

BIO



MIKE PENWOLF

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Mike Penwolf studied History of Art and Visual Studies (Applied Art) at Oxford Polytechnic. He has since had a varied career including prop making, CAD design, interactive exhibits and museum mount making. Mike has worked with almost every material but with a recent emphasis on metalwork, expanding his engineering workshop skills to include welding. His passion for taking things apart to understand how they work began aged four and he is still working out how to put them back together, and hopefully improving them.

ABSTRACT

Mounting Motorcycle Legends

In late 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic Zenzie Tinker Conservation (ZTC) in Brighton, UK were contacted by Manx National Heritage about an exciting project.

Every year the Isle of Man hosts the iconic motorcycle event, the Isle of Man TT Races, one of the oldest and the most dangerous road races in the world. The Manx Museum in Douglas has a unique collection of historic and contemporary one-piece leathers and wanted to display them in a new way - in dynamic poses mounted on their contemporary motorcycles, mimicking actual racing positions.

There followed a two-year collaborative project undertaken by the ZTC team of conservators and mounters and Mike Penwolf from Panotechnia. This presentation will follow their progress and outline the challenges, including the pandemic, limited access to some of the objects and the installation process itself.

Mounting any historical garment with known provenance and context is always a challenge but adding dynamic positions, open display and historic motorcycles was something new to us. Working together closely, Mike and the ZTC team came up with the idea of an inert, articulated 'skeleton' that when padded could be easily inserted into the one-piece leathers and posed in appropriate positions.