



## CAPC News – April 2020

### COVID-19

CAPC's current position on the COVID-19 pandemic is as follows:

- The health of conservators, their families, and our communities is top priority. If your work has not been deemed an essential service, please stay home. There is much valuable conservation work that can be done from home.
- As explained below, we will not be advocating for governments to add our profession to the list of essential services. Significant risks to cultural collections and sites can and should be managed by those already designated as essential workers. We believe that arguing for designation as an essential service at this time isn't optimal as the government's focus is responding to the human catastrophe around us.
  - During this crisis, we believe that the most significant risks to cultural collections and sites are theft and vandalism. One such event has been publicized and there are undoubtedly others that have either not yet been detected or are being kept from the media. We know from experience that museums and sites that are closed seasonally are at higher risk of theft and vandalism. Protecting museums and historic sites from these threats is indeed important. Larger institutions have security teams that can monitor the premises remotely and in person. Many smaller museums have contracts with security firms that monitor their alarm systems. Municipalities and provinces have police services that can increase patrols of museums and historic sites. Across the country, security services are deemed an essential service and are trained to respond to break-ins and other security issues. We do not believe that conservators without such training should be taking on security duties.
  - Other risks to collections that will cause significant damage if left unattended include water leaks, pests and malfunctioning HVAC systems. To detect the presence of leaks and pests, regular inspections of collection areas in closed museums are recommended. This should be undertaken by museum staff who are already designated as essential workers, such as facilities management. In larger institutions, facilities management will also monitor building systems and will be made aware of environmental issues that they can then address. Some museums are asking staff to take turns inspecting collections areas. Whether you will be asked to do this or not will depend on your work status under provincial rules.
- CCI has set up a task force to provide advice to heritage institutions about how best to protect their staff, collections and sites during the pandemic. Rather than duplicating this effort, CAPC and CAC will distribute CCI's recommendations to the

heritage sector via our websites and press releases. At the time of writing, CCI is not able to update their website remotely so this is a critical role for us. We believe that this is the most effective use of our limited resources at this point. CAPC members who wish to be more pro-active can engage with their local authorities to provide expert advice and/or encouragement on safeguarding local heritage.

- We believe that the primary risk to cultural heritage in the long term is a reduction in conservation personnel and funding for conservation in general after the crisis has passed. It for this reason that we are exploring how to approach this type of advocacy and welcome your suggestions.

We have created a list of resources for conservators and museums affected by the pandemic. It can be found on our website [here](#) and has also been shared with CAC.

### **Annual General Meeting**

In light of the cancellation of the 2020 CAC Annual Conference, our Annual General Meeting will be held online via Zoom. The meeting will take place on Friday May 8th from 12:30 p.m - 2 p.m. You will be receiving all of the official AGM documents by email shortly. If you cannot attend the meeting, please fill in your proxy and send it to our secretary, Melissa Potter at [secretary@capc-acrp.ca](mailto:secretary@capc-acrp.ca)

### **Board Positions**

The two positions up for election this year are Vice-President and Special Projects Director. Stephanie Porto is standing for her second term as Vice-President, but other nominations are welcome. We are bidding farewell to our current Special Projects Director Lisa Isley. Lisa has contributed greatly to the Board; we will miss her business savvy and her thoughtful consideration of the issues at hand. Marie-Lou Beauchamp has agreed to run for the position of Special Projects Director. Other nominations are welcome.

### **New Members**

CAPC is delighted to welcome three new members: Katherine Potapova (Paper), Bethany Joe Mikelait (Paintings), and Chloé Lucas (Photographs). Many thanks to those who volunteer their time and expertise as members of Boards of Examination.

### **Retired Members Class**

Last year the Board sought feedback from the membership on whether to add a new class of retired members to the membership structure of the CAPC, which would require an amendment to the By-laws. The responses prompted the Board to explore the issue further and to draft a proposal for a Retired Members Class. This was originally to be voted upon by the membership in a special resolution before the Annual General Meeting however we were alerted to the fact that we did not allow for a discussion amongst the membership, which would have enabled those in favour and those against the proposal to explain their position to their colleagues, and which would also have allowed for a refinement of the proposal for the better.

In the interests of transparency and best practice, we are allotting time at the AGM for a discussion where members can share their points of view. The proposal can be amended based on the discussion, and a vote will be either be taken on the final proposal at the AGM or shortly thereafter.

### **Revised By-Laws**

Last year the By-laws were updated to reference Continuing Professional Development. This year, a further revision may be necessary depending on the outcome of the vote on the Retired Members Class. Changes to our By-laws must be submitted to Corporations Canada.

The Board has also been working on updating the Rules and Regulations to include new aspects of CAPC's practice such as the Continuing Professional Development requirement and the expedited process for recognizing additional specializations. A draft of the revised Rules and Regulations will be circulated to the membership for comment before a final version is put to a vote.

### **Accreditation Information**

Accreditation Director Cathy Stewart has been very busy responding to numerous enquiries about applying for membership in CAPC and, with the help of Anita Henry, organizing Boards of Examination. She has also been reconciling and updating accreditation information on the website and in various documents, and adding guidelines developed by the Documentation Working Group.

### **Mentorship**

CAPC's Mentorship Program is underway. The Board has received three mentee applications since last December and successfully placed one of those mentees. Potential mentors are currently being approached to assist the other two candidates in preparing their applications for accreditation and to offer advice on professional development. Members with knowledge and experience in Paintings and Sculpture conservation, private practice, and workshop instruction and bilingual Paper conservators are sought at this time. Please consider offering your time and expertise to help form the next generation of accredited conservation professionals!

### **Joint CAC-CAPC Canadian Collections Care Survey**

The data from this highly successful survey was analyzed and published in an accessible and meaningful report. It can be found on the CAC and CAPC websites. A press release spurred media interest and resulted in several newspaper articles. Journalists continue to contact CAPC for comments on issues such as overcrowding in museums. We plan to explore joint advocacy initiatives with CAC using the survey results as a catalyst.

### **Joint CAC-CAPC Hiring Resource Working Group**

Chloé Lucas (CAC) and Carmen Li (CAPC) have begun work on a Hiring Resource that will provide guidelines to heritage institutions for the creation of conservation positions. It is

intended as a constructive response to the misuse of the title of “Conservator” in job ads and will encourage the hiring of conservation students and emerging professionals. The issue of reasonable compensation for emerging conservators will be touched upon. Members interested in finding out more about the work of the Hiring Resource Working Group are encouraged to contact Carmen Li at [liaison@capc-acrp.ca](mailto:liaison@capc-acrp.ca)

### **Job Ads**

On a related topic, the CAPC Board has instituted a policy regarding job ads in response to the increasing number of requests to distribute these ads to our membership. We do not currently have the volunteer resources to evaluate each posting to see if it meets appropriate professional practice in the area of salary, qualifications, etc. To each distributed ad, we are therefore adding a statement to the effect that we do not endorse the contents of the ad. If a member has concerns out the ad, they are encouraged to contact us and we will investigate the issue. In the past three months, the President has contacted three organizations with suggestions as to how to improve job ads.

### **Grants**

The 2019 Emerging Conservator Grant was awarded to Marika Kesler to attend the 2019 North American Textiles Conservation Conference in Ottawa. The 2019 Programming Grant was awarded to the Gilding Workshop delivered by Sacha Marie Levay at Queen’s University in February 2020.

### **Communication and Liaison**

This year has seen an increase in the number of opportunities for communication with the general public. For example, we participated in #AskaConservator Day, where we managed to compensate for our lack of social media presence. We were also approached to write articles for museum publications; Carmen Li wrote an article for the Alberta Museums Association’s quarterly INFOrm e-magazine. We have confirmed the need for a communications strategy to help guide our responses to these requests and our eventual social media activity.

We have been approached to engage with the International Institute for Conservation (IIC) and have begun a tripartite CAC/CAPC/CCI liaison which holds great potential for strategic and synergistic action that will benefit the field of conservation in Canada. Stay tuned for news about these collaborations.

As is evident from our numerous joint projects, we continue to work closely with our sister organization, CAC. At this time it is becoming clear that advocacy is an important area for further partnership.

### **Call for Volunteers**

There are many important initiatives that are on hold due to insufficient volunteer resources. Contact Fiona Graham at [president@capc-acrp.ca](mailto:president@capc-acrp.ca) if you can help out with any of the following:

- Spearheading a CAPC Instagram or Twitter account

- Researching/obtaining discounted insurance rates for CAPC members
- Obtaining links to the CAPC website from other organizations
- Writing profiles of Award of Distinction winners
- Publishing articles on CAPC in allied professional publications (this goes toward an effort to create a Wikipedia entry on CAPC, for which we need third party references)
- Becoming a CAPC mentor