



## Threads of Conservation

Social fabric • Fabric and place • Conserving fabric

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Laura Matarese B. Lib Stud. (Hons); M. Herit. Cons (Candidate); M.ICOMOS) is a Senior Heritage Consultant at Archaeological and Heritage Management Solutions (AHMS). Laura recently completed a graduate internship at the Getty Conservation Institute where she worked on the Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative. As part of the Initiative, she assisted in the preparation of the Conservation Management Plan for the Eames House and the second phase of the Teak Fenestration Conservation Project at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

In 2013, Laura was awarded a placement on the US/ICOMOS International Exchange Program where she spent three months working with the Historic Preservation team at the Presidio, San Francisco, preparing an historic building survey and preliminary condition assessments of 122 unoccupied historic buildings. Prior to this she worked at AHMS as a Heritage Consultant since 2008. Laura is also an Associate Member of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage.

### “Honouring the Material“: Conservation of Twentieth Century Wooden Buildings

#### Paper Abstract

Twentieth century buildings - often thought of for their use of new and experimental architectural materials - also used traditional materials. Conservation has started to focus on the technical and philosophical preservation challenges of innovative architectural materials developed during this period. However, the conservation of twentieth century buildings that used more ‘traditional’ materials, such as wood, also requires investigation. Twentieth century buildings that used exterior wood cladding face conservation challenges in relation to their fabric and component based building systems employed in their design and construction. Other conservation challenges is addressing the significance of the appearance of the wood work, highlighting current debate regarding the importance of the architect’s design intent in twentieth century heritage. These buildings are of the age where maintenance and repair is required and it is therefore timely to consider how these issues should be addressed for the longevity and preservation of such buildings.

This paper will discuss these issues through a study of Louis I. Kahn’s buildings of the latter twentieth century that used architectural wood work on their exterior including Dr. and Mrs. Norman Fisher House (1960-67), the Steven and Toby Korman House (1971-73) both located in Philadelphia, the library at the Philips Exeter Academy (1965) in New Hampshire and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies (1959-64) in California. A number of significant twentieth century Australian buildings, constructed using exterior wood work are likely to face similar conservation challenges. The paper will apply the lessons learnt from a study of the Kahn buildings to Australian twentieth century wood-clad buildings and their fabric.