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Conservation: Hearings, Reports, Correspondence (1971-1973): Conference Proceeding 05

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To supplement its own resources, the Laboratory often enlists the cooperation of the faculty and laboratories of Oberlin College, and of other specialists. The staff of the Laboratory is encouraged to maintain its contacts with colleagues and professional organizations in this country and abroad and to cooperate in international research and educational projects.

➤ To improve and disseminate knowledge of the theory and practice of conservation in relation to works of art and objects of cultural interest.

INTERN PROGRAM

Although the Laboratory is not equipped either by staff or facilities to undertake elementary training in conservation, it can accept, from time to time, a qualified student on an intern basis. Such an intern becomes, in effect, a junior staff member, participating under supervision in many Laboratory activities. Appointments are for one year. Interns are expected to carry out an independent research project in which the cooperation of any member museum may be enlisted.

LECTURE-REPORTS AND SEMINARS

From time to time members of the Laboratory staff are called upon to make lecture-reports on objects examined or treated in the Laboratory. If such a report is requested at the time an object is sent to the Laboratory, special illustrative material can be prepared as the examination and treatment progress.

PUBLICATIONS

Besides articles in various professional publications, the Laboratory staff issues, twice annually, a *Newsletter* containing current technical observations and miscellaneous news. This publication is distributed to member museums and to those persons who have been associated with ICA.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Objects are accepted at the Laboratory only when accompanied by a *Request for Laboratory Examination*. This should state the title and subject as registered by the owner. The request should state the type of report needed and bear the signature of the depositing institution and of the owner. *Request for Laboratory Examination* forms are available at the Laboratory.

Institutional members may request examination and treatment of objects owned by them, or in their custody, or in which they have an interest.

As schedules permit, inspection, examination, and treatment may be made available to charitable or educational institutions which are not members of ICA, in a manner prescribed by the Trustees.

The Intermuseum Laboratory does not undertake any investigation or treatment without written authorization.

Invoices for services rendered by ICA are based on rates established by the Board of Trustees and are submitted on conclusion of authorized operations.

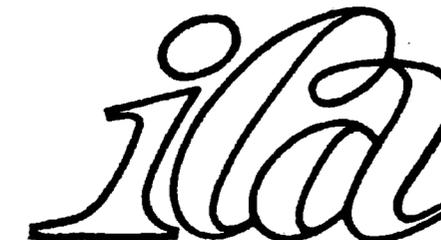
ICA describes the condition of objects in terms of the insecurity, the damage, or the unnecessary disfigurement that exists.

ICA does not answer questions regarding style, artistic merit, authorship, date, or provenance. These are questions for the style critic or art historian. However, evidence having a direct bearing on these questions may be derived from Laboratory examinations.

ICA does not appraise objects. This is the business of professionals familiar with the market.

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY | Buffalo, New York |
| ALLEN MEMORIAL ART MUSEUM | Oberlin, Ohio |
| THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART | Cleveland, Ohio |
| THE COLUMBUS GALLERY OF FINE ARTS | Columbus, Ohio |
| DAVENPORT MUNICIPAL ART GALLERY | Davenport, Iowa |
| THE DAYTON ART INSTITUTE | Dayton, Ohio |
| ELVEHJEM ART CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN | Madison, Wisconsin |
| GALLERIES OF CRANBROOK ACADEMY OF ART | Bloomfield Hills, Michigan |
| HERRON MUSEUM OF ART | Indianapolis, Indiana |
| THE MEMORIAL ART GALLERY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER | Rochester, New York |
| THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS | Minneapolis, Minnesota |
| MUNSON-WILLIAMS-PROCTOR INSTITUTE | Utica, New York |
| THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART | Toledo, Ohio |
| THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MUSEUM OF ART | Ann Arbor, Michigan |

INTERMUSEUM CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



ALLEN ART BUILDING, OBERLIN, OHIO 44074

INFORMATION

LEAFLET

THE INTERMUSEUM CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION is an alliance of museums established for the conservation and technical study of works of art. It was founded in 1952 and was registered as a non-profit corporation the following year. The corporation is governed by a Board of Trustees, consisting of one representative from each of the institutional members.

The general purposes of ICA accord with those of its institutional members, to each of whom ICA is an adjunct.

SPECIFIC AIMS of ICA are stated in its Articles of Incorporation:

- *To co-ordinate and assist in carrying out conservation programs of charitable and educational institutions [which own or have custody of works of art or other objects of cultural interest, and thereby] may become members, and to render conservation services for them.*

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in ICA is institutional and is open only to non-profit institutions. Qualified institutions wishing to further the purposes of ICA and to become members may make written application to the President of ICA and are admitted to membership by a vote of the Trustees. An initial membership fee to match the assessments paid by founding members is required.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Each member museum pays an annual subscription which varies according to the operating budget of the institution. The larger part of this subscription is credited to the member for services specifically authorized. Services in excess of credits are invoiced as they are completed. Unused credits are not carried over to the following fiscal year. Costs are reckoned on the basis of time, at rates defined by the Board of Trustees. Part of the subscription is used to support general services and to meet operating costs. Thus each member contributes equitably to the support of the Association.

Additional support comes from services rendered to non-member institutions. Such institutions pay no subscriptions, but the rate schedule is somewhat higher than that for members.

ICA has been assisted by grants from members and from the Lilly Endowment, the Kress Foundation, and the Ohio Arts Council, and by voluntary gifts from private individuals. These funds are used for research, educational activities, publications, and for the purchase of books and equipment.

ICA is exempt from Federal Income Tax. Donors to ICA may claim deductions in computing their taxable net income.

- *To maintain a laboratory and staff in order to carry out the stated purposes of the Association.*

INTERMUSEUM LABORATORY

The Intermuseum Laboratory is located in the Allen Art Building at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, 44074. Although the Laboratory is independent and not a part of Oberlin College, the College has generously cooperated with ICA in many ways and makes its many facilities and services available to the Association.

The Laboratory equipment for the technical study of objects includes stereoscopic microscopes for the examination of surfaces, an x-ray unit with a range from 6 - 110 KV, an infrared viewer and an ultraviolet light. An analytical desk is adapted for study of the components of objects, with a chemical microscope, a polarizing microscope, a comparison microscope, and accessories for the preparation and study of paint cross sections.

The larger of the two work rooms contains a vacuum hot table, spray equipment, and the tools and supplies for the treatment of large objects. A smaller room is fitted for the study and treatment of works of art on paper.

The library and the pigment collection are built around generous gifts from Dr. Edward W. Forbes, Director Emeritus of the Fogg Museum at Harvard University. The library numbers some 350 art technical books plus periodicals, pamphlets, and museum catalogs. The pigment collection includes 450 or more specimens from known sources covering the history of painting from earliest times. Micromounts of these pigments are available at the analytical desk for microscopic comparison with unknown pigments.

Adjoining the large room is a humidity controlled storage room for objects sent to the Laboratory. It is equipped with protective devices communicating with the College security department, with extensions to the city police and fire departments.

A resource of increasing importance is the growing collection of color slides, most of which are macrographs and micrographs of materials, structures, and defects photographed in the Laboratory. These are complemented by color slides and motion pictures of processes or stages of procedures in the treatment of objects.

Easily accessible to the Laboratory staff is the Oberlin College art library of 20,000 volumes and assistance from the College's faculty and laboratory facilities.

Certain equipment for the examination and treatment of objects is portable or duplicated, making possible an increased scope of operations during visits to member museums.

SERVICES OF ICA

The services of ICA are based on a long-range view of conservation and care.

The periodic gallery inspection of collections is the primary reference for administering the conservation program. Gallery observations of condition are recorded briefly on cards that are filed at each museum. These inspection records serve as a current inventory of the condition of the collection. The museum administration is advised by the records on general needs and on special care or treatment of specific objects.

Objects sent to the Laboratory are accompanied by a *Request for a Laboratory Report*. This may be a *Report on Condition*, a *Proposal for Treatment*, or a *Report on Technical Observations*.

Laboratory treatment is undertaken only after a copy of the *Proposal for Treatment*, with an estimate of costs, is returned to the Laboratory signed by the owner.

During treatment daily operations are recorded on a work sheet. When treatment is finished, a *Treatment Record* is transcribed and returned with the object to the owner.

The Laboratory is prepared to send one or more members of its staff to museums for other purposes than inspections. There is a range of minor treatment that may be carried out by visiting teams.

A particularly valuable service of ICA is the preliminary examination of objects considered for purchase. This service, which includes special photography and x-radiography, makes available technical evidence which may have a significant bearing on the decisions to be taken by purchase committees.

- *To investigate materials and equipment, and to conduct studies and tests in order to develop methods to protect, preserve, and maintain the integrity of, and improve the conditions of, works of art and objects of cultural interest.*

RESEARCH

Research is a normal aspect of all Laboratory activities. The significance of scattered and apparently unrelated data, after they have been assimilated into the growing corpus of art technical knowledge, is often greater than anticipated. The Trustees recognize, therefore, the Laboratory's obligation to make the best use of its unusual opportunities to observe, record, and classify evidence. The Laboratory's objective is to study:

- The materials and construction of objects
- The nature and behavior of materials
- The historical use of materials and techniques
- The condition of works of art and the effects of environment and former treatment on condition
- The monitoring and control of environment
- The aesthetics of restoration and conservation.