



**SBMK day &**

**SBMK Summit on  
(inter)national  
collaboration**

Acting in Contemporary  
Art Conservation

**WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2018**

**THURSDAY 15 - FRIDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2018**



# SBMK day & SBMK Summit on (inter)national collaboration

Acting in Contemporary  
Art Conservation

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SBMK



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Conservation and restoration  
of cultural heritage



Cultural Heritage Agency  
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science



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# SBMK day & SBMK Summit on (inter)national collaboration

## Acting in Contemporary Art Conservation

WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2018 &  
THURSDAY 15 - FRIDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2018

### BACKGROUND

The Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art | SBMK was formed to manage the international project *Modern Art: Who Cares* (1995-1997). One of the results of this project was the foundation of the International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art | INCCA. Since the start of INCCA in 1999, many conservation related research projects have been carried out through international collaboration and the results shared through the INCCA website. SBMK continued to initiate projects, such as *Inside Installations* (2004 - 2007), *Artist Interviews* (1998 - 2004), and the international symposium *Contemporary Art: Who Cares?* (2010). SBMK has taken the initiative to organise a new international symposium reflecting this background and to inspire future collaborations: *Acting in Contemporary Art Conservation* on 15 - 16 November 2018 in the Netherlands. The aim is to create a lively event where you can meet your peers, share current research and initiate new projects.

### MUSEUM PRACTICES

One of the general outcomes of the research projects so far, has been a thorough understanding of the influence that conservation treatments and museum practices have on the future existence of contemporary artworks. Museum professionals and the audience are often actively engaged in contemporary art, sometimes becoming participants in the creative process, which poses challenging questions to the preservation of such artworks. These developments create new challenges for museum professionals and ask for specialist expertise, as they are in fact all acting in contemporary art conservation.

## SBMK DAY

Topic of the English spoken SBMK day 2018 is 'Plastics'. This one day symposium will take place just prior to the event on 14 November 2018 in Utrecht (Centraal Museum). One of the topics is the Dutch project on identifications of plastics outside the lab. There will be presentations of several conservation projects of different kind of plastics from all over Europe. International renowned artist Folkert de Jong is keynote speaker, as plastics are his favourite material to work with.

## SUMMIT

The Summit committee received over an hundred proposals from all over the world.

The chosen themes are:

- decision making
- artist participation-
- oral history and roles and
- stake holders in conservation.

The programme exists of 20 plenary presentations, 21 poster presentations and 4 break-out sessions. Locations are Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands in Amersfoort (first day) and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (second day).





# SBMK day

WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2018

CENTRAAL MUSEUM  
AGNIETENSTRAAT 1, UTRECHT

programme

## SBMK day

WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2018

CENTRAAL MUSEUM

09:15 – 10:15 ARRIVALS AND REGISTRATION

10:15 – 10:30 **Welcome**, Paulien 't Hoen

10:30 – 11:00 **Key note I – Project Plastics: Identification of plastics outside the lab**, Carien van Aubel & Olivia van Rooijen

11:00 – 11:20 **What plastic objects can tell about the history of plastics industry**, Ines Soares

11:20 – 11:40 **Artist Participation for the Decision Making: four plastic artworks**, Marta Piraldo & Aurelia Costa

11:40 – 12:00 **Restoring Gianni Colombo's three Strutture Ritmiche (1964); A case-study of a kinetic-visual work in (poly)methyl methacrylate**, Maria Cristina Lanza

12:00 – 13:30 LUNCH AND MUSEUM VISIT

13:30 – 14:00 **Key note II – The Artist and his plastics: Flash art-Trash art**, Folkert de Jong

14:00 – 14:20 **Challenges of our times - plastic works of art in Poland: Kantor, Szapocznikow, Tarasin, Bałka, Althamer**, Monika Jadzinska

14:20 – 14:40 **To act ahead of time: preserving animation artworks on cellulose acetate**, Aafke Weller & Mette Peters

14:40 – 15:00 **Shocking Results? The Effect of Cleaning on Electrostatic Charge Buildup and Dust Accumulation on Face-mounted Photographs**, Clara von Waldthausen

- 
- 15:00 – 15:30**    **BREAK**
- 15:30 – 15:50    **Just a metal sculpture?**, Marianna Cappellina
- 15:50 – 16:10    **Know, name and assess your plastics**,  
Annelies De Mey
- 16:10 – 16:30    **From artist intention to public perception:  
conserving and displaying three interactive  
artworks of Piero Gilardi**,  
Flavia Parisi
- 16:30 – 16:50    **The ‘life story’ of Zuccaia**, Thea van Oosten
- 16:50 – 18:00**    **DRINKS**

## Key note I – Project Plastics: Identification of plastics outside the lab

CARIEN VAN AUBEL, SBMK  
OLIVIA VAN ROOIJEN, SBMK

SUZAN DE GROOT & HENK VAN KEULEN, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE, LYDIA BEERKENS, freelance  
[www.sbmkn.nl/plastics-project](http://www.sbmkn.nl/plastics-project)

Numerous museum collections, especially in contemporary art and design, contain plastic objects. The diversity of types of plastics will only increase in the future. The monitoring of plastic collections and appropriate measures for preventive conservation largely depend on correct identification and specialist knowledge. It is rare that museums have access to a laboratory. Hence, SBMK and NICAS (RCE) initiated the Project Plastics (2017-2019) with the aim to educate collection keepers and conservators, offering a method and do-it-yourself tool for identification. In the long term, Project Plastics will improve the sustainability, visibility and accessibility of 'plastic collections'.

The first year focused on developing an identification method and Do-It-Yourself kit, including a physical toolbox and digital tool. The digital tool consists of a questionnaire, sorting out what type of plastic is applicable, information sheets and guidelines for conservation. A list of iconic examples of artworks gives an impression of the most used types of plastic and their requirements for conservation.

During the second phase a number of workshops is being organized. Participants learn 'on the job' to identify their own collections and use the tools under the supervision of conservation scientists and conservators trained in working with plastic objects. The project is funded by Gieskes-Strijbis Fund and Mondriaan fund.

# What plastic objects can tell about the history of plastics industry

## The Portuguese context of production

**INÊS SOARES**, New University of Lisbon

**JOANA LIA FERREIRA**, New University of Lisbon

**SUSANA FRANÇA DE SÁ**, New University of Lisbon

Plastics offer new forms, colours and textures, comfort, and affordable luxury. The wide use of these materials in several areas brings about new challenges for the conservation of modern and contemporary heritage, as some plastics are intrinsically instable and sometimes their daily use in the past is sufficient to raise countless preservation issues.

Based on a number of objects of everyday life, from private to industrial collections, our presentation aims to investigate the material history of the Portuguese plastic industry. Within the framework of the project *The Triumph of Bakelite - Contributions for a History of Plastics in Portugal*, the premise is that every object can tell a story. In this project, comprehensive studies into plastic objects contributed to a full coverage of the history, lifestyle, industrial, economic and environmental development in Portugal.

To achieve this goal, industrial archives and libraries were accessed, oral testimonies from locals and industrialists were collected, selected plastic objects were characterised by using infrared spectroscopy, and conservation approaches were analysed.

This work results in a new perspective on the Portuguese history of the plastic industry as these case studies were selected as testimonies from a social, cultural, artistic and industrial background. It also intends to identify the plastics most produced, the main processing methods and the influence of manufacture on the objects' current condition. From this knowledge, a future exhibition is planned for 2019, including our expertise on this modern and contemporary material, enabling a better understanding and preservation.

## Artist Participation for the Decision Making: four plastic artworks

**MARTA PIRALDO**, freelance

**AURELIA COSTA**, freelance

**FRANCESCA SERRATI**, Villa Croce Contemporary Art Museum,  
Genoa

Four artworks, from the Contemporary Art Museum of Villa Croce in Genoa, made by different plastic materials, were investigated and restored. The survey has been structured in the following areas:

1. assesment of the state of conservation;
2. chemical analysis of plastic materials;
3. study of the historical documentation and comprehension of the artist's aim, through interviews with the artist, or through other testimonies.

For the decision-making of these case studies, the artist's participation, oral information and photographic/written documentation have been essential for an appropriate intervention. A valuable contribution was provided to other cases in which non-traditional materials have been used.

Hans Jörg Glattfelder, *Pyr 195* (1971), acrylic on polystyrene. The artist didn't collaborate, but fundamental information about the artwork was obtained from the restoration of another similar Glattfelder's 1969 artwork.

Antonio Porcelli, *1977: in my white room* (1988), plastic tray with objects (PS, PP, Latex and others) and polyurethane foam. The artwork's conservative state was found through archive photographs and art critics interviews.

Antonio Scaccabarozzi, *Essenziale Rosso/rosa* (1990), synthetic resins and acrylic color. The informations about the artist's aim and the materials employed, came by the artist's wife who collaborated through interviews, archive documentation and also provided a set of original materials as reference.

Gianni Stirone, *Untitled* (1965) ant and nitric colors. The artist offered his collaboration giving information about: materials employed, the aim of his artwork and his volition regarding the conservation and restoration interventions.

## Restoring Gianni Colombo's three *Strutturazioni Ritmiche* (1964); A case-study of a kinetic-visual work in (poly)methyl methacrylate

**MARIA CRISTINA LANZA**, freelance

The research was carried out as part of a graduation thesis at the Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro of Rome. Working group: M. C. Lanza, P. Iazurlo, M. E. Prunas, Fabio Aramini, M. Margozi, G. Priori, A. Rubino, G. Sidoti, F. Testi, L. Tozzi, Zp Elettronica srl.

The conservation of kinetic-works is a challenge because it is necessary to strike a balance between the preservation of original materials and the functionality of the work.

Through the restoration of three *Strutturazioni ritmiche* by Gianni Colombo (1964), carried out at the *Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro* of Rome, the present research focuses on an approach for the conservation of light-kinetic works. Moreover, the treatment of a (poly)methylmethacrylate (pMMA) work included tests of the procedures on a plastic of which there are few documented cases of conservation. Each *Strutturazione ritmica* consists of four pMMA transparent panels vertically inserted into an aluminium base inside of which four incandescent bulbs intermittently illuminate each sheet, emphasizing the geometrical patterns made through incisions and cuts on pMMA.

Before the treatment, a significant decay restricted the right perception of light effects, so the work was no longer exposed to the public for many years. The pMMA panels showed the worse conditions of conservation and they could no longer perform their function as optical conductors, due to scratches, abrasions, cracks, crazing, loss of transparency, gaps and deformations caused by mechanical and thermal stresses. Moreover, the lighting systems had partially lost their functionality. The complexity of the conservation problems required a preliminary study in order to restore the functionality of the work, respecting, at the same time, constituent materials. Tests were performed on pMMA samples reproducing the degradation phenomena characterizing the original sheets; this allowed to apply suitable conservative treatments on the work. A restoration of the lighting systems was also carried out, exploiting an up-to-date technology.

## Key note II – The Artist and his plastics : Flash art – Trash art

**FOLKERT DE JONG**, artist

Folkert de Jong's expressive sculptures are the result of his intense fascination with mankind's psychological and physical condition. De Jong's work is known for his distinctive application of insulation materials, such as polyurethane and Styrofoam. His lecture, 'Flash Art – Trash Art', addresses the value and moral meaning of matter and decay. He considers the intrinsic, spiritual, financial, and cultural significance of the zeitgeist, especially in the context of art, the material world, and the human body.

## Challenges of our times - plastic works of art in Poland: Kantor, Szapocznikow, Tarasin, Bałka, Althamer

**MONIKA JADZINSKA**, Academy of Fine Arts Warsaw

Multiplicity of forms, ideas and tangible/intangible aspects of contemporary artworks force us to take a different approach in taking care of them. We need detailed research – to recognize the material, technique, concept and context – preventive and active conservation, and documentation. The following issues are pointed out:

- identification of the objects: oral history verified by the instrumental research;
- interviews with the artists, problems with works of deceased artists;
- how the research institutions/universities can draw attention of museums and the public to the problems associated with unconventional contemporary art

These issues were foregrounded by a project dedicated to the complex care of the plastic's legacy in Poland, *Innovations and new technologies devoted to the conservation of artworks made of plastic. Sustainability through building a knowledge for identification, research and methodologies of conservation in collections and public space (2011-2015)*. A body of knowledge was built for identification and research, establishing a methodology for maintenance, preservation and exhibition, as a result of collaboration between scientists, conservators, art historians, artists and archivists.

The objective was to develop a scientific conservation plan together with the possibility of applying the results to the museum practice. The results include the history, properties and manufacturing process, as well as analytical tests (FTIR, ATR-FTIR, RAMAN, NMR, SEM-EDS, GPC, DSC, XRF). The project was carried out on the basis of case studies of 13 leading Polish artists: Tadeusz Kantor, Alina Szapocznikow, Paweł Althamer, Mirosław Bałka, Zbigniew Libera, Jan Tarasin and others. The project was funded by the National Centre of Science, Poland.

## To act ahead of time: preserving animation artworks on cellulose acetate

AAFKE WELLER, EYE Filmmuseum

METTE PETERS, EYE Filmmuseum

[www.materialsinmotion.nl](http://www.materialsinmotion.nl)

The EYE Filmmuseum in Amsterdam holds a unique collection of archives of Dutch animators and animation studios. Besides films, photographs and documents, these archives contain an estimate of 80.000 cels; thin sheets of transparent plastic (mostly cellulose acetate) each containing an image depicting a moment in time in the animated sequence. Most of these cels were made in the 1970's, 80's and 90's; a period in which animators experimented with a wide variety of both traditional and modern materials such as gouache, indian ink, marker ink, acrylic paints, polyvinyl acetate paints and pressure sensitive adhesive tapes and foils.

We know very little about the aging of these combinations of different materials and their response to various storage conditions. Yet, given the inherent instability of the cellulose acetate, a general urgency to take action is felt throughout the conservation community. An apparent deadlock; collection managers are eager to preserve the animation cels in their collections, but unsure about the measures to take.

The aim of our research project *Materials in Motion* is to develop guidelines and tools that help conservators and collectors feel more confident when working with cels and to take action in spite of the many open questions. In the development of these guidelines we cooperate with the University of Amsterdam, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE and the Getty Conservation Institute. The research entails a close examination of the cels in the collection of Eye as well as an inventory of current practice, in close cooperation with (animation) film archives in both the United States and Europe.

# Shocking Results? The Effect of Cleaning on Electrostatic Charge Buildup and Dust Accumulation on Face-mounted Photographs

**CLARA VON WALDTHAUSEN**, University of Amsterdam

**BILL WEI**, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE

The face-mounting of photographs with poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) sheets using the Diasec® or other related methods has become an established way for artists to present their work. As a result face-mounted photographs have become important parts of museum collections around the world. The multi-layer structure of these objects presents a number of conservation challenges, in particular, the cleaning of the PMMA face-mounting. The surface of PMMA is sensitive to many chemical and mechanical cleaning methods, which, besides causing surface abrasion or clouding, can lead to a build-up of electrostatic charge and the possible acceleration of dust accumulation.

A project was therefore started to determine the effects of different cleaning methods on the production of electrostatic charge, how long this charge remains on the PMMA surface, and the role of static charge in dust accumulation. Experimental and practical testing on the cleaning of the PMMA surface was conducted on PMMA sheets and on face-mounted photographs produced for testing. The investigated cleaning methods include mechanical cleaning, using different dry and moistened microfiber clothes, cleaning with Kunststoff Reiniger™, roller cleaning with the Dust Removal System™ (DRS), and cleaning using compressed air combined with an 'ionizing gun'. The results indicate that there are short term effects of cleaning on the build-up of electrostatic charge and dust accumulation. The consequences for the conservation and exhibition of PMMA objects will be discussed.

## Just a metal sculpture?

*Annunciazione* by Don Marco Melzi

**MARIANNA CAPPELLINA**, Strati Milan

**MARI MAPELLI**, MiBact

**DANIELA LATTANZI**, MiBact

The church of Santa Maria Annunciata was designed by architect Gio Ponti for the San Carlo Borromeo Hospital in Milan (1964-1967). The project included the design of liturgical furnishings and iconographic features that were created in collaboration with Don Marco Melzi, artist and teacher at the Beato Angelico Art School in Milan. The sculptural group of the *Annunciazione* placed ten meters above the northern portal of the church, is the most impressive component of the complex. This artwork was part of the restoration program of the MiBact Regional Secretariat between 2013 and 2015. The *Annunciazione* was supposed to be a bronze casted sculpture, considering the distinctive copper-green patina as the peculiar characteristic of its surface.

After stepping up on the scaffolding, the team work could proceed with a closer technical examination. The results were surprising. The sculpture appeared to be made of a synthetic polymer covered by a thin layer of oxidized metal. The observation of this original technique, lead us to a deeper understanding of the existing conservation issues.

By interviewing students and technicians who worked with Don Melzi, we discovered that the technique employed for the *Annunciazione* was developed by the artist with self-manufactured instruments. Discovering the technical complexity of this artwork was as challenging as the restoration itself. This process has led us to rethink issues such as the reversibility and compatibility of restoration materials.

## Know, name and assess your plastics

**ANNELIES DE MEY**, Design Museum Ghent

This presentation introduces a project starting in Oktober 2018. The project of knowing, naming, and assessing the condition of plastics is an initiative taken by the Design Museum Ghent and S.M.A.K., supported by KIK and RCE. It will be a testing ground for building expertise within two museums, with the purpose to share knowledge gained with other heritage institutes in Flanders and beyond.

The care of plastics start with knowing which plastics you are dealing with. Cascading down from this need is the necessity of a thesaurus enabling us to categorize and write a proper inventory. A digital database in which one can search for correct information is the key to a good-working museum collection. A lack of both an efficient thesaurus and the knowledge of the collections brought us to set up this project.

The project is divided into three stages, each one running for one year. The first phase will focus on developing the thesaurus, mapping out a scheme to divide the plastics in groups depending on their needs of care and starting the identification of the plastics objects by means of research. Phase two focuses on carrying out condition surveys and the identification of plastics by means of a Do-It-Yourself tool (currently developed by SBMK and RCE). This is an immediate implementation of the Dutch project in Belgium. The third part focusses on scientific tools for the identification of a group of objects where there is still doubt, to be combined with the continuation of the condition survey, and writing and implementing the guidelines for cleaning, storing and exhibiting within our plastic collections.

This introduction is a means to place a warm call for collaboration, our end goal is to generate a broad knowledge base of plastics within the heritage field in Flanders. Don't hesitate to contact us if you are interested to participate!

## From artist intention to public perception: conserving and displaying three interactive artworks of Piero Gilardi

FLAVIA PARISI, Polytechnic University of Valencia

ROSARIO LLAMAS-PACHECO, Polytechnic University  
of Valencia

This abstract is part of a doctoral research project within the Polytechnic University of Valencia, aimed at highlighting the importance of visitor's perception of the artwork when considering conservation and exhibition strategies.

Among the research case studies, there are three interactive artworks by Piero Gilardi, presented within the 2017 monographic exhibition *Nature Forever. Piero Gilardi*, MAXXI Museum, Rome, all realized with polyurethane foam combined with various electronic devices.

The interaction with the public is one of the main causes of deterioration of these artworks, where visitors can physically enter it (*Ipogea*, 2010), lay and lean on it (*Tiktaalik*, 2010), or sit on it (*Aigües Tortes*, 2007). In an interview with the artist (December 2017), he stated that priority should be given to the interaction and that he is not favourable to the creation of a replica. The artist provided the museum conservators with a tool kit for repairing periodically the damages caused by the interaction while the artworks are on display. Furthermore he provided content and graphic suggestions for an information sheet on how to 'use' the artworks, which was distributed to the public during the exhibition. However, not many visitors consulted this sheet as they were not concerned about conservation issues. During a video interview with visitors conducted by the author in June 2017, they considered polyurethane foam as a resistant material due to its softness. When questioned about the potential fragility of the artworks, visitors answered that these were not considered fragile, since they felt their bodies well sustained during the interaction. This means that visitors separated the significance of the artwork from material values, which were considered less relevant in comparison to the interactivity of the works. The question how the museum will exhibit the artwork *Ipogea* (acquired in 2017) in the long term, still remains and was just partially clarified by the artist.

## The ‘life story’ of *Zuccaia*

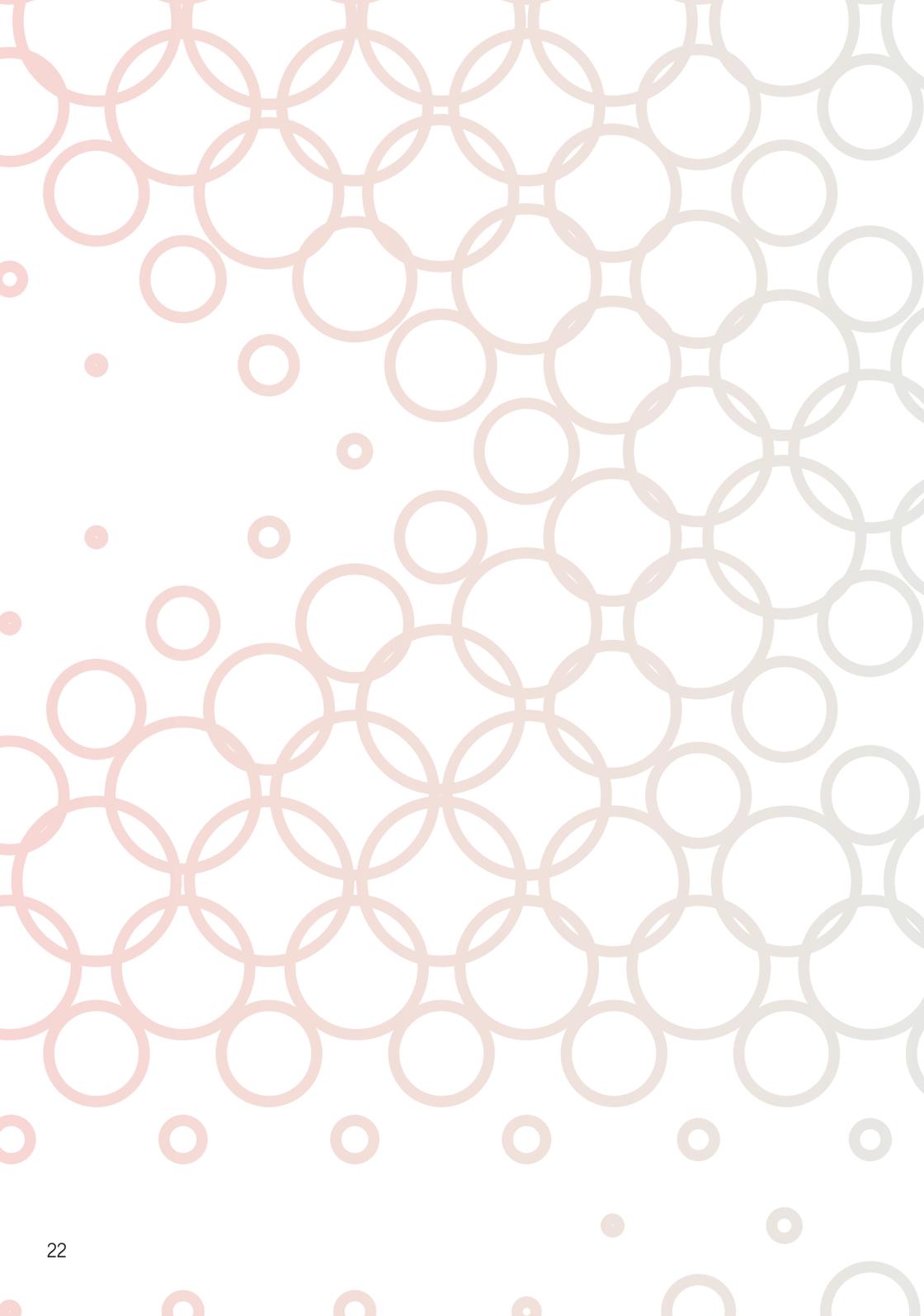
Conservation of modern and contemporary art:  
a matter of long breath!

**THEA VAN OOSTEN**, freelance

**ALETH LORNE & CARIEN VAN AUBEL**, freelance; **RON KIEVITS, SUZAN DE GROOT & SIMONE VERMAAT**, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE; **ESTHER TAP**, City of Zoetermeer

In 1992, the organisers of the Floriade (a Dutch flower trade fare) acquired *Zuccaia* (1991), a polyurethane (PUR) foam artwork made by the Italian artist Piero Gilardi. After the trade fare, *Zuccaia* was donated to the city hall administration of Zoetermeer. Displayed on the wall of a corridor in the city hall, this so called *Nature Carpet* was accessible to the public for some time, but it was banned to storage when the building was refurbished. In 2001, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE inquired about the possibility to research the carpet. From that time, *Zuccaia*'s biography and the RCE research project into PUR foams were bound together: *Zuccaia* was kept in storage facilities of RCE in Rijswijk and the techniques and condition of the foam were investigated (2001-2002). During the last part of the research project, *Zuccaia* was restored and consolidated with a newly developed consolidation technique using nebulising Impranil and Tinuvin (2006-2008). Furthermore, guidelines for storage and exhibition were set up for the cultural advisers of the city council. In 2016, researchers from RCE examined the consolidated condition of *Zuccaia* once again, with satisfactory results. Only in December 2017, when the Council of Zoetermeer financed the installation, *Zuccaia* returned to the (rebuilt) City Hall-Forum of Zoetermeer, where the artwork was installed lying on the floor within a showcase.

The presentation will highlight the timeline of various steps and events in the biography of *Zuccaia*, an emblematic work of art for the city of Zoetermeer and a reference work for conservators and researchers. Besides, it will show that, apart from finances, time is an important factor in the decision making process of the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The artist's involvement at all important steps of *Zuccaia*'s life will be taken along in the discussion.





# SBMK Summit on (inter)national collaboration

Acting in Contemporary  
Art Conservation

THURSDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2018

CULTURAL HERITAGE AGENCY OF

THE NETHERLANDS

SMALLEPAD 5, AMERSFOORT

programme - first day

# SBMK Summit on (inter)national collaboration

Acting in Contemporary Art Conservation

THURSDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2018

CULTURAL HERITAGE AGENCY OF THE NETHERLANDS

08:30 – 09:30 ARRIVALS AND REGISTRATION

09:30 – 09:45 **Welcome and Opening**, Susan Lammers

## SESSION 1 – DECISION MAKING

MODERATOR Paulien 't Hoen

09:45 – 10:05 **From the artist's intentionality to the 'effect' of the work: observe, describe and quantify the qualitative perception**, Muriel Verbeeck

10:05 – 10:25 **Doing ethics in conservation practice: an example from the SBMK**, Renée van de Vall

10:25 – 10:45 **Museum participation in conservation treatment shown in three installations by Joseph Beuys**, Carolin Bohlmann, Eva Riess & Ina Hausmann

10:45 – 11:00 **PLENARY DISCUSSION**

11:00 – 11:15 **POSTER PITCHES PART 1** (three minutes each)

- **Public engagement and conservation in an open-air museum**, Veerle Meul & Flavia Parisi
- **Implications of Different Conservation Strategies on Socially Engaged Artworks**, Hedwig Braam
- **Transcending Today's Technology**, Zeeyoung Chin & Nani Lew
- **The Inside of Technology-Based Artworks**, Alice Watkins
- **The INCCA mentoring programme: connecting and growing together**, Tom Learner

11:15 – 11:45 COFFEE BREAK & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

**SESSION 2 – DIFFERENT ROLES OF STAKE HOLDERS**

MODERATOR Pip Laurenson

11:45 – 12:05 **How actions come to matter**, Hélia Marçal

12:05 – 12:25 **Please do it again!**, Simone Miller

12:25 – 12:45 **Creating Collaborative Conservation Cultures to care for Time-based Media Collections**, Joanna Phillips

12:45 – 13:00 **PLENARY DISCUSSION**

13:00 – 13:15 **POSTER PITCHES PART 2** (three minutes each)

— **Seeing the Light: Characterizing a Monitor Light Installation**,  
Claire Molgat Laurin

— **The Importance of the Artist’s Participation in the ‘Revitalisation’ of Site-Specific Installations**, Mirta Pavić

— **3D Documentation, a case study of Pino Pascali’s artwork**,  
Gaia Fagiolo

— **Of Art and Men: The Conservator as Story Collector**,  
Sagita Mirjam Sunara

13:15 – 14:15 **LUNCH & POSTER PRESENTATIONS, DEMONSTRATION OF THE PLASTIC IDENTIFICATION TOOL AND SPEEDDATES OF THE INCCA MENTOR PROJECT**

14:15 – 16:00 **BREAKOUT SESSIONS A, B, C and D**

**BREAKOUT SESSION A**

**ROLES IN DECISION MAKING**

short presentation and workshop

— **Conflict, negotiation and leadership in contemporary art conservation decision-making**, Rita Macedo

— **Applying Advanced Methods of Reflective Practice in Decision-Making**, Anna Schäffler

Followed by an interactive discussion

## BREAKOUT SESSION B

### TIME BASED ART

short presentations

- **Digital art preservation for and by artists**, Gaby Wijers
- **Collaborative archiving of digital art**, Annet Dekker
- **Performing artworks: embodied practice and knowledge**,  
Jo Ana Morfin
- **Installation Art on the Map!**, Sylvia van Schaik

Followed by an interactive discussion

## BREAKOUT SESSION C

### TOOLS; THREE DEMONSTRATIONS

several demonstrations

- **Decision making during preservation and restoration of film and video art works**, Ramon Coelho
- **VR Simulation of David Hall's *TV Interruptions: The Installation (1971/2006)***, Adam Lockhart
- **BiNoP – Biographical Notation System for Performance Art**,  
Melissa Köhler

## BREAKOUT SESSION D

### RISKS AND DECISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART

short presentations

- **Art in a Cage?**, Irene Glanzer
- **Hidden in Plain Sight: Decision making processes around the management of hazards within contemporary art collections**, Deborah Cane & Louise Lawson
- **The dissociation factor applied to the preventive conservation of contemporary art collections**,  
Alice Nogueira Alves

Followed by an interactive discussion about a casestudy

16:00 – 16:30 TEA BREAK AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

### SESSION 3 – ORAL HISTORY

MODERATOR Sanneke Stigter

16:30 – 16:50 **Beyond the Artist Interview: Notes from the Field,**  
Aga Wielocha

16:50 – 17:10 **Deterioration, a concept we should revisit,**  
Ruth del Fresno-Guillem

17:10 – 17:30 **PLENARY DISCUSSION**

17:30 – 19:00 **DRINKS**

## From the artist’s intentionality to the ‘effect’ of the work: observe, describe and quantify the qualitative perception

MURIEL VERBEECK, ESA Saint-Luc de Liège

Contemporary art is no longer about contemplation (where aesthetics and history are expressed together), but about life-span, action and interaction. The artist uses technical means to fulfil the aesthetic function: they aim to have an ‘effect’. The material and functional analysis and the technical and analytical approach are not enough to perceive this. If we require the traditional conservator-restorer to take a practised, sharp look, we must encourage the contemporary art conservator to have a broader sensitivity that encompasses all the senses. To understand the work, he must therefore become a ‘perceptor’, and ‘test’ the stimuli created by the artist as objectively and sensitively as possible.

Is it possible to use a methodology that helps the conservator-restorer to objectify perception, to specify ‘the effect’, which should be a prerequisite for restoring the work’s aesthetic function? Several propositions will be outlined, which will highlight the importance of updating critical concepts (i.e. the ontology) for contemporary art. The approach of the philosopher G. Genette could provide a way forward. His definition of the work of art and the concept of attentionality are particularly fruitful for the conservator. The notions of *aesthetic function*, *effect* and *perceptual attention* allow to approach the work from a specific, broader perspective. They invite to objectify the subjectivity. How? It could be the subject of interdisciplinary research. The conceptual tools are not theoretical, but practical: by inviting us to look differently at the work of art, they encourage us to rethink the goals and means of our intervention. They also invite consideration of new methodologies.

## Doing ethics in conservation practice: an example from the SBMK

RENÉE VAN DE VALL, Maastricht University

Contemporary art has profoundly changed both the theoretical and practical dimensions of conservation, because contemporary artworks are so very often inherently variable. The idea that rather than preserving irreplaceable and unique works of art, museum conservators might be managing inevitable *change*, is becoming more and more accepted in the conservation profession. This re-orientation implicates a rethinking of well-established ethical guidelines, which are primarily geared to preserving objects rather than, for instance, facilitating processes, re-enacting performances or continuing projects. It can be argued that:

1. conservation of contemporary art is going through a paradigm change;
2. that the new ethical paradigm is emerging in and through the new conservation strategies developed in the professional field and the various platforms, conferences, research projects and publications reflecting on the problems of contemporary art conservation;
3. therefore a practice-oriented, casuist approach is needed to articulate ethical guidelines which are adequate to meet the demands of the care for contemporary artworks.

This paper will outline the relevance of the ‘turn to practice’ (Schatzki et.al. (eds), 2001) for conservation theory and ethics. It will analyse a couple of Platform meetings of the SBMK in order to explore what types of ethical deliberation are articulated in these meetings and how the Platform meetings constitute a ‘middle-grounding’ form of practice in which the conservation profession organises its own learning processes, from an ‘ethics of protection’ to an ‘ethics of care’.

## Museum participation in conservation treatment shown in three installations by Joseph Beuys

CAROLIN BOHLMANN, Hamburger Bahnhof  
EVA RIESS, Hamburger Bahnhof  
INA HAUSMANN, freelance

Our project investigates the question how institutional practices such as collecting, exhibiting, preserving, and communication become aspects of artworks. By providing three case studies, we would like to focus on the many challenges and practices involved in conservation treatments of installation works.

There are three major conservation projects, carried out between 2013 and 2018 on works by Joseph Beuys within the collection at Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, which reflect the active participation of the institution in the practice of conservation:

1. The open-studio conservation project on the installation *Richtkräfte für eine neue Gesellschaft* (1974-77), highlights the demonstration and public presentation of a work process which ranges from the artistic performance to the sculptural installation.
2. The removal of the installation *Das Kapital Raum* (1980), from its stationary presentation context and its acceptance into a new collection, in connection with the room planning for a new museum building, discusses the re-contextualization of a location-specific work while considering its historical spatial framing.
3. The development of a long-term strategy for conservation with regard to the installation *Unschlitt* (1977), demonstrates the ‘immobility’ of a work due to a complex and fragile employment of materials.

Does this create a stationary dependence on the institution and museum collection? For all these three works by Joseph Beuys, the installation history, the institutional and material constitution, as well as the museum’s obligation to educate, define and configure the conservation and restoration practices. The paper will argue that no conservatory step can be determined independently of these factors.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 1 —

## Public engagement and conservation in an open-air museum

VEERLE MEUL, Middelheimmuseum

FLAVIA PARISI, Polytechnic University of Valencia

GREET STAPPAERTS, Middelheimmuseum

The Middelheim Museum in Antwerp holds a collection of about 600 sculptures from 1877 to present, registers about 600.000 visitors a year, and offers a rich educational program along with significant conservation projects and treatments. However, for the public it is difficult to consider it as ‘a Museum’. The institution has this peculiarity: it does not present the collection in a space with walls, but in a park (also designated as a listed immovable heritage site-landscape). Free, accessible to everyone, in the open air, the museum-park continuously questions the public and the professionals working there on its identity and functions. One of the challenges of presenting artworks in an open-air environment is the relation with the public; people want to interact with the sculptures in many ways: touching, taking selfies with them, climbing on them, allowing their children to play on them and pets to pee on them. Everything is done in good faith, since the environment is a park, with all the characteristics of a park.

How to make public aware of conservation issues, in order to build a collective sense of ownership and responsibility? Is it possible to do this by maintaining a high level of interaction with the artworks? The museum conservation and education departments, as well as museum guards, tried different approaches, demonstrating how building up a dialogue on conservation issues with the public is of utmost importance while providing educational programs on materials and techniques. A positive example is offered by the *Heavy Metal guided tours*, through which specifications on materials and productions techniques engage young visitors and stimulate them to think about conservation and management issues of outdoor metal sculptures. However, the question remains very open and challenging, offering opportunities for a critical perspective on what a museum is or has to be, what its functions are, and how to find a balance between its mandate to conserve collections and public expectations.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 1 —

## Implications of Different Conservation Strategies on Socially Engaged Artworks

HEDWIG BRAAM, University of Amsterdam,

In the last decades, there has been a rise in socially engaged art practices. In this type of art the public is involved in the creation or functioning of an artwork at different levels of participation and artistic control. These practices can differ in motivation, approach or outcome. Besides material, conceptual or historical value, there is an important social component to take into account in conservation. An important question is how one can preserve the aspect of social engagement. This research aims to explore what factors are to be considered in the conservation of socially engaged art and what the implications of different conservation strategies can be for the artwork and its future life.

On the basis of three case studies (*Rookgordijn* by Fransje Killaars, *Walking in Venus Blue Cave* by Ernesto Neto and *¿Being Home?* by Rupprecht Matthies), the applicability of different conservation strategies have been explored. It was argued that methods used in New Media Art, such as migration (a transformation of an artwork into a new format or material similar to the original) and emulation (the complete recreation or re-enactment of the original artwork) could be suitable for the conservation of socially engaged artworks.

With careful consideration these strategies could be adapted and successfully implemented in view of safeguarding the social engagement of different types of socially engaged art. A dialogue between the conservator and various stakeholders involved, can determine how the artwork functions, how it is valued and what should be conserved.

These practices can enable the social or interactive functioning of the artwork for its users and include participatory conservation practices to do justice to the collaborative practice for which socially engaged artworks were created.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 1 —

## Transcending Today's Technology

ZEEYOUNG CHIN, Samsung Museum of Art  
NANI LEW, Samsung Museum of Art

Tatsuo Miyajima's *Transcend Section* (2005) is an artwork conceived for the main entrance of the Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul. The piece consists of forty panels of light emitting diodes each displaying numbers from one to nine. The numbers are lit according to the speed set by participants for the inauguration of the piece. Each one of the forty panels therefore has a speed of its own, which means that the numbers are never lit all together at the same time. Each panel consisted of a printed circuit board programmed to control the numbers' display and speed, an emerald-green LED panel and a cabinet that matches the flooring.

This symbolic and site-specific installation did not hold up for very long after its creation. Being partially exposed to rain and sunlight and to the visitors who must walk on the piece to enter the museum building, one month after its installation, two thirds of the panels were no longer functioning. Small adjustments were made throughout the years to overcome technical problems. In 2017, the conservation department worked with local fabricators to come up with solutions to make the piece function in a stable manner with a lighting technology that has progressed considerably during the thirteen years since the first fabrication of the artwork. The artist, the artist's fabricator and the commissioner of the piece were interviewed to have their views on the modification of the technology. We will share our decision-making process which involved issues of cost, efficiency and sustainability of the artwork's conservation.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 1 —

## The Inside of Technology-Based Artworks

ALICE WATKINS, University of Amsterdam

Technology-based artworks depend on the correct functioning of internal electro-mechanical components to produce their desired visible effect. To maintain correct functionality internal parts are frequently updated and replaced, a factor which conflicts with conservation ethics. This research strives to establish what values internal parts can hold that may be lost in attempting to keep the authentic material or function of the artwork.

To determine this, five technological sculptures from a series titled *Ice Machines* (1968-1969) by the Dutch artist Woody van Amen (b. 1934) are comparatively analysed, focusing on their physical and conceptual issues. As each case study is owned by a different Dutch institution, the various stakeholders of the works (conservators, curators, art historians, technicians and artist) hold different opinions about the importance of the internal components, in turn influencing conservation decision-making.

By taking on a multi-disciplinary approach of literature research, oral history and visual analysis, it was found that a multitude of values can be placed on internal components at any one time, depending on whether the stakeholder values their material or functional authenticity. These values conflict – a choice for one can mean a loss of another. Conserving these artworks therefore becomes a management of loss. Consequently this study showed that treatment decision-making should encompass all available stakeholders in order to come to a balanced decision.

**— POSTER PITCHES PART 1 —****The INCCA mentoring programme: connecting and growing together**

**RACHEL RIVENC**, Getty Conservation Institute

**KAREN TE BRAKE-BALDOCK**, INCCA

**PIP LAURENSEN**, Tate

**TOM LEARNER**, Getty Conservation Institute

[www.incca.org/incca-mentoring-programme](http://www.incca.org/incca-mentoring-programme)

Many of us in the conservation world have had the good fortune of finding professional mentors, and experiencing the benefits of mentorship. These are numerous and depend on individual relationships, but overall entail: receiving advice and guidance with professional choices, career paths, and/or work matters, help in making connections with colleagues, and advancing our careers in general. However, finding a mentor does not always happen spontaneously, while many established conservators might worry about the time commitment of long-term mentoring schemes.

The INCCA mentoring programme aims to connect emerging conservators, or those new to the conservation of contemporary art, with recognized and established conservation professionals from the field. It will allow the fostering of meaningful one-on-one mentoring experiences around specific short-term activities, and also the creation of longer-term professional relationships. The INCCA mentoring programme will consist of two schemes:

**Conference presentations**

In the lead-up to a major conference, the mentor gives advice to the mentee on their presentation and/or poster, giving feedback on the content, format and delivery. Then, during the event, the mentor will make introductions to other established professionals in the field at the conference, and draw attention to the work of the mentee.

**Speed mentoring**

This fun networking event is inspired by and modelled after speed dating. This scheme creates the chance to have short periods of one-on-one time with established professionals in the field, without all the normal distractions associated with conferences. A list of those willing to make themselves available will be circulated in the lead up to a conference and delegates can then book a short individual session (about ten minutes) with one of them.

## How actions come to matter

### Decision-making in the conservation of performance art

HÉLIA MARÇAL, New University of Lisbon

Performance art emerged in the 1960s, and it is still revolutionising the art world in unpredictable ways. This genre has been characterised by its ephemeral and event-like nature, which has been linked to the context of its emergence. The notion of performance art has expanded since its first appearances, incorporating various peripheral art forms that do not fit in categories within the realms of visual or performing arts. The characteristics of this artistic expression need to be at the core of conservation efforts, and yet, due to institutional contingencies and to the attachment of conservation to material-oriented practices (Laurenson and van Saaze 2014), performance art conservation seems to be an oxymoron.

This paper aims at discussing the role of the contemporary art conservator in transmitting performance artworks to future generations. Departing from a new materialistic perspective (van den Hengel 2017), this presentation is structured around three main arguments:

1. Conservation needs to be understood as an accumulation of micro and macro decisions, which necessarily have repercussions in the artwork's trajectory (van de Vall et al. 2011) and, consequently, in future decisions;
2. Artworks are agents in their own trajectory;
3. performance artworks are considered material manifestations of virtual potentialities (van den Hengel 2017). The articulation of these three theoretical pillars has consequences not only regarding the threshold of their duties and responsibilities of conservators, but also concerning their agency. This theoretical inquiry will be illustrated with examples from the Portuguese artistic panorama.

## Please do it again!

Repeating works of art – the relationship of Ise-Jingu and Sol LeWitt, Balanchine and Tino Sehgal, Gray's Elegy and Lawrence Weiner

SIMONE MILLER, freelance

Since the 1960s, artists have been increasingly adopting methods and techniques that had till then either not been used or only occasionally been used in the production of Fine Arts. The emphasis on idea and concept or the systematisation of artistic processes, even going as far as serial, industrial working methods, moved to the foreground. Original material with iconographic meaning became less and less important. Artistic disciplines such as dance, theatre, music, painting and sculpture were combined and the borders between the artistic disciplines were redefined. As a result hybrid activities such as performance, happenings and installations etc. were displayed.

In my talk I will focus on a very special form of Fine Arts as a result of this hybridisation: works of art that are conceptually meant to be repeatable.

The concept of repetition is well known in other artistic disciplines, but still – though less and less – uncommon in a museal context. Taking a view back in history and comparing strategies for other disciplines is helpful to develop suitable strategies for contemporary Fine Arts.

Which preservation strategies are already established for these works, what information do we need and what skills and competencies? Authorisation, artists intention and sanction, interpretation and the role of the interpreter in contemporary Fine Arts, notation and documentation can be addressed with the case studies mentioned in my talk.

Preservation strategies for iterable artworks include not only material aspects but also a story that is been told. The strategy becomes part of the artwork and forms it actively in every interpretation. The challenge is to decide which story will be told!

## Creating Collaborative Conservation Cultures to care for Time-based Media Collections

JOANNA PHILLIPS, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Over the past two decades, time-based media conservation has evolved into a specialized and ever-growing discipline within contemporary art conservation. Catalytic for the development of this new conservation specialty have been national and international collaborative projects, such as *Modern Art Who Cares* (1997), *Aktive Archive* (2003-2008), *Matters in Media Art* (since 2004), *Inside Installations* (2004-2007), *DOCAM* (2005-2010) and the ongoing *TechFocus* conference series (since 2010).

Today, a growing number of contemporary art museums are dedicating conservation staff to their time-based media collections who work to develop new acquisition, documentation and preservation standards in practice. Based on the author's experience of implementing time-based media conservation at the Guggenheim Museum and of operating in close exchange with a network of practitioners in the US and beyond, this talk highlights the importance of creating collaborative structures to enable time-based media conservation, both institutionally and as a professional field. Among the different models of collaboration discussed, a special focus is given to the importance of cross-departmental collaborations to build institutional synergies and generate financial support; to the integration of non-conservation expertise into workflows surrounding the acquisition, treatment, documentation and exhibition of artworks; to cross-institutional and cross-disciplinary partnerships in order to research and develop new conservation approaches; and to outreach, advocacy and training initiatives that offer education opportunities within the institution and the larger community of contemporary art conservation. Comparing the development of the professional field between Europe and the US, this presentation also takes a critical look at the political and institutional conditions necessary to allow for the effective care of time-based media collections.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 2 —

## Seeing the Light: Characterizing a Monitor Light Installation

CLAIRE MOLGAT LAURIN, University of Amsterdam

Media installation artworks and light artworks both present important challenges to conservation practice. These artworks often create complex experiences that are difficult to describe in documentation, and often rely on vulnerable technological components to create these experiences. Furthermore, media installations can only be fully experienced when they are assembled and functioning, making it difficult to assess the condition of an artwork from its individual parts.

This research presents a process for testing and characterizing media installation artworks to determine the artwork's current functionality and identify possible preservation problems. In order to examine the proposed testing process, this research uses a test reinstallation of *Forma Lucis VI* (1989), a media installation artwork by Roos Theuws that uses light emitted from cathode-ray tube (CRT) monitors installed in sculptural components to create a light experience. CRT monitor technology is at high risk of obsolescence, and if monitor light sources in the artwork fail, the entire experience of the artwork could be lost. However, the preservation of this artwork needs to not only account for its technological requirements, but also for the preservation of the complete experience of the artwork. The testing process integrates observations about the intended effect of these technological components, as gathered through technical research, interviews with the artist, and observations by viewers of the artwork. Together, these different types of information can be used to identify and assess preservation problems according to the risk they pose to the complete experience of the artwork.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 2 —

## The Importance of the Artist’s Participation in the ‘Revitalisation’ of Site-Specific Installations

MIRTA PAVIĆ, Museum Of Contemporary Art Zagreb

VESNA MEŠTRIĆ, Museum Of Contemporary Art Zagreb

Close communication with the artist is vital when dealing with variable media that always open up new questions whenever they enter a museum’s collections and are being re-installed. Such artworks demand the involvement of the artist in all phases of the musealisation process; the analysis of the artwork with all its components before and during acquisition, as well as documentation, including exhibition guidelines that define the degree of flexibility permitted for subsequent displays.

An interesting example of a variable site-specific installation is *Memo-chips* by the Croatian artist Duje Jurić, which was recently donated to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb (MSU). It is made up of wallpaper to which paintings are applied with memory chips in a geometric frieze joined by a sound-light matrix. *Memo-chips* investigates and expands the medium, experimenting with space, sound, programmed light, and chips.

Without the involvement of the artist who, during the artwork’s first installation, discovered issues ‘as he went’, it would be impossible to correctly understand and set up the artwork. Despite the fact that the work has already been displayed, some elements must be reconditioned for future exhibitions. As the work is large and demanding, it is unlikely that a test display can be set up in order to gain some experience prior to the final installation. As such, the input of the artist and his collaborators through interviews and oral history is key for future installations of the artwork.

The revitalisation of the installation brings together various professionals: an electrical engineer, a musician, technicians, curators, conservators, and the artist. This presentation will attempt to reconstruct the entire process of setting up this artwork, which can serve as an example for a range of other specific artworks of a similar nature.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 2 —

## 3D Documentation, a case study of Pino Pascali's artwork

GAIA FAGIOLO, freelance

GABRIELLA DE AMICIS, freelance

LAURA BARATIN, University of Urbino

LUCIANA TOZZI, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e  
Contemporanea Rome

The eclectic sculptor of the Italian artistic panorama of the 1960s, Pino Pascali, created in 1966 a cycle of pieces called *Finte sculture* made up of canvas with Vinavil glue and calcium carbonate hanging on a wooden center. This project entails a case study of one of the works from this cycle: *Ricostruzione del dinosauro*, displayed today at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Roma. A collaboration between the Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo and the Conservation Laboratory at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Roma was established in order to develop a new method of three-dimensional documentation, which would be useful for the documentation of the piece's state, its' monitoring and the effective conservation within a museum environment. The objective of the research was to compare two different 3D-techniques: the innovative photo modelling technique with the use of open source software and the more traditional laserscanning technique in order to evaluate the best characteristics in terms of: efficiency, precision, and limits. Thanks to this recent study we can evaluate the artist's techniques and with additional X-rays it was possible to discover the internal characteristics. All the data, 3D models and radiographies, have been archived on [Conditionreport.it](http://Conditionreport.it). On this portal it is possible to retrieve pictures which map and locate the graphic deterioration or the intervention of restoration as a valid alternative to classical graphic documentation (i.e. AutoCad).

— POSTER PITCHES PART 2 —

## Of Art and Men: The Conservator as Story Collector

SAGITA MIRJAM SUNARA, University of Split

This poster focuses on the collection of outdoor sculptures created between 1971 and 1990 within an artists' colony organized by the Sisak Steelworks (Croatia). Following the collapse of the company during the 1990s, the sculptures became subject to decay and vandalism. In 2012 a project for the preservation of the remaining 38 artworks was initiated, its principal aim being to prolong the sculptures' physical life.

In order to study the intended appearance of individual artworks as well as the creative and fabrication processes behind them, the conservators have carried out interviews with the artists who created the sculptures, the steelworkers who assisted them and the organizers of the colony. Interviews have also been used for exploring the specific historical context in which the sculptures were created, and how the steelworkers and local community perceived the artists and their works. Based on the collected information, it was possible to reconstruct the history and the spirit of the colony into great detail.

Mrs Anica Gašparić, who was once in charge of promoting cultural events among steelworkers, shared a story that vividly illustrates the transforming power of art: 'A female artist came once to the blast furnaces. When molten steel is poured out of a furnace, drops of molten metal splash onto the floor – she called those drops 'flowers'. After that, the workers walked around the molten metal looking for those odd shapes and carried them home, as if they were flowers. Stories such as this one can increase appreciation of the sculptures regardless of their artistic quality or state of preservation. Very importantly, they can engage and educate audiences.

In the case of Sisak, narratives are equally worth to be preserved and presented as the objects they refer to. Having recognized the importance of those narratives, the conservators have taken up the role of story collectors.

**BREAKOUT SESSION A**  
**ROLES IN DECISION MAKING**

## Roles in decision making

MODERATOR Rita Macedo

In this session we will work with our own and each other's expertise and professional experience in order to reflect on roles, motives and decision-making. The conservation of contemporary art is complex and various museum departments as well as external experts get involved, acting according to their own set of principles and practices. The discussion will bring into focus how different perspectives and motives can be made transparent and therewith contribute to a sound decision-making process.

**BREAKOUT SESSION A**  
**ROLES IN DECISION MAKING**

## Conflict, negotiation and leadership in contemporary art conservation decision-making

RITA MACEDO, New University of Lisbon

In a cross-disciplinary field like Conservation-Restoration, conflict and negotiation between different professionals involved in decision-making processes are continuous. Decisions in this area are, generally, not made individually, but by a team of experts including professionals with different academic backgrounds, areas of expertise and goals. The decision-making in conservation encompasses also other stakeholders who represent institutional and community interests, but this presentation will focus on the professionals who are physically closer to the object. Both the treatment of a painting or the re-installation of an artwork involve different professionals such as a conservator, a curator, a conservation scientist, an art historian and probably an artist. Each of them with their own views, knowledge, beliefs, skills, values and aims. This kind of collaborative work is not exclusive to conservation-restoration. In fact, in a society in which specialized work has become the norm, collaboration between different experts is becoming the required standard practice. In that respect, it is instructive to look at areas outside conservation-restoration: How are professionals in other collaborative projects translating different interests and dealing with conflict? Can we learn from their experience in order to rethink the relationship between professional roles in conservation decision-making?

## Applying Advanced Methods of Reflective Practice in Decision-Making

**ANNA SCHÄFFLER**, Free University Berlin

Knowledge about the social dynamics among stakeholders – who differ in terms of abilities, motivations and disciplines – is key for understanding the preservation of contemporary art. We will take the session's theme of 'roles in decision-making' and the expertise of the workshop's participants as starting points for an experimental reflective process. In small exercises we will apply techniques and discuss strategies for the collaborative solution of complex problems. The workshop will open up vistas for sharing knowledge in a multidisciplinary environment. It will raise awareness for the creative potential and importance of empathy in this process. This not only implies critical self-reflection, but also the inclusion of different perspectives in order to overcome biases and create an atmosphere of curiosity and mutual respect. Apart from reflective methodologies in design and education practice, the approach presented in the introduction is based on the ensemble method of artist Anna Oppermann and my own experience of installing her ensembles. The ensemble method can be understood as a conscious awareness practice, which is a sequence of iterative actions that allows for continuous feedback while navigating complexity. Applying the ensemble method provides the opportunity to deal with uncertainty and conflicts of values in constructive ways. Moreover, it is capable of presenting different points of view and considerations in a single space – whether they are congruent, (self-)critical, or paradoxical.

Visualization and mediation of the decision-making not only requires advanced methods, but also includes the development of innovative exhibition formats in order to put these procedures on display. As an example from my curatorial practice, I will introduce an experimental setup created for the presentation of an ensemble as the result of such a reflective practice.

**BREAKOUT SESSION B**

**TIME BASED ART**

**Time-Based Art**

MODERATOR Gaby Wjers

The continuance of digital art and other time-based art poses big challenges to conservators as well as to the artists themselves. Apart from the issues of migration and emulation, documentation and process management are key to the longevity of the works. Over the past few years, several initiatives have been taken in order to support artists in the management of their work, from production to preservation, and several documentation tools for museum professionals have been developed. In this breakout session various recently developed instruments will be presented and illustrated with concrete case examples. The discussion will address the usefulness of such preservation strategies and the availability and accessibility of the tools.

## Digital art preservation for and by artists

**GABY WIJERS**, LIMA

The artistic choice for a digital online medium often implies specific ideas about the future and continuity of the artist's work. Hence, the artist can provide insight into the creative process (sometimes as the only source) and deliver technical data needed for the work's future accessibility. In the preservation research projects of LIMA, collaboration with multiple stakeholders and artists' interviews are common practises. Sometimes it is often taken one step further when the artist is an active participant in preservation. In the case of digital art, management and preservation starts with the production, which is often the source of the problem as well as of the solution: the artist, the formats, associated software and hardware, the quality, selection and organization of the files, and the additional information about them, are all actors in the process of production and future life of a digital works of art.

LIMA considers training important, because the earlier sustainability of the work is implemented in the process, the more effective the strategies will be. Documentation and preservation are not easy topics for artists due to a frequent lack of knowledge, time and resources. Therefore, in addition to support and service to museums and collections, LIMA developed a service programme for artists. The Artwork Documentation Tool is one way of making artists aware of the problems and to support them with a Do-It-Yourself tool for the preservation of their own work.

Besides, LIMA is currently updating its digital repository and workflow. With an emphasis on net art and complex digital artworks, the new repository, collection information system, and associated workflows, are tailored to capturing the mutability inherent to the life cycle of digital artworks. The methodologies, requirements and architecture are being explored in the research project Art Host. In the development of practical assistance, guidelines, tools and services in Arthost, LIMA is working towards empowerment of artists to take ownership of the way in which their work be preserved and presented in the future.

BREAKOUT SESSION B  
TIME BASED ART

## Collaborative archiving of digital art

ANNET DEKKER, University of Amsterdam

JULIE BOSCHAT THOREZ, freelance

For the purpose of collaboration and archiving, Version Control Systems (VCS) are available that check the differences between versions of code or text. By means of a timestamp and the name of the author Version Control Systems make ongoing versions of a project available and allow several persons to work on elements of a project without overwriting someone else's entries. Changes that are made can easily be compared, restored, or, in some cases, merged with one another. Finding a coherent and structured way to organise and control revisions has always been at the core of conservation, but it has become even more urgent and complex in the era of computing and digital art.

In this presentation we will briefly explore various ways of using VCS for the purpose of conservation. With the aim to gain a better understanding of the underlying, but omnipresent, structures that support these environments we will present some of the outcomes of earlier workshops we have organised in the field of conservation. The focus is on open systems such as Git and MediaWiki. Based on the case study *Chinese Gold* by UBERMORGEN, we will explore the pros and cons of using VCS in conservation practices and discuss the usefulness of collaborative work spaces by answering questions such as: What is the value of concepts such as provenance in Git and MediaWiki? What is the function of metadata in these systems? And how stable and secure are the data in a version controlled archive?

## Performing artworks: embodied practice and knowledge

JO ANA MORFIN, National Autonomous University of Mexico

This paper foregrounds theoretical and practical connections between the fields of Performance Studies and Time-Based Media Art Conservation. It reflects on the work *El Tendedero* [The Clothesline] by the Mexican performance artist Mónica Mayer, as a means to explore the challenges involved in the circulation, documentation, and conservation of performance artworks.

I will argue how a ‘relational definition of materiality’ (Sorensen, 2007) may be used as a theoretical ground for discussing issues around the re-activation of performance artworks. Furthermore, the strategies employed by a performance practitioner will be discussed who aims at restoring the behaviour and triggering ‘artistic circulation patterns’ (Monreal, 2015) of *El Tendedero* within curatorial and museological circuits.

By examining the afterlives of *El Tendedero*, I will explain what conservators may learn from performance artists’ transferring/reactivating strategies, as means to enrich theoretical approaches in conservation about the modes of existence, continuity, and reactivation of transient forms of art. It will be argued that this interdisciplinary knowledge enhances our understanding about the transmission of artworks as embodied practice and knowledge, and modes of making. Therewith challenging conventional assumptions about materiality and provoking a paradigm shift in conservation practice.

BREAKOUT SESSION B  
TIME BASED ART

## Installation Art on the Map!

SYLVIA VAN SCHAIK, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE

The project *Installation Art on the Map!* aims to improve the registration of installation artworks in museum collections with the dual purpose of collection management and distribution of the works. The primary question was: What strategies support a proper process of sending installation artworks on loan, after they have spent considerable time in storage and a backlog has occurred in the documentation and condition survey of the work? The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE owns dozens of installation artworks from the 1960s to 90s, which have not always been documented and researched according to current standards. This project took existing documentation models and concrete case examples as jumping-off points for developing a number of practical tools: a registration-documentation form and additional guidelines for reinstallation, registration, management of storage and maintenance of installation works of art. The presentation includes two case studies executed on the basis of these forms.

**BREAKOUT SESSION C**  
**TOOLS: THREE DEMONSTRATIONS**

## Tools: three demonstrations

MODERATOR Ramon Coelho

The conservation of contemporary art is a continuously expanding field and new tools supporting the profession appear on an impressive scale. In this session some of the most recently developed tools will be demonstrated and their usefulness will be discussed, with an eye on the preservation of film, video art and performances.

BREAKOUT SESSION C  
TOOLS: THREE DEMONSTRATIONS

## Decision making during preservation and restoration of film and video art works

RAMON COELHO, freelance

Due to different standards and resolutions in the digital era, analogue film and video recordings need to be upgraded or adapted in order to compete with more recent productions in terms of picture quality. In the case of media artworks the quality should meet specifications of modern presentation equipment used for exhibitions or other screenings. But also for galleries the enhancement of older media artworks with analogue origins would definitely help sales. During the breakout session we will have a quick look at the process of preservation and restoration. What decisions need to be made during the mostly irreversible process of digitization? What can be done with the obtained digital version to improve the image quality? Each type of film or video content needs its specific approach for restoration, but in general the restoration process involves: stabilization, cleaning, colour correction, noise reduction, sharpening and re-scaling. These matters will be addressed as well during the session.

## VR Simulation of David Hall's *TV Interruptions: The Installation* (1971/2006)

ADAM LOCKHART, University of Dundee

David Hall (1937-2014) was one of the pioneers of video art in the UK, beginning with his ubiquitous *TV Interruptions* made for the Edinburgh Art Festival in 1971. He continued to make single screen video works, but his main focus was the creation of video sculptures. Most of these sculptures used old cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors which are no longer manufactured. Although these are still available at the moment, over time they will gradually disappear and it will become difficult to find any working examples. Due to these problems with technological obsolescence, many of Hall's and numerous other artists' works may not be so easily replicated in the future. With this in mind, other ways to present these works need to be considered to allow them to be appreciated by future audiences. One way to do this is by using virtual reality.

This demonstration will present the experimental recreation of David Hall's video installation in virtual reality entitled *TV Interruptions: The Installation* (1971/2006). Viewers can experience the work by being immersed in a 3D virtual gallery, giving them an idea and 'feel' of what the work would be like in real life. The process of creation, maintaining the integrity of the work, authenticity and the user experience will be explained. This experiment is the second version of this piece, using stand-alone packaged equipment as opposed to full VR which uses a larger space. This is part of on-going research we are developing in this field. The VR simulation is envisaged and curated by Adam Lockhart, modelled and simulated by Sang-Hun Yu.

BREAKOUT SESSION C  
TOOLS: THREE DEMONSTRATIONS

## BiNoP – Biographical Notation System for Performance Art

The software *nota* as a potential documentation and notation tool for Performance Art

MELISSA KÖHLER, freelance

Nowadays Performance Art enters museum collections of contemporary art and is being displayed in exhibitions or featured as part of the museum's event program. Definitions of this art form often emphasize notions such as *liveness*, *(co-)presence and ephemerality*. However, with performances of the past we are addressing an event of the past as well as its translation into a variety of media. During a two year research project, realized within an interdisciplinary collaboration with museums, theatre scholars and the artist collective *Monster Control District* the following questions were addressed: What challenges do we face when the function and value of notions like *materiality*, a work's *identity*, *originality* and *documentation* are called into question? What influences the ontology of the work when dimensions of *participation*, *intermediality*, *digitalisation* and *processuality* are included?

The goal of the project was to elaborate an approach on how to document, reproduce and interact with Performance Art in museum contexts, focussing on the fluid relationship between the performance event, its mediation and remaining *leftovers*. A multidimensional structure was proposed that allows for a fluid archiving discourse, mapping Performance Art with a self-constituting archive and a flexible documentation strategy. The approach includes (retrospective) de- and remounting of the biographies of performance artworks according to five biographical phases, and a Biographical Notation System for Performance Art (BiNoP) executed with the software *nota*. In this session the outcomes of the research project will be shared and BiNoP will be introduced.

**BREAKOUT SESSION D**  
**RISKS AND DECISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART**

## Risks and decisions in contemporary art

MODERATOR Agnès Brokerhof

Installations artworks may cause a risk to public or staff, dissociation may occur when important information is lost or non-existent, solutions need to be found for a safe ‘use’ of the objects without diminishing their value. In this break-out session three speakers give examples of the dilemmas they are facing in daily practice, the decisions they make and how they reach them. Subsequently the participants will discuss the case study *ZEE* by Austrian artist Kurt Hentschläger (2008) in small groups. The installation is described by the artist as an ‘Immersive Audiovisual Environment with artificial fog, stroboscopes, pulse lights and surround sound’. How to document the intangible aspects of such a complex work in order to avoid dissociation? How to exhibit the work given that the artist expects two percent of the visitors to have seizures.. In small groups, participants will discuss the challenges, decisions, revelations or insights encountered with this ‘hazardous’, kaleidoscopic case example.

BREAKOUT SESSION D  
RISKS AND DECISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART

## Art in a Cage?

IRENE GLANZER, Doerner Institut

In depicting notions of immediacy, direct experience, voluntary thrill and even danger, hazardous materials and techniques entered art production decades ago in order to illuminate unorthodox concepts. Due to the minimal obligation to preserve a collection, temporary exhibition spaces have generally possessed more freedom in encouraging and implementing art productions of all kind, including works comprised of precarious materials.

Public collections, however, are usually constrained to create exclusion zones for either artworks or visitors. Hazardous objects are shown behind barriers or on pedestals to keep visitors at a distance. Often, they are displayed in glass to keep possible dangers enclosed. Any type of barrier can add connotations to the artwork, potentially troubling or even opposing the primary intent of the piece.

Two case studies from the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, demonstrate the dilemma of presenting hazardous art works with 'sprezzatura', preserving their immediacy and directness, without posing harm to visitors or museum staff. The newly acquired painting by Katharina Grosse (*Untitled*, 2008) is mildewed by design. The canvas shows different phenomena of mould growth and is even torn by it. Rather by coincidence, the presence of mycotoxins was detected; since then, the joint decision of how to present the painting has been pending. Composed of exotic beetles, *Wand der aufsteigenden Engel* (1993) by Jan Fabre, is glazed by fumes of polychlorinated naphthalene from past storage, a necessity to keep protein-eating dermestids away. These repellents pose a risk to human health and disturb the presentation by exuding a strong, unpleasant smell. Immediately after its acquisition in 1997, a discussion among conservators, curators and the artist's studio started about how to store and present the piece, which continues until today.

**BREAKOUT SESSION D**  
**RISKS AND DECISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART**

## Hidden in Plain Sight: Decision making processes around the management of hazards within contemporary art collections

**DEBORAH CANE**, Tate

**LOUISE LAWSON**, Tate

**SHARON ROBISON-CALVER**, Museum of London

Over recent years it has become apparent that management of hazardous collections is still a challenging area due to complex legislation, lack of published material and inconsistencies of approach. Facilities and teams of estates have traditionally dealt with hazards such as asbestos in the fabric of buildings but less so with collections, and legislation has only recently developed which more usefully applies to collections. Within institutions a grey area still exists as to whose ultimate responsibility management of hazards falls, and increasingly the responsibility lies with conservation and collection care management teams.

Hazards associated with traditional areas of collecting are becoming more well-known with raised awareness of the dangers presented by radioactive watch dials, geology, asbestos containing social history, toxic ethnography, taxidermy, lead and mercury. Many museums are now however focusing on the collection of contemporary art, which by its nature often sees reuse and recycling of materials (some of which may be hazardous) and the use of numerous modern materials. Are these hazards overlooked because it is art? Is there a lack of awareness within the discipline, from curatorial to conservation, and is there a change in the scale and boundaries of what is art and what can be considered a hazard?

This presentation will discuss how Tate is reviewing the assessment of hazards, from legislation and collection care to artistic intent. The presentation will look at an asbestos artwork, the collection of a fatberg and performative aspects. Part of this work is a collaborative project with the Museum of London to launch an i-tool for educational purposes on hazards in collections and where to find information.

BREAKOUT SESSION D  
RISKS AND DECISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART

## The dissociation factor applied to the preventive conservation of contemporary art collections

**ALICE NOGUEIRA ALVES**, University of Lisbon

**MARTA FRADE**, University of Lisbon

In the 1994 Ottawa Congress, Robert Waller presented his proposal for risk assessment of collections, in which he indicates the loss of objects through misplacement, the lack of legal provisions for the acquisition process, the failure to collect information regarding the objects and their effective link with one another as agents of degradation relating to custodial neglect (Waller, 1994: 12). Later on, the process of ‘dissociation’ was identified as a factor for ‘loss of value’. A few years ago, the dissociation process was referred to as an agent of degradation at the website of the Canadian Conservation Institute, in addition to the nine agents of degradation previously defined by Michalski (1990).

Michalski’s nine agents concern the material components of the objects identifying risks and threats to their preservation. However, if one does not preserve their reason for existence and their meaning, objects lose their value over time and eventually they are lost entirely.

At present, a definition exists of procedures to develop this factor (Waller, Cato, 2016; Alves, Frade, 2017), but we still need to define strategies for solving the problems of collections that go without information, especially those of contemporary art. The process of breaking the connection between the object and its information may have many reasons, but it is necessary to create strategies which recover the information and ensure a good connection with the object and related data, both in regard of material and immaterial components.

In this session we explore the problems raised by collections rather than by individual objects. We will illustrate our ideas on the basis of case studies carried out in the art collections of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon.

## Beyond the Artist Interview: Notes from the Field

AGA WIELOCHA, University of Amsterdam  
NINA QUABECK, University of Glasgow  
ZOË MILLER, Tate London & Maastricht University

NACCA DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS, New Approaches in the  
Conservation of Contemporary Art | NACCA

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie  
Innovative Training Network  
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2020 Programme.

The institutional care of contemporary art revolves around fundamental questions of the artworks' identities, values and authenticities. Historically grown professional distinctions are being rethought and a re-organization of the museum's ecosystem is proposed. The research programme *New Approaches in the Conservation of Contemporary Art | NACCA* addresses these demands by educating a new generation of reflexive professionals who are equipped to navigate the complex and collaborative field of contemporary art conservation. Over the past three years, the NACCA doctoral researchers have been conducting fieldwork in numerous institutions around the globe which are collectors of contemporary art. This research/fieldwork has primarily adopted an ethnographic approach, using interviews and participant observation. At the same time a number of interviewees were contacted with a clear focus on collecting information about specific artworks, in the manner of an artist's interview for conservation purposes.

This presentation examines how stakeholder interviews are used in contemporary art conservation-related research, using our NACCA research projects as case studies. It focuses on the methodological and epistemological differences we observed between interviewing artists and interviewing other stakeholders including curators, conservators, fabricators, and members of the public. We consider both the advantages and disadvantages of different interview approaches, and reflect on the afterlife of created sources – their form, accessibility, value, status, and function within the institutional framework.

## Deterioration, a concept we should revisit

The artist interview will help to identify what is damage and what is not

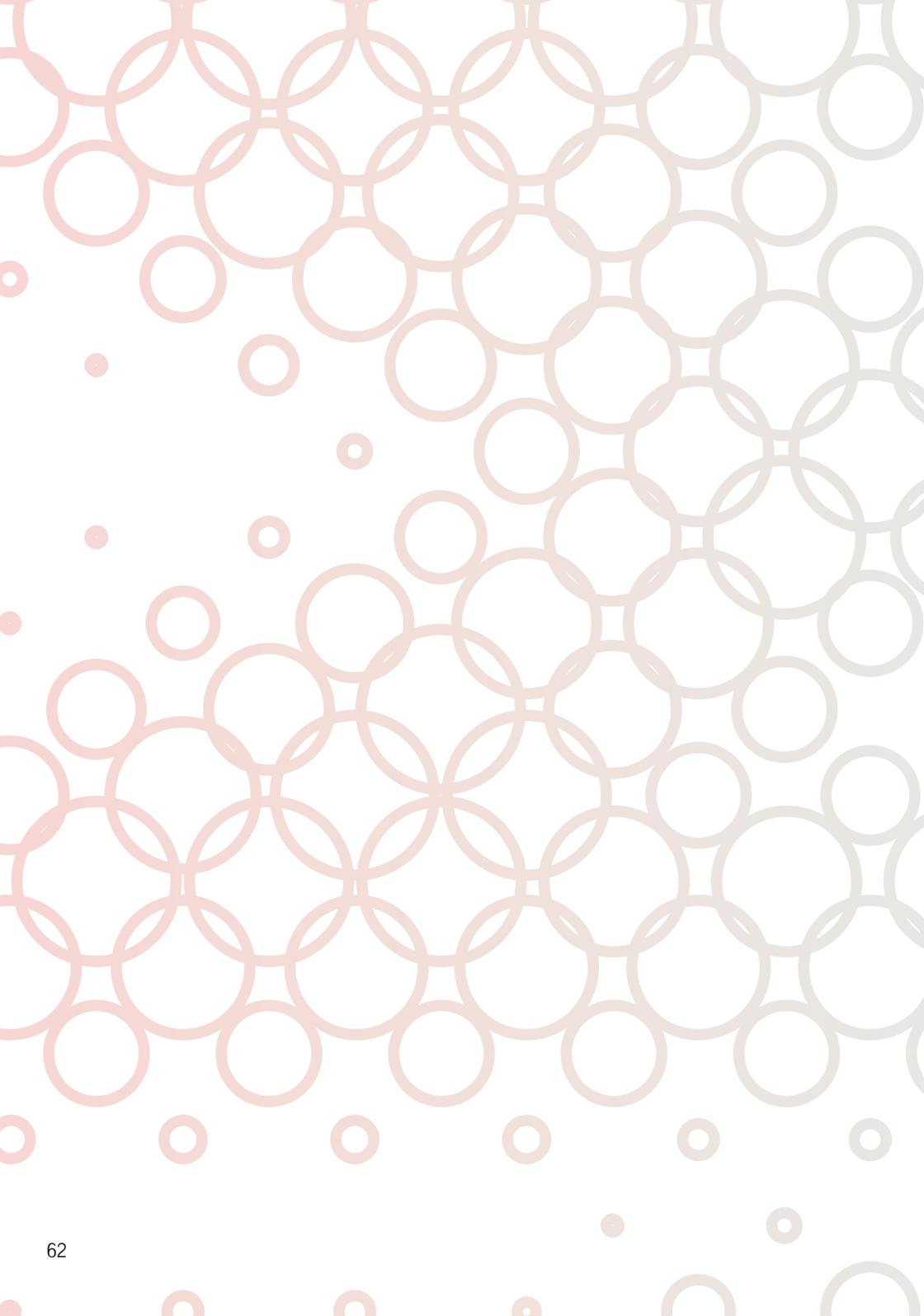
RUTH DEL FRESNO-GUILLEM, freelance

In this presentation we will review the idea of damage and deterioration from the artist's perspective. While artists' interviews has been vastly used with 'recognized' artists, very little has been done with emerging artists. In our project we interviewed 87 of them. One of the important results of this investigation was about the idea of deterioration and what damage means. It foregrounded the notion that where one artist considers damage as a problem, it can be part of the artwork for another.

The interviews helped initially to come to a definition of damage for each individual artist. In some cases, after a dramatic situation occurred, the artist decided to have a second interview. In this second interview the artist changed his definition of damage affecting the whole process of conservation.

We will present several cases to illustrate some definitions of damage and deterioration. This will show that a correct definition would help to define the procedures and preventive conservation treatments in each case. Moreover, knowing the specific definition helps to understand the conservation process and the life of an artwork.







# SBMK Summit on (inter)national collaboration

Acting in Contemporary  
Art Conservation

FRIDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2018

STEDELIJK MUSEUM AMSTERDAM

MUSEUMPLEIN 10, AMSTERDAM

programme – second day

# SBMK Summit on (inter)national collaboration

Acting in Contemporary Art Conservation

FRIDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2018

STEDELIJK MUSEUM AMSTERDAM

08:30 – 09:25 ARRIVALS AND REGISTRATION

09:25 – 09:30 **Welcome**, Paulien 't Hoen

## SESSION 4 – ARTIST PARTICIPATION I

MODERATOR Sanneke Stigter

09:30 – 09:50 **Richard Deacon's *Never Mind* (1993) refabricated in 2017 at the Middelheim museum: close and long-term working relationships**, Veerle Meul

09:50 – 10:10 **Undocumented performance and dance practices**, Francesca Verga

10:10 – 10:30 **Stewarding voices: negotiating the '(re-)interview'**, Rebecca Gordon

10:30 – 10:45 **PLENARY DISCUSSION**

10:45 – 11:00 **POSTER PITCHES PART 3** (three minutes each)

- **Detachment in contemporary murals. Controversy and possibilities of an obsolete technique**, Rita L. Amor Garcia
- **The Artist's Interview: the perfect tool for preventive conservation with Urban Art and emerging artists**, Rita L. Amor Garcia & Ruth del Fresno-Guillem
- **Faradayurt by Jana Sterbak. Preserving a material of the future**, Simona Brunetti
- **The restoration of the contemporary multi-material artwork *Sans Titre* made by Paul Van Hoeydonck**, Valeria de Angelis

11:00 – 11:30 COFFEE BREAK AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

SESSION 5 – ARTIST PARTICIPATION II

MODERATOR Paulien 't Hoen

11:30 – 12:45 **SHORT PRESENTATIONS** (ten minutes each)

- **It's Alive!**, Sherry Phillips & Sjoukje van der Laan
  - **Decision Making: The Artist's Body in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction**, Barbara Dettl
  - **A Posthumous Collaboration**, Joep Vosseveld & Paula van den Bosch
  - **The artist as conservator**, Laura Wolfkamp
  - **The artist as conservator**, Stephanie de Roemer & Christine Borland
- plenary discussion

12:45 – 13:00 **POSTER PITCHES PART 4** (three minutes each)

- **Democracy of Materials**, Johanna Hoffmann
- **The long route to a 'new' work by Tom Claassen**, Susanne Kensche
- **Primarily speaking, kept in translation**, Tjerk Busstra
- **Artist participation and intentional destruction of photographic prints**, Monica Marchesi

13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

SESSION 6 – THE FUTURE

MODERATORS Maarten van Bommel & Paulien 't Hoen

14:00 – 14:45 **PLENARY DISCUSSION** **History and future of the summit and the international network**

14:45 – 15:00 **POSTER PITCHES PART 5** (three minutes each)

- **The Evaporation of Fragrance**, Sarah Jahns
- **Here and there – then and now**, Mareike Opeña
- **Memory and decision-making in contemporary art conservation**, Sofia Gomes & Rita Macedo
- **Reshaping the Collectible: When Artworks Live in the Museum**, Pip Laurenson

15:00 – 15:30 TEA BREAK AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

**SESSION 7 – DECISION MAKING MODELS**

MODERATOR Tatja Scholte

15:30 – 15:50 **Stimulating Reflection when Using Artworks from the Collection: DIAL for Complex Artworks,**  
Sanneke Stigter

15:50 – 16:10 **Revisiting the Decision-Making Model,** Julia Giebeler &  
Andrea Sartorius

16:10 – 16:30 **Beauty inside and out, a role for aesthetics in the conservation of contemporary art,** Lydia Beerkens

16:30 – 16:45 **PLENARY DISCUSSION**

16:45 **CLOSURE**



## Richard Deacon's *Never Mind* (1993) refabricated in 2017 at the Middelheim museum: close and long-term working relationships

VEERLE MEUL, Middelheim Museum

RICHARD DEACON, artist

In 1993, the Middelheimmuseum in Antwerp embarked on a new artistic direction by commissioning ten artworks to internationally acclaimed artists for a permanent exhibition, simply called *New Sculptures*. Among them was a work by the leading British artist Richard Deacon: a large zeppelin shaped sculpture in beechwood named *Never Mind*. Only a few months after its installation, the sculpture showed major damage; it could not withstand the outdoor conditions. Despite two extensive restorations by the artist, the problems recurred and the reluctant decision was made to take the work inside until a solution could be found. More than two decades later, a solution was finally agreed upon.

In 2017, Deacon refabricated the work in stainless steel. The project reformed from a backstage troublesome conservation case into a triumphal reintroduction, involving all museum departments and the public. It inspired Deacon's first outdoor exhibition *SOME TIME*, with 31 artworks exploring the topics of variation and of material transformation in sculpture. Themes that are not only crucial to the artist's working practice, but are also part of the very nature of sculpture in general. The case of the refabrication went viral and bloggers and social media from all over the world expressed perspectives on this conservation decision and the issue of authenticity, topics traditionally kept behind closed doors of museum professionals.

To a live Middelheimmuseum audience, the artist shared his views on replication as a method for production and the changed concept of authenticity, ranging from Japanese temples to the Sci-fi body Snatchers. Mediators, funders, museum professionals, artists, conservators, students, fabricators and even insurance companies engaged actively in discussing dilemmas in the conservation of outdoor sculpture. The case of *Never Mind* paved the way towards a multi-perspective conservation approach in the museum, in close collaboration with the artist and many involved.

# Undocumented performance and dance practices

## The case of Mike Kelley

FRANCESCA VERGA, University of Amsterdam

This presentation discusses the processes taking place when works of art relating to performance and dance practices are being documented and archived, with a main focus on Mike Kelley's early performative work. The artist himself refused any idea and form of documentation. During the 1970s and 80s, performances in the United States were often not or hardly documented and such artists as John Duncan, John Miller, Paul McCarthy and Tony Oursler could act as key witnesses in the formation of an oral history for this type of art.

The importance of oral history will be at the heart of this presentation addressing such questions as: How do artists build history from their own memories and how do historians and researchers relate to those witnesses? Who creates and spreads oral memory? Is it steered by influential authors or is memory written by researchers and institutions? Can historians and researchers offer a 'partial' reading when information is missing?

The dance piece of Mike Kelley, *The Pole Dance* (1978), has been re-enacted by Anita Pace in 1997, posing important questions about the role of living artists in steering memory constructions and the freedom of re-interpretation.

The presentation will contribute to the discussion on memory building and critical acts that recall the 'ghosts' of a performance, analyzing the relation between witnesses and historians in the process of conservation.

## Stewarding voices: negotiating the ‘(re-)interview’

REBECCA GORDON, University of Glasgow

In 2008-2010, I conducted in-depth filmed interviews with 11 artists, whose voices became the heart of my doctoral thesis, *Rethinking Material Significance and Authenticity in Contemporary Art*. The now-archived interviews, made for the purposes of academia and ultimately the stewardship of the artists’ artworks and practices, covered every tense: rationale behind past works, thinking on current practices, and proposals for future strategies.

Ten-years later, what would it look like to re-engage with these artists? Would we cover similar ground in the ‘past’ tense, and would the future strategies spoken about in the ‘archived’ interview be represented in the ‘new’ present? Does it matter? How has the experiences of the intervening decade informed the artist’s ‘present’ voice, from market and institutional success to biographical milestones? These sorts of questions will be addressed as I re-engage with six of the artists ten years on (Claire Barclay, Karla Black, Christine Borland, Nick Evans, Toby Paterson, Ross Sinclair). As holders of key works by these artists, the National Galleries of Scotland are valuable collaborators on this project.

The ‘new’ interviews also will be made into a series of six short films with award-winning director Joseph Briffa. Each film will use footage from the ‘archived’ interview alongside clips from the ‘new’ interview, essentially pitting the artist in conversation with him/herself. Not simply a ‘follow-up’ interview, these dialogues become a form of externalised ‘inner speech’ (Ferryhough 2016), a ‘thinking aloud’ using concurrent and retrospective protocols from psychology (Ericsson and Simon 1993) and usability studies (Lewis 1982), yielding information about decision making and decision outcomes respectively.

This paper discusses some of the methodology of this artist (re-)interview project, its nuances as a film project, and seek advice on its stewardship to gain greatest impact for the life of the artworks and artists involved.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 3 —

# Detachment in contemporary murals. Controversy and possibilities of an obsolete technique

RITA L. AMOR GARCIA, freelance

Independent public art expressions – like graffiti and street art – have risen and developed as approachable and unexpected art forms available and free for all. However, communities and private collectors have seen the potential of those alternative art forms for the neighbourhoods and in the art market respectively.

Consequently, conservation mechanisms have been applied to some artworks originally created without a specific preservation idea. In some cases, the methods applied follow similar criteria to the conservation of contemporary artworks, but in others, there is a lack of criteria – confronting the value added to the artwork by the public with that of the artist's and the artwork's concept.

Independent mural interventions are some of the most representative art forms that suffer from this controversy, and one that has, somehow, brought back to the table the detachment as a recuperation mechanism. Traditionally, detachment techniques in wall-paintings have been widely criticised because the methods employed, the implications of their 'experts' and the future of the detached murals were misused or misconstrued. Although it is clear that detachments are extreme mechanisms, these could be the best and only system applicable to traditional or contemporary mural conservation.

In order to avoid repeating mistakes from the past and identifying a correct use of the detachment techniques in contemporary mural expression, this proposal will analyse and present specific proceedings for the use of this system in current murals. Following a method that would take into account respectful criteria and adapted uses of detachment techniques on aerosol art.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 3 —

## The Artist’s Interview: the perfect tool for preventive conservation with Urban Art and emerging artists.

RITA L. AMOR GARCIA, freelance

RUTH DEL FRESNO-GUILLEM, freelance

With this poster presentation we argue for the importance of conducting interviews with marginal or small collectives working in contemporary art – like emerging and urban artists. While artist interviews are widely used with regard to ‘recognized’ artists, very little has been presented about emerging or urban artists.

The main purpose of our research is to listen to the artist, annotating all the aspects that could serve in future needs of the conservation of their work. In the process of information gathering, the interviews offered new points of view to us as well as to the artists themselves, who became aware of conservation aspects. This awareness has contributed to our conservation strategies and for the artists to their creative processes and future productions.

In our research, 87 emerging artists and 31 urban artists – working with graffiti and street art – have been interviewed in two parallel investigations. The interviews were conducted with the purpose of gathering as much information as possible.

From our experience, we concluded that the interview is not just a way to collect information but a human interaction. Respect, interest, and recognition are feelings the artists recognized in working together with other specialists. The interaction also opened the door to establish a new relationship between them and us, the conservators, creating awareness and respect within both professions.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 3 —

*Faradayurt* by Jana Sterbak. Preserving a material of the future

SIMONA BRUNETTI, Fondazione MAXXI

The work *Faradayurt* (2009-2017), by the Canadian artist Jana Sterbak represents an interesting case in terms of obsolescence of a very performative and hi-tech material called flecron. The work is composed by a steel structure and a flecron tent, whose shape resembles a Yurt, the traditional dwelling of nomadic families in Mongolia, and whose function is the same of a Faraday cage in which the visitor can experience a complete state of isolation from electromagnetic waves. The flecron is an alloy of nylon and metal (copper, nickel or silver) and it is usually employed as insulation material in the aerospace spacecraft. Easily oxidizable at the only contact with the hands, the flecron of *Faradayurt* had been very damaged as consequence of an unforeseen perishability due to an incorrect use of the work. Remaking the tent meant rethinking the whole work in terms of material (a new kind of more resistant flecron has been used) and concept.

The participation of the artist has been fundamental in all three steps of the research. First in the experimentation on the material; tests on different sample of flecron, the original copper-base one, the nichel-base and silver-base ones. Second in the tent's remaking; the 'remote' control of the taylor's work by the artist through the photographic documentation and her presence and personal checking of the final results. Third in the rethinking of the work's statement: new instruction concerning its use, preservation, conservation, double date, edition, and so on.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 3 —

## The restoration of the contemporary multi-material artwork *Sans Titre* made by Paul Van Hoeydonck

VALERIA DE ANGELIS, freelance

The conservation of contemporary multi-material artwork by Paul Van Hoeydonck, *Sans Titre*, realised in 1964, is a telling example of the complexity and heterogeneous nature of the materials used: wood, cardboard, seeds, fabric and plastic. The mechanical and physical behavior of the materials over time have been investigated, as well as the issues they may create for conservation.

During our research it was important to interview the artist, who supported the conservation of his artwork and answered questions relating to the concept behind the artwork and the techniques involved in its creation.

The restoration, supported in all phases by monitoring the condition of the artwork and by creating graphic and photographic documentation, allowed us to examine the validity of the treatment techniques, either traditional or innovative.

The treatments involved the cleaning of the artwork with thermo-reversible gel, which is a challenging treatment because of the fragile, inhomogeneous, three-dimensional, monochrome surface.

The deformations, tears or cuts and loss in the cotton fabric were resolved by using a 3D-printing technique. The ‘3D-no contact technology’ allowed us to follow a methodology aiming at minimum treatment. It could be indispensable for similar cases that are otherwise difficult to solve.

**SHORT PRESENTATION****It's Alive!****Conservators interaction with living systems**

**SHERRY PHILLIPS**, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto  
**SJOUKJE VAN DER LAAN**, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto

Over the past five years, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) had three major conservation projects engaging live insects, mollusks and micro-organisms. Each project required a conservator to take a more pronounced role than usual, in effect to 'stand-in', or act, guided by the artist, to see the project to fruition.

1. Pierre Huyghe's *Untilled (Liegender Frauenakt)*, 2012. The AGO conservator was a significant contributor to the AGO team working together with the artist and his studio in order to develop and implement a plan that would support an active beehive in an urban environment.
2. Simon Starling's *Infestation Piece (Musseled Moore)*, 2006-08. Zebra mussels were cultivated on the surface of a metal sculpture submerged in Lake Ontario. The work was eventually brought into the museum environment; the presence of organic material and open display has led to engaging challenges.
3. Ron Benner *Anthro-apologies (and the trees grew Inwards- For Manual Scorza)*, 1979-80. Fresh food and active decay while on open display is intentional. How do conservators manage the mould and insect population that inevitably develops, while preserving the photographic supports of the food presentation?

The projects were dynamic, fascinating and demanding. Conservators were actively involved in the creative planning phase, took an active and interpretive role in the transformation process and eventually, the preservation of the final form. Our preservation approaches were occasionally unconventional. Vigilance and pragmatism were necessary to balance the health and welfare of the living organisms with the preservation needs of the associated art materials and the museum environment.

## SHORT PRESENTATION

# Decision Making: The Artist's Body in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

BARBARA OETTL, University of Regensburg

In 2012, the Japanese cell researcher Shinya Jamanaka and the British biologist John B. Gurdon received the Nobel Prize for the successful re-programming of human cell material. This means that specialized stem cells – i.e. the cells our human bodies consist of – can ever since be retransformed into pluripotent stem cells that are able to reproduce any other type of human cell as they are not yet specialized. I want to clarify that medical fact within an art historical context by the works of the British artist Marc Quinn, the French performance artist ORLAN, and the Australian Tissue Culture & Arts Project. They are apt to raise questions that are a common subject among the liberal arts: questions on our human bodies and about life and death – and how to deal with this in the context of the curated *white cube*.

With their works these artists insist on the possible reincarnation of their oeuvre as well as their flesh/personae well after their deaths. Marc Quinn's blood- and gene-portraits, more than any other genre of the portrait before, holds the option of commemoration by reproduction. The same is true for ORLAN's dissected cell cultures and reliquaries that the artist gains from surgeries on her body in order to culture cells for future life with the help of *BioArtists* such as the TC&A Project.

Curating the living – be it flora, fauna or the human – has always held risks. With *BioArt* we are following the battle into its next round: it is no longer only the art works which are being reproduced, but the artist-body itself that is hinting at its potential for being duplicated. Therefore, the uncontrollability of the art material needs to be reevaluated: are we finally grabbing the meaning of Walter Benjamin's critique on the long lost aura of *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936)?

**SHORT PRESENTATION****A Posthumous Collaboration****JOEP VOSSEBELD**, freelance**PAULA VAN DEN BOSCH**, Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht

Ine Schröder (1951 Heerlen – Maastricht 2014) was and is still known in the region for her provisional constructions of painted slats, wood chips, cloth and paper that have an equally robust and fragile appearance. Less known is that this, during her lifetime modestly living artist, disassembled most of her works, in order to make room for new pieces or for lack of money to buy new materials. It's only recently that we learned that, throughout her working life, Schröder carefully archived everything through photographs sketches and notes.

From this archive an impressively versatile artist now emerges. An artist that conceived of her practice as a whole; not as discrete, autonomous things, but as a large network of objects interconnected in space and time. In one of her notes Schröder significantly states 'that once a work has done the job it should be given the chance to become something else'.

In January 2019, Ine Schröder and her pioneering oeuvre will be introduced to the public in an exhibition at the Bonnefantenmuseum. However, to do justice to her uncompromising attitude, the museum needed to reflect on its own exhibition practice. How can the museum represent an oeuvre, when the artist deliberately let go the majority of her works?

Schröders oeuvre sprung from an intuitive exploration of daily life through work. She had a detached attitude towards the object: emphasizing the whole; the interconnections and the transitory. To reflect this comprehensive artistic legacy in the show, we decided not to reconstruct lost works, but to use our energy to move on in the spirit of Schröder. Concurrent with the re-installation of some existing works, we create therefore, in a posthumous collaboration with this artist, a new body of work for the exhibition. We look forward to tell you about this project.

## SHORT PRESENTATION

### The artist as conservator

LAURA WOLFKAMP, University of Amsterdam

In contemporary art conservation, the artist often participates in the conservation process. This participation mostly takes the form of interviews, in which the artists are consulted on their materials and techniques, creative process, and artistic intent. Although it is generally the conservator's job to perform conservation treatment, some artists may wish to take care of their work themselves. In such cases, the custodians of the artwork may not always know what approach to take. This was also the case with an untitled sculpture (1985) made by the Dutch artist Henk Visch from iron and horsehair. In the context of a possible long-term loan of the sculpture to a museum, the artist proposed to execute the required conservation treatment himself. The owner's initial hesitation towards this proposal formed the start of a master's thesis research into the considerations to be taken into account when artists wish to intervene with their own works of art. Through a combination of literature research, a visual examination of the artwork, and interviews with diverse stakeholders, the benefits and challenges of the artist as conservator were evaluated. Finally, the artwork was treated by the artist in close collaboration with conservators. This case study shows that conservators can play a key role in overcoming possible challenges by guiding and documenting the treatment process.

## SHORT PRESENTATION

### The artist as conservator

STEPHANIE DE ROEMER, Glasgow Museums

CHRISTINE BORLAND, freelance

In October 2016, internationally acclaimed Scottish artist Christine Borland began her residency at the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre as part of a two-year research art commission, inspired by artefacts from the Glasgow Museums first World War collections. Borland's artwork resulting from this commission will be unveiled and exhibited in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow, in October 2018.

The experience of the broader museum team's engagement and assistance to the artist's research project, as well as the investigation of objects and their associated 'narratives', provided a rare opportunity for conservators to become an 'eye witness' to the circumstances, conditions and dynamics which inspired the artist's intent. They participated in the shaping of thought and decision-making that was crucial for the nature and manifestation of such a major new tangible work of art.

With this project we gained insight into Borland's approach, methodologies, practices and processes and we discovered that 'art' and 'conservation' share many similarities in methodology and working practice, and that we are able to operate across different temporalities while providing each other's objectives.

In our talk we share the insights and reflections gained from this collaborative process of 'conception to manifestation' and present an unorthodox and counter-intuitive approach to the current academic thinking in contemporary art conservation.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 4 —

## Democracy of Materials

Re-installing an installation by Christoph Büchel, 2007/ 2016

JOHANNA HOFFMANN, freelance

The multimedia installation *Training Ground for Training Ground for Democracy* by the Swiss artist Christoph Büchel was created on-site at Art Basel Miami in 2007. With his work the artist takes a critical view on the ambivalent codes that influence the shaping of the American national identity.

Hundreds of objects were meticulously arranged inside, around and on top of a shipping container. The items were all purchased in the USA and included voting polls, children’s toys, burnt clothes, electronic devices, a bomb, a gas tank and — a significant amount of junk food. The viewer was invited to explore and have access to all areas of the installation.

After the art fair, all objects were placed inside the shipping container by the artist and his team. The work was sold to the Flick Collection and later donated to the Museum Hamburger Bahnhof. Until its re-installation at the museum the work remained untouched and in storage for almost a decade. Nine years later Pepsi and Coca Cola cans were leaking, mold had grown on pizza slices, and jello had become unrecognizable... The artist was delighted.

The poster will point out the challenges of re-installing this work of art in a different location with significantly altered materials, while matching museum guidelines, the artist’s vision, conservation ethics and the desire to keep the experience for the viewer unchanged.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 4 —

## The long route to a ‘new’ work by Tom Claassen

**SUSANNE KENSCHKE**, Kröller-Müller Museum**KATE VAN LOOKEREN CAMPAGNE**, University of Amsterdam

In 2017 the Kröller-Müller Museum decided to (re)purchase an artwork from the Dutch artist Tom Claassen standing in direct succession to his earlier work *Rocky Lumps* (2005-2006, 25 forms in white concrete, 15 x 10 m). *Rocky Lumps* was on show in the sculpture garden until 2015. After untreatable damage due to production failures, the artwork was declared a ‘total loss’. Prior to its demolition, the work had been fully documented, including a 3D scan. Since 2017 museum and the artist are closely collaborating on the possibilities of making *Rocky Lumps* again.

The presentation will address the artist’s preferences, the materials and colours used for the remake, as well as a new location for *Rocky Lumps*. During the research project profound questions arose: Will a remake be an entirely new work or is it another version of the first *Rocky Lumps*? Should it get a new name? To what extent is the artist free to create this artwork anew given the museum’s involvement and ethical demands for sustainability of the material? What is the role of the conservator in decision-making and the creative process? In dialogue with the artist various steps and changes in decision-making are taking place and have been continuously been documented.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 4 —

## *Primarily speaking*, kept in translation.

TJERK BUSSTRA, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

Two laserdisc players, a 386 computer with custom color-generating software and a timecode syncing unit, are all connected to one black box, switching and sending eight separate synced streams to eight monitors. This is ‘future tech’ from the 1980’s in Gary Hill’s video installation *Primarily Speaking*.

How do you properly preserve and translate such a complex and aging video installation for the future? What is the essence of the media art installation? And is the equipment a vital part of it?

A crucial part of this project was to interview Gary Hill about the meaning and the behavior of the artwork, and getting help from his technician Dave Jones. This gave us a solid understanding of the vital parts of the work and how the different components were related to one another.

Research had to be done in understanding the behavior of the custom-made equipment, what needed to be replaced and how... Then a plan was made for replacing several devices and translate their timing and color-generation behavior into code.

From the code, eight separate video streams were made, which can be played on network-synced media players on the monitors. Thus replacing the complex and fragile equipment and displaying the exact behavior of the original installation. While still checking the result, Gary Hill showed his interest in this ‘translation’ for some of his other works.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 4 —

# Artist participation and intentional destruction of photographic prints

**MONICA MARCHESI**, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

The engagement to build and maintain a durable relationship with living artists is generally considered to be beneficial for an informed decision-making regarding the preservation of (complex) works of art. Consultation and cooperation with artists or their estates, before and during a conservation treatment, is perceived as a correct ‘behavior’ and therefore welcomed by conservators as well as professional organizations. Hence, conservators are inclined to honor the artists’ interests and the artists’ saying is often felt as a compelling factor that should be taken into consideration. But how to act when divergent intentions and ethical conflicts arise between artists and conservation practitioners? What to do when the artist literally demands the physical elimination of his or her work in order to substitute it with another version?

This poster presents examples in which the artists claimed prolonged control over their own work, even after a change in ownership. It examines the intentional destruction of photographs in the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam as requested by the artists. In all cases, the artists were disappointed in the way their works looked, insisted on the replacement with new, pristine photographic prints, and required the elimination of the old, discarded ones. The poster presentation analyzes the visible and technical differences among the versions, but mostly investigates, at a theoretical level, the mechanisms of disqualification, de-accession, and physical elimination of the prints. Moreover, it addressed the need for discussions within the collecting institutions about the necessity and the appropriateness of these processes.

## History and future of the summit and the international network

MODERATORS Maarten van Bommel & Paulien 't Hoen

A plenary discussion on the need, content and organization of a biennial summit on the conservation of contemporary art. Is it desired and what should be the main themes for the next summit? Please share your wishes and ideas on the forms you've got at the start of the summit and let yourself be heard during the plenary discussion.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 5 —

# The Evaporation of Fragrance

A Preservation Strategy for *Perfume Chess 4/4* (1977-78)

by Takako Saito

**SARAH JAHNS**, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

**GERDA KALTENBRUNER & KARIN STEINER**, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

The noticeable change or loss of material components of artworks is a major challenge for conservators, especially if the altered appearance disguises the intended meaning and is inconsistent with the artistic concept.

*Perfume Chess 4/4* (1977-78) by Takako Saito represents such a specific problem.

The artwork can be described as a chess game played via olfactory perception. It consists of 32 identical flacons filled with six different fragrances for the six types of chess pieces (king, queen, rook, bishop, knight, pawn), which can be distinguished on the basis of odour. The original liquid fragrances in the flacons have almost completely evaporated, leaving oxidised, strongly discoloured residues with a different smell. It is not possible to play *Perfume Chess 4/4* any more and the visual appearance is misleading.

The current condition leads to the following questions: Is it possible to reactivate *Perfume Chess 4/4*? Which parameters and preconditions have to be considered beforehand regarding the artist's concept and instructions as well as the artwork's status within a public collection? How to deal with the changed residues of the original fragrances? How could this piece of art be given access to and how could its content be communicated to the recipient? Is it essential to perform the process of an (inter)active game with *Perfume Chess 4/4*?

Based on the examination of materials, the project investigated a variety of approaches and selected the most appropriate one by considering the following aspects: The artist's intent and her attitude toward the altered appearance of the piece, the context of the Fluxus movement as well as the art historians' perspectives concerning the altered state of the work. Additionally, conservation measures conducted on comparable works by Takako Saito were evaluated.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 5 —

## Here and there – then and now

Reflections on three Conservation Treatments of

*Atrabiliarios* by Doris Salcedo

MAREIKE OPEÑA, Contemporary Conservation Ltd., New York

This poster reflects on three conservation treatments of a series of contemporary artworks, *Atrabiliarios*, by the Colombian artist Doris Salcedo. The series, consisting of worn female shoes placed in wall niches and sealed with sown cow-bladders, refers to Colombian women ‘desaparecidos’. Yet, it is informed by European theory and aesthetics as well, such as the notion of ‘counter memorial’ or Beuys’ social sculptures.

In moments of conservation, an artwork may become conceptually unstable, especially when it is an explicitly cross-cultural work, such as *Atrabiliarios*. This instability derives from different expectations of various stakeholders, an area that Contemporary Conservation Ltd. in New York City often navigates.

On these grounds, the perception of historicity in this series has been discussed within the company – how it becomes tangible through our expectations towards its physical appearance of the quickly-aging bladders. The material substance, as a carrier of the intellectual meaning within the series, was observed from both the artist’s and the conservator’s perspective as representatives of their respective cultural backgrounds. Approaches from anthropological perspectives, like oral history, memory studies and material culture studies were employed in order to understand both realms (here and there) and both moments (then and now). It was concluded that the stitched bladders resemble memorial sites and historic photographs on the one hand, and that visible, timely decay, would be acceptable. Yet, from the Colombian perspective on the other, the disclosure and permission to represent a public space of mourning, for a long time unacknowledged contemporary trauma of a society, requires the freshness of an internal, recently-sewn wound, expressed through materials in perfect condition.

By re-defining an apparent conflict not as a negative result but as a positive process, as the fluidity of not-yet valorized or diachronic meanings in contemporary artworks and their cross-cultural references, appeared to be the most delicate aspect to preserve and conservation decisions should take them into account.

## — POSTER PITCHES PART 5 —

# Memory and decision-making in contemporary art conservation

**SOFIA GOMES**, New University of Lisbon  
**RITA MACEDO**, New University of Lisbon

The variable, ephemeral, and temporal characteristics of contemporary art have brought up many discussions and critical reflections about its conservation. Authenticity, artists' intention, conservator's role, documentation as conservation, autoethnographic approach, and biographical approach, are some of the topics that have been contributing to the discussion. Contemporary artworks demand strategies to manage change and a more flexible conservation methodology. What does it mean to be a contemporary art conservator? Still heavily attached to the material intervention, conservators are challenged when dealing with artworks that do not have a fixed form. Rather than act as neutral agents, conservators are pushed to play a more active role and to give a personal input in the process. One of the most difficult aspects in regard of complex and variable artworks is that conservators redeem their memory without having the chance to rely on the artist's presence. Without the artist's help to determine the ultimate characteristics of the work, other actors relevant to their conservation should be identified and interviewed. This means to rely on external memory holders in order to re-execute a work. How is this process going to influence the future of an artwork?

The aim of this poster presentation is to examine particular issues relating to the reinstallation of a set of complex artworks by the Portuguese artist Ana Vieira (1940-2016), without her presence. Some of her works belong to museums, but many more are not incorporated in institutional collections and are at short-term risk of disappearing. This case will bring insights on the contemporary art conservator's role as a decision-maker for whom the oral history approach is crucial.

— POSTER PITCHES PART 5 —

## Reshaping the Collectible: When Artworks Live in the Museum

Introducing a major new research initiative at Tate

PIP LAURENSEN, Tate

LUCY BAYLEY, SARAH HAYLETT, STEPHEN HUYTON,  
HÉLIA MARÇAL, BERGIT ARENDS, CHRISTOPHER GRIFFIN,  
SUSANNAH WORTH

[www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/reshaping-the-collectible](http://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/reshaping-the-collectible)

This poster announces the launch of an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funded programme of research to develop new collection management and conservation models to inform how particularly challenging works of art might live and flourish within the museum.

The artworks that are the focus of this initiative are those that are in their nature unruly; works that are dependent on changing ecosystems of data; artworks that defy conventional distinctions between the archive, the record and the artwork; works that unfold over time and depend not only on moments of re-engagement with the artist but also on external social worlds and networks of people, technologies, materials and skills. This initiative engages a trans-disciplinary team of research practitioners and academics to advance museum and conservation theory and practice. This initiative, whilst centred in practice, will call on a range of senior academic scholars to work collaboratively to develop new theoretical frameworks through which to think about the conservation and stewardship. Based on more than twenty years of experience, this research will serve to underpin practice, advance scholarship and inform the training of the next generation of museum professionals. Structurally the project will deliver a broad range of outputs including six case studies, six workshops, six keynote lectures, one collaborative doctorate, four academic fellowships and a range of academic and non-academic publications.

It is central to the vision of this initiative that it will explore ways of bringing this work, and the invisible lives of these artworks, into the view of the public, to engage new audiences and enhance audience experience; testing our ability to communicate in an open and transparent way that which is currently invisible to those not privileged by being an insider.

The first case study is Tony Conrad's performance *Ten years alive on the infinite plain*.

## Stimulating Reflection when Using Artworks from the Collection: DIAL for Complex Artworks

**SANNEKE STIGTER**, University of Amsterdam

The project is a collaboration between the University of Amsterdam, Kröller-Müller Museum and Wiel's Simple Solutions, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research | NWO within the Creative Industry – KIEM programme.

This contribution discusses the results of the research project *DIAL for Complex Artworks: A Digital Index of an Artwork's Life*, which involved the development of a database application for museum professionals to assist them in becoming more aware of their influence on the way artworks are presented. Starting from the view that, in addition to conservation treatments and exhibition, the influence on the life of an artwork begins with interpreting the work, compiling documentation, and making inventory photographs, the project included various professionals who work with collections.

Seeking to engage museum professionals with an autoethnographic approach, the DIAL app has been designed to promote reflexivity. It does so by enquiring about the artwork's 'behaviour' according to the Variable Media Approach. The practitioner sets a sliding indicator along a scale from a passive ('contained') to an active ('performed') character. The user is invited to consider each display moment as this rating is not considered fixed, but rather an interpretation, which can change over time and differ between users.

Having to plot the artwork's character based on past, present and possible future presentations, increases accountability and stimulates the investigative mind of the museum professional. There is not one truth about an artwork, which the application further emphasizes by making visible the viewpoints of previous users. This way the DIAL app integrates the dynamics in the workplace into the collection management system. The project has shown that the awareness of managing contemporary artworks is deepened by DIAL in a critical, transparent and respectful way.

## Revisiting the Decision-Making Model

JULIA GIEBELER, Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences

ANDREA SARTORIUS, Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences

GUNNAR HEYDENREICH, Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences

The project aims to revise the ‘Decision-Making Model for the Conservation and Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art’, which has been developed by the Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art | SBMK in 1999. Ever since, the model has served as a valuable tool when navigating through complex problems in the conservation of modern and contemporary art. Nevertheless, within the last decades a number of research projects have revealed potential needs in regards to an extension of the model.

A multi-disciplinary working group including professionals from the fields of conservation, cultural heritage preservation, art history, philosophy, and decision theory as well as the researchers from the training program New Approaches in the Conservation of Contemporary Art | NACCA, re-evaluated the model within the context of recent research results and case studies.

A potential extension of the model was elaborated, considering different aspects, such as A) the description of the point of departure in the particular case at hand, to acknowledge subjectiveness in decision-making by specifying the initial purpose, situation and questions and stakeholders involved; B) the consideration of complex biographies of works of art; C) dynamics in the process of deciding; D) the revision of the centerpiece of the model in order to also include decisions that are pending when developing preventive conservation or presentation strategies and when dealing with ephemeral or inherently changing works of art; E) terms and terminology.

The extended model is hoped to provide an updated guidance for complex conservation and presentation decisions. The awareness of implicit aspects in decision-making is raised. Explicitness is fostered in order to enhance the argumentation and discussion of conservation decisions in a multidisciplinary context.

The research initiative ‘Revisiting the Decision-Making Model for Contemporary Art Conservation’ is organized by the Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences | CICS, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE and the Maastricht University. The initiative is funded by the Wüstenrot Stiftung.

## Beauty inside and out, a role for aesthetics in the conservation of contemporary art

LYDIA BEERKENS, SRAL

In the critical discourse on contemporary art conservation there is no clearly defined role for ‘beauty’ or optical aesthetics; does ‘beauty’ play any role in the actual conservation treatment of modern art, three dimensional works and installation artworks? This presentation aims to put on the agenda the definition of the final part of the intervention by the modern art conservator, traditionally the part where a treatment is completed by ‘restoring’ the artwork into one whole. There is a gap between the academic discussion on decision making in contemporary art and the daily practice in the conservation studio. From newly set standards and guidelines in contemporary art conservation, treatments are performed. However, the optical end result to aim for is often not well-defined, leaving certain decisions to the conservator’s professional but also subjective eye. Looking back, the decision-making model developed by the Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art | SBMK, has functioned well in the distinction of many different factors playing a role in defining various concepts, such as meaning, idea, the artworks’ biography and the artist, providing the conservator with a ‘back-up’ in translating these concepts into actual hands-on treatments on the materialized artwork. The many case-studies available today allow for a contemporary study into the conservator acts during the various stages of a treatment, when choices are transferred into an intervention in the artwork’s materials, from cleaning to repair and replacement. The decisions may be influenced by two different positions, i.e. a conservator working within a museum’s conservation department steered by a long term vision on collecting and collection care and having a neatly defined approach for collection presentation, or the independent conservator who performs conservation treatments for museums, public, private and corporate collections.





# participants list

























## colophon

### Summit Committee

MAARTEN VAN BOMMEL, University of Amsterdam | UvA

SUSANNE KENSCHKE, Kröller-Müller Museum

PAULIEN 'T HOEN, Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art | SBMK

TATJA SCHOLTE, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands | RCE

SANNEKE STIGTER, University of Amsterdam | UvA

GABY WIJERS, LIMA

### Programme booklet

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