

## FOREWORD – PRÉFACE – VORWORT – PREFACI

After four years, the colloquium in Barcelona offers us an opportunity finally to meet in person. As I write, in March 2022, the occasion seems more and more possible. Can any colloquium ever have been more welcome in prospect?

The theme of our 30th International Colloquium, 'The Concept and Fabrication of Stained Glass from the Middle Ages to Art Nouveau', is highly appropriate to the Catalan setting. This is the second colloquium in the region, and both featured or will feature that extraordinary survival of the medieval glaziers' craft, the glazing tables in Girona Cathedral. Bringing together thinking and making, the theme is also appropriate to a joint session of the colloquium and the forum for conservation, about the tables.

Across almost the whole new, broad timescale of our project, from the middle ages to the twentieth century, the programme promises stimulating insights into the relationship between the materials and settings for the medium that we study, and very different cultural environments, with different ways of making art and thinking about its manufacture. We shall be hearing about pattern books and drawings, artists and glaziers, craft workshop practice and serial production, stained glass and other media, and authorship and the status of those involved in the craft.

We look forward with excitement to the many opportunities that are planned for us to explore the stained-glass riches of Barcelona itself, in its city churches, the cathedral and at the Sagrada Familia, and to visiting the Museu del Disseny. We shall also go to Girona itself to hear about new work on the famous tables. Remarkably, a long-forgotten thirteenth/fourteenth-century window has emerged from behind an altarpiece in time for our colloquium.

Beyond the formal programme, of course, we anticipate with pleasure the opportunity to meet again in person, on the streets of this great medieval trading city, with its extraordinary history of creativity and international exchange down the centuries. Altogether, it promises to be a wonderful event, for thinking and working together, and for meeting again after years of lockdown.

It would not have been possible without the hard work of our Catalan colleagues, who have prepared the colloquium under the exceptionally difficult circumstances of the pandemic, with all its uncertainties. I would therefore like to thank the whole Catalan committee, on our behalf. I am also grateful to Stefan Truempler for his work in coordinating a special session to consider digital futures for our project.

The colloquium would have been impossible without sponsors. We shall be meeting on the first day at the distinguished Institut d'Estudis Catalans, host institution for the Catalan Corpus, but also thereafter in many other museums and public buildings in Barcelona, Cerdanyola and Girona. We thank them all for opening their doors. We are also extremely grateful for the generous financial support that underpins the colloquium, from many local and international organizations. We are most grateful for their generosity.

Prof. Tim Ayers

President, International Board, Corpus Vitrearum

