

## 2017 IIC STUDENT & EMERGING CONSERVATOR CONFERENCE

### HEAD, HANDS and HEART – Transcript 3 of 3

#### Session 3, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October

Heart – Passion and Communication in the Field of Conservation

Moderator: Mona Konietzny

Speakers: Ana Galán, Helen Hughes, Renate Pogendorf

#### *Opening remarks*

**Theresa Hilger:** Hello everyone. I hope everyone is fortified now from this great meal. My name is Theresa and I'm also part of the local organisation committee here. I would like to welcome you to our last session with the topic: "Heart, Passion and Communication in the Field of Conservation" and introduce Mona Konietzny to you. She has graduated in conservation-restoration of paintings at the Academy of Fine Arts in Dresden, 2014. After she worked as a freelancer and a volunteer she started here as assistant at the paintings workshop and is now a very appreciated lecturer of ours. Now I give the word to you, Mona.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much Theresa for the introductory words, and welcome everyone to the third session. I am very happy to take on the task of introducing the speaker of this session, "Heart, Passion and Communication in the Field of Conservation" which is going to be a very emotional topic, I guess. I am 100% sure that none of us has chosen this profession for economic reasons. Conservation and many other disciplines in the cultural sector are known to be less profitable than many other fields. Thus, everyone might have his or her own motivation or driving force to become a conservator, and I guess that passion is most likely involved in this decision. However, there may be appear some hindrances or difficulties on the way. That could affect and even lower this initial passion, for example problems in finding a position, or conflicts with employers, with clients, or even with colleagues. Also, uncomfortable working conditions and salary is just one example that we'd like to pick up here again. But, on the other hand, are the expectations of young professionals sometimes too high? Or might a demanding attitude even be helpful to improve their own, and also, the profession's image? I am happy to welcome the three speakers of this session who are going to talk about some of the difficulties we face in the early years, how to approach them and, consequently, how to keep our passion alive. At first I would like to introduce Ana Galán. Ana Galán is a conservator-restorer, she is a member of the ECCO committee and vice president of the Spanish Association of Conservator-Restorers. She studied conservation and restoration of paintings in the ESCRBBC, the school of conservation-restoration in Catalonia. With a BA in the history of art from the university of Zaragoza, a master in cultural heritage management from the University of Barcelona and a PhD from the University of Seville's Faculty of Fine Arts. There she specialized in museology, conservation and cultural heritage. Currently, she works as a collection manager in Musealia Entertainment Company and joined the University of Seville's research group SOS heritage. Ana, we're looking forward

to hearing from you about your current work, about your experiences and about the challenges in communication in that field.

*Which challenges do conservators face when communicating their intention/work ethics within their team or to clients?*

**Ana Galán:** I'm very grateful to be here today, thank you very much. I would like to share a few thoughts based on my experience. I would like to say that better take into account the power of communication. I'm trying to divide this short speech into three main areas. First of all, "What is passion? Secondly, "What is communication?" And three, "Which are the areas or, context that we must take into account when we work as conservator-restorers?"

First of all, passion. The meaning of passion for a conservator-restorer is love, advocacy and defense of the profession. So conservator-restorers are very passionate about our work. We are enthusiasts, we are followers. In most cases, it is avocational work – we love what we do. We are convinced of the need of conservation – a right approach using scientific tools and spending the necessary time. For us, it is very clear. So when we speak, we transmit an idea, a message, and we do it using the words we find most appropriate. But, the main reflection – whom are we actually addressing? How do you communicate your defense? So the second issue – I'll try to be very short – communication. I understand that there's three different phases when we communicate. The first one is a one-way communication, in which we give information, or a portfolio that we share or we send to different companies to show who we are, and which are our experiences, or also a conservation project so there's one way we send to each other this information. And then the second phase: a two-way communication, we start a dialogue. They have read our portfolio and then try to understand what we should do in this project, and why we should dedicate so much time and resources. So we have three phases, the signing of an agreement, that is a common understanding in the form of a contract, so as far as I understand, we need to divide communication into three different moments. First, a one-way communication, second, a two-way communication – starting a dialogue – and three, signing an agreement. I think that in most cases these different steps maybe should be in different time-moments. And we need to take into account in which way we communicate all this information, this dialogue, and how to arrive to an agreement. Because the third step, as I said, is to whom are we dedicating this information. We have three areas, from my point of view, three different contexts. First of all, there is a work team, we work with colleagues who are also conservator-restorers, [referring to] the role or profile, using management tools. This is quite important for me, because my profile is very transversal. I started studying conservation-restoration of paintings and jumped to management, because I understood that I needed some tools to create schedules, to work with teams, to coordinate these teams, and so on. So my tip would be: use these management tools, because they are there [to be used], not just for economics, not just for architecture, but for us. Second area. Communication tools to find a job that is related to the real interaction with the heritage collections owner. So, in this case, we

need to use marketing tools. We need to know the different targets, the different public, to whom we dedicate our ways of communication. The third area in communication would be the civil society and the main stakeholders. From my point of view, we should [reinforce] multiple networks, with other heritage professions, we should go to more discussions on many round tables with people who [do not] belong to our profession. And this is an important point of view because, based on my experience, I went to many conferences and congresses only with conservator-restorers. We talk in the same language, we send the same messages, so it is clear for us. But, when we communicate a message with another profession we can't use the same vocabulary. We need to be simple, but try to be [convincing], and this is why we have to use different languages with colleagues. Of course, we need to know what is our role inside the work team. We need to use different tools to find a job, to work with this company. Their issue is to communicate with the civil society, so we need to make an extra effort, to have the educational and didactical tools, to show always what we are doing, all the processes from the beginning to the end. It is very important that the civil society understands what we are doing and why we dedicate so much time and effort into doing this. So this is my short speech, I think that passion and communication and context must be there. And thank you very much.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much for the insights into another possible profile of a conservator. We're continuing with Helen Hughes; Helen Hughes studied history of art and architecture at the University College [London] and got her diploma in easel paintings at the Gateshead Technical College. After working as a freelancer, she helped to develop standards for architectural paint research in the 1980s and led a wide range of other projects, for example at Hampton Court and Windsor Castle in the UK. As head of her own company, Historic Interiors Research and Conservation, HIRC, she presents practical options for managing changes in historic buildings and sharing conservation decisions. Furthermore, she provides workshops and training courses for communities, conservation students and heritage professionals. Helen, please let us know about your attitudes concerning self-confidence and self-knowledge.

*Which methods can help us overcome our initial fear, in order to reveal that we are self-confident in assuming responsibility?*

**Helen Hughes:** I must say, I'm delighted to be here and was very honored to be invited by the committee to talk about issues of the heart. So when I was preparing my talk I thought "Oh, I'll and have a look at [Johann] Pestalozzi," because I must admit I know nothing about him, but he sounded very interesting. I did a quick Wikipedia search. I assumed he was a twentieth century educational theorist, but he wasn't. He was born in the late 18th century in Zurich, in 1746 and he died in 1827. Interestingly so, he saw teaching as a subject worth studying in its own right. He was a massive influence and very ahead of his time. He advocated a student-centered, rather than a teacher-centered approach to teaching – active rather than passive participation, in the learning experience, the students having direct experience and the use of

senses in the training of students in observation and judgment. He stressed the importance of an all-round learning education – an education of the head, the heart and the hands, but which is led by the heart – learning which is cross-curricular, an education which puts an emphasis on how things are taught, as well as what is taught, and an authority based on love not fear. So I hope as tutors we are loved by students, not feared by them. Also, the idea of training teachers – the fact that you're very good at something doesn't mean that you're good at teaching it, which is an important [point].

I was very pleased to be invited to help develop a common course in Switzerland here, on conservation history and theory. I think some of you will remember, back in 2014? We [settled] all the tables, the students came in, and you could read from their body language, “Oh gosh, five days of conservation history and theory, how exciting.” So they all piled to the back, where I saw them put their laptops up, and they got the mobile phones down there, where we couldn't see them sort-of-thing. But they had a surprise in store, which I think you'll agree on! Rather than sitting and us talking to them, we got them out on the streets. We had them looking at modern architecture, we had them on the bus going up to the Abegg [Stiftung], and there we had students from completely different disciplines right up close and personal to those wonderful textiles. We were all on the floor looking at the fixing mechanisms, really getting involved. We set them exercises – we divided them into teams and gave them an object. I think this is a unique selling point of conservators. We can read objects. They didn't have any documentation at hand. They looked at the objects and we gave them a day to do a Wikipedia search, and the next day we asked them to do a presentation about the of objects, but they had to speak as if they were the objects. The presentations we got – we've got some budding script writers there, great actors. There was one team which had two sports medals, so they [assumed] that the medal had a split personality, and there was a wonderful scenario, [...] thoroughly entertaining, and it was delightful because of the passion, inventiveness, the eloquence – we had courtroom dramas! You had to argue should the Sistine Chapel have been cleaned, had it been damaged? The passion and energy that the students had was really interesting. I have to say, I just steal all these exercises from other people, mainly from ICCROM, and Stefan has been on several ICCROM courses with me, wonderful exercises. At ICCROM they always say, “Never underestimate the power of humor in teaching,” and all of these wonderful events. Also the power of what we've been doing today, this week – eating and drinking together, and that's always a good bonding activity as well, because it gets to people's personality and their hearts. So at ICCROM there is a wonderful summer school every two years for conservation teachers, because I think a lot of us at some point in your career, will be up there at the bench and somebody will be placed beside you as an intern. You'll have had no previous experience in teaching someone, so you think, “What do I with this person?” How do you teach people, how do you learn? That's an interesting concept. There's lots of ways of teaching, it's not just Powerpoints – you can take people and give them a direct experience. You could actually just tell someone just to go learn it on Youtube, which is actually quite nice because if they haven't got it the first time, they can repeat it and do it again. There are lots of different ways, if you understand that people learn in different ways, and that you teach in different ways, it can be very helpful.

So then I looked at the checklist that we were offered. “How does one communicate with the employer? “How does one work in a team – what are our responsibilities of that team?” And then, “self-confidence of the emerging conservator.” I’ll get back to that, then we’re going to talk about salaries, which will be very interesting. But, getting back to how does one communicate with the employer, that sort of saddened me because I thought inherent in that phrase was a kind of master-servant relationship. I don’t want you to be thinking, “How do I talk to my employer?” I want you to be thinking, “How do I proclaim to the world?” Think big. Think beyond your employer. Think of your profession, because your employer [implies] that you are different from your profession – you are your profession, you forward your profession of being a conservator.

About 10 years ago I was giving a paper at a UK conference which was called “Working Within the Project Culture” and I think we were probably chairing it. My paper was “As Others See Us.” I think it's important to realize the view that the rest of the world has about conservators. If you understand how people perceive us, probably entirely wrongly, but it's as well to know these misconceptions that are held. I go to the conference, and it’s true. For the conference flyer, someone had interviewed the great and the good of the heritage world about what they thought of conservators. I'll read a few of the comments.

“Communication is not as it should be.”

“It is a multi-disciplinary field, but not a discipline.”

“Conservators should become more involved with the wider aspects of collection management.”

“Conservators are addictive, making today's conservator into another willing slave.”

“There are not enough conservators, and they are not rewarded for the magnificent work they do.”

“Conservation as a profession is fragmented, introverted and lacks a strong voice.”

So anyway, at the conference I said okay, this is what people think of us. If they would make a mission statement for us, it might be something like this, “Conservators are a nice, conscientious pick-and-mix group who seem contented with their low wages because they are blinkered, introverted, impractical and often obstructive – they need to be managed by us, honestly, it’s for the best.” So I asked the conference, “This is ridiculous, can I blow it up?” They said yes, so we blew that up. But keep it in mind, because the rest of the world isn't aware of all the developments in conservation that have happened in the last 50 years. Have that in mind, and pre-empt anything there. A lot of our problems I think stem from John Ruskin. He said, “Do not let us talk of restoration, it’s a lie from beginning to end.” So that lurks in the background there. Also, remember – we are working with other disciplines. As you quite rightly pointed out, we didn't go into conservation for the salaries and we're working with other disciplines, who like us, probably don't get paid a lot as well. Our disciplinary identity means so much to us that we get very passionate about it. If we were all earning three-figure salaries and we didn’t like our jobs, so on the weekends we’d go out on our yachts and things, maybe we wouldn't be so passionate. This means a lot to

us because we've made sacrifices to be conservators, but we love it, because I think it takes over all parts of our brain. That's why I think this is for me.

I was having a conversation with my niece – I love my niece, obviously, and she likes me because I'm her aunt – she had just been newly qualified as an architect. We were having dinner with my friend Helen Shenton, who is a very eminent conservator, and we got talking about projects. My niece Emily said to me, "Oh, I know what you're going to say, you two, you're conservators – you're going to say no." Helen Shenton, who was head-hunted to go to Harvard University, to sort out and digitalize all the libraries there that were in absolute chaos. "All right," I thought, "you're playing the professional card, and obviously as an architect you've been told that conservators are trouble and need to be managed." So have some strategy up your sleeve when you're in a position like this. The gloves are off, well-loved niece or not, I said, "Okay, qualified architect – how does English Heritage define conservation?" You know, you'll be up for this, you know it's important, but she hadn't had any conservation training in her life and I knew it. I said, "English Heritage says conservation is the management of change." Now that took her back. Me actually saying the word "change" – management of change. Just have some tricks up your sleeve when somebody says "Oh, you're a conservator," say "Oh, I'm writing an article" – it can be lies, you're not writing an article – "on the relationships between art historians or curators and conservators." What they just said, and they've probably said something that they wouldn't dare say in public, you write it down. You can say you'll put it in the article, and see the color drain from their faces, because bullying only goes on behind closed doors. But be aware of this.

So how does one work as a team? Being positive and proactive. Our unique selling point is that we can read objects and the rest of the world can't. So we can study objects and come up with wonderful surprises that adds to [the whole] and enhances the project. I work on historic interiors and I had come across a photograph of a lovely Victorian interior which had a wonderful stencil ceiling. When I did my research I realized something – the ceiling had been covered, but with lining paper. It hadn't been obliterated with paint, as they had [predicted]. I said to them, "It's lining paper!" That means nothing to them but to us – we know lining paper is just there with glue. We all know that we can get glue off very gently with hot water, so I could give them that ceiling back. Because of my research, we should get that ceiling back. In another room we had four white doors and I did some analysis – they were mahogany doors! So if you'd remove the white paint, we could get the mahogany doors back. So actually, we're not just obstructive, we add to the understanding. The exercise we did with the object was to understand that objects have a biography, and to be able to tell people that biography. The information might not be there in the documents and photographs but the biographical details will be there in the object itself. We're the only people who can unravel it. That's important.

So who decides the decision making process? Chris Caple is a professor of conservation up in Durham University – he said we conservators are invariably focused on how, and not why, we're doing this. We

stand uncertain and mute as decisions are made. Don't put yourself in that position, get involved in the decision making [process], don't go into a huff in the corner [thinking] this isn't happening. Just be involved, get involved. Salvador Muñoz Viñas [wrote] a paper that was called "the Controversy of the Profession that Wasn't" which is a quick summary of the history of conservation as a profession. You can say in the 18th century a conservator would be an artist, who would just do the repairs. Then, later on, it was the restorer-artist. This is the time when Ruskin is going to say "A lie from beginning to end." So is the restorer a forger? This way of thinking is quite difficult. Then in the 1950s, there's conservation science, we could say "But we're objective, we've got white coats and science." This is when the rest of the world is just discovering values – there's nothing that's objective, everybody else is getting in subjective decisions. So taking retreat into conservation science wasn't really a good move. Then the Burra Charter came and after that there was all these charters, we're talking about intangible heritage, living heritage, the question of the western view of conservation. The young lady from Cuba mentioned this, we've got a very western perspective, perhaps, in this conference. The importance of spirituality, the importance of objects and community, and their relationship. Suddenly it got really interesting to be a conservator because you have all of these multi-values, we have to negotiate our way through all of these.

I was at an ICCROM conference in Copenhagen – of course you weren't there because it was just far too expensive which is sad, why can't we get students to get there for free – but there was a wonderful opening address given by Kathleen Dardes, who is the head of the conservation department at the Getty, celebrating 50 years of ICOM-CC. What she said was very important, I think, for young conservators. The changes that have occurred in the field over the last 50 years invite consideration of conservation's broadening professional landscape. It's increased engagement with the public – so you who are communicators, you've got a great role there, drawing people in with the stories you've got to tell – and with its response to climate change. I mean, we're all going to be dead, you are the ones who have to face this, to take responsibility. It's going to have a major impact on the practice of conservation. The profession's younger generation will need to take on these, and other challenges, with vision and leadership. It's up to you, we're all going to be retired in the next 10 years, so it's your world. Her closing remark – which I thought was great – was, "Be audacious, the next 50 years belongs to you and your outward-looking profession." So take that to heart.

Self-confidence, I thought, how can we instill self-confidence? Because you all say to me, "It's all right for you to say, you've worked in [the field] for 30 years, but I'm new, what am I going to do?" I think the solution to this is to love yourself and don't be afraid to challenge things. In another paper I gave I talked about the three myths of conservation. Sometimes students, when they're new to the discipline, they hang on to tenets to grim death, because it's a certainty. You will have heard these before: "one standard – I don't make value judgments, there's just one standard," "everything I do is reversible" and "minimal intervention." If you have a Rembrandt with a minor little scratch, there can be other paintings falling to bits in the basement, you don't care – see, you are exercising a standard, aren't you? And reversibility – what can you reverse? Even if I lick the dust off of a laptop, I can't get it back. We talk about retreatability,

but it's physically impossible to get anything completely reversed. This brings me to the last one, which is minimal intervention. It's really hard to get people to abandon this one, and we've tried. We did lots of exercises and we tried a vote with the students – can we blow up the term “minimal intervention”? But no, they wouldn't let us do it. On another course we were asking students to read quite difficult theoretical essays. All we asked them to do was write an A4, a general summary what the article was about, and if you would recommend it to a fellow conservation student as being useful to read. The one we selected on this occasion was Caroline Villers' “Post-minimal Intervention” which is an excellent article, a bit dense. This was a BA student's response, and now I'm going to read out some chunks of his essay because I thought it was really interesting. This was a BA student.

“This article focuses on the myth of the term ‘minimal intervention’ in modern conservation practice. It was written in response to ongoing tropes of conservation being thought about as an entirely objective process that doesn't subject projects to judgments about whether treatment is [within the] budget, appropriate to the significance of the work, etc. As a conservation student I found this article on the debate around the issues it discusses to be very eye-opening, and helpful to me, in understanding the role of the modern conservator. Prior to being introduced to issues like this I thought it was obvious that the materiality of historic objects should take precedence over everything else, including community benefit, and the job of the conservator was to attempt to ensure the objects of art pass through time as unchanged as possible.”

I think this is lurks below the sub-conscious of a lot of people. Then he said, “Now I'm glad modern conservation has largely moved past this point of view, and I can see that without understanding the value people gain from historic objects, they might as well not exist at all. So minimal intervention, I feel, is a damaging mindset for a conservator to have. Therefore this article, though a little long and overly focused on paintings, is very relevant for a conservation student like myself today.” I was so heartened when I read this essay. I thought he has had a threshold moment, he is liberated and his mind has been expanded, because he has chosen to say, “Minimal intervention is meaningless, I'm not going to use this.” So he would blow it up.

To get back to teaching methods – how do we teach? I like to think when we teach we're giving you fishing rods rather than fish – we're teaching you how to think through [problems], to get in there and get the fish. I could serve you a fish, I could even cook it for you and garnish it with lemon and a bit of parsley. But I don't want to do that. I want to give you a fishing rod, I want to instruct you how you cast it into the water. I even want to give you a pair of waders, because I want you to be there in the stream, turbulent stream, you're landing a big salmon, and you're struggling with the salmon, you get it onto the pebbles and bang it on the head. I want you to be strong and assertive in doing this sort of thing.



So threshold concepts. This came up at the conference in Copenhagen, I didn't really know about this idea before. Alison Murray delivered a paper called "Threshold Concepts" which was first brought into prominence by Meyer and Land in 2003. Alison Murray attempts to identify specific threshold concepts where the student has difficulty in understanding, and she is applying it to the science curriculum in conservation programs. If you go back to what Meyer and Land were saying, sometimes, when the students face a troublesome, often counterintuitive issue or idea – it's almost like when you learn to ride a bike or to swim – once you've launched off on the bike, you're always going to be able to ride a bike, once you've got the confidence swimming in the water, you're never going to have that problem again. It's these moments – and I think [in the case of] minimal intervention, if you can get over that threshold concept, and various others – then, it liberates you, it doesn't inhibit you. So what I'd like you to say is, [to make it] sailing off into the distance with your bike – have confidence to let go, and also trust yourself, speak from the heart. Because sometimes, if someone is saying, "Everything I do is reversible", it's gone in one ear, it's come out the mouth and hasn't gone in the head, and it definitely hasn't gone in your heart. Just question things from people, question, "Why am I wearing these plastic gloves, what's the chemistry behind me wearing these plastic gloves in this occasion?" So, in conclusion, I want you to be swimming across the oceans, facing up to climate change, landing loads of salmon and being audacious! Thank you very much.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you Helen for this very inspiring talk, and for introducing passion also in the field of teaching, not just in conservation itself. I'm [handing] over to the next speaker, to our last one for this session, and for today. This is Renate Poggendorf, who studied conservation-restoration of paintings at the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden and has worked at the Bavarian National Museum, as well as at the Doerner Institute in Munich. Since 2005 she's a senior conservator-restorer at the Neue Pinakothek and Sammlung Schack, that are in care of the Doerner Institute. She's a member of the Executive Committee of the German Association of Conservator-Restorers, of the VDR, and serves as chairwoman of the stakeholders group of restorers in public services. Renate is dedicated to improving the visibility of conservator-restorers in public service and to the development of our profession. We are very curious about what you have to say on that topic. We assigned also the very tiresome topic of salary to you, so thank you in advance.

*Does salary reflect our professions' recognition?*

**Renate Poggendorf:** Well, thank you Mona for the nice introduction and as the last speaker, again I thank the organisation team for this wonderful conference, and I also thank them for having invited me to speak about this very unpopular topic. I was only told when I arrived here that they themselves thought it's an unpopular topic. I have to admit, I was immediately tempted to talk to about it. Probably Helen and I should have made summer courses at ICCROM to lecture about this in an amusing way. It's a really dry topic, and I will try to do my very best. "Does salary reflect our profession's recognition?"

This lecture has aspects of which would probably be better presented by someone who's at home in social sciences which I'm definitely not. My thoughts are just based on long years of experience in the field. And although I try to look beyond borders, I can only present my knowledge about the situation in Germany. It would be very interesting to study and compare recognition and the salaries in our field in more countries. The situation may be very different, and I have to admit when I look at the advertisements of jobs in conservation I have no idea of what that means in that country in comparison to what it means in my country. Well, of course I can only give you this insight into the German situation, but I hope I may be able to give an idea of the complexity of salary systems. I hope it won't be too depressing. But, before I talk about money, let me start with some thoughts on the recognition of our profession.

For us it is beyond question that professional conservation-restoration makes an irreplaceable contribution to the preservation of the world's cultural heritage. Professional conservation means for us that we attain substantial mastery of complex skills through academic training in combination with practical experience on the objects. It means that we provide personal, self-responsible and professionally independent services in the interest of the general public, or of our clients. This is the definition of a liberal profession, in German "ein freier Beruf" – we've heard of that before. In Germany liberal professions are, for example, physicians, dentists, lawyers, engineers, architects, journalists, artists. I think you'll all agree – these are all professions that receive high recognition. But is what I just described what other people think about conservation? The general public, employers, our clients, politicians, journalists? I doubt it. Still, a lot of people think that you must have outstanding artistic skills to be able to restore a painting, or that it needs a good craftsman to restore an object that was once produced by a craftsman. This is definitely some kind of public recognition, but it doesn't match with our own definition of our profession.

In most countries our profession is not protected by legislation, not even the professional title "conservator" or "conservator-restorer." That means everyone who can call themselves a conservator can start a business, or luckily, be employed by an institution. One does not have to prove qualification. In Europe, politics favor permeability between different types and levels of education and training. They generally favor a free market, and therefore dislike restrictions on access to a profession. But nobody doubts that a physician or a lawyer should only be practicing, if he has a degree providing at least fundamental qualification. Why not for conservation? Only the academic degrees protect it – the BA, MA or diploma that is awarded by the university that you are going to, or just have received. Why is it so difficult to get regulations which define who is qualified and is therefore allowed to make interventions on cultural property? Probably there's still not enough understanding of differences between the various actors in the field. I think conservation-restoration is not sufficiently recognized yet.

Now let me talk about the other key word of my lecture – salary. Salary is the amount of money that employee is paid regularly. But as numerous conservators work in the private sector, I will make a short note on the remuneration of the freelancers as well. In the beginning of this year the German conservator's

association [VDR] has made a survey among its 3,000 members. About 600 of them, or 20%, have returned evaluable answers. I will quote some of the results. 36% of our members say they can finance their living through their work as conservators in a good, or very good way. 44% say finances are satisfying or just sufficient. The rest, 20%, cannot finance their lives by doing conservation. But I have to say here that the survey doesn't make it clear if these people work part-time, or if they really don't find work. If conservators work for other conservators or some kind of private institution, wages are negotiated individually in Germany, and I can't tell you anything about that. But in our country most employed conservators work in the public sector. According to the survey, these are about one third of the VDR members. And of these, only one third were content with their salary. In Germany, in the public sector, salaries are negotiated between representatives of the employer and of the employees, whose representatives are the unions. There are different salary agreements, and I have to skip details and simplify a lot, although what I'm telling you may still seem a little bit detailed.

Each position has a ranking on a rating scale of 15 levels. In general the higher the level, the higher the professional qualification, or the other way around. But, employees only get a salary on the level of the final degree their education certificate, if their daily work correlates with this degree and the description of their professional task. That makes sense, in general. A museum guard who has a PhD in some kind of science is paid as a museum guard. But, for conservation, this is a problematic regulation because it splits up our tasks into details, into bits and pieces. In West Germany – I have to skip the former Eastern part of Germany – in West Germany in 1968, for the first time, the areas of professional activity of restorers were defined and allocated to the different levels of the wage systems. That was almost 50 years ago. You can imagine that the description of our profession was very different from how we are supposed to work today. Let me just give some examples from my field, paintings conservation. The highest level paintings restorer can reach – and I will say restorer, not conservator on purpose – the highest level a paintings restorer can reach is when he executes for example, the transfer of a painting onto a new support. One level below is lining, and I guess both are treatments [which I am not paid for]. Technical examination was regarded as a supporting task for scholarly evaluation. This scholarly evaluation is apparently thought to be done by others, because our profession in this old wage system doesn't really exist on the level to which employees with a university degree are generally assigned. Well for us it's more than obvious that this ranking system is terribly outdated. But it is still the system valid for about 50% of the conservators in public service in Germany. Luckily things are changing. In 2014 and 2017 the labor agreements for conservation were fundamentally renewed for parts of the public sector. Thanks to – and I really have to mention this with emphasis – the knowledgeable and dedicated cooperation of some colleagues, these agreements now represent our present-day profession. They specify, for example, expertise on care of collections or preventive conservation, technological research, the development of conservation concepts, etc., our profession. Now, also in conservation-restoration in bachelor's or master's degrees is assigned to the appropriate level, as any other profession. Experience, higher responsibilities, and exceptional requirements on the job allow for higher levels. These new agreements look like a quantum jump for

conservation in Germany, but in fact it's not a jump – it's still a rather troublesome climb up the hill. Conservators can only reach a certain level if they can prove that more than 50% of the daily work is equivalent to this level, according to the descriptions of the salary agreements. And there's another very unfortunate drawback. The majority of the degrees of the last decades are diplomas from universities of applied science. According to the decision of the German government, these diplomas are put on an equal level with the more recent bachelor's degree. Or, to compare the qualifications of the European Qualification Framework, there have put it on the EQF level 6. But these former studies in conservation took about 4 years, and counting the formerly required internships of up to 3 years, the professional training took up to 7 years. We – the VDR – think they should be regarded as equal to EQF 7. And yet another problem – public institutions have a rather fixed job plan which means that for an open position they have to find a person that fits the given level of this open position, not the qualification really needed. There's still a long way to go, to gradually improve these job plans. Easy to understand, because this costs a lot of money. At the moment 80% of the conservators in the public sector in Germany are paid at levels equivalent to a BA degree. This has to change. But, for the colleagues working for those parts of the public sector that recently got new salary agreements, things are getting better. The first results are promising and we don't have final results yet. The improvement looks as if it's going to be at least one level, but up to four levels up. At the moment we are also hopeful that for the rest of Germany the salary agreements will be negotiated soon – finally, after 50 years.

Now a short note on the private sector. In Germany freelancers in conservation, just as well as employees, are generally not content with their income. The fee per hour seems low, if you compare it with other professions. Reasons may be a strong competition, or the fact that conservation is time-consuming and therefore more expensive than the clients may expect. There are many aspects and we may come back to that in the discussion. Conservation in general and the specific needs of qualified conservation needs better recognition to improve this situation. Let me come to another little side aspect – maybe not a little aspect – when I look around, I see mainly women. Of course, I don't have a problem with women in conservation. In many professions the percentage of women is increasing, but the increase in conservation seems to be higher than in other [professions]. Why is it like that? I dare to draw a personal, and definitely not a proven, conclusion. The interest of young people to study conservation seems to be generally decreasing. A reason may be that conservation is not regarded as a profession with good career opportunities – you mentioned that before. Young men seem to be easier discouraged by the prospect of bad career chances and low pay than women. Then, the conservation of the future will be dominated by women. But this might be a vicious circle. Today professions dominated by women are, according to studies, in danger of losing recognition. This tendency today may change with the increasing professionalisation of women in general, with an increasing number of women in high positions etc., it's a general political topic. But we should be aware of this in all fields. The question was, “Does salary reflect our profession's recognition?” I'm afraid I have to say yes. The recognition is not good, the salary is not good. I think we have to work on both. This may sound depressing, and I don't want to be depressing –

especially not talking to young people. We are managing change. It's up to you how the story continues. When I started my professional training, it just came up among German conservators that professional education on a university level must be the future. That was in 1981, and it sounded like science fiction then. Look where we are today. If you think the circumstances of this profession are not yet satisfying, do something to change them. It needs effort, but it's possible. For example, join a conservator's association, we've heard that before – IIC, ICOM-CC, all [of them] – or better yet – your national association. But don't only become members, become active members. It helps yourself and the profession. Conservation is a wonderful profession, not only because of the tasks we are fulfilling, but for me, because it needs head, hands and heart. Thank you.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much Renate, not only for this desperate talk but also for giving motivation, and I hope this gives you the possibility of generating questions. I think this is a very great topic to start with, because this was the last point we had in Session 2 – the salary. Are there already questions from the audience? I mean, we have three speakers of different backgrounds. Ana, what is it in Spain? What is the position, the recognition, the salary of conservators in Spain? Do you have surveys like from German association?

**Ana Galán:** Well, in Spain we are working hard in order [for] salaries to [increase], and the recognition of the profession. We have a strong problem with crafts, and we have a problem with the concept of our profession. We are working on this line. Our association is working with politicians right now, and with different governments inside Spain. We hope that this [will] change sooner or later, but it's a long way. It seems like this issue should've been solved 20 years ago but we are always talking about the same [thing] in our general assemblies. So this is why it's so necessary to be part of the professional association. She's right, we need people to be active in this association, because we need help to do this. So relating to the [crafts] in Spain [there] has been an idea to put another professional [advocate] not with the university degrees, less than the university degrees, and we are also fighting with them. It is not a matter of a system of [conservation-restoration]. We need to work as a conservator-restorer and we need to learn all the process. To be junior, to be senior, and to be able to coordinate and to manage projects. So that's the situation in Spain.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you. So it's more or less the same. You're working on the same issues. We've got a question.

**Eva von Reumont:** My name is Eva from the HKB, here from the school, and I'm wondering if the difficulty doesn't also lie in the fact that the world, just to say in an abstract way, doesn't really know what we are learning and what we're doing. Because in a way we are now academising, or we're [receiving] a higher status of education, but on the other hand, of course, we are still working with our hands. It's like we're two things in one and the people that we work with – they really don't understand what a drop of

water can do to a material. So this discrepancy between the people that we work with, and our knowledge and their knowledge – how can the link be made so that it becomes more transparent what we learn and who we are? I guess this has been the subject of other conferences, in a way, and maybe it's a silly question, because how can it be answered, but somehow I just wonder. We want more recognition, so many of us are doing PhDs, we want also to have positions that decide upon things, where you don't restore anymore, and the whole field – how can we actually represent ourselves?

**Mona Konietzny:** Renate, would you like to answer?

**Renate Poggendorf:** I think I can't answer the "how," I think we have to. We just have to be aware of it, that there is a need and that we have to think, "What am I doing here, how can I exhibit it, can I give tours, can I talk to journalists?" We have to make it more public, what we are doing, and the level of understanding it needs [for us to do] it. This combination of, heart, yes. When I give a tour, people are always enthusiastic because they feel the passion that you have that comes directly to the people with whom you talk. But the combination of the head that leads the hand is [undivisible], that's a concept that is not that easy to explain but I think you can explain it.

**Mona Konietzny:** There's another question. Yes?

**Rupert Featherstone:** Rupert Featherstone. I was just going to add to what you were saying. It's more about the perception of conservation in popular culture. In Britain, we have a program called "Fake or Fortune." Now, that's not necessarily representative of conservation, but conservators get involved. It's very much to do with attribution, trying to see, "Is this a real Rembrandt or not?" But there is a sense that they're going to the professionals, and that these are the professionals and they're shown on television. And then recently, colleagues of mine who work at the Royal Collection were featured in a film of their Venetian exhibition, and the conservators were featured at the same level as the curators in the film, and their research. So although that's more talking about the research and academic side of painting techniques, possibly, which is only one very small facet of painting conservation, which is only one small facet of conservation, there is this going on in Britain that people are becoming more aware through television. Then we had an exhibition at the Fitzwilliam on Egyptian coffins, where we have a conservator in the exhibition and they were talking to people and that was, you know, visible. So little things are helping, I think. I'm wondering whether that's happening in other countries in Europe.

**Velson Horie:** Velson Horie. Sorry, I'm back again, thank you. What we heard just now, I think, is completely the wrong way around. It isn't what our qualifications are, or what we know, it is how we contribute to the rest of society. It is that bit we've heard about it on television or making objects available. How we've got there is irrelevant [compared] to what we contribute. If we say we deserve a lot of money because we've done seven years of training – we don't deserve anything for having suffered seven years of

training – what we deserve the money for is what we produce with that knowledge, expertise and standards we developed, and the passion and the engagement. All those things are the important thing. And we'll get paid on that.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you.

**Sebastian Dobrusskin:** I'm Sebastian Dobrusskin and I have the ECCO hat on now. I think I just want to add to your comment and what you said. You said, when you look at the liberal professions like doctors why are they so popular, or why do they earn so much money. Because we need them. And we have to get the public to know that they need us, and then we get a better salary, I'm sure. And I think this is quite a lot of political work but it's the work of the conservator, as well.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much, I think you made a point. Because, Helen, we also talked beforehand that we can generate passion in clients, or in the public, while just explaining why their object is so precious and so valuable.

**Helen Hughes:** When we go on-site, or when we're talking to clients about an object, it's actually quite nice for them to see how excited you are about it because it's quite infectious. Sometimes it's just natural, but then sometimes, maybe [I'll egg] it slightly, just to convey that this is really precious, "I haven't seen one of these like it in this condition." But also, work with them, because it might be that a chair leg that is missing and they want to sit on it, and that's really valid. Or a teapot that's lost its handle, and they want to use that teapot. So you have to kind of see what they need, and what they want, and then talk with them openly and sincerely, not patronisingly. I think, as Ana was saying, listen to your client and see what they want. And then work together, talk to them like they're your best friend.

**Mona Konietzny:** Exactly. And I think an object becomes more valuable to the owner when he knows about what he's got there. I think it's also with cultural heritage, with our common heritage. We can generate that.

**Helen Hughes:** If you talk to the owner, or the body, or whoever is in charge of it, understand what that means to them because sometimes it can be a value that you're unaware of. Take that on board.

**Mona Konietzny:** There's a question in the last row.

**Piotr Popławski:** Piotr Popławski from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. I want to share a story, a point of view, about a lot of those topics from the [Polish] point of view. First of all, I will share a little story about my life and my first experience about what the public thinks about conservation. When I wanted to start my studies in conservation at the Academy of Fine Arts, first I needed to be prepared for

the exam. I didn't know how to draw, how to paint. My wife taught me how, but we were hiding from my parents. They didn't know that I was going to the Academy of Fine Arts. My parents are engineers and when they heard that I want to be a painter, I want to go the Academy of Fine Arts, so I was [saying] "I want to go into conservation, it's science, it's important, it's also [about] technical things." No, they [think] the Academy of Fine Arts is for painters. So my father, the engineer, didn't want his son to be a painter. Also, that painters don't have a good salary, so, "No, no, no." That was my first experience with what is the public point of view on conservation. And once more, [another] point of view about how conservators and public institutions differ from the institutions in Poland. There is a problem for conservators who are working in archives. Because of their salary, they are treated like people from archives. They are not treated like conservators, so they have the lowest salary in our country. After 6 years of studying, sweat, blood, everything, and the lowest salary that that you can even imagine. Also, in the private sector it's tricky because there are private collectors who want to have something to be conserved, to be restored, preserved, and some of them, when they heard, for example, "Okay, I will do it – materials, job, everything, for 1000 Złoty", they say, "Noo. 200, maybe." Wow. This is one thing – they just want to have the price very low. But there is a tricky thing with the other point of view. There are private collectors who, when they hear a too low price. So you would say, "1000 Złoty," and they say, "No, my collection is so good, you are so cheap, so you can't be a good conservator." Like, Wow! So thank you.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you for that comment. We have another question in the first row.

**Christian Müller-Straten:** Müller Straten. I want to propose that the academies, the universities for applied sciences, they should differentiate between the public image of conservators and restorers and the public acknowledgement of them, because the public image of conservators and restorers is excellent and the public acknowledgement is very bad. I would like to direct the attention [towards] looking at other jobs. What do they have in common with conservators and restorers? The first working group I realise in this context is museum people. The same happens to museum people. Museum people are ill paid and well honored in the public. In most cases when you look at these working groups which are ill paid, they have one thing in common. And I think this term has been used here in this conference several times. They all have in common that they love their jobs. With reference to museum people and conservators, one thing adds [up], and this is that they love the objects, they love the art objects and they love culture. So I would say that any working group who says, "We love our jobs, we love the things we touch, we are allowed to touch," they are ill paid. If you ask a medical doctor or lawyer, for example – he couldn't explain what he is doing in such beautiful words as you are using. He would only say this is a way of earning much money. And my father was a doctor, too, and loved to help people. But he cannot really explain why he becomes a lawyer or a medical doctor. You can explain it very well. But therefore I would say it can be quite useful to identify the groups who are acknowledging your job. Who is it really who says it's only in Germany, in the VDR, 9 up to 11? Who is it really? Is at the head of the human resources? I would say no. Who is it really who makes the prices? Who is making the ruler? And therefore I would say there are



some groups in the public who are very important for you if you want to change the system. And one of these groups are public journalists in newspapers, who always have one sentence with reference to conservation and restoration in mind. I can only use this sentence in German, I cannot translate it into English. This sentence is, “Im neuen glanz erstrahlen lassen”, [or] “Im alten glanz erstrahlen lassen.” This term is used to characterise conservators, and this is exactly not the ideal of the conservators and restorers, this is the ideal of 30 or 40 years ago. So what can you do to transfer your actual image to journalists? That would be a very good question. And how can you involve journalist to solve your payment problems?

**Renate Poggendorf:** May I just try to give a translation of this sentence, “Im neuen glanz erstrahlen” means “It shines again in it’s old gloss.” And that's not what we're doing. I can't give a better translation. We hate it because you find it always.

**Ana Galán:** Yes, I absolutely agree. We should be more in contact with journalists. We have the case in Spain about Cecilia, maybe you know it, about that film. Each summer, when the journalist don't have any news – not this summer, other summers – they always appear with something like an article about the restorer who is the most successful in Spain. And it's very painful for the good of the society, for the restorers. On the other hand, they usually go through the Prado Museum, through the most important museums, and give idyllic ideas of what a restorer is. So, yes, we need to work with them. I don't know how and in which sense, but it is necessary. And I'm afraid that in our studies, conservator-restorers don't have good communication skills regarding this, because we don't dedicate our time. But it's very necessary, I think, I am very confident about this.

**Mona Konietzny:** Yes, thank you very much. We have another question here on this side.

**Eleonore Bernard:** Eleonore from HKB. I was just wondering if maybe one of the reasons why it's a bit more difficult for us to get recognised in terms of salaries maybe also has to do with [the fact] that a lot of people perceive jobs like restoration – which are very passionate jobs but also cultural oriented jobs – a bit as hobby jobs. So you know, like how everybody thinks “One day I'm going to write a book.” They always say this at parties to their writer friend who actually writes every day and it's really hard work. But they think, “I really like going to the museum and maybe one day I would open my own little atelier and also be a restorer.” I mean, I'm kind of making a caricature, but I do think that a lot of people perceive jobs that are more on the cultural side and that are very passionate, differently than a doctor. A doctor you would never say, “As a hobby, I would be a doctor.” That doesn't make any sense, right? Yeah, just a thought.

**Mona Konietzny:** Another comment. Over here.

**Stefan Belishki:** Thank you. Stefan Belishki from Bulgaria, this time with the ECCO hat, again. Just a short comment on the low recognition of our profession. It's not only the need to communicate more

extensively with the society, general society, but also with the other relevant professions. I'm afraid that a lot of these professions just don't understand our own profession, conservation-restoration. It was not by chance, the question coming from the architect on the conflicts between architects and conservator-restorers in some countries. It's because of misunderstanding of professional principles of conservation-restoration by some of the architects and maybe this is one of the reasons of these conflicts. So it means that we also need to communicate better with other professionals, with architects, with archaeologists, with curators, with politicians, who are also many of them not aware really of the need of a high professional level in order to preserve successfully our cultural heritage. So there are different levels of communication, it's not only the general public but also other professionals.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you for that. We've got a question. Okay first you, I keep you in mind.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** David Aguilera Cueco from France, I'm in ECCO, and also the French representative of FCR in ECCO. The question of recognition of the profession – I've been fighting for 30 years, or something like that, for it, and I still don't know what could be the best strategy. I think that we have tested almost all [strategies], for example being recognised as a liberal profession; putting the intellectual part of the work as the main issue or the main concern, to build the profession. Did it work? Well, it does not really work. The people who are giving us the work we are supposed to share, but they are giving us the work, they pay us. Some of them consider – because that's their interest – they consider we are hands-on, practical, not thinking. They are the intellectual, we are the practical. I've seen this shift, the balance between both as something which is totally not understood. Really, some of the people are thinking we are just doing the job, and we go in that same shift, or problem, between arts and crafts, very good experience and very good ability, or skill, working with your hands, and on the opposite side the intellectual, the one who's not allowed to touch [the object]. And we are, according to the people we are discussing with, they will put us in one or the other box. In France we had that, and we have been identified last year, for example, in the category of arts and crafts, even if at the same time we are recognised with a master's degree to enter any museum for conservation-restoration. So that's something which is really important and I think this is not solved. We are not understood for this capacity to be able to work on the object and on the history, on the values, to value the object. Of course the question of the fees, how much we are paid, well it's the same in the all the cultural fields, most of it, except the managers get more money because they distribute the money to the others. Otherwise we are considered as [having] the lower fees in the society, I think, most of the time. All the curators, of course, they are more important. I wanted to just highlight or ask the question. I totally agree about the passion we have, but I feel like it is in some way degrading us, because as we are passionate, well, we don't need to be paid. In a way it lowers the responsibility, because we are so passionate. I really think that's really something where we have to be very pushy. A doctor will never be considered as passionate, but I'm sure he is, and he will save people. I think doctors want to become a doctor because they want to save the world, they want to save people, so they have a good reason to become a doctor. To become a lawyer you want better justice in the world, so

you do it for that. You have a good reason to become these professionals. So what are our reasons? That's maybe the question. Probably to have a better cultural heritage to transmit, to analyse, to discuss – and we tell stories. That's probably the last point I want to say, that we are the ones in the scheme of all the professions where we are not really mapped, not an old story. We are telling the story, that's something you said, when we are in front of the public. When we reach the public not only with the object, but when we pass in front of the object instead of being always behind the object, never being visible except when we publish, that's something important. When we are able to talk with people, telling the story, the story of the material, how it was made, and the history of the object, how it has transformed, how it has changed; the management of change during the history and how it is valued now, or was, and then it has changed. We are the ones able to tell the curators, sharing with the curators, the information we have. I think we have this connection between all the facts, and that's where we have our role, an important place, and that's probably the most difficult thing to tell, and to be recognised. The last point is that we are responsible. If you go for the passion, never forget the responsibility, because it's more important for society than our passion, or passion is important for us, but our responsibility is important for society. Maybe I'm opening a door which is already open.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thanks a lot for that and yes, I think we also have to be aware of how we do our PR for ourselves because when we guide other people, who or non-conservators, through our studios, we of course show them our practical work, we're not showing them the thousands of hours of research, for example.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** What we do practically is, we can't work practically without thinking about it. Your hands are not able to do anything without your brain thinking. That's probably what we have to show and explain.

**Anika Bilinski:** Thank you, Anika Bilinski from Cologne Institute of Applied Sciences. I don't have a question, I have rather a comment, or I want to share a personal experience about communication with journalists and PR of our jobs, and what we do. I must say that I haven't had too much communication within the first years of my studies. The first time I really had a conversation, or how I got to know the view of other people, or how others that are not involved see our profession, was when I was abroad, actually. I was very positively surprised by how it was because I didn't know it from Cologne, maybe just because I haven't been in the right places. I have been in Norway for two weeks for summer school and I've seen how the Norwegians pay a lot of attention to their PR. During that project we were doing a blog which we were all very annoyed every evening, writing down what we've done, but the answer, and the outcome of it, what we got back from all of was just amazing; it was really nice and a very positive experience. I think that we should not be too shy to show what we can do, what we do, because we can gain a lot from it.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thanks for that. Next question.

**Anja Romanowski:** Thank you, Anja, wearing the hat of ECCO, I just wanted to take the opportunity to make an announcement. Next year will be the European Year of Cultural Heritage with a lot of actions. ECCO has planned to create or to make a call for European Day of Conservation-Restoration. So everybody, all players, are invited to open their private studios, institutions, working sites, open to the public. Maybe it's a Sunday, we don't have the real day for the moment. It will be accompanied several weeks before by social media; we'll have Twitter and Facebook to post pictures, Instagram maybe also, making comments what conservation-restoration is about, what you are doing in the moment. We will give also some aspects, to have more ideas, like raising awareness, the responsibility and the scientific work in [conservation-restoration]. It's just an announcement – it will be next year in October, we will try to spread it, to have an idea of public relations to the society.

**Ana Galán:** And meanwhile we encourage you to follow us in Twitter and in Facebook. Regarding this I would like to ask you, how many of you have tweeted something about what's happening these days? Really? It's not a lot. May I ask why? Is it a matter of connection or you don't have Twitter? No I don't have Twitter? Yes I have Twitter? I will look for you.

**Mona Konietzny:** Next question.

**Eva von Reumont:** Eva from the HKB. I thought to get back to the [question of] recognition because there's a question, I think, about political lobbying – that for some reason, conservation-restoration doesn't have political lobbying. From what I've understood is that there are institutions that are engaged with cultural heritage that do have political lobbying. For example, in German it's the Denkmalpflege, and in English you call it heritage institutions. I'm wondering, why aren't they connected with us, why aren't they lobbying for us? Actually, I think in Switzerland, some of these institutions actually believe that we are only hands-on, so they are even contributing to a very wrong image. I'm wondering how institutions, or museums that know what we do, how they can contribute, that there is a connection between these for political lobbying.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you for the comment. There is a question.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Sarah Staniforth, IIC. That's a really interesting question, and it leads me to one of my hobby horses which has to do with the leadership of museums and heritage organisations and how many museums and heritage organisations have conservators or conservation professionals as their directors or chief executives. So my personal view about one of the issues of the status of our profession is that conservation becomes self-limiting because all of our peers and mentors rose to the dizzying heights of head of conservation and then, didn't break through the glass ceiling. Now, it was very nice to have Stefan

yesterday from the Mining Museum. Is he still here? Where is he? I mean, you know you are a shining star in the very, very small firmament of conservators in director's positions. My role when I was the Historical Properties' director in the National Trust – and I'm the only conservator who got into that position – was not the chief executive. Even when you are studying, just thinking about how far can you go in your career, as soon as we have conservators in these chief executive positions it will have a real impact on the status of the profession. One of the organisations that does lobby government in the UK, and is directly financed by the department of media, culture and also sport, is the National Museum Directors' Council which are the 24 directors of the national museums. Not a single one of them is a conservator, and only two of them, by the way, are female. So there is another interesting issue there. But I do think that just thinking about the skills that you need – the soft skills that Anja was talking about this morning – which you need when you rise into senior management is something that you can be learning and practicing right at the beginning of your careers, and I do encourage that as a way forward for the future.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much.

**Anja Romanowski:** I just wanted to complete this wonderful comment for your question why the preservation department are not lobbying for us conservator-restorers, because they know about our qualities and competencies, and how necessary we are. [Part] of the truth is that they also have political pressure because there's another very strong lobby and this is the arts and crafts – they have a really strong lobby and they are really [involved] in politics. So they are afraid of having a preference of one of those related to restoration. They take restoration as an umbrella term for any works of monuments, if you see it like this. So if you say, “We are the conservator-restorers, you want to push out the crafts of restoration?” It's a question of terminology, so it's always a problem that they have a strong lobby, there [are a lot of them]. Since years they have contacts to the politicians and the politicians are giving pressure, and the preservation departments are also kind of under pressure. It's a very dark picture I'm painting but that's part of the truth, don't forget, so that's why it's important to do this political work as well.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you Anja. I think we have a question from the blog, or from Twitter.

**Kamilla Ødegård:** Yes, so this question actually came in half an hour ago but I will still mention it now, from the Sacchi school in Italy, “Could women have a better sense of conservation in general, as they take care of family, house, children? Men are working with technological toys also in our field.”

**Mona Konietzny:** Very interesting. Who's willing to answer?

**Renate Poggendorf:** Who dares to answer? When I was in training I had a wonderful paintings conservator, very famous at the time, with whom I trained, and he was convinced of it. But he also said that there are few men, and they are even better, among the men many women, but that was his personal

view. It doesn't make sense, but it's our self-awareness in a way. I look at this room and I see at the technical desk three male students. Why? The whole gender discussion is a big thing in the conference on its own, but I don't think there is any difference. I think it is very important to be aware of this hidden information that there is when you speak up as a man or a woman. Therefore, maybe as women, we have to speak up more, louder – shout, sometimes. I talked about the vicious circle, of a potential of a vicious cycle for women in conservation, and it's the same one that goes back to the to the question of the organisations of the care for monuments. I started as a conservator for public services many years ago on a low level of payment and slowly, slowly, slowly, I received a higher position. It acts in both ways when you're in a lower position and you have a lower payment, everybody knows it. If they ask you to be part of a meeting where a project is discussed, your role is weaker than if you're the Head of Conservation and you're the paid on the same level as the other ones. So with the increase in our incomes we will become more self-confident. To force it, we have to be more self-confident than we are paid, to pull it up.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you this is an excellent comment on that. Yes, one question again.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** I totally agree with what you said. Another remark for the question of recognition within an institution, the recognition of the role of the conservator-restorer. I think it's a question of power, that's what you said more or less. If you have the power over the object, to say what should be done, what must be done, to serve the object, if the object can go for loan or not – if you say this object should not move from the museum, you are perceived by the curator or manager with [bills] organising the exchange of a loan, you are the person who blocked the machine, blocked the system. There is a question of power. If you ask for money and you say there's a very high cost for something you already own, and there is a need of an important sum of money, when the same money could be dedicated to new acquisitions. So there is a question of power. I do agree with the fact that a lot of women are more involved in the profession. To be frank, on the committee of FCR, I am the only man on the board. Nobody can complain because it's the truth and if we were going for parity, we would have to ask for more men in the field, which is nonsense, who cares? That's not the problem. But it's true that the fees are totally lowered and never increasing, probably because the majority of the profession are women. The payment is reduced, it's not increasing because of that. I think that's one of the reasons. That's something we mentioned at the Council of Europe. As some of you asked about political leverage, we try to move inside ECCO, and the Council of Europe, and we would have to develop the strategy of cultural topics at the European level. Normally it's not the competency of the commission, but rather the competency of the Council of Europe. I'm not going to develop it, that's a mess, it's a pain. But, we are trying to do that with the politicians, but when they want to have advice they will go to their technicians, their reference people, and there will be the heads of the institutions, so we won't be there.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you. Would you think that there's a correlation between the payment and the amount of women, that women are maybe accepting it more to be paid less?

**Helen Hughes:** I'd like to mention this about the medical profession where, because there's more woman doctors, the status of the doctor is declining because it can be held by a woman. There was a paper that Jane Henderson gave at the Liverpool conference and she says it was just an issue that sometimes, as a woman – it might be counterintuitive – but actually say the opposite of what you mean because sometimes you [might] be perceived as an assertive woman. One time my line manager said one of my problems was that I was an assertive woman, like, “Yes, does rain fall down, I am, have you got an issue with that?” But he obviously had, and that was a problem. Jane Henderson was talking about this and said that actually you can do this reverse psychology. So if you really want something to happen and you know this is going to irritate this male boss because there you are, being an assertive woman in your space, and he doesn't like that, she said, “You could try it, you could just say the opposite and he might be in this sort of hissy-fit about obstructing you that you might get it through, counterintuitively.” But that is a factor that we're all aware of and live with. I'd say no – keep your self-respect and be true to your heart.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you.

**Ana Galán:** Regarding this, I think it is not the matter of gender, mostly, in Spain, but it's a matter of the cultural profession.

**Mona Konietzny:** From the blog?

**Kamilla Ødegård:** Well, it's actually from the Sacchi School from Florence and it is for the session in the morning. So I would totally interrupt it now, I could also ask it in the end. Or shall I now? Okay, so the question was, “Who pays for fixing students' work before you send away a restored artwork?” And I think this will be in the education, when a student is doing practical work. There is also a second question which is for Rupert Featherstone, “Can American and Canadian students join internships at the Hamilton Kerr Institute?”

**Mona Konietzny:** Comments on that?

**Rupert Featherstone:** Well, yes to the second question – yes, open to anyone who is eligible in that they are a recent graduate of a conservation master's program anywhere in the world, and the question being visa restrictions, but we can find ways to accommodate people from the US as visiting scholars, so that's a simple question. In terms of the first question, I'm not sure quite what they mean by fixing' the students' work, but it's all a matter of where do students begin to work on real objects and how, on what level and capacity? You can't hold that moment off for too long. You have to supervise – this is the advantage of having good teacher-student-ratios; you have to be very aware of what you're asking students to do, and gauge the progress. There's got to be a lot of feedback to the students so that the tutors understand where the students are in terms of their ability. Obviously one wouldn't want to have any failures, or anything that

needed to reversing but if you do need to do more work it has to be on something like a retouching which can be done again. I'm certainly not in a cleaning or structural treatment, so you gauge your supervision in that way. But from our point of view – we're very unusual in that the staff work on a lot of treatments, so much of what we do is staff lead and students involvement as the students gain confidence and ability they will do more and more on their own. But yes, you've got to keep keep a very close eye on what goes on.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you Rupert. Any further questions in the audience?

**Marc Holly:** Marc from Cologne, just a short story and then a question. In the last years I met a lot of people who study art history and work in museums more or less as curators, and they never heard about conservation in their studies. They go through all the years with PhD and they never heard about collection management and conservation. How do you think conservators can change the academic system to get more noticeable, or more awareness. How do you see it in your daily routine and your own institutions?

**Helen Hughes:** There was a paper at the ICOM-CC about the role of conservators actually informing art historians about how artworks are constructed. In a way they were kind of horrified that the art historians had gotten so far through their career without actually considering know how a painting was made and also considering how the image they're looking at might not actually be authentic that it has been retouched. So they were offering courses showing them, and giving them practical exercises that they could make, such painting and gilding that they could perhaps understand an X-ray. I think we were all sort of aghast that art historians could get so far without actually engaging with the physicality of the objects that they're looking at. I think it's perplexing.

**Rupert Featherstone:** If I can just add a comment to that. It obviously depends, during the training of art historians, whether they are linked closely to another institution training conservators. Many art historians are trained in separate units, but at places like the Courtauld, they do joint research projects, they present jointly, you pair an art historian student with a conservator student and they work together. That seems to be a very good model. Likewise, in Cambridge, we bring the first year bachelor art historians to the institute to at least give them a morning of mixing up some paint and looking at technical reconstructions. We also give lectures, not that many – we would like to give more, within the context of their bachelors. So I think it does depend on university structures, making sure that those links created really early on, and then you've got a much better system; you get art historians and conservators on the same wavelength.

**Helen Hughes:** Yes exactly [...] as a conservator because when I started at University College in 1976 professor John White actually employed Libby Sheldon as a conservator to teach us materials and techniques and [there was another thing I] wanted to comment on – the rise of technical art history. Because sometimes when I'm talking to an art historian I would say, “Ah, as a non-technical historian it might be hard for you to grasp this.” Because I would say that we are technical art historians, we all are in



part of an aspect of what we do. We should either embrace this term technical art history – because we are technical art historians – but I can't see how traditional art historians can live with themselves with this other discipline which is called technical art history. I think it's bizarre. It's sort of like being a policeman but not engaging with DNA analysis. I just thought art history would've evolved into being technical art history, but it clearly has not.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you for that comment.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** Just a remark, to mention a publication I've seen in the Geneva Museum of Art – I can't remember the name exactly, Musée d'Histoire de Geneve I think it is, and where they have a publication of the collections. They have a conservation studio with 5 permanent people, maybe even more. In the publication of collection they have an art [historical] article which is quite consistent, with pictures, and in front of it you have the technical report. The article is very specific, very well organised and detailed with pictures: raking light, [X-ray], if possible. It's really a different world, a different catalogue – it's a building of knowledge, that's where you get the real knowledge on the object. I found it very very good and well, here in Switzerland, it's good to mention, it's a very good example. I invite you to watch the [...] collections of paintings [...] by the name of the head of the conservation studio, he is someone important I think.

**Mona Konietzny:** Yes thank you very much. Was there a question?

**Renate Poggendorf:** [I would like to] comment on that. I think there are wonderful examples of presenting our profession. Just looking at the internet there is also just the opposite – you find so many [museums] when I try to find a colleague, a telephone number of who is working there, who is head of the conservation department – they're not even mentioned on the homepage of the website on the staff list. So this is just a [facet] of this whole thing, and all the little things we can ask for, go for, improve. Thank you.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you, so make ourselves visible in the public.

**Mariana Escamilla Martinez:** Hi, I'm Mariana, Cologne Institute of Applied Sciences. I would like to highlight something that I think is very important in our profession right now, and Helen mentioned it as well. I would like to ask all of you your thoughts about this. What is the role of sustainability in conservation nowadays and how should we keep on discovering new green alternatives. Yes – just your thoughts about this issue.

**Mona Konietzny:** Yes, this is a new topic – that's great. It's a fact that we are wasting our planet and we should also consider [this] in conservation, I think. We are often not aware of how many materials are from non-sustainable sources. Do you already have some some examples, how to improve, for example?

**Mariana Escamilla Martinez:** I am right now involved in a group called Sustainability in Conservation. It's a student group and they were also in Copenhagen presenting a poster I think. We are trying to reinforce sustainability thoughts already in the conservation institutions and I myself, personally, am doing my master's thesis in green solvents as an alternative for solvents that we're using in our institute. I think it's a very important issue that [hasn't] come through before my master's thesis, and I think many conservators don't think about this issue because we have the object there, and we just think what's better for the object without also thinking about the environment.

**Ana Galán:** May I ask, you are a Spanish speaker, so I have information for you. I could tell all of you but it is in Spanish.

**Mona Konietzny:** So it's just a source.

**Ana Galán:** I can share, yes. It is the last publication about preventive conservation. Benoit de Tapol is the conservator of the Museum of Catalonia and says [something] regarding this, I think that it could be interesting for you.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you.

**Anja Romanowski:** [I] wanted to answer for sustainability, I think it's larger than just for the environment or a green museum, [about which there were] some conferences and exhibitions as well. The strategy of sustainability in Europe takes the three pillars of economics and environment – ecological and social. In the new strategy, they wanted to put the fourth pillar – culture – but they realised it's not a separate pillar. It influences all the other three pillars, so they are revising this [idea] of sustainability. So if you think about sustainability, it's also about economics, so think large.

**Mona Konietzny:** Yes, thank you. One comment over there.

**Salomé García Bacallao:** Salomé from Cuba again, I wanted to go back to the topic of how to make our profession more visible, I think it's also important to make artists and art students aware of our profession. I was trained first as an artist and a lot of the times, especially in modern art and contemporary art, artists think they can restore their their own artwork, or museums if they are not aware of scientific conservation they go to the artist and they ask the artist to restore the art. Maybe we should try to get more involved in art education, in the form of conferences or lectures, to make them aware of this problem. I've been to several conferences on conservation for example to the Congress in LA, the IIC Congress, and they were pointing out that there were no artists present in any panel, so they are not aware of all of this research, maybe. It is also very helpful for an artist to know how a material that they might be using will degrade in the future, or what is not a good combination of materials, etc.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you, I think it's a great issue. The problem, or issue of artists that are trying to repair, or overwork their own works. No further questions? I want to pick up on a point that we ended with last session and we discussed it during lunch: the unpaid internships. I mean, we have heard that this it's not recommendable to start those internships that are not paid and I was wondering, also as a young conservator, that somehow you have to do internships, and if you are doing them in an institution that is well-known, for example, you can put this in your CV and this will lead you to other positions, maybe, or this this might be the way that it works. If you are not doing it, maybe someone else is doing it, and I think this is a problem. There will always be people who are willing to work for free, or for a very low payment. I think this is an issue, a great problem, and I wanted to ask you about those questions. Next question.

**Helen Hughes:** [...] work for free, are wealthy enough to do that. Isn't? Because they are being supported by somebody else. So that's what we're going to say, we're just going to end up with conservators being a sort of rich elite, unless we can just stamp this out.

**Mona Konietzny:** [Or by their parents], maybe, so this is then another social issue that rich people get more educated or, then again get in higher positions, can climb up higher and higher compared to people who are refusing, really refusing to do great jobs at great museums, because there's not enough money that they are earning.

**Ana Galán:** Yeah, this system is more or less accepted in in my country. When you finish your studies you apply for an internship without being paid. And it is supposed to be the first step to other superior [positions], being paid a little. I disagree, but that is what it is.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you, but I mean, who's in charge of changing this situation.

**Ana Galán:** The associations, professional associations, please associate.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you. Renate?

**Renate Poggendorf:** Yeah I think also it's the responsibility, first, of the institutions to say if somebody contributes with work to our institution, there should be money for it, but if you can't get it in the institutions there are always the associations that can at least give recommendations. Museum associations [could] say, "We recommend that museums don't take volunteers, or interns, who are not paid; that the services, the work that is done by people, is is always worth something and please get that money." It's a political issue. We have had the experience, when we worked in Munich, the group of interns in the German Museum Association became active and said the payment is not good, and they wrote letters to the politicians, and they changed things. It took not that long and things have improved locally. We are

allowed to open our mouth, we're allowed to go to the politician in our neighbourhood and say "I have a problem, will you please take care of this problem." Maybe you will find somebody, and that's the way it worked.

**Mona Konietzny:** That's true, but it needs people like you Renate, thank you very much indeed for that support we had of you, because you were the person, I think one of the few ones who believed in us who guided us in the way how to do that in a very diplomatic letter we then sent to the ministry.

**Renate Poggendorf:** Yes, but that brings me back to the point that I made. If you as young people start being politically active, in whatever field, whether it's in your interest to say sustainability should be a higher issue, or payment, then go for it. When I started in conservation many years ago I did it because I wanted to come and sit in the small room and work on a wonderful object. I didn't see myself sitting in front of an audience, but then there was the passion that made me go further and further. In doing that you learn how to do it and you learn that a letter to a politician, or to my director, has to have a certain form. So having that experience I can help younger ones bringing the letter to the people I have to address. But you have to start doing it, and I learned a lot from just being active also in our conservator's association, being in a good group, being supportive and doing that work in the association I have learned so much. I sat on a Sunday afternoon writing some passionate letter about something that I sent out and on Monday morning I had mailed it to the board and I received a [response], "Well, Renate, you can't do that, you can't write that." Well, okay, I learned from that – don't do it, we have to go other ways. But try it, go your way.

**Helen Hughes:** And you were saying that "Oh, if I don't take this unpaid internships somebody else will." Well, as a community of conservation students just [have it] that anyone who takes an unpaid internship is really frowned on. Because if you're trying to make an appeal to government that funding for internship should be supplied, nobody should go and take an unpaid internship. That should just be something that a conservation student should not do. Because it's kind of letting everybody else down, so no, nobody takes an unpaid internship from now on.

**Mona Konietzny:** If that works, that would be great.

**Helen Hughes:** So we're all going to vote – nobody takes an unpaid internship? We're all agreed?

**Charlotte Höpker:** Charlotte from Munich, I just wanted to point out something to keep in mind. I am a postgraduate intern and I get paid a little bit more than the minimum wage, but I just have been to a conference for postgraduate interns in Bavaria and there are still many interns who are not paid the minimum wage. The reason is that the postgraduate internships are declared as educational programs and because of that they don't fall under the regulations for payment, to get the minimum pay. So maybe it's an

issue of how we name it or declare those postgraduate internships, that they are maybe not internships or something like that, because this is a real issue because of the legal things.

**Mona Konietzny:** Yes, thank you.

**Helen Hughes:** [If it's] just a policy then you are saying we should get the press involved in this? So why don't people who are working under these kind of shady contracts write "slave" on their forehead in the morning, go into the museum, also tell the local press that they are going to have slave written on their forehead so they can be photographed going in and see how the directors of the museums react to that.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you for that. Are there any other comments or questions on that? No questions about the payment? That's not bad. All right, then I just want to pick up on one point you mentioned. I think it was part of all of the talks – especially of yours, Helen – that we are making like measures that should be minimalistic, that should have one standard and that should be reversible, and that I think all of us are just failing this and how do you deal with this failure if we are trying to communicate those standards as our basis, so to say, but we cannot reach them. Do we communicate that, should we make this public?

**Helen Hughes:** I don't understand because I was trying to say that here we are too "one standard, reversibility and minimal intervention," – I'm just saying that they are lies. As long as we could just bury them, life would be better. But if you're hanging on to this myth and this lie, you are going to be be slightly conflicted between what you really believe in your heart and what's coming out of your mouth.

**Mona Konietzny:** So just change your attitude?

**Helen Hughes:** Yes, just say what you believe, that's what I'm trying to [say], to free people up. But I can understand when you're new to discipline you do hang on to these sort of outdated mantra because they are a kind of support. The sooner you can abandon them, see them for what they are, then you will evolve quicker and be a stronger conservator, I think.

**Mona Konietzny:** One comment.

**Renate Poggendorf:** I don't agree on that concept of minimal intervention. It may be a general concept but from case to case it may be the concept, and although I may see that I don't reach it, I can define it as a concept, as an ideal, as the direction my work is oriented.

**Helen Hughes:** [...] to achieve what? Minimal within the context of that project?

**Renate Poggendorf:** Yes, it depends on the project. We have to also be self-confident, to say, “Well I restore this painting, yes I do inpainting, no I can’t only state in the areas of the fills if I want this Rembrandt to be appreciated – it’s a Rembrandt.” Then be open about it and say yes, but I do it in a technical way that I try to reduce the risk if someone has to take my inpainting, or retouchings down again. I try to go into that direction and be open about it. Whatever that does is not without impact somehow; our work has impact. I think the concepts that we were trained by in the last decades, these concepts are good directions, but in a way they have become dangerous because of the rising level of training, for the higher education that conservation has achieved, that we are thought by some people of not being hands-on conservator-restorers anymore. That’s one corner they want to put us into: do the analysis, do the research, do the concepts, but other people are going to do the practical work. You mentioned problems with craft – we have similar problems in Germany. Craft needs good recognition and what’s one’s work and we have to find out who does what and we are not the ones who don’t do the hands on work – we do restoration and not only preventive conservation, and don’t touch anything.

**Mona Konietzny:** Yes there are some working fields that are the same, so we are almost working with craftsman on the same objects and also the same measures. How to deal with those craftsman? I mean as young conservators how to separate us from that field? Yes, thank you. There’s a question over here.

**Stefan Belinsky:** Stefan Belinsky again. We have to define the roles of the different players within our field, which is not very clear at the moment. I’m afraid it’s really vague, the perception of our profession amongst other professionals in the field. Again, coming to different players, it’s really important for the politicians, for the managers in the field of cultural heritage, to identify clearly the role of our profession just to state what is conservation-restoration, who is responsible for this, what is the role of the professional in this big process of conservation, which includes of course other professions like craftspeople, of course, you cannot avoid that, but we really need to define the role of different professionals.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** David Cueco again. I agree with that, the role of everybody and maybe look at the standard which defines different sub-activities. For example, if you go for remedial and preventive conservation, and restoration, maybe some of these divisions, which are quite artificial, is also a way to identify the more intellectual and the more practical work, and the work which requires more experience. I would like to set another stone – which is related to this topic – In your gardens. Or, not a stone; a flower. Are you being paid – it’s a question to the audience – are you being paid for an estimate? When you evaluate the object, you make a diagnosis and you propose a treatment. I’m a freelance conservator, so I know what it means and you know there is competition between colleagues and public tendering. So I can

develop later, but when you assess the object, you assess its condition and you identify the diagnosis, the alterations, why they are there, what could be done as a remedial cure, and maybe restore the damages. Are you being paid, do you consider this as a professional act?

**Helen Hughes:** I'd say it would depend on the scale of the project. I was asked to tender for the paint research in all of Oakland castle which is half the size of Hampton Court, so it was going to be quite a big project. I actually costed how long it would take me to evaluate and produce it for them, and they paid me, but if it was a small job, I wouldn't.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** But do you realise that's it's a way of reducing our possible recognition when you assess the object, even if it's just a stone, a small painting or a large one. Of course, for a bigger one like this people will think he needs time to do it, or she needs time to do it, and there's a big surface. But if you go for small work and you may have time to think about it, to propose different proposals. Minimal intervention, a little more, maybe a maximum intervention. When I was a student that was something I was told, "You may always be able to propose three different levels of treatment." Of course, it's the minimum, and I think that's a very good exercise first as a student, and even as a professional. It goes in the garden – that's why I was thinking of a stone in the garden, minimal intervention, reversibility or not, and so on. That's the very beginning, that's totally professional. I mean, if you're not experienced, if you don't have the knowledge, you're not able to do it.

**Helen Hughes:** I think Rupert mentioned this when talking about the UK accreditation system where when the conservators are going up for accreditation and the assessors will expect them to be reflective, to say "Well, what are the other treatment options for this project?" And they'll say "Yes, we had some other options but you know the client did this, or the budget, or the time," so we do expect conservators to have that reflection on what they're doing and look at other objectives and options.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** Yes, but then why not be paid for it? I mean, do you go to a doctor, to see three different doctors, and say "Ok, I'm going to pay this one because I like the way he told me, and the other one I won't pay because I don't like what they said." That's exactly what we do when we're not paid for estimation and assessing an object. That's what I'm saying, I'm sorry [...].

**Helen Hughes:** Anja, [you] might have a solution for this because you are very practical minded.

**Anja Romanowski:** Not a solution, but maybe a differentiation. An estimate, if you say a cost estimate, of course I'm not paid to make a cost estimate. To make a concept, the assessment, I am paid. I make the estimate, a cost estimate [on] how much it will cost if I make a concept – that's my freelance daily life.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** How can you make a cost assessment without the concept assessment? I mean, it's impossible.

**Anja Romanowski:** I know. I'm describing the tender – what you have to do, if I have to describe the tender I'm paid as a consultant to make the description of the tender, depending [on] how [many] hours I'm paid to make the concept for the tender and, also, I can make an estimate for a tender. The work I'm doing is immaterial work. Building conservation might be a little bit different but I'm just not passing by and saying I know what to do and how much I will [need] to do the intervention. Now it's very strict with a lot of contracts and many steps.

**David Aguilera Cueco:** That would be different with the craftsman, I think. The way you justify what you want to do, what you may do, what you could do – I think that would be different. Because that's the intellectual part; that's where your knowledge is visible, and the different options you can have.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you. Is it still an issue for young conservators?

**David Aguilera Cueco:** It will be, more and more. I don't know how it goes in your country, in different countries – I know that in France almost all conservation-restoration goes through public tendering and maybe, sometimes, there will be a consultant among the tendering itself. So you will have a dossier with all the diagnosis and you will follow it, but I think even when you follow some advice already done by someone, first you lose the possibility of dialogue with the owner, or the custodian – so that's really something missing – the second part is that you will do your own diagnosis anyway, [even] if you totally approve of what has been said by your colleague, who you never know, generally you don't know who it was. So, I think, when you make an estimate for public tendering, which [means] you will never be paid for that – because in public tendering it's not paid – except if it is considered a “concourse” – in French concours, competition – and then there are some possibilities for [hiring], for architecture, for example, the team can be paid. But, for conservation it's never considered necessary. You are chosen because of your project in the end. So they choose a project and that's why you're paid. I mean, sometimes you see what is in the report, and what is asked, what is required and you say, “No, I'm not going to do that – that's not what I think is good for this object.” And then you [redo] the stuff. But then if you are also at a public tendering you're out of the [...] as they say.

**Renate Poggendorf:** To summarize this in a way, yes – we should be paid, if there's a certain amount of effort in something, in whatever we do. If there are conservators in a public institution that may be as consultants there, they should defend their colleagues that are freelance conservators. I don't know the situation in other countries, but if that is a problem, then we have to organize ourselves, then we have to say, “What does the French association of conservators do for it?” Write a statement, and say it should be like that, go for it – it can improve slowly.



**Peter de Groof:** Peter de Groof from Belgium, textile conservator. In Belgium it is like that, if you are asked as a consultant to make a proposition for treatment of an object, you are paid for that. But, there is one exclusion – you can't do the job. It's somebody else that has to do it. So you are paid to make a proposition of treatment and the [assessment] of the object, but then you can't do the job anymore.

**Renate Poggendorf:** Okay, that's for the reason of competition because you have better knowledge of [the object], as someone who's taking part in the competition shouldn't have a higher knowledge than the other ones – that makes sense. Next time another one will make the concept and you will be getting an offer. That's all fine, if it's if organized like that.

**Peter de Groof:** It's also the whole cultural heritage environment, I think in Belgium and everywhere, is getting more and more commercial, so sponsoring is involved in that. A lot of the times it's also the sponsoring company, or the private owner, who also wants to decide on how it's going to be treated. That's something really really dangerous, where I have to try to stay out – that's why they ask for external consultants for big jobs.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much. Staying out is a good point. I think that we have time for one last comment or question.

**Velson Horie:** Just before David hijacked the discussion on defining professions, it's been interesting watching what's happening in Britain in the medical profession. We have nurses and doctors, and these had really clear definitions between nurses – they looked after the patients – and the doctors who did all the medical stuff. Now there's a huge gray area, almost no distinction between a nurse, practitioner and a nurse trainee into moving into the doctors field. So, the idea that you define a profession now, and since what is it – 1966 – it hasn't changed, these professions are shifting all the time. The idea that we want to define it now and have that definition next year, never mind in 10 years time, to be the same as now, I think it puts us into a box from which we are trying to escape every year. We are, all of us – hearing all these discussions – trying to escape from that box someone else has made for us. We shouldn't make the box for ourselves.

**Mona Konietzny:** Great. I think there was one very last question over there. Who was it?

**Christian Müller-Straten:** I think that any member of a conservation-restoration association can do something to better the situation, because you can urge your associations to have someone in charge, or on duty, for public relations. I don't know exactly if the Restauratoren Verband or SKR has someone really in charge for public relations. The German VDR has I think the two people in charge of public relations, but the I don't know exactly if they are influencing what we have called here the public. Anyway, you could urge your associations to install such a person on duty, or in charge, for public relations and you can tell

them don't understand the public as a unity. Approach the public only in certain groups. We have heard here about art historians, they are such a group, we have heard here about artists, they are such a group and I mentioned the journalists. There are of course other groups which are important for conservator-restorers, but they should be approached only in their language, in their dimensions of thinking and we should not think that the public itself would transform into directions which would fit the goals of conservator-restorers. We have to bring them on the right way, and therefore we need someone who really of is able to speak in the language of the different groups of the public and approaches them properly. I don't see in the moment any action in this direction. Even if we have lots of newspapers, lots of interesting websites, lots of social media – I don't see any public relations work for conservator-restorers. Therefore I would say this is the first step, if you don't have a union which does it for you, the first step is that the associations do the job they are made for. I think that these associations a little bit too sleepy.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much. Again, a call to join the associations.

**Renate Poggendorf:** Yes – a call to join the associations, and yes – the German conservator's association is quite good and has comparatively many people working for it. I was responsible for the finances there and it's all at the limit of what we can do with employed work power, taking [into consideration] that the income of an association is only the fees of the members put together. Having worked, and still working for many years for an association in my free time, and also saying here, “Join an association, go to your association!” It's really a matter of my heart to say that an association is not like a huge insurance company that does it for you. We are the associations and some are at part of the life that they say, “Okay, I will spend some extra time of my life to volunteer to work for an association.” But it's all of us – when we talk about communication, yes – we have someone who is a professional journalist and tries to do that, but she can't do it for 3,000 people. It must be the concept of it, the task to communicate what conservation-restoration means today to us, is a matter of everybody. The association can multiply the information but it's a task for all of us.

**Mona Konietzny:** Thank you very much, I take that as the famous last words. Thank you indeed for all this, thanks a lot. Okay before I pass over to the local organizing committee, just one word on passion. I experienced lots of passion here the last months – thank you very much for these on behalf of the whole conservation-restoration department and on behalf of all the participants. You did a great job and it was a pleasure to work with you. Thank you very much.

#### *Closing remarks*

**Theresa Hilger:** Also from me, thank you a lot for being here, for your participation and this active exchange. Before the coffee break starts I would like to point out that the participants of the object presentations will meet in front of the elevator at 17:00. Afterwards we are going to meet each other again

for the evening reception with ECCO and ENCoRE – this is at 19:00 pm. And on Saturday the participants for a guided city tour will meet at the main station in front of the departure panel at 12:00 o'clock. Those are going to the Abegg Foundation with me at 12:00 o'clock to take a bus to Riggisberg. After the morning program everybody is warmly invited to come to the Rosengarten, where the city tour ends, to have a last bye-bye beer with us. So we would like to thank our speakers, moderators, and of course Graham, for coming, for supporting us and also for their dedication and for sharing their experiences with us. For that, could the moderators and the speakers please step forward to the podium. First to Giovanna di Pietro, Velson Horie and Hannah Flock. For Session 2: Sarah Staniforth. Rupert Featherstone and Anja Romanowski. And our last session Mona Konietzny, Ana Galán, Helen Hughes and Renate Poggendorf. Thank you a lot everybody. Last but not least, Graham, please step forward to us.

**Graham Voce:** This is been a very calorific conference, hasn't it? Cakes, this. Head, Hands and Heart – so we've had three topics. Most IIC conferences have a two part title, so this is our first with three parts in the title – thank you for that. It's also our first event in Switzerland, hopefully not our last, and what a fabulous event it has been, so thank you everybody. The rule of three: I started landscape architecture on one of the many rules in landscaping, and landscape gardening is the rule of three. You plant in three groups of three, it grows it develops. On a theme of three, I'd like to do three things. The first thing is for me – from IIC – to accord our thanks, firstly to HKB for providing us with a superb venue and the facilities, and allowing us to see the work of the students and academics – it's always a rare thing to see things on the inside. Secondly to Stefan, Sebastian, Felix and Mona for supporting this event and guiding the students as well as letting them plan this and implement it themselves. And that, as Stefan said is important, learn by doing. The third thing is to thank the students on the local organizing committee under the quite inspirational leadership of Isa, who is sitting over here, who put together a fully professional event. From registration to the AV, all the technical guys, all the web people. It is a mini-version of what we have done in Los Angeles, it's a mini-version of what we will continue to do. So thank you, and thank you for the cakes. More calories. The second thing to do is to thank our sponsors, of course, and I can quote them here. We have of course HKB, our main sponsor, without whom we could not have done this. Abegg Stiftung, the Swiss Association for Conservation-Restoration, TruVue, Kulturesk, Museum Aktuell, Fontana & Fontana ECCO, Deffner & Johann, Willard, Kremer, GMW, Routledge, PEKA, Lascaux, and also thank you to Angela [Stindt] for designing the logo which has caused a lot of discussion, and what has been the image of what we've been doing, so thank you. And finally, to the future. I think as Sarah has mentioned we have interest in a student conference in this series in 2019 in Delaware, in New England. There may be others of you too who would like to organize events. Since I wrote these notes I've spoken to somebody about possibly an event in Cuba, about possibly an event in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia. That's exactly what this is about, and I think, as Renate said, "It's up to you how the story continues." We have a conference in 2018 in Turin: "Conservation: The State of the Art". That his next year. In 2019 we may be having another student conference it might be in Cuba, it might be in the Baltic states, it might be in America. What about now? What about next week? What about when you go home? Because we want to capture the energy of

these two days in tomorrow. In what happens in next week. So we have an IIC Facebook site – contribute to that. We have an IIC LinkedIn group – be part of that, it's free. We have a Twitter feed, you can feed into that. You can send us articles to put into News In Conservation. If you have ideas or thoughts, send them to us at IIC, because we want to hear what's happening now. These conferences came out of somebody coming to me after our 2010 conference and said, "What's next?" and I said, "Oh thank goodness, we've got two years off, there's another one in Vienna," and he said, "But what's happening next? Why not a student conference? Why not something different?" And that's why we're here now. Because somebody sitting where you're sitting said, "Let's do something." So as you said, it's your story, now write the next sentence. But anyway, thank you to everybody, it's been a great two days, and enjoy the rest of this evening.

**Isa von Lenthe:** Thank you Graham. Thank you so much for this wonderful conference. I really have to say that all the work I mentioned yesterday in the opening remark was totally worth it. Dear participants – really thank you so much – for coming to Bern, to super expensive Switzerland. It is a pleasure to have all of you here at the Bern University of the Arts. I would like to thank the whole Department of Conservation-Restoration, and especially Stefan Wülfert, for believing in us and giving us the chance to host this event and support us in any way. Further, I would like to thank the IIC coordinators Graham, Jo and Mikkel, for all the support you have given us in the last month. It was amazing how you lead us through the organisation. And last but not least, a huge, huge thank you goes to all the volunteer helpers behind the scenes that you don't see, but were working all the time, and to the house staff. I would now like to ask everybody outside for a group picture.