The New York Public Library Preservation Database online artifactual treatment documentation management system

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Abstract

The New York Public Library Preservation Database is an online documentation management system responsible for integrating and storing information pertaining to the physical treatment activities of the Goldsmith Conservation Laboratory. The relational database operates as the communicative link between laboratory staff and institutional users by providing instant access to reference and instructional information connected with the treatment of artifactual library and archival materials. The interactive format creates a unified system capable of linking and sharing information and making navigation between related documents possible. The hybrid documentation system combines beneficial features of electronic and paper forms. The flexibility of electronic data exchange anticipates and accommodates future development of the conservation treatment program.

Zusammenfassung

Die Konservierungs-Datenbank der New York Public Library ist ein online Verwaltungsystem für Dokumentationen, welches die Einfügung und Verwahrung von Informationen über die restauratorischen Maßnahmen des Goldsmith Conservation Laboratory zur Aufgabe hat. Die Datenbank fungiert als Kommunikationsverbindung zwischen der Belegschaft der Werkstatt und den Nutzern des GCL durch die sofortige Verfügbarkeit von Referenzmaterial und Informationen, welche die Behandlung von Objekten aus der Kunstbibliothek und Archivalien betreffen. Der interaktive Charakter der Datenbank erlaubt durch das vereinheitlichte System die Verknüpfung und den Austausch von Informationen und macht das Hin und Her-Wechseln zwischen verwandten Dokumenten möglich. Das kombinierte Dokumentationssytem nutzt die Vorteile der elektronischen sowie der Papierformulare. Die Flexibilität des elektronischen Datenaustausches birgt Möglichkeiten für die zukünftige Entwicklung von restauratorischen Maßnahmen.

Database system features

- barcode inventory tracking
- control
- project management
- collection survey
- workflow monitoring
- time log
- resource/materials allocation
- statistical reporting
- treatment services request
- treatment procedure guide
- artifact attribute recording
- condition assessment
- treatment specification
- treatment worksheet
- treatment documentation
- housing/protective enclosure specification

Documentation system design objectives

- documentation sequence mirrors treatment processing sequence
- application of automated workflow task sequences to treatment processes
- information sharing capability between multiple documents
- construction of compound document formats with hypermedia links
- standardization of terminology and procedures with provision for modification and expansion
- flexible multilevel document configuration integrating textual and visual treatment data
- incorporation of multimedia data types [text, still images, digital video, graphics objects]
- compliance with professional guidelines for documentation of treatment, format criteria and retention requirements

Document format

The online documentation management system is interactive software and functions as a communicative informational pathway capable of creating both electronic and paper records. The electronic display design uses visual language to convey the various application options to the user. The context-sensitive layout of the PDF document reconfigures data in response to the laboratory workflow sequence and treatment activity selections.

Portable Document Format sequence

- Request for conservation treatment services
- Treatment specification form
- Treatment worksheet
- Treatment documentation form

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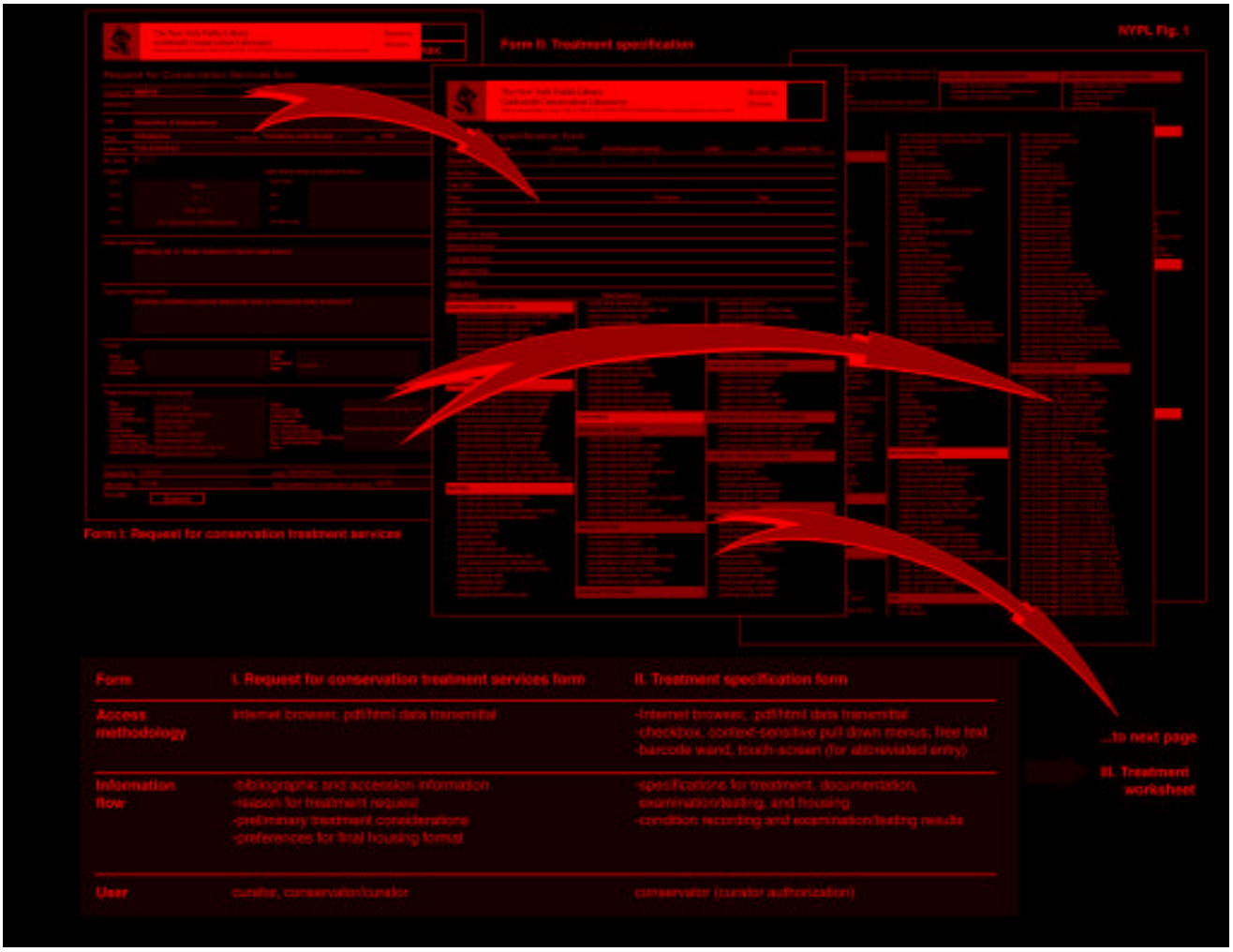

Future directions

A recent system design development connected with the New York Public Library Preservation Database has been the proposed incorporation of a series of multimedia conservation training and technical information exchange productions in the area of conservation treatment of book, paper, and other record materials. The multimedia productions will emphasize the visual presentation of examination and treatment techniques for artifactual materials, using high-resolution still photographs and video, concentrating on images that convey activities at a macro or micro level. The techniques presented are "minimally interventive" in intent and conform to current standards of practice. The Goldsmith Conservation Laboratory is currently seeking funding for the development, implementation, and distribution of the multimedia "visual treatment textbook."

Software requirements

Delivery software
- Network browser 3.0 or higher
- Adobe Acrobat Reader plug-in
- PDF format front end
- Helix Express 4.51
- Osmosis

Authoring software
- Helix Express
- Adobe Acrobat
- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Premiere
- Macromedia Dreamweaver

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Biographies

Marc Reeves has been Head of the Goldsmith Conservation Laboratory at the New York Public Library Research Libraries, since 1986. He received an undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago in 1976, and studied and worked with William Minter Conservation in Chicago 1976-82. He received an M.S. degree and Advanced Certificate in conservation from the joint Columbia University/New York University IFA program in 1985.

Anna Stenstrom has been Senior Conservator at the Goldsmith Conservation Laboratory at the New York Public Library Research Libraries, since 1988. She received a B.A. in Classics from Reed College in 1978, and attended the Art History program of Rosary College Graduate School of Arts in Florence, Italy. She received an M.S. degree and Advanced Certificate in conservation from the joint Columbia University/New York University IFA program in 1985.

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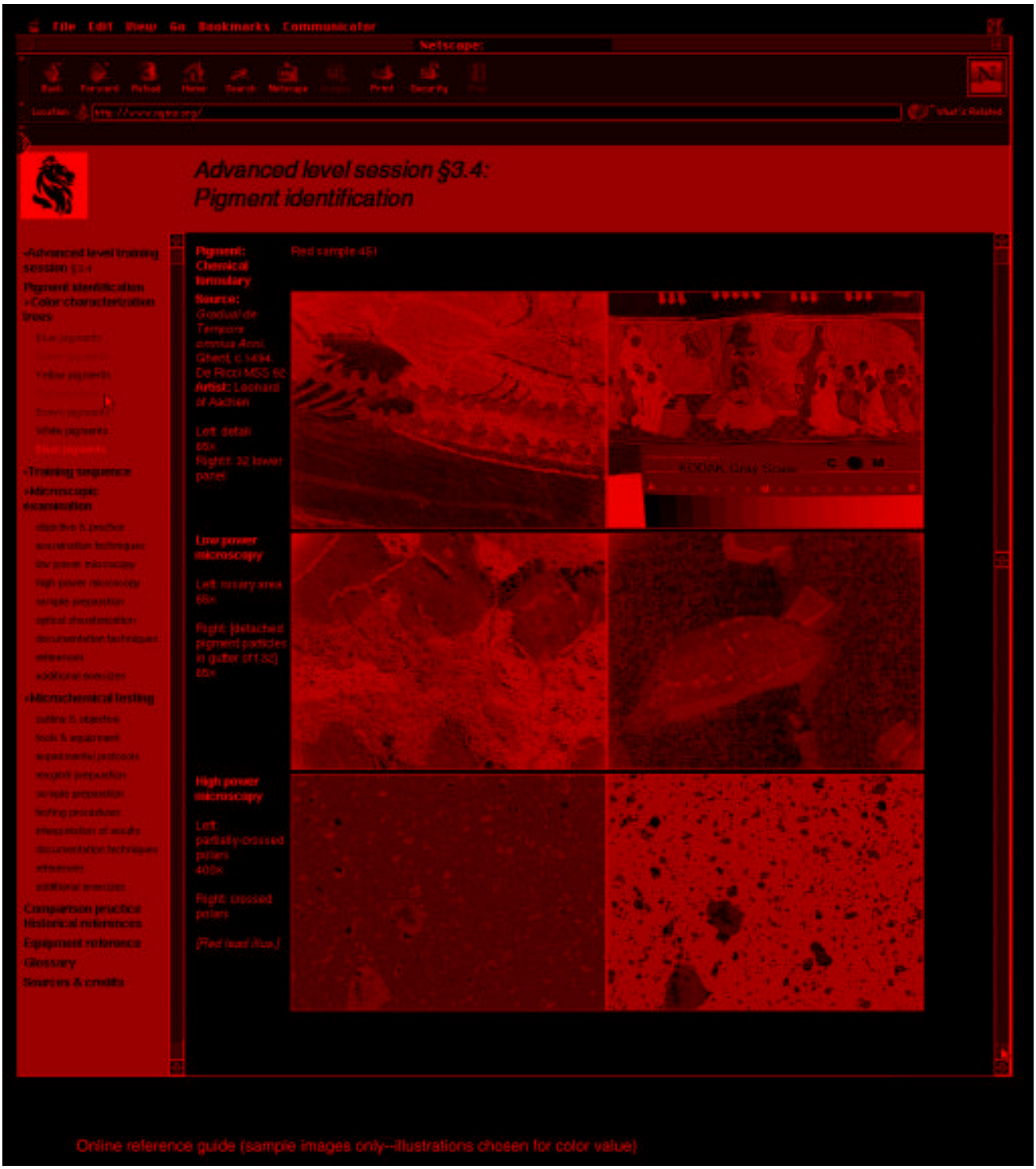
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65x
Right: 32 lower panel
Low power microscopy
Left: rosary area
66x
High power microscopy
Left: partially-crossed polars
400x
Right: crossed polars
Online reference guide (sample images only--illustrations chosen for color value)