

## IIC AGM

8 February 2008

Information and election manifestos – see pages 6 and 7

## Pole position

Discover what it is like living and working as a conservator in Antarctica

## Testing times

The development of a professional accreditation scheme for conservators in Estonia

No.3, December 2007

# News in Conservation

The newspaper of the International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works



## Textile Conservation Centre to close in 2009



The Textile Conservation Centre's custom-designed building in Winchester

The UK's Textile Conservation Centre (TCC) will close in 2009, following a financial review by its parent institution. The TCC, which is run by the University of Southampton, has a Conservation Services department that carries out conservation and analytical services for museums and private clients. Despite this, the centre required annual subsidy from the university to make up its budget shortfall. According to a university spokeswoman, 'this cross subsidy from other areas of academic endeavour can no longer be justified.'

The TCC was founded by Dr Karen Finch in 1975 and was based until 1999 in Hampton Court Palace. In 1999, it moved to a specially designed building in the Winchester School of Art (WSA), having merged with the University of Southampton during the previous year. Following a restructuring of the WSA earlier this year, the TCC ceased to be part of the WSA. Efforts to find a source of external funding that could guarantee the TCC's long-term future have been unsuccessful.

A spokeswoman for the university said that they had investigated the possibility of transferring the TCC to another university, but that these institutions had been put off by the cost of providing appropriately equipped accommodation for the centre. The university has said that the TCC's existing buildings, which were built with the assistance of funding from grant-giving foundations, will be used for other academic purposes.

The TCC currently employs 12 people, including academic and research staff and conservators. In the year before the centre closes, it expects to take on over 30 students for taught and research-based postgraduate degrees. A high proportion of the TCC's students come from outside the UK; this is in part a reflection that there are few comparable training

institutions anywhere in the world. Staff from the TCC have been very active in conservation research, contributing frequently to IIC congresses and journals. Current areas of research include smart and techno fabrics, liturgical textiles, deliberately concealed garments, and early synthetic dyes. They have also worked on a number of high-profile conservation projects, including a sail from Nelson's ship *Victory*, suffragette banners, and a stage costume worn by the singer Freddie Mercury. In a letter to the university's Vice Chancellor, IIC President Jerry Podany said, 'This action is a severe blow to the conservation of the world's textile heritage in terms both of the supply of international professionals and internationally invaluable research output. The need for high-level expertise in preserving the world's textile heritage has never been greater, and the shortage of supply of properly educated conservators will begin to have its effect in the years to come.'

The move to close the centre has been condemned by several other conservation organisations, including Icon, ECCO and ENCoRE. Writing to the university on behalf of the Board of ENCoRE (the European Network for Conservation Restoration Education), René Larsen added, 'We fear that this sad development of simple short term economy thinking may reflect that UK universities can no longer support the essential needs of society like the protection of cultural heritage.' In an official statement, the university said, 'The University fully acknowledges the international excellence of the TCC and its significant achievements before and since becoming part of the University. However, postgraduate conservation education is a resource-intensive activity. The conservation sector has been discussing this for some months, as conservation programmes elsewhere face similar pressures as the TCC.'

## Rohm and Haas hosts first conservation 'webinar'

Rohm and Haas (ROH), the company that makes the Paraloid and Rhoplex conservation adhesives, recently announced two new initiatives aimed at conservators worldwide. The first of these – an 'e-center' – aims to make information about ROH's products more accessible to conservators, and to allow the company's scientists to exchange ideas with conservation professionals. The e-center contains technical information about the Paraloid adhesives and links to information about their use. Users of the site are invited to complete a questionnaire about what they want from a conservation adhesive, and what they think is the biggest challenge facing conservators today. 'We really want to understand the issues that are out there, and to see if there are ways in which we can help solve these problems,' said Renette Richard, Market Manager for Building and Construction Network at ROH. 'We will also have the chance for scientists to pose questions of other conservators, as well as posting answers from our scientists.'

Rohm and Haas also hosted their first conservation 'webinar' (a live, online conference) earlier this month. Among the participants were Jeff Wexler, a scientist responsible for the Paraloid product line and Peter Eastman, a former conservator who now works as a Senior Scientist in ROH's Microscopy Group. After a panel discussion about the company's involvement in the production of conservation materials, the audience was invited to e-mail in questions for the panel. These included concerns about the continued production of Paraloid B72, questions about the suitability of certain adhesives for stainless steel – and even where the 'B' in 'B72' comes from. About 220 people signed up to watch the first webinar when it was broadcast, but the organisers say that many more people have watched it online since. Future webinars are planned for spring 2008. To sign up for these, visit <http://coatings.rohmhaas.com>.

Find out more about the conservation webinars and the e-center in our interview on page 6.

A screenshot from the first online conservation 'webinar', which took place earlier this month.



## Editorial

It is with great concern that we report the proposed closure of the UK's Textile Conservation Centre in 2009. The TCC has been a focus of excellence in conservation research, training and practice for many years. The TCC trains conservators from all over the world, so the centre's closure will be a great loss for the conservation profession as a whole. Many TCC staff and students have also been active in IIC, including frequent contributions to our journals and congresses.

The future of conservation training is tackled in two other articles in this issue of *News in Conservation*. The first, about the withdrawal of Icon from ECCO, highlights an important debate about requirements for entry to our profession. These issues have become especially urgent given the threats of funding cuts and closure to a number of university training courses.

### The TCC's closure will be a great loss for the conservation profession as a whole

On a more heartening note, it is good to see how one country has approached the need to assure standards within the conservation profession. Following their country's independence in 1991, Estonian conservators were faced with the challenge of creating a coherent training and accreditation system. On page 3, Piia Harvonen describes the process – from the first discussions about professional standards to the successful graduation of the most recent candidates this month.

As you will see from the 'IIC News' section, we have four candidates standing for election to the IIC Council in 2008. Please take the time to read their manifestos, and use your vote at the Annual General Meeting next February.

As I sit in my chilly office in Cambridge, I find it difficult to imagine why anybody would choose to work for six months in one of the coldest places on earth. Yet that is just what several teams of intrepid conservators have chosen to do, through their involvement with a programme to conserve some of the huts and artefacts left by Antarctic explorers. You can read Julian Bickersteth's account of living and working in the Antarctic – and discover the ritual of the 'polar plunge' – on pages 4 and 5.

And finally, if you're wondering from our front page news story where the 'B' in 'B72' comes from ... I'm afraid it is nothing more exciting than the range that follows the 'A' range!

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Editor

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## Icon withdraws from ECCO

Icon, the UK's Institute of Conservation, last month announced its intention to withdraw from the membership of ECCO (the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations). The move followed disagreements about the education requirements for entry to the conservation profession, and about how open conservation members' organisations should be in their membership.

The ECCO membership consists of 18 European conservation associations, including bodies from France, Germany, Scandinavia and Slovakia. ECCO's main objectives are 'to promote a high level of training and to work toward legal recognition of professional status'; to this end, it has prepared 'Professional Guidelines' that include a code of ethics and a set of basic requirements for training in conservation. These guidelines recommend that a conservator-restorer should have a minimum of five years' study in conservation at a university level (the equivalent of a Masters degree). Full membership of ECCO would be restricted to conservators who fulfilled these educational requirements.

Speaking to *News in Conservation*, ECCO President Monica Martelli Castaldi said that the guidelines were intended to 'serve as a bench mark for professional status which is transferable and mutually recognisable', and that they would fit into the European Qualifications Framework (which links equivalent qualifications between different European countries, making it easier to work in another country). However, a majority of conservation training courses in the UK would not fulfil the ECCO guidelines, being either Bachelors degrees (3 years at undergraduate level) or stand-alone Masters degrees that do not require previous study in conservation. Icon argues that adopting these guidelines would exclude a majority of its members from being able to call themselves 'conservator-restorers'. Instead, they would prefer to see a system that recognised the value of internships or work practice in addition to purely

academic qualifications. Icon's PACR (Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers) scheme does not have minimum academic requirements, but seeks instead to assure professional 'capability' and an ongoing commitment to professional development. Icon has also recently introduced paid training internships in conservation as a way of broadening access to the profession, especially in areas (such as natural history, stained glass or books) where there is no formal academic training available in the UK.

Given these differences of opinion, the Board of Icon felt that there was no alternative but for Icon to cede from ECCO. In a letter to members, Icon Chair Simon Cane said, 'We are interested in, and have a commitment to, setting and maintaining standards ... but we believe that we should recognise that people work at different levels and that a healthy profession requires diversity not exclusivity.' He also pointed out that the size of Icon's membership (3000 members compared with 160 members in its sister body in France) reflected its willingness to embrace the entire conservation community and not just those who meet the ECCO educational standards. However, Monica Martelli Castaldi said that Icon would have to abide by the same rules as other organisations if it wished to belong to ECCO. 'ECCO has very specific membership criteria and as such is not an 'open' organisation ... many [other organisations] have been obliged to undertake major restructuring and expenses in order to become a member.'

Both sides are keen to seek a resolution if possible. Icon Chief Executive Alastair McCapra describes it as 'entirely conceivable' that Icon would rejoin ECCO at some point in the future, and said that Icon was still involved with other European projects. 'We do want to work with other organisations within Europe – we're not going to turn our backs on working in Europe.' ECCO similarly expresses a wish 'to find common ground with Icon' and hopes that the issue of membership would be resolved in the future.

## Restoration by stealth

Four 'cultural guerillas' were charged, and cleared, last month of breaking into Paris' eighteenth-century Panthéon when it emerged that they had been secretly restoring the building's antique clock. The restorers were members of a gang of 'urban explorers' called Untergunther, which undertakes clandestine restoration of urban heritage. They have previously restored medieval church crypts and organised secret nighttime plays in cultural monuments.

The Panthéon clock, a Wagner clock dating from 1850, had been disused since the 1960s. The Untergunther team – which included a professional clockmaker – broke into the building and set up a secret workshop underneath the Panthéon's dome. According to one of them, 'Opening a lock is the easiest thing for a clockmaker.' For a year, they worked to clean and repair the clock, unnoticed by the building's staff and security guards. They even managed to connect their 'workshop' to the mains electricity grid and set up a computer with a connection to the internet. Once their task had been completed, they revealed the results of their labours to the Panthéon's administrator so the clock could be wound and

started once more. However, Monum (the French Centre of National Monuments) decided to prosecute the Untergunther restorers for breaking a lock on one of the Panthéon's doors, even though they also acknowledged that the restoration of the clock had been carried out skilfully. However, the restorers were cleared of all charges – leaving them free to start work on another top-secret project...

### Date for your diary

Bookings for the IIC congress will open on 1 February 2008. Please make a note of the date, and check the congress section of the IIC website regularly for more information. The congress will take place in London on 15–19 December.



Katsuhiko Masuda

Congratulations to IIC member Katsuhiko Masuda, who has won the 2007 ICCROM Award in recognition of 'special merit in the field of conservation, protection and restoration of cultural heritage'. Professor Masuda worked at the Tokyo National Institute of Cultural Properties for 25 years until his retirement as Head of the Department of Restoration Techniques, Paper and Textile Section in 2000. He had a long association with ICCROM, notably in the introduction of courses on Japanese paper conservation techniques that were designed to share experiences between East and West. The award was received in his absence and a laudatio was delivered by Gabriela Krist, Vice-President of IIC and a former student and colleague of Professor Masuda. In her speech, Dr Krist commented that 'all those who know him personally and who once had the chance to work with him or to attend one of his courses will share my opinion that he is the ideal recipient of this prestigious honour'.



Kriste Sibul

Book and paper conservators sitting the professional examinations in October 2007

## Testing times

Piia Harvonen describes the development of a professional qualification system for conservators in Estonia that unites the existing Estonian system of professional standards with ideas taken from conservators' accreditation schemes in other countries.



The development of a professional qualifications system in Estonia was launched in 1998 by the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The ECCI instituted a working group on the Reform of Vocational Education and Training, as a result of which first Professional Standards were provided. The Estonian Qualification Authority's Professions Chamber (Kutsekoda) has been responsible for the development of professional qualifications from 2001.

There are Professional Standards for almost all areas of economic activity in Estonia. At present, there are confirmed requirements for 655 different professional levels. The standards are prepared by employers, specialists and trainers, and describe the skills and knowledge required to work at a particular professional level. Professional qualifications are awarded mainly by employers' and members' associations that have been authorised by the professional council of a specific field. There are currently 82 organisations that award professional qualifications, and they have issued more than 25 000 professional certificates.

### Development of Conservators' Professional Standards

The professional training of conservators in Estonia is less than 10 years old, so there are no single requirements for the conservator's profession yet. For that reason, restoration and conservation laboratories employ conservators-restorers with very different levels of education, manual skills and work experience. This situation created the need for a coherent

system for connecting the knowledge, skills and experience of different generations, and for setting measurable requirements necessary for the work of professionally educated conservator-restorers. An important reason for creating the accreditation system was the need to protect the clients using conservation services.

### The Professional Standards give the opportunity to plan for personal professional development and to set the foundation for lifelong learning

The Conservators' Professional Standards working group was established on 12 December 2003. Estonia was then on the way to EU accession and systems already approved by the European Union were taken into consideration when creating directions of activity and professional standards. When developing Professional Standards for conservation in Estonia, the PACR (Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers) scheme developed by the former United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC, now Icon)

Some of the successful candidates from the most recent batch of professional exams

and the professional guidelines I, II and III of the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organizations (ECCO) were taken into consideration.

On 23 November 2004, the Estonian Professional Council of Culture confirmed the Conservators' Professional Standards III, IV and V. Six months later, the same body awarded the Kanut Conservation Centre a licence allowing it to act as an awarding body. In the beginning of 2005 the professional committee, including representatives of the National Heritage Board, museums, archives, libraries, professional associations, national conservation centre and acting conservators, was established at Kanut, with the aim of organising the professional qualification awards process.

### The Conservators' Qualification system

The Conservators' Qualification awards system has many stages, thus helping to realise the principle of lifelong learning. It complies fully with the normal pace of working, primarily in one's institution but also more generally.

The Estonian system of Professional Standards includes five levels, which are assessed according to the following criteria: complexity, knowledge and skills, extent of independent work and responsibility. Anybody with relevant education or training and enough knowledge and professional experience can apply for a Professional Standard.

The lowest point of entry for conservators is level III and the highest is level V. At levels V and IV management skills are added, and the difficulty of work increases along with the responsibility. The education and work experience requirements also differ across the levels. For example, level III requires a minimum of 2 years' professional experience, whereas level V can be acquired by a conservator who has 12 years' professional experience and vocational higher education.

Application for the Conservators' Qualification is voluntary and requires a written submission and the payment of a fee. The process differs for first-time applicants and for repeated applicants or renewals. For initial applicants, the process includes three stages: monitoring at the workplace, a written test and presentation of a portfolio, and an interview. Repeated applicants must present a portfolio and undertake an interview and, if necessary, also workplace monitoring.

The aim of the workplace monitoring is to determine the professional suitability of an applicant by observing him or her at the workplace and evaluating the following skills: organisation of the workplace, object handling, and ability to work safely. During the written test, the theoretical knowledge of the conservator is compared against the demands of the Professional Standards. The aim of the professional interview and defence of a portfolio is to check the applicant's specific professional knowledge and skills.

Upon the successful completion of the necessary stages, the applicant is awarded a professional certificate. The professional certificate is valid for four years, after which conservators may defend the existing level or apply for a higher level.

### Summary note

In the last year, two professional exams have been conducted in Estonia – in November 2006 for paper conservators and in October 2007 for binding and paper conservators. Already, 14 conservators have acquired professional certificates, something which, considering the total number of conservators in Estonia, is quite an impressive figure (professional exams for textile and object conservators will be conducted next).

As a result of successful accreditations and publicity from the professional committee at Kanut, conservators have started to acknowledge the need to acquire the professional standard and qualification, understanding that the national professional certificate increases their competitiveness in the eyes of employers and clients and helps them to stand out in the labour market. Conservators are also coming to the conclusion that the Professional Standards help to differentiate between existing and lacking skills, giving the opportunity to plan for personal professional development and to set the foundation for lifelong learning.

### Author Biography

Following a Masters degree in Chemistry and Material Science, Piia Harvonen worked in the Kanut Conservation Centre in Tallinn as Head of the Department of Paintings and Polychrome Objects Conservation until November 2007. Since 2005 she has been the Secretary of the Conservators' Professional Committee, where her primary role is to assist the Committee's Chairman and to prepare the Committee's work documents.

Conservators receiving certificates at the awards ceremony on 16 November 2007



Kriste Sibul



Kriste Sibul

Five years ago, the Antarctic Heritage Trust of New Zealand embarked on an ambitious programme to conserve huts and artefacts belonging to some of the early explorers of the South Pole. The Technical Advisor to the programme, Julian Bickersteth, describes what life is like for the intrepid conservators living and working in the Antarctic.

# Taking the plunge



Julian Bickersteth

Digging out Scott's hut at Cape Evans after a blizzard



Kerem Stirling

One of the team braving the plunge into the icy polar waters



Julian Bickersteth

The author at Scott's hut at Cape Evans

March 2012 will mark one hundred years since Robert Falcon Scott and his four companions died in Antarctica on their return trip from the South Pole. Whilst much has been written about the race to the Pole between Scott and the Norwegian Amundsen, less well known are the surviving relics of Scott's expedition, particularly the hut at Cape Evans on Ross Island from where his sledge trip to the Pole departed. The hut still stands and more remarkably still contains some 8 000 artefacts. It has been described as the most evocative heritage site in the world by the New York-based World Monuments Fund and it certainly still feels (and smells) as though the expeditioners have only just left.

The hut is one of four managed by the Antarctic Heritage Trust of New Zealand (AHT), who since 2002 have been engaged on a major conservation programme of all the huts and some 15 000 artefacts still preserved in and around them. Sydney-based International Conservation Services (ICS) are the technical advisors for the artefact conservation programme, and have been assisting AHT over a number of years.

New Zealand has responsibility for the three Ross Island huts and that of the British Antarctic Expedition of Carsten Borchgrevink at Cape Adare under the terms of the International Antarctic Treaty, through New Zealand laying claim to this part of the continent. AHT is based in Christchurch in the South Island of New Zealand, from where New Zealand's Antarctic programme and also that of the USA is run. In the summer season, which stretches from October to February, there are almost daily flights from Christchurch to an airstrip that is created afresh each year – initially on the Ross Sea sea ice, and then as it progressively melts, on the Ross Sea ice shelf. From there, New Zealand services its station at Scott Base (where up to 60 scientists

and support staff spend the summer), whilst the USA services its much larger McMurdo Station (where up to 1 500 personnel spend the summer).

Within this well oiled process the artefact conservation programme has now been operating for two winter and three summer seasons. Prior to that a number of summer seasons were spent completely cataloguing and condition assessing the artefacts, as well as developing a conservation plan for each hut, to determine the approach taken, and an implementation plan to guide the detailed programme.

## Antarctic folklore is full of axe-wielding expeditioners who find the conditions and isolation too hard to bear

The first hut to be conserved has been Ernest Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds, due to the stability of the hut's structure and the relatively small number of artefacts (c. 3 500) compared to Scott's hut at Cape Evans. Shackleton had travelled south with Scott on his first expedition in 1902–4 and had been invalided back to New Zealand suffering from scurvy after the first winter. However, he was determined to return and managed to organise his own expedition in 1907–9 on board the SS Nimrod, setting up his base for 15 men at Cape Royds.

During the summer of 2005–6, artefacts were packed into plastic crates and dragged back to Scott Base over the sea ice on sledges, a three-hour journey undertaken at a low speed to ensure that vibration caused by ridges in the sea ice did

not result in further deterioration to the artefacts. Once at Scott Base, the artefacts were unpacked into containers used as storage units until they were ready to be brought into the purpose built laboratory for treatment.

The process of assessment, analysis and treatment is being reported in other IIC journals, but what of life for conservators undertaking the work?

Chosen through a rigorous process of interviews, referee checking and psychometric testing, the skills being looked for are diverse. Conservators need to be practically experienced in their speciality (paper, metals, objects or textiles), prepared to undertake repetitive work (there are many dozens of identical artefacts, such as cans of food, candles, and matches) and able to demonstrate the stamina to live in remote locations. Once through this stage, conservators are then assessed for how their personality will complement that of the other conservators and also the staff at Scott Base. There is no prescriptive schedule for what these personality traits should be, as it is driven by ensuring a mix of different personalities. Antarctic folklore is full of axe-wielding expeditioners who find the conditions and isolation too hard to bear. And finally, when all of these things are successfully hurdled, an exhaustive series of medical tests is required.

Conservators are chosen specifically for either the summer season or the winter season, each of which has a very different programme. The winter season runs from early February, as the summer season's activities are winding up with the last flights out in late February. It finishes in August at 'Winfly', a period of about a week when flights come in from New Zealand. At that time, the summer season conservators arrive and the handover takes place. The summer conservators continue to work at Scott Base until 'main body' begins in October (when the summer's scientific activities get under way). At this time, the conservators go



Unpacking artefacts at Shackleton's Hut



The camp site at Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds in a blizzard

out into the field, camping near the historic huts and undertaking the packing and unpacking of artefacts and in-situ conservation treatment. They are in the field for up to four weeks at a time before returning to Scott Base to work from the lab, restock ... and have a shower!

So the experiences of the two seasons are very different. Most obviously, the summer season takes place in 24-hour light for at least 3 months whilst conversely the winter season has 24-hour darkness for the same period. The summer season is conducted in an atmosphere of considerable scientific activity by both the NZ and US programmes, which means there are up to 60 people staying at Scott Base. These personnel are constantly changing as scientific teams head out into the field and more teams arrive by air. In winter, there is less obvious activity with about 12 maintenance personnel and 4 conservators being the only occupants of the base. Only 3 kilometers away is McMurdo where some 150 US personnel are fulfilling the same function.

**A busy and often exhausting time in the field is countered by the extraordinary exhilaration of living beside the expeditioners' huts in such an awesome landscape**

The summer season conservators are transported to the huts either by tracked vehicle (Hagglunds) when the sea ice is strong enough up (until early December), or thereafter by helicopter. Due to weight restrictions with the helicopters and

**The programme allows conservators to work in an environment which is both highly challenging and spectacularly beautiful**

the cost of operating them, the movement of artefacts takes place whenever possible over the ice. Once at the site, polar tents are erected for sleeping in, and either a large insulated tent known as a Wannigan is used for living in. Toilet facilities are basic, being either buckets behind a screen or a porta-loo. Both need regular emptying into the sea through digging a hole at the tidecrack (where the sea ice meets the land) – a process which can become somewhat entertaining, particularly when there is a strong wind blowing, hands are cold and the contents of the bucket are frozen solid and refuse to be removed. Long hours are worked in the huts and then meals have to be cooked, reports written, documentation completed and daily radio contact made with Scott Base. In addition, there are regular visits by scientists, always keen to see and hear about the huts, and by IVs (Invited Visitors). Later in the season, when the sea ice melts, tourists arrive on cruise ships. All of this makes for a busy and often exhausting time in the field, countered by the extraordinary exhilaration of living momentarily beside the expeditioners' huts in such an awesome landscape.

By contrast, the winter conservators' experience is based around becoming part of a very close knit community. The responsibility of the base staff is primarily to maintain the station during winter. The conservators play a role in this by

being an integral part of the fire crew and assisting in a wide range of activities. Regular social functions are held, both in-house and with staff from McMurdo, and even darts competitions conducted via webcam with the staff at the US's South Pole station. Whilst it is light, trips are made over the ice to various local sites and the ritual of the polar plunge conducted (which involves jumping into the sea water through a hole cut into the ice). Apart from having to strip off to avoid snap freezing of clothes as one comes out, this is not as bad as it sounds as the sea water being above freezing can feel distinctly balmy.

Whilst not for everyone, the conservation programme is one of the most exciting projects in our profession, allowing conservators to work in an environment which is both highly challenging and spectacularly beautiful.

For more information on the conservators' experiences on the ice, visit their blog hosted by the Natural History Museum, London at [www.nhm.ac.uk/antarctica-blog/](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/antarctica-blog/). Conservators interested in applying for positions should contact Julian at [j.bickersteth@icssydney.com](mailto:j.bickersteth@icssydney.com).

**Author Biography**

Julian Bickersteth read Theology at Oxford before completing the West Dean course in Furniture Conservation, and working in London. He joined the conservation department of the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney in 1983, before establishing International Conservation Services in 1988. Julian has been on the Council of IIC since 2001.



Scott Base in Antarctica



Tents and Wannagans at Cape Evans



Julian Bickersteth

Julian Bickersteth

## The NiC interview

News in Conservation spoke to Carmen Ferrigno, Director of the Marketing Communications Group and Renette Richard, Market Manager for Building and Construction Network at Rohm and Haas about their new initiatives for conservators.

**NiC:** Why have you set up the webinar and the e-center?

**CF:** We wanted to accelerate the relationship with conservators. We have two major goals: one, to reach out to as many people as possible; and two, because we record the entire webinar and all of the questions that get asked along with it, we have a great opportunity to find out exactly what [conservators] think.

**NiC:** But why do you care what such a tiny part of your market thinks?

**CF:** This is about communicating with people, giving people a context for the value that this \$8bn company brings to people's lives. It's not all about simply making money. For our employees, focusing on conservation lets them know that they are making a material difference.

**RR:** It was interesting for us to learn more about what conservators require of our products. When it comes to our own research and development, it allows us to understand what other needs are out there.

**CF:** Yes, and it's useful for us when people look at something in a different way. Conservators get their materials as a hodgepodge of whatever other industry they happen to latch onto and test. They may teach us to look at things differently. So there's a real opportunity here to look at them as an extension of our applications research.

**NiC:** So how responsive are you to feedback from conservators? Would you change or develop products for them?

**CF:** Let's take the example of Paraloid B72. If we know that there's a simple way for us to make a matte B72, and there's a process we can use that's not too expensive, then yes, that's something that we'd consider. The question is: can we fit that into our larger commercial activities? And we might be able to connect them with a different business: for example, maybe our biocides people can help conservators who are in wet climates to halt the growth of fungus or mould on objects.

**NiC:** Has it helped to have an ex-conservator [Peter Eastman] on your team?

**CF:** It's tremendous! Not just for the work, but for the context that he can bring. So that makes our team feel smarter. And Pete's been instrumental in preparing for this webinar. He was able to go through what questions we were likely to get asked, and who we should have involved.

**RR:** Pete also really helped us out with how to communicate with individual conservators. So we could make sure that we weren't just being glitzy and glam. They don't

really care about all the glitzy and glam, what matters is materials. And so what we're giving is value to the conservators and not just ... talk.

**NiC:** Are you planning future webinars?

**CF:** Yes, I think we are. The vast majority [of participants] wanted another one by the end of March, and that's what we're planning for. We had 220 registrants for the first webinar, although we only sent an e-mail out to 40 people. This is an example of really strong viral marketing: if you give it to the right people, and you're open enough to have them share it, you can have them make the call on whether this is valuable or not.

**RR:** The conservators said that they wanted a more technical discussion.

**CF:** It doesn't necessarily have to be one Rohm and Haas person dealing with one conservator. It could be conservators learning from each other. The big issue that I find with conservators is, it's a fragmented audience group. They have so many channels of sharing information so we're kind of opening up a communications channel with a group of conservators who have a hard time communicating with the rest of the world. And that is a really valuable tool for the e-center, too. Each person sees different facets to a question so, by the time we get to it, we're seeing the whole issue on the table instead of in isolation.

**NiC:** Will these initiatives concentrate exclusively on Rohm and Haas products?

**CF:** Yes, I think they have to. I don't think we would actively turn things down but it's still the early stages for us in developing this



Carmen Ferrigno

relationship. One possibility, if it looks like our executives and conservators both see the value in it, is for us to just host a conservation discussion. And Rohm and Haas turns 100 in 2009 so it's a great opportunity for us to look back at the contribution of this company to history ... and you guys are it. Protecting things that are a thousand years old is really something that you can tell your kids about. That's the type of story that we want to tell, it's a little bit more than just, "hey, look at this molecule". We really are honoured that these people who deal with irreplaceable works of art, or architecture, or archaeology find Rohm and Haas products that valuable. And to be on that end of it, and to hear from these experts is actually a huge benefit for us as a company because it makes our employees really happy!

## IIC News

### IIC Annual General Meeting 2008 – Official Notice to IIC members

Notice is hereby given that the fifty-third Annual General Meeting of The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works will be held in the Sackler Rooms at the British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC2, on Friday 8th February 2008 at 4.00 pm. for the following purposes:

- 1 To receive and consider the Reports of the Council and the Auditors and the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2007 (copies of which are being circulated with this News in Conservation)
- 2 To elect two Vice-Presidents
- 3 To elect one Ordinary Member of the Council
- 4 To re-appoint Jacob, Cavenagh & Skeet as Auditors to The Institute and to authorise the Council to fix their remuneration for the ensuing year.
- 5 To transact any ordinary business of The Institute.

1 December 2007

By Order of the Council  
David Leigh  
Secretary-General

Registered Office:  
6 Buckingham Street London  
WC2N 6BA, UK

After the formal business is concluded, **Kazuko Hioki**, will give a talk on the Japanese 'Kura' approach to conservation storage. Kazuko is Conservation Librarian in the Preservation Department of the William T. Young Library University of Kentucky, USA and has experience of conservation work in Japan and the USA.

### Voting at the AGM

Fellows, Honorary Fellows and Individual Members are able to vote. For postal voting the enclosed form can be returned by post to IIC, 6 Buckingham Street, London, WC2N 6BA UK,

by fax to +44 (0)20 7976 1564 or by email to [iic@iiconservation.org](mailto:iic@iiconservation.org). But please remember that it must reach us forty-eight hours before the meeting, that is, by 4.00 pm on Wednesday 6th February 2008 at the latest. Voting forms received after that will not be counted.

All current members of The Institute are entitled to attend but it would be helpful if you could notify the office in advance if you plan to come. If you attend the meeting you should not, of course, make use of the postal voting form.

Please use your vote. Below you will find statements from the candidates who are standing for election.

### Candidates for Election

Ashok Roy is standing for election to the post of Vice-President that he was co-opted to by Council in 2006, after Andrew Oddy stood down from his post; the IIC's Articles of Association require that, if the President is not domiciled in the UK, at least one of the Vice-Presidents of IIC should be so domiciled. There is a second Vice-President post subject to election as well; this post is not subject to the same UK domiciliary requirement as is the post above. For this second post, Eleanor McMillan is standing to be elected to her second term as a Vice-President; Julian Bickersteth is also standing for this post. Lesley Carlyle is standing for election to her second term as an Ordinary member of Council.

Their 'manifestos' are printed below:

### Ashok Roy



I was both pleased and honoured to be co-opted last year to serve as Vice-President on the Council of the IIC, and the experience has encouraged me to stand for election to continue to help build on the very positive changes your organisation is undergoing under the present Council. I joined the IIC in 1977, at the suggestion of Joyce Plesters, as I started my career in conservation in the Scientific Department of the National Gallery in London, where I have worked ever since, becoming Director of Scientific Research in 1990. My past contribution to IIC has been as co-editor of five of the Pre-print volumes for IIC Congresses; I was Forbes Prize lecturer in 1998.

If elected to continue to serve on your Council, I would take a particular interest in building the international profile of the IIC; encouraging its membership to see itself as a world-wide community of conservators with influence on policy and practice; I would ensure that IIC engages with the critical issues in conservation, of funding, professional development and status and, importantly, is active on the world stage

dealing with the issues of the effects of war, natural disasters and climate change on cultural heritage and conservation. I believe it is most essential for IIC to respond actively to the requirements of younger conservators in the organisation and to put effort into expanding that membership. I am also interested in helping to continue to improve IIC's service to its members generally, through its publications, international meetings and the developing web-site.

The IIC has a most significant history in conservation; it will I am sure meet the challenges of the 21st century and become important to the future of conservation, as well as being a significant, influential and enjoyable part of the life of its membership around the world. I would very much like the opportunity to contribute to that process in the Council.

### Eleanor McMillan



I received my BA degree from Harvard University in 1960 with a major in English Literature and strong interests in anthropology, architecture, studio arts, and art history. During the summer of 1962, while enrolled on a self-directed course in

studio art, I volunteered in the Conservation Laboratory of the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore under the guidance of Elisabeth Packard, an experience that sufficed to "hook" me on the field of conservation.

In fall of 1963, I joined the Smithsonian Institution's newly formed Conservation Research Laboratory (later the Conservation Analytical Laboratory (CAL)). I worked initially on various ethnographic objects from the National Museum of Natural History, then became interested in the problems of paper. I was sent to Philadelphia to train with Marilyn Weidner, becoming the Smithsonian's first paper conservator.

After two years, I left paper conservation to manage all the Smithsonian's furniture, paper, paintings, textiles, and objects conservators, later becoming responsible for the CAL Training Program. Also, through the Smithsonian Office of Museum Programs, I served on a multidisciplinary faculty addressing issues of collections management, exhibition techniques, registration. The participants were mainly Americans, but also museum professionals from abroad.

During this time I held positions in the Washington Conservation Guild as Social Hostess (the best beverage I produced in a snowy January consisted of dark rum and vanilla ice cream!), Vice President, and President. I also served on nearly all of the AIC committees AIC, most notably as Chair of the Committee on Ethics and Standards, and as Secretary of the Board of Examiners for the Certification of Paper Conservators. I also served as a member of the ICOM Working Group on Training of Conservators, producing together with Paul Perrot a document entitled 'Training of the Conservator/Restorer'.

In 1993 I took early retirement after 30 years and a few months!

I am still intellectually active in the field. I served two terms as an Ordinary Member of Council of IIC, then as a Vice-President. I also serve in a conservation capacity on the Advisory Councils of the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., and the Peabody Essex Museum.

To me it is most interesting to serve on the IIC Council because of its international flavor and the opportunity to learn about the conservation responsibilities, problems and solutions of its members. We each may have different approaches to matters, yet we try very hard to advance together the principles and to achieve the aims of IIC.

I would very much like to see the conservation aims of IIC made more accessible, especially within developing countries. In my extensive post-retirement travels I have observed that economic situations, coupled with lack of understanding of our basic premises – and inability on our part to understand the situation and communicate successfully and to provide alternative solutions to conservation dilemmas – have been counterproductive. We need to be comfortable with being flexible in our own tenets so as successfully to address the global conservation needs of museum people.

#### Leslie Carlyle

Having been an active member of council since 2004, I am eager to complete my second term on the IIC Council. My background as a practicing paintings conservator (1979–1987), conservation materials historian and researcher (1987–2005), and now head of conservation for a large complex gallery (Tate), gives me broad experience and insight into the field of conservation which I bring to my role on council. I have been fortunate in working in



North America, The Netherlands and now the UK which gives me a sense of our organisation's international significance and impact. The coming few years will be crucial for council in steering IIC towards truly international representation of our field. I look forward to continuing to work on behalf of the membership on the initiatives for change and renewal that Council is undertaking. I hope that you will support my bid for re-election as a council member.

#### Julian Bickersteth



I have been an Ordinary member of Council for two terms, and now stand for Vice-President at a critical time in IIC's development. These past eighteen months have seen a number of major initiatives already beginning to bear fruit in that for the first time for years we are holding our membership levels steady. The initiatives have ranged from the launch of the broadsheet *News in Conservation* to the formation of a Finance Sub-Committee of Council, of which I am a member. The former is critical in terms of reaching a wider audience, the latter equally critical in allowing us to ensure IIC's funds are optimised for the advancement of the Institute. They are both potentially allowing us to build a stronger membership base, and provide a wider range of services to our members.

But whereto from here? With a small resurgence in membership, and reasonable financial reserves, we must continue to do what we do well (particularly in providing professional publications and running Congresses), but we must also continue to evolve to survive. This may mean we need to work more closely with organisations that represent allied cultural heritage professionals such as collection managers and registrars. More broadly it must also mean we need to optimise our exposure to, and use of, the Web for the dispersment and exchange of information, and the maintaining of connection with all our members worldwide.

I believe I can continue to bring experience and expertise to Council in ensuring the path we have started on is kept to and extended. As managing director of International Conservation Services, employing 34 staff in Australia, I have daily contact with the front line of conservation. I started life as a furniture conservator and I have served on AICCM's national council for 9 years, variously as Treasurer, Secretary

and Editor of the AICCM Bulletin. I also bring broader experience as the Deputy President of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and a former director of AusHeritage. With the latter organisation, I have travelled extensively in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, India and Vietnam. Here reside many potential members of IIC and to grow significantly we need to ensure we are encouraging them to join and catering to their specific needs. I look forward, if elected, to ensuring IIC has a growing presence and membership in the Asia Pacific region.

#### IIC Congress 2008 – Conservation and Access

##### Final Call for Posters

The 22nd IIC international Congress will take place in London, UK, 15–19 September 2008. The Congress will examine the role of conservation in the presentation and protection of the world's cultural heritage. It will explore the ways that conservation professionals engage in the worldwide sharing of art and heritage, whether through people going to see that heritage or the heritage itself travelling the globe. Manuscripts have been requested from authors in fifteen countries; the locations where the conservators are trying to improve access are truly global, extending from the Arctic to the Antarctic. The approaches vary from technical experimentation to philosophical analysis, yet a common theme of risk assessment and risk management can be detected.

Poster presentation is particularly well suited to material with a strong visual impact, short case histories and accounts of work in progress. Posters are displayed prominently throughout the meeting and this year there will be a programmed session giving delegates the opportunity to speak to poster authors. An extended abstract is published in the conference papers to provide a permanent record and point of contact. If you would like to present a poster, please send us your provisional title and a 100-word summary of the poster content. The choice of posters for display will be made by 15 January 2008 and final texts should be submitted by 28 March 2008.

Submit your abstract to the London Congress Section of the IIC website by 14 December 2007.

#### IIC Keck Award 2008

Every two years an award is offered to the individual or group who, in the opinion of IIC Council, has done most to further the public appreciation of the work of the conservation profession. The award consists of a certificate and a cash prize of £1000, presented at the biennial IIC Congress. Details of previous award winners can be found on the IIC member website ([www.iiconservation.org](http://www.iiconservation.org)) in the About section.

We are now seeking nominations for the 2008 award. If you would like to propose yourself, or a colleague, please send your nomination to the IIC office (preferably by email) to arrive by 31 March 2008. You should send a statement of between 500 and 1000 words describing the nominee's public outreach activities and outlining what supporting material, such as publications, websites, videos, or evidence of media coverage is available. You may be asked to supply these at a later date. The application should include the name, job title and professional address of the individual (or of all the partners in a group project). Send your proposal to [iic@iiconservation.org](mailto:iic@iiconservation.org) with the words 'Keck Award' in the subject line, or by post to IIC, 6 Buckingham Street, London WC2N 6BA, UK.

#### New IIC fellows

The biographies of two of the new IIC fellows were printed in the last issue of *News in Conservation*. We are pleased to be able to include biographies of the remaining two, Frances Lennard and Michael Duffy, in this issue.

#### Frances Lennard



Frances Lennard gained the Postgraduate Diploma in Textile Conservation awarded by the Textile Conservation Centre (TCC) & The Courtauld Institute of Art in 1985. She worked for the Conservation Services Department of the TCC until 1990, then moved to the south-west of England to work as a freelance textile conservator in partnership with Fiona Hutton. She was Chair of the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Textile Section from 1994-1997. She returned to the TCC in 2001 and is now a Lecturer and Programme Leader of the MA Textile Conservation. She has been an Assessor for the PACR Accreditation scheme since 2003. She has published on conservation treatments, including the treatment of tapestries and painted banners, and is currently the Principal Investigator of an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project investigating the use of engineering techniques to monitor tapestries.

#### Michael Duffy



Michael Duffy holds a BA in Art History from Rutgers College and an MS from the University of Delaware/Winterthur Program in Art Conservation. Since 1993, he has been a Conservator at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), specializing in twentieth century paintings and contemporary art. Before that, he held positions at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Worcester Art Museum. His special interests include the documentation of contemporary artists' working methods and materials. Michael has published and lectured on the treatment of Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger, 1907*, including a contribution to the 2004 IIC Bilbao Congress 'Modern Art, New Museums'.

## News in Conservation No. 3 December 2007

### Calls for papers

**34th Annual CAC Conference**  
30 May–1 June 2008  
Montreal, Canada  
Submit abstracts by: 15 December 2007

**Multivariate Analysis and Chemometry for Cultural Heritage and Environment**  
1–4 June 2008  
Ventotene, Italy  
Submit abstracts by: 28 April 2008

**XIII International Symposium on Luminescence Spectroscopy**  
7–11 September 2008  
Bologna, Italy  
Submit abstracts by: 15 April 2008

### Meetings and Conferences

**Icon Archaeology Group Christmas meeting: conservation cock-ups**  
12 December 2007  
London, UK

**Icon Paintings Group Christmas talk: cleaning the uncleanable**  
19 December 2007  
London, UK

**The object in transition**  
25–26 January 2008  
Los Angeles, USA

**Terra 2008: 10th international conference on the study and conservation of earthen architecture**  
1–5 February 2008  
Bamako, Mali

**Risk assessment — management strategies**  
14–16 February 2008  
Aschaffenburg, Germany

**Holding it all together**  
21–22 February 2008  
London, UK

**Icon Stone & Wall Paintings Group: 'Polychromed wood'**  
22 February 2008  
London, UK

**Infrared and Raman Users Group (IRUG) conference**  
26–29 March 2008  
Vienna, Austria

**Association of Art Historians 34th annual conference**  
2–4 April 2008  
London, UK

**8th Indoor Air Quality meeting**  
17–19 April 2008  
Vienna, Austria

**AIC annual meeting**  
21–24 April 2008  
Denver, CO, USA

**11th international seminar on the care and conservation of manuscripts**  
24–25 April 2008  
Copenhagen, Denmark

**8th triennial meeting for conservators of the Baltic states**  
7–10 May 2008  
Tallinn, Estonia

**Art 2008: non-destructive testing, microanalysis and preservation**  
25–30 May 2008  
Jerusalem, Israel

**34th Annual CAC Conference**  
30 May–1 June 2008  
Montreal, Canada

**Multivariate Analysis and Chemometry for Cultural Heritage and Environment**  
1–4 June 2008  
Ventotene, Italy

**XIII International Symposium on Luminescence Spectroscopy**  
7–11 September 2008  
Bologna, Italy

**11th International Conference on Accelerator Mass Spectrometry**  
7–11 September 2008  
Rome, Italy

**IIC 2008 Congress: Conservation and Access**  
15–19 September 2008  
London, UK

**Stone 2008**  
15–20 September 2008  
Torun, Poland

**ICOM-CC triennial meeting, 2008**  
22–26 September 2008  
New Delhi, India

**Salt weathering on buildings and stone sculptures**  
22–24 October 2008  
Copenhagen, Denmark

### Courses, Seminars and Workshops

**Pre-Columbian Textile Workshop**  
8–19 January 2008  
Lima and Yarinacocha, Peru

**Digital photography of museum objects**  
14–16 May 2008  
Tenerife

**Conservation of glass**  
19–23 May 2008  
Corning, NY, USA

**Making high-quality resin replicas of museum objects**  
26–30 May 2008  
Dianahund, Denmark

**Making high-quality electroform replicas**  
9–13 June 2008  
Dianahund, Denmark

**Indo-Persian paintings workshop**  
16–20 June 2008  
London, UK

**Practical insect pest management**  
17–18 June 2008  
London, UK

**Conservation and preservation of photographs**  
3–5 July 2008  
London, UK

**For more information about these conferences and courses, see the IIC website: [www.iiconservation.org](http://www.iiconservation.org)**

### Job Vacancies

**Conservation Fellowships**  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
Closing date: 4 January 2008

A number of annual conservation fellowships for training and research are available in one or more of the following museum departments: Arms and Armor, Asian Art Conservation, The Costume Institute, Musical Instruments, Objects Conservation (including sculpture, metalwork, glass, ceramics, furniture, and archaeological objects), Paintings Conservation, Paper Conservation, Scientific Research, and Textile Conservation. Also available is a Polaire Weissman Fellowship for conservation work in The Costume Institute. Fellowships are typically one year in duration. Shorter-term fellowships for senior scholars are also available.

It is desirable that applicants should have reached an advanced level of experience or training. All fellowship recipients are required to spend the fellowship in residence in the department with which they are affiliated.

The stipend amount for one year is \$40,000 for senior conservators/scientific researchers and \$30,000 for junior conservators/scientific researchers, with up to an additional \$5,000 for travel and miscellaneous expenses. Senior fellowships are intended for well-established professionals, with advanced training in the field and proven publication record. A typed application (in triplicate) should include: full resume of education and professional experience, statement (not to exceed one thousand words) describing what the applicant expects to accomplish during the fellowship period and how the Museum's facilities can be utilized to achieve the applicant's objectives, tentative schedule of work to be accomplished, official undergraduate and graduate transcripts, and three letters of recommendation (at least one academic and one professional). The deadline for completed applications is January 4, 2008.

Applications should be sent to Attn: Marcie Karp, Fellowships in Conservation Program, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10028-0198. For more information, see the Metropolitan Museum's website: [http://www.metmuseum.org/education/er\\_fellow.asp](http://www.metmuseum.org/education/er_fellow.asp).

**Associate Conservator, Contemporary Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**  
Closing date: 15 January 2008

The world-renowned Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is seeking an Associate Conservator, Contemporary Art for its Conservation Department. The successful candidate will demonstrate a passion for and understanding of modern and contemporary materials, as well as the underlying concepts inherent in the creation of contemporary art.

Key responsibilities include: conducting treatments on works of art; researching a wide range of unconventional materials as needed to conserve assigned works of art; helping to establish best practices for the care and maintenance of the Guggenheim's collection; travel to international venues to oversee the installation of collection works; and working with living artists to determine appropriate parameters for preservation of contemporary art.

Candidates are required to have: an advanced degree from a recognized conservation program; 3–5 years of museum experience, or equivalent; an understanding of time-based or digital art and a willingness to explore and research a wide range of materials and technology; ability to collaborate with colleagues and communicate with other professionals; and knowledge and interest in contemporary art. They should also be flexible and creative, with proven problem solving ability and strong interpersonal and written communication skills. The ability to travel frequently, sometimes for extended periods of time may also be required. All areas of specialization will be considered, with an emphasis on cross-disciplinary interests.

The Guggenheim offers a competitive salary and excellent medical, life, disability and pension plan coverage. Our staff also enjoys generous vacation, sick leave and personal days, access to a variety of cultural institutions, discounts to museum stores and an interesting work environment.

Qualified applicants please send your resume and cover letter, including salary expectations, to [employment@guggenheim.org](mailto:employment@guggenheim.org). Indicate the job title "Associate Conservator – Contemporary Art" in the subject line. The closing date for applications is 15 January 2008.

**For more information about these or other vacancies, visit the jobs page of the IIC website: [www.iiconservation.org](http://www.iiconservation.org)**

**To advertise in *News in Conservation* or on the IIC website please contact the IIC office email: [iic@iiconservation.org](mailto:iic@iiconservation.org)**

## GABO TRUST for sculpture conservation

(Registered Charity 298715)

### GRANT APPLICATIONS 2008

The Trustees invite Professional Practitioners in Sculpture Conservation from both the public and private sectors, and from Post Graduate Students of Sculpture Conservation, to apply for grants towards any of the following:

- Attendance at conferences or symposia related to the conservation of sculpture;
- Attendance at specialist courses as part of a CPD programme;
- Travel grants related to the conservation of sculpture;
- Funding towards internships;
- Contribution towards the purchase of equipment and the enhancement of storage facilities.

The Gabo Trust is a charity established by the family of the sculptor, Naum Gabo in 1988. It supports both individuals and organisations working on the care and conservation of modern and contemporary sculpture, and in particular extending expertise in this area.

There is also a joint scheme with the International Institute of Conservation (IIC) for travel grants, available to members of IIC.

For details and application form, visit their website [www.iiconservation.org](http://www.iiconservation.org).

**To apply for a grant, please write in the first instance to  
Mr Graham Williams, Chairman,  
Gabo Trust for Sculpture Conservation,  
Weavers Cot, Cot Lane, Biddenden,  
Ashford, Kent TN27 8JB**

**Do you have any conservation-related photographs (humorous, dramatic or artistic)? Or have you spotted an amusing or unusual story in the news? Send your clippings to: [news@iiconservation.org](mailto:news@iiconservation.org) and share them with your fellow IIC members!**