

Presentation Abstracts

(in order of program)

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14th AICCM Paintings Special Interest Group Symposium

National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

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Back to the trenches: conserving the *Transportation of Supplies* diorama series at the Australian War Memorial

Lightning talk

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In-situ conservation projects present challenges not always encountered in the conservation lab. Treatment of the *Transportation of Supplies* dioramas at the Australian War Memorial proved this to be true. The recent redevelopment of the First World War galleries provided the much-needed opportunity to carry out conservation work on this series of nine dioramas, created in the 1920s. They required extensive stabilisation and restoration processes, made all the more challenging by the restricted access and lighting, and the necessity of working in a confined space.

This presentation will focus particularly on the consolidation and retouching aspects of the painted backdrops and bases. While challenging, these two treatment phases were assisted by availability of new devices. The AWM's newly acquired hot air tool contributed greatly to the success of the consolidation of curling paint, a vast improvement on the traditional heated spatula under these conditions. Successful colour matching of the retouching was achieved primarily through consultation with the lighting designer, resulting in a lighting system that replicated the final display lighting being created for the retouching procedure.



Jocelyn Evans activating the adhesive and repositioning the paint flakes with a heated spatula



Flaking paint on the backdrop of "Transportation of supplies, Palestine, 1916: Within the sound of the guns" diorama

Acknowledgements: Nicholas Flood, Kasi Albert and Helen Gill

Jocelyn Evans is a conservator of paintings at the National Gallery of Australia. She is a graduate of both the University of Canberra and the University of Melbourne, and completed a Fellowship in Conservation at Harvard Art Museums. She has previously held positions in paintings conservation at the Queensland Art Gallery - Gallery of Modern Art, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, the University of Melbourne, and the Australian War Memorial where she worked on the project forming the subject of this presentation.

Alana Treasure has been Senior Paintings Conservator at the Australian War Memorial for eight years, previously working at the National Archives of Australia and University of Canberra in both conservation and conservation science following her Bachelor of Science (Chemistry) and Masters in the Conservation of Cultural Materials, Paintings. She managed the diorama conservation project in the lead up to the FWW centenary. Alana is a Professional Associate at the University of Canberra and conducts Raman and FTIR materials analysis for many cultural institutions.