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Recent Advances in Glass and Ceramics Conservation 2016 (ICOM-CC) in Wrocław, Poland

THE CONSERVATION CENTER ENCOURAGES ITS STUDENTS TO EXPLORE THE FIELD OF ART conservation in a variety of contexts, ranging from summer internships in museums across the United States and Europe, to projects abroad at NYU's Villa La Pietra and archaeological excavations in Italy, Turkey, Greece, and Egypt. These opportunities allow students to practice and contextualize treatment and research skills developed through their coursework. National and international conferences likewise afford students an opportunity to supplement and reframe their academic studies in a professional context. This past May, three students from the Conservation Center—Rebecca Gridley '17, Emily Frank '18, and Soon Kai Poh '19—attended the Interim Meeting for the Glass and Ceramics Working Group of the International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) in Wrocław, Poland. The conference was co-organized by Chairman of the Conservation Center, Dr. Hannelore Roemich, who has served as the Working Group's coordinator since 2011. In this Newsgram, we hear from Emily, Soon Kai, and Rebecca about their experience at the conference.

Although it did take us some time to learn how to pronounce Wrocław ("vrohts-wahf"), it did not take long for us to be charmed by the "city of bridges," which is comprised of twelve islands created by branches of the Oder River. Wrocław has a fascinating and complex history; over the centuries it has been under the rule of the Poles, Czechs, Austrians, Hungarians, and Germans. The city and the surrounding region of Silesia were incorporated into modern Poland in 1945, when the borders of Germany were redrawn following World War II. Wrocław has played an important role in the history of glass production in Poland, and today is home to many museums and universities, making it a perfect location for the ICOM-CC Glass and Ceramics Working Group Interim Meeting. The conference was hosted by the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design, which has faculty and studios devoted to teaching ceramic and glass art production, restoration, and conservation.

The conference program included two and a half days of presentations, tours of the Geppert Academy's ceramic and glass conservation facilities, and a poster session at the Museum of Architecture. An additional day was devoted to the Student Forum, and study trips to local ceramic and glass museums and production facilities were available for participants in the days before and after the conference. During the meeting, we heard about new research and current practices in the field of ceramics, glass, and stained glass conservation. These presentations highlighted collaborations between conservators and conservation scientists, which reinforced for students the importance of communicating research ideas and results in a succinct and technically accurate manner.

Some of our personal highlights included presentations on the treatment of glass marine invertebrate models by the Blaschkas, the development of a transmitted light RTI (reflectance transformation imaging) protocol for studying transparent glass, and the use of ion chromatography to analyze glass degradation products in order to improve preventive conservation guidelines for objects suffering from "glass disease." We were particularly happy to be there to support adjunct faculty member Sarah Barack '03, who presented on her experiments with 3D printing technology for filling losses on glass vessels. Sarah's paper prompted an exciting dialogue with colleagues on the potential of 3D scanning technology in conservation treatments.



Proceedings of the conference: Recent Advances in Glass and Ceramics Conservation 2016, ed. Hannelore Roemich and Lauren Fair

The publication is available for purchase by contacting icom@asp.wroc.pl

Below (left to right): Soon Kai, Rebecca, Hanne, and Emily



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Emily gets ready for her talk at the student forum

forged new connections with colleagues who have similar research interests in the imaging sciences. Rebecca Gridley gave a brief presentation on graduate-level conservation training in the United States, with a focus on the New York University and the Winterthur-University of Delaware programs. These program presentations revealed the diversity of approaches towards conservation education, and fostered discussion amongst students at the Happy Hour event held afterwards.

The conference was a great opportunity to meet with mentors, conservators, conservation scientists, and fellow students from universities, research institutions, museums, and private practice firms in sixteen different countries. We had engaging conversations with professionals at different points in their career, and it was illuminating to hear their perspectives on the field and its future. These informal exchanges in conjunction with the formal presentations gave us an opportunity to practice our communication and public-speaking skills, as we had to effectively discuss our own work with a range of individuals, including those with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Overall, the conference allowed us to reframe our experience and studies at the Conservation Center within a global context. It also helped us to think about how we would like to contribute to the field as we move forward in our careers, to critically reflect on our practice, and to seek out collaborations with colleagues from other sub-specialties, disciplines, and countries. We gained valuable insight into the peer-review and publication process, as proofreaders for some of the conference papers. The experience of attending the conference with Professor Roemich was especially meaningful, as her long-standing involvement in the Glass and Ceramics Working Group reflects her passion for these materials and her commitment to the sharing of knowledge in the field, while her dedication inspires us to play a more active role in the international conservation community.

Rebecca Gridley

Rebecca is a fourth-year objects conservation student

Emily Frank

Emily is a third-year objects conservation student

Soon Kai Poh

Soon Kai is a second-year objects conservation student

ICOM-CC TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Copenhagen, Denmark

September 4-8, 2017

“Linking Past and Future”

More information at: <http://www.icom-cc2017.org/>



Gerhard Eggert, left, introduces Norman Tennent and his co-author, Deborah Carthy

Below: Participants at the poster session; NYU students in Wrocław

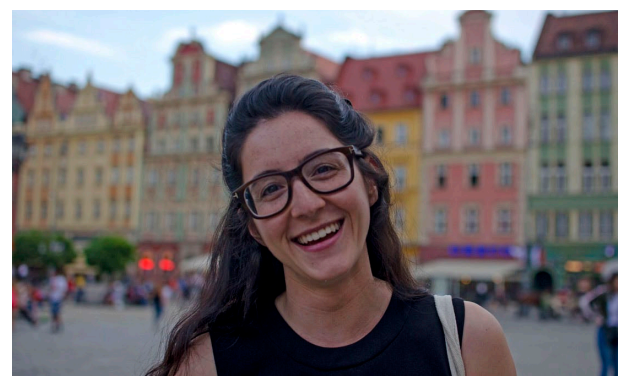


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