

NEWSGRAM

News in brief from the Conservation Center

Issue 1, March 2011

The Conservation Center Observes Its 50th Anniversary

A Celebratory Year Continues

On October 15th and 16th, 2010, the Conservation Center celebrated a milestone: 50 years of conservation education in the United States.

The event brought alumni and friends from as far away as Canada, Switzerland, and Japan.

In the midst of another busy and exciting spring term, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on this year's commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University. What began in 1960 in the basement of the Duke House, today stands as a premier graduate program in art conservation and a critical center for academic research, with alumni advancing the field around the world. The founding of the conservation program at the IFA represented a fundamental and important shift in art conservation training and would forever change the field. This year we are taking time to recognize and celebrate a half-century of excellence and leadership in education, training and research in art conservation at the IFA.

"We are excited to be marking 50 years of the Conservation Center as the first graduate-level training program to be offered at a university in the United States," said Patricia Rubin, Judy & Michael Stein-

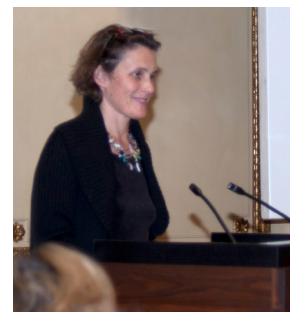
hardt Director of the Institute of Fine Arts. "The Conservation Center led the way 50 years ago and continues today as a leader in the field by providing our graduates with a unique advantage as they enter and progress through the professional world."

The anniversary festivities kicked off this fall with a wonderful celebration weekend on October 15th & 16th, 2010. An open house at the Conservation Center welcomed many longtime friends, alumni and supporters to tour our facilities and meet students presenting and discussing a variety of current projects. During this time, many of our alumni were kind enough to open their doors for a series of personal tours of local museums and conservation laboratories for old friends and classmates.

The attendees then all gathered at the Duke House, where a memorable afternoon of presentations and special recollections commenced. Patricia Rubin welcomed everyone for the celebration and introduced the first speaker, Francesca Bewer, Research Curator at the Harvard Art Museum who presented the early history of art conservation in the country based on her recently published book *A Laboratory for Art: Harvard's Fogg Museum and the Emergence of Conservation in America, 1900 – 1950*. The story of the development of art conservation training continued with Jean Portell, private conservator and historian, who discussed her research into the



Michele Marincola, Phoebe Dent Weil,
Hannelore Roemich, and Margaret Holben Ellis
at The Parsonage



Francesca G. Bewer, Jean D. Portell,
and Joyce Hill Stoner

very beginnings of the program at NYU and the dedication and vision of its early leaders including Craig Hugh Smyth, James McCredie, Lawrence Majewski, Sheldon and Carolyn Keck, and Norbert S. Baer. Professor Baer, Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Conservation at the Center, spoke fondly and amusingly of his memories of those early days and his work with his colleagues in his presentation “Out to Lunch.”

The audience was then treated to “*The Saga of Seventy-Eighth*”, a special ode composed and delivered by Joyce Hill Stoner ’73 recounting the fascinating and humorous history of the Conservation Center program. This kicked off a series of recollections from alumni representing each decade of the Center’s history, including current faculty Eugene Thaw Professor of Paper Conservation Margaret Holben Ellis ’79 and Sherman Fairchild Chairman and Professor of Conservation Michele Marincola ’90. The speakers shared their unique stories and memories of their time in the program culminating in an address by current student Julia Sybalsky ’12 and

own way to a relaxing autumn picnic at The Parsonage in Wappingers Falls, NY. The former home of Larry Majewski, Chairman of the Conservation Center from 1966 – 1986, this beautiful estate was lovingly restored by Peggy Ellis and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to explore the picturesque walking trails and foliage in the surrounding acres. Over 150 alumni and friends gathered for this memorable weekend to meet old acquaintances, share memories and commemorate an important milestone in the history of conservation in America. Everyone agreed that it was a great success with guests commenting on the “thoughtful, wonderful and moving” recollections and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to “reunite with friends, colleagues and meet new faces.”

Throughout this commemorative 50th Anniversary year, we recognize that the rich history and ongoing success of the Conservation Center has been the result of the dedication and vision of its founders, as well as the devoted faculty, staff, students, alumni, friends and partners over the years. The Center has always

conferences across the country and abroad. The fund has already enabled four current students to travel and present their work at recent conferences including the



Anusha Kasthuri, from Sri Lanka, our second Leon Levy Visiting Fellow in Archaeological Conservation, and Shelby White

ICOM-CC Working Group for Glass & Ceramics and the Eastern Analytical Symposium. We have an anniversary year goal to reach \$50,000 by August and many have already given generously – the fund currently stands at an inspiring \$37,500! We will make a final push to reach our goal with our summer appeal, so there is still time to be a part of this historic anniversary celebration.

We are honored to mark this important anniversary year as a time to celebrate both the history and the future of Conservation Center. Over the years, many of you have supported the program financially while others have shared their knowledge and time, enriching our students’ education and experience. As we take a moment to look back we are eager to carry the goodwill and community that has sustained the Conservation Center over its first 50 years into the next century and beyond! Thank you to all who worked to help make such a wonderful Anniversary celebration and to all of those who attended. We will continue to inform you regarding more 50th Anniversary news and events throughout the rest of the year. •

– Oliver Luisi

Oliver is the Assistant to the Chairman for Administration and Public Affairs



Center graduates Jean Domermuth and Eliza Spaulding at The Parsonage



Tony Frantz addresses John Bernstein, President of The Leon Levy Foundation; Max Marmor, President of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation; Shelby White and Hannelore Roemich during our Open House

closing remarks by Acting Chairman Hannelore Roemich who thanked everyone and promised that “the best is yet to come!” A delightful evening reception followed at the Duke House with much camaraderie, laughter and many personal reunions.

The next day attendees loaded onto buses or made their

relied on the generous support of an engaged and vibrant alumni community and essential partnerships with foundations and donors. It is in this spirit that we created a special **50th Anniversary Fund** dedicated to the support of current students, including tuition, stipends and presentations of their academic work at

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