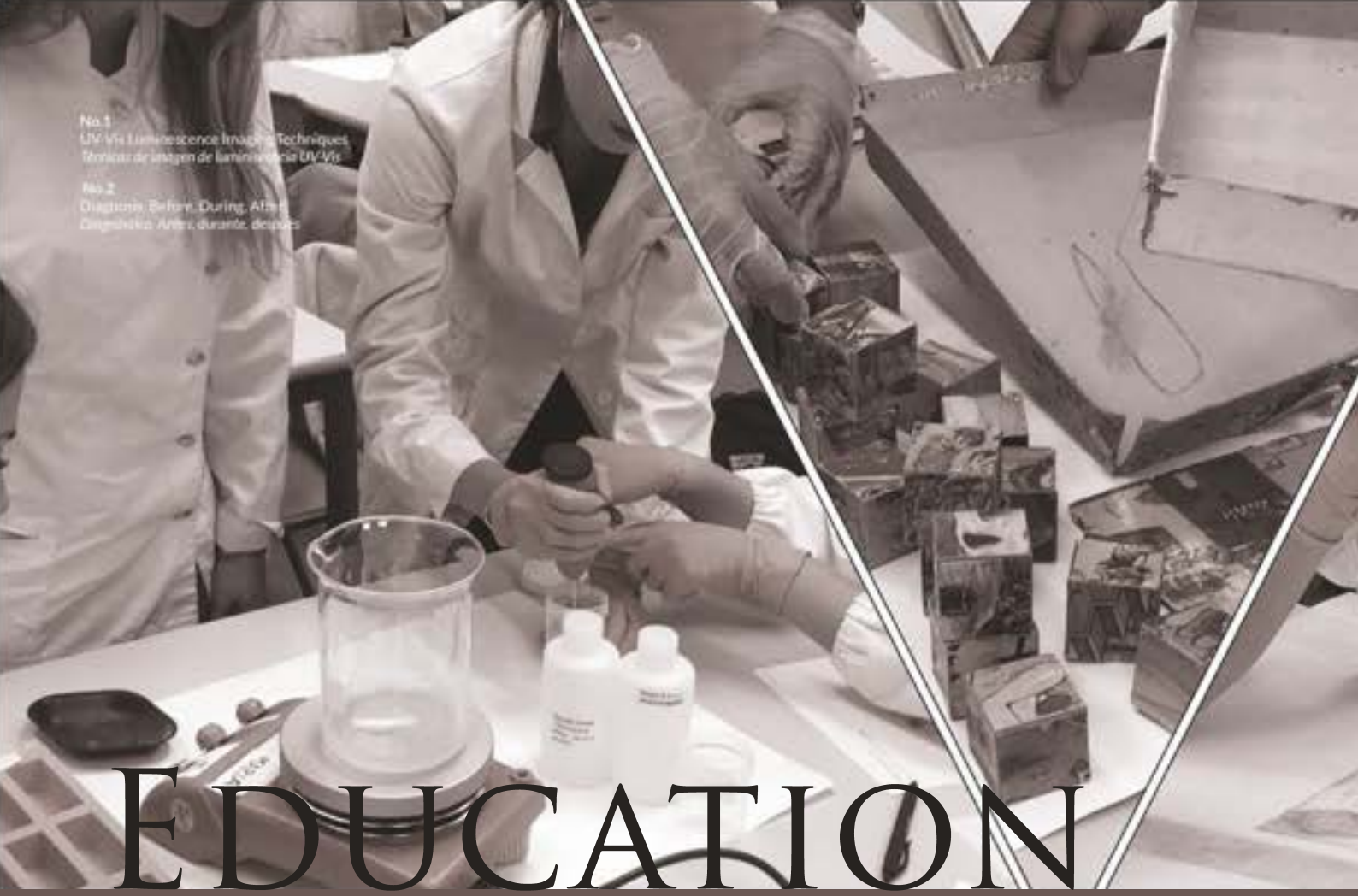

Education and Pedagogy

Reviewed by Zuraida Akma

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By Giovanna Di Pietro Nico Broers
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The book looks at conservation education and pedagogy across different institutions at a global scale. It is written by academics and specialised conservators in their respective fields. Chiefly edited by Laura Fuster-López, with assistance from Ana M. García-Castillo, and scientific editors Giovanna Di Pietro and Nico Broers, the volume is supported by a long list of editorial board members and reviewers.

It is divided into three main chapters. The first analyses the development of conservation education from its historical origins to current systems and frameworks. The second chapter examines how societal issues, such as climate change, influence conservation education curricula. The third chapter focusses on the role of preventive conservation education, scientific research, and progressive ideas for the future of the profession.

THE HISTORY OF CONSERVATION-RESTORATION EDUCATION AND THE COMPETENCIES OF CONSERVATORS-RESTORERS

This first chapter discusses the early restoration training between master and apprentice, before moving on to the formalisation of conservation education in the early 20th century. It also considers post-qualification training, highlighting that each country, institution, and private practice studio evaluates

Front cover art for *Education and Pedagogy*. Image courtesy of Conservation 360°

formal qualifications and conservation experience differently, depending on their specific visions, criteria, and the knowledge and skills required for current projects. The chapter focuses particularly on conservation education systems in Europe, America, and Colombia.

It demonstrates how conservation education frameworks have evolved alongside developments in scientific and technical advancements, as well as in response to pressing issues such as climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic. The authors argue that preventive conservation measures should be the first step in mitigating the degradation of heritage objects. The delivery of certain modules online, necessitated by the pandemic, is now recognised as a necessity in certain countries.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL MOVEMENTS ON THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE CURRICULA

This chapter explores the lack of diversity and heritage connection in conservation education and the profession at large. The content of conservation curricula and theory tends to dominate academic discourse, often overshadowing practical perspectives. The chapter explores the impact of climate change and conservation education in Australia, discussing the interrelated social concerns of sustainability, poverty, and human rights. It highlights how cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary knowledge, particularly in conservation at the Grimwade Centre, reflects the epistemological and ontological distinctiveness of Australia and its neighbours.

A new teaching approach is introduced, designed to support indigenous communities in Australia by combining traditional and contemporary methods to address sustainability and environmental impacts. Both hard and soft approaches were implemented, allowing students to work with local communities most effected by extreme weather events, economic challenges, language barriers, and infrastructure limitations.

The chapter also references other institutions that have integrated sustainability topics into their curricula, this includes the University of Glasgow, the University of Delaware, the National University of Singapore, and Queens University of Canada.

It then presents survey-based studies on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students, conducted by the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property, IIC, and ICCROM. The lack of hands-on experience and limited access to conservation resources were identified as the top two challenges affecting student training. While the pandemic altered educational delivery methods, some adaptions—such as the digitisation of literature and virtual field trips—are encouraged to reduce financial strain and carbon emissions.

DIDACTICAL EXPERIENCES IN REMEDIAL CONSERVATION, CONSERVATION SCIENCE, AND PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION

This chapter, comprising seven sub-sections, discusses the impact of multidisciplinary approaches in conservation education, training, and research. It highlights conservation science as an evidence-based field that supports practical conservation work, with blended and hybrid learning emerging as effective teaching methods. It also discusses how the method of copying paintings allows students to understand the construction, materials, and techniques used by original painters. The third sub-section discusses a four-year education programme at the University of Amsterdam, covering its challenges, current structure, practices, and future planning with the hope that readers will be able to learn from these experiences.

The fourth sub-section examines the impact that PhD research can have in contributing further knowledge to the field, and the fifth highlights the importance of internships during and after academic training. It discusses conservation qualifications in Portugal following the Bologna Process in 2006/2007. The article focuses on the *Parques de Sintra Monte da Lua* (PSML) education system and their four-week traineeships at the *National Palace of Queluz and the National Palace of Pena*.

The sixth sub-section presents analysis by Jean Brown on how democratising conservation education and decentralising museum objects can keep the conservation profession relevant to 21st-century practices and societal issues, including those affecting Indigenous and marginalised communities.

With a focus on the conservation education at George Washington University in Washington, DC, the seventh sub-section presents an interesting take on moving away from traditional gatekeeping roles and instead advocating for knowledge sharing for the benefit of broader society and museum collections.

In addition to hard skills in conservation education, the authors identify soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and project management as essential for advancing preventive conservation qualifications.

Overall, the book provides the reader with valuable insight into the historical and current challenges faced by educators, students, and institutions in both the Global North and South. The perspectives shared in this book are timely and important in the post-Covid-19 context and in light of global societal shifts such as climate change and the movement towards democratising museums and their collections.

Zuraida Akma was trained in easel paintings conservation at Northumbria University and is currently working as a conservator for the National Conservation Service in the UK. Her role focusses on collections care, remedial treatments on artworks, and exhibition-related projects. She is also a research volunteer for the GoGreen Conservation project.