

Loong 龍 Conservation Project

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In this update

Painting the stands

Raising Loong 龍 head

Cleaning Loong 龍

Conservation student
engagement

Before and after
cleaning

Image gallery

Painting the stands



Image: Conservator Lisa Yeats from the Grimwade team painting the stands

The conservation program began on Monday 6 December with the painting of stands. Team members from the University of Melbourne secured Loong's 龍 skirt with magnets, masked his bamboo poles with mylar, and cleaned and painted the stands. The new stand colour is a Watty! Solarguard satin paint in venetian red alternative.



The Loong, Chinese Dragon Conservation project is supported by the Victorian Government through the Living Heritage Grants Program.



Image: Conservators from the Grimwade team painting the stands

Raising Loong's 龍 head

As part of the stand painting program, Loong's 龍 head stand was modified to raise his head by 30cm. This change has enabled Loong's 龍 eyeline to be raised and the rubbing of his inner bamboo structure on the stand has been removed. The Bendigo Woodturners Inc constructed a new stand to support Loong's 龍 neck and this was installed on 7 December.



Image: Loong 龍 before (left) and after (right) stand adjustment to raise his head



Image: Loong 龍 after stand painting and raising his head

Cleaning Loong 龍

An important part of the conservation program is the cleaning of Loong's 龍 head and body. The last substantial clean was in 2019 and since then Loong has accumulated a significant amount of surface dust. Dust can attract pests and cause staining so an important first step in his conservation is a detailed clean of his scales and mirrors, fabric skirts and beads, and head. Both the outer and inner surfaces were cleaned. A team of 9 worked over three days from 10 December to clean his whole 40m surface. Four Grimwade conservators were assisted by University of Melbourne student conservators and Bendigo Chinese Association volunteers in the detailed work.



Image: Bendigo Chinese Association volunteers, University of Melbourne student conservators and Grimwade conservators working on detailed cleaning of Loong



Images: Conservators and students carefully brush vacuuming dust from Loong's scales and beads

Conservation student engagement

Providing students with the opportunity to learn conservation skills alongside professional practitioners has been one of the many highlights of recent months. The cleaning program in early December provided University of Melbourne students the opportunity to work closely with Grimwade professional conservators and the Bendigo Chinese Association volunteers on intensive conservation cleaning. The students were able to develop skills over 3 intensive days where they performed detailed surface cleaning of fabric, papier mache, mirrors, beads, tassels, bamboo, paper and feathers. The conservation program continues in February with more opportunities for students to improve their skills.

Image: Conservator Marica Mucic (top left) and student conservator Isabel Walker brush vacuuming Loong 龍



Before and after conservation cleaning

Conservation cleaning is a slow and meticulous process which can deliver outstanding results. Here are some examples which demonstrate the impact of cleaning.



Image: Mirror on head before (left) and after (right) cleaning



Image: Lower lip before (left) and after (right) cleaning



Image: Scales before (left) and after (right) brush vacuuming of black velvet

Image gallery

Images of Bendigo Chinese Association members and the University of Melbourne team working together to clean Loong 龍.



Get in touch

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