President's Letter

Who knew serving on a Board could be fun?

When I was elected to the WAAC Board, I knew it was something I believed in and wanted to do, but I didn’t realize how much I would enjoy working with the other Board members, or how proud I would feel about the way we are able to work together and accomplish good things for the organization. This year we continue to work out new ways to distribute an extra-special Newsletter (the September issue packed with emergency response information); we’re planning a workshop to be held just before our Annual Meeting (Spot Tests for Materials Characterization, co-sponsored by AIC); and updating our website to be more useful to both the membership and the Board (most of this credit goes to Walter Henry). We’re also paying attention to the WAAC finances, cutting costs where we can, including keeping our mid-year Board meeting in January economical but enjoyable. The fun comes, I think, from the way we can work together to generate ideas, solve problems, and make decisions together—as much friends as colleagues. And though some of us have known each other for a long time, every year there are newcomers to the Board and individuals who may never have met before. I like to think of the collegial tendency of the Board as reflecting the friendly and inclusive—as well as professional—nature of our organization as a whole.

I’ve come to realize that not many WAAC members are very aware of the Board positions or what they involve—indeed, it seems you only discover these things once you’ve been on the Board. With this year’s Board nominations and election coming up, it seems a good time to discuss what the different positions entail.

The Board consists of both elected and appointed positions. Appointed positions serve indefinite terms and technically are appointed by the President; they may receive modest stipends to reward what otherwise appears to be a labor of love. These positions include the Treasurer (currently Tania Collas, but will be changing next year), Membership Secretary (Chris Stavroudis), Newsletter Editor (Carolyn Tallent), Web Editor (Walter Henry), Fulfillments Officer (Donna Williams), and Secretary (Teresa Moreno).

Elected officers are the President, Vice President (VP), and four Members-at-Large (MaL). Each year, we elect two MaLs and a VP. After being VP for a year, that person becomes President. Each MaL serves for two years, so that every year we have two new ones and two continuing who are about to finish their term. All elected officers as well as the Treasurer are eligible to vote on matters before the Board; the other appointed positions can state opinions but do not vote.

The Secretary position has evolved over the last few years; now serving for one year it is usually someone the President can work with closely in getting the Annual Meeting together. The Secretary also fields questions from both members and the public, sometimes passing them along to other Board positions such as the Treasurer or President depending on the matter at hand. The Membership Secretary manages the membership database (an understatement—Chris created it and continues to improve its functionality) and generates the Directory. The Fulfillments Officer manages back issues of the Newsletter and other publications, filling orders as they come in and keeping the inventory up to date. Predictably, the Newsletter Editor is responsible for putting together the WAAC Newsletter; and the Web Editor maintains and improves the WAAC website. The Treasurer handles all money transactions and ensures that our organization continues, as is said, “in sound financial health.”

Elected officers are the President, Vice President (VP), and four Members-at-Large (MaL). Each year, we elect two MaLs and a VP. After being VP for a year, that person becomes President. Each MaL serves for two years, so that every year we have two new ones and two continuing who are about to finish their term. All elected officers as well as the Treasurer are eligible to vote on matters before the Board; the other appointed positions can state opinions but do not vote.

The Members-at-Large are essential to the Board, but don’t have many specifically defined duties. They participate and vote in Board discussions, both at the twice-yearly Board meetings and via our email conversations—which sometimes become quite extensive. MaLs also help with specific projects as needed and asked by the President—for instance, this year Scott Carlee is the co-ordinator for the upcoming Spot Test Workshop (as well as being co-instructor) and Leslie Rainer was instrumental in organizing our mid-year Board meeting, which was
President’s letter, continued

hosted by the Getty Conservation Institute. And, of course, all of the Board members are available and helpful when it comes to getting the Annual Meeting put together and going smoothly. Mostly, though, I have found all our Members-at-Large to be essential to the decision-making process of the Board. They take their responsibility to the membership very seriously, give thoughtful comments to the issue at hand, and ultimately reach a consensus and/or vote on the issue, depending on the specific situation.

The Vice President comes to the Board with a lot on his or her mind – because of the knowledge, initially quite intimidating, that in a year she or he will be President with all that the position entails. For me at least, this pre-occupation made it a little difficult to concentrate at first on the very specific tasks of the VP, until I realized how important they are in their own right. I also realized that I had a year to observe and learn how to be President, actually just the right amount of time to prepare myself to assume the bigger job.

So what does the WAAC VP do? He or she is primarily responsible for editing the Regional News column in the Newsletter, naming and heading the Nominations Committee, and managing the annual election. All three are tasks essential to the organization but ones that few people outside the Board, or the VP position, give much thought to – unless for some reason they aren’t done.

To elaborate, when you open your WAAC Newsletter to the Regional News column (I for one count it as one of my favorite parts of the Newsletter), the news you see was gathered by the Regional Reporters (volunteers who deserve applause for their efforts) and then sent by them to the VP for consolidation into the formatted column that you read. I understand this particular task has been a big deal easier by computers and email – often there is very little reformatting to be done whereas in the past they were often handwritten and had to be typed or entered onto the computer. I really enjoyed having this contact with the Regional Reporters – and gained a new appreciation for what they do throughout the year to make that column happen. My only disappointment was that, once I got the Newsletter, I had already read one of my favorite parts!

Getting the election slate together was more challenging than I anticipated – but then I think last year was just a difficult one when so many people were too busy to contemplate running for volunteer office. Even so, in the end I felt the Nominating Committee (myself, Jill Sterrett and Susanne Friend) achieved a good slate that certainly has produced excellent Board members. One innovation last year was a success–the Nominations Postcard which generated much more response from the membership than we had ever had before.

The final thing the VP does is not official, but definitely necessary – you think a lot about the meeting you will be planning for the next year, and likely go so far as to pick a location so that it can be announced at the preceding Annual Meeting. That’s just the initial preparation, but it’s a good way to get your feet wet before diving in to the Presidential year.

Besides the meeting planning, the President is responsible for writing three letters to the Newsletter, leading the Board meetings, fielding non-routine questions from outside the organization, and generally keeping Board discussions on track. Planning the meeting, though the largest task, is not as scary as much work as it sounds. The biggest problem, I think, is to keep track of all the details – like in planning a big party, which is essentially what you’re doing, with a couple of days of talks thrown in. Once I had the location lined up, I decided to make a list of all the things that needed to happen and, with the help of the Board, organized it into a calendar. As this goes to press, we have registration and general Tucson information on the website, as well as materials about the Spot Test Workshop which will take place in Tucson the week prior to the meeting.

Volume 28 Number 2 WAAC Newsletter

The Western Association for Art Conservation (formerly, the Western Association of Art Conservators), also known as WAAC, was founded in 1974 to bring together conservators practicing in the western United States to exchange ideas, information, and regional problems, to discuss national and international matters of common interest.

President
Laura D. Stanef

Vice President
Camilla Van Voorst

Secretary
Teresa Moreno

Treasurer
Tania Collar

Members at Large
Scott Carter
Nicholas Dorman
Leah Raines

Web Editor
Henry Henry

Publications Fulfillments
Donna Williams

Individual Membership in WAAC costs $30 per year ($35 in Western Canada, $40 overseas) and entitles the member to receive the WAAC Newsletter and the annual Membership Directory. Institutional Membership costs $35 per year ($40 in Western Canada, $45 overseas) and entitles the member to receive the WAAC Newsletter and Membership Directory, for membership or subscription, contact the Secretary.

The Western Association for Art Conservation (WAAC) is a member of the Alliance of集装箱 Art Organizations (CoCoA), also known as the WAAC Website, a part of CoCoA (Conservation Online) hosted by Stanford University Libraries, at http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/waac/.

The 2006 WAAC Annual Meeting will be held in the auditorium of the Center for Creative Photography (CCP) on the campus of the University of Arizona, which is in central Tucson. Talks will be held all day Saturday and Sunday, October 21-22. There will be an opening reception at the Arizona State Museum (also on the campus) the evening of Friday October 20. A tour of the Western Archaeological and Conservation Center of the National Park and Conservation Center of the National Park will be arranged for Friday afternoon. Also of note is the workshop Spot Tests for Materials Characterization, co-sponsored by WAAC and AIC, which will be held in Tucson October 17-20, very convenient to the meeting. Registration and information materials for both the meeting and the Spot Tests Workshop can be found on our website.

Weather in Tucson at that time of year should be pleasant—warm, but with the worst of the summer heat over. Average highs can be expected in the 80s, lows in the upper 50s; but it also could be a bit warmer or cooler (up to a high of 100°F or down to a low of 40°F). Rain is unlikely, but possible—more likely the sun will shine as it does so beautifully in Southern Arizona. So, bring both an umbrella and sunscreen.

We have not selected a specific hotel for the conference, preferring to let our members find it possible to attend. Please spread the word to colleagues who may wish to attend. The cost of accommodations and registration for the meeting will be available on the Annual Meeting webpage. Please make your reservations early! The University’s Family Weekend coincides with our meeting (though we scheduled first), and this is likely to affect rates and availability, especially near campus.

On the website is a page of information about getting to and around Tucson, including a link to the UA campus map page.

Finally, we expect this to be another interesting, fun meeting, and we hope many of our members find it possible to attend. Please spread the word to colleagues (or conservators) who may or may not be members but might enjoy an introduction to WAAC. And, for those of you who were at the Cody meeting, be sure to bring your photos.

Susanne Friend, President, letter, continued

In short, being President and planning the meeting is a big responsibility, but it isn’t really that bad. And once you’re in the position you realize that you’re not in it alone—there’s an ample Board of your friends and colleagues ready to help spread the load, give you constructive feedback on anything you’re not sure about, and to participate by discussing and voting on the occasional bigger issues. I feel honored and proud to be serving with our Board, as well as very grateful to the members. Working with them and for you, the WAAC Membership has been more much more enjoyable for me—yes, it’s fun!—than it has been onerous.

So, if you’ve been a member for a while, enjoyed going to the meetings, maybe you have already served as a Mal or Secretary, I hope you will consider running for the President position and the annual Membership Directory. (In that case, though, remember that we often have half a dozen or more people running for just two positions. If winning matters, you have much better odds if you’re happy just being a WAAC member, I hope you’ll come to the Annual Meeting in October to see some good professional talks and have some fun with a lot of friendly colleagues.

2006 Annual Meeting – October 20-22

WAAC Newsletter

Western Association for Art Conservation

WAAC Newsletter

2006 Annual Meeting – October 20-22

Center for Creative Photography – Tucson, AZ

Please send your title and contact information to Laura Downey Stanef

Talking submissions are being accepted as of now!
**Regional News**

**SILENT AUCTION**
WAAC will be hosting a Silent Auction benefit again this year. Last year’s auction was particularly fun and successful because we had so many great contributions—so please think about bringing or sending any unwanted or unused items of any kind—books, tools, kitsch, what-have-you. To donate, simply bring items along to the first day of the meeting—the first little earlier than the talks begin, please! Or, if you can’t or don’t want to carry them, send them ahead of time to:

Teresa Moreno

**ALASKA**
In addition to her usual Art Bank Curator position, Emily Ramos is given a 5 day lecture/workshop in April on the basic preservation practices for records managers for the Greater Anchorage Chapter of ARMA (the Association of Records Managers and Administrators).

In Juneau, a tragedy occurred when the city’s second oldest church burned to its foundations on March 12. The church, Pyjil in Hoonah, is the 6 ft. tall Alaskan oil paintings by Francis Davis, which adorned the walls of the main altar. El- scott Carrlee and Camilla Van Vooren have had the opportunity to work with each other, as well as conserve Academy prints in the collection, which were examined for the Renaissance panel paintings in the collection, which were examined for the rehousing of the remodeled Western Art Galleries.

Valerie Free is traveling to Beijing, China to prepare Qing Dynasty Empress Dragon robes for an upcoming exhibition. She will work closely with the Chinese Women’s Historical Gallery at the Bishop Museum. Conservation intern Vaimua Mullava is working in the objects lab for the next 3 months. Vai hail from Uvea via New Caledonia and will complete his graduate degree in conservation from Université de Paris at the Sorbonne this year. All hands are preparing for closure of Hawaiian Hall in July. The historic building will be renovated, and all new exhibits will be installed. Valerie has been working with Steve Weintrath over the past few years to develop environmental and lighting improvements for the galleries and Victorian style exhibit cases.

**Tin Manick is continuing environmental and lighting improvements for the four Kawaihae’a Church kou entrance doors and is in the process of repairing a broken King Kalakaua koa calabash lid. He has also submitted a treatment proposal for the Grand Teton National Park’s Alaskan Bumblebee (www.uaf.edu/museum/expand/index.html), evoking images of glaciers and ice break-up. The new Rose Berry Alaska Conservation Sci- ence, two renovated laboratory spaces, a temporary Project 10: Mrzyk & Moriceau and Félicen Rops – You Only Live 25 Years exhibition, which will be on display at the Library of Congress.

Jennifer Koerner, Chail Norton, Soko Furuhata, and Chie Ito have been busy preparing for LACMA at 40: Gifts in Honor of the Museum’s Anniversary and Preventive Conservation: Theory, Practice, and Prevention: An introduction to the conservation of objects lab for the next 3 months. Vai hail from Uvea via New Caledonia and will complete his graduate degree in conservation from Université de Paris at the Sorbonne this year. All hands are preparing for closure of Hawaiian Hall in July. The historic building will be renovated, and all new exhibits will be installed. Valerie has been working with Steve Weintrath over the past few years to develop environmental and lighting improvements for the galleries and Victorian style exhibit cases.

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Regional News, continued
these exhibitions include collaborative conservation projects with the lending institutions. Several ancient vases are now under conservation at the Robert Aitchison Sammlung in Berlin and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Kansas City for the Colors of Clay exhibition, and three Roman floor mosaics will be completed in partnership with the Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of El Jem in Tunisia.

The Department will be hostling an international symposium on the protection set museum collections from earthquake damage on May 3rd at both the Villa and the Getty Center. Speakers from all over the world, as well as the United States, will present state of the art approaches and research aimed at protecting collections.

The new mailing address for Jerry Poda-
ny, Jeffrey Maish, Eduardo Sanchez, Laura Rivers, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1000V, Los Angeles, CA 90049-1745. The phone extensions remain the same.

Susan Ann Chui joined the Paintings De-
dpartment at the J. Paul Getty Museum as assistant conservator in October, is presently conserving a large painting of a Madonna and Child by Nasonella, and is working with the Norton Simon Museum to examine and treat a collection of Fragonard paintings.

Griswold is serving as a consultant to the American Foundation for the Study of Man at the archeological site of Mahram Bilgh in Marib, Yemen. John is reviewing and coordinating initial investigations into the limestone and its deterioration, and helping to develop a plan for reinstallation of 30 monolithic columns in the Peristyle Hall. John is also heading a team to reconstruct the Daodifal Terrace and other elements from Laurelton Hall, Louis Comfort Tiffany’s estate, now lost. Work is also continuing on a condition survey of 100 sculptures at the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena.

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tion and deinstallation of two Paul Noble works at the Museum of Contemporary Art. Each work is composed of sixteen drawings with total dimensions of 13’ x 18’. Aitchison and Watters is working with the Norton Simon Museum to ex-
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Indian cultures. She is currently work-
ing with them to prepare for the opening of a new branch facility, Heard West, in Surprise, AZ.

The Conservation Department of the Mu-
seum of New Mexico System welcomes textile conservator Rebecca Tinkham to the staff in May. Rebecca will be working on the conservation of close to 400 artifacts from the Palace of the Governors under a generous Save America’s Treasures grant.

Laura Rivers, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1000V, Los Angeles, CA 90049-1745. The phone extensions remain the same.

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The evidence room at the Orleans Parish court house, and at the residence of jazz musician Dr. Michael White.

Regional Reporter:  Francis Prichett

SAN FRANCISCO

Meg Geiss-Mooney (textile/costume conservator in private practice) recently completed a site visit to one of California’s oldest missions still serving as a Roman Catholic church. Having left her part-time position at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco after 1 1/2 years where she conserved a wide variety of textile objects that were once used in worship, she continues to expand her practice into these religious realms. At the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco Textile Conservator Sarah Gates and Beth Suhay welcome new intern Joy McCallister. Joy is a recent Bay Area transplant and is volunteering in the lab three days a week in preparation for applying to conservation programs. In Paintings Conservation we welcome Mareike Lintelmann who is with us for a 6-month internship. Mareike comes from the Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences in Germany where she is in her second year of studies.

Will Shank is pleased to announce the publication of his first book, Celluloid San Francisco: The Movie Lover’s Guide to Bay Area Film Locations, co-authored with Jim Van Buskirk. The book launch took place in April at the San Francisco Public Library, followed by a series of book signings and a presentation at the San Francisco International Film Festival in Japan’s Kabuki Theaters. Art has relocated to the south of Spain with partner U.B. Morgan and daughter Stassa, but retains the mailing and e-mail addresses in San Francisco that are listed in the current WAAC newsletter.

Anne continues working with Greg on a series of five murals to be conserved and re-housed in a newly renovated performing arts center, an on-going project expected to continue for about 5 years. Anne is working on smaller paintings and works on paper, including master drawings from the collection of the Crocker Museum and privately owned Japanese paintings. Anne was in the small town of Lincoln, NE, in May, doing scheduled maintenance and repair of murals in the rotunda and entry vestibule. On May 25, Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University is hosting a BAACG program with Tom Stone of OCI. The general topic is discussion of conservation treatments and impact on the value of art objects. Details forthcoming.

Regional Reporter:  Charlotte S. Ameringer

TEXAS

Gregory Thomas continues his private practice, dba Art Care, in Rockport, Texas in paintings and paper conservation. Most recently he completed seven, early 20th-century oil on canvas paintings by A.R. Gurry for the Kauai Museum in Hawaii. Having completed a survey in 1998 for the museum on Kauai, the conservation treatment proposals were recently funded and the paintings shipped to the Art Care conservation studio for treatment. Greg also continues to provide conservation services for clients in Texas; works include an impressionistic landscape, oil addresses canvases in San Francisco that are listed on 3-D computer imaging of the archaeo-

Barbara Brown notes that Camille Moore, graduate student in the Insti-

tute of Fine Arts, New York University, will be fulfilling her 4th-year internship in photograph conservation at the Harry Ransom Center, working with

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Tear Repair of Cotton Canvas: A Variation of the Heiber Technique

At the Tear Repair Workshop at the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2004, Professor Heiber kindly discussed with me in some detail the specific process of thread by thread tear repair for unpainted cotton canvas. There are some distinct differences in the technique compared to that for repairing linen - and the WAAC Editor thought it useful to disseminate them more widely.

The aim of the technique for repairing a tear in unpainted cotton is to create a join that is not, when viewed from the front of the painting, visibly saturated with adhesive. This is definitely easier said than done! Below, in point form, is Professor Heiber’s advice.

Use water alone to groom the threads prior to joining, rather than 5% isinglass. Cotton is highly absorbent and thus stains very easily if the glue is used. It quickly absorbs the adhesive, and in doing so can also become quite stiff.

Pull the threads to the reverse of the canvas. One may need to lengthen the threads a little more with moisture and heat in order to be able to join them in the fashion described below.

Using tweezers twist the threads together perpendicular to the canvas, and apply the adhesive (Heiber’s starch/isinglass mixture) between the first twist. In this way, the adhesive join is above the plane of the back of the canvas, and is thus undetectable from the front.

Do not release the tweezers as the threads will untwist! Instead, apply the heated spatula to the tweezers; this then transfers the heat to the join whilst the threads are still being held together.

Finally, you may need to loosen the tweezers with a dental probe, as they tend to stick.

These instructions came at a good time, as I was working on a tear in a 19th-century painting on a medium weight basket-weave cotton duck. The tear was L-shaped, measuring 23 cm. horizontally by 10 cm. vertically.

The paint layer consisted of light brown dry pigment, merely rubbed and scrubbed into the support. Thread-by-thread tear repair was the only way one could reinsert the canvas, given that the weave was entirely visible and such an integral part of the painting. I repeatedly practised my technique for both tear mending and inpainting on a number of mock-ups prior to working on the original.

I endeavoured to use the twisting/tweezing technique above, but found that I simply did not have the skill to do it as Professor Heiber had described. (Professor Heiber mentioned that even he found it difficult to obtain an invisible repair.) I did, though, spend much time manipulating and lengthening threads in order to place the joins at the back of the canvas over the opposing thread below.

I found that all threads became quite fluffy with prolonged reweaving and manipulation, and that initial grooming with very dilute starch paste instead of water alone worked extremely well. This held the fibres in each thread together beautifully, such that they could then withstand the localised friction from reweaving, and also the later inpainting with dry pigment.

I constantly used a thread-counter to check my progress as I worked. The tear was L-shaped and quite large, and having started from the end of each side I was able to complete the repair at the corner relatively easily.

As for the inpainting, the dry pigment sat both within and on top of the canvas, making it very hard to emulate the surface. After much trial and error – and discussion with colleagues from other conservation disciplines; always a good thing! – I used a mixture of fine bole and ground pastel applied with a tamping motion using a very fine, broad, stumpy, worn sable brush. The nature of the brush was so critical; this one held enough material, both fine and coarse, to allow me to transfer it easily onto the canvas threads, and then work it in a little to achieve a result similar to the original paint/stain.

My technique developed as I worked, as is the nature of things, even whilst working on the original. It was during inpainting that I discovered the beneficial effects of having started using the starch paste to ‘consolidate’ the fibres. Those areas coated with starch were less disrupted by the necessary vigour of the action I used. It was disheartening to see one’s careful repair work become more visible as inpainting progressed.

However, the end result means the painting is displayable, and with careful lighting, even I have trouble finding the site of the repair. (I’ve seen this repair and it is stunningly good. Depressing, actually. Life was easier when you could tell yourself that a repair like this was not humanly possible. Ed.)

The extra manipulation of the threads inevitably meant the occasional breakage occurred. I dealt with this by the incorporation of another length of thread, the join for which was once again, strategically placed so as to be hidden from the front.

The cotton fibres for canvas are heavily beaten and are therefore quite short - you find yourself pulling out the occasional tuft of short fibres that have not withstood manipulation! The warp and weft threads had quite different characteristics – the weft was a fatter but less dense thread, and the warp, thinner and stronger, and each demanded a slightly different way of handling.

The pigment was mobile in water and travelled along the threads when they were wetted for grooming, staining the back of the repair.

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Note: During the treatment a colleague and I developed a variation of Prof. Heiber’s technique that works rather than fails, which allowed me an unobstructed work area. This will be described in a later Newsletter.

Linda Waters is a paintings conservator in Melbourne, Australia.

by Linda Waters
As a conservator and consultant, I occasionally have been asked to provide assistance in the care of American Indian items. The methods and techniques I suggested were always based on standard museum practices, yet, it seemed, my suggestions did not meet the cultural needs of the items and were impractical given the situation in which they existed. I was glad that this situation was rare. When collaborating on the project, we are still faced with the challenge of understanding the need for a special care. Yet there appeared to be a need for additional practical information, especially as tribal museums and cultural centers grew in number. So, one thing led to another, and in collaboration with many people, I edited a book intended to fill this need. The title is Caring For American Indian Objects: A Practical and Cultural Guide (edited by Sherelyn Ogden, St. Paul: MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2004) The book is based on standard museum practice and includes a section on cultural considerations, which is written by American Indian people. It was during this project that I became aware of how important cultural considerations are.

This article explores cultural considerations as they relate to why items are preserved and how they are used, handled, and displayed. Because I am discussing cultures different from mine, I use the words of American Indian people as much as possible, quoting extensively from American Indian conservators, and interpreted by professionals, which follows this article. Ed.) Sadowi points out that “Sacred objects...often require special care that cannot be reduced to a list of “do’s and don’ts.” The very notion of sacred is not static and, in fact, is subject to change. While having such a list or guidelines is practical, it simplifies the profound nature and purpose of these objects.”(p.9) Perhaps the concept of respect is violated most often in the display of cultural items. For example, it is not unusual for items that have special meaning for American Indian people, such as a powwow regalia, to be displayed in a museum, and thus "a list of objects and display techniques "(Hopi) points to the “conflict between culturally sensitive information protected by Indian communities and a museum’s role as a repository of the past or public institution... Native American people today. Whatever the item is, it is ‘alive’ and full of spirit. These items connect past, present, and future, and he notes "when most non-Native American people view...items behind glass [in a display], they think that the items are dead...and frozen in time. However, they aren’t, because much of the time of the items are still used by contemporary Native People. People who own heirloom pieces often bring out the pieces and use them for social gatherings and for religious purposes...”(p.16)

Another important cultural difference is the value placed upon respect and the interpretation of this concept. As Bad Bear explains, “everything about us — how we were raised, how we were taught — everything revolves around respect,”(p.82) and Char Tullie (Diné/Navajo) points out that “when working with cultural objects, the number one thing to have is respect.”(p.57) This value, which is deeply held by American Indian people, is central to their culture and needs to be respected in order to be able to work in museum work, including preservation. It affects the way items are used, handled, and displayed. And, is it not enough to employ the best museum practices when handling cultural objects? It is important to find information on how to handle items in a manner that is compatible with the appropriate tribal practice.

Another issue related to display and the concept of respect is displaying items out of the context of how they were used originally or without appropriate supporting information. Laine Thom believes that “American Indian cultural items should be combined with historical and contemporary photographs and graphic text of Native peoples, narrative and didactic, relevant to the themes of the exhibit. The result of such an exhibit would be an important method of [demonstrating] the ways of life of native peoples, historically and now. It is important to display items in such a way that the contemporary use are understood in the context of the lifeways of Native peoples.”(p.15) Nordstrand suggests that “when beginning an exhibit project, the collector or committee members should find out by first analyzing your own point of view. Do you see this object as art, as an artifact, or a museum object? As a living thing? As a cultural thing? What was the maker’s intention in creating this object? Did he or she intend for it to be displayed? Or even preserved beyond its original form? Or, do you want to consider how your point of view influences the story you are telling the audience. If a ceremonial item is displayed for its aesthetic qualities, are you providing accurate information to the audience?”(p.12)

Respectful display of items probably cannot be accomplished by non-American Indian curators and professionals. A list of “do’s and don’ts” is insufficient to carry over to the display of Native American cultural items.

The concept of respect in the care of cultural items may be most challenging for the nonindian curator as he or she adapts to a situation that is a cultural practice, and in other cultures. Some Native American people today. Whatever the item is, it is ‘alive’ and full of spirit. These items connect past, present, and future, and he notes "when most non-Native American people view...items behind glass [in a display], they think that the items are dead...and frozen in time. However, they aren’t, because much of the time of the items are still used by contemporary Native People. People who own heirloom pieces often bring out the pieces and use them for social gatherings and for religious purposes...”(p.16)

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The presence of American Indian sacred objects in museum collections continues to raise questions about their preservation and care for museum professionals and American Indian communities. These questions, which relate to standard collections management and conservation, speak to the diversity of tribal cultural practices and the tension that exists between protecting sacred objects and communal interests. The presence of American Indian sacred objects in museum collections is key to this discussion, and cultural institutions are central to the communication that NAGPRA had led to among tribal communities. The removal of objects from their original contexts, however, is key to this discussion, and active management practices, such as using the tribe’s methods of care to sacred and significant objects in their collection, are important to consider. Neutrality can be the most important form of respect that museums can demonstrate.

Recent research into the nature of sacred collections suggests that it is possible to view sacred objects in light of their original purpose by using the following general categories of use: Physical, Symbolic, and Life Ending Use. Life Ending Use is employed by religious or cultural practitioners to ritually end the life of an object in order to cease its sacred attributes. Undoubtedly, tribal and non-tribal museum professionals have been able to observe some of these different categories of use in the museum, especially if they have engaged in consultations with tribal representatives. Tribal museum professionals may recognize these types of special use from their own tribal traditions. The categories are very simple and are outlined here to provide a minimal sense of the different uses or contexts sacred objects have for tribal communities. Passive accommodation allows the museum staff to accommodate the active practice of a religious or cultural practitioner.

For virtually all sacred and significant objects in museum collections, tribal or non-tribal, the type of care is subject to the context in which the objects are currently situated. For the objects. The offering is not made or performed by the practitioner, the object may be placed near the object for a period of time. The key to this scenario is that the practitioner, not the museum staff, engaged the object or employed active practice. The offering is specifically made by the practitioner to the object. The offering is not made by the museum staff, and the object is not transferred to the museum. In the post-NAGPRA years, neutrality can be the most important form of respect that museums can demonstrate. Because having such a list of guidelines is appealing, simplifies the profound nature and purpose of these objects. To do the right thing by engaging in repatriation consultation and opening the door to dialogue that offers alternatives to objects in the collection that have not been listed from their original context to further the museum’s goal of preservation or education, not to further their fulfillment of the objects.

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Tucson Hotel List

Make your reservations early! The University’s Family Weekend coincides with our meeting (though we scheduled first!), and this is likely to affect rates and availability, especially near campus. As a tourist destination, Tucson has a wide variety of hotel/motel possibilities to fit any budget. Check out a map for proximity to the campus and our meeting.

Sites for information:
- arizona.edu/home/locating.php – for links and descriptions, as well as information about getting around the university campus.
- visittucson.org – The Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau

These hotels are within blocks of the WAAC Meeting site, the Center for Creative Photography (CCP):
- Peppertrees Inn & Breakfast Inn
- Doubletree Hotel
- Casa Alegre B&B Inn
- Clarion Hotel Randolph Park
- La Posada del Valle
- Doubletree
- InnSuites (I-10 at St Mary/Speedway)
- Choice Hotels

Located about one mile NW of the campus:
- University Inn
- Four Points Sheraton
- A bit further away (a mile or so from CCP on the other side of campus) but still walkable:
- Sam Hughes Inn (B&B)
- Located just outside the NE corner of the campus; large, beautifully maintained facilities; walkable, but the neighborhood is not as good:
- Historic building, but don’t stay here unless you know and like the architecture:
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A bit further away (a mile or so from CCP on the other side of the campus) but still walkable, if you like to walk:
- Four Points Sheraton
- Located just outside the NE corner of the campus; large, with a number of amenities, but not the newest of buildings:
- Also located in the Sam Hughes neighborhood:
- Adobe Rose (B&B)
- Adobe Rose (B&B)
- Also located in the Sam Hughes neighborhood:
- Casa Alegre B&B Inn

Also walkable, but the neighborhood is not as good:
- Best Western Royal Sun Inn

Getting to Tucson – and Getting Around Once You Are There!

By Air
Tucson International Airport (TUC) hosts 10 domestic airlines: Alaska Airlines, America West/US Airways, American, Continental, Delta/SkyWest, Frontier, Northwest, Southwest, and United. Sometimes it is more convenient or less expensive to fly into/out of Phoenix rather than Tucson—so it’s usually worth comparing flights in both airports. The Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix (PHX) is approximately a 1.5 hour drive from central Tucson.

Rentals are available at the airport, in terminal:
- Or Arizona Stagecoach, a door-to-door airport shuttle (520) 889-1000 azstagecoach.com
- Or Arizona Shuttle (800) 888-2749 arizonashuttle.com
- Shuttle goes to shuttle stop located on the edge of campus. Fares depend on whether you have a reservation or not; made within a week of travel costs $29 one-way and $58 round-trip; 7-day advance is less expensive and same-day more costly.

By Train or Bus
Not the most common means of arriving in Tucson, but Amtrak and Greyhound both have stations downtown, thus within a couple of miles of the meeting location. Rental car facilities would require a taxi ride.

By Car
The I-10 freeway runs through Tucson, roughly skirting it from the northwest to downtown, then curving eastwards to skirt the southern part of the city (or vice-versa, if you approach from the east). Thus the freeway is a way to get to Tucson, but not usually an efficient means of getting around once there.

A major construction project will affect the I-10 freeway in central Tucson for much of 2006-2009, including during our meeting. Current information (February 2006) suggests that entry to the downtown area will remain open during the time of the WAAC meeting; however it is worth checking the ADOT website for current information: 10tucsonstr disjoint.com.

Getting Around Tucson

Unsure of where to go next time you’re in Tucson? We have compiled a list of interesting destinations:

- Tucson is a well-lit caving system into which water still percolates from the surface above and calcium carbonate features are still growing. It has an unusually wide variety of brilliantly colored cave formations, including the longest-known Soda Straw stalactite formation in the world.
- The observatory is a working research station, observatory, and planetarium situated on Kitt Peak. Elevation is 6,875 feet and temperatures average 20 degrees cooler than Tucson.
- Private anthropological and archaeological museum and research center, founded 1957, dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Native American cultures and their histories.
- Bisbee, Arizona
- South of Tucson, driving distance from U of A: apx. 95 miles (2 hours).
- Historic mining town featuring a large open pit copper mine (inactive) as well as historic sites, museum, and galleries.
- Tombstone, Arizona
- South of Tucson, driving distance from U of A: apx. 70 miles (1 hour).
- Yes, the actual Tombstone of Wild West fame, now existing primarily on tourism.
- Tubac, Arizona
- South of Tucson, driving distance from U of A: apx. 50 miles (1 hour).
- Established in 1752 as a Spanish presidio (fort); now an artist’s colony with some galleries.
- State Historic Park.
- Tumacacori National Historical Park
- Driving distance from University of Arizona: apx. 45 miles (1 hour).
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“This Could be Monumental,” Los Angeles Times, 01/06/05

Motivations get tangled as countries turn to art as a forum of facts. A telling case in point: the Obelisk of Axum.

At the end of last year, a stone slab from the Sahel area of Chad, measuring 1.8 metres by 1.5 metres, is estimated to be original Pollocks. The work of Richard P. Taylor, a scientist who is broadly experienced in using computers to identify Pollock’s style, is the largest art of its kind and has since been added to the museum’s collection.

“Stressed Workers Enjoy Art for Heart’s Sake,” The Guardian (UK), 01/09/06

Visiting a museum is a good way to relieve stress, says a new study. The study of 28 City high flyers who visited a museum measured the time they spent in front of works and at a gift shop – in 1986 and acquired it a year later for about $220,000. The museum, one of the Spanish city’s largest and most popular, commissioned the work four years ago and 1986.

“The Guardian” (UK), 01/25/06

Working on an ambitious train tunnel to connect Asia and Europe, work- ers stumbled on the original part of Constantine’s zama, a maze of dams, jetties and platforms that is the ancient city of Byzantium’s hub for trade with the near east.

“Lost Treasures of Constantine,” The Guardian (UK), 01/25/06

The vases had been placed – rather than the Ethiopians could. The Italians could better care for the arti-

facts. A telling case in point: the Obelisk of Axum. The Obelisk of Axum is an ancient granite statue 24 metres tall that was sent to France in the 1930s. It is the largest art of its kind and has since been added to the museum’s collection.

“The Guardian” (UK), 01/06/05

A milepost will be planted this spring, ignore the fact that the world of high art.

“Welcome to the Machine,” The Guardian (UK), 02/08/06

“Shoelace Costs Museum Dear as Violet,” The Guardian (UK), 01/09/06

Amid a Roman storm, a bolt struck. That spent most of its life in the middle of a busy Romanian piazza.

“The Vincent van Gogh masterpiece at the heart of a brewing contro-

versy at the Detroit Institute of Arts will be back on view starting this weekend. But the fight over the painting’s rightful ownership, with its charged accusations of Nazi-era fraud, is far from over. The DIA filed a lawsuit in federal court Tuesday to argue that van Gogh’s ‘The Diggers’ is an estimated $15 mil-

lion and willed to the museum by a De-

troit collector in 1970, should remain in the museum. The heirs of a Nazi-era Jewish collector, Martha Na-

than, claim the painting should be returned to them because it served as a work as a result of Nazi persecution and did not receive a fair-market price.

“Prehistoric Cave Art Discovered,” The Guardian (UK), 02/08/06

An amanuensis has discovered prehistoric human remains and cave art in western France believed to date back 27,000 years, several thousand years older than the world-famous paintings at Lascaux. As well as wall markings including that of a bear and a horse, the finding is the largest art of its kind and has since been added to the museum’s collection.

“Computer Analysis Suggests Paint-

ings Are Not Pollocks,” Los Angeles Times, 02/08/06

A physicist who is broadly ex-

perienced in using computers to identify Pollock’s style, is the largest art of its kind and has since been added to the museum’s collection.

“Welcome to the Machine,” The Guardian (UK), 02/08/06

Moscow has been tearing down much of its Soviet-era architecture. But now Moscow is seeing a rash of cool industrial conversions that display ing from projects like London’s Tate Modern. It has yet to turn the tide of de-

struction but embattled preservationists believe it’s a sign of hope for the future. The idea is to transform the shells of dilapidated industrial buildings that are dotted across the capital into galleries, arts centers, and design bureaus. Pre-

eminent among them is the magnificent new State Centre for Contemporary Art, a disused power station that sits on a side street near the city zoo.

“Amid Flap, van Gogh back on Dis-

play at the DIA,” Detroit Free Press, 01/27/06

The Vincent van Gogh master-

piece at the heart of a brewing contro-

versy at the Detroit Institute of Arts will be back on view starting this weekend. But the fight over the painting’s rightful ownership, with its charged accusations of Nazi-era fraud, is far from over. The DIA filed a lawsuit in federal court Tuesday to argue that van Gogh’s ‘The Diggers’ is an estimated $15 mil-

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“Rocked to our Foundations,” The Times (UK), 02/22/06

The warranty of destruction of cultural-

important buildings is now a war crime.

Genocide, crimes against hu-

manity, religious persecution, Slombodovsky is not short of charges to face at his trial in The Hague. But one charge in particular is intriguing: “The intentional and wanton destruction of religious and cultural buildings of the Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat communities.”

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“Detroyed: The Untold Story of the Grozny Museum of Fine Art,” The Art Newspaper (UK), 02/08/06

In 1994 in Grozny, Chechnya, the city’s Museum of Fine Art was obliterated. The destruction has gone unreported, despite the fact that it is the first museum in Europe to have been attacked in wartime. The building was found that about 90% of buildings in the city, once home to 500,000, have been made into apartments and the rest partly destroyed, mostly as a result of Russian bombing. The Museum of Fine Arts, which housed a collection of Islamic, Slavic and Western works, was one of them.
“Boy, 12, Gums Up Pricey DIA Artwork,” Detroit Free Press, 02/28/06

At the Detroit Institute of Arts on Friday, a mischievous 12-year-old boy visiting the museum with a school group took a piece of barely chewed Wrigley’s Extra Polar Ice out of his mouth and stuck it on Helen Frankenthaler’s 1963 abstract painting The Bay, damaging one of the most important modern paintings in the museum’s collection and a landmark picture in the artist’s output.

Completed in 1963, The Bay is a landmark Frankenthaler because it was her first stained picture done with acrylic paint, a new medium at the time. Luckily, the gum stuck to the painting’s lower left-hand corner and had not adhered to the fiber of the canvas. But it did leave a chemical residue about the size of a quarter. The conservation department was researching the exact chemicals in the gum to determine which solvent should be used to clean the painting. Once a solvent is chosen, the picture would be placed on a vacuum table that would pull the solvent through the canvas, removing the stain.

“Valley of the Queens Gets a Getty Assist,” Los Times, 03/08/06

Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities and the Getty Conservation Institute have entered into a six-year partnership for the conservation and management of the Valley of the Queens, one of the world’s most important archeological sites. Building on an earlier collaborative effort — which consisted of wall paintings in the tomb of Nefertari — the new project calls for a methodical approach to long-term preservation of a broader area on the west bank of the Nile at Luxor.

“Boy’s Gum is Plucked from Valuable Art,” Detroit Free Press, 03/11/06

The saga of the $1.5-million abstract Helen Frankenthaler painting defaced two weeks ago at the Detroit Institute of Arts by a 12-year-old boy who stuck gum on it during a school outing is heading for a happy ending.

After intensive research, experimentation, and surgical work with high-performance tweezers, hand-rolled Q-tips, and a fast-evaporating solvent - plus some purposeful fooling around with gum – the quarter-sized residue on Helen Frankenthaler’s The Bay is gone.

It’s not often you see a 53-year-old professional play with his gum, but on Friday morning at the Detroit Institute of Arts, paintings conservator Alfred Ackerman picked up a wad of chewed Wrigley’s Extra Polar Ice and stretched it like taffy, flipping it around his finger to create a second disgusting strand.

“No Flattery Is Found in an Imitation of a Rockwell,” The New York Times, 04/06/06

For years, art experts have noted that the original copy of Norman Rockwell’s painting, Breaking Home Ties, appears to be lighter in color than the prints that appeared in the Saturday Evening Post in 1954. The discrepancy has long been blamed on an overly aggressive cleaning of the work. But now, the truth has come out: cartoonist Don Trachte, who owned the painting for years, apparently made a sophisticated copy in the 1970s and hid the original in a secret compartment in his Vermont home, in an effort to avoid losing the Rockwell in a bitter divorce. It wasn’t until last month that Trachte’s sons discovered the genuine article, right where their father had left it.

“After the Wisdom Moment, Time to Tape over the Cracks,” The Guardian (UK), 03/30/06

Conservators at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge are working to restore Qing vases that were shattered when a museum visitor tripped and smashed into them. What will happen when they’re glued back together? They’ll go back on display. “These vases were given to us in the 1940s and have been in the same place for 50 years. Some 9 million people have walked past them and this is the first time they have been damaged. We have to look at the risk in perspective.”

“Babylon Awaits an Iraq Without Fighting,” The New York Times, 04/18/06

Babylon, the mud-brick city with the million-dollar name, has paid the price of war. It has been ransacked, looted, torn up, paved over, neglected, and roughly occupied. Archaeologists said American soldiers even used soil thick with priceless artifacts to stuff sandbags. But Iraqi leaders and United Nations officials are not giving up on it. They are working assiduously to restore Babylon, home to one of the Seven Wonders of the World, and turn it into a cultural center and possibly even an Iraqi theme park.