

PROFESSIONAL CONSERVATORS IN PRACTICE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION OF TRANSPORT AND INDUSTRIAL COLLECTIONS

PC1001 21-26 FEBRUARY 2010

A wide choice of primary training is available in this country in aspects of object care. However, there are relatively few opportunities for conservation professionals to find specialist training in traditional skills and enhance their knowledge of materials and techniques. West Dean College has developed a series of short courses aimed at meeting this training need.

All too often the original surface and materials that make up transport and technology objects are being lost due to over-restoration and inappropriate replacement. In addition, there is such disparity in aims of treatment and the level of conservation/restoration of objects that there is no common approach that can be used as a basis for management, treatment methods, and documentation or for the consideration of ethics. Another concern is the lack of any provision for conservation training. It is impossible for a conservator to learn the required engineering skills in a short timescale and so the staff of transport and technology museums tend to be engineers first and become conservator-restorers second. However there are relatively few opportunities for them to develop a more ethical conservation approach.

Course Leader

Chris Knapp, Conservation Manager, Imperial War Museum, Duxford, Cambridge

Tutors

John Delaney, Imperial War Museum, Duxford; Moira Gittos, Fleet Air Arm Museum; Mark Holloway, Hampshire County Council Museums Service; Brenda Keneghan, Victoria and Albert Museum; Suzanne Kitto, The Royal Armouries, Leeds; Dave Morris, Fleet Air Arm Museum; Bill Smith, The Bluebird Project; Adrian Tribe, University of London; David Willey, The Tank Museum, Bovington.

In addition to the course tutors, other specialists from the college who are acknowledged experts in their field will contribute to the teaching.

Participants

The course was designed specifically for staff already working in museums but it is open to other groups or individuals.

The Programme

The course will deliver the fundamental information needed to understand the role and the approach of the conservator involved in the care of a transport or technology collection and to extend their knowledge of conservation principles and techniques.

The five-day programme will comprise a series of demonstrations, lectures and practical sessions, making use of case studies and with comprehensive handouts provided for participants. The workshop will concentrate on the role of the conservator and approaches to conserving the many different materials encountered in transport and technology collections, preventative conservation, handling, storage and display and on environmental monitoring and control. The final day will include sessions on accessing information on conservation.

Topics will include:

The history and current direction of conservation and restoration treatments

Recognising the properties of different categories of fabrics, leather, woods, paint and varnish finishes, metals etc;

Recognising the main causes and effects of degradation of the material;

Identifying the major environmental parameters for safe handling, storage and display;

Understanding the different roles of objects within private and public collections and the influences of these roles on treatment;

Understanding basic passive techniques and housekeeping methods

Identifying and discussing the pros and cons of in-situ treatments and treatments involving temporary removal of one or more element of the object.

Current practice

The course will encourage active participation from those attending in order to foster the spirit of mutual exchange of ideas and experiences.

OUTLINE PROGRAMME

Day 1	Sunday	Day 4	Wednesday
16.00-18.30	Register at Reception Desk	Morning	Lectures Materials science: Understanding the structure of inorganic materials
18.45	Welcome Talk		Understanding the deterioration and corrosion of inorganic materials
19.00	Dinner followed by	Afternoon	The Bluebird Project Working with mixed media objects, case studies
Evening	What is a museum and why do they exist?	Evening	Students' survey presentations
Day 2	Monday	Day 5	Thursday
Morning	Lectures Introduction to conservation aims and principles Ethical guidelines for conservators	Morning	Lectures Understanding environmental control Conservation techniques
Afternoon	Lectures Object management, recording and documentation Metalwork	Afternoon	Lectures: Object risk assessment and disaster planning Storage and display
Evening	Students' project	Evening	Large object conservation success story
Day 3	Tuesday	Day 6	Friday
Morning	Lectures Materials science: Understanding the structure of organic materials Understanding the deterioration and decay of organic materials	Morning	Lectures: How to access conservation information from printed sources How to access conservation information from the Internet
Afternoon	Lecture Plastics conservation research Approaches to conservation, case studies	Afternoon	Seminar: Discussion and questions Course evaluations Course closes.
Evening	Approaches to conservation, case studies		

Non-residential course fee: £554

Fully inclusive residential course fee:

Shared bathroom facilities: £744

Standard room with private bathroom facilities: £819

Superior room with private bathroom facilities: £874

HOW TO BOOK

Please complete one booking form, or copy of form, per person per course and enclose a deposit for each course booked. On receipt of your booking, we will send all the further details you will need for your visit, including the course details, full details of cancellation conditions and your final payment slip. Travel instructions will be sent to all students.

For further information on the course, please contact Liz Campbell: liz.campbell@westdean.org.uk or +44 (0) 1243 818219.

For further information about booking please telephone the Admissions Office on +44 (0) 1243 811301.

Website: www.westdean.org.uk/College