

Science and Technology Group Annual Report FY2020

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1 Introduction

The goal of the Art Conservation Program at OIST is to contribute to the preservation and understanding of material culture through collaborations with museums, communities, and cultural heritage professionals. This year was focused on the conservation treatment of lacquer artifacts from the Yuntanza Museum, as well as on international collaborations that focused on advancements in the art conservation field. I also researched methods for decolonizing collections care practices and forming more equitable conservation community partnerships.

2 Activities and Findings

Conservation Treatments with the Yuntanza Museum

- *Mishibaachi* (special occasion red & black lacquer bowl), Okinawan, Acc.#763: Treatment of this object was continued after a hiatus from the 2017 treatment that was begun by former intern Tessa Young. In FY2020, excess glue was reduced, lacquer was further stabilized, and the lacquer object was cleaned.
- *Kufan* (ceremonial red & black lacquer lidded vessel), Okinawan, Pre WWII, Acc#1513: Treatment of this object was continued after a hiatus from the 2018 treatment that was begun by former OIST visitor Kristen Gillette. In FY2020, unstable areas of lacquer were stabilized, excess glue was removed, and the *kufan* was cleaned.
- *Bento Bako* (tiered bento box, *tsuikin* multicolored lacquer), Okinawan, Acc#3120: Treatment of this object was continued after a 2017 hiatus. Previous treatment steps were performed by myself, Melissa Carr (former OIST visitor), and Tessa Young. In FY2020, areas of flaking lacquer and splitting wood were stabilized, and excess glue was removed.

OIST DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility) in Conservation Leadership Workshop

- I organized a 3-day workshop (March 2-4, 2021) focused on DEIA Leadership in Conservation. The workshop was led by Dina Bailey, who is CEO of [Mountain Top Vision](#) and an experienced facilitator in the area of DEIA in cultural heritage. The workshop brought together thirteen international participants, all of whom are leading advocates for DEIA in conservation. The session allowed the participants to gain new skills to help them more effectively cause positive change, allowed participants to explore methods that promote dialogue around difficult topics, and provided them with other leadership training.

American Institute for Conservation (AIC), Equity and Inclusion Committee (EIC)

- In my role as co-chair of the AIC [Equity & Inclusion committee](#), I helped plan, craft, and implement policies and programs that strive to make the art conservation field more diverse, inclusive, accessible, and equitable. FY2020 was a particularly dynamic year as the cultural heritage sector responds to the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice.

Professional Associate Status

- I achieved peer-reviewed [AIC Professional Associate](#) status in FY 2020.

3 Collaborations

- **Untold Stories:** I participated in a series of conservation planning workshops organized by [Untold Stories](#), an organization that "...pursues an art conservation profession that represents and preserves a fuller spectrum of human cultural heritage."

4 Publications and other output

- **Presenter & Panelist**, Session: *Our Conservation Future: Together, moving forward toward an inclusive & diverse field*, Garman Art Conservation Department, Buffalo State College, 50th Anniversary Program – October 24, 2020.
- **Guest Lecturer** (co-presented with Anisha Gupta). *Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Conservation*. The UCLA/Getty Interdepartmental Program in the Conservation of Archaeological and Ethnographic

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Materials – October 21, 2020.

- **Co-organizer**, [Social Justice & Conservation](#), Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC) Webinar and Workshop Series – October 27 & December 8, 2020, February 23 & March 11, 2021.
Description: “Conservation ethics is a topic of perennial interest and central importance to conservators. In the last few months there has been special attention on ethics within our profession as we grapple with the reality of racial inequity in conservation and in wider society. This webinar series provides participants with opportunities to learn from diverse speakers on critical issues that explore the intersection between conservation and social justice.

The Social Justice and Conservation series includes three free online webinars for the cultural heritage field followed by an online interactive workshop geared toward conservation professionals. Each webinar will start with short presentations by speakers with first-hand knowledge of the issue being addressed. These presentations will be followed by a panel discussion where participants can ask questions of the speakers. Drawing upon the content shared in the webinar series, FAIC will offer an interactive workshop in the spring, allowing participants to further evaluate their ethical framework in small groups. A facilitator will guide participants through this process, helping them question and examine long-held conservation stances.”