



# CLOTHING THE PANDEMIC WORKSHOP

PART II  
FALL SESSION

CONSERVATION/PRESERVATION

SEPTEMBER 22 2021

**M COSTUME** ICOM  
international committee  
for the museums and collections  
of costume, fashion and textiles

**M ICOM-CC** ICOM  
international council  
of museums – committee  
for conservation

**M ICME** ICOM  
international committee  
for museums and collections  
of ethnography

**ICOM** conseil  
international  
des musées  
Canada

Clothing the Pandemic' Workshop aims to offer a place for sharing experience and knowledge. It will help to connect people and institutions (international curators and conservators, historians, museums, and the global public) at a time when we are all physically distant from one another.

The workshop is seeking to understand how to document the Material Culture of the Pandemic; to develop Strategies and to face Challenges.

It will unfold in 2 parts: Part I "Collecting, Researching, Documenting, Displaying" in Spring 2021, Part II "Conservation, Preservation" in Fall 2021.

Free online events upon registration only.

See full description of the project :

<http://costume.mini.icom.museum/clothing-the-pandemic/>.

*"I used the mask as a performative object I made the invisible, visible. Our breath, our life-force and – in 2020 – the transporter of our most feared opponent, COVID-19."*

*Breath, by Threadstories (2021)*

# PROGRAMME

**SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION  
INTO ICOM LANGUAGES  
FRENCH, ENGLISH AND SPANISH  
PARIS TIME SCHEDULE**

**SEPTEMBER 22 2021**

**Moderated by ICOM CC**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>3:00 PM</b> | Welcoming words by ICOM Costume Chair<br><b>Corinne Thépaut-Cabasset</b> - Versailles Palace   |
| <b>3:05 PM</b> | Introductory words by ICOM CC Chair<br><b>Kate Seymour</b> - ICOM CC Chair   |
| <b>3:15 PM</b> | Collecting COVID: Collecting lockdown clothes for a social history museum<br><b>Beatrice Behlen</b> - Museum of London   |
| <b>3:35 PM</b> | Conserving a symbol: Preservation of the facemasks from the Covid-19 Pandemic<br><b>Sarah Benson</b> - Bergen and ICOM CC Textile Working Group Coordinator<br><b>Anna Lagana</b> - Getty Conservation Institute and ICOM CC Modern Materials and Contemporary Art Working Group Coordinator |
| <b>4:40 PM</b> | Q&A  |

Free online event

**REGISTER NOW !**

Contact : [clothingthepandemic@gmail.com](mailto:clothingthepandemic@gmail.com)



# SEPTEMBER 22 2021

## HUMBLE OBJECTS

Capturing Londoner's experience of the pandemic in things



## Beatrice Behlen

Like many other institutions, in April 2020, the Museum of London embarked on an ambitious - still ongoing - contemporary collecting project: gathering objects that reflect Londoners' different experiences of the pandemic. This talk provides an opportunity to reflect on the project's challenges, successes and failures. Certain events and themes were difficult to capture in material culture – we often asked ourselves: 'what is the object' and sometimes we did not find an answer. Representing a broad range of Londoners also proved difficult. Starting with a brief overview of the different ways in which we collected and the kinds of digital and physical objects we have brought together, the focus will be items of clothing, in particular the importance of 'humble objects' for a social history museum.

Image credit : Mask made by London-based fashion designer Natasha Zinko for cycle couriers, March 2020.

## CONSERVING A SYMBOL

Preservation of the facemasks from the Covid-19 Pandemic



Sarah Benson



Anna Lagana

## Sarah Benson and Anna Lagana

Facemasks have become the iconic object and symbol of the pandemic representing humanity's resilience, community and unity during this global tragedy. Since April 2020, all around the world museums started collecting new and used facemasks to document this period of time and to explore their meanings for the people who make and wear them. Preserving the facemasks is an essential part of this documentation. In order to best preserve these iconic objects, knowledge of the materials, manufacture processes and how they were used can be fundamental in how museums chose to conserve them.

This workshop will use a selection of masks that represent the variety that has been collected by museums around the world. These masks have ranged from typical medical masks and home-sewn masks to masks made by artists and designers. The masks will be used to guide participants through the processes that need to be considered to preserve them in the best way possible.

The virtual workshop will cover: proper handling, ways of classifying materials and manufacture processes, preservation guidelines for exhibition and storage, and more.

**Workshop coordination :** Romane Jamet Roudenko-Bertin, Versailles Palace Intern

# SPEAKERS

**Corinne Thépaut-Cabasset** is a research associate at the Palace of Versailles. Her work focuses on fashion culture and international relations. At Versailles, she contributed to the major exhibition on court dress and convened the related international conference “Royal Wardrobes: visual culture, material culture” in 2009. In 2010-13, she was recruited by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Fashion and Textile Department) for a 3-year international research project led by Evelyn Welch “Fashioning the Early Modern: Creativity and Innovation in Europe 1500-1800” funded by the Humanities in the Research Area from the EU Commission. In 2015, her project “Dressing the New World: The Trade and Culture of Clothing in the New Spanish Colonies 1600-1800” was awarded the Marie Curie Fellowship (Horizon 2020) at the Centre for textile Research in Copenhagen (Denmark). In 2017 she was Research fellow at the Bard Graduate Centre NYC (USA). She is the author of “L'Esprit des modes au Grand Siècle” (Paris CTHS 2010) and the research blog “[DRESSING THE NEW WORLD](#)”. She is the founder of the association “ART & LUXE” which organizes workshops on the history of fashion makers and artisans of luxury in Paris. ICOM Costume Committee member since 2005. Elected Chair of ICOM Costume Committee in Kyoto in 2019.

**Kate Seymour** is an art historian (MA Hons, Aberdeen University 1993) who received a Masters of Arts in the Conservation of Easel Paintings from the University of Northumbria at Newcastle in 1999. She moved to the Netherlands in 1999 to work at the Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg (SRAL), Maastricht (the Netherlands) as a painting conservator and is currently the Head of Education at this institution. Her position entails supervising the practical and research work carried out by post-graduate paintings' students from the University of Amsterdam programme for the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage, as well as teaching and lecturing on a variety of subjects, both academic and practical, throughout the two year Master of Arts in Conservation Studies at the University of Amsterdam. She also co-organises and teaches modules at Maastricht University (FASOS and MSP) aimed at introducing conservation science to Liberal Arts and Science Bachelor students. She travels frequently abroad to give workshops on conservation practice and theory to

mid-career conservators, integrating her material knowledge and practical skills with an ability to disseminate complex decision making processes. Her interests include the structural treatment of both canvas and panel paintings, cleaning polychromed surfaces, filling and retouching systems and varnishing painted surfaces. In addition, Kate Seymour is currently a member of the ICOM-CC Directory Board (2020-2023), where she holds office as Chair, following on from her service to this volunteer organisation as Directory Board - Coordinator Liaison on the 2017-2020 ICOM-CC Directory Board. She held the post of ICOM-CC Coordinator for the Working Group Sculpture, Polychromy, and Architectural Decoration (2008-2014), and Coordinator of the Education and Training in Conservation Working Group (2014-2017). She has been involved in a number of European funded projects, including IMAT (ENV-NMP.2011.2.2-5) and Proyecto Gacha (HAR2011-24217 Spain). In 2019, she was the project coordinator and one of the lecturing team for the Conserving Canvas Mist Lining Workshops hosted at SRAL, funded by The Getty Foundation. She currently leads the Indian Conservation Fellowship Program (ICFP) at SRAL (2013-2023).

**Beatrice Behlen** studied fashion design in Germany before moving to London in 1989. Following a postgraduate course in the History of Dress at the Courtauld Institute, Beatrice worked as curatorial assistant at Kensington Palace. She then turned to teaching fashion and design students at several art colleges before working at the contemporary art gallery Annely Juda Fine Art. At the beginning of 2003 Beatrice returned to Kensington Palace where she curated and co-curated exhibitions on royal clothes. In late 2007 Beatrice became Senior Curator of Fashion & Decorative Arts at the Museum of London where she worked on a new permanent gallery and curated displays about contemporary jewellery, photography and – most recently – The Clash: London Calling. Beatrice has been an associate lecturer at Central Saint Martins since 2005. Since 2018, she has been publishing a weekly podcast – Bande à part – with Rebecca Arnold. Her main interest is how lives of people can be told through their surviving clothes.

**Sarah Benson** was named as the ICOM-CC Textile Working Group Coordinator in October 2020 and will

be carrying out this role for the current triennial session ending in 2023. She has worked as a textile conservator since 2013 after gaining her MPhil in Textile Conservation at the University of Glasgow. Before switching to conservation, she was educated in fashion design and learned a variety of machine and hand-sewing techniques working as assistant to a well known author of how-to-sew books. Her research interests in conservation have ranged from stitched supports and adhesive treatments to research on the conservation issues with modern synthetic textiles. After studying she has worked several contracts in different countries including Scotland, Singapore and Qatar. Currently she is working in Bergen on the west coast of Norway for the conservation department which supports the regional museums. At the current position, many aspects of preventive conservation and collection care are used to help improve the overall preservation standard within a range of museums from art museums to folk and open-air museums.

**Anna Lagana** is a modern and contemporary art conservator and researcher, specializing in the conservation of plastics. Since October 2020 she took on the role of Coordinator for the Modern Materials and Contemporary Art Working Group of ICOM-CC. Anna earned a diploma in the conservation of paintings and modern and contemporary art from the Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione e il Restauro in Rome. Since graduating, her work has focused on the conservation of plastics in museums. Currently, Anna works as a Research Specialist at the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), where she leads projects, including the investigation of treatment options for plastics in collections, and she develops workshops on their conservation. Before joining the GCI, Anna had the opportunity to manage her own company and work within larger institutions in varied roles, including as Coordinator of the Contemporary Art Conservation Laboratory at the Centro Conservazione Restauro la Venaria Reale in Turin, as a conservator/researcher at the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands conducting research on plastics conservation, and as a lecturer at the University of Amsterdam coordinating the Postgraduate program 1 (PI1) in Conservation of Modern and Contemporary Art.