

# Conservation Outreach: Talks with Makers

Isabella Rossi, Rossi Conservation



Presentation for Edinburgh Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers, 19 October 2024. Photo by Sam Case.

## Background

I have been asked to give multiple talks about my work as a textile conservator to groups such as weaving guilds, sewing groups, yarn festivals attendees, etc. I have observed multiple benefits to the public and to myself as a conservator from taking part in these events.

## Benefits for the Public

- Increase awareness of art conservation
- Learn about the chemistry, history, and craft skills involved in conservation
- Craft with future degradation in mind
- Develop scientific view of crafting materials
- Understand basic preventive conservation
- Aware of dangers of DIY conservation

## Benefits for Conservators

- Engage with other perspectives on work
- Connect with cultural shareholders
- Reflect on conservation methods
- Practice discussing conservation to non-conservators
- Refresh basic conservation knowledge
- Promote small business

## Outreach Tips

- Tailor talks to the knowledge and interests of the audience
- Do not use technical language or scientific concepts without explanation
- Ground concepts with examples that the audience would be familiar with
- Include interesting case studies
- Use images to emphasise points
- Give practical advice, rather than ideals
- Stand firm on what needs to be treated by a conservator
- Be reasonable on what an amateur can do
- Listen to the thoughts and ideas of the public
- Bring materials and tools that can be touched and passed around

## About the Author

Isabella Rossi is the owner of Rossi Conservation, a textile conservation studio based in Scotland. She graduated from the MPhil Textile Conservation programme at the University of Glasgow in 2020. Additionally, she is the Social Media Officer of the Icon Private Practice Group and the Web and News Editor of the Icon Textile Group.

**Contact:** [rossiconservation@gmail.com](mailto:rossiconservation@gmail.com)



Display materials for talk at Woolly Good Gathering, 5 April 2025. Photo by Isabella Rossi.