

**2013 IIC STUDENT & EMERGING CONSERVATOR CONFERENCE**

**CONSERVATION: OBSTACLES OR OPPORTUNITIES?**

**TRANSCRIPTS – 2 of 3**

**Session 2, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

**Presenting oneself in a professional context**

*In the pursuit of a professional career a student must learn to promote him or herself by presenting work experience and study to a potential employer or institution, e.g. students seeking work placements either at home or abroad, or applying for a local or an international training programme. It has become increasingly common to present oneself with the help of a portfolio, in print and online versions. What constitutes a good portfolio? How should one be designed / appear? What should a portfolio include and for what reasons? How can the student's educational institution prepare the student for this challenge? Should the student have versions of this in a number of languages?*

**Moderator: Tine Louise Slotsgaard**

**Introduction**

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard** Good morning everyone and welcome to the second session of the conference. Again I must remind you that this session as well as the session in the afternoon will be filmed.

The theme for this second session is Presenting Oneself in a Professional Context. The panel speakers today are Amber Kerr, Rikke Bjarnhof, Jørgen Wadum, Sarah Staniforth and Carrie Roberts who will join us via the web. After the presentations there will be time for questions and debate.

The first speaker is Amber Kerr. Amber is a Paintings Conservator at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Lunder Conservation Centre. She received her M.Sc. from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Programme in Art Conservation. Beyond her role as paintings conservator, Amber also serves as a member of Council for the IIC, in addition to her contributing roles as Social Network Editor for the IIC Facebook and Twitter pages and her support of advancement programmes for emerging conservation professionals and students.

**Amber Kerr:**

Hi. I need to stand here. I've got a little bit of a presentation for you this morning. I've have been a part of the IIC since I was a student. I was a student member of my first year in graduate school at Winterthur, and I was encouraged by my professors to become actively involved in any professional

organisations, and I am a very strong supporter of that, and I think you all saw that a lot yesterday in the presentations. I'm going to touch on some points of what I look for; when I'm looking at students for interns now, now that I have been graduated from the programme since 2008, and then working full time in a museum. I do a lot of mentoring for both pre-programme and programme students, and then postgraduate students, either at a fellowship level or beyond.

I'll step though: The first thing I look for is beyond your skill sets, and what you can bring as a professional to the field. It's your attitude, because what can differentiate you from the next person is how you present yourself, how you look at yourself and how the world sees you, which I think is a really important point that you need to consider, when you present yourself professionally. Are you enthusiastic?

One interesting thing I find, and I don't know if this is a generational thing, that so many people are conversing digitally though text, e-mails and on their phone, but then when you get face to face, I noticed that there seems to be a decline into personal skills sometimes, and communications, and that is really hard, because when someone goes to interview and is not comfortable talking, it makes it really difficult for a person to get to know you. Showing your enthusiasm, talking, being able to talk about what you like, why you do what you do, why you're here, is really going to be important to the person who brings you on board. You're entering a team of professionals, whether you come on board as an intern or a Fellow, and it's really important for them to get to know what are your driving forces, what brought you here, why you want to be there, and not to be afraid to show that enthusiasm. That means that you don't have to be overly enthusiastic and really excited, but show that you care. I once interviewed a person that was so flat-lined I didn't realize how impassioned she was in conservation, so I tried to draw it out of her, and then I realised that she really had a lot of passion, but none of it showed until I really worked on pointing that out to her.

And I work with the public. I work at a working conservation centre that's behind glass walls, and so when you go out and engage with the public, which has become increasingly more important in our field, you need to engage the public, you need to excite them, you need to talk about what you do, and why it's important they get involved with preserving cultural heritage. So again, an enthusiastic attitude is very important.

Being receptive and open to new ideas, we all learn new things all the time. Are you receptive to criticism? Are you receptive to both negative and positive criticism? We all like to know that we do something well, and when we don't do something perfectly, and we are all perfectionists as conservators. How receptive and open minded are you to new things, especially if you're going

internationally. Being open to new environments, new cultures, new things, this is a very important thing.

Being adaptable: I plan something, when an intern comes on board with me, or I'm working with someone, and I have this plan, a ranked plan of what is going to be accomplished over the next 11 months that they are with me, but that doesn't always happen, and so I ask them, I want to see if they adaptable to the plan, that they can shift and change, and they have that kind of enthusiasm and attitude to be able to work with me and to adapt situations.

Being considerate: now, we work in the team environment as I mentioned, and the importance of understanding how your actions affect others, right down to how you care for the tools in the lab. How do you use the materials? How do you leave them for the next person? Because each of these needs to be considered for each other, to have a really nice smoothly operating lab. And because we are bringing somebody on board, we definitely want that person to fit in, and so they if are not considerate with the people they work with it starts to - and we all had that experience at times -i it can really rub each other in kind of the wrong way. So being considerate is very important.

Innovative: I'm passionate about what I do as a conservator. We have this wonderful situation where we are a small field, and we often have to come up with our own problem solving skills. So are you innovative, and are you willing to share that innovation? I love it when someone comes in as an intern with me, and they are doing some repetitive task, and all of a sudden I found out, that they worked out a better way of doing it, and they show me that, and share that with me, and I learn, because it is a reciprocal situation. You're learning something, but you're also bring new information to the place that you're going to as an intern, and it's important to be able to share that innovation and to learn from it.

And then initiative: I love nothing more than when one of my interns will come to me and say: "I've noticed this. Would you like me to do something about it?" And what I hate is when something happens, and they say: "Yeah, I saw that," hiding that initiative.

So these little key points, that you as a person, asides what you learning in school and all the hand skills you're developing as a conservator. Think about you're professional development, and how you present yourself. And these are real key points, I think.

Networking and professional development: You hear this word networking all the time. It is so important, that you are creative to do so. As I said, I've been a member of the IIC, since I was my first year in graduate school. And I wasn't able to go to my first congress actually, until after I graduated.

Just after I graduated I went to a conference in London. Since then I have been able to become friends with colleagues from around the world. I mean people in Egypt, Africa, South America and throughout Europe, and it's been so exiting, and we sort of feed each other with information, and they can be in different multi-disciplines as well, and it's wonderful when I'm talking with a student, emerging student, or an intern, and I'm able to connect them with somebody in the world that they want to go to or to meet. So I always use my resources, and that you can use for your career moving forward.

Conferences and lectures and workshops - attend as many as you can, and seek the funding to go to them. It's again very important to be able to introduce yourself professionally, and that's where all the first attributes I listed for you really come in to play. Don't just go. Take a deep breath, and walk up and introduce yourself to people. It's amazing in this field I've met so many people, who were so receptive to meeting students and interns. So you're in a wonderful phase in your career right now, where you can actually take advantage of where you are, and people love to hear what got you in, what you are doing there ... So most conservators seem very receptive to that. They've all been there, so they know.

Advocacy and outreach, and this is something of course, working in a conservation lab with glass walls where the public can watch what you're doing all the time, is a very important component of and driving force in what I do professionally.

Conservation is actually a second field to me. I had a whole other career, and then switched into conservation in my thirties, so for me, I'm so grateful every morning when I get up. I get to go to work and am able to be a conservator. And I never thought that the first career I had, which was actually corporate American marketing and sales support, regional management, all these, like, *business* things would ever come into play, but those skill sets are so important. So, even though you're in graduate school as a conservator, these are things that you really want. If you can take a speaking class, if you can take a class on how to interact with other employees, these are all skill sets that will come into play, because if you get hired as a conservator, and then ultimately you're running a lab, it'll be nice to know how to manage the people that you're working with, and to be effective in managing the public and programmes, so you're always thinking, not only about your professional conservation development, but your professionalism, and your skill sets there as well.

And then finally mentors and mentees: I was mentored by some amazing people, and I continued to find mentors. Seeking mentors is very important, and then with some delicate little tip of the balance all of a sudden, you start mentoring someone. And that's an important thing too, because you begin to

learn what your skill sets are. And you're giving back. It's this relationship, as you move forward in your career, and you should be thinking about that. I think it's very important.

Presenting oneself: E-portfolio. This is something that is really coming forward. I mean, we all know we've had [to], and I've walked around with, this huge binder for the longest time. Every time I had an interview, I had to put it in a suitcase and guard it, bringing it on the plane with me, and making sure that I had this huge binder of information. It weighed a ton, and I'm surprised I could still stand up straight at the time. But now there's this wonderful thing of an e-portfolio and it's really becoming popular. In the [United] States I think most of the graduate programmes (I wouldn't be surprised if by the next year or the following year, all of the students in the United States) will have e-portfolios from this point forward. It is becoming that rapidly popular. As a person who is looking at potential candidates, this is amazingly wonderful. You can use different types of sites to develop them. This is actually my third year graduate intern, and she just started with me a couple of weeks ago. When she was interviewed last January, she and other two candidates all had e-portfolios. I could look at them before they even got there. I could actually use my time wisely enough to gather questions for the candidates based on the e-portfolio that I was looking at online. And the way that the e-portfolio works is, as you might be able to see, [I don't have a pointer] that there are different categories. Now, it's sort of like LinkedIn, if your familiar with that, you can land on the page, you can learn basic things about the person. But to get into any depth, to get into any of their treatments, you actually need to have the password. So it is locked at some point, so you don't have free access all the time to everything, so that anybody can see it. You actually can control the information and how it's viewed. And this is going to be very important to the institutions that you work at, because there will be copyright issues, and you should, when you're using an e-portfolio, at least [have a] dialogue with them to make sure that it is okay that you use their photographs in your portfolio, letting them know that they are locked [protected]. But also, you may have to put some sort of [text] like, you know, "photograph provided by such and such institutions". So, being aware of those copyrights is very important.

So in Jessica's portfolio, [on] the main page you can look at who she is, and kind of look at her CV, and that's all accessible to anyone. And then it goes a little deeper, and she talks about projects that she has done, internships that she has been in, and she's categorized these things, and the one I love is that she is actually talking about volunteering and advocacy outreach. So you can highlight your strengths, and you can even put in there where you want to go and do beyond that. So, again, for potential employers and places you going to be as an intern, an e-portfolio, you don't have to look at it in the plane with you, you don't have to worry being lost in your luggage, it's there. So as long as they have access, they can go before you, so they can get a good professional image of you.

The other options are using different social networking sites and blogs. I will now actually ask candidates: Do you have a blog site? This is actually a blog that was written for the first student conference. One of the students who, she wasn't at the Winterthur programme at the time, she hadn't been accepted then, but her name was Heather Brown and she is now in the programme and she actually sat in her pyjamas, and she talked about this is the first conference that she attended in a pyjamas. She watched the IIC student conference on her lap top. Got up very early in the morning to be able to watch it, and I hope that we have a lot of people on the web today watching us as well. But, she had her own personal blog, and when she interviewed to get into graduate school, this was a key point in her being accepted, because they saw that she was already pro-actively using networking skills and social networking sites to reach out, both within her community and to the public in general. She was sharing what conservation is. Again with blog sites, you need to be careful about copyright issues and such. But she's really good, and she credits all of her photographs, if she hadn't taken them herself, or if they belonged to someone else. But I thought it was great when I saw that she actually blogged about the first student conference, and maybe we have some bloggers out there, who will on this one.

So you have blogs. Contributing to a blog, if you don't have one yourself, this is another thing that they like to see, potential employers. When I have an intern, because we have so much outreach, we can see that Smithsonian Lunder Conservation Centre, I have my interns write two blogs over the course of the year. I want them to write one about their project, and another one maybe about their experience, and I think that the graduate programme they now belong to actually asks them to write one for the university. So you're going to start seeing these writing skills about your projects are going to be more and more demanding, because they use social network websites to help promoting the museums. I have both a LinkedIn and I'm visible on Accademia.edu. These are other ways of presenting yourself, besides from e-portfolio. Again, it's mostly just CV or basic information. On the Accademia.edu, it's sort of like a Facebook for academics, and you can put up power point presentations, and you can put up posters you've done that you've put into conferences, so that other people on Accademia.edu in the world, can actually read things you've written, publications, and share that in an academic environment. One thing I'd like to do, is try to maintain a consistent portrait photograph in these things, especially professionally, so that they say "Oh yeah, that's the one I saw on LinkedIn, and it goes with the Facebook one. So, being consistent in the way you present yourself, with a snapshot of yourself, keeping it consistent in any formats you use, helps someone knows that they have found you, and not someone who got the same name as you. So it's a visual.

I also work, when I have my Facebook page, I also tweet at the same time. And I just told you to keep it consistent, and you can see how it can be very different, and all of a sudden someone goes like "Oh, do I have the same person or not?" So, it is nice to have that consistency. And I actually was asked to start at the Facebook page for the IIC a little over two years ago, which amazingly, this is an older

photograph, we are close to 12.000 followers now in just two years. So very exiting internationally to see the demographics of who follows us on Facebook. So indeed, this aspect of outreach is becoming important in using social networking, and the fact that you may be doing that for yourself, or helping an institution, that is going to be really important. And I also say be very careful because potential employers will look at your Facebook page. Just letting you know, it's out there.

Professional involvement: When I first attended the [IIC 2008] London conference, and here I have a picture of all those of us who received Brommelle Memorial Fund funding to attend the conference, I was very excited. I went to London, and there I am. - you can always follow the red hair in the circle there in the centre. So these were all the Brommelle funding winners that year, and I attended my first IIC student meeting and it was wonderful. I got all involved, and I immediately went up and said: "How do I get more active in the IIC? I'm really excited about what is going on". And there was a huge number of students that had attended this conference and volunteered for it. I can't remember, Graham [Voce] how many volunteers, but it was tremendous with the students. 30 or so volunteers, just volunteers, and beyond that there were locally students who came to this conference too, so it was very exciting to be a part of that. And then I went on, and here you see me actually working at the first one I went to [as a volunteer at the IIC 2010 Congress] in Istanbul. I was asked to be the first student poster session chair. So actually I pulled together contemporaries from around the world from different continents, and we actually had our first student poster session, which I talk to in just a moment. We did have a [Student] meeting at that conference as well, and you start to see that these are students from all over the world. We had students from Greece, Turkey, Italy, London and South America. It was very exciting to see how many people, how many students were there. And a lot of that had to do with that student poster session, so we were very excited that students were coming to an international venue, and this one was in Istanbul.

And the next one that you see here was in Vienna. That was just this past year [2012] in September. So here we are again, in an auditorium setting. And what we often do, you've put together a poster gallery, and we talk about what the students are interested in, what they want, and who runs the programme, and I just sort of stand there at the side and listen carefully or interact, but the students have such wonderful ideas, and it's great to hear them. And we've been improving upon things because of that feedback, and I will state that in that lower picture the person I have highlighted is Adam. Adam, I want you to stand up, because Adam is a really important person. Adam attended the Istanbul congress, and if I'm not mistaken, Graham, came up with an idea about a student conference, and this shows you how much we do listen, because Adam approached Graham, and said: "This is it? Just going to this congress? What about the students? What about a conference for students?" And lo and behold the next year, literally within 12 months we had our first student [conference] and Adam was actively involved in getting these conferences started for students. I spoke about the poster

sessions, and these are really important. The first one was in 2010, and the winner there was Kerry Roberts who is going to speak in the end as the last speaker today on Skype, and she is going to tell you her story about what happened when she applied for this poster, and where she is now, which is fascinating case study, and I encourage you to all listen carefully to what she has to say. The second one was in Vienna. Here you see three students. They shared the poster, and they were from Mexico, and they were so excited to be able to come to Vienna and present their poster, and again we had students from all over the world.

The next congress is in Hong Kong, and the student posters though we would like them to have a similar theme to the conference, they don't necessarily have to. So, think about that. We're going to have a call for papers, and then for posters in the next month and a half. So, look for that announcement, and if you have an interesting research project and want to send us an abstract, please do. And there is Brommelle [Memorial Fund] funding to help students to get to these IIC Congresses, and of course there's other funding that you might be able to find, if you're representing an institution as such. Their museum [in Mexico] was so excited about the fan project that they gave the poster on, that they actually wanted to send them with an artifact to the Vienna congress, so we were like: "Uh no, that's okay. You can just bring the poster". But the enthusiasm of the museum, and the idea that they were representing their museum though the poster and research was really wonderful to see. And they went on to write an article for *News in Conservation* for the IIC. So again, you can see what is happening for students.

So now we get on to the [Student & Emerging Conservator] conferences. Adam, his blossoming idea of a conference for students. You should go talk to him. The first one happened in London in 2011, and now the second one in 2013, and we are looking forward to the next one. These are becoming very successful, and I hope with your involvement, we can continue to talk about topics that are relevant for you. And get the professionals in so that you can talk to them, and learn from them, because this is a very unique environment, where you get to put us on the spot. You get to ask us very direct questions. It's not just that you sit there, and listen to what we've been doing. So we're here for you to sort of plug into our minds and asks us what we know.

And then beyond that, you got international organisations that you can join, regional organizations and community involvement. And when I say community involvement, I don't just mean what's happening in your town or on your block, and helping in that way, but I'm talking about the conservation community as well. What can you give back? You know, we all get things when we become members. We all get the publications, we go to conferences, and we learn things. What are you doing to give back to the greater community? And I think that is going to be a very important part of where you progress professionally, is what you contribute back, and then who you get to meet in

that process, and where you develop professionally through that experience. So that kind of concludes the summary, and I know we were going to talk about many different things and let the fellow speakers to speak more, but I always love this Chinese proverb, because it's not just a matter of going somewhere, and showing something, remembering something. It's involving. You're being involved, and involving other people in what you do, and I think that's a real key component, and it goes back to the first attributes that I've told you about, that is so important. That's my little two cents for the day. I look forward to your questions later on. Thank you.

(Power point with Chinese proverb: "Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand")

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard:** Thank you Amber. The next speaker is Rikke Bjarnhof. Rikke is a paintings conservator with an M.Sc. from the School of Conservation in Denmark and a Masters in public governance from Copenhagen Business School. Rikke is today head of Buildings and Artefacts at the National Museum of Denmark's Department of Conservation. Rikke is also involved with the implementation of recent changes to conservation training and education in Denmark. Rikke, go ahead.

**Rikke Bjarnhof:**

First I want to thank you for inviting me, to join this session about presenting oneself in a professional context. As you heard my name is Rikke Bjarnhof. I work at the national museum, and I'm head of section buildings and artefacts at the conservation department. My staff's major purpose is to conserve our museums artefacts of course, but two thirds of my staff are employed based on external financing. So we work hard to maintain the size of our staff, by bidding on conservation projects and connecting with the renovation of buildings and churches, and for private people.

So in large and externally financed projects often with strict deadlines, we have to hire more conservators temporarily, to secure the progress of the projects. For example, for the time being I have fourteen temporarily employed conservators on different projects, on top of my 30 permanent employed conservators. This situation is not unusual, so I'm very familiar with the process of assessing the way conservators present themselves in job situations - or how they apply for internships. In the last couple of years we have had 30 national and international internships connected to our department each year. During my career I have also worked abroad for many years, both in Italy and in the United States. So I have been integrated in other cultures, tried the job interview situation myself, with and without portfolios and know about other perspectives on valuing employees.

What you just heard here is an argument for my qualification for sitting in this session here with knowledgeable colleagues. Good argumentation, which I in a job situation appreciate more than a context of a portfolio - since everybody joining today is or will be qualified for a job as a conservator, I presume that their interest for the subject lies in what is significant or what differs.

Portfolios can be used for an ice-breaker at the job interview. They can be used to demonstrate the work experience with different materials and methods. They can show the variety of conservation projects that you've been involved in. They can show the additional skills of presenting written materials and photographs in an appealing way, which is of great value when discussing presenting oneself in a professional context. But I believe that portfolios can have several unintended or even misleading factors also. Looking into the portfolios you cannot see who influenced or decided the final resolution of the conservation. Often conservators have to collaborate with other professionals. So, was it the conservator? The curator? Was it the customer or an architect? Who decided the level and the appearance of the final result and presented the case? How many hours have been spent on the conservation? Was there a deadline? Was it a small or large budget? And another factor is that the demands for work experience before or during attempting the conservation education differ a lot between the countries. Some might have two years of experience before even entering the education. Others might complete the education with spare experience, and therefore nothing to put into the portfolio. For me, it is the context that decides which kind of conservator I look for at a job interview. What matters for me is decided by the complexity of the project or the special function wanted. It is the combination of the education skills and experience, but also combined with the personality, such as open-mindedness, curiosity, ability, especially ability for collaboration which determines the choice.

But let's get back to the title of the session: Presenting oneself in a professional context. In a way, this is exactly what I'm doing now. But now I'll just turn the subject around, and look at what's forming issues, the employer angle, for a minute. My angle. So I'm putting myself in your position now, presenting myself to you as a potential employer, trying to have an attractive place for you to work. There is not a correct way of presenting oneself in a professional context. I regarded as my duty as an institution to collect versatility in the combination of my staff, and there to employ experienced conservators as well as secure employment for young, newly educated and non-experienced conservators. They can contribute with curiosity, innovation and another dynamic to the group, and can help to develop the institution through new ideas, which is very important. Your generation has been raised and educated to perform in the pursuit of a professional career - most of you are extremely picky and ambitious about which institution you want to be able to write on your CV, and which kind of work that attracts you. I'm now looking out at you, and out on the future of the conservation world, and you're sitting in this room here with me. You should know, that the institutions work very hard to

be able to attract conservators and professionals so we can develop and meet external demands for our *raison d'être*. My advice to you all is to be authentic, with or without a portfolio. And remember, conservation is a very good education and understanding of processes and a flair for collaboration with other professionals, which could open more doors to related professions for all of you. So think big. That's my advice.

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard:** Thank you Rikke. The next speaker will be Jørgen Wadum. Jørgen received his education as a paintings conservator, with a Masters from the School of Conservation in Denmark and a PhD from the University of Amsterdam. At present he is Director of Conservation at the National Gallery of Denmark, Director of CATS (Centre for Art Technological Studies and Conservation) and a professor of Conservation & Restoration at the University of Amsterdam. Jørgen previously worked for 15 years as chief conservator at the Mauritshuis in The Hague. Here you go Jørgen

**Jørgen Wadum:**

Thank you. Now all expectations are set. I am going to try to cover all the subjects that Amber and Rikke have touched upon as well, of course.

I am showing you here a painting by Degas and the x-radiograph of it. As you can see on the x-radiograph at the very far left, there is a figure that has been obscured in the final painting. That could have been one of you. You should want to come out and be involved, be within the scene, be performing together with the other dancers and show off that you are able to engage in the conservation community as full members of staff in the various institutions that are indeed, as Rikke says, waiting for you to come along, be innovative, have influence, be creating networks.

I think, having employed numerous people – interns, young staff, more experienced staff – that the majority of the CVs I see are very good indeed. You produce very good CVs in general. CVs that present you with the education, the additional training, all the issues that are very close to you as individual beings. The training of conservators has also changed over time. 20 years ago, 40 years ago, there was a different attitude: you had a different way of presenting yourself when you went out for a job interview. Training has something to do with the development of the profession as well. We are training students in higher degrees now to be real professionals - also in their academic work, presenting abstracts, presenting papers - full papers - going to conferences, to be somebody who has something to offer. So, long lists of seminars, conferences that you have attended, as also Amber noted, is also something that shows off when you present yourself. We have been training conservators to become more intellectual beings than hands-on beings sometimes. That is exactly the

little change I want to make in my small presentation here, to engage in our discussion, because when you have listed all the things you can list in your CV, indeed the portfolio is something that I would value as a very important thing. This is slightly different from what we have heard in some situations here, because the portfolio can of course be out there, all over the place within the social media, but I must honestly admit, I am not going out there to look for you. I look for you when you apply for the position I put up there. You send in your material, but if the material I get in - these very brilliant CVs that you send me - do not include images of what you have been doing, that shows that you are actually (and I am simply borrowing some images here; that is why there is no text you can read, because I didn't want to include this) shows what you have been working with, before treatment, after treatment, how complex the treatments were, let us see your own hands being involved, that you can really work with these objects. That it is not just a list of your qualifications - but instead show that you are a hands-on person in the middle of all these intellectual exercises that you also have to do and be part of when you work in the real world. So go in and put a lot of attention into presenting yourself this way.

We did it for the Getty panel paintings project. Where we have engaged a lot of young, potential, hands-on conservators, you could say that should go in and work with complex structures like panel paintings that deform, that have to be re-glued, that have to be re-joined, that have to be issued with cradles or floating cradles or nothing on the reverse side, to make them function and be part of the museum collection again. This selection of these young people, young trainees in panel painting conservation, showed that if you have not got a good grip on the machinery, the tools can prove that you are managing a band-saw for instance. How can you be expected to fill with a CV of all the conferences that you have attended, that you really can go in and work in this discipline where we want you to be? It's part of showing off for job applications, but also to be ready to show "I am at this point in my professional career, I could learn more, based on what I have here." I think it is really good to use images to a larger degree than I see in many of the CVs I have come across so far. Send on these E-portfolios with your application. It has happened a few times, only recently, but it is certainly not something that we very often see in European applications, as far as I can judge so far. Talk about your treatment projects, and although it is difficult to understand how much did you understand a particular treatment, but then tell it, tell who was your supervisor, how the work was planned, just short information that really sets you in the limelight as this practising conservator, because those are the ones that we want to have out there, at the institutions.

We also want you to write articles, to make papers, to make posters, whether it is for IIC or ICOM-CC (that also has a call for posters right now). Do all this, and be very careful then, that you really show what your ability is from documentation, because documentation in the profession is important, 'before and after' photography must look like 'before' and 'after' and not like two different settings

with different lights and different shadows and I don't know what, because that just gives away that you are not thinking ahead, that you are not planning to use what you are working with as part of your portfolio. So, I would say, portfolio: yes. Be very careful that you plan them well ahead, because we are looking very critically at them. We are looking at all of the things that are not in focus in the image that we see, the edges, is there something there to give it away, that you have not completely mastered this situation that you are trying to convince us that you do master. So, lining up the various issues that you can do, but also give away, with your letters of recommendation. Be sure to include all these aspects with a set of images that can show the variety of the projects that you can engage in, that you have your skills in a certain direction. We will ask for it anyhow when you come in for an interview. Some of you may not come to an interview. That does not mean, however, that your application was not good. Do remember that situations like the one we had last month, where we had an open vacancy, we got 40 applications, and we only take in three or four for interviews. That does not mean that the rest were not good, they were very good. There was just a fraction of them that were not good. So it is all based on what is the need of the institution. Don't feel horrible or in despair if you are not called in ... I'm sorry but we cannot write to all of you that "it was a good application but unfortunately for this and that reason ...". Do believe in yourself and move on to the next opportunity. That is the best way that you can do.

I think that is my short contribution to this. Thank you.

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard:**

Thank you Jørgen. The next speaker is Sarah Staniforth. Sarah has recently been Museums and Collections Director at the National Trust. She was Historic Properties Director from 2005-2010 and Head Conservator from 2002-2004. She is also a director of National Trust Enterprises and Historic House Hotels. In 1985, she had joined the National Trust as Adviser on Paintings Conservation and Environmental Control. She studied chemistry at Oxford University, and paintings conservation at the Courtauld Institute of Art, and worked in the scientific department of the National Gallery from 1980-1985. In 2013 she was elected President of IIC and has just completed a book on preventive conservation for the Getty Conservation Institute's Readings in Conservation series, Historical Perspectives on Preventive Conservation. There you go, Sarah.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

Thank you. Good morning everyone. It's really nice going fourth, because a lot of what I would say has already been said. And I can now carry on very easily with the foundations laid. In particular Rikke's last words, about thinking broadly about career options, is what I want to focus on. I want not

to talk about your first jobs, because I think that has already been very well covered. But I want you to be thinking more about maybe in 20 years' time, and where you want to be in 20 years' time. Why Rikke's closing words are so relevant to what I want to say, is this business about thinking, broadly, about your career options. You've heard that as well as being Head Conservator at the National Trust I'm the Museums and Collections Director, which is a broader role. It's to do with not only the conservation of the collections and the interiors of the 200+ historic houses of the National Trust, looks after in Englewellsh, Northern Ireland, but it's also about curatorship and it's also about the visitor experience. And my job as a director of the National Trust's Enterprises and Historic House Hotels is about the commercial activities of the National Trust. The very necessary income that we need as a charity is in order to be able to look after the houses and the collections, and indeed the land that surrounds them, because we look after gardens, parks, woodland, agricultural land as well. So, I don't suppose that when I was at the Courtauld in the 1970s I imagined that my role would be quite as broad as it has ended up being, but I'm very glad that I have ended up being where I am, because it demonstrates that those of you with a conservation qualification can think quite broadly about options in the museum and heritage world, and you don't need to feel that your options are limited to the conservation studio or laboratory, and that is what I really want to focus on in my talk. How you can position yourself to give yourself as many options as possible in your future career? Because, as Jørgen has just said, when we advertise jobs for conservators, the competition is very great, and, of course, in the UK the competition is from candidates from all across Europe. We're not just looking at candidates from within the UK now, and I think it's the same in all European countries that it's a very international field now.

The decisions we make about who to interview and who gets the jobs are quite marginal, because to put it blankly you all have very good portfolios, and with the advice that you've heard this morning, I'm sure that you will emerge from courses with presenting yourself very well, and it's very difficult for us as employers to look for those differences between you, and that's exactly why Jørgen says, that you should not at all be discouraged about not getting an interview. However, there are things that you can do, that certainly, when I look at an application, will make the difference. The first of those is pro-activity. There are a number of people, I'm not sure there are any one in this room, but there may be, who have contacted me, when they have been at school, so before they even get to university, even I will get enquiries from students, or in fact school children, saying: "I'm interested in a career in museums or heritage. I'd like to work for the National Trust. What should I do?" And those sorts of people, the number of them that then will remerge after 5 years, or even 10 years, I hopefully remember them, because that sort of enthusiasm at a young age really demonstrates a passion for the career that we want to pursue. Pro-activity would be my first word.

I also want to talk about volunteering, because it is a controversial subject to me. We may want to discuss that, because it's a difficult issue, particularly when students have had to finance their way through courses to then take an unpaid internship or voluntary work. But, at the moment with the economy as it is, we at the National Trust, are a largely volunteer-run organisation. We have 5,000 staff. At the beginning of this week we had a press release, because we have just gone through the 70,000 volunteer barrier. 5,000 paid staff. 70,000 volunteers. We couldn't open those houses. All of the guides in our houses are volunteers. In the UK, and I know in the USA Amber has mentioned it, volunteering is a very recognised activity. It's a way of giving back to communities, as Amber has referred to. In return for volunteering, in the National Trust, we provide training, so we have internships, National Trust internships, which are 3 months or six months or a year, and the return for that is the training that we offer. It is very noticeable how many of the successful candidates for our roles in all disciplines (and not just the conservation ones, but in 'visitor experience' and marketing) are where people have done volunteer work, because it enabled them to understand the focus of our organisation. But I know it's controversial, because it can make our work exclusive, because it limits volunteering to people who can afford to volunteer. However it's a very good way of getting experience.

Having got that first job, there are opportunities for positioning yourself within the organisation, to really put yourself in the best position for making those next steps, whether it's within conservation, or the wider museums or heritage field. And the first of those is accreditation. Unfortunately I wasn't able to be here yesterday, I'm not sure if you talked about accreditation yesterday. But in the UK we have PACR, the Professional Accreditation for Conservator Restorers, and that is run by Icon, our UK Institute for Conservation, which at one time was the UK version of the IIC, and is now independent. And accreditation is a benchmark of professional practice in the UK. So a lot of conservators, whether they are working freelance or for organisations, are working towards accreditation, and you might want to think of that as a goal to have in mind.

And then there are the other forms of professional development that can be pursued. Amber mentioned mentoring, both being mentored, but also offering mentoring. Attending conferences, writing papers, and things when you're more advanced in your career, such as to commit to other organisations and sabbaticals. I was lucky enough, when I was working on the preventive conservation book for the Getty Conservation Institute, to be given a 3-month sabbatical from my employer to be able to go and work there. And that experience in another organisation is incredibly valuable because every organisation does things differently, and you can learn from that. And that's why at any stage of your career, any work experience you can get in different organisations really looks good on your CVs. And so I don't need to say about the characteristics that I would look for beyond conservation skills, because Amber has said almost exactly the same list as I could have: those

of good communication skills, enthusiasm, being public-facing – so important, now a days, because certainly in National Trust properties our visitors are at interested in the practice of conservation as its product. So all of our conservation projects are now done in front of visitors rather than in studios. I can't emphasise how important it is as a part of our visitor experience.

Finally something about the preparedness of people for work; in the UK, the Museums Association has done some work to bring together employers and training courses, and this is not limited to conservation training courses, but includes our museum studies courses in the UK, because there is a bit of a miss-match, particularly between museum studies courses and what employers want, to really prepare students for the workplace. So we have been working, and I think in the conservation field it's better, because in the museums field people like us are so engaged with the conservation courses that I think it's less of an issue for conservators, but certainly for the curators and the learning staff during emerging museum studies. There can be a bit of a gap between what's taught on training courses, and what you actually need for starting work. That's where work experience and internships can really help, to fill that gap. So I will stop talking now, and I think we have one more speaker. Thank you.

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard:**

Thank you Sarah. The last speaker of this session is Carrie Roberts. Caroline, or Carrie, Roberts graduated from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Programme in Art Conservation. Carrie recently completed a one-year Graduate Internship in Antiquities Conservation at the J. Paul Getty Museum, and is now working as a Mellon Fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Carrie served for two and a half years as a co-officer of Professional Education and Training for the Emerging Conservation Professionals Network at AIC. She is now part of the Education and Training Committee of AIC, serving as a liaison to the AIC Wiki project.

Carrie will be assisted by Amber, since she has a power point presentation. Are you with us Carrie?

**Caroline Roberts:**

Thank you and I so appreciate the opportunity to talk about my experience as a recent conservation graduate. The theme of my talk this morning is engagement, which for me signifies networking, building friendships and serving professional organizations. I will be talking about how this has helped me navigate the transition from conservation student to professional. Professional engagement I have found not only benefits the field, but it benefits you too in unexpected ways.

My conservation training experience has been, as I am sure it has been for many of you, quite a journey. Mine started about three years ago while I have in my final year at the Winterthur /

University of Delaware Programme in Art Conservation. That year in fact I had the chance to present a poster at the 2010 IIC conference in Istanbul. After submitting my study at the IIC first ever student poster session, as Amber mentioned earlier, and after learning my poster had been accepted, I applied for and received travel funding from my University to attend the conference. I had no idea how much the trip to Istanbul would in fact shape my subsequent career path. It was first of all such a privilege to be able to visit Istanbul. I distinctly remember how it felt in Hagia Sofia and how this transformed my experience of being at the conference. I feel, as a student, we are all so busy and sometimes overwhelmed by what we are doing that we can easily forget what we are working towards, and when I was in Istanbul looking down into this space I felt completely re-energized and reminded why I had chosen the field of conservation, and I felt completely ready to meet new people at this conference. Now anyone will tell you, and many already have today, that one of the most important things you can do for yourself as an emerging professional is to attend conferences. Once you are there though, you have to be proactive. This is something that the director of my graduate programme, Debbie Hess Norris, will often say. Sure it is great to reconnect with friends and people you know at these conferences, but it is always good to make goals for yourself, to make introductions to new connections. For example, the two ladies in the centre of this photo, they have proven to be great allies in the profession, and I will talk about an example of this later in my talk.

As I mentioned before, the main goal of my attending IIC Istanbul was to present a poster, and this provided a great starting point for conversations with other conference attendees and helped me practice talking about what was a highly technical project to a number of people, and important skill to have, as we just discussed.

Now the highlight of the conference came on the last day, the highlight for me at least, when Amber presented me with the first Annual Student Poster Award on behalf of IIC. Now for someone who had never attended a professional conservation conference before or travelled to the Middle East in order to do so, this was a really encouraging event. My research was suddenly out there for the first time and visible to many, and I was instantly connected to a global community of conservators.

Istanbul was transformational for me in so many ways. It reinforced my enthusiasm for the work I do and introduced me to people who are already making an impact, and this includes Amber who had been serving as an Officer, for both AIC and IIC for some time when I met her. Now waiting at the Istanbul airport for a flight home, I asked Amber how I could become involved and back in the States, while completing my third year of graduate school, I joined Amber as co-officer for the Emerging Conservation Professionals Network at the American Institute for Conservation or AIC. ECPN is the professional network of conservators who are just at the start of their careers. You may have heard of it already. The network is run by a group of students and conservators, recent graduates mostly, who

develop resources and activities, conduct research, promote professional advancements, all in support of conservators from the three programs, pre-grad schools, who recent graduate level. I joined Amber as a co-officer, professional educational training, a position charged with strengthening ties between AIC and the North American Training Programmes. Amber and I work together on a number of initiatives and in the process I learned how to write resumés, communicate effectively between different groups of people, and to develop programming for the ECPN membership. Here I have included screen shots of a couple of the initiatives Amber and I worked on as ECPN officers. The student on the left is in an on-going project developing an online platform for student research. Now here is a shot of the survey we created for the graduate training programmes in an effort to engage interest and to determine what kind of model we should follow to structure this around. This is part of a larger effort to create access to student research, which we all know often goes unpublished.

Another project we focused on was conservation outreach, and how emerging conservators are using online platforms, such as social media. We presented this research at the poster session of the 2012 AIC Annual Meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico. ECPN has been a presence at the AIC meetings for a number of years now, providing opportunities for emerging conservators, to come together and share ideas. One of the most popular ECPN programs is the portfolio session, which was first developed by Amber and is now in its third season. The portfolio session was organised to provide students and recent graduates a chance to share their portfolios with conference attendees, to get feedback and to network.

This past year I have worked with a new co-officer in expanding the session into a seminar that includes talks about portfolio building. One speaker who resonated especially well with our audience was my mentor Suzanne Davis, who talked about issues beyond the portfolio, including CVs, cover letters, and again how to present yourself to a potential employer. ECPN events are always faced on the feedback we get from emerging conservators, so that the projects we develop are in touch with the ethos and concerns of our members. Each year ECPN hosts a 'happy hour' at the AIC annual meeting, and like many of our other events, the happy hour is attended by conservators at all levels, which reflects one of two goals I have had with ECPN, to increase dialogue between emerging conservators and more established professionals and attended by the lovely conservators I first met at the IIC conference in Istanbul. This is a good example of how the connections you make can really make a lasting impact, long-term.

Professional services remain a common thread in my post-graduate conservation experience. Even as I bounced around the globe and the United States I eventually landed in Los Angeles, California. The nomadic lifestyle that we must take on post-graduate year can be difficult and at best I felt especially out of my element when I landed in Los Angeles, for an internship at the Getty. Luckily ECPN has

regional representatives, including one in Southern California. Already an officer, I thought, “why not get involved locally?” And I am very glad that I did. Here are members of the local ECPN branch in front of a sculpture, Playground, by Tony Smith. The so-called ECPN group documented research on this sculpture, which was installed in Beverly Gardens Park in Beverly Hills. Together we created a Wikipedia article on the sculpture as part of the international network of conservation of contemporary arts, the Tony Smith Public Art Project. Volunteering your time for an important cause can be a great way to connect with people and in this case, with young conservators in the L.A. area. I definitely encourage... as well as their local fields, and if there isn't one, perhaps contact conservators in your area and start one. It would be a great way to meet new people that want to connect with other professionals.

Now, reflecting back on the last year, I realise now how important that trip to Istanbul was. It inspired me to get involved and introduced me to mentors and colleagues who made important allies as I navigated my way through the end of graduate school and into my first couple of years as a conservator. And in another full circle, I will be working with one of these colleagues, Anna Serotta, a fellow IIC poster presenter from Istanbul, starting in this month at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I have also continued to serve, having recently taken a liaison position at AIC Educational Training Committee.

How do we engage? My recommendations are these: first, go to conferences, don't just attend, participate, submit some of your research as a poster or paper, and not just in the student session, introduce yourself to new people and offer people your business card, cultivate friendships, follow up with the people you really connect with, check in, express interest in what these people are doing, don't be shy to make inquiries to possible opportunities for further training or work, serve your profession, become a member of your national or regional conservation organisation, have ideas or just want to help out; you can approach officers about joining a committee or just share your ideas with them, they matter. Participate regionally, locally, get to know your local conservation guild and propose meetings with other emerging conservators in the group. Finally, encourage others to do the same. The more we engage with and support each other, the better we will be to serve and represent our profession to the world.

I would like to thank the International Institute of Conservation of Artistic and Historic Works for inviting me to speak today... Thank you.

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard:**

Thank you, thank you Carrie, thanks to all the speakers. The session is now open to questions and any comments the audience may have. If you have a question, raise your hand and we will bring you a microphone. Today I do ask you to stand up before you ask your question and say your name and where you are from.

Participants watching this session over the web are also welcome to ask questions or comment via the web-stream or Twitter. We remind the participants using Twitter to post questions by using the hash tag, which can be viewed on the IIC Facebook page.

**Meaghan Monaghan:**

Hi, I am Meaghan Monaghan. I am originally from Canada and I just completed a Kress scholarship here at the National Gallery of Denmark (SMK). My question is related to the volunteer or unpaid internship issue, which I just think is a good discussion to have. I am going to approach it from a slightly different angle, that I am not sure that I have heard discussed at other conferences. What I am wondering, from maybe other students who have got funding or from employers who know a bit about getting funding, is how can we as emerging conservators help to get this funding for ourselves so that we are aren't working unpaid? How can we help in this process, because we know employers are really busy and they are already trying to get funding for so many different things within their departments? I just wonder if you can discuss some ideas about how we can be an active participant in this.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

Shall I? I think there is a question about the length of time and I think, in the good old days, when the National Trust had a bit more money, than we have now, we have had for three years, what we call "assistant conservator positions" and "assistant curators" and "assistant archaeologist positions," which were in fact paid internships. I think when the economy took a nose-dive after 2008, it became more problematic and we now have these shorter opportunities recognising that people can't afford to work unpaid for a long period, but clearly that isn't as good an option as a longer term. We have managed to secure some paid internships, but it is exactly as you say, that we are constantly, you know half my life is spent fundraising. I think you make a really constructive proposal about how can students help themselves to find funding.

**Amber Kerr:**

I will just interject a moment to say that one of the things you can do that I found to be very helpful for me is that is my student, or the intern, has taken a course for writing for fundraising, I mean to write grants. There are courses out there on how to apply for grants, how to help your employer find that money, because we are not only looking for money, but we are also doing that job, usually at understaffed facilities, so making that time just to write the grant, to help fund your fellowship or help fund the internship can be a challenge for the institution. So if you have a skills-set where you start to learn how to assist an institution in writing those grants, that is a very important skillset to have. Not only to help yourself get funding, of course, but to help an institution get funding, and that is something that you can carry forward wherever you go. So certainly taking part in any kind of workshop to learn how to write grants is a wonderful thing and it is a wonderful thing to see on a CV when I have someone coming in. Some students have approached us at the Smithsonian, we do have research grants that we can compete for and I'll have students write to me that they are interested in a particular type of research or conservation treatment.

Actually Meaghan approached us, it was wonderful to receive her application, and she was actively saying, "how can I help, I would like to apply, what kind of options are there, I would like to work with modern materials." It was wonderful to have someone pro-actively, first off, reach out to us. We have an area in modern materials, and we do need assistance and then to offer throughout this, "well what can I do to participate actively in helping to get the funding for that." We did apply for an internal grant. We were not awarded it this year, but we encourage Meaghan to please don't give up on us. We really need it, and having an active participant really puts her at the top of the pile if you will, because she is going to help us. I don't always have that time. I would love to go out and find that funding and apply for it. There opportunities out there, and being creative, one of the things about networking as students, if that has happened in the ECPN back in the States, is that they show where they got that funding. Who funded when they did have money given to them and they share that with other students who can then take that information to a potential employer and say "well I know someone who once got funding from the particular organization, perhaps we can apply for a grant from there." Again this pro-activeness is really, really important, sort of dialoguing with each other, because a lot of these grants can only be afforded once. I know that Meaghan received a Kress, well you can get a Kress grant, you only get it once. Usually this is the same way with Mellon as well. If you are a recipient of it, it is a one-time thing. You are a Kress fellow, you are a Mellon fellow, and then even if you go to another institution you don't have an opportunity to be a Kress fellow there. It's that one-time deal. But you can tell other people about it, so they have an opportunity. So, networking amongst yourselves and sharing that information is quite vital.

**Jørgen Wadum:**

I wanted to add that of course it is brilliant if you can do the fundraising yourself and help the institution to fundraise. On the other hand, institutions have their way of fundraising and there are companies that you want to approach, but I would rather like to see, like we have the Mellon, like we have the Kress in the United States, that we develop and we as institutions press on to develop comparable grants on the European continent, where we have so few opportunities. I am struggling, just like Sarah, in using half my life on fundraising, but also trying to persuade companies in Denmark to maybe fund 6 months, a year conservation training grant for someone coming in, because having an education and producing so many brilliant students in conservation, that we do all over Europe, we are terribly behind in getting grants and I think institutions have an obligation there to do more, in order to staff their cut-down conservation departments better by having these opportunities for the young generation. Having said this I think the young generation, you, many of you at least, you are so vital for any institution, Meaghan and others sitting here have been at our Gallery and I hope that you have the feeling that the ideas that you came with, the new approaches you came with, are being listened to, and they are vital for the old institution in which we sit us old people, that we get this new feedback, and have an impression that you really are at the top of where things are moving, not on all the aspects, but some of the aspects.

I think we should try to stimulate institutions, museums to establish more grant possibilities than we have done so far. We have, on our website, an opportunity for people to come and stay with us for 6 months to a year, but you have to find your own funding. We will as institutions support successful candidates very strongly with letters of recommendation that you can use when you go out and fundraise wherever you are in order to support you, because we can underline, that yes you came through to us in an interview situation, or however we do it, that you are the one that we would like to have. We can support you strongly in raising funding wherever you are.

**Rikke Bjarnhof:**

I think what I experienced is that when people are doing their education, then it is easier to find funding for an internship. Very often the people that come to our place are funded in some way by Erasmus or something like that. I see the challenge is really when you want to be a volunteer afterwards, when you have your education and want a grant to get some experience abroad somewhere else. That is a challenge, because there is not a job possibility - and then you want to volunteer, but you cannot do it for free, you have to have something to eat if you have to come in to work every day! I am not really sure how to do that, because at our institution we can help with seeking grants, giving recommendations and stuff like that, but not really much more. I think it is very

important that we do work on the possibilities of developing these kinds of grants, because I think that is going to be the world, more and more competition we are dealing with.

**Amber Kerr:**

I actually have a little story to tell. When I did my third year internship at the Smithsonian as a graduate student, of course we are open to the public as I mentioned, they come through and we give tours about conservation, and we work behind to glass walls. There was one individual, who came through on a tour, and the woman's husband had recently died, and he was a chemist, and she was looking to donate money to a cause that would reflect her husband's interest in both art and science. She was just an average person coming to a museum, going on a tour and she was so motivated by what she saw in the outreach programme at the Smithsonian that she actually donated 100 thousand dollars to the Smithsonian and dog-eared a portion of it to say, "I want to fund a year fellowship for someone in conservation," and I benefited from that. It was a tour that she had come on that I had given and she just walked through, and she didn't even know that I was the recipient or it. The next year I got to meet her and I gave her a personal tour of the projects that she basically funded to help in our institution, because she funded my being there, and that has promoted her to talk about it with other collectors that she knows. You never know in public outreach and how you present yourself and how you present your institution, you never know who is on that tour, who may be so motivated, again the enthusiasm, by what you are talking about and what you present to them, that it actually motivates them to want to do something about it. Sarah mentioned the importance of outreach and public communication, it is something that is going to become more and more vital as we look for more funding, so you become that active person every time you talk to someone in the public. It is not just the institutions, you just never know.

**Rikke Bjarnhof:**

I would like to add another story about money coming from an old lady who came to see a workshop in our museum and she donated some money for us and the whole department of conservation went to London to visit our collaboration partners at the British Museum. One hundred people went there for the money, to network and to get a general experience with colleagues there. It is important, but it would also be nice to get money for grants, and for you to travel also. It is very important.

**Anton Bachs:**

Hello my name is Anton, I am from Sweden and I have a notion that we are doing some work without getting paid. Is it possibly a problem that it will make the view of conservation work as charity work

instead of that of paid professional work? Is that a problem or is it not? I mean I am asking you, as professionals?

**Amber Kerr:**

In the arts themselves, anywhere, volunteering is a vital part, whether you are a museum with docents. I think in the arts we struggle, we are very dependent on volunteers on many different levels and those entry levels too. It is a difficult thing, I want to pay, I definitely want to pay someone, if they are going to be working on projects and they are going to working 9 to 5. I really want to find funding for that person, but I also take my time to invest in some pre-programme volunteers who want to come to my lab, only one or two days a week for a period of time. I don't make their hours really structured. I hope that they will show up on Tuesday, it would be great to have them, but at the same time I am providing them with an opportunity. They are beginning their CV, they are beginning to get into graduate school, and it takes a lot of time to manage those projects, to manage that person, to give them my knowledge. That is time for me too, so there is that relationship, so I don't know that entirely volunteerism will completely disappear, I don't think it can if we are going to survive, but there does reach that point of, if you are being asked to do a lot of projects and you are being a professional, that is where I find sort of the ethics I really want to find funding for that person and I have a hard time giving them that kind of responsibility. If they are volunteering in my lab they are not expected to do things. Everything I give to them is sort of, "if you would like to help out with this that would be wonderful." It will give you an opportunity to, I will be your support, but I recognize I can only ask so much from them. I think stop the abuses, if you will, in volunteering is really important, and to really be recognizing when is that critical turning point of this person should really be funded in some way. If I can't find funding I try to get them connected with local conservators who might be able to give them opportunities, beyond what I can, so that they earn money, to actually work on larger mural projects or other where. I am always thinking outside the box, "if I don't find the funding and I really want this person, maybe I can find them another position, two, three days a week that will help them in the same field and help a local conservator as well with a large project." Always keep networking and communicating with local conservators to find out what kind of projects are going on and if they need assistance, and then be able to get paid money for volunteers that are coming to me.

**Anton Bachs:**

And also a notion to the discussion about that the conservators: maybe we should go out to work more with companies, because maybe that would also be a good idea, because right now I feel lots of the focus, especially in Sweden, anyway at the Conservation School and maybe also here, is a focus

towards museums, but I guess as a conservator we should be able to work with private companies also, in construction companies and these kinds of things.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

At the National Trust, we now have a principle: when we are going out to tender on our building conservation projects, and actually within the National Trust our building conservation absolutely dwarfs collections conservation, and we will preferentially select contactors who have apprenticeship schemes. I think that for large artefact or wall-painting conservation projects we will also ask that there is a training element within that work. I think it is a really positive thing that employers use private contractors, to encourage training by private companies. It is a really good idea.

**Jørgen Wadum:**

I do understand the question, the first question you put, and to my best beliefs, we within the state institutions in Denmark are not allowed to have volunteers, because that might take positions that would otherwise be filled by somebody who should have a salary. It is certainly not acceptable within the state institutions in Denmark. However, I do hear also somewhere in the grapevine, that they are reconsidering, because 1) there are a lot of people out there that would like to do something and 2) we don't have the funding, so why not allow them to do something at least as a volunteer, but indeed it has been a struggle within the profession over the past 50 years to emancipate ourselves from being volunteers, that parents have the financial support to work in a museum, because that is crazy. We want of course to be regarded as any other building company with the same responsibilities. On the other hand, I also realize that the whole cultural sector is constantly put on the financial strain as one of the first ones when it goes downhill with the economy.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

I must emphasise that the volunteering that we do is absolutely across the board, it is not just conservators. We will have people gardening; particularly gardening volunteering is really popular. It is not limited to the cultural sector.

**Rikke Bjarnhof:**

We do have a lot of volunteers at the museum, not at the conservation department, because as Jørgen says, we are not allowed to have volunteers, but we do have volunteers for driving the mills and sailing our ships and gardening the houses at the open-air museums. We have a big tradition at our

museums for that. In a way I think, I would like to pay, as Amber says, I would like to pay people when they come to work for me, but I have all the interns who are really brilliant and really clever people. We have had a lot of training, and I can see when you are, especially you use a lot of time for supervising people, they are still on the education, but you do use a lot of time supervising, telling, mentoring, showing, discussing. You get a lot back also, because they know the new techniques, they have seen something somewhere, so it is both ways, qualifying the work you are doing. It is really giving, but it is difficult, you look a lot on the CV to see, have you been 'out there', as many of us said. It is really important that you have been out trying different things, so in a way it would be nice to have volunteers, so people could get started somehow. It is still my feeling that you should, when you have your education, you should get paid. It is really a dilemma I think.

**Adam M Klupś:**

Hello, I am Adam Klupś. I have recently finished my Masters in Principles of Conservation at the University College London/ Institute of Archaeology. I also work for St. Albans Museums and I am member of the Executive Committee at the Pilsudski Institute in London. I have a few comments about portfolios, because I think that the two arguments that Amber and Rikke stated - one for and one against, to some extent – it's really interesting to compare the two stands that you have taken. I would like to tell you all how important it is to be flexible, be versatile. Various institutions will require you to present different things, and your various skills in your interviews. I recently applied for an internship at a large architectural conservation practice in the UK, and they specifically required me to bring a portfolio with me. I have not had one before, but it was really useful to put it together and now it is great to have it for my own records. Obviously if they ask you to put together a portfolio, you have to do it if you are interested in the job, you just have to do it, and you will, but obviously if you are invited to an interview and they do not ask you for a portfolio, don't bring one with you, because if they don't want it, they don't want it. Think about it and always look at what the job description says. Try to address every bullet point. Even if you don't have experience in a certain sphere, say "ok, well I don't know anything about it" or "it rings a bell, I don't have the skill, but I am willing to learn". I think that is very important. Overall I think, again about portfolios, I think it is very useful to have one, like I said, even for your own records, so you can just look back and remind yourself what you have done four, five years ago. I just wanted to add to this conversation really... as you can tell - I've got a portfolio!

**Jørgen Wadum:**

I think that was really very well said. I would also like to emphasize that training in being called to an interview could be something that some of you might be able to benefit from. It is a different matter,

you have sweaty hands, there are five or six people looking at you and you have only got 20 minutes to present everything you know. That is a hard thing and you need to train for that. You can only train by going to more interviews, but maybe you can also set up something to train yourself together with your colleagues. Try to sit in front of a colleague and tell that person why you are the best one for that imaginary job that you want to apply for. Really get to know, how do you sell yourself without overselling, but really do it well.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

Just picking up on Adam's point, getting to the interview is also really difficult, because of the number of applicants and your point that I absolutely love, in the job description it will have what we will call the key result areas, which are the bullet points, it will also have a section on knowledge, skills, and experience. It is really important to systematically match yourself to both the key result areas and the knowledge and experience, because in the way that a selection process is done is there will be criteria based on those, and it will be scored, about whether the candidate meets the criteria, exceeds the criteria, or doesn't meet the criteria. We will frequently find that a lot of candidates who meet and exceed all the criteria. If you don't match yourself to the criteria you will not score on that, so that is really important in the application process.

**Amber Kerr:**

I can even add to that, that when I applied to my full-time position at the Smithsonian, it wasn't a given that I would get this position even though I had been a fellow there for two years and an intern for a year. I had to compete, and I had to compete through a website application process, where I had to provide my CV, I had to say whether I had portfolio, I had to answer questions about certain skills I had. This first stage of my application review was done by human resources. They are not conservators. They are given, these are the questions your answers, they want to know your skillset, so if you are really going for those larger positions, chances are that a conservator is reading that application you put in, are actually pretty low. You are probably being screened out by a human resources department, who is looking to check off these little boxes and they are looking methodically through hundreds of applications, and just going "nope, nope, yep, nope, yep, nope," and it sounds cruel but it is reality, and so really addressing those points is very important, because you need to say that "yes you have done that", "yes you have got that skillset". They will score you and then those applicants end up on the desk of the person who is in the conservation-curatorial staff, who then previews them and starts to narrow it down further, but getting through that first gate can be really difficult.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

Just to build on to that, in the written application and in the interview, evidence is very important. You can't just say, "Yes, I have great communication skills," you need to say, "I have great communication skills and my evidence for that was that I was invited to present at the Student Conference in Istanbul or wherever."

**Rikke Bjarnhof:**

I would like to add to that, saying that a portfolio is not that important is perhaps because when you have 20 or 30 minutes for the interview then it is very important what you prioritize your time there and I have never been presented to an e-portfolio before, so if you have this portfolio in front of you and you have to look through that for 20 minutes, you cannot get that deep into it. It's something, "oh yeah, it looks nice," so in that way it does not value that much for me when you have the 20 minutes, but it might be different if I got it in my hands. If you were invited to the interview, and you would like to send your portfolio in advance, then I can look into it, then perhaps a portfolio has a bigger value, but if you present it at the interview, you don't have the time or the concentration to look into the portfolio. There might be a different issue there for when you get the portfolio.

**Amber Kerr:**

As an interviewer, e-portfolio has really allowed me to use that 20 minute time much more effectively, because I could look at that portfolio, scan through the projects, and I would specifically say if they are applying for modern say paintings materials. I would say to them, "Talk about that project with de Kooning, what did you do there, I noticed that you use this treatment, why did you choose that," and I can then say "who assisted you with that?." It can be a much more pointed interview, which gives me a lot more information, and the frustration I had before with the physical portfolios, was I never had the time to really look through them, as you mentioned. The idea of these e-portfolios and what they can do is of great potential and I think it will be interesting to see. I remember, I sound like I am in the stone ages and I only graduated in 2008, but when I first interviewed for graduate school the first year, and I didn't get in, the first year that I applied, I gave a presentation with slides, the next year, and I was like one of, and there were 24 of us that presented, and there were two who gave power point presentations, the next year it was the reverse. In just one year it had gone completely digital and this was in the graduate application process at Winterthur, and I was one of the ones giving by the way a power point the next year. I had been told to give a slide presentation the previous year. It is interesting to see where the digital world is taking us. Where

maybe it isn't a big thing in Europe at the moment, e-portfolios, because you are working with so many different countries and you can work bilingually in them. It could be quite advantageous, moving into the future. You just never know what is going to take off, but it was interesting to find that I had heard about the e-portfolios only two years ago and now of the ten graduates of the winter programme all ten of them had e-portfolios when they graduated, and they are using those proactively in the field, which is going to give them an advantage, so just thinking about it.

**Student from Camberwell College of Art:**

Hi, I would really like to talk to the board, Camberwell College of Art, I have two questions: 1) in what ways are conservation departments at institutions involved in museum funding? Are they going to, I know that these large institutions have different gala events, are you waiting for the little old ladies to come by on a tour or are you going out and participating in these things? What ways can we be involved and if we are volunteering, is there a way that maybe the volunteers who are young and fresh and excited and the new students, can they go to these fundraising events and try to talk to people about conservation and why they are passionate about it and maybe get these little old ladies to participate more instead of stuggle past the studio? Then I also have a question about how the, when we address the bullet points on our CVs and cover letters, when we are applying for these jobs, if we don't meet it completely or only have a little experience, how is that viewed? If we say "I have assisted with something but I would like to learn more," does that mean that we meet it, or that we don't meet it or how does that get viewed in the application process?

**Amber Kerr:**

God bless the little old ladies. That is all I have to say. I don't think we were actively looking for this woman who walked down the aisle and came through this tour. This is why I say, "always be on your best foot forward." You just don't know. I don't go out there soliciting everyone on the tour, "there might be somebody on this tour who is going to give money." I don't think that way. I have a consistent way of presenting conservation and I think about how I get this audience to recognize the significance of this field, so that we can sustain this field. I figure if I heighten public outreach and awareness to conservation I am contributing to planting that seed in someone's head, so that they go back to their small town in America and go wherever they are, and they look at their little historic society and they go, "wow, that piece of artefact is really falling apart, do we know anyone who can care for it, you know I met a conservator, there are people out there trained to do that," and then they realize, "well, maybe we need somebody to look after our collection, and maybe they take that initiative and they move forward." That is my hope. I can only put my best foot forward every single time I engage. I encourage anyone who works with me to think that way, because you don't know. I

don't know that I proactively look at those tour groups and size up the old ladies in the group. It is a way of...

**Student from Camberwell College of Art:**

What about fundraising? Are the institutions in conservation involved in those types of things?

**Amber Kerr:**

We would love to be. Sometimes we are, sometimes they have their needs for that funding, and it is going someplace else or it's going into a certain pot. We want to be actively more involved with business development, as they call it, or development and opportunities, and that is a matter of the departments. I think that can differ from one museum to another. Certainly if we have a project, we will approach our director and say, "we would really like to have funding for this, can we start to use the business development people to assist in coming up with programme ideas or ways of fundraising or finding people who can assist us." You can work with those departments who are specifically designed to go out there and do fundraising and that is another skill you can go out there and learn through taking a workshop too, is how do you raise money, not only writing the grants but how can you be involved in programmes. Again, outside the realm of conservation the type of training you can give yourself, which is real important. The Smithsonian offers it to our interns. Is someone is an intern with me I say, "Go take that grant writing course, go take that fundraising course." Learn these skills, even if they don't involve cleaning a painting, go take them. I want to see you develop in that area.

**Sarah Staniforth:**

Just on the fundraising. We have a very systematic approach to do fundraising and we run legacy days for people who may want to leave bequeaths. We have various levels. We are a member organization. We have many members and then we try and develop those members into higher levels of giving. Next weekend I am going to a National Trust house with our major donors. This is a very, very tailored, behind the scenes, opportunity. Many of those donors will give specifically to conservation projects. We are running a huge conservation project at Knole just south of London and at the moment it is a 19 million pound project. We have already raised two million from donors and we have other grants, so we have most of the funding in place. We absolutely involve all our conservators, curators, archaeologists, building people, in fundraising activities, because the people who give money are not interested in meeting managers, they are not that interested in meeting our professional fundraisers. They want to meet the people on the ground, who do the work, and they are as delighted

to meet a young, new member of staff as a senior member of staff. It is very, very tailored to the interests of potential donors.

Your point about meeting selection criteria; the thing that is absolutely disastrous to do in an application is to pretend that you can do something that you can't, because that will really get found out under interview. The best approach, if you feel that for a criterion you need further development, is to do exactly what you say and say "I have some experience in this area, but I am very enthusiastic to learn more about it and the way I would like to do that is... etc." One more thing about applications is that I will expect to receive telephone calls or emails from unsuccessful applicants asking for feedback. Always ask for feedback! Because that will improve your chances the next time around, and you will see, don't be put off in an interview if the people who are interviewing you are scribbling away, because 1) we write a lot, in case anyone accuses us of not conducting a fair process, so we always record answers to questions, we ask all the candidates the same questions, so that it is a level playing field, and that record is not only there to ensure fairness, but it is also there, for when candidates ring us and say, "why did we fail, was there anything that I could have done better," and then we are in a position to give feedback. We will say, if we have caught someone out bluffing, we will say that, because that is really important, not to pretend things. No one is perfect, no one is going to be experienced in all areas that are required and you just have to say so.

**Michael Højlund Rasmussen:**

Yes, originally I had a comment to your question about using volunteers. My name is Michael Højlund Rasmussen. I am head of conservation at a regional conservation centre, Conservation Centre West in Jutland and I am also a member of the board of the Danish association of museums, a rather good place for a conservator to be actually, to be able to influence and promote conservation at the right place. What we are discussing right now is actually the use of volunteers, voluntary help in the museum business. It is a hot issue and it is a very political issue and to use the key problem is whether the use of volunteers is being put on to us as a political stress, or something that you are expected to do in order to keep down your expenses. I find that most annoying because we can always have these kinds of, the dilemma that Rikke defined; is it good to use a volunteer instead of a professional, then it comes to the end of it; it is a matter of resources. Are we allocating the right amount of resources to the cultural business, to the keeping of the cultural heritage? That is in the end a political question, especially in this country where most funding comes from state and city councils. We are feeling that there are certain amounts of pressure, political pressure, for taking on volunteers and because of that we are carrying out right now a survey, where we try to map how frequently the museums are using volunteers. In my opinion, we are not doing so much in the conservation part of the museum area. But still when it comes to building restoration, for instance, and where you have skilled craftsmen of

various kinds, you may see people, and I do see them coming around and doing something to the historic buildings, and I want to control that, at least in my area. I am trying to influence the situation towards my museums, in order to keep up these good standards of building restoration, whenever they try to use voluntary people, working on the buildings there. That is one of the places where I think it is difficult to approach it as a student or as a junior conservator, because it is highly political, but I think most of us that are working as employers are aware of that and are trying to have a critical approach to the whole issue.

**Velson Horie:**

The difference between, the approach to volunteering is considerable across different cultures. This is a very international group. I was reminded, I was in Spain in a Botanical department, I said, they were dealing with their collections, very large collections in the Madrid Museum, “do you use volunteers?” “Of course not! We wouldn’t let volunteers come here!” At Manchester Museum we were packed with volunteers. We use them all the time, we use people who had volunteered as students, as housewives who wanted to fill their time during the day, as retired people and they were really enjoying themselves, they were good botanists, they were amateur botanists, they were learning about botany, they were learning botany as students, they were using their botanical skills as retired people. There is a completely different attitude across different cultures. You cannot make these judgements, “is volunteering good,” because it is wonderful in some places, and it is not in others. You may go from your country in Denmark where volunteering isn’t normal. You go to England or the States where volunteering is the normal practice. I am a museum mentor. There is a heritage centre that is run by volunteers. They don’t have any trained staff; they don’t have any paid staff. It is done by volunteers. It is just a completely volunteer museum. I am there as a volunteer advisor, advising on professional practice. In many cases their practice is better than the professional practice of the people that think they are poorer than.

**Anton Bachs:**

Maybe the problem there is that if you have an education for five years, doing volunteering work, that it is a different thing, than if you are a housewife. The question is that if you have an education and you are a professional doing volunteering work, that is what I feel is the issue, it is not an issue if you are a normal person without any special education in heritage work doing volunteering work. It is as if a doctor was to come into the hospital doing voluntary work. That is my concern, for the people with the education in this field.

**Amber Kerr:**

I am seeing a really good topic for the next student conference. That is what I see, potential. This is where, I am serious though, when we look forward to the next conference for students we want the feedback. There are issues like this that get, that come to the surface, sort of percolate to the surface in this dialogue with professionals in this panel. We then take that and put it into the next one. Last time it was “how do we present ourselves, how do we get out there” and then here you have this conference going on, where you are voicing ideas. This may be, it sounds like something that is beyond the scope of what we are talking about. We are talking about how to help you present yourself professionally. This is a very interesting topic and we could dialogue about it specifically, but I think that it might be something that warrants a little more concentration, and pulling in some real people who may be directors of museums may be politicians. I don't know, at the next conference or something. Let's think about it, let's do this.

**Jørgen Wadum:**

I just want to make a short comment on the fundraising issue again, because you can train yourself to be good fundraisers, but I do think that what we have experienced now at museums, is that if you are there, if you are one of the few that come in as an intern and you see a problem with some of the issues that we are doing in conservation, you may be able to sell that as a new fundraising issue for me as a manager of the department and we will try together to raise funds, to see if we can prolong your stay. That has happened in a number of cases. We have been able to address this within the management of the museum and see that here is an issue that we haven't looked at before, but thanks to the fresh eyes something new develops and we can try to draw that to the attention of some of the funding needs. It is important to us.

As we are to understand, there are different cultures and in Denmark, indeed it is mainly the state that subsidizes extraordinary activity in the museums, also to extra conservation projects. However, we are increasing the using of private foundations. That means inviting them out to the museum and maybe my director and myself, we will have a little dinner or a lunch with them, but we will always go down in the department, and there we will meet some of you and there you are selling the thing. There you are making it possible for me to convince them, afterwards when we have the coffee, that this is potential, it's good to put your money here, because this museum can both engage young people, but also bring out projects to the limelight. ‘Fishbowl conservation’ is something that we practice a lot, ‘behind glass conservation’, because we can see that it not only enlightens the public, that are indeed very curious to know much more about our material culture than just being emotionally activated by a painting on the wall, but know what is behind, this third dimension you could say, what is in there

behind this that also makes in more tangible sometimes. Telling that story is essential to the public and if the public understand it, the politicians will too, because they do not know more than the general public about conservation and cultural heritage in general.

**Amber Kerr:**

As professionals I think we have an incredible stewardship actually in the way that we engage with the public. That is why I am such a big supporter of it, because we provide access to artefacts and items of cultural heritage that people don't often get to see, but it is something that they can connect with. They have had x-rays done on them, so when they see an x-ray of an object they are fascinated by its substructure. They know that things need to be cared for, so when they here that someone has to go to speciality cleaning in order to be able to care for something or look out for its environment, to preserve it, these are things they can connect with. Whereas maybe if they haven't had any kind of academic training in art history, they might be a little bit intimidated by an artefact, going well "I don't know what say about that painting, I'm not sure what to say about that sculpture," but when they hear that something has happened to it and it represents something, and they need help or something is going on, they can connect with that idea, because they do those things from day to day. We provide access to cultural heritage that is not done just in an academic sense, but actually on a very personal level and they know, things need to be cleaned, things need to be cared for and I think that is part of the wonderful thing we do in our job, and a very important thing you are going to do moving forward.

**Tine Louise Slotsgaard:**

With that comment we bring to an end this session. Thanks to you Carrie as well.

Before you go anywhere I would like to inform that there is a lunch in the cafeteria which is in the middle of the courtyard over here. There is a buffet for all conference participants. After lunch we will start session here again at 13.30, so you have about an hour and a half, but before you go I would just shortly like to give the floor to Velson Horie for just a small announcement.

**Velson Horie:**

I am Velson, or I am treasurer of IIC. I see that it is unusual giving away a free gift. A free volunteering opportunity; we are establishing a membership committee to find out if all organizations are changing rapidly, so we want to find out how membership can be altered in the future in IIC, how we can adapt differently. We have established a membership committee and as I say, we want a

student, an emerging conservator, to come into this committee and tell us what your generation thinks of membership in IIC. We have some of the old guard who are looking on as well, looking back at why they are members, but we don't actually want their input. We want to make sure they are in a minority, so we want to, but they are not physically dead yet, so we want one or two volunteers from the students of your generation to tell us how membership is viewed, how it can be incorporated in IIC, so over lunch, this afternoon, if you can come and contact me, I will still be here, unless... Ok. Come and contact me later. Thank you.