



FACTVM FOVNDATION

FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
IN CONSERVATION



The Homepage comes alive

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The look of this Homepage is changing - an organic process by which Jess and Natalia are bringing it alive. The slider – the thing at the top that shows news items consecutively – and then the Highlight which is there to draw your attention to a project with current immediacy – have taken on an independent life. Clicking through the slider shows just how the Foundation is growing and how the work becomes more and more important. So much is happening and so many projects and teams and wonderful images. I thought I'd take the journey and explain it a little – all the stories are set out in more detail in the News section.

So, the journey, as I write – and it changes almost daily so this Opinion piece will be out of date immediately but the scope and importance and energy is what I want to remark on - starts with the return from Russia of Eva and Pedro with recorded data on the unique C15th frescoes from the Ferapontov Monastery. Moving on, Alex and Ferdy can be seen (at least, Alex can, Ferdy is the less flattering shot from behind) in Nigeria from where they have just returned with extraordinary recordings of the Cross River Monoliths – that are scattered and, I hear, many sadly ignored locally, though some are still intact and some deeply cared for – though all deserve our attention. Then, next and much closer to home, Adam with Tom Stuart-Smith at the RA presenting HM the Queen with the 1:7 scale bronze of a great oak from Windsor, part of a project with the Bronze Oak Project that is exciting in its vision of introducing wooded areas to blighted urban spaces in the UK as well as creating a facsimile of the Great Oak itself to celebrate and commemorate the Queen's 90th birthday. The slider keeps going - Kala-Koreysh in Daghestan, a project that continues to astonish and where the two local photographers, who were recently trained at Factum in Madrid, are still working. We also hear of the beginning of the work on the facsimile doors for the Mosque which will be routed in wood and then put in place. A little later in the slider you will find an image of another part of the Daghestan work - the scanner made by Factum, with Crevi Ingenieros, to digitise the fragile manuscripts in the State Archive in Makhachkala. From Glasgow we highlight a project, driven by Ferdy, which concerns a vast Neolithic cup and ring petroglyph buried by the local Council since the 1960's for protection. The Cochno Stone has been laid naked and is now re-covered and secure under its blanket of earth but it has been fully recorded so that the markings can be analysed and researched and, as we have the full data, a facsimile can be made. We have an image of Aliaa lecturing in Cairo on the Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative in the run up to opening the training centre in the Valley of the Kings, at Stopplaere's House (the next slider image), which, as is explained, is a major project run by Tarek Waly, approaching completion and the start of its new use in training local people to work on the next stages of the enormous project.

The next image is also from the Valley of the Kings showing the results of colour and 3D data recorded by Carlos, Aliaa, Gabriel and Pedro in the truly wonderful Hall of Beauties in the tomb of Seti I being processed in Madrid and then a lovely image of the interior of the facsimile of Seti's Sarcophagus (in the Sir John Soane Museum in London since 1824) – recreated using data gathered in the museum using photogrammetry by Pedro, Manuel and Ferdy and where we can enjoy the sublime blue detail carefully painted in water colour by Silvia in Madrid on the incised surface of the white alabaster facsimile. Sliding forward we see part of the facsimile of the painting Sir Robert and Lady Walpole for (and originally from) Strawberry Hill House with

its extraordinary gilded frame, again in facsimile – a project that continues to re-populate the collection from its diaspora through digital re-creation. Next includes a startling pink image from the Venice Biennale which continues through November and where glass, wax (pink) and plaster Paolina Borghese languidly face the Knole Silver Chair in A World of Fragile Parts – an exhibit with the V&A.

Images of Nahr El Kalb stelae outside Beirut almost take us to the end of the slider show – the data sets from this project, collected by Alex, are now being optimised to reveal their cuneiform script. And then the last image, of Guendalina in the Foundation's Lucida Lab in Milan, explaining how digital technology can be a benign factor in the preservation and conservation of our heritage.

That is the ideal that all of these projects are based on. What is so exciting for us is that the message is being heard – in so many parts of the world - and we are able to use the enthusiasm, skills and experience of the team to do this work and to train others to do it too – to save for future generations what we inherit. What we need is to find amongst you those willing to help us to continue this tremendous work both financially and practically.