNITURE CONSERVATORS

On May 10, 2023—as part of a project being developed by the GCI's Collections department that will focus on the transmission of traditional skills in conservation—the Institute convened a gathering of nine French furniture conservators in Paris to discuss their work. Over the next two days, individual interviews were conducted with three of the participants. More interviews are planned.

This part of the developing project—headed up by Stéphanie Auffret of the GCI, working with UK-based French conservator Yannick Chastang and Getty Museum conservator Arlen Heginbotham—seeks to document the evolution of practices in furniture restoration and conservation. It was prompted by an awareness that extensive knowledge of furniture restoration and conservation practices is at risk of disappearing if not rapidly recorded. Furniture conservation is a small field in which an entire generation of practitioners has already retired, taking with it knowledge of traditional practices that graduate programs don't cover in depth, if at all. As a result, we are losing understanding of how furniture was made or restored over time, and what materials, tools, and techniques were used. This affects interpretation and preservation of these objects.

Participants in the Paris meeting reflected on the shift in the last forty years from restoration to conservation, the development of new techniques, and how they kept alive knowledge of traditional restoration practices. All agreed that creating a record of their experiences and those of others will help ensure that future generations of restorers, conservators, and scholars have information they need to further the growth of this profession.

The project team hopes to establish a bridge between the traditional restoration and the more formal conservation carried out by museum conservators and curators. The group meeting and individual interviews were (and will be) recorded as a reference. Based on the information captured, the content could serve as the basis for articles or larger publications, all for educational purposes.



At the African American Historic Places, Los Angeles kickoff, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar—NBA legend, best-selling author, and esteemed activist—shared with community members his knowledge of and love for Los Angeles African American history. Photo: Momodu Mansaray.

Project Updates

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIC PLACES KICKOFF EVENT

The GCI and the Office of Historic Resources of the Los Angeles City Planning Department are collaborating on the African American Historic Places, Los Angeles project (AAHPLA), which is designed to advance the understanding, identification, protection, conservation, and celebration of the city's Black heritage.

On Saturday, June 24, 2023, the GCI and the city hosted a community kickoff event for the project to introduce the local African American community to AAHPLA, create enthusiasm for its work, and build trust between Getty, the city, and communities. An event objective was to engage community members in the preservation process by giving them an opportunity to talk about places that matter to them. Their stories will inform the project's work, including local historic cultural monument nominations, a historic context statement update, neighborhood preservation strategies, and more.

The kickoff was held at St. Elmo Village, an artists' enclave of ten small Craftsman bungalows in a colorful garden setting in Mid-City Los Angeles, founded in 1969 by artists Rozzell and Roderick Sykes as a place where children and adults could explore their creativity. It was also the birthplace of the Black Lives Matter movement.

The 170 guests included community leaders, representatives of historic preservation organizations, and cultural ambassadors. Guests enthusiastically participated in community storytelling activities that included listening sessions, a digital survey, and a photobooth.

The collected data will help the project identify significant places and stories within local Los Angeles communities and inform how the city preserves and celebrates sites associated with African American history and culture.

An event highlight was a discussion between Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and his longtime business partner Deborah Morales about Kareem's knowledge of and love for Central Avenue's historic jazz corridor. Guests were encouraged to continue bringing forward hidden gems of African American heritage in Los Angeles.

This public launch included the announcement of the nomination of four African American heritage sites for city Historic-Cultural Monument designation as part of the project: the Tom and Ethel Bradley Residence (West Adams); the First African Methodist Episcopal Church (South Los Angeles); Stylesville Beauty & Barbershop (Pacoima); and the *California Eagle* newspaper offices (Southeast Los Angeles).

CONSERVATION OF MODERN HERITAGE COURSE

As twentieth-century built heritage is increasingly appreciated and protected, architects and conservators need to acquire a complex array of skills for managing it. Like all places, modern heritage sites age, can become outdated and inefficient, or may no longer serve their original purposes.

To address these problems, the GCI began its Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative over a decade ago. As part of that initiative, in 2023 the GCI organized the International Course on the Conservation of Modern Heritage, conceived as a hybrid course for midcareer professionals. The course—built on previous

courses developed and delivered by the initiative—offered participants an opportunity to connect with other professionals from around the world and gain practical conservation knowledge they can apply to their own local modern heritage.

After nine weeks of remote online teaching beginning in May 2023, a final two-week in-person component brought participants to Los Angeles, a city of modern masterpieces. From August 6 to 19, participants from six continents, along with a group of expert instructors, met with each other at the Getty Center, visited important modern sites, and applied their knowledge to local case studies. The course used modern sites in Los Angeles such as the Eames House (Charles and Ray Eames), Hollyhock House (Frank Lloyd Wright), and the Reunion House (Richard Neutra), among others, as case studies that allowed focused, hands-on study. There was also a trip to the Louis Kahn–designed Salk Institute for Biological Studies and the campus of the University of California, San Diego, both in La Jolla, to examine completed and ongoing conservation projects.

CHANGING CLIMATE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES WORKSHOP

In an era defined by the urgency of climate change, developing energy-efficient strategies for preserving cultural heritage is increasingly paramount. For many years, the GCI, through its Managing Collection Environments Initiative (MCE) has been conducting scientific research and fieldwork focused on sustainable control and management of collection and environments for museums, libraries, and archives.

As part of that commitment to advancing sustainable conservation practices, the GCI and the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) in Australia recently co-organized a workshop, Changing Climate Management Strategies: Sustainable Collection Environments and Monitoring Object Response. The workshop—held August 7–10, 2023—brought together leading experts and professionals to discuss innovative approaches to monitor collection responses while implementing new environmental management strategies.

Environmental guidance in the heritage field has recently shifted away from prescriptive narrow ranges of temperature and relative humidity and toward the adoption of broader environmental parameters suitable for numerous classes of objects. However, many institutions remain reluctant to adopt these wider parameters because of a lack of evidence-based

risk analysis for climate-induced damage and limited expertise on sustainable management of collection environments.

A workshop objective was to foster dialogue about sustainable collection environments. The forty participants represented heritage institutions in Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and the United Arab Emirates. Participants included conservators, facilities managers, registrars, scientists, curators, and architects; nearly half were emerging professionals in the field. Most participants were from large or very large heritage institutions, although nearly 20 percent came from medium or small institutions. This diversity was sought by organizers to ensure a rich exchange of knowledge and perspectives during the workshop.

The workshop's first day focused on the changing environmental and political contexts in which museums operate, with sessions on environmental guidance and government regulation. The afternoon included a group discussion on decision-making under uncertainty and concluded with considerations of object damage, change, and value during walk-throughs of the NGV gallery. The second day examined risk assessment, environmental monitoring, and data analysis through lectures, followed by panel discussions on the impact of loan processes and the role of the facilities team, as well as a virtual tour of NGV's HVAC system.

The third day explored monitoring of environmentally induced object response, focusing on acoustic emission monitoring. Participants also saw a demonstration of the GCI/NGV acoustic emission monitoring system, which assesses the response of a “witness” object during the NGV's transition to wider gallery conditions defined by the Bizot Green Protocol. The final day included presentation of six case studies of heritage institutions striving for more sustainable museum environments. In the final session, participants discussed what they learned during the workshop.

MCE continues to seek opportunities to engage in regional dialogues about sustainable collection environments. The next iteration of this workshop is being organized by the GCI and the Victoria and Albert Museum, to be held in London in February 2024.

WORKSHOP ON STRUCTURAL MONITORING

A four-day workshop on the monitoring of earthen historic structures was held in June 2023

in Cusco, Peru, jointly organized by the Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Cusco—the local branch of the Peruvian Ministry of Culture—and the GCI as part of its Seismic Retrofitting Project, an ongoing activity that seeks to adapt seismic retrofitting techniques previously developed by Getty to better match the equipment, materials, and technical skills available in many countries with earthen sites. Instructors from the organizing institutions, as well as from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in Lima and the University of Minho in Portugal, led the workshop.

The twenty-two participants, primarily midcareer engineering professionals, came from private practice, academia, and public entities such as the Ministry of Culture. While many were from Peru, others came from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, and Mexico. All had expertise in historic preservation and a keen interest in structural monitoring.

The workshop, which began June 5, was opened by Maritza Rosa Candia, director of the Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Cusco. Lectures covered a range of topics, including methodologies for inspecting, analyzing, and diagnosing structural issues in historic buildings, in situ testing, and implementing structural health monitoring systems. About half of the workshop focused on practical activities, such as site visits to historic buildings in Cusco to discuss structural damage. There were exercises and field sessions at an earthen site in the historic center, where participants conducted nondestructive and micro-destructive testing on a traditional adobe *casona* owned by the Archdiocese of Cusco.

On June 8, the workshop's final day, participants visited the Structural Health Monitoring System at the Church of Santiago Apóstol of Kuñotambo. This system was installed as part of the monitoring and maintenance plan for the conserved church, which is being implemented by the GCI in collaboration with local stakeholders and international consultants. The system collects data from various sensors, which is uploaded online and analyzed by University of Minho engineers; this not only provides valuable information about the Kuñotambo building's performance but also validates the seismic retrofitting techniques recommended by the GCI's Seismic Retrofitting Project and implemented by the Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Cusco.



GCI senior research specialist Anna Laganà reconstructing a missing fragment on Gino Marotta's *Giraffa Artificiale*. The treatment recovered the transparency and intended form of the damaged tail. Gino Marotta, *Giraffa Artificiale*, 1973, polimetilmetacrilato, Museo del Novecento, Milan. Photo: Samuele Pellecchia/Prospekt. © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Recent Events

GIRAFFA ARTIFICIALE

During spring 2023 the GCI partnered with Museo del Novecento, Museum of Cultures (MUDEC) of Milan, and Centro Conservazione e Restauro La Venaria Reale (CCR) to conserve *Giraffa Artificiale* by Gino Marotta, a significant Italian Pop Art artist. *Giraffa Artificiale* is a nine-foot-tall sculptural giraffe, masterfully constructed in 1973 by shaping and assembling sixty-seven pieces of transparent pink poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA). As a component of its multifaceted Modern and Contemporary Art Research Initiative, the GCI recently completed extensive research to develop treatments to repair plastics, particularly PMMA, and identified *Giraffa Artificiale* as an exemplary case study to put research into practice via its treatment.

The sculpture, owned by Museo del Novecento, was in storage for over twenty years owing to its poor condition: the work was covered by dust and scratches, its hoof and two tails were broken, and fragments were missing. Damaged artworks made of transparent plastics like *Giraffa Artificiale* are often kept in storage or deaccessioned from collections because of a lack of knowledge of how to successfully repair them and recover their transparency.

The treatment project was led by Anna Laganà of GCI Science and conducted with

CCR collaborators in MUDEC's conservation laboratory. It included examination and documentation of technique and condition, preliminary tests on mock-ups, cleaning with spray application of agar gel, readhering broken pieces, filling scratches and cracks, and reconstructing missing fragments. The treatment successfully reestablished the sculpture's transparency and intended form, and *Giraffa Artificiale* is back on display, currently in Milan's Natural History Museum as part of the exhibition *Rainbow*.

The project included various dissemination activities—live streaming during treatment, social media communications, lab tours, and a free workshop (co-organized with the Italian project *Storie di plastica*) on plastics conservation, showcasing the treatment in MUDEC's lab and offered to twenty-two Italian conservators. The project will be presented in a Getty Trust video and in an open access publication.

CONSERVATION OF MOSAIC COLLECTIONS IN STORAGE

In spring 2023 two advisory missions were carried out following up on MOSAIKON training on the conservation of mosaics in storage. The focus was specifically on stored mosaics—left unbacked on deteriorating wooden panels—that have been in critical condition for decades.

Several days were spent in Morocco in March at the site of Volubilis assessing the recent rebacking of stored mosaics with lime mortars, following the methodology used during the 2018 training. This work was made possible by a grant from the US Ambassadors Fund and was carried out in collaboration with the Direction du patrimoine of Morocco by a private conservation company directed by a former MOSAIKON trainee, with scientific coordination by the former site director of Volubilis. Advice was also provided to the project team on planned conservation on-site of selected mosaics, walls, and wall plasters in the Maison d'Orphée, a house where the MOSAIKON course conducted practical exercises in 2017–18.

In Sidon, Lebanon, where training was held in 2022 on mosaics from Beirut stored there since 1998 (see *Conservation Perspectives*, spring 2023), a two-week follow-up mission assessed the rebacking work with lime mortar that trainees from Lebanon's Directorate General of Antiquities had done since the training, and provided supervision and advice on future work. A local Lebanese conservator was involved in this mission to help ensure continuation of the work, including the urgently needed stabilization of the most water-damaged stacks of mosaics

by replacing the wooden support panels and foam sheets used to transport the mosaics in 1998. Similar to the ongoing mosaic conservation project at Volubilis, advice on external funding is being provided to continue the conservation of the mosaics in storage in Sidon.

"ASTERIXE" EXPERTS MEETING

Since its beginnings, scientific research on stone weathering and conservation has relied on exposure trials to investigate the environmental response of built heritage materials, to understand the nature and progression of deterioration patterns in real-world conditions, and to assess the compatibility and durability of conservation solutions.

In 2019 the GCI—as part of its Built Heritage Research Initiative, a collaboration with the University of Oxford—partnered with the Oxford Resilient Buildings and Landscapes Lab (OxRBL) and the Fraunhofer Institute for Building Physics (IBP) to revisit the so-called "Asterixe" exposure program and explore the potential for new research based on it. The Asterixe are large stone and concrete blocks with complex geometry designed to replicate details and conditions typical of built heritage. This program was initiated in 1986 by the German Ministry for Research and Technology under its Stone Deterioration and Stone Conservation project, and the Asterixe have now been exposed for over thirty years.

On May 12, 2023, the GCI, OxRBL, and IBP held an experts meeting at the Fraunhofer IBP in Holzkirchen, Germany, marking the conclusion of their partnership's first phase, which focused



An "Asterixe" block, one of several examined by experts at the May 2023 meeting in Germany. Photo: Davide Gulotta, GCI.

on archival information gathering and a series of field campaigns to document and define an updated state of conservation of selected Asterixe stone blocks. The meeting brought scientists and professionals involved in designing and implementing the original exposure program together with the new team. It opened with presentations on recent Asterixe research activities by Fraunhofer IBP, GCI, and the University of Oxford team members, followed by a moderated discussion. In the afternoon, a tour of the exposure site promoted the recollection and sharing of crucial institutional knowledge from the original participants, which was recorded and will complement archival information collected so far.

The meeting successfully connected past and present project aspirations and goals and, more broadly, confirmed the potential role of field exposure studies in tackling current and future challenges in built heritage preservation. The partners are currently collecting all feedback and experts contributions in a meeting report that will inform discussion on the next phase of research.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK OF HERCULE FLORENCE

Over a number of years, the GCI has conducted research into photographic processes to advance identification of historic photographic materials. In that context, the Institute recently worked with a group of scientists, researchers, and scholars on a study of what are believed to be three of the earliest surviving photographic artifacts produced in the Americas, created by Hercule Florence, a nineteenth-century artist and inventor. Supported by the GCI, the HERCULES Laboratory at the University of Évora in Portugal, the Institute Hercule Florence, and the Instituto Moreira Salles in Brazil, the project aimed to analyze and understand Florence's pioneering techniques. The research shed light on his innovative work and his little-known experiments in photography.

Florence was a European of French-Italian-Monegasque origin who settled in Brazil and led a versatile life as an inventor, draftsman, painter, typographer, and naturalist. His experiments in the 1830s revolved around mass-producing images without relying on artists. His diary entries detailed various chemical processes, including use of water and even urine to prevent photographic images from continuing to darken when exposed to light. One experiment involved etching designs on a piece of blackened glass, to use as a negative, placing it on sensitized paper, and achieving positive images.

The research team, led by Art Kaplan from the GCI and António Candeias from

the HERCULES Laboratory, studied the three artifacts using photomicrography, X-ray fluorescence, and ATR-FTIR analysis to examine the paper composition, identify the imaging metals (silver and gold), and detect the presence of protein. The results of the investigation—along with talks about Florence's documentation of the flora, fauna, and native peoples of Brazil, and his impact on contemporary artists—were presented in May at a conference at the Instituto Moreira Salles celebrating the 190th anniversary of Florence's earliest experiments in photography.

The results of this study provide insights into Florence's techniques and materials, allowing for better preservation and further scientific examination of his works. The project's researchers will continue to analyze his works, as well as produce and analyze reproductions based on his techniques, using information in his journals, to gain further understanding of his early breakthroughs.

MEETING ON CARE OF NEON

The GCI's long-term Modern and Contemporary Art Research Initiative has been studying the myriad materials and technologies used by modern and contemporary artists, in order to address their conservation challenges. As part of that work, the GCI convened a meeting on the Care of Neon Artworks, which was held in Los Angeles at the Getty Center and at the Museum of Neon Art (MONA) March 15–17, 2023. The meeting—organized by Ellen Moody of the GCI and Taylor Healy, a conservator at the Art Institute of Chicago—included twenty-five professionals working in the conservation, fabrication, history, and installation of neon in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Participants shared what they considered

the main challenges to neon's long-term care and brainstormed solutions to those challenges. They used MONA's collection and electric lab to observe fabrication processes and condition phenomena in neon objects firsthand, as well as to demonstrate and refine strategies for handling, packing, and installing the medium. Among the takeaways from the gathering were:

- neon is highly prone to obsolescence due to no-longer-available materials, discontinued electronic equipment, the hard-to-transfer skill set of neon fabricators, and environmental regulations (e.g., electrical standards, fire and electrical codes, and restrictions on mercury use);
- preserving neon units ultimately requires replication and therefore depends on skilled neon fabricators and the survival of their industry; it also depends on thorough documentation;
- conservation professionals must identify fabricators to work with and learn enough about the technology to effectively communicate with them;
- stockpiling materials, commissioning custom recipes for hard-to-source glass, and migration of electronic equipment are strategies to consider on a case-by-case basis to mitigate obsolescence;
- more research is needed on the mechanisms and rates of color shifting in neon tubes, on their materials, and on how best to harness analytical tools to understand them;
- in addition to basic guidelines on neon care, a library of neon color measurements and a directory of neon benders may benefit neon's long-term conservation.

The meeting's findings will form the basis of freely available guidelines for neon's caretakers, which should be available sometime in 2024.



Participants in the March 2023 meeting on the Care of Neon Artworks visiting the Museum of Neon Art. Photo: Cassia Davis. © J. Paul Getty Trust.



Reception at the Getty Center for the inaugural meeting of the Conservation Association of Los Angeles. Photo: Naomi Mayo, GCI.

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES INAUGURAL MEETING

On May 11, 2023, the GCI hosted the inaugural meeting of the Conservation Association of Los Angeles (CALA). CALA was founded to create a new network of professionals dedicated to caring for art and historic materials who live and work in the Greater Los Angeles area.

More than one hundred local conservators and historic preservationists convened at the Getty Center to connect with colleagues and hear about current research happening at area institutions and in private practice. A lightning-round series of presentations covered a diverse range of topics, from cleaning with rigid gels to reexamining the history of conservation in Los Angeles through the lens of racial justice. The goals and future of the association were also discussed; the group agreed to aim to meet three times a year at different locations around Los Angeles, with a mix of programming including casual social gatherings, volunteer events, and professional meetings.



To keep up to date with CALA's programming, follow its Facebook page, which can be reached using the QR code at left.

GCI GETTY MARROW INTERNS

For many years during summer months, GCI staff have supervised college undergraduate interns as part of the Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program. The aim of the program—named in honor of longtime Getty Foundation director Deborah Marrow, who began the program—is to encourage greater diversity in professions related to museums and the visual arts. It supports substantive, full-time summer work for undergraduates from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in the arts. The summer 2023 GCI undergraduate interns were:

Alexys Ahn

GCI Information Center | Vanderbilt University | Major/Minor: Classical and Mediterranean Studies and History

Alexys assisted with AATA Online, researching and clustering author names for authority records, inputting index terms into bibliographic records, and identifying and saving print and online articles missing from AATA.

Mariam Helmy

GCI Communications | University of California, Santa Cruz | Major: History of Art and Visual Culture with a concentration in Curation, Heritage, and Museums

Mariam assisted the GCI Digital Content Team with visual asset management support and research, as well as with writing to update the Institute's Wikipedia page.

Jennifer Lee

GRI Conservation and Preservation, GCI Science | California State University, Fullerton | Major/Minor: Art History/Chemistry

Jennifer's internship—shared between the GRI and the GCI—focused on preventive conservation; tasks included conservation of Frank Gehry architectural models, use of the Whitmore and Fotonowy microfading testers, and website preparation for MCE's sustainability workshop at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Jeremiah Taylor

GCI Buildings and Sites | University of Southern California | Major/Minor: Law, History, and Culture/Modern Art Markets and Ethics; Music Production

For his internship with the African American Historic Places, Los Angeles project—a collaboration with the Los Angeles City Planning Department's Office of Historic Resources—Jeremiah aided with a community kickoff, assisted with combing through and cataloguing audio recordings of community members at kickoff, and helped create an upcoming community newsletter.

Upcoming Events

PUBLIC ART INSIDE OUT SYMPOSIUM

The GCI is co-organizing with the Museum of Cultures (MUDEC) of Milan a symposium that will explore issues related to public art in all its forms and multi-vocality. The symposium, to be held May 7–8, 2024, at MUDEC, will take place in hybrid form.

Public art reflects our cultures with diverse meanings for the communities that interact

with it. In all its forms, public art provokes reactions from the public. Conserving it is a complex process involving different actors, with local communities playing a significant role in creating, assigning values, advocating for what needs to be preserved, and, in some cases, conserving what is valued. Also important is the relationship between public art and museums.

Public Art Inside Out aims to promote a broad exchange of ideas among a wide variety of professionals—from practitioners to researchers and academics, artists, art historians, curators, conservators, architects, city planners, policy-makers, collectors, benefactors, and institutions procuring public art. We seek original, theoretical, and empirical proposals to contribute to and promote debate on art in the public sphere.

Details, including proposal submissions and registration information, are available at: <https://www.getty.edu/projects/outdoor-sculpture/public-art-inside-out-symposium/>.

OLD CITIES, NEW CHALLENGES 2024

A course for urban conservation in Southeast Asia
An eight-week online workshop co-organized by the GCI and Think City Institute
April 17–June 22, 2024

The Southeast Asia region faces formidable challenges to the conservation of its urban cultural heritage, from population growth, urbanization, intensifying tourism, and economic and infrastructure development. To help improve conservation practice within the region, we are again partnering with Think City Institute to offer an online course for Southeast Asian urban planners and architects examining methodologies, practical tools, and techniques for the conservation of historic places. The course will follow the Historic Urban Landscape approach and will be delivered online with an on-site case study to follow.

Applications are due January 10, 2024, and will open in September 2023. Applications can be found at: https://www.getty.edu/conservation/our_projects/field_projects/urban/old_cities_course.html

GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Applications are being accepted for the 2024–25 Getty Graduate Internship program. These internships are full-time positions for students or recent graduates who intend to pursue careers in fields related to the visual arts. Placements are typically available in areas such as curatorial, education, conservation, research, publications, web and new media, public programs, digital projects, and grant making.

The GCI pursues a range of activities dedicated to advancing conservation practice, to enhance the preservation, understanding, and interpretation of the visual arts. Twelve-month internships are available in the GCI's Collections, Buildings and Sites, Science, and Information Center departments. Instructions, application forms, and additional information are available online in the "How to Apply" section of the Getty Foundation website. For further information, visit <https://gty.art/gettygrad>. The application deadline is November 1, 2023.

2023–24 GRADUATE INTERNS

Tahmida Afroze

University of Applied Arts Vienna and Silpakorn University International College, Bangkok, Thailand
Managing Collection Environments Initiative

Ifrah Asif

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Seismic Retrofitting Project/Earthen Architecture Initiative/Earthen Architecture Course

Antonia Gerstner

Fachhochschule Potsdam, Germany
Cleaning of Gilded and Lacquered Surfaces & Recent Advances in the Characterization of Asian Lacquer

Jonah Halili

Queen's University, Ontario, Canada
Managing Collection Environments Initiative

Bahareh Kheyrkhan

Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy
"Climate Change and Heritage at Risk for Archaeological Sites of the Mediterranean World" Symposium

Caroline Longo

Queen's University, Ontario, Canada
Modern and Contemporary Art Research Initiative

Timothy Augustus Ong

Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy
Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative

Teal Patterson

University of Malta
Built Heritage Research Initiative

Kira Williams

University of Southern California, Los Angeles
African American Historic Places, Los Angeles

CONSERVATION GUEST SCHOLARS

The Conservation Guest Scholars Program at Getty provides opportunities for professionals to pursue research on topics that contribute to

the advancement of practice in the conservation field. Successful candidates are in residence at the Getty Center for periods of three or six months and are chosen by a professional committee through a competitive process.

2023–24 GCI GUEST SCHOLARS

Yael Alef

Israel Antiquities Authority
"Cultural Significance Assessment of Archaeological Sites in the Digital Age: From Text to Spatial Networks of Meanings"
September 25–December 15, 2023

Marie Dubost

Independent Scholar, Le Pré-Saint-Gervais, France
"Recutting in Western Europe"
September 25–December 15, 2023

Stephen Kelley

Independent Scholar, Oak Park, Illinois
"Cracking the Code: Earthquakes and Conservation of Built Heritage"
September 25–December 15, 2023

Giorgio Buccellati

University of California, Los Angeles
"Locally Based Conservation and Community Involvement at Ancient Urkesh"
January 8–March 29, 2024

Cornelius Holtorf

Linnaeus University, Kalmar, Sweden
"Heritage in Transformation"
January 8–March 29, 2024

David Saunders

Independent Scholar, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom
"Sustainability and Museum Lighting"
January 8–March 29, 2024

Bertrand Lavédrine

Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France
"Taxonomy for Photographic Images and Sustainability in Photograph Preservation"
April 8–June 28, 2024

Barbara Lubelli

Technische Universiteit Delft, Netherlands
"Development of Accelerated Laboratory Test for the Assessment of the Durability of Plasters and Renders with Respect to Salt Crystallization"
April 8–June 28, 2024

Aga Wielocha

Hochschule der Künste Bern, Switzerland
"Having, Holding, Keeping, Sharing: New Art and New Ways of Institutional Collecting and Preserving"
April 8–June 28, 2024

Print & Online Publications

Print publications are available for purchase at shop.getty.edu. Online publications are available free at getty.edu/conservation.

PRINT

René Magritte: The Artist's Materials

Catherine Defeyt and Francisca Vandepitte with contributions by David Strivay, Elodie Herens, and Joy Mazurek

Belgian artist René Magritte (1898–1967) is one of the most famous Surrealist painters, known for subverting the expected, often placing household or everyday items in unusual settings. His work is found in museum collections worldwide. Despite his popularity, the materiality of his works has been poorly documented. This volume changes that, shedding new light on his oil paintings and revealing his habit, particularly between 1920 and 1935, of painting over previously used canvases.

This book is the culmination of the Magritte on Practice project (2016–19), a collaboration of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (RMFAB) and the European Center of Archaeometry of the University of Liège (Centre Européen d'Archéométrie, CEA), which studied the world's most extensive collection of Magritte's paintings—that of the Magritte Museum in Brussels. The project was led by coauthors Catherine Defeyt, senior researcher at both the University of Liège and RMFAB, and Francisca Vandepitte, senior curator of modern art at RMFAB, joined by David Strivay, CEA's director.

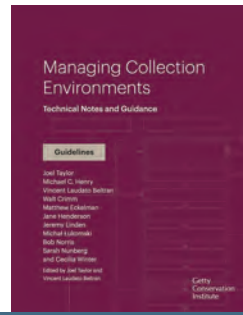
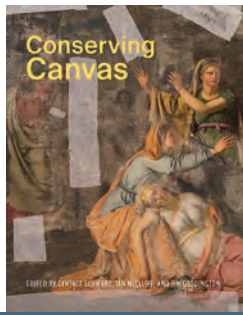
This is the tenth volume in the GCI's Artist's Materials series, which explores materials used by modern and contemporary artists, and the challenges related to their conservation. Of interest to conservators, scientists, curators, and enthusiasts of twentieth-century art, this book expands understanding of Magritte the artist and provides new findings that will inform strategies for future care of his works.

PRINT

Conserving Canvas

Edited by Cynthia Schwarz, Ian McClure, and Jim Coddington

In 2019 Yale University, with Getty Foundation support, held an international conference where nearly four hundred attendees from more than



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twenty countries gathered to discuss the conservation of paintings on canvas. This was the first major symposium on the subject since 1974, when wax-resin and glue-paste lining reigned as the predominant conservation techniques. In the past fifty years, such methods—often deemed destructive to artworks—have become less widely used in favor of more minimalist approaches. Recent decades have witnessed reevaluation of traditional practices as well as focused research supporting significant new methodologies, procedures, and synthetic materials for the care and conservation of paintings on fabric supports.

Conserving Canvas compiles the proceedings of the conference, presenting a wide array of papers and posters that provide important global perspectives on the history, current state, and future needs of the field. Featuring an expansive glossary of terms that will be an invaluable resource for conservators, this publication promises to become a standard reference for the international conservation community.

Cynthia Schwarz is senior associate conservator of paintings, Yale University Art Gallery. Ian McClure is director of the Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, Yale University, and the Susan Morse Hilles chief conservator, Yale University Art Gallery. Jim Coddington was formerly Agnes Gund Chief Conservator, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

ONLINE

Eames House Conservation Project Cemesto Panel Investigations | Phase 1

César Bagues Ballester, Laura Matarese, and Chandler McCoy, 2023

This volume presents findings from the first of two phases of study on the Cemesto panels used for exterior cladding on the Eames House residence and studio. It describes the history and properties of Cemesto and assesses the material's significance as an element of the Eames House. The report then addresses mechanisms of deterioration based on limited laboratory testing and a visual evaluation of the panels and their steel frames and sealants, conducted in 2015 and again in 2022.

These studies are part of a long collaboration between the GCI and the Charles and Ray

Eames House Preservation Foundation. Since 2011 this partnership has demonstrated the application of well-recognized conservation methodologies at the Eames House, including material investigations and condition assessments of the buildings, contents, and setting to design and implement conservation measures and prepare a conservation management plan to assist the Eames Foundation in the site's ongoing care and management. This plan and the results of investigations conducted between 2011 and 2016 were published in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

ONLINE

Managing Collection Environments: Technical Notes and Guidance

Joel Taylor, Michael C. Henry, Vincent Laudato Beltran, Walt Crimm, Matthew Eckelman, Jane Henderson, Jeremy Linden, Michał Łukomski, Bob Norris, Sarah Nunberg, and Cecilia Winter
Edited by Joel Taylor and Vincent Laudato Beltran, 2023

This publication of sixteen technical notes from eleven authors presents a holistic perspective on the sustainable environmental management of collections in museums, galleries, archives, and libraries. Developed for the course Preserving Collections in the Age of Sustainability, the publication offers fundamental concepts such as climate physics and data collection and analysis, approaches to managing the indoor environment, and broad topics such as historical and organizational contexts and consensus building.

Each note is self-contained and can stand alone in providing insight on a specific topic. However, as no single field of study holds the solution and no one solution can be applied universally, the diverse elements presented in this publication—technical knowledge, organization, management, and communication—need to be woven into an interdisciplinary whole to support sustainable practice. The technical notes allow readers to engage their own perspectives and practical experiences, a crucial step toward applying new information, tools, and skills, and promoting dialogue about sustainable collection environments.

The J. Paul Getty Trust

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Conservation Perspectives, The GCI Newsletter is distributed free of charge twice a 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 website, getty.edu/conservation.

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) works internationally to advance conservation practice in the visual arts—broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. The Institute serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, field projects, and the dissemination of information. In all its endeavors, the GCI creates and delivers knowledge that contributes to the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.

The GCI is a program of the J. Paul Getty Trust, a cultural and philanthropic institution dedicated to the presentation, conservation, and interpretation of the world's artistic legacy.



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The Gallery of Gandhara in the National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi. Photo: Suzuki Kaku/Alamy Stock Photo.



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