



american
institute for
conservation

**Preserving Cultural
Heritage**

culturalheritage.org

2026 Awards Presentation

for outstanding and distinguished contributions to the field

Excellence in Practice Award

for demonstrated excellence in the execution of hands-on skills in cultural heritage preservation



Susan Costello

Conservator of Objects
and Sculpture
Straus Center for Conservation
and Technical Studies



Ron Harvey

Principal
Tuckerbrook Conservation



Paulette Reading

Textile Conservator
Mountain States Art Conservation



Nina Roth-Wells

Conservator
Nina A Roth-Wells LLC



Shauna Young

Senior Conservator Modern Art
Conservation



Julie Lawson

Object and Archaeological
Object Conservator, Retired



Dorothy Mahon

Paintings Conservator
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Christopher Mills

Architectural Conservator
Christopher Mills Conservation Services, LLC



Excellence in Practice Award

for demonstrated excellence in the execution of hands-on skills in cultural heritage preservation

“I am deeply honored to receive the American Institute for Conservation’s Excellence in Practice Award. This recognition is particularly meaningful coming from a community whose high standards of care, rigor, and ethics I greatly aspire to in my work.

I am especially grateful to my colleague Joanna Neville for this nomination and for her generosity in assembling such thoughtful letters of support, and to Suzanne Siano for her mentorship and guidance throughout my career as a paintings conservator. I am extraordinarily fortunate to work alongside colleagues who value both technical excellence and intellectual curiosity, and who are profoundly committed to maintaining the highest standards of our field.

My practice focuses on the conservation of minimalist paintings. These can be deceptively simple objects that are among the most technically demanding to treat. With nowhere for intervention to hide, even the smallest decisions carry significant consequences. These challenges shape my aim to work thoughtfully and precisely, intervening only as much as necessary in service of the artist’s intent.

Because so much of our work in private practice is necessarily confidential, it rarely has a broad public platform, making this recognition especially gratifying. At its core, conservation is an act of stewardship, and I am deeply grateful for the trust placed in me to care for works of such cultural significance.”

—Shauna Young



Excellence in Practice Award

for demonstrated excellence in the execution of hands-on skills in cultural heritage preservation

“I am deeply honored to receive the Award for Excellence in Practice for the treatment of the sculpture *Why Born Enslaved!* by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux. My thanks to AIC and the Maxwell-Hanrahan Foundation for sponsoring this award. I am especially moved to have been nominated by my former colleague and friend Tony Sigel, an incredibly gifted conservator. When we worked together, he was generous with his time and knowledge, and we continue to share thoughtful conversations about treatments. My thanks to him for his mentorship and nomination, and to colleagues who wrote letters of support. It is a privilege to be part of such a supportive and inspiring field. This honor reflects my collaborators and the many mentors who have shaped me. I look forward to continuing this work alongside so many dedicated people, preserving our shared heritage for future generations.”

—Susan Costello



Excellence in Practice Award

for demonstrated excellence in the execution of hands-on skills in cultural heritage preservation

“I am deeply honored to receive the 2026 AIC Excellence in Practice Award. I was genuinely surprised and humbled by this recognition, and grateful to AIC for acknowledging my work in architectural conservation.

Work in historic architectural settings is a continuous learning process. Each structure tells its own story through its architectural features, environment, past alterations, historic materials, and the effects of time. All of which can create a fundamental difference between what materials are and what they were, in both performance and aesthetics.

Understanding historic materials and finishes—often informed by generations of craftsmen and historic treatises—is central to conservation. Today, tight schedules sometimes lead teams to favor proprietary products over traditional methods, risking the long-term integrity of historic structures. Deep knowledge of original materials remains essential for true preservation. I hope future conservators will continue this work with patience, curiosity, and, above all, the courage to trust proven traditions.

I regret that I cannot be in Montreal to accept this award in person. I am very proud to be part of AIC and grateful for the colleagues, mentors, and friends whose support and contributions have shaped my work.

Thank you again for this meaningful recognition.

—Chris Mills



David Magoon-University Products Conservation Advocacy Award

for advancing the field of conservation through public outreach and advocacy



Dr. Annette S. Ortiz Miranda

Researcher/ Conservation Scientist, The Walters Art Museum

Allied Professional Award

for outstanding contributions to the conservation profession by professionals in other fields



Andrew Baxter
Owner, Bronze et al, Ltd.

Allied Professional Award

for outstanding contributions to the conservation profession by professionals in other fields

"I'm honored and grateful to the AIC and the colleagues that nominated and supported me for being selected as a recipient of the Allied Professionals Award.

It has been very rewarding through the years to collaborate with conservators at locations such as the National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, The White House, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

As I phase into retirement it's been particularly meaningful to pass along my extensive knowledge regarding the chemical patination of bronze alloys. During the past several years I have conducted Bronze Patination for Conservators workshops on behalf of SERCA at the North Carolina Museum of Art, and more recently at the Getty Center. We partnered with the Getty Conservation Institute and the Decorative Arts and Sculpture Conservation Department, presenting to highly accomplished conservators from around the world.

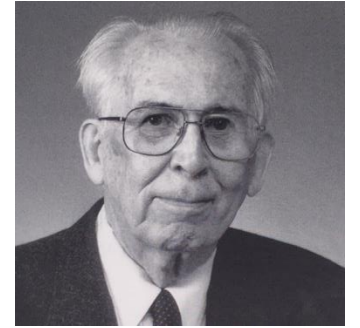
My varied and gratifying experiences as a member of the AIC have greatly enriched my career in the field of conservation. Many thanks for your recognition of my contributions, especially related to outdoor sculpture conservation."

—Andrew Baxter



Robert L. Feller Lifetime Achievement Award

for exceptional contributions to the conservation profession over one's career

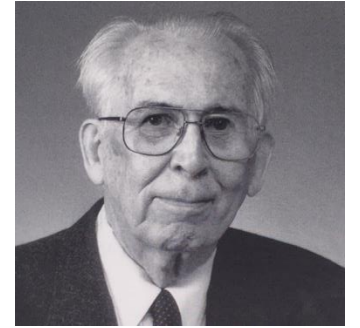


Nobuko Kajitani

Conservator Emerita, The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Textile Conservation Department

Robert L. Feller Lifetime Achievement Award

for exceptional contributions to the conservation profession over one's career



"I am grateful and overwhelmed with honor receiving the 2026 Feller Award administered by the American Institute of Conservation, our profession's prestigious organization, and, with the recognition of my first-rate colleagues as well as of specialists in the related fields worldwide.

Fabric-related medium on The Earth taught me the subjects of material-technical nature and the history of craftsmanship, and in addition, the limited abilities of a museum textile conservator. This medium needs time-invested preservation – longevity in principles and variety of on-site applications in depth, hands-on caring procedures for museum fabric collections considering fiber materiality; fabrication technology; use/loss patterns of condition related to diverse objects; history and process of material life action/expiration in fabrics from around the world; and so forth. These are endless subjects with no precise descriptive words for varieties and in combination. A single object in this medium is composed of a multiple number of crafting procedures, which took place in varied hands and environments.

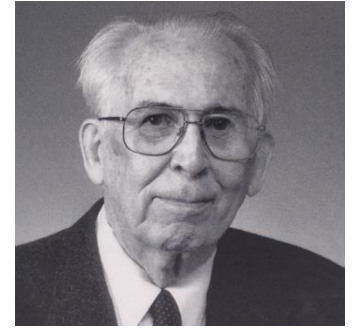
I began handloom-weaving during high school and was taught by teachers who had studied in the post-Bauhaus period in Berlin. In 1964, while visiting The Textile Museum, Washington D.C., I encountered professional on-site museum textile conservation work – then in its dawn period of development – among various other museum professions. Ever since, I – after 20 years in Kyoto having retired from 38-year care of fiber media objects at The Metropolitan Museum of Art – am thankful to have had a precise, logical start at The Textile Museum (which since 2015 is now part of the George Washington University)."

– Nobuko Kajitani



Robert L. Feller Lifetime Achievement Award

for exceptional contributions to the conservation profession over one's career



Karen Zukor

Senior Paper Conservator, Zukor Art Conservation

Honorary Membership

for outstanding contributions to the conservation profession



Debra Hess Norris

Chair of the Art Conservation Department and Professor of
Photograph Conservation
Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation

Honorary Membership

for outstanding contributions to the conservation profession



Ellen Pearlstein

Emerita Research Professor,
UCLA/Getty Interdepartmental Program in the Conservation of
Cultural Heritage

Honorary Membership

for outstanding contributions to the conservation profession



Patricia Silence

Director of Conservation Operations,
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

President's Award

for exceptional performance in the profession of conservation



Frank G. Matero (1953 - 2025)

Gonick Family Professor of Architecture and Historic Preservation,
University of Pennsylvania Center for Architecture Conservation



Sheldon and Caroline Keck Award

for excellence in the education and training of conservation professionals



Mary A. Jablonski

President, Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc.



Sheldon and Caroline Keck Award

For excellence in the education and training of conservation professionals



Catherine Matsen

Senior Scientist, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library

Sheldon and Caroline Keck Award

for excellence in the education and training of conservation professionals



Gianfranco Pocobene

Principal & Senior Paintings Conservator
Gianfranco Pocobene Studio, Inc.

Publication Award

for excellence in an article or book on conservation



Managing Collection Environments: Technical Notes and Guidance

edited by Joel Taylor and Vincent Laudato Beltran

Paintings Specialty Group Award

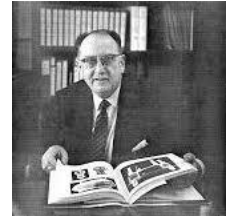
for outstanding contributions to the field of paintings conservation



Matthew Cushman

George F. & Sibyl H. Fuller Conservator in Charge
Worcester Art Museum

Rutherford John Gettens Award



for outstanding service to the organization

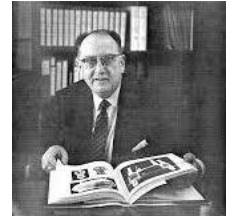


Robin Hanson

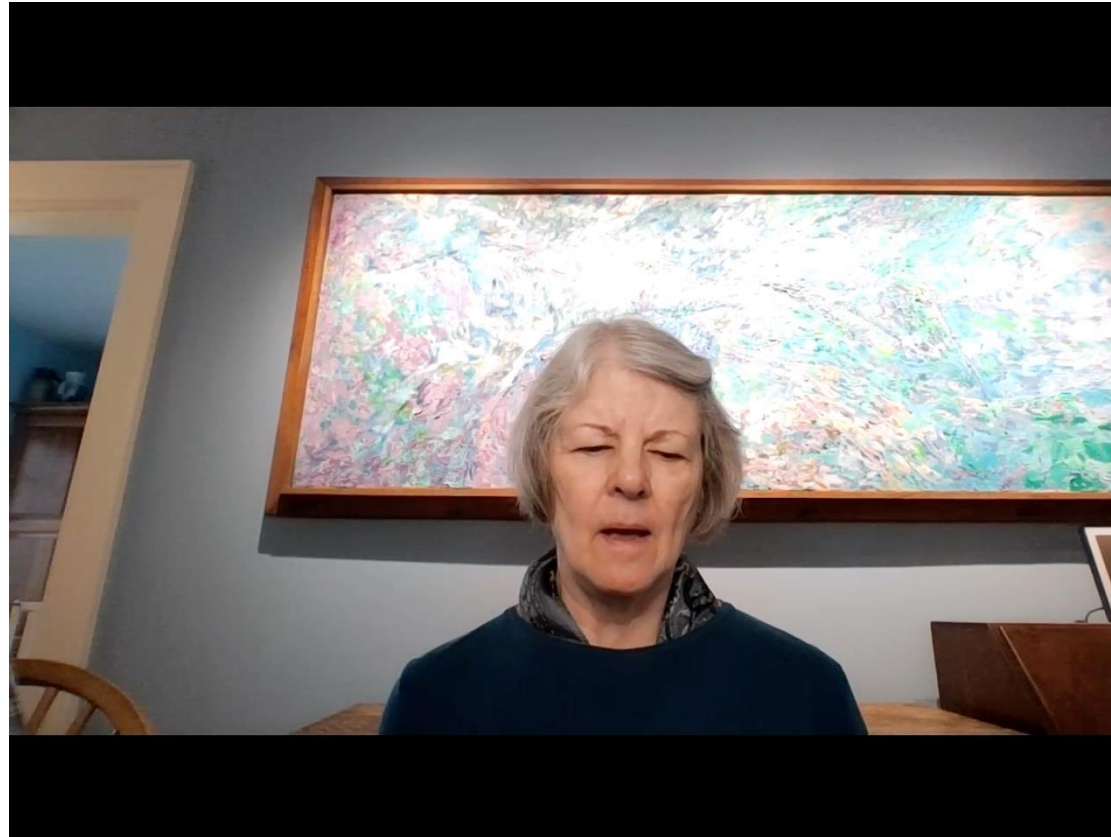
Textile Conservator (Retired)

Recipient also of the **Textile Specialty Group Award**

Rutherford John Gettens Award

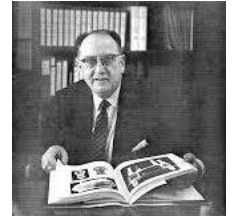


For outstanding service to the organization



Rutherford John Gettens Award

for outstanding service to the organization



Bill Wei

Conservation Scientist
vibmech.nl

Foundation Service Award

for exemplary leadership and steadfast support in the field of conservation



Rebecca Rushfield

Conservation Consultant



Joyce Hill Stoner

Director, Preservation Studies

Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation

CAC Charles Mervyn Ruggles Award

for conservators making an outstanding contribution to and achievements in the field in Canada



Alison Freake

Textual Records Conservator
Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA)

CAC Emerging Conservator Award

for the dedication and outstanding potential of a future conservator or conservation scientist in Canada



Jade Guan

Graduate Student,
Queen's University Master of Art Conservation Program

Thank You!

We would like to thank everyone involved with this year's awards, especially...

- Our session sponsors for their generous support: the Maxwell-Hanrahan Foundation and University Products
- The members of AIC's Awards Committee: Jane Klinger (Chair), Vanessa Applebaum, Adam Novak, and Ryan Winfield (Staff Liaison) and Sonia Kata, Chair of the CAC Grants & Awards Committee.
- YOU! Whether you submitted a nomination, wrote a letter of support, or simply gathered with us to celebrate your colleagues and their accomplishments, you have also shown your commitment to advancing leadership the field.

For more information about these awards and how you can nominate one of your colleagues next year, visit:

culturalheritage.org/awards (AIC) or cac-accr.ca/about-us/#awards (CAC)

