

*Conservation training program*

## **Simple practical methods to identify plastics in museum collections**



*Practical work, session 2011 © Inp*

**Friederike Waentig  
Colin Williamson**

*March 2013 – 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>*

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FORMATION PERMANENTE DE L'INSTITUT NATIONAL DU PATRIMOINE

## OBJECTIVE

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**The aim of this workshop** is to give participants the basic essentials of how an experienced conservator, curator or collector can identify plastics items by simple, non-invasive observational techniques using their natural senses of sight, hearing, touch and smell.

Color and transparency, surface finish, production method, physical properties and type of degradation all will create mental sub-lists of possible polymers, and an analysis of this sub-list should point to the correct material identification.

## SPEAKERS

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**Friederike Waentig**, professor at the University of Applied Sciences Cologne, CICS (Cologne Institute of Conservation Science): she teaches conservation of wood and plastics and preventive conservation at the University. She is also part of a research program about history of plastics.

**Colin Williamson**, plastics technologist, founder and member of the Plastics Historical Society of London: he has dedicated over more than 40 years in the plastics materials industries. He is considered to be an expert in non-invasive identification of early plastics.

## COORDINATORS

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**Nathalie Le Dantec**, responsible for continuing education at the Inp

**Nathalie Balcar**, engineer at the C2RMF

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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**Registration fee: 530 €**

**Contact:**

Nathalie Le Dantec, responsible for continuing education: [nathalie.ledantec@inp.fr](mailto:nathalie.ledantec@inp.fr)

Emilie Masse, registration and organization: [emilie.masse@inp.fr](mailto:emilie.masse@inp.fr) / +33 1 49 46 57 92

**Registration form to send to:**

Emilie Masse - Institut national du patrimoine – département des restaurateurs,  
150 Avenue du Président Wilson, 93210 Saint-Denis la Plaine, France.

**Place of workshop :**

Institut national du patrimoine (Inp)  
Département des restaurateurs  
150 avenue du Président Wilson  
93210 Saint-Denis La Plaine  
France

## DAY 1

March, 25<sup>th</sup>

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9:30 – 12:30

### **What are plastics?**

Historical development of plastics  
Formulating and producing plastics  
In which collections you can find plastics?

### **Physical and chemical properties of plastics**

### **Degradation of plastics**

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch time

14:00 – 17:30

### **Conservation of art works made of plastics**

Showing and discussing case studies

### **Looking at plastics**

Describing and finding out the differences between plastics  
What does the surface feel and look like?

## DAY 2

March, 26<sup>th</sup>

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9:30 – 12:30

### **Storage, handling and display**

Temperature, humidity, light and pollutants  
Typical degradation and *statu quo* in conservation

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch time

14:00 – 17:30

### **Micro chemical tests**

Identification of plastics using destructive and non-destructive tests