

Carola Del Mese

Metal conservator, BA, PGDip & MA West Dean College

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Summary

I am a qualified metals conservator experienced in conservation of antique and archaeological metals, from marine and terrestrial environments. I have an extensive background in the practical creative arts, within events and theatre contexts, and am familiar with both the workshop and office environment. I have worked within and managed small teams to achieve tight deadlines for events, production and fabrication. I believe that this combination of conservation training and bench skills, logistics and interpersonal experience is invaluable as a professional conservator, in a collaborative working environment.

Qualifications

• Master of Arts	Conservation of Metalwork	West Dean College	2022
• Postgraduate Dip	Conservation of Metalwork	West Dean College	2020
• Apprenticeship	Theatrical prop making	Glyndebourne Opera House	1996
• Bachelor of Arts	3D Glass Craftsmanship	University of Wolverhampton	1994

Master's Thesis: An evaluation of the suitability of Paraloid bulked with copper powder, for in-situ fills on non-archaeological copper objects. Keywords - polymers, restoration, corrosion, adhesive, gap-filler, ethics

Museum and Conservation Experience

• MA placement	Historic England, Fort Cumberland.	6 weeks.	Feb - Mar 2022
• Volunteer Conservator	Worthing Museum, East Sussex.	2 months.	Aug - Sept 2021
• Volunteer Conservator	Fishbourne Roman Palace/Novium Museum	2 months	June - July 2021
• Internship	Brighton Royal Pavilion conservation.	3 months.	July - Aug 2019
• Display Assistant	The Old Police Cells Museum, Brighton.	6 months.	2018 - 2019

Employment History

• Project Conservator	Historic England, Fort Cumberland.	Aug 2022 - current
• Event prop maker	Freelance - Corporate events, theatre and opera, high street brands, arts festivals,	2012 - 2019
• Senior project manager	Prop Studios Ltd, London	2010 - 2012
• Event Management	Created and managed entertainment and events company	2010 - 2019
• Prop Maker	Freelance - including English National Opera, Royal Opera House, Channel 4, Selfridges, Harrods, Liberty	2000 - 2010
• Artist Sculptor, metals	Self-employed, private commissions	2000 - ongoing
• Theatrical Prop Maker	Glyndebourne Opera House	1996 - 2000

References available



Conservation Skills - Practical

- **Archaeological metals, dry** - surface cleaning (chemical and mechanical), chemical stabilisation, infills and consolidation of copper alloys and ferrous metals. Cleaning and reconstruction of bronze, iron, copper alloys and precious metals in preparation for display.
- **Marine conservation** - Objects from the Rooswijk shipwreck (1740): assessment, de-concretion using air and hand tools, stabilisation and treatment of ferrous, silver and bone objects. Micro-excavation, stabilisation and cleaning of 100 sabres from a heavily corroded chest concretion.
- **Object assessment and documentation** - Identification of conservation issues, development of treatment options within project limitations and completion of photography, condition and treatment reports.
- **Coating and cleaning** - Disassembly, tarnish removal and lacquering of silver gilt Regency tableware. Wax coating of bronze bust including colour matching and infilling of patinas with pigmented wax.
- **Hot joining techniques** - Silver and soft soldering, PUK welding, basic silversmithing, steel forging, pewter work, metal reshaping, polishing and finishing techniques.
- **Corrosion removal and chelation** - understanding of corrosion mechanisms, passivation and treatment of ferrous and copper alloys, corrosion removal using chelators and chemicals - antique and ancient metals.
- **XRF and FTIR analysis** - use of analytical equipment, familiarity with spectra and understanding of material science.
- **Ethical standards, research and Health and Safety** - Critical evaluation of applications, consideration of cultural heritage and appropriate treatment methods. Awareness and consideration of current conservation issues. COSHH and risk assessments undertaken. Knowledge of conservation resources and professional networks when seeking advice.

Interpersonal and transferable skills

- **Team member** - very happy to work within a team, teach skills and take instruction from project managers. Capable and flexible team member, also able to work autonomously. Professional work ethic.
- **Team management** - event management and prop making projects. Coordination between staff, venues, clients, and subcontractors. Enabling team members to take on an appropriate level of responsibility.
- **Advocacy and engagement** - experience speaking with the public and interested parties. Teaching marine conservation to Nautical Archaeology Society. Experience writing project proposals for the arts. Creation of social media and promotional content for conservation.
- **Communication** - confident and happy to negotiate project expectations and outcomes with clients and stakeholders.
- **Time and budget management** - extensive experience within a professional context of allocating and managing budget, time, and team member schedules.
- **Creative thinking and problem solving** - Confidence with negotiation regarding decision making and problem solving to reach a solution.

Conservation Scholarships and awards

- The Arts Scholars Conservation Award 2020
- Anna Plowden Trust Scholar 2019 - 20
- Anna Plowden Trust and The Clothworkers' Foundation grant for further training. 2021
- York Foundation for Conservation and Craftsmanship. 2021
- BADA Harold Davies prize 2020

Membership of professional bodies

- IIC
- ICON (Emerging Professionals Network steering committee member).