Images
The newsletter of the VRA
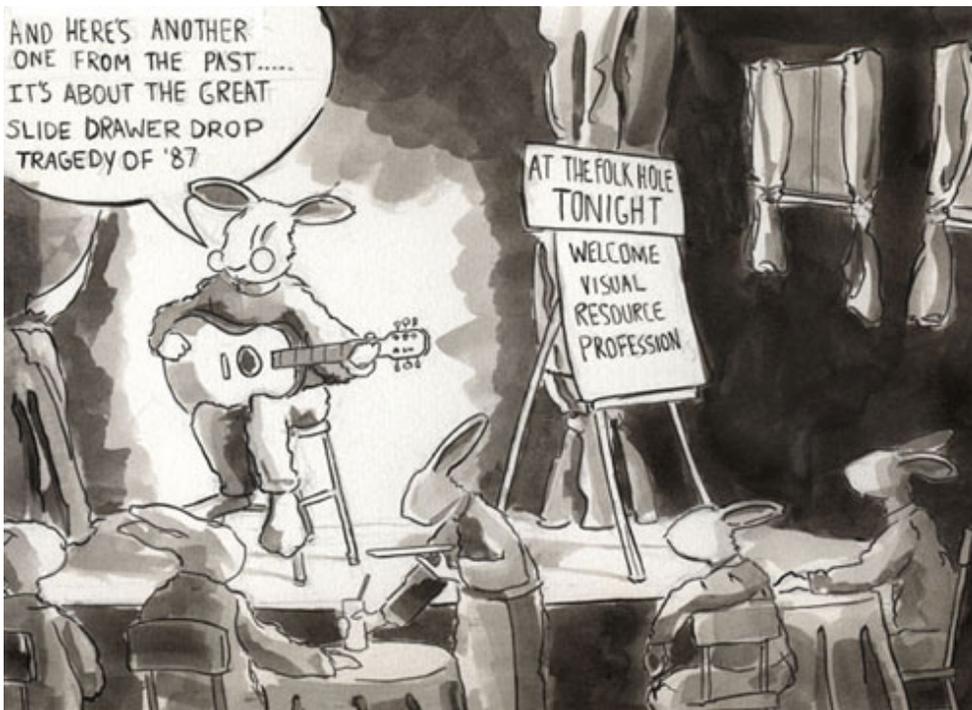
visual resources association

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Editors: Marlene Gordon (University of Michigan-Dearborn) & Corey Schultz (Stanford University)

VRA Funnies
By Jonathan Cartledge (Massachusetts College of Art)

VireoCat
By Susan James Williams (Scholars Resource)

VireoCat is a new open source relational database developed by Susan Jane Williams, and is now ready to be downloaded from Saskia's Scholars Resource web site.

Link #1: www.scholarsresource.com/download/VireoCat.zip
This link contains the application file; please note that you have to have FileMaker Pro 7 installed on your computer in order to view VireoCat. Also included are three PDF files that include the logo, a copy of the entity relationship diagram, and a nine-page user guide.

Link #2: www.scholarsresource.com/download/VRCollectionImages.zip
This link contains the folder and subfolders for the preview images that illustrate how VireoCat functions. (Note: the images are quite small (to facilitate downloading); also, read the user guide first before changing the folder structure.)

Thanks to Mark Olson, list manager (mso@ku.edu), there is a fledgling user group and discussion list already going, . To subscribe to VireoCat-L, send a message to this address: listproc@ku.edu Leave the subject line empty, and place this text in the body of the message: SUB VIREOCAT <Your Name> (omitting the angle brackets and substituting your name for the words "Your

Name".)

Thanks to Kurt Wiedenhoeft for hosting the VireoCat download on the Scholars Resource site. Thanks also to betatesters Mark Olsen, Kristin Solias and Eileen Fry who offered several suggestions and fixes. We will keep making adjustments to VireoCat as VRA Core 4.0 and CCO are finalized. One of our major goals is to share records via XML; therefore, when the XML schema is released, we will work with the XML export feature in FMP7 to ensure that it works fully.

DIRC - What is it?

During the Miami conference, DIRC was mentioned on several occassions. But what is it? DIRC is the "Digital Image Rights Computator". DIRC will be a companion to the Copy Photography Computator (CPC) written by Allan Kohl. It will also be an interactive program consisting of a series of questions and will provide such items as definitions of terms and links to online resources. Information hints will also assist the user in determining an answer to the questions posed. DIRC will provide a recommended action allowing the user to make an educated decision on how an image can be made available for use. A sub-group of the Intellectual Property Rights Committee is currently working on this project, and it is anticipated that the program will become available early 2006.

Orphan Works - VRA a Signatory on Orphan Works Reply Comments
By Jane Darcovich (University of Illinois/Chicago) - VRA Intellectual Property Rights Committee

The Visual Resources Association was one of a group of signatories (including, among others, the American Library Association, the Association of Research Libraries, the College Art Association, and Educause) on a Reply Comments document filed with the U. S. Copyright Office by the Glushko-Samuelson Intellectual Property Law Clinic on May 9, 2005. Our VRA President, Kathe Albrecht, attended a meeting in Washington D.C. in April to participate in discussions for crafting this joint set of reply comments. The VRA supported the original Copyright Clearance Initiative (CCI) proposal for remedying the Orphan Works issue, also submitted by the Glushko-Samuelson Clinic, on March 25, 2005.

This Reply Comments document reiterates what is deemed the "heart" of the CCI proposal; that is, the requirement that a potential user of an orphaned work (a work for which the copyright holder is unknown) first conduct an appropriate "reasonable efforts" search to locate the rights holder. If a user fails to conduct such a search and the rightful copyright owner later emerges, the owner would retain the right to seek full remedies against the user. Thus, the potential user of an orphaned work has a strong incentive to conduct a meaningful search. As a corollary, this proposal insists on the importance of limiting remedies in the case where users of orphan works have conducted a reasonable efforts search without locating a copyright owner. [1]

This method is seen as one which would develop a known set of "best practices" among user communities, and is described as an approach which is more likely to promote clarity than a "top-down" regulatory approach which has been suggested by others.

A group representing several major members of the museum community also submitted Reply Comments. [2] The signatories to this document are: The Denver Art Museum, The Indianapolis Museum of Art, The J. Paul Getty Trust, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, The Spencer Museum of Art, The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and The Wolfsonian-Florida International University.

Contrary to the position expressed in the CCI proposal, the museum document supports providing an outright exemption for those who use orphan works. Their document expresses the opinion that it is important to make a strong effort to encourage the use of orphan works, not to just allow their use under certain conditions, in order to provide the greatest benefit to the general public. They repeated the opinion, stated in their original comments, that the possibility of monetary damages due if a copyright holder should emerge, even if limited in dollar amount, will be daunting enough for small museums to choose not to use an orphan work.

The U. S. Copyright Office has posted these, and many other Reply Comments (a total of 146 are currently available) on its web site at http://www.copyright.gov/orphan/comments/reply/

End Notes
[1] The Joint Reply Comments document filed by the Gluskho-Samuelson Clinic is posted on the

U.S. Copyright web site at: http://www.copyright.gov/orphan/comments/reply/OWR0127-Various.pdf
[2] The Reply Comments filed by this group of museums are available at:
http://www.copyright.gov/orphan/comments/reply/OWR0122-ArtMuseums.pdf

SEI Update: Who ya gonna call . . . for professional development focused on images?
By Maureen Burns (UC Irvine) - Co-chair of 2006 SEI

Where might a fledgling image curator or library student get specific training to break into the field of visual resources? If you are already working in an image collection but are interested in honing your skills or transitioning to digital images, where might you get the crucial information you need? Consider the Summer Educational Institute (SEI) for Visual Resources and Image Management as an option, a joint program of the Art Libraries Society of North America and the Visual Resources Association. One 2004 participant described it as the "Best program... right on target for what I needed to know, now!" The SEI will be taking place from July 5 through the 9 at Duke University with John Taormina turning on the Southern hospitality for a second year in a row. It is an intensive 5-day program; as another attendee wrote, "It is like 4 years of conferences rolled into 1 week!... I think SEI is especially good because the subjects were so well coordinated with each other and so were the instructors! It makes this program extremely valuable." Building on the resounding success of the first year, an implementation team of eight volunteers representing both professional organizations, have worked tirelessly to update the curriculum and provide the same high standard of instruction, with both new and returning instructors. The team has accomplished a great deal of work to get the 2005 SEI off the ground: local planning, budgeting, development, policy, and publicity. A web site with all the information you need can be found at http://www.vraweb.org/2005sei/index.html. If you have additional questions, SEI co-chairs Trudy Jacoby and Maureen Burns are available to help. Although the 2005 Institute filled quickly this year, the waiting list is shorter second time around, so start planning now to attend in 2006! One of last year's participants summed-up the spirit of the SEI nicely; "This attitude and commitment to working towards the greater good of the profession adds to the quality of life for all pursuing a VR career."

Stay tuned to Image Stuff . . . where the new venue for SEI 2006 will be announced next time!

The Dragon VRAffle Donation

Inspired by discussions on the VRA list, Trudy Levy created a painting of a Dragon guarding the image repository, which she donated to the 2005 VRAffle. Sara Jane Pearman, Dragon Expert, won the painting and took it back to her lair at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Congratulations, Sara Jane!

Image is Everything
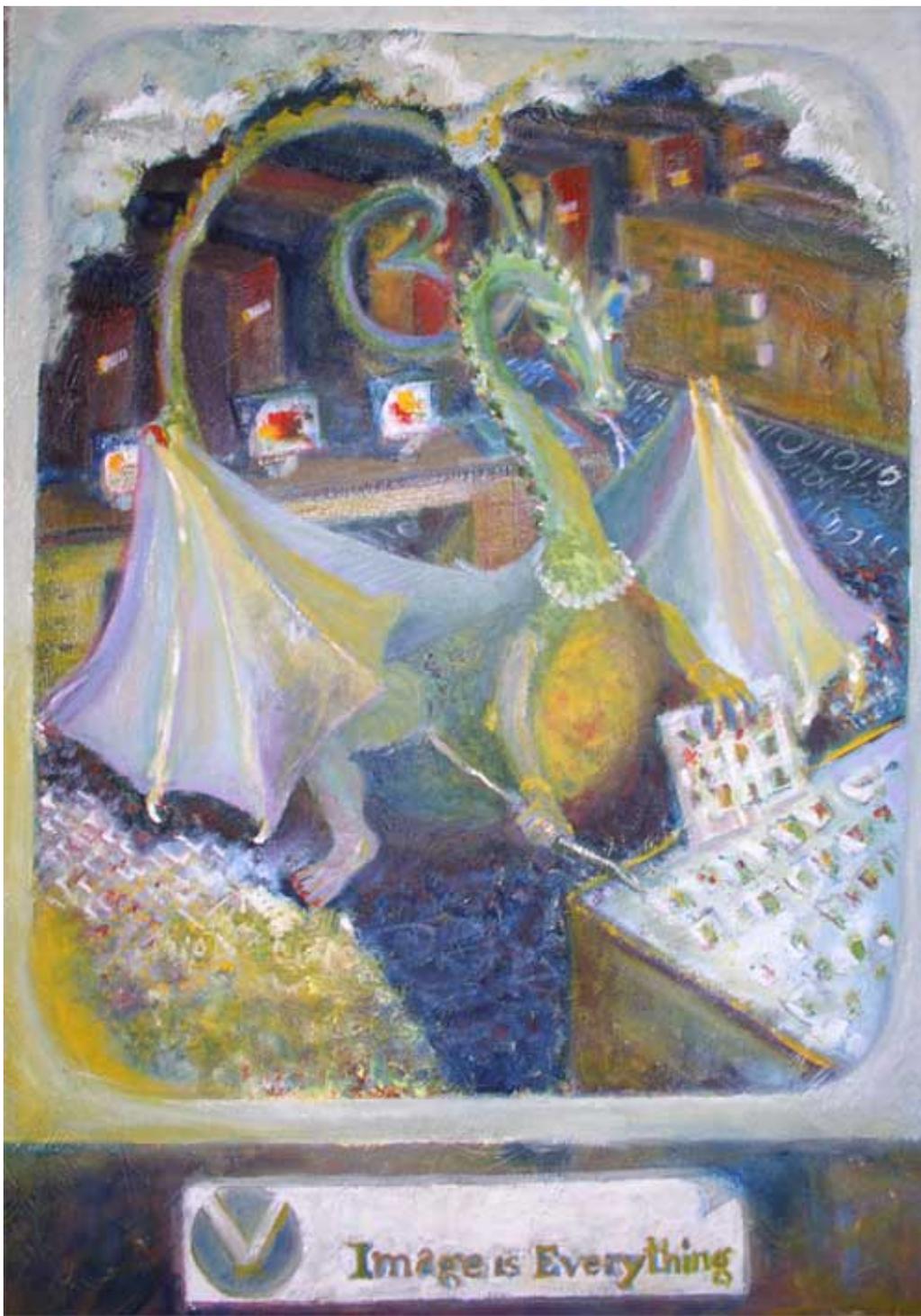
Tech Tips
By Alexander Nichols (Michigan State University)

Q. What type of lens is recommended for the Nikon D-70?

A. This depends on how the camera will be used. For photographing books and periodicals on a copystand, Nikon's 28-105mm lens is a good mid-priced option, providing a convenient focal range and a macro mode. For photographing flat original art (when sharpness is critical) a combination of the 60mm Micro-Nikkor (for smaller items) and the 35mm f/2 (for larger items) would be ideal. For general purpose photography, the 18-70mm lens (often included with the D70) is an excellent option.

Positions Filled
By Mary Duff-Silverman (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor)

In December 2004, I accepted the position of Supervisor of University of Michigan's Visual Resources Collection after working part-time in the collection since May 2004. Previously, I was at Michigan State University where I worked initially in the Art Department slide collection and then spent the next twelve years designing, building, and managing a resource center and computer lab for the Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities. In my new position at the University of Michigan, I oversee the daily management of the Visual Resources teaching collection for the department of the History of Art. Currently, our greatest challenges and adventures include development of a new database and preparing almost half of the department's courses to "go digital" in fall 2005.

If you have accepted a new position or know of someone who has, please contact Marlene (mgordon@umich.edu). Please include contact information and a brief biographic statement on the individual.

Chapter News

The Greater New York Chapter meeting will be held Friday, June 17th at Princeton University. It will feature demonstrations of the image management databases Almagest and Pictor, a tour of Princeton's VR collection, and possibly tours of the Princeton Index of Christian Art and/or Marquand Library. New officers will be elected during the business meeting, and a reception will follow. RSVP to Dustin Weems at dw@artstor.org

The Northern California Chapter held its Spring meeting at UC Davis on May 13th, hosted by Leah Theis, Visual Resources Librarian. Members gave reports on the Miami conference, and Alev Akman of CSU Fresno reported on her involvement with Project Gutenberg (http://www.gutenberg.org/), the largest collection of free eBooks on the web. In the afternoon, Kirk Alexander, the Manager of Educational Technology, demonstrated the open source image database and teaching tool Almagest (http://www.princeton.edu/~almagest/opensource/).

The Pacific Rim Chapter of the VRA is planning its annual meeting for August 27th. The meeting will be held at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, OR, and Margo Ballantyne (Visual Resources Curator at Lewis and Clark) and Karin Whalen (Visual Resources Librarian at Reed College) will share the duties of hosts. At Lewis and Clark College, the chapter will visit the new 'green' building, Howard Hall, which is equipped with the latest classroom technology. An agenda for the meeting is being developed; input from chapter members is being sought on issues they would like to see discussed. In the planning stages is a session on CCO (Cataloguing Cultural Objects) lead by Debra Cox (Art Slide Library, University of Washington), who received the Chapter's 2005 Travel Award to attend the VRA conference in Miami Beach.

A technology-based session may center around the experiences of chapter members who attend a demonstration of digital asset management technology at Reed College this June. A third topic might deal with human-resources type workplace issues. Several chapter members have experienced re-organizations within their institutions, moving into new buildings, and changes in work-flow. A discussion session on dealing with change, preventing burn-out, or maintaining momentum during such events might be pertinent. The annual meeting will also include a business meeting, lunch, and possibly a tour of a museum in Portland. Chapter members with items for the meeting agenda, and with ideas for sessions, tours, and discussions should use the Chapter's listserve to contribute to the agenda.

The Upstate New York Chapter held a meeting Alfred University on May 20th, hosted by Mandy Economos. They toured Scholes Library and the stunning Visual Resources Center at the New York State College of Ceramics, saw a glassblowing demonstration, and had a fantastic workshop on Photoshop CS taught by David Seiler of Skidmore. In addition, three VRA members living in Upstate New York, Jeanne Keefe, Marcia Focht and Caitlain Devereaux Lewis, gave papers for a session moderated by Marcia titled "Managing Image Collections for Teaching: Selection, Storage and Preservation" at the Conference on Instructional Technologies, May 23-26 at Binghamton University. Upstate NY looks forward to an upcoming joint meeting with the New England Chapter in October.

If you would like more information on any of the other regional chapters, please contact the appropriate chapter chairperson. A list of the chapters and contact information is posted on the VRA website (www.vraweb.org/organization/chapters.html).