

New Additive for General Conservation Use

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Abstract - During the 1980's progress in solving conservation problems was slow. During the second half of the 1990's many conservators started to use Re, an useful and almost universal additive. This ingredient brought a new freshness to old observations and greatly enhanced some conservators' publications and conference presentations. As with all significant advances there are perceived drawbacks and some conservators are claiming better long term outcomes by eliminating all traces of Re.

Advances in Use of Re

It is believed that it took several millennia to invent The Wheel¹ (Figure 1). With the introduction of Re^{2,3,4} conservators were given the opportunity to Re-invent The Wheel. (Figure 2). The wheel has traditionally been thought of as an aid to moving in a particular direction, often forward. However experiments at Re-CAL (Re-Calibration Anal. Laboratories) have shown that, if the axis of rotation is maintained in an immobile configuration, the wheel can turn without any of the side-effects of progress. However, any single turn of the wheel can then be published as a Re-volution.

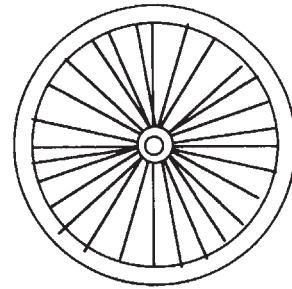


Figure 1. The invented wheel.

In exciting new work⁵ The Wheel and the Re-invented Wheel have been combined to form a Cycle (Figure 3). With further addition of Re this becomes a Re-cycle. This is used at international conferences to Re-present someone else's twenty year old work as your current original thought. Once you have excluded the contributions of previous workers you can repeatedly Re-turn to your own work. Instead of citations of other pioneers you can give a Re-citation of your own successes.

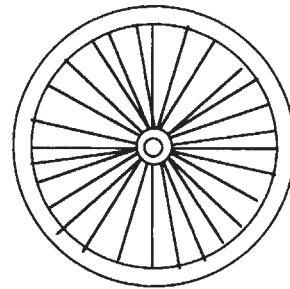


Figure 2. The re-invented wheel.

Re and the Literature

A quick look at a few papers might give a conservator a view on a particular topic. With cautious application of Re this superficial glance can be turned into a Re-view. The half-hearted search for information becomes Re-search, which entitles you to special leave and Re-search funds.

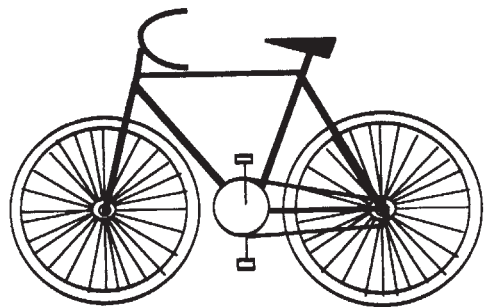


Figure 3. The cycle.

Re and Intervention

There have been some unfortunate consequences of the use of Re. Conservators once, with skill and confidence, used to treat decaying objects. However it is now more fashionable to re-treat from any contact with historic artefacts.

Some conservators⁶ claim that the same, if not better, outcome can be obtained by elimination of Re. Thus while, in the past, exotic conservators used hand, eye and special tools to Re-store objects (Figure 4), modern purist conservators merely store them. (Figure 5).

Complete absence of Re may also turn out to have undesirable effects when we finally meet the Grim aper.

Re-ferences

1. It's the Wheel Thing. K.Vinhabitant. ISBN 00000001.
2. Plenderleith and Werner. Hoo R. Thay.
3. More white powder on bits of lead. Tin Ant and Greasewax.
4. Painting induced stress. Meckle and Berger.
5. More new exciting work. The Canadian Cycling Institute
6. And they all get put in boxes and they all look just the same. Sease Store, Margery Daw.

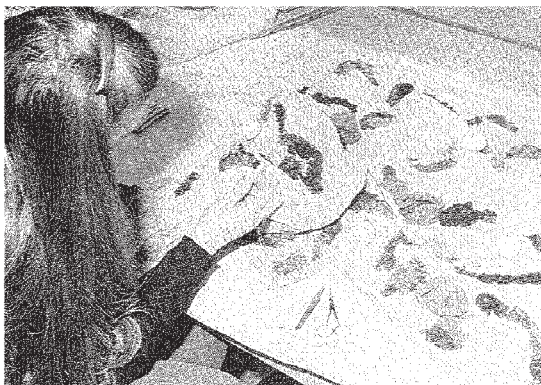


Figure 4. Re-store object



Figure 5. Store object