



# Images

## The newsletter of the VRA

February 2009 vol.6, no.1

### Notes from the President

Allan T. Kohl (Minneapolis College of Art & Design)  
President, Visual Resources Association

“Change” is a commonly-heard watchword these days, with the inauguration of the first African-American President of the United States and a dramatically altered political environment. But we all know that change can be a two-edged sword, encompassing both positive opportunity and the necessity of relinquishing a portion of what each of us may find comfortable and familiar. Through recent messages on the VRA listserv and in private conversations with our colleagues, we’re all aware of the realities of a changing economic climate that evokes disquieting analogies to houses built upon sand: the elimination of positions; budget cutbacks (or “givebacks”); reductions in hours; curtailment of funding for travel and professional development.

Because change can be unpredictable and frightening, most human beings cope by building into their lives a strong measure of continuity: for individuals, continuity is founded on habit, custom, routine, and similar ways of organizing particular aspects of the immediate world around us so that it makes sense and functions smoothly. For an organization, continuity evolves in forms such as precedent, tradition, and ritual.

A member-services organization like the Visual Resources Association must concern itself with both dynamics: change and continuity. We document, and lead, changes in our professional world, such as the momentous transition from analog slides to digital images; our members endeavor to help one another cope with changing skills requirements; we learn, with advice from our colleagues, to manage different kinds of resources—some of which didn’t even exist when the Silver Foxes among us entered the profession years ago; we collectively provide a forum for asking questions, weighing answers, or simply venting when the pressures of change seem to weigh particularly heavy.

Tradition and precedent are also invaluable in an organization like ours, whose all-volunteer officers hold positions and perform responsibilities unrelated to their “real” jobs, often requiring a steep learning curve. Knowledge of the way one’s predecessors approached a given task or made decisions helps each of us to avoid the “reinventing-the-wheel” syndrome. And yet, to paraphrase the words of an old hymn, we must make sure that tradition and precedent remain our guides, rather than our chains. Changing circumstances often call for new and different solutions to problems. Like anything alive, an organization must grow and transform to survive. We cannot afford to dwell in the past, assuming that the way things may have been at some point in previous years is the way things must always be tomorrow.

While the Strategic Planning Task Force is currently endeavoring to forecast where the VRA will be five years hence, and how we can get there successfully, the members of the Executive Board must focus on the more immediate concern of how our organization is to survive the current recession intact and solvent. As our Association struggles to deal with the realities of our first deficit budget in many years, and the likely prospect of another yet to follow, all cards must be put onto the table. And you, dear members, hold some of those cards.

Taking a cue from Barack Obama’s successful campaign, we would like to encourage and facilitate direct input from our constituency. Yes, that’s you! The Executive Board will be soliciting your comments, suggestions, and constructive criticisms through a series of mini-surveys. Approximately six mini-surveys will be available through the coming year, beginning this month. Each of these mini-surveys will consist of three to five questions dealing with a particular

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Contributions to **Images** are due the 15th of the month before the issue. Please send your copy in ".doc" format and Arial font to Marlene Gordon - [mgordon@umich.edu](mailto:mgordon@umich.edu)

change-related challenge we face as an organization. The format will be brief enough so that taking the survey should not be an imposition on anyone's time. At least one question in each mini-survey will be open-ended, with space for a free-form text response in which each member may make suggestions, provide additional information, or propose alternative solutions. The mini-surveys will be conducted using SurveyMonkey, the same query software we have been using for conference evaluations. Each respondent's anonymity will be protected.

Most of us accept that we are creatures of habit, routine, and custom; but most of us are also curious, inventive beings who continually ask: "What would happen if we did it *this* way instead?" Asking is taking the necessary first step towards trying.

Watch for the first Members' Mini-Survey in early February! In each subsequent issue of *Images*, I will summarize your responses to the previous survey and explain how the Executive Board is using your feedback. Thanks in advance for your input.

Intellectual Property Rights News  
Compiled by Jen Green (Massachusetts College of Art and Design)  
Intellectual Property Rights Committee

### **IPR—In the News**

Compiled by Jen Green (Massachusetts College of Art + Design)

We are pleased to provide a link to this PDF of Jen's valuable compilation of IPR articles recently published online, which she sends to the list serv. This was prompted by the request Rebecca Young made on the list serv that there be a link to her compilation .

### **"Practice Makes Practice"**

by Jen Green (Massachusetts College of Art and Design)

Summary of an EDUCAUSE Live! presentation (Jan. 13, 2009) titled "Copyright Balance and Fair Use in Networked Learning: Lessons from Creators' Codes of Best Practices". This webinar was led by Peter Jaszi, Professor of Law at American University and Pat Aufderheide, Professor and Director, Center for Social Media, School of Communication at American University. Access the full seminar at:

<http://connect.educause.edu/Library/Abstract/CopyrightBalanceandFairUs/47988>

Jaszi and Aufderheide articulate the educational fair use doctrine and explain the important role that it plays within copyright law. Whether you are already comfortable explaining copyright and fair use to patrons or you have been avoiding the issue altogether, this seminar is engaging and informative.

According to the Stanford University Libraries, Fair Use is a doctrine within copyright law that permits the use of "copyrighted material for a limited and 'transformative' purpose such as to comment upon, criticize or parody a copyrighted work." Jaszi further explains that this generally-stated doctrine provides content users considerable flexibility when utilizing copyrighted material to create new works—especially within an educational environment. Jaszi also points out that because the Supreme Court strives to find balance in law, they strongly support the fair use doctrine. Without it, copyright law risks infringing upon the first amendment. "Why then do we diminish Fair Use in new creations, especially right now, those posted on YouTube?" What's gone wrong?

In response to this, Jaszi states that some copyright owners, especially corporations trying to protect profit, tend to value what copyright protects more than what fair use allows society to use. When reviewing new works such as YouTube videos containing movie clips, for example, corporations often react to the use of their content as if there is no such thing as a fair use doctrine. In consideration of this, Jaszi asks that we revisit fair use and its broad claims: the "right to use copyrighted material when the benefit to society is greater than the harm to the owner." What does that mean? (1) Did the user of the content "add value"? (2) Did the user re-purpose the content, or direct it to a different user for a different purpose? (3) Was the amount of content used appropriate for the purpose? If the answers to these questions are yes, then content users should feel safe using content under the fair use doctrine. As Jaszi states, feeling safe is a challenge when you are a one small person facing a "giant swinging a big bat."

Aufderheide suggests that rather than facing copyright and fair use alone and letting business define fair use, artists, librarians, and academics need to work together to define fair use for themselves (e.g., documentary filmmakers, film scholars, online video makers, media literacy

teachers, etc.). The result should be a “Best Practices” statement that addresses common instances within a field or community where fair use is justified (e.g., [Code of Best Practices for Fair Use in Online Video](#)). Although best practices do not exhaust the possibilities within the fair use doctrine, librarians and educators, for example, can determine what is reasonable and defer to consensus of that community. Jaszi and Aufderheide emphasize that “practice makes practice (of the field!)” community discussion and consensus is a powerful way to realize the benefits of fair use.

The VRA IPR committee is moving forward to create best practices for the Visual Resources community. By recognizing and agreeing on reasonable uses of copyrighted materials, we can provide a solid foundation upon which new and experienced professionals can rely when facing copyright questions within our field. If you are interested in reading other examples of Best Practices documents, visit the American University’s Center for Social Media website at [www.centerforsocialmedia.org](http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org).

**Digital Scene and Heard**  
**Edited by Jacquelyn Erdman (Florida Atlantic University)**  
**Digital Initiatives Advisory Group**

**Articles of the Past Year You Might Have Missed**

By Jacquelyn Erdman [jerdman2@fau.edu] (Florida Atlantic University)

There are so many articles and reports published each year that it can be hard to keep up with the literature. In this issue of the *Digital Scene and Heard* some articles of interest over the past 12 months are highlighted, just in case you missed them.

**Orphan Works Update**

Maring, Marvel. “ACRL Government Relations Committee Updates: Orphan Works and Net Neutrality.” *Nebraska Library Association* 39:3 (Fall 2008): 6, 8.

Pike, George H. “Orphan Works Proposals Moving Quickly Through Congress.” *Information Today* (July-August 2008): 13, 15.

The issue of orphan works has been on the minds of many education professionals. For those of you who did not know there was a library committee following the progress on this issue and the subsequent bill that was written, then please review the ALA (American Librarian Association) committees on Government Relations and Copyright, found at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/about/committees/committees.cfm>. These two articles give a brief description of where the issue currently stands and where you can get more information.

**How Images are used in Scholarship**

Hemming, William S. “The Information-seeking Behavior of Visual Artists: a Literature Review.” *Journal of Documentation* 64:3 (2008): 343-362.

The literature reviewed by Hemming starts from a small study in 1975 until the 2000’s. Hemming notes that traditional query into the information needs of students consists of what literature that student needs, whereas art students also need visual inspiration and stimulation. The studies and queries reviewed by Hemming might help you to consider your own approach to meeting your community needs.

McMartin, Flora Et. Al. “The Use of Online Digital Resources and Educational Digital Libraries in Higher Education.” *International Journal of Digital Libraries* 9 (2008): 63-79.

This article documents a study of over 4,600 people who were surveyed in the United States. The survey asked questions regarding what types of resources faculty use, how they find the resources, how they use the resources, and what frustrations and barriers they encounter. It is an interesting study that can help the VR professional reconsider how they give faculty access to resources. Knowing their frustrations may help VR professionals market their services better.

## Jpeg 2000

Buonora, Paolo, and Franco Liberati. "A Format for Digital Preservation of Images: a Study on JPEG 2000 File Robustness." *D-Lib Magazine* 14:7/8 (July/August 2008), <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july08/buonora/07buonora.html> (accessed January 2009)

Chute, Ryan and Herbert Van de Sompel. "Introducing Djabatoka: a Reuse Friendly, Open Source JPEG 2000 Image Server." *D-Lib Magazine* 14:9/10 (September/October 2008), <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/september08/chute/09chute.html> (accessed January 2009)

The first article describes the current trends and benefits to JPEG 2000 as a way to preserve digital images. The study concludes that JPEG 2000 is a suitable standard at this time, but there is always room for improvement. The second article offers an alternative to Adobe Photoshop as the only way to produce JPEG 2000 images. Djabatoka is an open-source product. The article shows you the richness in the images' visual data and metadata. It also shows how to work with Djabatoka to build APIs. There is also an opportunity to collaborate with the creators of Djabatoka to continue to improve the product. Please contact Jacquelyn Erdman with any questions or suggestions for future columns. For more information on the activities of the Digital Initiatives Advisory Group (DIAG) see <http://www.vraweb.org/diag/index.htm>.

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## Tech Tips

By Alex Nichols (Michigan State University)

### Non-Destructive Image Editing, Part 2: RAW

In the preceding article (see the Tech Tips column in *Images* vol.5, no.6 from December 2008), the idea of non-destructive editing was described, along with the advantages and disadvantages of one particular approach (layers). To briefly summarize, non-destructive editing involves making image adjustments in such a way that the original data is preserved. Editing images in this way has the advantage of a better overall level of quality maintained, even through numerous edits over numerous sessions, and all changes are independently reversible and can be fine-tuned. Using layers (including adjustment layers and masks) has been a common non-destructive editing strategy for a long time (relatively speaking), but layers have the disadvantages of being potentially very complex, and some types of edits can't be done with layers (such as cropping), while others can be much less convenient than their traditional Photoshop tool palette counterparts (dodge and burn).

There is a newer approach to non-destructive editing that can overcome some of these deficiencies: raw editors, including the Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) plug-in for Photoshop, as well as Lightroom, Nikon Capture Editor, Capture One, and others. Raw editors originally started popping up for the purposes of handling raw files from digital cameras (and this is still their primary purpose), but in the last couple of years, many of them have begun supporting the editing of tiffs, jpegs, and other non-raw file formats. Another notable change found in recent versions of raw editors, is the ability to make local adjustments to images (traditionally raw editors were only able to make any given adjustment to the whole image, not just a select portion of it). These two developments make raw editors more feasible as a total workflow solution, even a total substitute for Photoshop for some people and some types of work.

So why should you run all your non-raw images through ACR as a primary editing tool instead of Photoshop? The latest version of ACR (and some other raw editors) provides a much better non-destructive editing workflow than adjustment layers ever could. ACR lets you adjust colors, brightness, contrast, curves, saturation, sharpening, and much more, without ever changing a single pixel in your original file. All of your changes are infinitely undo-able and adjustable, no matter how many times you open and close the file. Even cropping and rotation can be changed later. As a bonus, ACR also features very powerful multi-image processing capabilities—you can make adjustments to many images at once, without taking the time to make actions or droplets. Did your student employee make all the images in a group too yellow? Tweak them all at once, seamlessly in ACR. Did something get mistakenly cropped out of an image? Put it back by adjusting the crop instead of going back to the original scan and starting over with any other adjustments that had been made correctly.

How does it work? It varies a bit with each raw editor, but in the case of ACR, every adjustment you make is recorded in an xmp "sidecar" file that accompanies the image, while the change is previewed on the monitor. For example, if you change the brightness to -3, ACR records

“brightness -3” in the sidecar, while the on-screen image shows a preview of the cumulative effect of all the changes listed in the sidecar.

This approach does overcome several of the downsides of using layers: it’s less complex, more intuitive, and has more types of non-destructive adjustments available. It does, however, retain some of the downsides: compatibility (the sidecar files may not be properly interpreted, or interpreted at all by other programs, or even other versions of Photoshop), and there are still some edits that can’t be made (or made well) within ACR (e.g. most filters, photomerge, layers, text, or more sophisticated uses of the clone stamp/healing brush). Additionally, if the sidecar file gets lost or deleted, all your edits are also lost or deleted (for this reason, files should ultimately be saved as standard, sidecar-less tiffs for long-term archiving).

In spite of the downsides, I’ve found ACR to be a very beneficial alternative to standard Photoshop-ing, even for use on flatbed scans and scanned slides. These benefits especially come into play when trying to maximize image quality and efficiency across a multi-person workflow.

### **Books, Articles and More**

Compiled by Marlene Gordon (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

Chr, Nicholas, Peggy Sotirakopoulou Stampolidis. Translated by Davidy Hardy. *Aegean Waves: Artworks of the Early Cycladic Culture in the Museum of Cycladic Art at Athens*. Milano: Skira; London: Thames & Hudson [distributor], 2007.

Eisler, Colin. *Masterworks in Berlin: A City’s Paintings Reunited: Painting in the Western World, 1300-1914*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., c1996.

Poeschke, Joachim. *Italian Frescoes: The Age of Giotto, 1280-1400*. New York: Abbeville Press, 2005.

van der Ploeg, Peter and Quentin. Translated by Beverley Jackson. *Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis: A Princely Collection*. The Hague: Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis; Zwolle: Waanders, c2006.

*Editor’s Note: Elizabeth Darocha Berenz has resigned as associate editor of this column. The staff of Images would like to thank Elizabeth for her contributions.*

### **Positions Filled**

Compiled by Anne Norcross (Kendall College of Art & Design)

#### **Tyler School Of Art, Temple University**

On July 1, 2008 Laura Paris joined the Tyler School of Art at Temple University as Curator of the Visual Resource Center, where she manages all aspects of digitization and provides support for faculty, as well as supervising staff and dealing with budgetary matters. Prior to her current position, Laura spent 7 ½ years as head of the Visual Resource Library at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Laura has a Master’s in Art History from Penn State, 1998.

#### **Roger Williams University**

Chris Strasbaugh accepted the position as the Visual Resources Curator at Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI in December 2008. His responsibilities will be to manage the Visual Resource collection with a focus primarily on architecture. Before joining the staff at Roger Williams University, Chris was an Interim Visual Resources Curator at University of Dayton in Ohio.

### **Upcoming Conferences**

Compiled by Brooke Cox (DePauw University)

ACRL 14<sup>th</sup> National Conference: Pushing the Edge: Explore, Engage, Extend  
March 12-15, 2009  
Seattle, Washington

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/events/seattle/seattle.cfm>

Stewardship of Digital Assets

(Two-day workshop focusing on sustaining digital collections.)

March 24-25, 2009

New York, New York

[http://www.metro.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=329](http://www.metro.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=329)

Association of Architecture School Librarians

March 25-28, 2009

Portland, Oregon

<https://sites.google.com/site/aasl2009/>

Computers in Libraries

March 30-April 1, 2009

Hyatt Regency Crystal City

Arlington, Virginia

<http://www.infoday.com/cil2009/>

DigCCurr 2009: Digital Curation Practice, Promise and Prospects

April 1-3, 2009

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

<http://www.ils.unc.edu/digccurr2009/>

ALA Annual Conference 2009

July 9- July 15, 2009

Chicago, Illinois

<http://www.ala.org/ala/conferencesevents/upcoming/annual/index.cfm>

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Chapter News

Compiled by Trudy Levy (Image Integration)

**Great Lakes Chapter**

Submitted by Marlene Gordon (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

The Great Lakes Chapter has elected a new secretary, Meghan Musolff (University of Michigan). Meghan will assume her duties at the annual conference in Toronto. The chapter would like to thank Lorrie McAllister for her tenure as secretary.

**New England Chapter**

Submitted by Megan Battey (Middlebury College)

Mark your calendars now for the 2009 VRA New England Chapter meetings! We will hold our spring meeting at Smith College in Northampton, MA on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and our fall meeting at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

We are planning a lunch-time get-together for our chapter in Toronto on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Please stay tuned for details.