



# Images

The newsletter of the VRA

June 2007 vol.4, no.3

## Notes from the President

By Macie Hall (Johns Hopkins University)  
President, Visual Resources Association

Dear VRA Members,

Almost two months have passed since our Kansas City conference. Board members have been busy in the interim following up on various aspects of VRA business, including preliminary planning for our San Diego conference and moving ahead with the process of selecting a hotel for our 2009 conference in Toronto.

### *Call for Proposals – San Diego 2008*

A call for proposals for the 2008 conference has just been posted on VRA-L by Vice President for Conference Program Vickie O'Riordan. I have already been hearing some great ideas for sessions and workshops and look forward to reading the submissions later this summer.

### *Midyear Board Meeting, Reports and Budget Request*

Our midyear Board meeting this summer will take place at the conference hotel in San Diego from August 17-19. This is a bit later than usual, due in part to the late March dates of the Kansas City conference. The Mid-year Board meeting agenda includes planning the conference program and finalizing the budget for the new fiscal year. The call for mid-year reports will go out at the end of June and reports will be due at the end of July.

This year we will be handling the budget requests in a different manner than in the past. Treasurer Ann Woodward will be sending VRA Appointees, Committee Chairs, and Chapter Chairs a separate form for the budget requests during the first week of June. These will be due on June 30 so that Ann can prepare the annual budget for Board review and discussion at our midyear meeting.

### *Kansas City Conference Financial Report*

The Board is pleased to announce that the Kansas City conference yielded a profit to date of \$12,412. There are still a few invoices which are to be received; however, we anticipate that this figure is close to our final profit. This profit was possible in large part due to the much lower than anticipated costs for AV services. We had budgeted \$23,000 for AV given the rates we have paid the past two years. AV costs were closer to \$12,000.

In the past, conference profits have not been earmarked in any specific way. The Board feels given the fluctuations in costs (and therefore profits and possible losses) that we are likely to experience from one venue to the next; we should designate conference profits to be used for future conference expenses. This would provide a cushion against years when there is a low profit margin (as is likely to be the case in both San Diego and Toronto) and allow us to fund special programming, speakers, and other enhancements for our membership. The Board proposes that it would make sense to build a "conference reserve" that eventually reaches somewhere around 50% of typical conference expenses, which could help cover a lower-than-average income in any given year. To that end, Treasurer Ann Woodward will be consulting with the Financial Advisory Committee and our accountant to investigate the best means for setting up a reserve fund.

### *Silver Jubilee Committee Discharged*

At our annual meeting in Kansas City, the Board voted to discharge the Silver Jubilee Committee.

Editorial and  
Technical Staff

#### **Editor:**

Marlene Gordon (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

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Jane Darcovich (University of Illinois at Chicago) *Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights*

Jacquelyn Erdman (Florida Atlantic University) *Digital Scene and Heard*

Alex Nichols (Michigan State University) *Tech Tips*

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).

The Board again gives thanks for commendable service to co chairs Megan Battey and Marica Focht, and committee members Elizabeth Gushee, Brian Shelburne, Martine Sherrill, Christine L. Sundt, and Christina B. Updike.

Macie Hall  
President, Visual Resources Association

VRA25 Silver Jubilee 2007 Kansas City

The Visual Resources Association celebrated 25 years in the city where it all began. The Silver Jubilee Committee assembled a wonderful program including a Memory Booklet, a history exhibit along with Nancy DeLaurier's Slide Curators Video and the Luraine Tansy Oral History video. It wouldn't be a VRA conference without the VRAffle and the VRAvue. Patti McRae Baley reports that \$2,887 was raised for Travel Awards, a record sum for a record number with 90 donations from the membership. This year's fundraising dinner for the Luraine Tansey Travel Award was held at the Jack Stack BBQ. Other special events are listed on the VRA web site at <http://www.vraweb.org/conferences/vra25/events.html>

This year's conference included the new Birds-of-a-Feather lunches. Each lunch focused on a particular issue. Some of the Powerpoint presentations from the sessions, seminars, workshops are available below.

Session 1

[Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going? The VR at 25: Understanding Our Past & Framing a Future](#)

Session 4

[Data Migration Strategies in the Age of CCO and VRA Core 4.0](#)

Session 5

[From Fair Use to Fair Trading: Creating a Digital Image Matchmaking Commons](#)

(sponsored by the DIAG, Digital Initiatives Advisory Group)

Special User's Group 4

[MDID Special User's Group](#)

Workshop 4

[Getting Past No: Assessing Copyright Risk](#)

[Session Bibliography](#)

Seminar 4

[Are We Speaking the Same Language? Communication Strategies for the Visual Resources Professional](#)

**Digital Scene and Heard**

**Submitted by Maureen Burns (University of California, Irvine)**

**Digital Initiatives Advisory Group**

Different ways of partnering and sharing image collections seems to be the talk of the visual resources town. Below you will find articles about how one software developer is mixing it up with image providers and food for thought about how image collections might be useful to audiences beyond traditional visual resources patrons.

**Insight: Content Enabled**

By Nancy Harm and Anna Miller (Luna Imaging)

The team at [Luna](#) wants to update the VRA community on a few new projects aimed at delivering content to both Insight and non-Insight clients within the VRA community and beyond. First off, Luna has teamed up with [Scholars Resource](#) to deliver pre-built collections of licensed images. Once the content is licensed from SR, the Luna team will work to migrate the content as a pre-built Insight collection directly to your server to streamline resources and provide your institution with content that is quickly accessible and ready for the classroom. This relationship is ideally suited to new Insight clients (and those considering Insight) who want to get a jump on content

building. A project of a slightly different flavor is underway with [Archivision](#) where there is an additional option of accessing the Archivision Archive in Insight but hosted by Luna. This Archivision Archive is also available to non-Insight clients. These two options compliment the [AMICA Library collection](#), which is available to both Insight and non-Insight clients as an Insight subscription collection from Cartography Associates.

These collections are only the beginning, during the recent Museums and the Web conference, David Rumsey participated in the closing plenary session focused on the future of “Museums and the Web”. David’s focus was on the topic of encouraging open content and the work he is doing with the [Open Content Alliance](#). This fits in well with Luna Imaging’s Insight development plans where we hope to move content from ‘out of sight’ to ‘in Insight’- easily accessed and free.

For further information, please contact [nancy@luna-img.com](mailto:nancy@luna-img.com) and [amiller@luna-img.com](mailto:amiller@luna-img.com)

### **The New York Public Library’s Picture Collection at Mid-Manhattan Library adds 500 Historical Postcards of New York City to the NYPL Digital Gallery**

By Susan Chute (New York Public Library)

A fascinating historical peek at all five boroughs of New York City from the 1890s until the 1920s is provided through the 500 postcards newly added to the [NYPL Digital Gallery](#) from the Picture Collection’s holdings of more than 25,000 postcards.

The postcards offer a colorful visual record of the city and document the beginnings of the postcard publishing phenomenon in the United States. Both the front and back of each postcard can be viewed. The postcards also illustrate emerging lithographic and photographic printing styles. Among the examples digitized are “oilettes”, tinted photographs, colored lithographs, line photoengravings, relief prints, inkless intaglio prints, linocuts, hold-to-light cards, and cards with highlights delineated by glitter.

An online exhibit highlighting the project and providing examples of the digitized images can be found at <http://www.nypl.org/branch/central/mml/postcards/index.html>

An unparalleled visual resource for designers, historians, illustrators, cartoonists and artists in every medium, the Picture Collection is a subject-based collection of over a million circulating images consisting of original prints, photographs, posters and postcards as well as illustrations from books, magazines and newspapers gathered over the past 93 years. In 2002, the Collection broadened its reach beyond New York with the [Picture Collection Online](#), a globally accessible digital selection of images created before 1923, with particular attention devoted to fashion, costume, African-American life and New York City. In 2007, the Collection merged its digital content with that of the world-renowned Research Collections of The New York Public Library into the [NYPL Digital Gallery](#). Picture Collection librarians are especially pleased that our ongoing digital projects extend our traditional access point. Now we can assign multiple subjects to one picture.

You may wish to begin your exploration of the Picture Collection’s contribution of over 30,000 images to the Digital Gallery by visiting the [Collection Guide to the Picture Collection](#).

The Historical Postcards of New York City project was supported in part by funds from the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO) through the New York State Regional Bibliographic Databases Program.

For further information, please contact [schute@nypl.org](mailto:schute@nypl.org)

### **Calisphere: University of California’s Gateway to Primary Sources**

By Rosalie Lack (California Digital Library)

[Calisphere](#) —the University of California’s free public collection of more than 170,000 digitized primary sources—is a rich resource that reflects the state’s role in national and international history over the past three centuries. The content—photographs, documents, newspapers, political cartoons, works of art, diaries, transcribed oral histories, advertising, and other unique cultural artifacts—is drawn from the diverse collections of the libraries and museums of the 10 UC campuses, as well as from large and small cultural heritage organizations across California.

The Calisphere team had a specific design goal: to create a site for a general audience that also

meets the specialized needs of K-12 educators. We provided tools that allow all visitors to explore the full breadth of the collection, but we also created special features and primary source subsets designed especially for educators.

Most teachers are pressed for time. They want to include primary sources in their teaching but have little time to spend searching for materials. We approached this need by creating themed subsets of carefully selected images with contextual commentary, organized to support educational content standards.

Calisphere's wide-ranging content has been selected and organized into three broad "collections" (the term "collections" is used here in the broadest sense—selected images and documents organized around a topic).

- Themed Collections is organized by historical era, from the Gold Rush to the Social Reform of the 1960s-70s. Each era contains four to six topic areas—primary source sets of 20-30 hand-selected items and a brief overview providing historical context. Topics include: Environment Impact (of the Gold Rush); the Chinese Exclusion Act; Help and a New Deal (includes innovative ways that individuals came together to cope with the Great Depression), and Life on the Home Front (during World War II).
- Japanese American Relocation Digital Archives (JARDA) is a larger collection of images, documents, and historical context focused on a particular event—the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. It is organized into four themes: People, Places, Daily Life, and Personal Experiences. JARDA offers many perspectives on this historical event by including not only official government photographs and documents, but the internees' personal photographs, transcribed oral histories, artwork, and letters and diaries.
- California Cultures is organized around four ethnic groups: African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American. Each of them provides compelling images and documents that illustrate California's diversity. Contextual commentaries chronicle the unique history, struggles, and contributions of each group.

Teachers' response has been extremely positive. In evaluating Themed Collections, for example, they noted that it was easy to find appropriate images they could use in the classroom, and the collocated images and topic areas sparked new ideas. As we continually add to our content and refine our approach, we also intend to work collaboratively with teachers, librarians, and other users—responding to their needs and demonstrating how a university collection can be successfully re-purposed for K-12 educators and a broader audience.

For further information, please contact [Rosalie.Lack@ucop.edu](mailto:Rosalie.Lack@ucop.edu)

### **Collection Spotlight**

By Maureen Burns (University of California, Irvine)

Cartography Associates Visual Collections (VC) launched in 2004 have one subscription-based and 50 free digital image collections totaling almost 300,000 images, most of which are accessible on the Web (National Palace Taipei collection is only available to Insight clients). The user can spontaneously browse images online, dating from antiquity to the present, or choose to download software for single- or cross-collection searching using the Insight suite of advanced presentation tools. The emphasis is on federating multiple collections that are not restricted simply to academic contexts; VC provides access to the largest digital image service with free, internationally accessible content and presentation tools—many of the collections have no restrictions in terms of access. Although eclectic, the content includes art, architecture, cartography, photography, and other types of collections useful for cross-disciplinary research and learning.

Insight's browser version allows for simple Web access to the images and descriptive data whereas the java client choice provides the full suite of Insight image management and presentation tools for anyone to use. The images can be used in the Insight software or exported for use with other presentation tools, such as PowerPoint or Keynote software. Universities and other "associates" from around the world have provided the content.

The University of California has collaborated with Cartography Associates in providing access to Berkeley's Japanese Historical Maps and the Museums of the Online Archive of California. Although these collections are available elsewhere on the Web (links in VC), when accessing them through VC's Insight java client, groups of images can be exported rather than having to retrieve them one-by-one (content owners decide on exportable file sizes). Some of these same

images are now available through [Calisphere](#), but again to obtain groups of images using VC might be a better access point. This example also demonstrates how digital image collections can be repurposed to reach various audiences and adding the intellectual effort of curation might provide better access for some, especially K-12 education. The University of California has its own Insight application where licensed and UC-owned content has been federated strictly for teaching and learning on the 10 UC campuses. It is a simple matter of contacting other Insight partners to obtain a virtual key to collections in order to add them to your own. Presently, UC visual resources curators have identified several in VC that tie in well with courses taught on UC campuses—John Carter Brown graphics of the colonial Americas, Catena Historic Gardens, and the Cornell University Collection of Political Americana, etc.—and are working towards making them accessible in the UC Image Service.

VC has a substantial number of images, flexible tools, a freely accessible business model, and ways to interoperate with other systems. For visual resources patrons from the community, who might not be allowed access to a university's teaching collection, VC provides some excellent image options. Although service to primary patrons is most important, especially in academic image collections, the example of VC reminds us to consider ways to share public domain content with the world.

For further information, contact [maburns@uci.edu](mailto:maburns@uci.edu) or [amiller@luna-img.com](mailto:amiller@luna-img.com)

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>

### **Positions Filled**

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

### **Visual Resources Center in the Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies at Duke University**

Julie Doring joined the Visual Resources Center in the Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies at Duke University as Associate Curator in June. She moves from the Department of Classics at Duke, where she has been managing the digital conversion of their slide collection since last August. Julie has master's degrees in both art history and library and information science from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She has also been working on a large-scale digitization project of early twentieth-century Chinese photographs in Duke's main library. Previously, she completed internships in the North Carolina State University's Special Collections, Duke University's Perkins Library and the North Carolina Museum of Art's Art Reference Library.

### **Tech Tips**

#### **Color Calibration and Profiling**

By Alex Nichols (Michigan State University)

Even for those who have some experience with color management, there is often some confusion about what's really happening when you calibrate and/or profile (also called "characterize") a device. Knowing something about how these processes work can be very helpful when trying to assess their results, and figuring out what went wrong.

Calibration is what you are doing when you make physical adjustments to the way the device behaves. For example, when your color management software asks you to change the brightness or contrast of your monitor until this number matches that number, or until a dark image is "just barely visible," you are calibrating the monitor. Calibration serves to alter the behavior of a device so that it reaches an optimal state for profiling.

Once your device is on its best behavior, the process of creating a color profile is usually automated -- this is the part when (in the case of a monitor) you would attach the Spyder or other colorimeter to the screen and wait while various color patches flash across the screen. During this process, the software is building a table of sample colors produced by your monitor. The table has two columns: one column lists the R, G, and B values that the calibration software fed to the monitor. The other column lists the color values that were actually measured by the colorimeter. (Example: Monitor says, "Red! R:255, G:0, B:0." Spyder says, "Actually, it looks a bit orange.") This information is saved in a profile.

From this point forward, whenever a color-aware program wants to display a particular color, it can look up the desired color in the profile's table (e.g. "a bit orange") and find the corresponding R, G, and B values that need to be sent to the monitor in order to display that color (e.g. "R:255, G:0, B:0"). Think of it as a translation between colors (as perceived by humans) and the numerical stimuli needed by a device to produce them.

These same basic concepts apply not only to monitors, but also to any device capable of display (monitors, projectors), output (printers), or input (scanners, cameras) of color. As such, a carefully performed regimen of calibration and profiling can make consistent color possible in a system of many devices of different types.

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#### Books, Articles and More

Compiled by Elizabeth Darocha Berenz (Roger Williams University)

With submissions by Marlene Gordon (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

#### The Art Institute of Chicago Collection Images

The new online database of objects from the Art Institute of Chicago's collections is now available with more than 2500 object records.

#### D-Lib Magazine

May/June 2007 issue available

Geist, Michael. *Museums and the Public Domain*. (posted May 23, 2007).

Gerster, Georg. *The Past from Above: Aerial Photographs of Archaeological Sites*. Los Angeles, CA: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005.

McClellan, Daniel and Karsten Schubert, eds. *Dear images: Art, Copyright and Culture*. London: Ridinghouse: ICA, 2002.

*Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation*, Vol. XXIII, Nos. 1-2, 2007  
Special issue on Visual Documentation in Freud's Vienna with guest editor Mary Bergstein.

#### Chapter News

##### **Southern California Chapter**

Submitted by Jacqueline Spafford (University of California, Santa Barbara)

The Southern California Chapter had its spring meeting at the Getty Villa on April 18 with about 35 attendees. A presentation on CCO from Murtha Baca and Patricia Harpring was followed by a very lively discussion. A business meeting was combined with lunch. The main topic of discussion was next year's VRA conference in San Diego. Vickie O'Riordan, Visual Resources Curator at the Arts Library at UCSD, and the VRA Vice-President for Conference Programs, talked about conference preparation and how the local VRA Chapter can participate. She asked for volunteers for the Local Organizing Committee.

Please contact her at [voriordan@ucsd.edu](mailto:voriordan@ucsd.edu) for further information.

Fall meeting venues were discussed. Barbara Furbush, the reference librarian at the Villa, gave library tours which were enhanced by her knowledge of the Getty's history. Some attendees participated in discussion of the VRA conference in Kansas City. Summaries of some of the workshops, sessions and seminars were presented for those members unable to attend the national conference. The meeting adjourned at 2:30.

##### **Greater New York Chapter**

Submitted by Steven Kowalik (Hunter College/CUNY)

(from minutes prepared by Johanna Bauman, Bard Graduate Center)

On May 11, the Greater New York Chapter met at the New York School of Interior Design (NYSID), hosted by Eric Wolf, Director of the Library, and Christopher Spinelli, Visual Media Administrator. A welcome from Inge Heckel, the President of NYSID, was followed by a short

business meeting. Johanna Bauman (Vice Chair) will become Chairperson for the coming year, and Billy Kwan, Metropolitan Museum of Art, was elected as Vice Chair. A proposal to meet with the Upstate New York Chapter at Vassar in Poughkeepsie was addressed. Johanna Bauman presented a report on the XML workshop she attended at the 2007 VRA conference. After the meeting was adjourned, Eric Wolf, Christopher Spinelli, and Barry Lewis, architectural historian and adjunct NYSID faculty member, discussed their experiences implementing IDOL, NYSID's installation of the Luna Insight database, and using Luna's presentation tool in the classroom. Afterwards, a reception was held in the NYSID Gallery where members were able to view the 2007 BFA & MFA Thesis Exhibition.