

Press Release

22nd August 2022

Matthew Read clockmaker-conservator – International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works – Keck Award 2022

York clockmaker shortlisted for prestigious international conservation prize.

Clockmaker-conservator, Matthew Read has been shortlisted for the prestigious International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works [IIC] Keck Award for his lockdown project, 'Open Clock Club'.

Following a particularly large and strong set of applicants from every part of the world, ten projects were selected as finalists by the judging panel for the award. This year, for the first time in the history of the award, there will be an opportunity for the public to vote for the winner, alongside a special Judges' Award.

The IIC Keck Award is presented every two years to the individual or group who has, in the opinion of the judging panel, contributed most towards promoting public understanding and appreciation of the conservation profession. This year the panel were particularly interested to hear from conservators working within the digital space, an increasingly important way to inform, inspire, and contextualise conservation work, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic with extended periods of lockdown.

Matthew's successful application to the Keck Award focussed on a lockdown project that was the follow up to a book, which he finished writing during a period of furlough, about clock repair. The book, 'How to Repair Pendulum Clocks', was aimed at beginners and underpinned by conservation values. 'Open Clock Club' was next - an on-line, lockdown support event for anyone, especially beginners, interested in clock repair. Using a desk top computer and a mobile phone as a camera, the first, open-to-all, free-to-attend, online, interactive, Open Clock Club (OCC) took place on Zoom on Saturday November 28th, 2020. After this first event, OCC met for 50 subsequent weeks, without a single interruption.

Each weekly meeting began with a welcome to members from around the world and a brief overview of the week's topics. Participants were invited to comment as Matthew showed the clocks on his bench and demonstrated conservation techniques. Each episode was immediately uploaded to YouTube, in order that those who were unable to attend, or wanted to watch again, could do so.

When OCC closed its virtual doors in 2021, fifty hours of free-to-view content had been produced for, and hosted on, the OCC YouTube channel. By April 2022, the OCC archive had received 28.9k views and 6.1k watch hours, with viewers from over thirty countries.

In mid-2021, in order to give OCC participants an additional forum for interaction, Matthew started a parallel Facebook group, again to support beginners. The 'How to Repair Pendulum Clocks' (HTRPC) FB group now has 3k members, who all have twice-daily, free-of-charge access to Matthew's decades of experience as a clocks conservator. Members of the group are encouraged to post work-in-progress and to describe their tools, clocks (and work on clocks).

The next step in making conservation practice accessible to an even wider audience was Matthew's newest YouTube channel: Read Repairs. Read Repairs was inspired by a repair to bring back Peppa Pig's¹ voice, for a niece with a much-loved, but broken, toy. Read Repairs currently hosts one video, a repair of a nineteenth century verge watch, which has already had over 100k views. Future videos planned for this channel, to be recorded in the Summer of 2022, include a wider range of objects, including: a 1970s Raleigh bicycle, a 1950s Smiths wristwatch, a mid-century modern desk lamp, and a Seikosha musical box.

Matthew Read's grandfather, Arthur Read, worked at the York-based instrument and clockmaker Cooke, Troughton and Simms before establishing what became a family business, retailing jewellery and watches, in 1948. The business is continued to this day by Matthew's brother, Julian Read. Following a period of postgraduate training at West Dean College, Matthew joined the Royal Observatory Greenwich as Assistant Curator and Conservator. From 2008–16 Matthew taught at [West Dean College](#), Sussex, where he worked as Programme Leader, Clocks and Metals. More recently Matthew completed a three-year contract at [The Bowes Museum](#), Barnard Castle, to direct a new arts and community initiative, The Bowes Centre. Today Matthew maintains a wide portfolio of activities; from clock repair and conservation services, to printed and digital content creation, working for Museum and Heritage institutions such as The National Trust, English Heritage, the Museum of the History of Science, Oxford, and other historic houses.

The IIC's Executive Director, Sarah Stannage FRSA, said, '*your narrative stood out for its originality and capacity to create a model for lasting change, and we have therefore selected you as one of ten finalists.*'

The public vote will go live from 22nd August 2022 and will close on Friday 9th September at 6pm (BST).

How to vote <https://www.iiconservation.org/content/keckvote>

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¹ Peppa Pig is a registered trademark of Astley Baker Davies Limited <https://trademarks.justia.com/owners/astley-baker-davies-limited-2889648/>

International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works:
iiconservation.org

Keck Award
iiconservation.org/about/awards/keck

Matthew's website
clockmaker-conservator.co.uk

How to Repair Pendulum Clocks website
www.howtorepairpendulumclocks.co.uk

Matthew's YouTube channels:

How to Repair Pendulum Clocks
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq25FhgQkNLeNJOBcw9BOIA/videos>

Read Repairs
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQAVLubQcXt3QbzIchDOWkw>

How to Repair Pendulum Clocks livestream
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLfoFiMrKYJHJZYIhE4t-9A/videos>

Twitter
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[@WorldbyRead](https://twitter.com/WorldbyRead)

Images for press use
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lialk5yrxdpjhlo/AAA0gn6D2G8VrvI3QDUmCyBja?dl=0>

#righttorepair #horology #clock #conservation