



PLASTICS IN PERIL:

Focus on Conservation of Polymeric Materials in Cultural Heritage

Virtual conference, November 16–19, 2020

HOMEPAGE: <https://www.museumfuernaturkunde.berlin/de/museum/veranstaltungen/virtual-conference-plastics-peril>

REGISTRATION (FREE OF CHARGE): https://survey.naturkundemuseum-berlin.de/en/plastics_in_peril_reg

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Plastic objects are found in every type of museum, ranging from mass produced objects in science and social history collections, to digital media tapes in archives, and to unique and valuable artworks. Unfortunately, some plastic artefacts are highly unstable and plastics in collections are a conservation time bomb.

This conference will discuss real-life approaches to caring for the plastics in our museums, including identification of materials, collection management and storage, conservation treatments, and packaging. Focusing on practical solutions, speakers from leading international institutions will share their experiences of analysing, conserving and caring for plastic heritage. Individual papers and keynotes will be complemented by a panel discussion and virtual coffee breaks to help us connect to one another in digital space.

The conference brings together speakers and participants from the University of Cambridge Museums' Plastics in Peril conference (unable to be held earlier in the year due to COVID-19) and a workshop of the Leibniz Museums within the series Conservation in Focus. It is funded by *Aktionsplan Leibniz Forschungsmuseen II*, a German federal and state government project grant to the Leibniz Research Museums.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

- Petronella Nel (Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne)
- Jill Sterrett (Smart Art Museum, Chicago)
- Thea van Oosten (Private Consultant, The Netherlands)

PANEL DISCUSSION:

- “A blessing and a curse” – plastic collections in the modern world**
Moderator: Katherine Curran (UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage, London)
- Tim Bechthold (Die Neue Sammlung – The Design Museum, Munich)
 - Mary Coughlin (The George Washington University, Washington, DC)
 - Joy Mazurek (The Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles)
 - Stefan Simon (Rathgen-Forschungslabor, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)

SESSIONS:

- “What am I?” – Identification of plastics
- “A goal without a plan is just a wish” – Collection management
- “Today’s and tomorrow’s sorrows” – Storage and global warming
- “From pop to blob” – Science driven decisions in plastics conservation
- “Pop, blob and back again” – Treatment techniques
- “Fit for the future” – Treatment options over time
- “A good atmosphere” – Packaging and micro-pollutants



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