

Melina Avery

3133 S Union Avenue, Apt. 1
Chicago, IL 60616

Mobile: (925) 319-7230
melinaavery@gmail.com

EDUCATION

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

MS in Library and Information Science (expected 2024)

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario

MA in Art Conservation with a concentration in Paper Objects

Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York

BA in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Art History

EXPERIENCE

April 2022 – present (full-time)

Senior Conservator

University of Chicago Library, Chicago, Illinois

- Perform a full range of conservation duties supporting the University of Chicago's preservation initiatives.
- Manage conservation projects involving multiple staff members, including large-scale single-item treatments and multi-item projects.
- Examination, research and documentation relating to library materials, including their history, condition and conservation options.
- Prepare condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carry out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
 - Primary focus is treatment of books and flat paper objects from the University's Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, which includes the University Archives.
 - Occasional treatment of books, maps and other objects from the University's circulating collection.
- Carry out research projects on specific objects of interest, and on general conservation issues.
- Participate in risk assessments, disaster preparedness and disaster response.
- Stay up-to-date in the field, develop new skills, and represent the university, at workshops, conferences and other events.

July 2012 – March 2022 (full-time)

Book and Paper Conservator

University of Chicago Library, Chicago, Illinois

- Performed a full range of conservation duties supporting the University of Chicago's preservation initiatives.
- Examination, research and documentation relating to library materials, including their history, condition and conservation options.
- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carry out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
- Participated in risk assessments, disaster preparedness and disaster response.

September 2010 – June 2012 (full-time)

Conservation Fellow

Northwestern University Library, Evanston, Illinois

- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carrying out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
- Trained with the Special Collections Conservator in advanced book and paper conservation treatments.
- Did extensive research into the preservation of 20th century photoreproductions, including technical analysis done in partnership with the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences.

July 2010 – September 2010 (full-time)

Archives Intern

The Jewish Museum of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland

- Trained with the archivists in archive preservation procedures.
- Rehoused and digitized archival records.
- Assisted in exhibit preparation.

February – July 2010 (full-time)

Helen Ohrenschall Intern in Book and Paper Conservation

The Sheridan Libraries and Museums at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland

- Trained with senior conservators in advanced book and paper conservation treatments.
- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carrying out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
- Assisted in exhibit preparation.

November 2009 – February 2010 (full-time)

Contract Paper Conservator

The Sheridan Libraries and Museums at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland

- Assisted the paper conservator, with a primary focus on treatment of a large collection of letters written with iron gall ink.
- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carrying out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
- Assisted in exhibit preparation.

June – October 2009 (full-time)

Paper Conservation Intern

National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland and Washington DC

- Trained with senior conservators in advanced paper conservation treatments.
- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carrying out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
- Assisted in exhibit preparation.

September 2008 – April 2009 (5 hours / week)

Paper Conservation Laboratory Teaching Assistant

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario

- Trained students in conservation protocols and techniques.
- Assisted the paper conservation professors as necessary.

May – July 2008 (full-time)

Paper Conservation Intern

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario

- Trained with senior conservators in advanced conservation treatments, with a focus on art on paper and photographs.
- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carrying out full treatments and housings of varying complexity.
- Assisted in exhibit preparation.

June – August 2004 (15 hours / week)

Objects Conservation Assistant

Cantor Center for the Arts, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California

- Assisted the campus art conservator in maintenance of the outdoor sculpture collection.
- Served as liaison to the public while working on sculptures in public view.

September 2003 – May 2004 (4 hours / week)

Conservation Training

Ezio Buzzegoli Conservation Studio, Florence, Italy

- The practical component of a year-long undergraduate academic program in conservation, which included basic training in many areas of conservation of art and historic objects.
- Prepared condition reports, treatment proposals and treatment reports for conservation projects as well as carrying out minor treatments and housings of varying complexity, and assisting the conservators and technicians.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

The Midwest Regional Conservation Guild

Vice President, 2020 – present

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI)

Preservation Committee Co-Chair, June 2022 – present

Preservation Committee Member, 2020 – June 2022

The Chicago Area Conservation Group

Executive Board Member, 2022 – present

The American Institute for Conservation, Book and Paper Group

Education and Program Committee Chair, 2020 – present

Education and Program Committee Member, 2016 – 2020

Sarah Lawrence College Alumni Board of Directors

Board Member and Chicago Area Liaison, 2012 – 2017

The American Institute for Conservation, Emerging Conservation Professionals Network

Chicago Area Liaison, 2012-2016

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Sarah Lawrence College Study Abroad Program, Florence, Italy

Studies in Renaissance Art History, Art Conservation and the Italian language

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

A Snapshot of our Preservation/Conservation Response to COVID-19 at CARLI Member Libraries (2020-2021)

Contributed to this year-long CARLI Preservation Committee project. The project is viewable online at: <https://www.carli.illinois.edu/products-services/collections-management/preservation-response-covid-19>

The Book and Paper Group Annual Volume 38 (2019)

“Rebinding a 52-pound Antiphonary:” co-written with Ann Lindsey, a paper about our project to rebind the largest book in the Special Collections Research Center, and the equipment built to make the treatment possible. Viewable online with AIC login:

<https://community.culturalheritage.org/viewdocument/bpg-annual-vol-38-2019>

The Society of Printers 9th Annual Charles A. Rhealt Lecture

October 2019, Boston, Massachusetts

“Whales, Skeletons and Mr. Darcy: Conservation Case Studies:” an invited lecture to the Society of Printers and their guests, describing the conservation treatment of five bound volumes from the University of Chicago’s Special Collections Research Center. This lecture was to a general audience including librarians, book collectors and artists, and therefore was designed to introduce the audience to the intricacies and variations of the conservation process.

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works Annual Meeting

May 2019, Uncasville, Connecticut

“Rebinding a 52-pound Antiphonary:” a presentation at the Book and Paper Group Session, co-presented with Ann Lindsey, about our project to rebind the largest book in the Special Collections Research Center, and the equipment built to make the treatment possible.

Music Library Association Annual Meeting

March 2013, San Jose, California

“Ozalids and Open Reels: Preservation Problems for 20th Century Music Collections”
Co-presented with Greg MacAyeal, music librarian at Northwestern University Library.

The Book and Paper Group Annual Volume 31 (2012)

“Ozalids in the Music Library: Life Before Xerox:” a paper discussing my research on conservation options for a type of photoreproduction commonly called an Ozalid.

Viewable online: <https://cool.culturalheritage.org/coolaic/sg/bpg/annual/v31/bpga31-02.pdf>

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works Annual Meeting

May 2012, Albuquerque, New Mexico

“Ozalids in the Music Library: Life Before Xerox:” a presentation during the Book and Paper Group Session, discussing my research on conservation options for a type of photoreproduction commonly called an Ozalid.

The Chicago Area Conservation Group

November 2011, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

A presentation on my projects during my fellowship at Northwestern, including discussion of a particularly complex conservation treatment as well as my research on the preservation of 20th century photoreproductions.

Conference of the Association of North American Graduate Programs in Conservation

April 2009, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York

A poster presenting my research on the effect of aged varnish on paper objects.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The University of Chicago Library: Preservation Labs

September 2022

A short documentary film made by the University of Chicago Creative and Development Teams to highlight the work we do in the Preservation Department. It is viewable online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzpArk7zN1k>

Under Covers: The Art and Science of Book Conservation

March - October 2013, John Crerar Library, University of Chicago

An exhibit that I curated about book conservation, open to the public and designed to coincide with the American Library Association's Preservation Week. An online version of the exhibit is accessible at: <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/under-covers/>

The Conservator

June 2013

A short documentary film with my profession and a Special Collections rebinding project as its focus. The short film was made by University of Chicago undergraduates, in situ in the conservation lab. It is viewable online at: <https://vimeo.com/68180343>

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES ATTENDED

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works Annual Meetings

2022 (Los Angeles, California): *Reflecting on the Past, Imagining the Future*

2021 (Virtual): *Transform 2021*

2020 (Virtual): *Conservation: Reactive and Proactive*

2019 (New England): *New Tools, Techniques, and Tactics in Conservation and Collection Care*

2018 (Houston, Texas): *Material Matters 2018*

2017 (Chicago, Illinois): *Treatment 2017: Innovation in Conservation and Collection Care*

2015 (Miami, Florida): *Practical Philosophy, or Making Conservation Work*

2014 (San Francisco, California): *Conscientious Conservation – Sustainable Choices in Collection Care*

2013 (Indianapolis, Indiana): *The Contemporary in Conservation*

2012 (Albuquerque, New Mexico): *Connecting to Conservation: Outreach and Advocacy*

2011 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania): *Ethos, Logos, Pathos: Ethical Principles and Critical Thinking in Conservation*

2009 (Los Angeles, California): *Conservation 2.0—New Directions*

The Midwest Regional Conservation Guild Symposia

2022 (Detroit, Michigan)

2021 (Indianapolis, Indiana)

2020-2021 Virtual Lecture Series

2015 (Ann Arbor, Michigan)

Advancing Diversity

Presented by Ingrid Wallace and Lawrence Brown

September 2021, University of Chicago

Biennial University of Illinois Conservation Colloquium: The Preservation of Digital Prints

Presented by Daniel Burge, Senior Research Scientist the Image Permanence Institute

June 2019, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Byzantine Bookbinding Workshop

Presented by Michael Burke

August 2018, San Francisco Center for the Book, San Francisco, California

German Paper Case Binding Workshop

Presented by Henry Hebert, Conservator for Special Collections at Duke University Libraries

March 2017, Big River Bindery in Atlanta, Georgia

Biennial University of Illinois Conservation Colloquium

The Iron Gall Ink Dilemma: To Treat or Not to Treat?

Presented by Crystal Maitland, paper conservator at the Canadian Conservation Institute

December 2016, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Attended the full two-day program including the smaller hands-on workshop.

Biennial University of Illinois Conservation Colloquium: Adhesives in Library and Archives

December 2014, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Biblio Tech: Reverse Engineering Historical and Modern Binding Structures, Part II

Taught by bookbinder Karen Hanmer

January 2013, Columbia College, Chicago, Illinois

The Fabrication and Preservation of Architectural Drawings: An Afternoon Lecture with Lois Olcott Price

Presented by the Guild of Book Workers

March 2010, Columbia University, New York City

Documentation and Conservation of Media Arts Heritage (DOCAM) Summit

Presented by the DOCAM Research Alliance

October 2008, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

Mount-making for Museum Objects

Presented by the Canadian Conservation Institute

November 2007, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario

Canadian Conservation Institute Symposium on Preserving Aboriginal Heritage: Technical and Traditional Approaches

October 2007, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Professional Associate in the American Institute for Conservation (AIC)
- AIC Specialty Group: The Book and Paper Group
- The Midwest Regional Conservation Guild
- The Chicago Area Conservation Group

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Proficient in Microsoft Office, FileMaker Pro, Adobe Creative Suite, Box, Google Drive and Apple and Microsoft computer systems.