

2011 Nancy DeLaurier Award

**Presented March 25, 2011 to
Renate Wiedenhoef, Saskia, Ltd. and Scholars Resource**

Renate Wiedenhoef, late husband, Ron, family and Saskia, Ltd. are well-known and highly respected in the cultural community for their significant and lasting contributions to the field of visual resources. For over forty-five years, Saskia, Ltd. has been the leading provider of high quality images for the teaching of art history. Successfully transitioning from the analog to digital format, Renate has kept true to the Wiedenhoef mission to provide images of the highest quality to many college and university libraries and visual resources collections. In 2005 Renate presented Scholars Resource to the members of the Visual Resources Association at the Miami Annual Conference, and today Scholars Resource has grown to represent images from fourteen vendors and museums and now offers over two hundred thousand images.



Thirteen support letters from Renate's colleagues from the United States and abroad accompanied the nomination letter submitted by Karin S. Whalen, Visual Resources Librarian, Reed College, Portland, Oregon. The following quote from Gregory P. J. Most, Chief, Department of Image Collections, National Gallery of Art Library, illustrates the contributions Renate Wiednehoef has made to the Visual Resources profession:

"Since founding Saskia and Scholars Resource, Renate has been an advocate for the visual resources profession by organizing many technical sessions at conferences, by sponsoring travel awards for members of our profession to attend those conferences, and even by facilitating our collegiality by hosting special events where we could forge personal relationships with others we might only know by email address."

Renate Wiedenhoef's Remarks:

Thank you, Karin, for these kind words and for nominating me in the first place. Thank you to all you wonderful friends who wrote letters of support. And a profound thank you to the committee for deciding that I should receive this award this year.

Being honored for work that I have enjoyed so much and that came so naturally to me is humbling but also immensely rewarding. Humbling because any long-term achievement by nature includes set backs, disappointments and the occasional fear of failure. There have been those times. And immensely rewarding because in the recognition there is an acknowledgment that the work was worthwhile and my time was spent well. There is recognition of sheer endurance; there is recognition that success is not measured by a big bank account but in daily work, in conversations with clients, in our slide and image sets and in the quality of our images. And, because that is also important in my life, there is great satisfaction in seeing our grandchildren develop into responsible world citizens. Having grown up in beleaguered Berlin during the war, I appreciate the importance of them feeling free and being equally at home on both sides of the Atlantic. As the events in the world remind us, we are not indispensable and can easily feel powerless. Change is ever present and has happened throughout history. Just in our own world of slides and images, we are witnessing—and over the years have dealt with--dramatic changes and many are ongoing. The changing role of visual resource professionals, changing technology and professional qualifications, moving the visual resource collections to the library, electronic media now displacing printed resources, social media as the new tool for communication and, of course, the most threatening of all—diminishing budgets. Some of these changes shake the very foundations of the educational system and many of us on a very personal level. And they include all of us in this family: visual resource curators, art librarians, SASKIA, Scholars Resource, even ARTstor.

I am grateful to all those who have made our ship run over all those years. Let there be no illusion, businesses like ours can only exist with the support of those who see value in our work and efforts. I would not be standing here if SASKIA had not had a faithful following of clients beginning in the early days of Nancy De Laurier, Margaret Nolan, Lorraine Tansey, Chris Sundt and so many others over all these years. The support and on-going purchases of slides and images have sustained us. They provided the means to continue to offer our products. We do not have any help from foundations and even though I still keep my eyes open to some find some generous handsome benefactor, he hasn't come along just yet. For this reason and many others, a deep and heartfelt thank you to my co-president Todd Keener. The technology behind the SR website is complicated and demanding. The data our vendors send us does not always conform to standards. Todd throws his whole heart into making our company grow and serve the needs of the Visual Resources community. It may not take a village to run this enterprise but it does take dedicated individuals who love what they are doing. Like Daisy, our art historian, image curator, researcher and personal assistant.

Finally, I am grateful to Ron, my husband of thirty years and our photographer, who brought me to this country when I wasn't quite 18 years old. He introduced me to art history. He was one of my biggest supporters and admirers and—as he called himself—the purveyor of imagines. His enthusiasm and love for the works of art was catching. His dedication to create beautiful images trumped everything. It allowed our family to live on both sides of the ocean; to climb around the back of the tombs of Alexander VII and Paul V in St. Peter's. To hold in my hands a small painting by Jan van Eyck. To run my fingers over the very smooth marble of Myron's Diskobolus in Rome, while the guard was sleeping. Those are special moments etched in my memory. Our long, somewhat unusual, relationship came to an end when Ron died last August but my promise to him was to stay determined and to continue to bring his beautiful images into the classroom so that they may enrich the lives of many more young people.

In our upside-down-world where libraries in England and the US are being closed or severely curtailed, the presidents of several top Chinese universities are convinced they need to expand courses in the humanities. I found this out when Charlie Rose interviewed the two women presidents of Harvard and MIT. What comes around, goes around... we can only hope that cool heads will prevail and that all our work continues to bear fruit.

Thank you so much!

[Link to full Convocation ceremony on Slideshare](#)