

Norman R. Weiss

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Biography

Norman R. Weiss, trained as an analytical chemist, is recognized for more than fifty years of scientific work with historic concrete, brick and stone structures. He has taught at Columbia University since 1977. Prof. Weiss is a Fellow of the Association for Preservation Technology, Vice President of MCC Materials, and Director of Scientific Research of Integrated Conservation Resources, Inc. He is Consultant Editor of the UK-based Journal of Architectural Conservation, and Chairman of the Preservation Technology and Training Board of the National Park Service. He is also a Fellow of the American Institute for Conservation, and of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Concrete Metaphysics

Why paint concrete? There are many answers to this question, and several generations of product formulations that have been used to undertake painting campaigns. This presentation offers a materials-oriented historical overview, starting in the middle of the nineteenth century. In the early decades of the twentieth century, there was a rapid expansion of the use of architectural concrete, and of the development of entirely new classes of paint binders. By the 1950s, laboratory and field assessment of paint performance had begun to provide useful data for product selection. As transparent surface-applied treatments (coatings and penetrating water-repellents) appeared in the 1970s, the market extended to include infrastructure concrete, with more of a focus on the extension of service life. Today, the demand for products for concrete protection and decoration continues to increase, particularly for older structures that have become significant to the preservation community.



Paint mock-up at Guggenheim. Photo credit: A.T. Trienens for Integrated Conservation Resources