ABSTRACT

Mount-making for Display and Conservation: A Case Study

Presenter:
Leanne Smith, Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK

'Reflection of the Moon' by Tadek Beutlich (1977) is a complex and fragile piece of woven art. Made from organic materials, including esparto grass, sisal and jute, the work is exceptionally fragile and prone to shedding. The original mount and display system was deemed insufficient and inappropriate for even short-term displays and even damaging to the work itself providing insufficient support. This talk will discuss the challenges of working with such a fragile object and demonstrate how a new mounting system was devised that would not only allow the piece to be displayed upright for sustained periods but also allow for easier access and storage. Considerations such as reduced handling and mount-making not only for display but for long-term preventive conservation will be also be explored.

BIO

Leanne Smith is currently the Conservation and Collections Care Technician at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, UK. With a background in textiles and a degree in Fashion Design Leanne is reasonably new to the world of mount- making, only taking up her current position in May 2019. In her role as technician Leanne assists the Whitworth's conservators in preparing objects from the collection for storage and exhibition.