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# **ABSTRACT BOOK**

**30<sup>TH</sup> EAA ANNUAL MEETING**  
**ROME, ITALY**  
**28<sup>TH</sup> - 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2024**

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## 12 THE BRONZE STATUE OF ST. PETER ON THE TOP OF THE TRAJAN COLUMN

Rinaldi, Federica (Parco archeologico del Colosseo) - Pujia, Angelica (Parco archeologico del Colosseo) - Rivaroli, Laura (freelance)

The statue of St. Peter on the apex of Trajan's Column in Rome, Italy was installed in the 16th century by Pope Sixtus V to replace the statue of the Roman emperor Trajan, which had already been lost several centuries before. The statue is a monumental bronze, standing at a height of 40 metres above ground level and exposed to the elements – and therefore difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. Thanks to a grant from the government of the country Romania, starting in summer 2024 it will be possible to install a scaffold and proceed with the restoration of the statue, curbing the phenomena of degradation. The entire restoration intervention will be conducted with the best methodology currently in use for the restoration of copper alloy (bronze) monuments exposed outdoors, and will be documented in all its phases through photographic, graphic and textual documentation. Starting with the visual analysis of the monument, it is possible to proceed with a restoration program aimed at improving the general preservation condition of all metal elements.

## 13 DOCUMENTATION AND ANALYSES OF 11TH-12TH CENTURY BRONZE AND BRASS DOORS

Mödlinger, Marianne (Universität Salzburg, Austria) - Utz, Judith (Universität Salzburg, Austria) - Martin, Fera (Novetus, Austria) - Ghiara, Giorgia (Politecnico Torino, Italy)

Around 30 copper alloy doors from the 11th and 12th centuries have survived to the present day, forming the only preserved assemblage of large medieval bronzes. Most of the doors are located in Italy. The doors were made either entirely of metal or with single metal plates attached to a wooden base. Some of these metal plates have inlays containing various materials, often depicting religious iconography (e.g. saints, Biblical events). Previous research on the art and cultural history of doors has not thoroughly investigated the production process and the interaction between the material and the iconography.

This presentation will discuss the first results of the three-year FWF-funded research project at IMAREAL (University of Salzburg). The doors have been fully documented with high resolution images and 3D scanning. They have also undergone non-destructive analysis (XRF) that determined their chemical composition, wood type, and time period of the support materials used on selected doors. This data reveals the materials and techniques used, as well as information about the craftsmen, artists, and patrons involved in the manufacturing process. Comprehensive material analyses conducted on all of the doors on site has answered numerous questions, for the first time, about historic door production and material selection.

## 14 HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN COLLECTIONS: NAVIGATING CHALLENGES AND EMBRACING OPPORTUNITIES

Connor, Kimberley (Stanford University)

Legacy collections from modern sites, particularly those from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, present unique challenges in the midst of the 'curation crisis'. This paper discusses insights gleaned from two case studies: the Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney, Australia, and the Market Street Chinatown Archaeological Project collection from San Jose, USA. It focuses on food and dining at the two sites using glass containers and tablewares from the Market Street Chinatown (1866-1887) and multi-material analysis from the Female Immigration Depot at Hyde Park Barracks (1848-1887) including glass, ceramics, metal, botanical, and faunal remains primarily recovered from underfloor occupation deposits.

Both collections pose significant challenges due to their sheer scale, origins in salvage excavations, and choices made in curation since the 1980s. Despite these challenges, both collections serve as invaluable resources for archaeological research. They provide rich datasets for addressing fundamental as well as emerging research questions, while also facilitating meaningful engagement with active descendant communities. In an era of uncertainty surrounding heritage institutions and academic archaeology, this paper explores the opportunities that emerge from re-assessing historical collections. By harnessing the potential of collections from the recent past, researchers can not only advance scholarly understanding, but develop innovative teaching methods, and foster public engagement. These examples underscore the value of re-evaluating historical legacy collections for understanding the past and communicating the importance of archaeology in the present.

## 15 THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF TREPOL, FOUND IN MUSEUM BOXES

Videiko, Mariia (Kyiv Borys Grinchenko University)

The ancient city of Trepol, Ukraine, is first mentioned in chronicles from the 11th century AD. In 2018, I began work on a project to get a complete picture of its medieval history within a few years. However, first the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and then in 2022 the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, stopped the archaeological excavations and

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nately. This led to the idea of studying the collections of the regional museum. Working with inventory books, and then the items mentioned in them from the territory of the city, gave interesting results: about a thousand objects with a connection to modern streets and estates were discovered. These include building materials, ceramics, and metal objects, which cover the period from the 11th to the 17th century AD inclusive. It was possible to map the distribution of these finds across the territory of the ancient city at different time periods.

Brick finds belonged to a church and a castle built in the 16th century, the existence of which was previously known only from documents. Ceramic vessels testified to the continuous existence of the city – including finds from the 14th century, which were absent from the documentary record. Finds of numerous kiln tile fragments from the 17th century showed the wealth of the inhabitants of the fortified part of the city, which according to documents numbered up to a hundred houses. Findings of jewelry and ecclesiastical items showed that the townspeople were already wealthy in the 11th and 12th centuries. Bronze artifacts indicate the likely presence of people from Scandinavia in the city and its surrounding region in the 11th century. The study of museum collections has not only revealed separate pages from the history of Tropol, but also indicated possible directions for future archeological excavations.

## 16 THE 99%: THE AMERICAS COLLECTION AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Zborover, Danny (British Museum)

Amassed over three centuries, the Americas collection at the British Museum comprises about 100,000 objects. Like with many such large museums around the world, less than 1% has ever been on display. While objects for exhibitions and loans are routinely drawn from the various storage facilities, more recently these transformed into dynamic loci where community members, curators, scholars, artists, students, and the public at large can directly engage with the collection. The opportunity to closely observe, manually handle, measure, photograph, and share unobstructed space with preselected objects makes each encounter meaningful, ranging from the analytical to the reflexive to the emotive, oftentimes within the same visit. In tandem, digital platforms are being developed to enhance the visibility and accessibility to the collection, most crucially aimed at under-represented groups such as Indigenous peoples and communities of origin. Along with a growing emphasis on provenance studies and collection histories, these in-person and virtual engagements with cultural belongings are critical for exposing past injustices and offer an alternative museological discourse to repatriation, where this still remains an unviable option. The resulting multivocality feeds directly into more nuanced documentation, exhibitions, and acquisitions, and charts new ways in which cultural heritage can be activated and made useful to diverse audiences.

## 17 STAYING WITH THE OBJECTS. UNEARTHING THE POTENTIAL OF MUSEUMS' COLLECTIONS

Cosic, Natalija (Shared Conservation Department, MuHO)

Since the turn of the century, an increasing theme in heritage studies has been the future of heritage and the reevaluation of assumptions about its preservation for forthcoming generations. Despite the critical importance of these debates, numerous challenges for the heritage in museums exist and persist in the present. Drawing upon Donna Haraway's conceptual framework of "Staying with Trouble" and "kin-making", in this paper I advocate for interdisciplinary collaboration in managing collections.

Discussions revolving around the curator crisis have highlighted the imperative for responsible archaeological research and the efficient management of the extensive findings in post-excavation phases. The results from prior studies I conducted on archaeological heritage in Serbian museums have unveiled a fundamental challenge stemming from the assumption that all disciplines involved in object processing share an identical ontological understanding of the physical remains from the past. Combined with an uncritical approach to collecting and acquisitions, the practice has led to overcrowded storage facilities and a lack of collection overview. This, in return, prevents the core idea of research, preservation, and meaningful usage. I have seen similar difficulties since relocating to Vestland in Norway, even though the issue is management in museums with various collections and levels of complexities (e.g. cultural history items or contemporary art objects). This is not a unique predicament, as both UNESCO and ICCROM have previously identified (2011) the global issue of inadequate collection accessibility and packed depots.

I intend to present a decision-making model in development that explores innovative solutions for dealing with overcrowded storage areas and processing collections in museums while considering their contextual significance. The model lies at the intersection of conservation, heritage, and museum studies, and it is grounded in interactive learning and scenario-based approaches. Rather than handing definitive answers, it empowers stakeholders and all participants to arrive at decisions collaboratively.