Images
The newsletter of the VRA

October 2007 vol.4, no.5

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

Dear VRA Members,

For many of us, September is a hectic month, with the starting of the academic year. Now autumn is upon us; our membership renewal drive is underway and we are preparing for the upcoming election of new officers to the positions of Vice President for Conference Arrangements, Public Relations and Communications Officer, and Treasurer. The Board and other VRA members have been busy through the late summer with various activities.

Mid-year Board Meeting
The Board had a very productive two full days of meetings in San Diego in mid-August.   We reviewed all of the appointee, committee and chapter reports, made decisions on the session, workshop and other program proposals for the 2008 annual conference, met with hotel staff and began to lay out the preliminary conference schedule. We are grateful for the very enthusiastic local committee in San Diego and look forward to working with the Southern California Chapter on the conference. The Board is excited about the programming and events, which along with the fabulous venue -- the Westin San Diego -- should make for a memorable conference.

Membership Renewals
Membership renewal packets have been mailed and you should be receiving them soon. In the past, the mailing included the slate of candidates for the VRA Board and an election ballot. Voting will be done online this year, and the election will be held from November 1 through 30, 2007. This will allow us to ensure that anyone who becomes a member by October 15 is able to vote. Our Bylaws state that after October 15, the membership dues are applied to the following year (Article 1, Section 7). Election information will be posted on the VRA website. In addition, memos will be sent out on VRA-L. This year's membership renewal mailing includes an information sheet on the online election procedure with screen shots of a sample ballot. An email to eligible voters will be sent out on November 1 with instructions and a link to the ballot. A link will also be posted on the VRA website. Members will use their MemberClicks (MY VRA) login and password to access the ballot and cast their vote. Only full members will be able to access the ballot and vote.

In order to assure that you are able to vote, please do two things now. 1) Be sure that you know your MemberClicks (MY VRA) user name and password. 2) Login and update your contact information. We need to have your correct email address. If you are unsure of your user name and password, go to http://www.vraweb.org and click on the link below the MY VRA login which reads *"Forgot your user name or password?"* Clicking on the link will send a request to MemberClicks and your user name and password will be emailed to you.

Slate of Candidates for the VRA Board
I am pleased to announce the slate of candidates for this year's election of Board Officers.

For Vice-President for Conference Arrangements:
Emy Nelson Decker, Director of Visual Resources, Lamar Dodd School of Art, University of Georgia

Brian Shelbourne, Head, Image Collection Library, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

For Treasurer:
Jane Darcovich, Director, Visual Resources Library, University of Illinois at Chicago
Billy Chi-hing Kwan, Systems Librarian, Image Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art

For Public Relations and Communications Officer:
Mark Pompelia, Director, Visual Resources Center, Rice University
Eric Schwab, Manager, AV & Imaging Services, Ontario College of Art & Design

The candidates' biographies and statements are available on the VRA website. There is a link at http://www.vraweb.org.

VRA Foundation News
We have received the exciting news that the IRS has approved our application for 510(c)(3) tax status for the VRA Foundation. The application was submitted at the beginning of September and we had expected that it would take at least three months for the review process. I am sure that the surprisingly rapid turn around is due to the tremendous amount of work that our VRA Foundation Task Force put into the application preparation, presenting to the IRS a thoroughly researched, clear and unchallengeable document.

The VRA Foundation provisional directors are Loy Zimmerman (Chair), Kathe Albrecht, Margo Ballantyne (Secretary), Macie Hall, Allan Kohl, Elisa Lanzi, and Ann Thomas (Treasurer). The provisional board will oversee the VRA Foundation until the new Foundation Board is appointed and takes office. As stated in the IRS-approved Foundation Bylaws, the VRA Board will appoint four directors and three will be appointed by the current Foundation Board. The new Foundation Board will take office with the opening of new business at the first annual VRA Foundation Board meeting. This meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2008 in San Diego, just prior to the opening of the VRA annual conference. As stipulated in the VRA Foundation Bylaws, the Foundation's annual meeting will take place at the VRA conference each year.

The VRA Foundation will be featured in an open informational session during the conference. Additional documentation about our new Foundation, including the IRS approved Bylaws, has been posted on the VRA web site:
http://www.vraweb.org/organization/foundation/foundation.html

On Monday, September 24, the VRA Executive Board formally voted to discharge the VRA Foundation Task Force. I know that our members will join the Board in thanking Loy Zimmerman (Chair), Kathe Albrecht, Margo Ballantyne, Elisa Lanzi and Ann Thomas for the time, energy, hard work and attention to detail that they have put into the process of establishing the Foundation. We are also appreciative of the advice and guidance of attorneys Damian Hovancik and Tom Simcoe of Whiteman Osterman & Hanna, LLP of Albany, New York.

Change of Position and Contact Information
On October 1, I will be assuming a new position at Johns Hopkins University as a Senior Instructional Designer in the Center for Educational Resources. Although my email address will remain the same (macie.hall@jhu.edu), I will have a new phone number and mailing address.

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VRA Bulletin News
Mark Pompelia, Editor, VRA Bulletin (Rice University),
Macie Hall, President, Visual Resources Association (Johns Hopkins University)

In an effort to expand member benefits, we are announcing the creation of a PDF version of the VRA Bulletin. In addition to being unabridged, the electronic version will offer many expanded features:

- - full-color illustrations and other graphic elements
- - active hyperlinks: live Web and e-mail addresses
- - full navigability: bookmarked articles and other content
- - full searching, both within the PDF viewer, via vraweb.org, and your local operating system
- - ability to print at 300 dpi

The PDF version makes its debut with Spring 2007 (vol. 34, no. 1), the theme issue entitled, "Creating Shareable Metadata: CCO and the Standards Landscape," which you should be receiving as a print edition shortly. It will continue with the Summer 2007 issue (vol. 34, no. 2), a second theme issue entitled "The Digital Transition: Perspectives from Art Historians." Future PDFs will be released in advance of the print version, as they avoid the month-long printing and mailing process. Back issues will be converted to PDF and also made available.

The PDF will be free to current members and available for sale to non-members for $10 via vraweb.org. It will be possible in the future to select "PDF Only" on your MyVRA (MemberClicks) profile to avoid the duplication of the print issue and to make the Bulletin more environmentally friendly with a reduced print run. This will also decrease the need and expense for overstock storage.

The PDFs are available to VRA members for free by logging in to MyVRA, and selecting Community --> Info, where will be links to download the PDF files.

For others, an order form to purchase the Bulletin in PDF format will be found on at vraweb.org under the menu tab Publications --> Bulletin. From there navigate about halfway down the page to the heading: VRA

Bulletin Available for Online Purchase [PDF]. Links to each issue will be here. Clicking on a link will bring up the publications order form. Once the order is finalized, the customer will get an email with the url and logon information to download the PDF. There is also a link to the order form from the home page of vraweb.org

Intellectual Property Rights
Compiled by Jane Darcovich (University of Illinois at Chicago)

Copyright Policy Development for FADIS
Submitted by Adam Lauder (University of Windsor)

Adam Lauder, Digital Imaging Librarian at the Leddy Library, University of Windsor (Canada) gave a presentation on copyright policy development at the University of Toronto on June 1st, as part of a meeting of Canadian visual resources professionals. The presentation included a summary of his ongoing initiative in partnering with administrators, faculty and legal counsel at the University of Windsor and the University of Toronto to develop copyright guidelines intended to inform the day-to-day administration of the Fine Art Digital Imaging System (FADIS), a consortial resource developed by the University of Toronto (UofT). Mr. Lauder's report on the ongoing process of copyright policy development at the University of Windsor included strategies for identifying potential partners on campus and for building a groundswell of support for institutional policies based on fair dealing - the Canadian equivalent of the concept of "fair use" in American law - that endorses a system that is research-based and fair.

Other topics discussed at the June 1st meeting included the logistics of establishing a new VRA chapter, a presentation of FADIS by Gordon Belray (University of Toronto), as well as a discussion on copyright.

Kenneth Crews Moves to New Position at Columbia University

Kenneth D. Crews has been appointed Director of Columbia University Libraries' new Copyright Advisory Office, starting in January 2008. In his new position, Crews will advise on the application of copyright policies to teaching, research, and scholarly communication within the University. His responsibilities will include educating faculty, staff, and students about copyright through web-based information, publications, training programs, and conferences.

Crews is currently Director of the Copyright Management Center at Indiana University Purdue

University Indianapolis (IUPUI) where he holds a chaired professorship in the IU School of Law-Indianapolis, and a joint appointment in the IU School of Library and Information Science. His latest book, *Copyright Law for Librarians and Educators*, is widely used as a reference at academic institutions.

Digital Image Rights Computator (DIRC) Now Available
Submitted by Marlene Gordon (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

The Digital Image Rights Computator (DIRC) is now accessible from the VRA web site under "What's New" on the main page. The DIRC program is intended to assist the user in assessing the intellectual property rights status of images of works of art, designed objects or architectural works. DIRC leads the user through a series of query pages, leading to a color-coded chart indicating the intellectual property rights profile of the image based on the answers given to the questions. There are also notes, including comments on the intended uses of the image, suggesting responsible standards of community practice. DIRC has been vetted by legal counsel. Before using the program for the first time, you are urged to read the Advisory Notice.

Thanks to the all of the members of the DIRC Development Team: Stacey Barnes (Designer), Marlene Gordon, Ben Kessler, Allan Kohl, Rebecca Moss, Maryly Snow, Chris Sundt, and Gretchen Wagner.

Review of Bielstein Book on Intellectual Property

The new issue of VISUAL RESOURCES: An International Journal of Documentation, Vol. XXIII, No. 3, 2007 contains a book review by VRA Intellectual Property Committee member Gretchen Wagner. Wagner reviews Permissions, A Survival Guide: Blunt Talk About Art as Intellectual Property by Susan Bielstein.

Digital Scene and Heard
By Jacquelyn Erdman (Florida Atlantic University)
Digital Initiatives Advisory Group

One of the discussions that have come up on the VRA-L is how to convince the administration of universities that the visual resources staff is essential to the university. The traditional roles of the VR department were to house slides and digitize images based on professor requests. It is my belief, however, that in the future all types of libraries will need to take a more active role in education in order to continue to be relevant to each of our respective communities. Whether it is to provide further assistance in using the collections, advertising what the collection contains, or creating supplementary education materials, VR professionals can no longer be passive collectors of content. In this month's column those VR departments that are going above and beyond the collection will be highlighted.

Above and beyond the collection
By Jacquelyn Erdman (Florida Atlantic University)

Examples of VR collections with impact on the web

The most important thing that VR professionals can do is make their services more visible within the university. Their department website is a perfect place to not only house the collections but to make an impact on the university about the possibilities associated with visual collections.

The Visual Resources Collection at the University of Chicago is an example of four important elements to a good website: catchy graphics, putting a face to the staff, hosting blog of all things visual, and advertising their special services: "Going Digital? We Can Help".

Duke University has special classes devoted to teaching teachers how to use and create visual materials for their classes.

Stanford's Visual Resources Center is a portal to their image collections, but also gives handouts and toolkits for how to use the images.

Examples of guides on visual resources

Guides to visual resources and how to use them are not new. However, the way they are presented and the extra steps they take to further educate the community about copyright issues and citations could take the VR department to a new level of education. If the department took an active role in educating the community about all the issues that surround creating and using images, then their importance to the university increases.

The library at the University of Cincinnati created a guide that not only gives a link to the slide library, but also mentions guidelines for copyrighted images, and how to use certain databases like ARTstor.

The University of Eastern Michigan used an aesthetically pleasing layout for their guides.

The University of Texas got very specific about their visual collections. In this example, they focus on only Latin American and Border Studies visual resources for teaching.

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

Tech Tips
By Alex Nichols (Michigan State University)
Stitching Images: Motivations and Methods

 "Stitching" is the technique of seamlessly combining multiple contiguous images. The most common application for this technique is the creation of panoramic landscape photos, but there are a few applications within Visual Resources that can benefit from stitching.

One situation in which I've found it useful to stitch multiple images is when doing copy work on books that don't want to lie flat (especially when an image is bisected by the spine). Squashing the book with a piece of glass or on a flatbed scanner is one option, but that can cause problems with reflections, dust, fingerprints, and still doesn't always do the best possible job. In this case, I sometimes cover a portion of the image with my hands in an effort to hold the book flat, taking two or more shots while covering different portions of the image. Then I crop my hands out of the shots, and stitch together the results to create one well-flattened image.

Another use for stitched images is to create interactive VR (virtual reality, not visual resources) movies of places or architecture, usually displayed through Quicktime, Flash, or Java in a web browser. In this case, you need direct access to the space-to-be-captured, and a small amount of special equipment and software, but it is neither difficult, nor time-consuming, nor expensive to accomplish.

Stitching can also be used as a way of creating extremely high-resolution images, much higher-resolution than can be captured in a single shot by any existing camera or scanner, no matter how much you're willing to pay. Some recent high profile examples of this include the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art's efforts to digitize its Unicorn tapestries, and the HAL9000 group's multi-gigapixel captures of two Italian frescos. As with VR movies, it is necessary to have access to the original materials, but it is also no great expense or difficulty to do the photography. The only real limiting factor in how much resolution you can get is: How much resolution can you handle? In any case where the resolution is counted in not megapixels, but gigapixels, customized software is necessary for the stitching and viewing/distribution of the resulting images.

For those that lack the budget or need for customized software, there are a few different ways to go about stitching together multiple images for any of the above applications:

1. The old fashioned way -- make a big blank canvas in Photoshop, add the images to be stitched as individual layers, blend and skew as needed, then flatten and save. This method can be tricky, but sometimes it's the only thing that works well with difficult images.

2. The photomerge way -- open your images in Photoshop, then File>Automate>Photomerge. There are a few, but not many options to play with. This method is easy and fast when it works, but if the images don't line up well, or don't contain a significant overlap of detail, results can be poor. There is an option, however, to bring the result back into Photoshop as multiple layers, thus giving you an opportunity to manually tweak things like in

method #1 above.

3. The dedicated software way -- I usually use a program called PTGUI for stitching. It does a fine job of automated stitching, even with numerous complex images, plus provides excellent fine-tuning abilities through a control point interface (you mark specific points in each image that should align, and PTGUI warps and blends the images as necessary to make it work).

Carefully executed photography is the best way to avoid hassle with any of these stitching methods. Be sure to have a significant overlap between adjacent captures, and avoid changes in perspective as much as possible. This isn't too difficult to execute with smallish two-dimensional subjects, but for larger or 3D subjects, it is very helpful to use a panoramic tripod head for precise movements and positioning. Also be sure keep exposure, focus, depth-of-field, and white balance consistent among all captures from a single image.

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

Visual Resource Center at Bard College Debra Klein has joined the Visual Resource Center at Bard College as an Assistant Curator. Debra comes to Bard College after a successful career as a graphic designer in Sarasota, FL and Boston, MA. She returned to college to study art history at Smith College where she discovered her passion for cataloging while working for the Imaging Center at Smith College. During this time, Debra gained additional library experience, securing an internship at the American Antiquarian Society, and working in the Smith College Rare Book Room and with the Friends of the Smith College Libraries. Debra's academic interests are within the field of American Art (colonial to 1870s), with a personal interest in modern dance.

Upcoming Conferences
Compiled by Brooke Cox (DePauw University)

The MILE Project
Intellectual Property Rights as Metadata
October 26, 2007
Barcelona, Spain 26th October 2007

Computers and the History of Art (CHArt)
Digital Archive Fever
Thursday 8 - Friday 9 November 2007
Birkbeck, University of London.

Museum Computer Network
Building Content, Building Community: 40 Years of Museum Information and Technology
November 7-10, 2007
Chicago, Illinois

Persistence of Memory Conference
Northeast Document Conservation Center
November 28-29, 2007
Seattle, WA

Stewardship of Digital Assets
Northeast Document Conservation Center
Seattle, WA

This is a two-day workshop on sustaining digital collections. Workshops are being offered in four locations with two dates coming up this fall and winter:

Wednesday, November 14 – Thursday, November 15, 2007
PALINET
Philadelphia, PA
Sponsored by PALINET

Wednesday, February 6 – Thursday, February 7, 2008
Georgia Archives
Morrow, GA

Sponsored by SOLINET

College Art Association 96th Annual Conference
February 20–23, 2008
Dallas-Fort Worth, Tx

Chapter News
Compiled by Trudy Levy (Image Integration)
New England Chapter
Submitted by Megan Battey (Middlebury College)

The New England Chapter will hold its fall meeting on October 19, 2007 at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. We will tour their newly renovated Museum of Art, and have lunch, our business meeting and sessions in the afternoon. In the evening we will gather for dinner at Scholars Resource in Freeport, ME. For complete information about the meeting, please visit the following website.

Photos of our spring meeting held at RISD in May can be found here.

Upstate NY Chapter and the Philadelphia Chapter
Submitted by Jeannine Keefer (Cornell University)

The Upstate NY Chapter and the Philadelphia Chapter will be holding a joint meeting at the Philadelphia Museum of Art on the 26th of October.

Great Lakes Chapter
Submitted by Joe Romano (Oberlin College)

The Great Lakes Chapter will have a meeting on October 12, 2007 at the University of Michigan at Dearborn, Dearborn, MI. The meeting is being hosted by Marlene Gordon. The events will include a business meeting, a presentation of the XML workshop from the VRA conference by Lorrie McAllister, Marlene will discuss the public digital image collections supported by the UM Digital Library Production Service and conduct a tour of the visual resources collections.

Southeast Chapter
Submitted by Emy Nelson Decker (University of Georgia)

The VRA Southeast Chapter had a meeting in Athens, GA, August 3-4th. There was a chapter business meeting, followed by an afternoon of presentations and then the next day a visit to the Georgia Museum of Art.

Their New Business was:

Workshop liaison, San Diego
Workshops available at the San Diego annual meeting are in the planning stages and have not been announced. A chapter liaison will attend and bring back information to the group. This is usually the chair. Since Emy did this last year, she opened the opportunity to others. Barbara Brenny volunteered to attend the workshops.

Joint meeting with Mid-Atlantic Chapter in San Diego
Emy Decker spoke about the joint meeting with the Mid-Atlantic Chapter in Kansas City. She asked the group if they wanted to meet with the Mid-Atlantic Chapter in San Diego. Kathy Albrecht, the liaison from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter, commented that her chapter was in favor of the meeting. Southeast Chapter members were supportive of doing this. A dinner event for the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast chapters will be planned for the San Diego conference.

PayPal option for collection memberships dues
This topic was discussed during the Mid-Atlantic chapter meeting. They are amenable to it. Their findings included that there is a small charge per transaction. A small part of the dues will cover this. Emy will investigate and communicate with Liz Gushee of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter.

2008 Chapter Meeting (San Diego, CA and Birmingham, AL)
Dates for the meeting Birmingham were discussed. Friday, August 1, 2008, was agreed upon all

that were present. The meeting will retain the same format as the today's meeting (chapter meeting in the morning and presentations in the afternoon). Barbara Brenny will present information from the San Diego's workshops. Various aspects of the meeting were discussed. UAB is an urban campus. Eating establishments are located off-campus. Members suggested topics of interest. These included learning how digital images are used in the medical field and a walking tour of architectural Birmingham including the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, the site of the 1963 infamous Civil Rights bombing.

Announcements
The chapter will not meet during the SECAC conference in the fall since it is meeting in West Virginia, out of southeast region. People holding both SECAC and VRA memberships will meet informally during conference.

There are sixteen members of the Southeast Chapter and thirty-seven listserv members.

VRA-SE dues are $10 per year. Dues for 2008 may be paid at the San Diego meeting. Payment using PayPal is under consideration.