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Can Textile Conservation Inform Textile Art?

By Kate Clive-Powell

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy
in Textile Conservation in the School of Culture and Creative Arts, University of Glasgow,
20th August 2015**



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Abstract

This study shows that it would be useful for textile conservators to share their specialist knowledge with textile art students in the UK. The findings indicate that textile artists and tutors are keen for an element of textile conservation to be incorporated into textile courses. Knowledge and skills that textile conservators possess that may be helpful to textile students at art college and throughout their artistic career are listed. Ways textile conservators and students may benefit from interaction are highlighted. Possible methods of outreach are discussed and limitations of implementing interaction considered.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an exploration of whether textile conservation can inform textile art. Specifically, investigation will be made into whether it would be useful and possible for textile conservators to share aspects of their specialist knowledge with textile art students in the UK, principally to help with the long term preservation of their work.

The initial inspiration for this research was the following point made by Ann French in her article discussing some of the main conservation issues with textile art:

“It is debateable whether conservation should be included in the education and training of artists. If one believes that choice is a result of knowledge, then some consideration of future degradation of materials and techniques should inform artistic choice, but not dictate it. If textile conservators must acquire new understanding to preserve the pieces, then perhaps textile artists should do as well.”¹

The following quotes arise from this quote: Are students taught about any aspect of conservation during their training? Is textile conservation a subject textile art students may be interested to learn about? If interested, what aspects of practice would be useful for students to learn?

This research aims to identify useful knowledge that textile conservators could share with textile art students and effective methods that could be used to communicate this information. If achieved, this could be beneficial to both textile conservators and textile artists. Increasing textile art students’ awareness of textile conservation at art college will mean they’d be more likely to contact a conservator for help and advice post-graduation, therefore generating work for conservators. This research will also help textile art students to make more informed decisions about the materials and methods they use to make, store, display and transport their work. This will reduce damage to textile art in the future and can therefore be seen as a form of preventive conservation.

The definition of textile art is not straightforward. Jennifer Harris states that by defining something as textile art emphasizes the importance of textile materials and process, and the textile artist tends to combine craft skill with a “strong sense of the conceptual possibilities

¹ Ann French, “Textile or Art? The Conservation, Display and Storage of Modern Textile Art,” in *Modern Art, New Museums, Preprints IIC 13-17 September 2004 Bilbao*, ed. Ashok Roy & Perry Smith (London: IIC, 2004), 38.

of materials and forms.”² This is different from art textiles that tend to reference textiles rather than being made from them.³ Harris, however, highlights that some people think that using textile art as an umbrella term is no longer useful as borders between different art disciplines are becoming more elastic.⁴ This can be seen through looking at the textile art featured in the recently published book *Contemporary Textiles: the fabric of fine art*, as many of the artists featured have used a diverse range of media in combination with textiles to make non-functional objects for display. Thus, the definition of textile art that will be used in this dissertation is: a non-functional object that has a conceptual element, made all or principally with textiles, with some hand-crafted element.

1.2 Aims, Objectives & Methodology

Key Aims

Aim 1 – To identify knowledge and skills that it would be useful for textile conservators to share with textile students.

Aim 2 – To identify benefits and limitations of sharing textile conservation knowledge and skills with students.

Aim 3 – To identify appropriate outreach methods that textile conservators could use when communicating textile conservation to art students.

Aim 4 – To find out if it would be realistically possible to put the findings into practice.

Objectives and Methodology

Aims 1 and 2 will be achieved principally through interviews with textile artists and conservators, as these will be used to identify textile conservation subjects that it would be useful for textile artists to know more about. Next, a literature review will be made to

² Jennifer Harris, *Art Textiles of the World: Great Britain Vol. 2* (Winchester: Telos Art, 1999), 6.

³ Jessica Hemmings, “Defining a Movement: textile & Fibre Art,” *FibreArts Magazine* (Sep/Oct 2005): 32, accessed July 10, 2015, <http://jessicahemmings.com/index.php/defining-a-movement-textile-fibre-art/>

⁴ Harris, *Art Textiles of the World*, 12.

identify sources that would be useful for textile artists to consult to gain more knowledge of these subjects. Limitations of sharing this knowledge will be shown through referring to both the interviews and secondary literature.

Aim 3 will be achieved by primarily referring to literature that discusses methods that have been used to communicate conservation to people outside the profession.

Aim 4 will be achieved by interviewing textile course tutors. These interviews will help to hone the ideas formed in the dissertation.

1.3 Use of Oral History

Interviews are the principal research method used for this dissertation. All the questions asked required the participants to draw on past experiences to formulate answers and so can be classified as oral history.⁵ Lynn Abrahams explains that oral history is:

“... the process of conducting and recording interviews with people in order to elicit information from them about the past. But an oral history is also the product of that interview, the narrative account of past events.”⁶

Oral history has been selected as the main research method as it enables an in-depth insight into the participants’ opinions, feelings and experiences about the topics being explored. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Excerpts from the transcriptions will be quoted in the dissertation to highlight points, but transcriptions of the interviews are also available in the appendices so that the original context of the quotes can be seen if required.

A key limitation of using a small number of interviews is that it can become difficult to establish how far the findings from a detailed, in-depth study of a small number of examples may be generalized to other similar instances. Martyn Denscombe summarises that to minimise this issue the researcher should supply information enabling others to infer the

⁵ “Qualitative research which may collect data via an interview can be a close cousin of oral history but may not have the distinctive character of specifically engaging with the past.”
Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 2.

⁶ *ibid.*

relevance and applicability of the findings to other similar instances.⁷ For this reason, brief précis have been provided in the next section of the interviewees' professional roles.

1.4 Summary of Interviewees

The following artists have been selected to interview as together they will provide an insight into UK art college training over a lengthy period, from the 1960s until now.

- **Malcolm Lochhead** is an established textile artist and teaches design at Glasgow Caledonian University. A student of embroidery and woven textiles at Glasgow School of Art from 1966-70, he has recently focused on creating ecclesiastical commissions (fig.1) and installations for retail spaces. He is the director of large scale embroidery projects.
- **Alice Kettle** is an established textile artist and a professor of Textile Arts at Manchester School of Art. Kettle completed a BA (hons) in Fine Art at The University of Reading from 1979-84 and a postgraduate diploma in Textile Art from Goldsmiths' College from 1985-86. She principally produces large scale commissions, often for public spaces, that are heavily machine stitched in many different types of thread (fig.2).
- **Christina Hesford** is a recent graduate from the Textiles in Practice undergraduate course at Manchester School of Art. She creates woven artworks for public spaces and is interested in incorporating non-textile elements into her woven pieces (fig.3).
- **Katie Schwab** is currently coming to the end of a Masters in Fine Art at Glasgow School of Art. Textiles are one of several media she chooses to use to create artworks. Her textile pieces are predominantly small tapestries and embroideries (fig.4).

⁷ Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide for Small-Scale Social Research Projects*, 4th ed. (Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill/Open University Press, 2010), 300-301.

- **Natalia Zagorska-Thomas** is an artist and freelance textile conservator. She studied fine art at Canberra School of Art, Sydney College of Arts and Central St.Martins School of Art & Design during the 1980s. She then qualified as a textile conservator at Winchester School of Art in 2004. She often incorporates and alters existing textile objects in her artworks (fig.5).

Zagorska-Thomas was selected to be interviewed as she is in the unique position amongst the interviewees of being able to offer the perspective of both a textile conservator and artist. Two other conservators will also be interviewed

- **Ann French** has in-depth experience of conserving textile art at the Whitworth Art Gallery, where she has worked since 2002. She trained as a textile conservator at the V&A.
- **Stephanie de Roemer** is the sculpture conservator for Glasgow Museums. She has extensive experience of working with mixed media contemporary artworks, which sometimes include textile elements. She completed a BA in Conservation & Restoration Science at London Metropolitan University and a MA in Conservation of Historic Objects at Durham University.

Finally, two tutors will be interviewed to hear their opinions about the discoveries made during this dissertation research. They have been chosen because they teach on textile courses within the UK which have produced graduates that have become textile artists.

- **Lindy Richardson** is an established artist and the Programme Director of the Textiles BA and MA at Edinburg College of Art.
- **Ainsley Hillard** is an established artist and a Senior Lecturer on the BA Surface Pattern Design and MDes Surface Pattern at University of Wales, Trinity Saint David.

1.5 Structure of Dissertation

The next part of this dissertation is a brief discussion of the state of current research about conservators sharing their knowledge with art college students. This is followed by Section 3: a discussion of subjects which may be useful for textile conservators to share their

knowledge of with textile artists. Section 4 identifies widespread characteristics of UK art colleges that mean interaction with textile conservators would potentially be useful to students. Section 5 identifies key skills conservators have to offer textile artists/ art students through direct interaction. Section 6 explores possible methods that textile conservators could use to communicate with textile students. Section 7 summarises the art tutors' thoughts about whether it would be realistically possible to put the suggestions made in this dissertation into practice. The dissertation ends with a final conclusion and suggestions for future research.

SECTION 2: CURRENT RESEARCH ABOUT THIS TOPIC

One published example was found of a textile conservator sharing conservation knowledge with textile students. In *Textile or Art?* Ann French briefly mentions that conservation knowledge of the degradation of materials was shared with students from the defunct Embroidery course at Manchester Metropolitan University as they could opt to do a textile conservation placement at Whitworth Art Gallery as work experience.⁸ One published paper was found that discusses this subject more generally. In this Breuil and Verbeeck describe benefits and drawbacks for conservation students and art students of housing conservation and restoration courses within an art college environment. This article is based on the authors' teaching experience in art colleges in France and Belgium.⁹

Knowledge sharing between art students and conservators has been addressed in two recent unpublished presentations at the 2012 AIC conference. Ingrid Neuman discussed strategies currently used to teach college level fine art students at the Rhode Island School of Design about art conservation concepts relevant to the long-term preservation of their own artistic practice.¹⁰ At the 2013 ICON conference, Alice Brown and Rachael Robbins presented their MA research which looked at increasing collaboration between conservators and art students to address the lack of material education that students receive.¹¹ They sent surveys to art students and tutors and found that 100% of their student respondents said they were not taught to think about the future conservation of their work. To address this they felt that the following things should be taught to art students: the aging

⁸ Ann French, "Textile or Art? The Conservation, Display and Storage of Modern Textile Art," in *Modern Art, New Museums, Preprints IIC 13-17 September 2004 Bilbao*, ed. Ashok Roy & Perry Smith (London: IIC, 2004), 35.

⁹ Marie-Hélène Breuil and Muriel Verbeeck, "Teaching Conservation-Restoration in an Art School: Sharing Experiences," *CeROArt* 9 (2014): accessed June 05, 2015, <https://ceroart.revues.org/4377>

¹⁰ Ingrid Neuman, "Empowering Fine Art Students to Make Educated Choices Regarding the Longevity of their Own Art Work" (presentation, American Institute for Conservation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 8-11 2012).

¹¹ Alice Brown and Rachael Robbins, "How Can a Lack of Material Education in Art Schools be Addressed by Collaborative Approaches with the Conservation Profession?" (presentation, ICON Conference Positive Futures in an Uncertain World, Glasgow, 10th – 12th April, 2013).

properties and processes of materials; how materials react in different environmental conditions; how materials react in conjunction with one another; considerations towards handling and transportation of work; the relationship of the artwork to additional, secondary materials, such as adhesives, screws, threads and inks.

SECTION 3: IDENTIFYING KNOWLEDGE TO SHARE

3.1.1 Introduction to Section 3

Artists' interviews show that it may be useful for textile conservators to share their knowledge of the following subjects with textile art students: the properties of materials, display, storage, handling and transportation methods, and documentation. A literature review will show where artists may be able to obtain this type of information. Christina Hesford prompted this idea, stating "just knowing where to look" for relevant information would be useful to help with the long term preservation of her work.¹² Benefits and limitations of sharing this knowledge will be shown. It will be highlighted when the expertise of a conservator would be needed.

Properties of Materials

3.2.1 Artists' Thoughts About the Properties of Materials

All the artists interviewed stated that they were not provided with any material education at art college (such as information about physical and chemical characteristics of materials, their ageing properties, and how they may react in different environmental conditions). The artists' response corroborates Brown and Robbins's MA research.¹³ A few of the artists stated that any knowledge they have has been gleaned from their experiences post-graduation. Malcolm Lochhead mentioned becoming strikingly aware of the negative effects that environmental conditions can have on textiles when he saw the vivid colours of a frontal created by his tutor Cath White had faded to "virtually" nothing from being hung in direct sunlight.¹⁴

When the artists were asked if they would have found learning about the properties of materials useful during their college training the majority said yes. Both Hesford and Kettle talked about the anxiety they feel, especially when making commissioned work, because

¹² Comment made by Christina Hesford during information discussion with Kate Clive-Powell about textile conservation, at the artist's home, Kirkby Stephen, June 6th, 2015.

¹³ Alice Brown and Rachael Robbins, "How Can a Lack of Material Education in Art Schools be Addressed by Collaborative Approaches with the Conservation Profession?" (presentation, ICON Conference Positive Futures in an Uncertain World, Glasgow, 10th – 12th April, 2013).

¹⁴ Malcolm Lochhead, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Glasgow, June 9th, 2015.

they don't know more about the properties of the materials they use. Kettle also mentioned that she suspects her lack of knowledge about the properties of materials caused condition issues to develop in one of her artworks which are worrying the conservators who have guardianship of the piece.¹⁵ The conservators have noticed that the artwork's substrate has begun to turn brown, which Kettle suspects has been caused by her use of an interlining that was chemically treated. This is a concern for the long term preservation of the piece, which was an expensive commission, as it is not possible to properly access this interlining:

“...so I bought an interlining, and I didn't ask those questions. It didn't occur to me, so unfortunately it's all stitched in so there's no way we can get it out, because it's layers of three fabrics and I've stitched through all three, across the whole thing.”

Textile conservators refer to a variety of books to find out about the properties of different materials and the causes of their damage. As the majority of the interviewees expressed a keen interest to know more about this subject a selection of these references will be discussed to ascertain their usefulness to textile artists.

3.2.2 Literature on the Properties of Textile Materials

There are several scientific texts used by textile conservators that focus on the properties of different textile materials, and their degradation processes. Probably the most commonly used is *Chemical Principles of Textile Conservation*. This includes information about the chemical properties of natural and synthetic textiles and the chemical processes of their degradation. This text, however, would not be useful to the majority of textile artists; its in-depth scientific explanations would be relatively impenetrable to textile artists unless they had some form of scientific training during further education.

The Handbook of Textile Fibres: Volumes 1&2 would be useful resources as they have been written for “all concerned with the textile trade who require a background of information on fibres to help them in their work.”¹⁶ They provide an overview of the structure, properties, processing and application of different types of fibres: Volume 1 focuses on natural fibres and Volume 2 concentrates on man-made fibres. Both volumes are not overly

¹⁵ Alice Kettle, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the Righton Building, MMU, Manchester, June 12th, 2015.

¹⁶ J. Gordon Cook, *Handbook of Textile Fibres: Vol. II - Man-Made Fibres*, 5th ed. (Cambridge: Woodhead Publishing Limited, 2001), v.

scientific, are well-indexed and the authors have organised the information on each fibre into four clear parts: an introductory section, production and processing, structure and properties, and the fibre in use.

The “structure and properties” section would be the most relevant to artists wanting to select an appropriate material for a particular effect or use. For example, by reading this part of the cotton entry one would discover basic details; such as, that it is a moderately strong fibre, which is relatively inelastic.¹⁷ This section also includes information about the main factors that induce degradation and what this damage looks like. For example, in the cotton section one learns that it gradually loses its strength when it is exposed to sunlight and that mildews will flourish on it in moist and hot conditions.¹⁸ However, this is a very broad overview that lacks detail. Artists could refer to *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping* for more detailed information about appropriate levels of light, temperature and other environmental factors for textiles, to reduce the risk of inducing the damage. This resource is made accessible to non-conservators because it’s not overly scientific, illustrations are used helpfully to elucidate many of the points, and there are chapters that describe in detail what each of the agents of deterioration are. Thus, if a non-specialist were reading the RH paragraph in the “Textiles” chapter and were slightly unsure of what relative humidity is and how it is measured and managed he or she could refer to the manual’s RH chapter for a more detailed explanation. The environmental threats, however, tend to be discussed broadly in relation to all textiles, rather than specific types of textile material. In the few instances when specific textile materials are mentioned, it is only cellulosic and proteinaceous ones, not synthetic.

Ingrid Neuman has argued that MSDS sheets would be a good resource for art students to use to inform themselves about the properties of different materials, keep abreast of changes in their formulations, and as reference tool for their safety.¹⁹ A Materials Safety

¹⁷ J. Gordon Cook, *Handbook of Textile Fibres: Vol. I – Natural Fibres*. 5th ed. (Cambridge: Woodhead Publishing Limited, 2001), 65.

¹⁸ J. Gordon Cook, *Handbook of Textile Fibres: Vol. I*, 69-70.

¹⁹ Ingrid Neuman, “Empowering Fine Art Students to Make Educated Choices Regarding the Longevity of their Own Art Work” (presentation, American Institute for Conservation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 8-11 2012).

Data Sheet (MSDS) is designed to provide proper procedures for handling or working with a particular substance and includes the following information: physical data, reactivity, storage, disposal, toxicity, health effects, first aid procedures and protective equipment that should be used.²⁰ Neuman explained that although the use of MSDS seems basic to conservators it is something that students are not taught about, and often don't know of its existence.²¹ Responses given by Hesford and Schwabb suggest this is also the case in UK art colleges, as both stated that they were not taught about MSDS sheets during their training (appendix I).

Thus, MSDS sheets could be recommended as a resource for textile art students to consult to find out more about the properties of materials they use, especially secondary materials that may be applied to textiles such as dyes and glues. The website "Where to Find Material Safety Sheets on the Internet" lists a wide range of free online resources which hold MSDS.²² However, it would not be possible to use MSDS sheets to find out the properties of a material made by mixing different substances, as the components may interact chemically creating another product with completely different properties.²³ If a substance such as this has been used and its properties need to be known then a conservation scientist could be contacted, as they may be able to provide the specialist advice needed.

3.2.3 Limitations of Providing References About The Properties of Materials

Textile artists utilise a vast range of materials, which poses difficulties for conservators to know the composition and ageing characteristics of every material used in art-works.²⁴ This

²⁰ "The MSDS FAQ," ILPI, accessed August 10, 2015, <http://www.ilpi.com/msds/faq/parta.html#whatis>

²¹ Ingrid Neuman, "Empowering Fine Art Students to Make Educated Choices Regarding the Longevity of their Own Art Work" (presentation, American Institute for Conservation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 8-11 2012).

²² "The MSDS FAQ," ILPI, accessed August 10, 2015, <http://www.ilpi.com/msds/faq/parta.html#whatis>

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Ysbrand Hummelen, "The Conservation of Contemporary Art: New Methods and Strategies?," in *Mortality Immortality?: The Legacy of 20th-century Art*, ed. Miguel Angel Corzo (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1999), 174.

reflects a wider shift within Western art over the twentieth century as visual artists have experimented with an increasingly varied repertoire of materials and techniques.²⁵ Thus, the resources that have been suggested cannot include information about the properties of all the different materials textile art students may use.

Frances Lennard describes that textile artists may have intended the deterioration of their work to be part of its identity, for example, because the artist prefers the appearance of the degraded material or the degradation of the components may have symbolic significance.²⁶ This intent was apparent during Hesford's interview as she described a woven piece she made and deliberately left outside to see how the environment would affect it fig.3:

"I'm interested in what happens to the weaving, as a consequence of leaving it there. So, for example, would animals come and take the fibres? Would the weather destroy it in some way? Would the colours change? Would the sun bleach it? What's going to happen to it?"²⁷

When creating this type of art artists would obviously not need/want to look at the texts listed above for conservation purposes. However, conversely, it could be argued that these might be useful references if artists are interested in learning more about how to induce degradation in a particular material as part of the concept of their work. Zagorska-Thomas described and artwork she was making through using her knowledge of light degradation. For this she was exposing areas of dyed fabric to high lux levels, to create faded shapes (fig.6). She stated she would be quite happy if this degradation process continued until the fabric had physical damage and loss.²⁸

²⁵ IJsbrand Hummelen, "Conservation Strategies for Modern & Contemporary Art: recent developments in the Netherlands," *CR: interdisciplinair vakblad voor conservering en restauratie* 6, no. 3 (2005): 22.

²⁶ Frances Lennard, "Behaving badly? The conservation of modern textile art," *Restauro* 112, 5, (2009): 328.

²⁷ Christina Hesford, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Kirkby Stephen, June 6th, 2015.

²⁸ Natalia Zagorska-Thomas, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Camden, June 11th, 2015.

Display, Storage, Transportation & Handling

3.3.1 Artists' Thoughts About Display, Storage, Transportation & Handling

All the artists stated that at art college they were not provided with tips for storing, displaying, transporting or handling their work to help with its long term preservation. When asked if they would have found learning about this sort of information useful during their training the majority of the artists answered yes. Lochhead responded with an emphatic yes, stating that: "there are basic vocabulary, grammar, etcetera of design and textile that build up over time and these technical aspects would've become part of that repertoire, that toolbox."²⁹ Hesford and Kettle both said that they've needed this kind of knowledge to create documentation to accompany commissioned work. Hesford has been asked to write future care instructions for commissioned work (Appendix A), but stated that she "had no idea" what to include in this and so referred to internet for most of the information she provided. Her recommendations have some useful suggestions, but would have benefitted from more detail, such as recommendation for light levels, which she could have obtained from references discussed in section 3.2.2.

Alice Kettle talked about being required to create technical documents to accompany commissions for public buildings which take into account how the textiles will react to a particular building/situation, and provide information about the fire-proofing and light-fastness of the materials.³⁰ Kettle explained that the technical document is given to the client when she presents them with a design or when the artwork is finished and is being sent to them. It usually includes the following information about the commission: the brief, design, concept, samples, installation requirements, after care and contact schedule (Appendix B).

The interviewees highlighted other particular instances when having this form of information would have been useful. For example, both Hesford and Schwab mentioned that they would like to have received guidance about how to store the mass of coursework

²⁹ Malcolm Lochhead, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Glasgow, June 9th, 2015.

³⁰ Alice Kettle, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the Righton Building, MMU, Manchester, June 12th, 2015.

they created during their training.³¹ Hesford described that her lack of knowledge about how best to transport her work safely has been problematic: she will soon need to send her art to Poland to be displayed in a Biennial and has no idea how to approach that task.³² Kettle stated that the costs involved and a lack of space have prevented her from adopting storage and transportation methods which she knows would be better for the work's long term preservation.³³ Zagorska-Thomas was the only artist who said she was not sure if it would have been useful to be provided with information about storing, displaying, transporting and handling art works during her training. Although she felt that some of her contemporaries would have responded well to this, she felt others would have seen it to be "a very uptight, bourgeois kind of idea that you're concerned with the longevity of your work", especially as the creation of ephemeral work was very fashionable at the time she was in college.³⁴ Nevertheless, Natalia did concede that the current drive within art colleges towards making students more commercially minded may mean that students are more receptive to learning about techniques to help with the long term preservation of their work.³⁵

3.3.2 Literature on Display and Storage Methods

The main text that would be useful for artists to refer to when contemplating how to safely display their textiles is *Unravelling Textiles*. Information is included about the most common mounting methods used by textile conservators to support textiles during display. Methods used for the following types of textiles are listed: large and/or long 2D textiles, flat textiles

³¹ Christina Hesford, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Kirkby Stephen, June 6th, 2015.

Katie Schwabb, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the JD Kelly Building, GSA, Glasgow, June 5th, 2015.

³² Christina Hesford, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Kirkby Stephen, June 6th, 2015.

³³ Alice Kettle, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the Righton Building, MMU, Manchester, June 12th, 2015.

³⁴ Natalia Zagorska-Thomas, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Camden, June 11th, 2015.

³⁵ *ibid.*

with pile, flat/composite objects and 3D textiles.³⁶ Factors to consider when debating whether to place a textile on open or closed display are also listed.³⁷ The authors stress when the expertise of a textile conservator would be needed, which would reduce the risk of artists damaging their textiles when referring to this resource for guidance.

Books are available, such as *The Textile Conservator's Manual*, which contain in-depth information about more complicated display methods and how to create them.³⁸ These are not being suggested for artists' use, as if they try to apply these trickier mounting methods without the advice and assistance of a conservator their textiles may be damaged.

An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections would be a useful resource for artists to consult for information about how to store their work to help with its long term preservation. Its chapter on storing textiles would introduce them to the main storage methods used by textile conservators: flat, rolled, framed and mounted, boxed and hanging.³⁹ For more detailed step-by-step instructions on how to apply most of these storage methods students could refer to the instructional videos which have been uploaded by The Minnesota Historical society onto YouTube.⁴⁰ These clips are comprehensive; what to do for each step and materials to use are clearly described.

3.3.3 Literature on Materials Used for Storage, Transportation and Display

CCI Notes: Guidelines for Selecting Materials for Exhibit, Storage and Transportation is a comprehensive resource that artists could consult to find out what inert materials they

³⁶ Foekje Boersma and Agnes W. Brokerhof, *Unravelling Textiles: A Handbook for the Preservation of Textile Collections* (London: Archetype for the Netherlands Textile Committee, 2007), 112-116.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁸ Sheila Landi. *The Textile Conservator's Manual* (London: Butterworths, 1985).

³⁹ Jane Robinson and Tuula Pardoe, *An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections* (London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 2000), 24-32.

⁴⁰ Instructional videos are available about the following: how to make a padded hanger; storage of costume in boxes; storage of flat textiles in boxes; rolling textiles on a tube. Frisina, Anna. "Conservation and Preservation of Heirloom Textiles (parts 1-6)," *Minnesota Historical Society on YouTube*, accessed June 06, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4emRz2k296M>

could use to support their art during storage, transportation and display.⁴¹ It is available for free online. Information about materials considered acceptable and unacceptable to use next to artefacts are listed and the best and worst examples of the following materials is highlighted: wood, paper and cardboard, coatings, plastics, foams, wires and tubes, adhesives and tapes. However, no information is provided about where the acceptable materials listed can be obtained. Nevertheless, a number of suppliers of conservation grade materials are listed in an appendix to *An Illustrated Guide*.⁴² Throughout this guide Pardoe and Robinson make suggestions for materials that could be used next to textiles for both basic and best practice. The basic suggestions would be useful for artists who have limited money and space.

Unravelling Textiles includes an extensive list of materials that are considered acceptable to use with textiles. The advantage of this list over the other two references is that more detail is often included about a specific material, such as information about the key properties and different available types. For example, under the Correx® entry this material is described as “lightweight and fairly rigid” and as available in “several thickness, from 2 mm to 15 mm.” Materials are also listed that could be used as a short term packaging material, such as Polyurethane.⁴³ Signs of a particular support material degrading and the frequency of replacement are also often suggested. For example, the fact that acid-free tissue yellows as it ages is highlighted and its replacement approximately every five years is therefore suggested.⁴⁴

3.3.4 Literature on Transportation and Handling

The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping has a chapter on “Transporting Objects” which would provide artists with an overall idea of key considerations that should be borne in mind to reduce damage to their textiles during transportation. The chapter’s first subsection

⁴¹ Jean Tétreault, “Guidelines for Selecting Materials for Exhibit, Storage and Transportation,” *Canadian Conservation Institute*, published December 05, 1993, <https://formacaompr.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/guidelines-for-selecting-materials.pdf>

⁴² Robinson and Pardoe, *An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections*, 50.

⁴³ Boersma and Brokerhof, *Unravelling Textiles*, 125.

⁴⁴ *ibid.* 126.

highlights key questions to consider when assessing possible risks to an object during transit and the remaining subsections give an overview of how to manage the identified risks. There is information about choosing appropriate packaging methods and materials. However, it is stressed that for more fragile objects, more refined packing solutions designed by a conservator would be needed.⁴⁵ There is information about documentation that may be needed when transporting an artwork, and helpfully *Spectrum, the UK Museum Documentation Standard* is highlighted as a useful tool for individuals who are developing their own movement documentation.⁴⁶ There is a discussion about using private vehicles versus specialist fine art transport and it is shown clearly when these different methods should be used.⁴⁷ What is not included, which would be useful for artists debating what transport to use, is a clear list of the main advantages and disadvantages of shipping, trucking or flying an object to its destination. This information can be found in the “Transportation” chapter in *Unravelling Textiles*⁴⁸.

An Illustrated Guide would be a helpful resource for basic tips on how to handle and move objects, when not using vehicles. Basic considerations are listed, such as keeping boxed and rolled textiles level and not stacking them, and illustrations are included showing how to carry costume and 3D items.⁴⁹ The handling section lists basic guidelines; such as using gloves and handling aids and keeping work areas clear. There are clear illustrations of the simple methods which should be used to lift and turn over textiles, but only for two types: small 2D textiles and costume.⁵⁰

3.3.5 Limitations of Sharing Knowledge of Display, Storage, Transportation & Handling

⁴⁵ Margaret Reid and Sarah Hickey, “Transporting Objects,” in *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping*, ed. Helen Lloyd, 4th ed. (London: National Trust, 2011), 767.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 771.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 769.

⁴⁸ Boersma and Brokerhof, *Unravelling Textiles*, 101-106.

⁴⁹ Robinson and Pardoe, *An Illustrated Guide*, 17-18.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 15.

The textile conservation resources discussed about display methods and materials may be of limited use for textile artists who hang their work in unconventional ways outside a museum setting: characteristics that are noted by Frances Lennard as not uncommon within contemporary textile art.⁵¹ Due to the uniqueness of this form of textile art, it is unlikely that the references would provide sufficient information for artists to make comprehensive recommendations for the work's future care during display. Judgement and experience of a textile conservator would be needed for this.

The storage references discussed focus on standard storage methods used by textile conservators and so will be of limited use to textile artists who produce work which is not suited to these customary methods. Ann French highlights this issue when she explains that as some pieces of contemporary art are extremely fragile and difficult to handle textile conservators need to formulate "unique solutions [for storage support], requiring additional expenditure of time, space and materials."⁵² French mentions Alice Kettle's work as an example of this, explaining that her use of layers and layers of machine stitching has created distortions and bulges in her work which make it difficult to hang and roll it using traditional methods.⁵³

There are characteristics evident in certain pieces of modern art, which may also be found in textile artworks, which make them particularly vulnerable during transportation. These characteristics are summarised by Hester Stobe et al. in *Packing and Transport of Modern Art* as size, design and condition: "the presence of heavy masses attached to lighter, fragile material, delicate surfaces on difficult to handle objects, hygroscopic material combined with easily corroded metals ..."⁵⁴ If a piece of textile art had any of these characteristics,

⁵¹ Frances Lennard, "Behaving badly? The conservation of modern textile art," *Restauro* 112, 5, (2009): 329.

⁵² Ann French, "Textile or Art? The Conservation, Display and Storage of Modern Textile Art," in *Modern Art, New Museums, Preprints IIC 13-17 September 2004 Bilbao*, ed. Ashok Roy & Perry Smith (London: IIC, 2004), 37-38.

⁵³ *ibid.*, 35.

⁵⁴ Hester Stobe, Wies Raanhuis, Stephen Hackney and René Boitelle, "Packing and Transport of Modern Art," in *Modern Art: who cares? : an interdisciplinary research project and an international symposium on the conservation of modern and contemporary art*, ed. IJsbrand Hummelen & Dionne Sillé (London: Atchetype, 2005), 333.

then the references listed would probably not provide adequate guidance. Rather, the problem solving skills of a conservator would be required to create a tailored transport solution.

Documentation

3.4.1 Artists' Thoughts About Documentation

The artists were asked if they were encouraged at art college to document their work through keeping records of any of the following: materials (types and brand names) and techniques used, and their original intent in creating the work. The majority of artists said that they were encouraged to keep a record of the original concepts for their work through using sketchbooks in which they developed their ideas through drawing, writing or photography.

Most of the artists described that they were not encouraged to keep records of materials they used. Alice Kettle was one of the artists who said this, but she also felt that this form of documentation would now be more present in students' practice. This was certainly suggested by Hesford's response to this question, who is one of the most recent graduates to be interviewed. Hesford explained that at art college she was encouraged to keep detailed records of the techniques and materials she used in her technical file, but this was specifically so she could recreate certain weaving patterns (Appendix C). Lochhead stated that he does not keep a record of the materials and techniques he uses because he would never want to replicate any of his artworks.⁵⁵ Hesford's and Lochhead's responses highlight that keeping records of materials and techniques are principally seen by the artists interviewed as a tool for reproducing artworks, definitely not as a means to help with the long term preservation of their work.

3.4.2 Benefits and Limitations of Sharing Information about Conservation Documentation

It will be shown that there are aspects of textile conservation documentation that it may be beneficial for textile artists to be aware of to increase the longevity of the work, particularly textile artists who create installations. There are very few references that would be useful

⁵⁵ Malcolm Lochhead, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Glasgow, June 9th, 2015.

for artists to consult to learn more about these forms of documentation, but the ones that may be helpful will be highlighted.

It could be explained to students that if their work were in need of conservation treatment in the future, then providing a conservator with thorough records of materials and techniques used as well as his or her original intent in creating an artwork would help the conservator to devise the most appropriate treatment for the work. As Ysbrand Hummelen explains:

“...a crucial precondition when deciding on appropriate methods and strategies for conservation is to determine the meaning ascribed to works and objects and, as previously mentioned, the significance of the materials used, the techniques, and working processes.”⁵⁶

However, a limitation of this idea is that even if an artist were to supply the brand names of the products he or she used a conservator may still find it difficult to identify the materials' compositions as the manufacturers may not be willing to disclose information about their materials due to commercial interests.⁵⁷

It could also be stressed specifically to textile art students who create installations that keeping a record of installation procedures is important to conserve the meaning of the work. As Hester Stobe et al. explain that it is important for artists to provide documentation showing how their installations should be assembled; otherwise there is a risk that their work's meaning and significance will be lost by being reassembled wrongly after transportation or storage.⁵⁸ Methods of documentation that could be used for this purpose could be suggested, such as those recommended by Hester Stobe et al. They suggest artists

⁵⁶ Ysbrand Hummelen, “The Conservation of Contemporary Art: New Methods and Strategies?” in *Mortality Immortality?: The Legacy of 20th-century Art*, ed. Miguel Angel Corzo (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1999), 172-3.

⁵⁷ Cornelia Weyer, Gunnar Heydenreich, Marja Peek & Agnes W. Brokerhof, “Documentation and Registration of Artists' Materials and Techniques,” in *Modern Art: who cares? : an interdisciplinary research project and an international symposium on the conservation of modern and contemporary art*, ed. Ysbrand Hummelen & Dionne Sillé (London: Atchetype, 2005), 389.

⁵⁸ Hester Stobe, Wies Raanhuis, Stephen Hackney and René Boitelle, “Packing and Transport of Modern Art,” in *Modern Art: who cares? : an interdisciplinary research project and an international symposium on the conservation of modern and contemporary art*, ed. Ysbrand Hummelen & Dionne Sillé (London: Atchetype, 2005), 328.

use sketches, photographs or a film to document how an installation's assembled form should look; they also stress that photography would be particularly useful for documenting installations with a large number of odd pieces and that it would be advantageous to use video to record installations that combine sound and visual information.⁵⁹

Finally, it may be beneficial for textile art students to learn more about condition reports so that they can monitor their artworks' condition. This skill would be particularly useful if an artwork were being sent somewhere that didn't have a conservator on site to monitor the condition of the piece, such as a small private gallery. Although an artist would not have the training to be able to articulate what the causes of damage may be they could still learn to record the condition of the work by taking good quality photographs. Referring to the AIC's free notes on documentation may help with this as it has a brief section on photographing objects for condition reports which includes key tips on photographing for this purpose.⁶⁰

3.5.1 Concluding Points for Section 3

All the artists interviewed stated that at art college they were not taught about the properties of materials, display, storage, handling or transportation methods that would help with the long term preservation of their work. Any information the artists have obtained about these topics has been acquired through personal experience, usually outside the art college environment. The artists almost unanimously expressed that they would have found learning more about these topics useful at art college. Consequently, resources have been suggested in this section that would provide students with the following key information:

- Properties of Materials
 - Physical and chemical characteristics of natural, the most common synthetic fibres

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 329-330.

⁶⁰ Susan Heald, "TSG Chapter IV. Documentation of Textiles – Section E Photographic Documentation," *The Textile Conservation Catalog*, published April 02, 1998, accessed June 02, 2015, http://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/TSG_Chapter_IV._Documentation_of_Textiles_-_Section_E._Photographic_Documentation

- The use of MSDS as a resource to find out about the properties of certain secondary materials that may be used with textiles, such as glues and dyes
- A broad overview of what factors may induce degradation in natural and the most common synthetic materials
- A broad overview of optimum environmental conditions for textiles and methods to manage these conditions to help with their long term preservation
- Storage, Transportation, Handling and Display
 - Standard basic methods used by textile conservators to display and store textiles
 - Information about inert storage and display materials to use with textiles
 - Basic handling tips for textiles
 - An overview of what is involved in transporting a textile, and key considerations to bear in mind to reduce damage to a textile during transportation
 - The main advantages and disadvantages of different transport methods

This literature review has been summarised in Appendix D and will be presented to the textile art tutors for their thoughts about giving it to students to use as a reference point. The following limitations with this literature review have been identified.

The references discussed principally provide information about the properties of natural and the most common synthetic fibres, as it was beyond the scope of this paper to expand on this. The sources noted would be of limited use to students who experiment with many different materials that don't fit these categories. The use of MSDS to find out the properties of secondary materials used with textiles would not be of use to students if these materials were made from mixtures of different substances.

The storage, transportation, handling and display references suggested provide information about standard basic methods used by textile conservators and so would not be of direct use to artists who produce work which is an unusual shape/design, is particularly fragile, or is meant to be hung or displayed in an unconventional way or setting. Nevertheless, these artists could still refer to the texts for suggestions of methods that could be adapted to suit their artwork, but the help of a conservator would probably be needed for this. Thus, it may be useful to show textile art students that the Conservation Register exists online, which

could be used by them in the future when they need the expertise of an accredited conservator.

The majority of the artists interviewed were encouraged at art college to document their intent in creating an artwork and a few were encouraged to document their materials and techniques. It could be communicated to art students that keeping these forms of documentation may contribute to the long term preservation of their work by helping a conservator to make informed decisions about how to treat their pieces in a way that would continue to convey their original intent. This would be beneficial for both the conservator and artist. Texts have also been suggested that would help artists to write future care guidance for their work, which it has been shown is a form of documentation that may be required by the patron of a textile artwork. Suggesting these texts to students will remind them that their work could well be purchased and collected in the future, even if this does seem like a remote idea to them while they're still at college.

SECTION 4: UK ART COLLEGE TRAINING – PERTINENT CHARACTERISTICS

There are certain widespread characteristics of UK art colleges, which have not yet been mentioned, that mean interaction with textile conservators would potentially be useful to the students. These characteristics include a movement away from teaching students about traditional craft techniques and an emphasis on making students more commercially minded.

Breuil and Verbeeck argue that a unique skill conservators have to offer art students is their knowledge of materials and techniques used in the production of art objects, as this is something they are no longer taught about.⁶¹ They explain that since the 1960s in French and Belgian art colleges there has been an emphasis on developing students' conceptual ideas for projects rather than teaching them technical processes.⁶² The authors' point can also be applied to the situation in UK art colleges as currently the teaching of traditional craft skills is diminishing in favour of teaching digital based skills as IT suits are considerably cheaper to run than craft workshops.⁶³ This was reflected by Schwab, who is the most recent of the interviewees to be at art college. She was asked if there was more of an emphasis on improving knowledge of techniques and materials or a focus on developing conceptual ideas during her training. Schwab answered that there has definitely been a conceptual emphasis during her fine art training, but she has independently sought out knowledge of craft based techniques and materials as this is something in which she has a personal interest.⁶⁴ Thus, Schwab's response and the general movement away from teaching students about traditional craft techniques in UK art colleges suggest that a textile conservator's knowledge of traditional textile techniques could be of interest to art students using textiles.

⁶¹ Marie-Hélène Breuil and Muriel Verbeeck, "Teaching Conservation-Restoration in an Art School: Sharing Experiences," *CeROArt* 9 (2014): accessed June 05, 2015, <https://ceroart.revues.org/4377>

⁶² *ibid.*

⁶³ Prof. Mark Hunt, "Traditional Skills are Being Lost by Designers Relying on Computers," *New Statesman*, November 04, 2013, accessed July 05, 2015, <http://www.newstatesman.com/art-and-design/2013/11/traditional-skills-are-being-lost-designers-relying-computers>.

⁶⁴ Katie Schwabb, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the JD Kelly Building, GSA, Glasgow, June 5th, 2015.

UK art colleges are becoming more professionalised which means that more interaction between conservators and art students may be welcomed. This trend stems both from student interest and programme contents. George Vasey argues that UK art students have become more professionally minded since the rise in tuition fees, as they are investing so much money in their education.⁶⁵ Vasey states:

“When I am asked to give tutorials at universities I am often struck by how many of the students ask practical rather than theoretical questions. Many of them focus attention on the market and how to sell their work...”⁶⁶

There is also now an emphasis in UK art college programmes on making students more business minded. This point is highlighted by Sheila Gaffney, the head of fine art at Leeds College of Art, in the recent BBC Radio 4 program *Art School, Smart School*. In this she states that art colleges have now all been charged with meeting employability agendas, and as a result of this more business is taught to the students and less technique and materiality.⁶⁷ Thus, this atmosphere in art colleges, suggests that both the students and the tutors may be interested to have access to a conservator’s knowledge. Students may find it useful to have interaction with a conservator so that they can question them about ways to improve the longevity of their work, as this would enable them to make pieces that would be attractive to buyers looking to purchase a durable piece of art.⁶⁸ Additionally, it is likely that facilitating interaction between conservators and art students, perhaps through organising a few taught classes, would be appealing to art tutors as this would help them to fulfil their college’s employability agendas.

⁶⁵ George Vasey and Jeremy Till, “Is the Golden Age of Art Schools Over?,” *Apollo* 181, no. 628, (Feb, 2015): 18.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ “Art School, Smart School,” narrated by Brian Eno, et al, BBC Radio 4, *BBC*, November 22, 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04pr1w2>. (10.12 mins in)

⁶⁸ Marie-Hélène Breuil and Muriel Verbeeck, “Teaching Conservation-Restoration in an Art School: Sharing Experiences,” *CeROArt* 9 (2014): accessed June 05, 2015, <https://ceroart.revues.org/4377>

SECTION 5: INTERACTION BETWEEN TEXTILE CONSERVATORS & TEXTILE ARTISTS/STUDENTS

5.1 Introduction to Section 5

This section aims to identify key skills conservators have to offer textile artists/art students through direct interaction. This will be done by discussing artist/conservation interaction that the interviewees have experienced, both before and after graduating. The interviewees' responses will also be analysed to gain a better understanding of how art students may get to know about conservation. This information will inform the subsequent "outreach" section.

5.2 Interaction Between Conservators and Textile Art Students

All the artists interviewed said they did not recall having any interaction with conservators at art college but a few stated that during their training they had brief encounters with the conservation profession outside of college. For example, Zagorska-Thomas said she had an interest in conservation from a young age and after finishing high school she learnt more about what the subject entails by attending an open day of the conservation course in Canberra.⁶⁹ Hesford said she became aware that textile conservation exists from visiting museums, particularly when she read about the conservation treatment of Egyptian Coptic textiles she'd seen on display.⁷⁰

All the conservators interviewed were also asked if they had any interaction with art students. Stephanie de Roemer explained that her conservation degree was run under the design department at London Metropolitan University, so she was taught in a vibrant making environment where there were many other craft and design students. She felt that her contemporaries who were art students didn't actively seek out her conservation advice, but that knowledge exchange happened naturally when socialising.⁷¹ Zagorska-Thomas trained at the Textile Conservation Centre which was part of Winchester school of Art, but

⁶⁹ Natalia Zagorska-Thomas, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Camden, June 11th, 2015.

⁷⁰ Christina Hesford, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Kirkby Stephen, June 6th, 2015.

⁷¹ Stephanie de Roemer, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, Glasgow, July 3rd, 2015.

explained that she didn't remember any knowledge exchange occurring between art and conservation students either formally through class visits or informally through socialising. Zagorska-Thomas felt that art students probably didn't come to the conservation studio for two main reasons. Firstly, she highlighted that art students couldn't just drop by the conservation studio, as anyone who wanted to enter needed to be granted permission and brought in as there were museum objects in the space that obviously needed to be protected. Secondly, she made an astute observation that the studio may have been an intimidating environment for art students:

“We were all wearing white coats, the room was all white ... artists who have just been splashing paint around, or you know, cutting wood or whatever, whatever it is that they were doing, would've found it very intimidating.”⁷²

This highlights a common negative perception of the conservator which is discussed by Elizabeth Pye. She describes how conservation is often seen as something done by 'experts' largely invisibly behind the scenes, and so urges for the image of conservation to be de-mystified through better communication.⁷³ One of the key things Pye argues should be communicated to overcome this aloof image is that conservation increases intellectual and physical access to objects.⁷⁴ Thus, if more interaction were to occur between students and conservators, then it is important that this positive benefit of conservation is clearly communicated to art students.

Through lectures and placements Ann French shared her conservation knowledge with students from the defunct BA Embroidery course at Manchester Metropolitan University. Once a year she'd give students from this course a lecture introducing them to textile conservation, which included information about textile degradation. To explain the degradation of textiles to the students, she'd use minimal science and imagery the students would be familiar with, such as likening light degradation to sun burn.⁷⁵ French

⁷² Natalia Zagorska-Thomas, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the artist's home, Camden, June 11th, 2015.

⁷³ Elizabeth Pye, *Caring for the Past: Issues in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums* (London: James & James, 2001), 49.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Ann French, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, June 12th, 2015.

has also written about imparting this knowledge more “obliquely” while hosting placements at the Whitworth.⁷⁶ During the interview French provided more details about this. She explained that at that time it was compulsory for students from MMU’s embroidery course to complete a work placement that involved textiles in the workplace and one of the options was to do this in the Whitworth’s Textiles Department. The students who opted to complete their placement at the Whitworth would make storage devices and carry out preventive conservation work. French clarified that through doing these tasks the students received an “oblique” education in the degradation of materials as she would explain to them why they were doing the tasks, what they were doing them for and then answer any questions that they might have about the care of textiles which arose from doing the work.⁷⁷

5.3 Interaction Between Conservators and Textile Artists Post-Graduation

Alice Kettle and Stephanie de Roemer’s discussions of conservator/artist interaction highlighted several additional skills that conservators would have to offer textile art students. For example, Alice Kettle stated that the main conservator she has had contact with is The Whitworth’s textile conservator Ann French “because she’s got that really sound, specialist knowledge.”⁷⁸ It seems that Kettle has learnt a lot from French through their interactions, as she has provided advice about hanging devices, fulfilling fire regulations, handling procedures and materials she should use which would be appropriate for a particular commission. Kettle explained that information Ann French has supplied about these things has helped her to write technical documents for commissions.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Ann French, “Textile or Art? The Conservation, Display and Storage of Modern Textile Art,” in *Modern Art, New Museums, Preprints IIC 13-17 September 2004 Bilbao*, ed. Ashok Roy & Perry Smith (London: IIC, 2004), 35.

⁷⁷ Ann French, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, June 12th, 2015.

⁷⁸ Alice Kettle, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at the Righton Building, MMU, Manchester, June 12th, 2015.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

Stephanie de Roemer explained that while working with artists to install their work at GoMA she has used several skills she possesses as a conservator which the artists have found useful. More specifically, she talks about being in a good position as a conservator installing artists' work to act as a mediator between the museum and the artist, because she has good problem solving skills and is aware of the obligations of the organisation and the artist's intent. To elucidate this point de Roemer cited her experience of installing Karla Black's sawdust sculpture *Empty Now* at GoMA (fig.7). Her knowledge of Health and Safety procedures meant she was able to identify the risks of displaying the piece and could reduce these to a level that complied with the museum's Health and Safety regulations but was still satisfactory to the artist. She recognised that displaying the piece could be an issue as sawdust is a fire hazard and an allergen and so she set about reducing these risks to an acceptable level by writing risk assessments, informing the museum's Health and Safety person, installing a specific type of fire extinguisher in the space, alerting the local fire service of the sculpture's presence and consolidating the sawdust with PVA. Appendix E shows the Health and Safety documentation de Roemer consulted and organised for *Empty Now*. She also checked that the artist was satisfied with this solution, as she did not want to interfere with the artist's intent for the work. Thus, she was able to formulate a solution that meant the artist was happy with the work's display, the museum's Health and Safety policy was not compromised and the condition of the work remained stable. This example highlights the logistical, problem solving and documentation skills that conservators have that would be useful to artists.

Stephanie de Roemer's description of her interaction with artists also highlighted a prevalent negative perception of conservators among artists as she found that they often initially have a negative perception of her as the "object police."

"[I've] Met some artists who were very off with me when they heard I was the conservator. I had one artist who said to me 'oh, so what do you think you can do better than anyone else?' ... I've had some artists who seemed quite worried that I was going to start to say 'oh, why are you doing that that way, or that is the wrong material to use.'"⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Stephanie de Roemer, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, Glasgow, July 3rd, 2015.

This sentiment echoes Malcolm Lochhead's perception of textile conservators. In an informal discussion before the interview Malcolm stated that he sees conservators as "bossy women." However, Stephanie did also explain that she found that the artists' attitude to her as a conservator changed as they learnt more about what her role entails:

"... they began to realise and understand that the conservator is very similar to them, as my only concern is the wellbeing of the artwork, whereas the curator and marketing all have other agendas."⁸¹

Thus, if there is more interaction between conservators and textile art students during their training, then the misconception of the conservator as a restrictive and controlling figure may be corrected.

5.4 Concluding Points for Sections 4&5

Section 4 demonstrated that the trend within UK art colleges towards them becoming more professionalised means conservators understanding of the durability of materials could be beneficial to students. It showed that the general movement away from teaching students about traditional craft techniques in UK art colleges means that textile conservators' knowledge of traditional textile techniques could be useful to students.

Section 5 identified the following skills conservators would be able to offer students through direct interaction: problem solving and logistical/organisational skills. It showed through examples discussed that conservators can be good mediators between artists and clients, helping the artists to fulfil their briefs effectively. Ann French helped Alice Kettle create art that fulfilled the requirements of a public commission, and Stephanie de Roemer helped Karla Black display her Sawdust Sculpture in such a way that fulfilled the museum's Health and Safety requirements. These examples also underline that textile conservators are facilitators who can help increase access to artists' work. Communicating to textile art students that textile conservators have these useful skills may help to alter misconceptions of the conservator as aloof, restrictive and controlling.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

SECTION 6: OUTREACH

Analysing the interviewees' responses has shown that art students may get to know about conservation through displays in museums, socialising, open days at conservation studios, placements and taught classes. Further methods used to communicate conservation to people outside the profession will now be explored. This will be done to gauge what might be an appropriate outreach method and tone to use to raise awareness of textile conservation among textile art students. Key benefits for conservation professionals of increasing communication with textile art students through outreach activities will also be briefly listed.

Kate Frame highlights several methods of communicating conservation to the general public when she discusses how Historic Royal Palaces' Conservation and Collection Care department has evolved to communicate conservation more effectively to palace visitors.⁸² Methods of communication that the department have used, which have not yet been discussed in this dissertation include: demonstrations, site tours and hands-on activities.⁸³ This suggests that providing textile art students with an opportunity to do hands on workshops and go on a tour of a textile conservation studio are methods that could be used to introduce them to what the conservation profession involves and how it may be useful to their artistic practice.

Due to the mixed media nature of many pieces of contemporary textile art it may be more beneficial to provide textile art students with a tour which briefly introduces them to all the conservation departments within a museum, not just textiles. If possible it would be useful to organise tours of conservation studios within a museum that includes post-1960s artworks, as they are likely to be more akin, to the artworks being produced by contemporary textile students than traditional textiles. This would also stress to the students that conservation could be useful and relevant to their contemporary practice. This is important as the students may assume that conservation just involves working with older

⁸² Kate Frame, "Communicating Conservation at the Historic Royal Palaces," in *ICOM-CC 15TH Triennial Conference, New Delhi, 22-26 September 2008, Preprints*, ed. Janet Bridgland (New Delhi: Allied Publishers PVT, 2008), 1147.

⁸³ *ibid.*, 1150-52.

objects. This is a common misconception which Katarzyna Wincenciak, a conservator of contemporary art, summarises in an interview about her conservation work:

“I am often asked, ‘Why would you need a conservator in a museum of contemporary art? After all, you have new works there, nothing deteriorates...’ Such an outlook is derived from the perception that all the conservator does is ‘repair’ work...”⁸⁴

It is likely that involving students in some form of textile conservation workshop would be a favourable method of outreach, as art students enjoy practical work. Some examples of possible workshops that could be held, based on the list of subjects compiled in Section 3, are standard packing techniques for storage and transportation and general handling tips.

Elizabeth Pye highlights a method that has not yet been discussed in this dissertation which has successfully been used to increase awareness of conservation among the general public. Pye argues that because of a common interest in personal collecting among the general public ‘clinics’ tend to be popular events in museums, during which curators and conservators provide information about, and advice on the care of personal possessions.⁸⁵ It has been shown that the products of textile art may be highly individual pieces, where the artist has used unconventional techniques and materials. Therefore, it may well be a good idea to provide a ‘clinic’ in an art college during which a textile conservator would be available for the students to consult about individual conservation concerns they may be having about their work.

In addition to considering what method to use to communicate conservation to textile art students it is also important to consider how to pitch the information so that it is communicated effectively. It has been shown that artists may view conservation as being a slightly intimidating and mystifying profession, so it will be important to communicate with the students in an approachable and accessible tone during outreach activities. Avoiding using conservation jargon will help to achieve this: stating dirt instead of soiling, dust rather

⁸⁴ Wincenciak Katarzyna, “The Conservator Is Not As Conservative as He Is Painted ... Katarzyna Wincenciak Talks to Zofia Kerneder,” *Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow*. Published 2011. <https://en.mocak.pl/the-conservator-is-not-as-conservative-as-he-is-painted-katarzyna-wincenciak-talks-to-zofia-kerneder>

⁸⁵ Pye, *Caring for the Past*, 17-18.

than particulate, damage instead of degradation etc. If a conservation term has to be used to make a point then this should be clearly defined. For example, the term 'conservation grade material' will probably need to be used when providing the students with tips for storage, and so should be clearly explained. Textile conservators should also avoid using terms that may be considered by the students to be pejorative. For example, the terms "inappropriate materials" and "appropriate materials" are commonly used by textile conservators but may be seen as pejorative terms by artists if conservators use them in isolation to describe materials the artists had either incorporated in their work or used to support their work.

There are several possible benefits for conservation professionals of increasing communication with textile art students through outreach activities. Helen Jones underlines two possible benefits of museum conservators engaging with students about the conservation profession. Firstly, Jones notes that museum conservators need to be able to communicate well about conservation to people outside their profession if they are to secure funding.⁸⁶ Secondly, Jones notes that if museum conservators are seen to be doing this, it will increase the profile of conservation within their museum: "More effective power can be earned through adding to the institution's success, and being seen to do so. By sharing our expert knowledge, opinion and skills more widely..."⁸⁷ If a textile conservator from a private conservation studio were to be involved in an outreach initiative to communicate conservation to art students then this could potentially provide them with new clients in the future. If students were made aware of, and felt comfortable interacting with that particular conservator during an outreach sessions then they would be more inclined to contact them and pay them for conservation help and advice in the future.

This section identifies several additional methods of outreach that textile conservators could use to communicate with students about conservation. These include: workshops, tours of conservation studios and 'clinics.' Textile conservators should ensure the information they present to students during outreach activities is accessible by using scientific and conservation terms sparingly.

⁸⁶ Helen Jones, "The Importance of Being Less Earnest: Communicating Conservation," *Conservation Journal* 41 (Summer 2002): 20.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, 21.

SECTION 7: ART TUTORS' RESPONSE

7.1 Art Tutors' Feedback

Lindy Richardson and Ainsley Hillard, two tutors from higher education textiles courses within the UK, were questioned about the suggestions made in this dissertation. Firstly, they were asked if they would be interested in facilitating some form of interaction between textile conservators and textile students. Secondly, the tutors were presented with key information which textile conservators could share with textile students (appendix F). Finally, the tutors were given a list of all the outreach methods that have been discussed in this dissertation as possible ways that textile conservators could communicate with art students. Their responses are summarised and analysed below.

Both tutors were asked if there had been any official interaction between textile conservators and students on their textile courses. Hillard answered that none had occurred in the eight years she had taught on the textiles courses at University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, and Richardson stated that some had occurred on the Textiles course at Edinburgh College of Art, but only recently.⁸⁸ Both tutors stated that they would definitely be interested in facilitating interaction between textile conservators and their students.⁸⁹ Many more strengths than limitations were stressed. Richardson felt that increasing the students' awareness of conservation would make them more aware of how to choose materials, construct, present and look after artworks.⁹⁰ She noted that a limitation may be the cost of hiring the conservator for this purpose:

“...since we've become part of the university, it's much easier for us to access the conservators that look after the collections at Edinburgh University ... in the past it wasn't easy, simply because getting a conservator in costs money and the College of

⁸⁸ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

Ainsley Hillard, emailed responses to questions, received August 6th, 2015.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

Art didn't have lots of spare money, and so that was quite low down our priority list."⁹¹

One way to overcome this would be to get textile conservation students from the CTC involved in outreach activities with textile art students. This would reduce the cost to the art college and would fit in well with the outreach activities final year students on the CTC course complete as part of their Professional Development module. As the CTC is the only textile conservation course in the UK and has a small cohort of students, the effect of this idea would be limited. Nevertheless, the idea was still proposed to Richardson, because of her course's close proximity to the CTC, and she was clearly interested.⁹²

Hillard explained that she thought this consultative relationship would be beneficial for the following reasons. Firstly, to provide information for students about textile conservation as a career path; secondly, to provide staff and students with practical advice associated with the conservation and care of textiles; thirdly, to work together to create appropriate storage conditions for textiles and materials used as teaching and learning resources within the department.⁹³

Both tutors thought that it would be good for interaction to occur at all levels, both undergraduate and postgraduate.⁹⁴ Richardson emphatically stated that she knows students at both these academic levels who are interested to learn more about textile conservation.⁹⁵ Both tutors also suggested suitable modules when information about textile conservation could be introduced. For example, when they are taught about the historic side of textiles during their 2nd undergraduate year or during the professional

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ Ainsley Hillard, emailed responses to questions, received August 6th, 2015.

⁹⁴ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

Ainsley Hillard, emailed responses to questions, received August 6th, 2015.

⁹⁵ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

practice modules that 2nd and 3rd year undergraduates as well as postgraduates complete.⁹⁶

Both tutors provided positive feedback when they were shown the sheet of suggestions for key information that textile conservators could share with textile art students (appendix F). Hillard thought that it was “a comprehensive list that would be invaluable if shared with staff and students.”⁹⁷ Hillard highlighted another factor which could be added to this list, that obtaining the professional opinion of a conservator could make an artwork more saleable. She explained that as an artist she continually has issues with potential buyers/collectors hesitant to purchase her work due to their concerns about its presentation, care and perceived durability; thus, Hillard felt that it would be useful to convey to students that in situations such as this conservators may be able to provide advice and assurance to potential buyers that may be able to alleviate these concerns.⁹⁸

Richardson stated that the ideas:

“...have great potential for positive effect at the outset of the textiles life rather than when problems might arise. I also think there is much to be said for working with students even before they begin the journey of design to ensure informed decisions.”⁹⁹

Richardson also noted that it might be useful to consider that textile students now use a broad range of alternative materials to traditional textiles, partially due to the development of new techniques such as 3D printing and lazer cutting (appendix G). Although textile conservators may not have the knowledge to treat all the new materials and techniques that the students are using, more interaction between the two parties may be beneficial to textile conservators as this would help them to keep abreast of new techniques and materials being used by textile artists. This may also lead to conservators

⁹⁶ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

Ainsley Hillard, emailed responses to questions, received August 6th, 2015.

⁹⁷ Ainsley Hillard, emailed responses to questions, received August 6th, 2015.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

⁹⁹ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

pursuing new avenues of research to develop new conservation treatment methods for these techniques and materials at the onset of their use within the art and design sphere.

The final suggestion that Richardson made was that it might be a good idea for textile conservators to share their knowledge with art technicians, as they are the people who work most with the students when they are actually making their work.¹⁰⁰ Job descriptions for textile technicians highlight that the role involves providing technical expertise in specialist textile techniques for both students and staff (appendix H). In her article discussing the role of the technician within universities Kelly Vere states that “amid the frequent turnover of research staff, it’s the technician who’s the reassuringly permanent fixture in an academic department...”¹⁰¹ This comment suggests that imparting textile conservation knowledge to technicians will mean there is a presence in the art department in the long term who can impart knowledge listed in Appendix F to students when they are making their pieces to help them make informed choices. Many art technicians are artists themselves.¹⁰² Consequently providing technicians with basic textile conservation knowledge may also have the benefit of informing their own artistic practice, helping with the long term preservation of their work. However, the information the technicians would be able to provide the students would inevitably be much more limited than if the students had direct contact to a trained conservator who they could probe and question about any specific conservation issues or concerns they had about their art.

The tutors were asked which of the possible outreach methods identified in Section 6 they thought would be the best method for textile conservators to use to share their knowledge with textile students. The only method that they both agreed would be appropriate to use for all textile students was a practical workshop. Richardson felt particularly strongly about using this outreach method:

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Kelly Vere, “In Defence of the University Technician,” *The Guardian*, August 02, 2013, accessed August 02, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2013/aug/02/university-technician-teaching-research-development>

¹⁰² Steve Bunn and Jovica Jovic, *How Does This Work? Being a Technician at the RCA*, ed. Ellen Delbourgo and Chris Mitchell (London: Royal College of Art, 2009), 10.

“...the most important part would be making it absolutely practical ... they probably would respond much, much better if it was, actually, a physical workshop. Where they were sharing information, rather than a lecture.”¹⁰³

Both tutors suggested a method which was not included on the list. They thought it would be a good idea to organise some form of practical project, where students, staff, conservators and technicians could work together, as they felt this would facilitate an exchange of knowledge between all parties. Hillard provided an example, as she suggested that establishing and managing a textile teaching and learning resource within the Textile’s department would be a good project to enable all parties to be actively involved.¹⁰⁴

In an informal discussion with Richardson after the interview, she was asked whether she thought that the literature review (appendix F) would be a good resource for the students. Richardson responded that she thought it would need to be condensed, possibly to a few key texts, as she felt they wouldn’t have time to read the texts in addition to the compulsory reading requirements of their courses. This list was also sent to two of the artists interviewed for this dissertation research, and both stated that they were grateful to receive it and would keep it for future reference (appendix I). Thus, the list in its current state would probably be most useful as a hand out for students to keep as a point of reference when faced with conservation issues and considerations in the future, rather than a list of required reading for their course. However, it would be useful to have further feedback from these artists in the future, when they have had a chance to use the list, so that any areas of weakness can be identified and adjustments made.

7.2 Conclusion for Section 7

In summary, the responses of the art tutors have indicated that it would be realistically possible to put these dissertation findings into practice, as a strong desire was expressed to include textile conservation information on the textile art courses in question. The tutors felt that this could be beneficial to students for a number of reasons. They repeatedly stated that they’d also like to involve the textile tutors, and particularly the

¹⁰³ Lindy Richardson, interviewed by Kate Clive-Powell at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, July 30th, 2015.

¹⁰⁴ Ainsley Hillard, emailed responses to questions, received August 6th, 2015.

course technicians in interactions with textile conservators. The information that was proposed that textile conservators could share with textile students was considered exciting and comprehensive. Of the options suggested a practical workshop was felt the most appropriate method of outreach for conservators to use to communicate with textiles students. However, both tutors also made an additional suggestion, that it would be a good idea to get conservators, students, technicians and staff to work together on a project that involved an element of conservation. The tutors' responses showed that modules that focus on the students' professional development or modules that develop their knowledge of historic textiles would be opportune times to include an element of textile conservation.

This section demonstrated that interaction between textile conservators and students could be beneficial for the conservators, as this may help them to keep up to date with new trends and developments within contemporary textile practice. This knowledge exchange would help to tailor and develop the list of key information that has been proposed (appendix F), so that it is more relevant to the students' artistic practice. Cost has been identified as a limitation of facilitating this interaction. Cost could be reduced by getting textile conservation students involved in these interactions, rather than qualified conservators.

SECTION 8: FINAL CONCLUSION

8.1 Overall Conclusion

This dissertation has shown that textile conservators have knowledge and skills that they could usefully share with textile art students in the UK. This would principally help students with the long term preservation of their work by aiding them to make informed choices about materials and methods they use right from the beginning of their artistic careers. This information could help them to adequately fulfil the requirements of commissioned work and may provide fresh inspiration for their artistic practice. Certain limitations have, however, been identified which may affect the usefulness of this information to the students during their artistic careers.

The following textile conservation subjects have been identified as useful for textile art students to learn about: storage, transportation, handling, display, documentation and the properties of materials. A list of sources was compiled that textile art students could keep for future reference for information about these subjects. It has been noted that the storage, transportation, handling and display resources listed may provide inadequate information for artists who make artworks that are particularly large, an unusual shape, particularly fragile or meant to be displayed in an unconventional way or setting. Emphasising this to students would highlight to them that creating artworks with these characteristics may create conservation issues. Nevertheless, it should also be stressed to the students that if they were to create work of this type then they could still refer to the texts for suggestions of methods that could be adapted to suit their work but they may well need the help of a conservator to implement this.

It was also shown that textile conservators have the following useful skills to offer textile artists and textile students through direct interaction: good problem solving, logistical and organisational skills. These skills mean conservators can be good mediators and facilitators, who ensure that an artwork is accessible and fulfils the artist's and the client's requirements. This should be underlined to students during their training, so that they would have a greater awareness of the positive and beneficial role of the conservator. This would help to prevent the students perpetuating negative misconceptions that some artists hold of the conservator as aloof, restrictive and controlling.

Sharing information with students could also be advantageous for textile conservators in the following ways. Firstly, increasing the students' awareness of the beneficial role of textile conservation may encourage them to hire a textile conservator's expertise post-graduation. Secondly, if textile conservators were to organise outreach activities with students then this may encourage a knowledge exchange and give conservators an opportunity to see and learn about what materials contemporary textile students are using in their work. This would help conservators keep abreast of new techniques and materials being used to make textile art, and this may lead to them developing treatment methods for these techniques and materials at the onset of their use in art and design.

Possible methods were identified that could be used to impart textile conservation knowledge to art students. However, the tutors' responses highlighted that practical outreach methods would probably be the most effective, such as a workshop or a practical group project. They suggested that art college technicians and lecturers could also get involved in a practical group project. This would enable all parties to glean some textile conservation knowledge and increase the impact of the conservators' presence in the art college. Through the artists' and tutors' interviews it was suggested that both undergraduates and postgraduates would appreciate and benefit from learning more about textile conservation.

The findings have shown that there is an appetite, from tutors and textile artists, for the findings to be put into practice by including an element of textile conservation on textiles programmes. A key limitation of doing this may be the cost to an art college of hiring a conservator for this purpose. Nevertheless, if the potential benefits to students' textile art practice are stressed to textiles tutors, then they may no longer see this as an issue.

8.2 Suggestions for Further Research

Two recommendations for future research are suggested. Firstly, it could be organised for a textile conservator to have a session with students on a textiles course in a UK art college to put this dissertation's findings into practice. This may highlight any adjustments that would be needed to make interactions more effective. Secondly, the references suggested for students that discuss the properties of materials only discuss the properties of natural and the most common synthetic fibres. An investigation could be made into further sources

which students could refer to for information about the properties of alternative materials to traditional textiles that they may use.

Illustrations

Fig. 1. Malcolm Lochhead, *Nave Altar Cloth for York Minster (detail)*, 2015. Painted cloth with hand stitching and goldwork done in silk, gold threads and various yarns. York Minster. ©Malcolm Lochhead

Fig.2. Alice Kettle, *Looking Forwards to the Past (detail)*, 2005. Embroidery in variety of threads. Winchester Discovery Centre. Reproduced from Alice Kettle et al., *Alice Kettle at the Winchester Discover Centre* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 2007), 4. Image Credit Joe Low

Fig.3. Christina Hesford, *Landscape Intervention Using Handwoven Textile (detail)*, 2014. Silk, cotton, and gold-tipped paper yarns, scale of handwoven textile: 70cm x 25cm. Part of artist's own collection.

Image Credit John Hesford, ©Christina Hesford

Fig.4. Katie Schwab, *Wall Hanging*, 2015. Wool, dowel, American White Ash, 80 x 33cm. Part of Artist's Own Collection.

Image Credit Erin Busswood, ©Katie Schwab

Fig.5. Natalia Zargorska-Thomas, *Nike*, 2011. Mixed Media, approx. H15cm x L27cm x W7cm. Work in the collection of Helen Wilks. Reproduced from zagorska-thomas.com, www.zagorska-thomas.com (accessed August 07, 2015).
Image Credit Franek Strzeszewski ©Natalia Zargorska-Thomas

Fig.6. Photograph of light being used by Natalia Zargorska-Thomas to induce fading for artwork.
©Kate Clive-Powell, Courtesy of Natalia Zargorska-Thomas

Fig.7. Karla Black, *Empty Now*, 2012, sawdust and PVA. GoMA part of Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art 2012. Reproduced from *Scottish Art Blog*, <http://scottishartblog.com/tag/karla-black/> (accessed July 15, 2015).
Image Credit: Ruth Clark

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Appendices

Appendix A

Christina Hesford's Recommendations for Future Care

Recommendations for cleaning woven panels

I recommend that you clean and check the artwork three times a year.

In order to clean, I would recommend hoovering the panels with the nozzle attachment along all edges and the main surface. A nylon netting should be used to cover the nozzle to prevent it from catching threads on the surface of the artwork. Ideally, the vacuum cleaner should be dedicated to artworks and should have a variable suction so that a gentler suction level can be used on the textile.

I would also suggest checking the wooden frame for any signs of rotting or disintegration. The frames should be lifted up, then off the wall, when removal is required. Also, check that no spider webs or other insect nests are living in the frame. Checking that the wooden battens are still firmly attached to the wall would be useful.

Ensure that the wall on which the artwork is mounted shows no signs of dampness as this could damage the artwork.

You may want to consider having UV filters (self-adhesive film) attached to the windows that are above the artwork. This will prevent fading of the hand-dyed silk used in the textile. (Although without UV filters, the colours should remain unchanged for around 20 years.)

Also, the natural oils on skin can damage textiles, so please ensure that nobody touches it, and that those who clean it wear gloves.

A.1 Recommendations for Future Care: written by Christina Hesford for commission made for St.Peter's House Church and Chaplaincy, University of Manchester

Appendix B

Email Correspondence with Alice Kettle

B.1 Description of technical documentation

Appendix C

Email Correspondence with Christina Hesford

C.1 Christina Hesford's explanation of the documentation she kept of her work for the Textiles in Practice course at Manchester School of Art (point 5)

Appendix D

List of Useful Sources for Textile Art Students

Properties of Materials

- **Gordon Cook, J. *Handbook of Textile Fibres* . Cambridge: Woodhead Publishing Limited, 2001. (Volume I is about natural fibres and Volume II focuses on man-made fibres).**

These books provide an overview of the structure, properties, processing and application of different types of fibres. The “Structure and Properties” and “Fibres in Use” sections for each fibre would probably be the most useful for students. The former section includes a broad overview of the main factors that would cause a specific fibre to degrade. The “Fibres in Use” section would be useful for artists wanting to select an appropriate material for a particular effect or use.

Environmental Conditions

- **Rendell, Caroline. “Textiles.” In *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping*, edited by Helen Lloyd, 4th edition, 404-419. London: National Trust, 2011.**

This book looks at environmental factors that will cause different materials to deteriorate and suggestions are made for ways these threats can be controlled. In the book’s chapter on “Textiles” a broad overview is provided of environmental threats to textiles. Details about managing these can be found elsewhere in the book, in each of the chapters that focus on the threats individually. For example, if someone were concerned that their artwork might be getting exposed to too much light, then they could refer to the “light” chapter for help. This has information about recommended light levels to minimise damage, tools that could be used to monitor the light levels and methods that could be used to control the light levels.

NB. A limitation of these references is that they only discuss the properties of natural and the most common synthetic fibres.

Storage

- **Robinson, Jane, and Tuula Pardoe. *An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 2000.**

This is a practical guide that has information about the maintenance, storage and display of textiles. This resource is available for free online. Its chapter on storing textiles would be most useful to artists, as it would introduce them to the main storage methods used by textile conservators: flat, rolled, framed and mounted, boxed and hanging. Suggestions are made of storage materials to use for both basic and best practice. The former would be particularly useful to artists who are on a tight budget or have limited space. No step-by-step instructions are provided for applying the different storage methods, but this information is available through the next reference.

- **Minnesota Historical Society, Conservation & Preservation of Heirloom Textiles, parts 1-6, available through You Tube.**

Step-by-step instructions are provided about how to apply most of the common storage techniques used by textile conservators, such as storing flat textiles in boxes, making a padded hanger for hanging storage, rolling textiles, and storing costume in boxes. The instructions are comprehensive; what to do for each step, the reason for doing it and the materials to use are clearly described.

Display

- **Boersma, Foekje, and Agnes W. Brokerhof. *Unravelling Textiles: A Handbook for the Preservation of Textile Collections*. London: Archetype for the Netherlands Textile Committee, 2007.**

A useful resource to learn about the standard basic mounting methods used to support textiles during display. Methods are suggested for displaying the following types of textiles: large and/or long 2D textiles, flat textiles with pile, flat/composite objects, 3D textiles, 3D objects.

NB. The references given discuss standard basic storage and display methods used by textile conservators and so would be of limited use to textile artists who produce work which is particularly large, an unusual shape, is particularly fragile or is meant to be hung or displayed in an unconventional way or setting. For this kind of work the textile artist would need to seek the advice of a conservator.

Transportation & Handling

- **Reid, Margaret and Sarah Hickey. “Transporting Objects.” In *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping*, edited by Helen Lloyd, 4th edition, 764-773. London: National Trust, 2011.**

This chapter provides an overview of key considerations that artists should bear in mind to reduce damage to their textiles when transporting them within the UK and abroad. The chapter is divided into the following sub-sections: assessing the risks to the object during transit, packaging methods and materials, transport methods, and the use of documentation.

- **Boersma, Foekje, and Agnes W. Brokerhof. *Unravelling Textiles: A Handbook for the Preservation of Textile Collections*. London: Archetype for the Netherlands Textile Committee, 2007.**

In the “Transportation” chapter questions are highlighted that should be considered when assessing whether an object is in good enough condition to travel. A clear list is also provided of the main advantages and disadvantages of shipping, trucking or flying an object to its destination.

- **Robinson, Jane, and Tuula Pardoe. *An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 2000.**

This would be a helpful resource for artists to consult for basic tips on how to handle and move objects, when not using vehicles, so that the risk of damage to them is minimised. Basic considerations for this are listed, such as keeping boxed and rolled textiles level and not stacking them, and illustrations are provided showing how to carry costume and 3D items. The handling section provides basic guidelines; such as using gloves and handling aids and keeping work areas clear.

Materials to Use To Support Textiles

- **Boersma, Foekje, and Agnes W. Brokerhof. *Unravelling Textiles: A Handbook for the Preservation of Textile Collections*. London: Archetype for the Netherlands Textile Committee, 2007.**

Includes an extensive list of conservation quality¹⁰⁵ materials that are recommended to use next to textiles during storage, transportation and display. The advantage of this list over the *CCI guidelines* (below) is that more detail is often included about a specific material, such as information about the key properties and different types available. Signs of a particular support material degrading and the frequency of replacement are also often suggested. Materials are mentioned that could be used for short term packaging.

- **CCI Notes *Guidelines for Selecting Materials for Exhibit, Storage and Transportation*.**

Includes information that would be useful to textile artists wondering what the most appropriate materials would be to use to support their art during storage, transport and display to help with its long term preservation. A list is provided of materials that are ideal to use next to textiles in the long term, due to them being inert. This is a free resource which is available online.

- **Robinson, Jane, and Tuula Pardoe. *An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 2000.**

Appendix C provides a list of suppliers that sell conservation quality materials.

Documentation

¹⁰⁵ “Conservation Quality” is a generic term that indicates that materials are chemically stable, free from impurities, durable and generally suitable for long-term storage of museum objects. Jane Robinson and Tuula Pardoe, *An Illustrated Guide to the Care of Costume and Textile Collections* (London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 2000), 44.

- **AIC Wiki. “Documentation.” Accessed June 20, 2015.**

www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Documentation.

Provides tips for taking good quality photographs to show the main locations of damage on a textile. This would be useful for creating basic condition reports to monitor the condition of a textile when it is loaned for display. This resource is easily accessible for free online.

Finding a Conservator

- **ICON. “Conservation Register.” Accessed June 25th, 2015.**

<http://www.conservationregister.com/>.

This is a useful resource available online which artists could use to find an accredited textile conservator. It is possible to search for a conservator with particular expertise or to search by area for a conservator.

D.1 Hand-out written by Kate Clive-Powell and presented to textile tutors Lindy Richardson and Ainsley Richardson

Appendix E

Health and Safety Documentation Organised by Stephanie de Roemer for Installation of Karla Black's Sawdust Sculpture *Empty Now* at GoMA

E.1 Identification of main Health and Safety risks of exhibiting *Empty Now* at GoMA
(courtesy of Stephanie de Roemer, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre)

E.2 Dust monitoring carried out after risk assessment (courtesy of Stephanie de Roemer, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre)

E.3 Conservation Method Statement for Installation of saw dust for Karla Black's *Empty Now* (courtesy of Stephanie de Roemer, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre).

Appendix F

Key Information Sheet

Key Information that Textile Conservators Could Share With Textile Art Students through Outreach

1. Brief overall introduction to textile conservation, including its main aims – it would be emphasised here that conservation isn't just about repairing old things, and that conservation can also be relevant to contemporary artistic practice

2. Information about skills conservators have to offer artists. These include:
 - Good problem solving and logistical skills which can be used to increase access to an artwork
 - Good mediators between artists and clients, helping the artists to fulfil their briefs effectively.Case studies would be used to highlight the use of these skills.

3. Textile conservation knowledge/resources that may be useful to share with contemporary textile artists. A list of references will be provided (please see attached) to show artists where they may be able to find more information about the majority of the following:
 - *Properties of Materials*
 - Characteristics of natural and the most common synthetic materials
 - A broad overview of what factors may induce degradation in natural and the most common synthetic materials
 - A broad overview of optimum environmental conditions for textiles and methods to manage these conditions to help with the textiles long term preservation

 - *Storage, Transportation, Handling and Display*
 - Standard basic mounting methods used by textile conservators to display textiles

- Standard basic methods used by textile conservators to store textiles
 - Information about conservation quality storage and display materials which can be used with textiles to help with their long term preservation
 - Basic handling tips for textiles
 - An overview of what is involved in transporting a textile, and key considerations to bear in mind to reduce damage to a textile during transportation
 - The main advantages and disadvantages of different transport methods
- *Documentation*
 - The purpose of condition reports, and how to take good quality photographs to record the condition of an artwork.
 - How documenting original intent, materials and techniques used when making work may contribute to its long term preservation by helping a conservator to make informed decisions about how to treat the piece in a way that would continue to convey the artist's original intent.
 - MSDS Forms
- *How to Find a Conservator*
 - Resources available for finding an accredited conservator
 -

F.1 Handout of key information textile conservators could share with textile art students through outreach written by Kate Clive-Powell and presented to textile tutors Lindy Richardson and Ainsley Hillard

Appendix G

Email Correspondence with Lindy Richardson

G.1 Feedback from Lindy Richardson about “Key Information Textile Conservators Could Share With Textile Art Students Through Outreach” hand-out

Appendix H

Job Description for Printed Textiles Technician

Job Description and Person Specification (HR5)

Vacancy Number: 025811FH



Job Description						
School/Department:	Winchester School of Art					
Post Title:	Printed Textiles Technician					
Please enter Level under appropriate Career Pathway	ERE	TAE	MSA	CAO	R.Nurse	Clinical
ERE Category	Academic Posts			Non-Academic Posts		
	Academic (mixed)	Research only	Teaching only	Enterprise	Education Development	
Posts Responsible to (and Level):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Services Co-ordinator (Line Manager) • Academic Supervisory: Fashion & Textile Design Programme Leader 					
Posts Responsible for (and Level):	None					
<p>Job Purpose: To provide technical support for the digital printed textiles area, including providing a technical programme of induction and support for BA, MA and PhD students to a quality standard and in compliance with University Health and Safety regulations.</p> <p>To lead workshops and assist in the printed textile workshops, where traditional screen-printed textiles, dyeing and related processes also take place.</p>						

Key Accountabilities/Primary Responsibilities (6-10 bullet points maximum)	% Time
1. To plan, organise and deliver technical support for workshops at standard and advanced levels, in digital printing, file preparation, dyeing, screen preparation and related processes for undergraduate and postgraduate Design students, to meet course requirements.	25%
2. To ensure that the facilities are maintained, serviced, repaired and supported to provide the correct academic and technical working environment and to ensure the maintenance of records, costings, stocktaking and re-stocktaking of equipment and materials. To adapt and refine work practices and procedures in own area, including monitoring technical standards, highlighting and prioritising any issues for further investigation/research.	25%
3. To provide instruction, consultation and advice using specialist knowledge and experience in relevant areas to groups or on an individual basis including demonstrations, workshops & training across the Textiles, Fashion and Fibre Programmes.	20%
4. Preparation of records and reference documentation for students and staff, including learning support documentation on Blackboard.	10%
5. To monitor and maintain, in conjunction with the other Printed Textile Technician, a safe working environment in accordance with Health and Safety policies and procedures, within all workshops, and to ensure that equipment and resources are used safely and accurately. This will include updating COSHH records, Risk Assessment and H & S data sheets in liaison with the other Printed Textile Technician.	10%
6. To liaise with other technical, academic, administrative, and support staff in order to maintain and develop the ongoing running of the responsible areas, including attendance at meetings where necessary.	10%

H.1 Job description showing the responsibilities of an art college technician
 “Job Description & Person Specification for Printed Textiles Technician,” University of Southampton., accessed August 07, 2015,
<https://jobs.soton.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx?ref=025811FH>

Appendix I

Further Email Correspondence

I.1 Email from Katie Schwab showing that she was not taught about MSDS sheets at college and showing her response to the “List of Useful Sources for Textile Art Students”

I.2 Email from Christina Hesford showing that she was not taught about MSDS sheets at college and showing her response to the “List of Useful Sources for Textile Art Students”

Appendix J

Questionnaire Completed by Ainsley Hillard, Textile Tutor

Background Information

1. **Please could you confirm on which textiles course you teach, and what your position is?**

BA Surface Pattern Design and MDes, Surface Pattern at University of Wales, Trinity Saint David (UWTSD).

Senior Lecturer and MDes Coordinator

2. **Could I also confirm that your course has enabled some of your graduates to pursue careers as textile artists?**

Interaction Between Students and Textile Conservators

3. **Has there been any official interaction between textile conservators and students on your textile course?**

|

4. **Would you be interested in facilitating some form of interaction between your students and a textile conservator? What do you think may be the benefits and limitations of doing this?**

-

-

- |

-

5. If you answer is yes to the above, then at what stage in their art college training?
i.e. undergraduate (if so, which year?), or postgraduate?

Information that Could be Shared

6. The following is a list of information, based on the research done for this dissertation, which may be useful for textile conservators to share with textile artists. (This refers to the attached sheet: Key Information that Textile Conservators Could Share with Textile Art Students Through Outreach) What are

your thoughts about this list? Can you think of anything that you think should be removed or added to this list?

Possible Outreach Method that Textile Conservators Could Use to Communicate With Textile Students

7. Through this dissertation research the following methods have been identified as possible ways that textile conservators could share their knowledge with textile students. Please could you indicate which method/s you think would be the most appropriate to use and why?

-

- **Workshop (could include demonstrations of the following: standard packing techniques used by textile conservators for storage and transportation; tips for handling artworks)**

- **A placement with a textile conservator**

- **A tour of a textile conservation studio or a tour of a whole conservation department (so the students have an opportunity to see the conservation of different types of objects/materials, not just textiles)**

- **'Clinic' (a period when a textile conservator would be available for textile students to approach with any conservation related concerns they have about their work)**

Appendix K

Transcriptions

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Lindy Richardson

Date: 30/07/15

Place: Edinburgh College of Art

Kate Clive-Powell (KCP): Please could you just confirm which textiles course you teach on and what your position is?

KCP: Can I confirm that your course has enabled some of your graduates to pursue careers as textile artists?

KCP: This set of questions is about interactions between students and textile conservators. Has there been any official interaction between textile conservators and students, on your textile course, that you know of?

KCP: Would you be interested in facilitating some form of interaction between your students and textile conservators, I mean, some more interaction?

KCP: You have mentioned what you think the main benefits of the interaction would be, but can you think what limitations there might be?

KCP: At what sort of stage during your students' training do you think it would be a good idea to have the interaction. Do you think undergraduate level, postgraduate?

KCP: My next question is about the list of information I wrote, that I thought might be interesting for textile conservators to share with textile artists. Did you have a chance to look at it? I ... Oh okay, I've got a copy of it. ...I just wondered what your thoughts were about the list, and can you think of anything that should be removed or added in particular?

KCP: So you think it would be beneficial for the technicians to have some textile conservation knowledge?

KCP: You've said that you would be interested in having a textile conservator or textile conservation student come and talk to your students, I was just wondering what you think would be the best method they could use to communicate to the art students about what conservators do and what skills they have to offer? I've got a list of possible outreach methods I came up with here...[KCP hands LR the list]

KCP: I've talked to Frances [Lennard] about this as well, and as part of our final year, we have a professional development module, and get into groups and do outreach work. So we

go and talk to various groups about textile conservation, and we sometimes do demonstrations. So would you be interested in a group of CTC students coming to do something like this next year?

KCP: Okay, and then your students and textile conservator would work together on that?

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Malcolm Lochhead

Date: 9th June 2015

Place: Artist's home

Kate Clive-Powell (KCP): The first set of questions is to gain some background information about your work. So, firstly how would you classify the types of artworks, with textile elements that you make?

KCP.: Do the materials and techniques you use ever have any conceptual significance?

KCP.: What do you tend to create works for, is it commissions, museums, other public spaces or private patrons? I think you've partially answered this question already, but would you like to add to what you've already said?

KCP.: So, the last question in this section is, I was wondering if technicians ever help you to create your work?

KCP.: It's the second section now, which is about your experiences of art school training. So, could you please tell me where you went to art college, and when, and what course you attended?

KCP.: During your college training, would you say there was more of an emphasis on craft based learning, with an emphasis on improving knowledge of techniques and materials or more of a focus on developing conceptual ideas?

KCP.: So I was just wondering, did you, as part of that training, attend different workshops, where they introduced you to the different textile techniques?

KCP.: While you were at college, were you encouraged to experiment with materials and techniques in your work?

KCP.: While you were at art school were you provided with any material education, so that would be information about things such as the ageing properties of materials and how materials may react in different environmental conditions?

KCP.: At art school do you remember being provided with any information that would help with the long-term preservation of your work? If so, do you remember what kind of information was provided, so, perhaps tips for handling packing, transportation, storage and display?

KCP.: Do you think if that information had been available to you during your training, that that would've been useful?

KCP.: Do you remember if there were any conservation courses at the Glasgow School of Art when you were there?

KCP.: So you don't remember having any interactions with conservation students at the time?

KCP.: Were you encouraged, during your training, to document your work? Keep a record of materials you used, types and brand names, techniques used and your original intent in creating the work?

KCP.: So we're on to the next section, it's about your view of materials, techniques and care. I was just wondering if you've created any installation pieces, or pieces of art with very ephemeral elements? Have you done any performance?

KCP.: Have you noticed any sign of degradation damage in previous work you made, involving textile elements, and do you have an idea of what caused the damage?

KCP.: When you're creating a piece of work, do you think about the practicalities of handling, storing and displaying and transporting it, or are you completely focused on creating the piece?

KCP.: This is the last question, it's about your interaction with conservators post-graduation. Have had any interaction with conservators post-graduation? If so, then in what situation?

KCP.: I think that's all my questions, thank you very much.

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Alice Kettle

Date: 12/06/15

Place: Manchester, Righton
Building, MMU

Kate Clive-Powell (KCP): The first set of questions is to get a bit more background about your work. How would you classify the type of artwork, with textile elements, you make; mixed media, machine embroidery or other?

KCP.: Yeah, that's great. Thanks.

KCP.: Would you say the materials and techniques you use have a conceptual significance?

KCP.: What do you tend to create work for, commissions for museums, for public spaces, for private patrons?

KCP.: What kind of scale are the pieces you make?

KCP.: When you create these pieces do you ever get technicians to help you with the work or do you do it all yourself?

KCP.: So we're onto the second section, which is about your experience of art school training. Could you please tell me where you went to art college, when and what course you attended?

You've just sort of answered my next question, but I don't know if you want to add to what you've said? The question is: throughout your training was there more of an emphasis on developing conceptual ideas rather than improving your knowledge of techniques and materials?

KCP.: During your training, were you encouraged to experiment with materials and techniques in your work?

KCP.: During your training were you provided with any material education, so that would be information about the ageing properties of materials and how they might react in different environmental conditions?

KCP.: So when you were training you didn't get provided with any information about tips for handling, packing and transportation of the work?

KCP.: And storage or display conditions?

KCP.: If the answer is no to any of the above questions, then do you think you would have found learning about any of this kind of information useful during your training?

KCP.: So is it mainly in relation to your commissions that you're concerned about that?

KCP.: I didn't know about that documentation. Is that a standard thing that artists have to produce with commissioned work?

KCP.: During your training, do you remember if there were any conservation courses at your art college? And do you remember having any interaction with conservators or conservation students?

KCP.: During your training did your tutors encourage you to document your work by keeping a record of the materials you used, the types and brand names, the techniques you used and your original intent in creating the work?

KCP.: The next section is about your view on techniques, materials and care. So, I was wondering, have you ever created any pieces of art with ephemeral elements? Have you done any performance, or pieces that you know are going to degrade quite rapidly? And if you have created this type of art do you keep documents of the work?

KCP.: Have you noticed any signs of degradation damage in previous work you've made, involving textiles? And do you have any idea of what the cause of the damage was?

KCP.: When you're creating a piece do you think about the practicalities of handling, packing, storing and transporting the work, or is it not something you really think about?

KCP.: I was just wondering whether during your discussions with Ann French you have asked her advice about the best way to package your work?

KCP.: Well that has led onto my next question which is whether you have had much interaction with conservators post-graduation and in what situation? Is it principally Ann French that you've had those interactions with?

KCP.: Did you actively seek out Ann French's help?

Great, well I think that's all my questions. Thank you very much.

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Natalia Zagorska-Thomas

Profession: Textile Conservator and Artist

Date: 11/06/15

Place: Artist's home

Kate Clive-Powell (KCP): The first set of questions are to gain some background information about your work. So, how would you classify the type of artwork, with textile elements, that you create?

KCP.: Do the materials and techniques you use ever have a conceptual significance?

KCP.: What do you tend to create your work for; commissions for museums, other public spaces, private patrons or for yourself?

KCP.: What kind of scale are your pieces? Does it vary quite a lot?

KCP.: Do you ever have technicians that help you create the work?

KCP.: The next section is about your experiences of art school training. So I was just wondering, where you trained as an artist and what course you attended?

KCP.: Were you encouraged to experiment with materials and/or techniques in your work during your training?

KCP.: I just wanted to clarify that it was your training in Sydney that was based more on developing conceptual ideas?

KCP.: Does that mean you were given a theme and a space and left to get on with it?

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KCP.: At any part of your training were you provided with any material education, so that would be information about the ageing properties of materials or how they might react in different environmental conditions?

KCP.: Do you remember being provided with any other information to help you with the long term preservation of your work? So things like; tips for handling, packing, transportation or tips for storage and display?

KCP.: And then my next question is, if you answer's no, which it is, to all the questions, do you think you would have found learning this information useful before you trained as a conservator?

KCP.: Do you remember if there were any conservation courses at your art college, and if there were do you remember having any interaction with conservation students?

KCP.: During your training did your tutors ever encourage you to document your work, in terms of materials you used, types and brands, techniques you used and your original intent in creating the pieces?

KCP.: So do you tend to keep any form of documentation when you create work now?

KCP.: I'm just going to ask you a few questions about your view of materials, techniques and care. I was just wondering if you created any installation pieces or pieces of art with ephemeral elements? And if yes to installation art, do you keep a record of the way you'd like it to be stored, and in what form; photography, diagrams, or written notes?

KCP.: You've sort of answered my next question which is about whether you have created any pieces where degradation was a part of the concept of the work? Have you got anymore pieces like that?

KCP.: Do you ever think about the practicalities of handling, storing, displaying and transporting the work when you're creating it, or is that really not something you think about?

Right, so those were the questions I was going to ask you as an artist, so I've got a couple more questions to ask you as a conservator.

KCP.: Can I confirm that you trained as a conservator at Southampton?

KCP.: Did you find that any of your contemporaries who were art students would seek out your advice about the conservation of their work?

KCP.: So have you found now since you've trained as a conservator, that any textile art students or textile artist have actively sought out your advice about things they can do to preserve their work during storage and display?

KCP.: The next few questions are all about conservators' interactions with artists. When and where do you tend to have interactions with textile artists?

KCP.: In past interactions, if there have been other ones, what kind of information and advice have artists sought from you as a conservator, about preservation techniques for their work?

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Katie Schwab

Profession: MFA student at
Glasgow School of Art

Date: 5th June 2015

Place: Artist's studio, GSA

Excerpts from the interview

Kate Clive-Powell(KCP): What are the main concepts behind this work [points to small tapestry on studio wall] ?

KCP. : Do your textile pieces tend to be quite small scale or do you create quite large pieces as well?

KCP. : The work you've created so far, what does it tend to be for? Is it for commissions for a museum, public space, private patrons or mainly coursework?

KCP. : Do technicians ever help you to create your work?

KCP. : So they haven't offered to teach you those skills here?

KCP. : For the next set of questions I'm going to ask you more about your experiences of art college. Where did you study art before enrolling on the postgraduate course here [at GSA]?

KCP. : During your art training so far, would you say that there has been more of an emphasis on craft based learning, with the aim of improving your knowledge of techniques and materials, or more of a focus on developing conceptual ideas. It sounds like it's the latter, from what you've said.

KCP. : Would you say it was the same for your undergraduate and your foundation as well?

KCP. : So throughout your training have you been encouraged to experiment with materials and techniques in your work?

KCP. : During your training, would you say you were provided with any material education? So, for instance, information about the aging properties of materials and how they may react in different environmental conditions, so how light and moisture and things, effect the materials?

KCP. : So then, I guess you weren't provided with any information to help with the long term preservation of work? Apart from the tips the technician told you recently, about the frame.

KCP.: During your training were you offered any tips for handling, packing and transportation you work?

KCP. : Who asked you to get the archival packaging materials?

KCP. : So the information didn't come from the tutors?

KCP. : Ok, so, if you answered no to any of the questions above, which you just have, do you think you would've found learning about this kind of information quite useful during your training?

KCP. : I know that there aren't any conservation courses directly connected to GSA, but were there any conservation courses connected to the other art schools you attended?

KCP. : So, you had no interaction with conservators or conservation students at art school?

KCP. : During your training did your tutors encourage you to document your work by keeping a record of the materials you used, the types and brand names, the techniques you used and your original intent in creating the work?

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Christina Hesford

Date: 6th June 2015

Place: Artist's home

Kate Clive-Powell (KCP): The first group of questions are to gain more background information about your work. So, first I'd like to ask how you'd classify the type of art with textile elements that you create?

KCP.: Do you tend to have concepts behind your work, or is it more decorative surface design?

KCP.: I'd just like to hear a bit more about some of the concepts behind your work. So for your end of year projects for your undergraduate, were there any concepts attached to that work?

KCP.: Do you think the materials and techniques you use have a conceptual significance as well? I guess you kind of answered that question actually. I don't know if you want to elaborate?

KCP.: So the work you've created so far, has it tended to be for commissions, museums, a public space, private patron, coursework or other purpose?

KCP.: What kind of scale do your pieces tend to be, does it vary or do they tend to be quite big?

KCP.: Okay, so do technicians help you create the work, or have you always done it completely on your own?

KCP.: So as part of your course was there a technician available, at all times, that could help you?

KCP.: Okay, so I'm now onto the second section, which is about your experiences of art school training. Could you please tell me where you went to college, and what course you attended?

KCP.: During your college training, would you say that there was more of an emphasis on craft based learning with an emphasis on improving knowledge of techniques and materials, or more of a focus on developing conceptual ideas?

KCP.: Okay, so I'm just interested to hear if in the first year they gave you a grounding in different techniques, a sort of introduction to different techniques?

KCP.: So, it was a bit broader?

KCP.: So, did you find during your course, in your work, you were encouraged to experiment with materials and techniques in your work?

KCP.: So it's almost, kind of, pushing the limits of the materials and using them in new ways.

KCP.: During your training were you provided with any material education? So that would be information about the ageing properties of materials and how they might react in different environmental conditions, so how things like, light, temperature and humidity levels might affect the materials.

KCP.: So did they, at GCSE teach you a bit about how the materials age?

KCP.: Do you remember being provided with any information, to help with the long term preservation of your work, during your training? If so, do you remember what kind of

information was provided. So things like, tips for handling, packing, transportation, storage, display, anything like that?

KCP.: So, your answer is no, to the last question, **(yeah)**. Do you think learning about any of that information would have been useful, and if so which aspects would have been specifically useful?

KCP.: Do you remember if there were any conservation courses at any of your art colleges? If so, do you remember having any interaction with conservators, or conservation students while you were at art college?

KCP.: So, outside of your course, while you were studying, you didn't come across any conservators?

KCP.: During your training did your tutors encourage you to document your work? So, by that I mean keep a record of types of materials you use, brand names, techniques used, and also your original concepts?

C

KCP.: This is the third section now, your view of materials, techniques and care. I was just wondering if you've created any installation pieces before, or pieces of art with ephemeral elements, so have you done any performance, or have you created any work with materials that have not lasted very long on purpose?

KCP.: I remember I saw a picture of your work outside by the sea, which I guess is related to the work you are talking about. Was it just for the photos you placed it there, or did you leave it for a prolonged period?

KCP.: I just wondered as well, have you noticed any signs of degradation damage in your work or previous pieces of work, involving textile elements, where you haven't actively wanted it to degrade? And have you any idea of what the causes might be, of that kind of damage?

KCP.: I just thought as well, were you aware that textile conservation exists?

KCP.: When you are creating a work do you ever think of the kind of practicalities of handling, storing, displaying and transporting your work or is that not something you really think about?

KCP.: Okay, we're now onto the last section. Have you ever had any interaction with textile conservators?

KCP.: That's the end of my questions. I don't know if you have any other thoughts about the topic that you want to add?

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Stephanie de Roemer

Profession: Sculpture Conservator at Glasgow Museums

Date: 02/07/2015

Place: Glasgow Museums Resource Centre

Excerpts from the Interview

Kate Clive-Powell (KCP): Where did you train as a conservator?

KCP.: During your conservation training were there any art courses connected to your colleges?

KCP.: Was there much interaction between you, as a conservation student, and the art students? Did they seek out your conservation advice?

KCP.: Since you've been a conservator, have you taken any taught classes with art students to share some of your conservation knowledge?

KCP.: Please could you tell me a bit about your experiences of working with contemporary artists in Glasgow?

KCP.: What sort of information do you think it would be useful for conservators to share with artists/art students?

KCP.: So from that, do you think that the main thing that could be communicated to all artists about conservation is what we do, that it is about protecting the work and helping to sustain it?

KCP.: So, do you find that most of the artists you have had interaction with are not really aware of what conservators do?

Interviewer: Kate Clive-Powell

Interviewee: Ann French

Date: 12/06/15

Place: Manchester, Whitworth

Kate Clive Powell (KCP): Where did you train as a conservator?

KCP.: My first set of questions is about the sort of interaction textile conservators have with textile art students. So, as part of your conservation training was your course connected to any art school at all?

KCP.: In one of your articles you pose the question: should conservators have a role in the training of artists and contribute to their understanding of the degradation of materials? You state that this subject is being addressed obliquely at WAG as a placement in textile conservation as work experience is an option for students of embroidery at Manchester Metropolitan University. I was just wondering if you could tell me a bit more about this and what kind of information was provided for students during placement?

KCP.: Have you had any other taught classes with textiles students, to share some of your conservation knowledge to help with the long-term preservation of their work?

KCP.: So, just out of interest, what kind of information did you provide in the lecture, was it a sort of introduction to what textile conservators do?

KCP.: And how was that received, did you find that the students were quite engaged and they'd ask lots of questions?

KCP.: So you haven't done any taught classes with post-graduate art students?

KCP.: Have you found that textile students have actively sought your advice about things they could do, to help preserve their work?

KCP.: My next section is about your interaction with textile artists, in your experience when and where has this happened and what sort of information do they tend to seek out from you?

A

KCP.: Okay, just as a quick aside to that, when I interviewed Alice this morning she said something about you helping her with documentation, is that for commission work? Did you help her provide full recommendations for future care?

KCP.: When the Whitworth directly commissions a piece is consultation between the artist and the museum's conservator, i.e. you, common practice or not?

KCP.: When considering an acquisition for the Whitworth collection, is the long-term condition of the artwork an important consideration?

KCP.: I've just got a couple of questions left about your approach to documentation and your use of materials. So how do you deal with textile art with ephemeral, perishable elements? Do you keep documents of this work through photography? And what do you do with the remaining textile elements, i.e. say clothes from a performance piece?

KCP.: So have you got any pieces in the collection where the artist has consciously used materials with degradation problems as part of the concept of the work?

