

West Dean College becomes the new training partner for the British Library

West Dean, Near Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0QZ

www.westdean.org.uk

West Dean College, on 23 September 2014, signed an agreement to collaborate on a programme of training with the British Library. West Dean will deliver a programme of courses into aspects of preservation and collection care for libraries, based on that developed by the National Preservation Office and Preservation Advisory Centre. The programme focuses on Continued Professional Development and is aimed at professionals, conservation students and others interested in furthering their skills in this area. The jointly-branded courses will be delivered at West Dean College and the British Library. The initial three-year programme was signed by Peter Pearce, Chief Executive, West Dean College and Alasdair Ball, Head of Collection Management, British Library.

“We are delighted to be collaborating with the British Library to continue delivery of this well respected Continuing Professional Development programme,” says Pearce. “This partnership brings together two organisations recognised for their expertise. This programme is the perfect complement to West Dean College’s existing range of conservation courses which are internationally renowned. We are excited to benefit from the British Library’s pre-eminent reputation in the care of books”.

The College brings a wealth of experience to the partnership having run a Professional Conservators in Practice programme for sixteen years. The College is able to design and tailor specific conservation short courses for organisations on request, drawing on a wide range of expertise amongst the tutors.

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. Alasdair Ball, Head of Collection Management, says: "The British Library is delighted to enter into this agreement with West Dean College. The public sector often works at its best when it engages in trusted partnerships with highly respected organisations and this is an excellent example. We look forward to seeing the partnership sustain the provision of high quality professional development for this important sector."

West Dean College also offers a full time postgraduate Conservation of Books and Library Materials programme which attracts students from around the world. The course is oversubscribed despite having been extended as much as possible in 2013 to meet growing demand. Students learn how to investigate book structures, and compare heritage and contemporary techniques. Historical context is used to analyse how each object was made and the craft processes involved. Students recently worked on a rare piece of manuscript handwritten by Jane Austen.

In recognition of the increasing difficulties in funding for postgraduate education the College offers a wide range of bursaries and scholarships for talented students who would not otherwise be able to study at West Dean.

For further information about the College's conservation programmes please visit

www.westdean.org.uk/college.



Alasdair Ball, Head of Collection Management, British Library signing the agreement with West Dean College (23/9/14)



West Dean College L to R Francine Norris, Director of Education; David Dorning, Conservation of Books Programme Leader; Cordelia Rogerson, Head of Conservation British library, Peter Pearce , Chief Executive, West Dean College and Alasdair Ball, Head of Collection Management, British Library