

Welcome

We are so grateful for all the support shown to us during the launch of Reversible Zine. This issue is all about **Intrepid Conservators.** Conservators that are pushing boundaries, taking risks and generally being awesome.

We hope you enjoy, and as always, let us know your thoughts and if you have any ideas to share. We want Reversible to represent all of you - our fantastic conservation community.

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Our Featured Artist

We are lucky enough to have with us @connieconservation, a conservator and artist who has been building up a following on instagram. Connie had to say...

I started drawing during the first lockdown in March 2020 - all my projects had been cancelled and I suddenly had a lot of time on my hands! I started thinking of ideas that I thought were funny and posted them on Instagram and had such a great response that I carried on even when work picked up. I started drawing by hand, but quickly moved to digital. Connie is purposely very simply drawn, so I can produce a comic panel within an hour. Embarrassingly, as a conservator drawing about conservation, preservation of my work had not occurred to me. My professional practice is predominantly working with sculpture and physical objects so the intangibility of something existing only on my laptop or online is beyond my expertise. With it being on social media, perhaps it should only be preserved for as long as it's relevant?

Sustainability

The ICON Environmental Sustainability Network is working really hard to make change within the conservation community and had these words of advice.

Opting out of paper publications is one way of helping save the environment. However, until recently, HMRC classified opting out as e-publications and subject to 20% VAT - which of course does not apply to print on paper. But we have good news! The Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak announced that the zero rate of VAT will now apply to all e-publications from 1st May 2020. This in turn means that ICON members who no longer want to receive printed paper copies of our publications can now opt out. From March, you will be able to do this on your membership renewal form but in the meantime you can opt out as soon as you like. Just write to membership@icon.org.uk stating that you want to opt out of either a) The Journal, b) I con News or c) all Icon publications.

SUSTAINABILITY NETWORK Being inspired by this, Reversible is going to do their bit and a digital version of our zine will be available in our shop for just £1.

ENVIRONMENTAL



Antarctica - Sophie Rowe

As an object conservator I never expected to be working around live penguins, but that's exactly what happened during my recent trip to Antarctica to work on the historic hut at Port Lockroy on the Antarctic Peninsula. The hut is on an island about the size of a football pitch which is also home to about 1000 gentoo penguins. The challenge is partly to avoid disturbing them while they are breeding - which coincides exactly with the season for doing conservation work! The penguins also leave a lot of oily, fishy-smelling droppings which visitors bring into the museum on their boots. This is not great for the fabric of the building, which is a 1940s wooden hut. We solved this problem with the help of the cruise ship operators. Everyone has to wash their boots in fresh water and then dry them to avoid tracking moisture into the hut. The operators were brilliant, providing the fresh water and towels (which we don't have on the island) and in communicating the new policy to visitors. And it worked!



Afghanistan - Elsa Guerreiro

It has been challenging or more precisely, almost impossible, to run projects abroad over this year. We scheduled our trip to Afghanistan to work with the National Gallery for just before Christmas, to schedule the quarantine time required on our return to the UK with the holidays. There was a lot of preparation involved: Materials were bought and shipped in advance, conservation training was undertaken online to avoid face to face contact, Covid risk assessments done, visas bought, Covid PCR tests booked, travel tickets almost bought, high risk travel insurance almost bought... when the government announced a second lockdown. We were fearing a government U-turn on Covid, as news of rising infections rates and scientists calling for a second lockdown escalated over the course of October. Terrorist attacks in Europe and increasing civil unrest in Kabul contributed to an atmosphere of fear, and when the project consultants in Kabul caught covid, it reality hit home and we knew the project would be cancelled. It was a tough call after all the time invested in organising the project and expectation for the trip. Intrepid UK conservators are on hold!



Hong Kong - Simon Stephens

Three days before Halloween I received a phone call asking if I could get to HK by November first to install a touring exhibition - Robots. All amidst a global pandemic! Thankfully, the touring manager had everything in hand, but I'll never forget how bizarre my journey was; the almost empty plane and waiting in an eerily deserted airport for twelve hours for my Covid tests to come through. I felt a bit like Tom Hanks in The Terminal! The HK Ministry of Health issued me with a certificate allowing travel to the museum each day for work but no leisure travel. However, The two curators charged with chaperoning me took me on different routes to the museum so I could have a glimpse of the city. Both curators and the conservator I worked with made my time there a fantastic experience. It just shows that museum folk from all around the world look after each other, especially during these difficult times. The install was a success, and I am delighted that the robots (who have weirdly become my friends) are on display again in this unique and inspiring exhibition.

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Working Tools

Artist: @oozy_tattoo Studio: @3layer_studio Location: Seoul, Korea



Artist: @tanya_dsm Studio: @goldenpanthertattoo Location: Boorloo/Perth, AUS



This amazing back tattoo was carried out by Expanded Eye, a Lisbon based, London born couple Jade Tomlinson and Kevin James. Their distinct storytelling approach and unique iconography has evolved organically over the last decade. They are one of the few tattoo artists that listens to a story or narrative and then creates the piece in their style, Jerrod Seifert being one of a small selection of people lucky enough to share his amazing story with them.

Seifret worked as a Senior Conservator at Çatalhöyük and wanted a tattoo all about the site, its destruction, conservation and the relationship they have with each other. The colours were kept to only earthenware pigments, the geometric designs and handprints are wall paintings Seifret excavated and lifted from the site, as well as the figurine. The photo was taken at Çatalhöyük, in the building that featured the wall painting that's in the lower centre of the tattoo. The composite figure represents the articulation of the burials on site.

This is an amazing example of what Reversible is all about - the collaboration between conservation and art to create thought provoking things of beauty. Thank you to Jerrod for allowing us to share this story.

One last feature...

ConCode

ConCode ('Coding for Conservation' and other heritage professionals) is an online community recently formed for discussing, showcasing, collaborating, and asking questions about data science & coding, and how it can be applied in the cultural heritage field.

Coding can seem incredibly intimidating and this space was designed to be welcoming for people at any stage of their learning. The group consists of conservation professionals and data scientists from all over the world with the unified goal of increasing coding literacy for our field and learning ways to better utilise data for the preservation and research of cultural heritage.

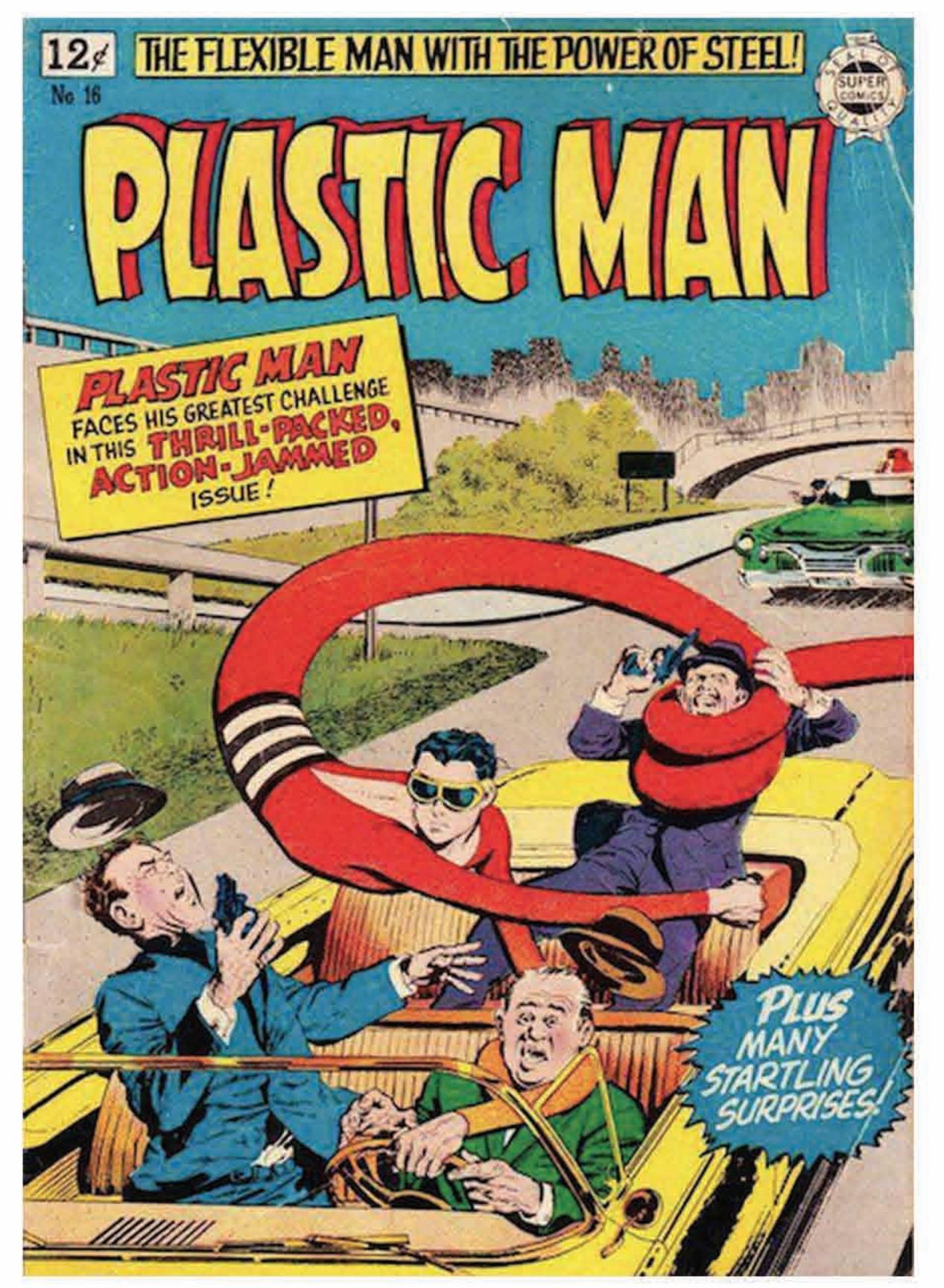
The group meets monthly to go over different topics in data science and to see presentations of people's research. You can find out more about the initiative and how to join by visiting:

> https://mkpreventive.files.wordpress.com/2020/12/ concode_charter.pdf

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There are 19 words made up from the letters found in 'Intrepid' hidden in this word-search. Can you find them all? Keep an eye on our social media for answers to be released.





@connieconservation

Title: Plastic Man

Based on the original Plastic Man comic and featuring fellow conservation comic artists @cynicalconservator and @gretchen.draws

What was the inspiration behind the plastic man?

I usually have various chaotic lists of ideas and sketches (in the corners of my work notebook) but the Plastic Man sketch was slightly different. There was an event on Instagram in December where you would imitate a classic comic book cover and draw in other independent comics to promote their work. I chose Plastic Man as modern materials degrade so fast causing so many problems for conservators. I looked at Plastic Man and thought, 60 years on, he would no longer be winning any fights.