

OPC Membership Meeting

Virtual via Web-Ex

May 20, 2021

Leadership:

Jim DaMico (Chair-Elect) - Curator of AV Collections, Cincinnati Museum Center

Kim Hoffman (Education & Programming) – Preservation Librarian, Miami University

Jamye Jamison (Secretary) – Paper Conservator/Owner, Jamison Art Conservation

Holly Prochaska (Education & Programming) – Preservation Librarian, The Preservation Lab, University of Cincinnati

Ashleigh Schieszer (Chair) – Conservator, The Preservation Lab, University of Cincinnati

Membership:

Susie Cobbledick – Ellerman Book and Paper Conservator, Peter H. Raven Library, Missouri Botanical Garden

Ed Vermue – Special Collections and Preservation Librarian, Oberlin College Libraries

Join for round table:

Jessica Ebert – Preservation Technician, The Preservation Lab, University of Cincinnati

Catarina Figueirinhas – Senior Conservation Technician, The Preservation Lab, University of Cincinnati

Julie Reilly – Executive Director, ICA Art Conservation

Miriam Nelson (Treasurer) – Head of Preservation, Alden Library, Ohio University

1. Call to order, agenda review, introductions (Ashleigh Ferguson Schieszer, OPC Chair)

Ashleigh called the meeting to order at 10:06AM with a Land Acknowledgment.

Going forward, she would like to attach it to the agenda with links. Jamye asked about also adding something to the website. Ed mentioned that Canadian organizations have been doing this for years and he supports it. Holly said both would be great. Ashleigh stated that leadership will craft a statement and share it with membership. She also hopes that DEAI will be a standing item on the membership meeting. Holly would like it to be on the leadership agenda too. Ed would like it to influence the education and programming aspect of OPC because it extends beyond our immediate group.

2. Chair Report (Ashleigh Ferguson Schieszer, OPC Chair)

LSTA Online Conservation Class - Overall, it has been a success so far. 20 spots for the class filled in less than a day. Glad to see people able to apply. June 2nd will be a kick off and then applicants can take the course at their own pace until June 23rd. Deadline for grant is Aug 2nd. Grants will be awarded in Oct with projects to start in Nov. Date of completion is Aug 31st 2022. There will be no extra meetings but the contact information for the speakers will be released. June 2nd event will be designed to make sure everyone can access the course and to give general information and an orientation to the process.

3. Chair Elect Report (Jim Damico, Chair Elect)

OPC has been advertising for the 2021 mini-grant since March 8th and have not received any applicants as of yet. The information has been posted to numerous list serves and social media. Jamye noted that people might still be in limbo and not sure what to do yet. Ed mentioned he has an assistant

that he could push toward applying for a mini-grant. Jim said hopefully people will be getting out there soon. Ashleigh suggested featuring someone who has done a grant in advertising/on social media to show people what is possible. Jim thought that maybe \$250 is too small. Ashleigh said there used to be larger amount but since there is no travel, the amount was reduced. We can always look at what funds are required on a case by case basis and up it as needed.

4. Approval of Minutes (Jamye Jamison, Secretary)

Minutes from the March 2021 membership meeting were offered for approval. Ashleigh moved to approve, Jim seconded. All were in Favor.

5. Review of the Council's finances (Miriam Nelson, Treasurer)

OPC currently has \$14636 in its account. We should start getting rid of money.

6. Membership updates – (Ashleigh Ferguson Schieszer, Chair)

We currently have a vacancy in this position with Ashleigh filling the position for the time being. There are more lapsed memberships, mostly institutions, likely due to the pandemic. People in various institutions have shifted and things are moving a lot more slowly with people still working from home. Memberships for individuals have stayed strong.

7. Marketing & Outreach Committee (Andrew Mancuso, Marketing and Outreach Chair)

Andrew was unable to join (out sick). He has been doing a great job getting content out there on social media. Everyone should feel free to share more scenes from their workplaces with him, especially things going on in labs and related events around OH.

8. Education & Programming Committee report (Holly Prochaska & Kim Hoffman, Education and Programs)

Following the last membership meeting, there was a survey sent which received 10 responses. So far, Kim and Holly have been scheduling education activities at end of membership meetings. They have been using MS forms for the survey and it's easier to use. Results indicate that cradles and historic binding structures were most popular. Holly wants to send out the survey for the roundtable directly after the meeting. It will be sent to everyone along with the reading. The 7 questions that will be covered in the roundtable will be sent to wild apricot. In terms of follow up, the data will be shared at the July Leadership meeting and it might serve to inform the Sept member meeting as well. Ashleigh is glad to have the survey as an opportunity for more feedback for those who might not be able to attend and/or those who feel more comfortable replying more anonymously. Holly is wondering about whether the Sept meeting would be able to be in person. Jamye wondered if there is a covered outdoor space for people who don't feel comfortable being inside. Ashleigh wondered if there was not quite enough institutional support for travel yet. Ed noted that even at his very cautious institution, the responsibility for COVID safety and decisions surrounding that is moving to the individual. Kim was not sure what the travel support would be for the fall and when would we need to decide whether the meeting would be in person or not. Ashleigh mentioned that the Sept meeting is usually in Cleveland for the purposes of the LSTA grant meeting beforehand. Jamye mentioned that it would be possible for there to be a space at 78th Street studios for a meeting, but also noted that it might be best to have the meeting in a central location like Columbus due to ease of travel. Ashleigh asked if there was a topic slated for the

educational section of the meeting yet. Kim mentioned cradles but Holly wondered what might be needed for a set up. Ashleigh noted that maybe for Sept we aren't ready yet for a longer workshop. Perhaps we should get a speaker – with virtual options, the speaker could be from anywhere. Kim asked if we had a speaker whether that would lend itself to more to a virtual meeting. Ashleigh hoped it could potentially be some sort of hybrid and will do some research to see how that might be able to happen. She will focus on Columbus as a central location for ease of travel.

Adjourn business meeting at 10:57AM.

15 Minute Break (11:00 - 11:15)

Roundtable Discussion (11:15 - 12pm) Ohio Preservation Council organizational assessment and planning: Ensuring DEAI work is our everyday work

Though the Balboa Art Conservation Center serves museums and other collecting institutions, Leticia Gomez Franco draws a distinction between the center and the organizations it serves in order to free the non-profit from the biases baked into the collecting, curating, describing and making public cultural heritage material. Many of OPC's members have some kind of professional relationship with museums, libraries, and archives that face the institutional biases Gomez Franco describes.

How do you see OPC in relation to those institutions?

Consider our interest in sharing best practices or our role as a professional organization, for example.

Feedback:

Lack of history (collections) = lack of baggage which makes OPC better positioned to speak to its members more freely. More of a neutral position than those orgs who do have a history.

Need to think more about developing relationships with other professionals and helping the next group of professionals come to the fore. How do members who represent larger institutions let go of their institution's baggage when coming to OPC? What types of biases do they bring into the organization? How can we reach out to more and a wider variety of organizations? How do we go out to others rather than expecting them to come to us, but in the same vein not impose upon those communities what we believe is "right."

Knowing and naming the communities that we want to reach out to. Every effort is not going to work, but that doesn't mean you should stop. The conservation field has historically been very elitist. How can OPC be more accessible to everyone from the bottom up. It isn't enough to just open the doors. For mini-grants, should we be more broad and post paper flyers for example. Important to figure out who to reach out to and then follow up with that.

What action steps can OPC take locally to address the disturbing lack of diversity within the field of preservation? What specifically are the barriers to entering the field?

Feedback:

Path to being in preservation/conservation is ambiguous. The route has high barriers so OPC could think about how to support those who are coming into the field. Issue of making people aware of what preservation is earlier. Reaching out to younger people sooner. Need to be aware of all the struggles

and barriers that exist for people coming into the field. Address smaller step by step barriers. Need to really broaden the net and not think about traditional libraries and archives as the only places that deal with preservation issues. Partner with OPC institutions to create mentorships/internships. STEM programs as a possible entryway to younger audience. Might need to target teachers to join career days. Underwriting the cost of a children's book. Could OPC tap into school programs that already exist. Could also explore book arts with younger audiences as a gateway. Show and tell.