

Plastics Heritage - Forum Kunststoffgeschichte is organized every second year by the Deutsche Gesellschaft for Kunststoffgeschichte (dgkg), KOREGT e.V. and the HTW Berlin. The next conference will be held in 2018.

The book of abstracts can be found [here](#).

Josephine Bobeck

Saving the Now: Crossing Boundaries to Conserve Contemporary Works (IIC Los Angeles Congress)

September 12-16, 2016

Los Angeles, California

The conference was held in downtown Los Angeles at the grand old hotel, Millennium Biltmore. Built in the 1920s with lavishly decorated interiors, it was an early venue for the Academy Awards. Further up the road is the Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Grand Avenue and the new, 'The Broad', which houses the Eli and Edythe Broad collection of contemporary art.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro from the Whitney Museum of American Art gave the Forbes Prize Lecture and asked 'what are we charged to conserve?' In contemporary art, the concept is often more important than the physical object, so an understanding of the conceptual framework is essential to determine a conservation approach. In addition, artists rarely relinquish intellectual control of their artwork and their estates retain an ongoing authority. Documentation, consultation and collaboration are a major part of the contemporary art conservators' role.



Participants were allowed an after-hours visit to The Broad Museum in downtown Los Angeles.

The IIC Congress was a wonderful opportunity to meet with international colleagues and to hear the most recent work in the contemporary art conservation field from a wide range of specialists. For me the greatest shift in approach has been that conservators are becoming more comfortable working in the conceptual sphere, and there is a greater acknowledgment that collaboration with fabricators and artists can produce an appropriate outcome. However it was also reassuring to hear of successful traditional treatments of 'objects', and to know that this approach still has a part to play in conservation today.

Preprints can be found [here](#).

Sarah Hillary

Study days on Nicolas Schöffer: Conserving/restoring works of a technological nature

November 3, 2016 and February 2, 2017

Paris, France

The study days were held on two separate days - November 3, 2016 and February 2, 2017 – in two different locations in Paris, and examined the conservation issues associated with complex technological artworks.

The first day focused mainly on Nicolas Schöffer's oeuvre and was held at his Atelier for a small group, where his widow Éleonore Schöffer still keeps and maintains an important part of his work and presents it to visitors as a private museum. This atelier is located in the 18th arrondissement of Paris, in the 'Villa des Arts', built in 1888 by architect Henri Cambon, where artists such as Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne, Francis Picabia also had their studios.



Tom Learner (Getty Conservation Institute) welcomes participants to the IIC Congress at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel.

The conference included two keynote addresses, 44 papers, 51 posters and several panel discussions over 5 days. Topics ranged from theoretical perspectives, new needs and approaches, to treatments and replicas. There were several functions at museums - MOCA, The Broad and LACMA - giving participants time to look at the displays, plus a variety of tours. Around 500 people attended the conference.



Discussion with all the participants during the 1st study day. Photo: Christelle Westphal.

Éleonore gave a very vivid introduction to her husband's life and work, then blacked out the lights in the studio and switched on the electrical systems, setting all the artworks into their lumino-motion, conjuring a wonderworld of light and color. Then several presentations covered different aspects of the maintenance and conservation of Schöffer's work, followed by a very lively and open discussion on the meaning of the concept of 'authenticity', the value of 'the original materials', and what happens when 'the artist concept' is prevalent.



Visit to the Schöffer Studio at the Villa des Arts (Paris). Photo: Christelle Westphal.

On the second day, organized several months later at the C2RMF (Carrousel du Louvre, Paris), Cécile Dazord welcomed a larger group of almost 40 participants. The talks focused on possible treatment approaches for technological artworks, aiming at practical, actual conservation solutions, this time from a professional point of view rather than from that of the artist's representatives. The legal framework for conservation of technological artworks was also given by attorney Anne-Laure Moya-Plana.

The audience included a diverse group of conservators, curators, artists, art historians, engineers and technicians, and the public participated actively to the discussions. Propositions for practical solutions to the obsolescence of materials, documentation and acquisition procedures

emerged from the discussions. This interdisciplinary network will hopefully keep going long after the end of these two days.



Éleonore Schöffer in the Studio presenting Nicolas Schöffer's artworks. Photo: Christelle Westphal

The Schöffer Study-days were organized by Université de Liège (AAP) and ESA Saint-Luc de Liège in collaboration with Association Internationale des Amis de Nicolas Schöffer (A.N.S.I. XXI) présidée par Mme Eléonore de Lavandeyra Schöffer, with the support of C2RMF, CeROArt and INCCA-f.

Lydia Beerkens and Manon D'haenens

The Shock of the New: Modern Materials, Media and Methods, Symposium

February 8-10, 2017

Museum Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

On February 8-10, 2017, the Museum Victoria in Melbourne, Australia hosted the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM) joint Objects and Digital and Audio-visual (Electron) Special Interest Group Symposium: The Shock of the New: Modern Materials, Media and Methods held in the Royal exhibition Building. Four Workshops were held on Friday 10 February. Dragan Espenschied --- Web Archiving; Dragan Espenschied – Emulation; Dr Michelle Woulahan – Introduction to Arduino and microcontrollers; Simon Young- Immersive VR experience in reconstructed archaeological sites.

Fifty people attended from a variety of professions including digital asset management, cultural heritage conservation, archivists, collection managers, technical producers, curators and practising artists. It included over twenty presentations by delegates from Australia and beyond as well as special invited speakers:

- Dragan Espenschied, from Rhizome. Rhizome is the leading international born-digital art organization and is an affiliate in residence at the New Museum in New York, USA.