

The Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation

Tim Ould

It was with great excitement that the staff of the University of Melbourne's Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation moved into their striking new premises on Swanston Street in January 2015. These purpose-built, state-of-the-art teaching and research laboratories were made possible by the extraordinary generosity of the Cripps Foundation, which is also endowing a new professorial chair in cultural materials conservation, to be appointed in 2016. Through this combination of facilities and expertise, this major philanthropic gift of \$6.9 million will support research, learning and teaching in cultural materials conservation.

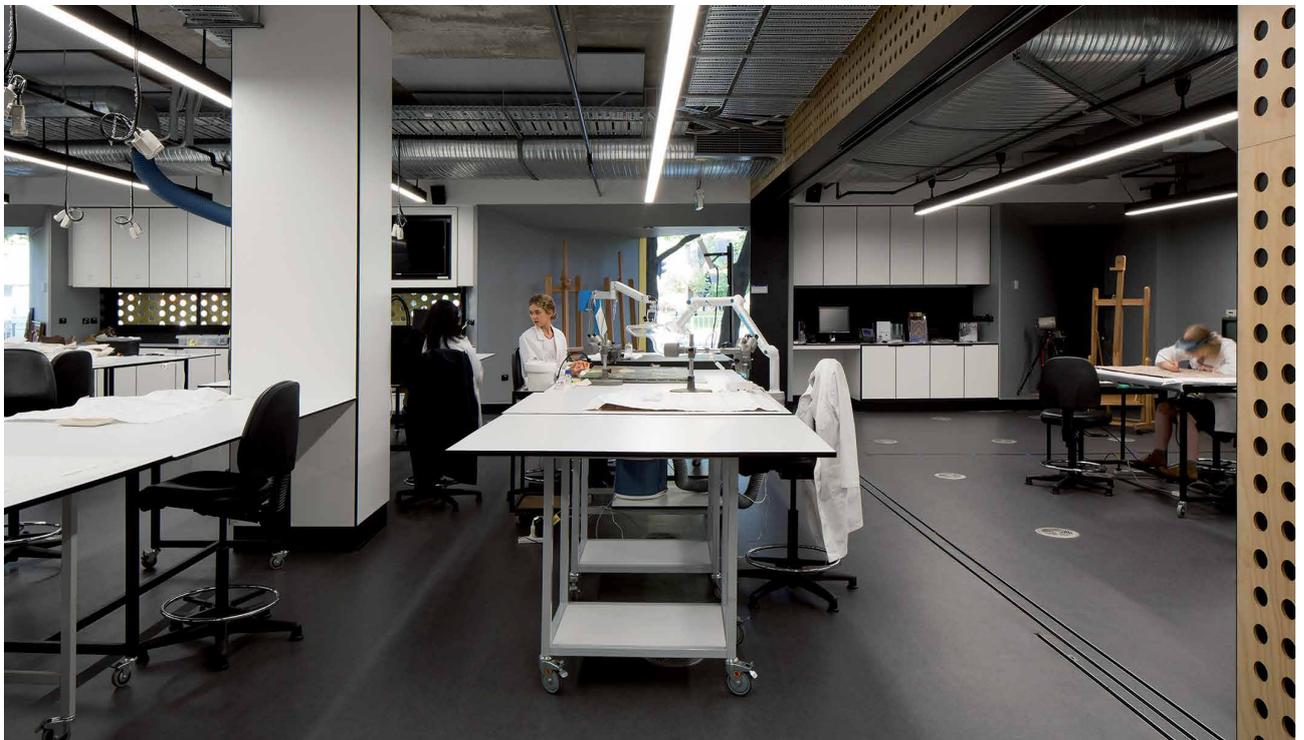
The new facilities were officially launched in March 2015 by Mr Allan Myers AO QC (barrister, philanthropist, chair of the Campaign Board for *Believe—Campaign for the University of Melbourne*, and fellow of the University of Melbourne). In acknowledgement of the long-term and substantial support of the University of Melbourne by the Grimwade family, and in particular Sir Andrew Grimwade, a formidable advocate and supporter of the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, both within and beyond the university, the new space has been named the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation.

Jackson Clements Burrows Architects (JCB) created a vibrant and striking yellow façade, which at street level showcases the important work of conservation staff and students in the Parkville campus cultural precinct, on Swanston Street opposite the Ian Potter Museum of Art (where the centre was housed from its creation in 2003 until 2014). As well as JCB, the team included engineering consultants Aurecon, principal contractor United Commercial Projects, University of Melbourne project manager Oli Sallabanks from Property and Campus Services, and many others. Together they transformed



Opposite: The entrance on Swanston Street to the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation. Designer: Jackson Clements Burrows Architects; engineering consultants: Aurecon; principal contractor: United Commercial Projects; project manager: Oli Sallabanks, Property and Campus Services, University of Melbourne. Photograph by Emily Bartlett.

Below: Students Robyn Ho, Yasmin Kopij and Hanna Sandgren working in the teaching laboratory of the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, University of Melbourne. Photograph by Emily Bartlett.



a large, dark, decommissioned computer file-server room into a suite of laboratories that are now the thriving home to Masters of Cultural Materials Conservation and PhD programs. In July, the Grimwade Centre was part of Open House Melbourne, bringing architecture fans, as well as friends new and old, into the building.

The teaching laboratory has been designed with flexibility in mind,

to allow simultaneous teaching of up to 40 students, in the three specialisations of paper, paintings and objects. This is particularly important for the fundamental Conservation Assessment and Treatment 1 and 2 subjects, where Masters students must devise and execute treatment plans for real objects from the collections of the University of Melbourne, gaining crucial decision-making

and hands-on experience. The new research labs have specialist areas for materials analysis and artificial ageing. These support the centre's strongly international PhD program, which currently hosts more than 10 students, from China, Egypt, Iran, Malaysia, the United States and Australia.

Tim Ould is research officer and tutor at the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation.