



# Newsletter

Winter 2018/19



## News

### Successful testing at the Museum of Art and History in Geneva

Conservators at the Museum of Art and History in Geneva, Switzerland, carried out successful laser cleaning tests on several Gallo-Roman funerary altarpieces last February with our Conservation Specialist, Dr Martin Cooper; other methods of cleaning had proved unsuccessful in removing the dark pollution encrustations and dirt layers. The limestone altarpieces date from approximately 1 – 300AD. The museum decided to rent one of our Compact Phoenix systems during the spring and summer months and completed the cleaning of all the stones in time for its 'Ancient Masterpieces from Arles' exhibition opening in February this year. The museum has since purchased a system of its own for use on future projects.



### New systems installed in San Francisco and New York

In June our Chairman, Dr Andrew Charlton, travelled to California to install a Compact Phoenix system at the De Young Museum in San Francisco. In November Dr Martin Cooper visited New York to install a system at the Brooklyn Museum, where the laser is currently being used to remove mortar remnants from six large Assyrian relief panels which once decorated the vast palace of King Ashur-nasir-pal II (883–859BC), one of the greatest rulers of ancient Assyria.

### Compact Phoenix systems being used to clean the Romanesque frieze at Lincoln

Lynton is delighted that conservators at Lincoln Cathedral have been using its portable Compact Phoenix system to gently remove pollution crusts from the wonderful Romanesque frieze (one of the longest and most complete in Europe) on the cathedral's west front. Lynton's Dr Martin Cooper was particularly pleased to see the work taking place as much of his early research into laser cleaning in the early 1990s was carried out on samples provided by the cathedral.



Panels depicting biblical scenes on the Romanesque frieze (west front, Lincoln Cathedral); during laser cleaning (right).

## Conservators start working with Compact Phoenix system at Sardis archaeological site

Following delivery of one of our portable Compact Phoenix laser cleaning systems at the end of the 2017 season, last summer saw conservators undertaking laser cleaning work at the Sardis archaeological site in western Turkey for the first time. Sardis was capital of the Lydian empire in the 7th and 6th centuries BC and a major centre in Persian, Hellenistic and Roman times. Particularly impressive results have been obtained on a late Roman mosaic floor.

## Conservation of the alabaster arch at St. Mary's church, Tutbury

The go-ahead to begin conservation works to the historic and unique alabaster arch above the west door of St. Mary's Church in Tutbury (Staffordshire, UK) was finally given in 2018. It is the only external alabaster arch in England and can also boast as being the country's earliest example of alabaster carving, having been completed in 1160. The (unsurprisingly) poor condition of the nearly 860 years old alabaster meant that laser cleaning was the only method capable of safely removing the black pollution crust from the soft and often friable stone surface. Conservators from Hirst Conservation Ltd. rented one of our Compact Phoenix systems and, following training with Lynton, carried out cleaning to the alabaster elements of the arch over a 5-week period this autumn.



## Lynton holds more workshops in the United States

Lynton held two more of its popular one-day laser cleaning workshops in the United States in 2018: at the Cleveland Museum of Art in April and at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore in November. The workshops are attended by 15-20 conservators and provide an excellent opportunity for conservators to learn about laser cleaning and to try out the technique for themselves on a range of samples. **Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would be interested in hosting a workshop in 2019.**

## ErYAG research continues with Manchester University

Our PhD research student, Pawita Boonrat, has continued her research into using ErYAG laser radiation (2940nm) to remove discoloured bronze overpaint from oil-gilded surfaces, a particularly challenging task for frame conservators. Pawita presented her initial results, which look very promising, at the LACONA XII conference in Paris in September. Work over the next few months will focus on optimising laser parameters, such as fluence.

## Training

Our laser cleaning training courses have been busy again in 2018 with courses taking place at National Museums Scotland, Knole House (National Trust), Manchester Museum, Museum of Art and History (Geneva) and Lincoln Cathedral. Our Conservation Specialist, Dr Martin Cooper, was invited by Lincoln University to give a laser cleaning workshop to students on its conservation courses in November. In total over 120 conservators and conservation students from Europe, North America and China received training from Lynton in 2018. Please contact us for further information about training possibilities, either at our newly refurbished workshop in Holmes Chapel, Cheshire or off-site.

**Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions** on any of the above news items or about training, testing, renting or purchasing one of our laser cleaning systems.