LOS ANGELES

Visual Resources Association

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND PROGRAM

February 14-16, 1985

The Embassy Hotel

1985
Thursday, February 14
The Biltmore Hotel
115 South Olive Street

1:00-5:00 PM  Registration for VRA Program & Activities
               (VRA Information Table, Main Galeria)

6:30-9:00 PM  VRA Annual Business Meeting and Introduction of New Officers
               (Check the CAA Program for room assignment)

Friday, February 15
The Embassy Hotel
151 South Grand Avenue

The Breakfast Room, Main Floor

4:30-9:30 AM  Registration

4:00-11:30 AM Open Workshop
               "Special Problems in Classification of Visual Materials" Section 1
               Leaders:  Decorative/Media Arts & Crafts
               NANCY DE LAURIER, University of Missouri-K.C. 6
               KATHRYN K. MCKENNEY, Winterthur Museum
               Special Problems in Architecture
               URSULA STAMMLER, University of Kansas

7:15-1:45 PM  Program Session
               "Photography and Art Historical Research"
               Coordinator: HELEN E. ROBERTS, Harvard University

               DR. JEANNE MARTY, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the
               Humanities: "Nineteenth Century Sources for Visual Documentation in
               Ancient Art"

               AMY STARK, Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, Arizona: "F. Jay
               Haynes: A Neglected Photographer of the American West"

               ELEANOR E. FINK, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian
               Institution: "Chronicles of American Art, Peter A. Juley and Son"

               WENDY HOLDEN, University of Michigan: "Photography as an Aid in
               Restoration: The Wall Paintings at Horyu-ji"
Friday, February 15 (continued)

The Embassy Hotel
The Breakfast Room

2:12-4:30 PM  Open Workshop
"Special Problems in Classification of Visual Materials: Section II"
Leaders:
New Art
DEBORAH TINSLEY, Kansas City Art Institute
Oriental Art
ELEANOR MANNIKA, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Other Non-Western Art
LISE HAWKOS, Arizona State University, Tempe
Didactic Material
NANCY DE LAURIER, University of Missouri-K.C.

Saturday, February 16
The Embassy Hotel
The Breakfast Room

8:10-2:30 AM  Registration

9:110-11:00 AM  Program Session (Complimentary coffee service included)
"Trends in Automation"
Coordinator: NANCY SCHOLLER, University of Texas at Austin
GARY A. SELOFF, University of Texas at Austin: "The University of Texas Automation Project"
DONALD BEECHER, Rutgers State University, New Brunswick: "Rutgers Slide Management System"
MARJORIE H. PANADEBO, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor: "Slide Indexing on a Mainframe Computer at the University of Michigan"

12:30-2:30 PM  Roundtable Discussion
"Microcomputers in the Visual Resources Collection"
Leaders: GARY A. SELOFF, University of Texas at Austin
CHRISTINE L. SUNT, University of Oregon

Thursday, February 14

ARLIS/NA-VRISIG
Coordinator: James Bowar, Getty Center Photo Archives
Moderator: Colin Alvey, Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities
Speakers: Elizabeth Bets, Library of Congress
Henry Milton, Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts
Toni Petersen, Art & Architecture Thesaurus Project
Lenore Sarason, Willoughby Associates
Elaine Pronsoulos, UCLA Graduate School of Library and Information Science
OPEN TO ARLIS/NA MEMBERS
(Pre-registration and fee required; for information contact Pan Parry, ARLIS/NA, 375 Bear Creek Circle, Tucson, AZ 85715)

Friday, February 15

CAA
6:00-9:30 PM  Reception: University of Southern California
(Open to CAA Participants; a bus ticket may be purchased at the CAA Conference Registration Booth at The Biltmore Hotel)

Saturday, February 16

CAA
5:00-8:30 PM  Reception: The Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design
(Open to CAA Participants)
CAA
6:00-8:30 PM  Reception: The J. Paul Getty Museum
(Open to CAA Participants; reservation required; a bus ticket may be purchased at the CAA Conference Registration Booth, located in the Biltmore Hotel)

Sunday, February 17

CAA
9:00 AM-1:00 PM  Tour: Huntington Library, Art Gallery and Botanical Gardens
Reception: Norton Simon Museum
(Open to CAA Participants; a bus ticket may be purchased at the CAA Conference Registration Booth, located in The Biltmore Hotel)

PLEASE NOTE: Registration for the VRA Program does not constitute registration for either the ARLIS/NA or CAA conferences. VRA members wishing to participate in either of these organizations' events must pay the appropriate registration fees required by the sponsoring organization for these activities.
Photography and Art Historical Research
Helen E. Roberts, Harvard University, Coordinator

"Nineteenth Century Sources for Visual Documentation in Ancient Art"
Dr. Joanne Marty, The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities

"F. Jay Haynes: A Neglected Photographer of the American West"
Amy Stark, Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, Arizona

"Chronicles of American Art, Peter A. Juley and Son"
Eleanor E. Flann, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

"Photography as an Aid in Restoration: The Wall Paintings at Horyu-ji"
Wendy Holden, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Trends in Automation
Nancy S. Schiller, University of Texas at Austin, Coordinator

"The University of Texas Automation Project"
Gary A. Seloff, University of Texas at Austin

"The Rutgers Slide Management System"
Donald Beem, Rutgers State University

"Slide Indexing on a Mainframe Computer at the University of Michigan"
Marjorie H. Panadero, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Photography and Art
Helene E. Roberts, Moderator

Photography and Archival Research

Today the camera plays an essential role in the documentation of architecture and archaeological sites. Before photography it was the artist or draughtsman, who provided such visual records if they were made. Not until the twentieth century was it a standard practice to make systematic use of the photograph for purposes of documentation. Consequently, in an effort to create a Photograph Archive of ancient Mediterranean sites and monuments as part of the Getty Center's resources for the scholarly community, it has been necessary to seek out visual material which was not necessarily created with the intent to document, but which provides the images of sites or monuments as they have been in the past, and often not today.

In the few cases where nineteenth century photographers provided such documentation, the material has taken on an excessive value because of its vintage and rarity. Curatorial departments of fine art photography which include examples of the early work of the Pratelli Allardi, Giorgio Sommer, Robert MacPherson, or James Anderson may provide significant early records. Collections of photographs, some with surviving negatives, are provided through special archives, such as Gerardo Balli’s early photos of the Middle East at Newcastle upon Tyne and the John Henry Parker photographs of Rome in the 1860's partially preserved at the Fototeca Unione in Rome. Less precious, but therefore more accessible, are travel photos and albums of the grand tour which may be found in libraries, for example the Lady Bessac albums at the Huntington Library in San Marino. Of special note is the Keystone-Mast Collection of stereoscopic views at the California Museum of Photography in Riverside where both prints and negatives, geographically arranged, offer vast numbers of images taken over many decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
F. Jay Haynes (1853-1921) trained in Wisconsin in the 1870s as a wet plate photographer of tintypes and stereo views. He moved west and built his career around commissions for the Northern Pacific railroad and Yellowstone National Park. For forty years, he travelled along the NP line from Seattle to St. Paul, photographing small towns, businesses, homes, and the people who lived in them. He advertised his work as keep amalgam of travel in exotic locales, as documentation of successful capitalism on the frontier, and as artistic renderings of the natural sublime landscape.

Preservation architects and cultural historians can use Haynes' photographs to study the growth of urban America along the railroad which so clearly allowed access to goods and ideas. His work can also be seen as part of the culminating phase of 19th century landscape photography, although he has been nearly ignored by the books and exhibitions of the 1970s which elevated the fame of other photographers such as Carleton Watkins to unimagined heights. Art historians have never given Haynes the attention granted to his contemporaries -- Gertrude Käsebier, Alfred Stieglitz, Jacob Riis, or Timothy O'Sullivan.

Because Haynes' entire archive has been preserved at the Montana Historical Society, we are finally able to take a comprehensive view of the photography of a neglected documenter and interpreter of the American West.
As this work was nearing completion in January, 1946, a fire broke out in the kondo and the interior was completely devastated. All of the wall paintings were damaged by fire and water. These paintings, dating from approximately 1100 AD, demonstrated the adoption by Japanese craftsmen of a style of painting associated with the continent. The murals illustrated the four Buddhist paradises of Zatchi, Amida, Miroku, and Yakushi. Smaller panels situated in the corners of the structure depicted eight bodhisattvas associated with the major figures. The greatest amount of loss occurred to the four paradise scences and the Kannon located in the southeast corner of the south wall. Other significant areas of damage included the loss of the faces of Sotshi and Sho Kannon, (on the south and west walls, respectively), as well as the lotus throne of the figure identified as Myoju on the north wall. Fortunately, the sculptures had been temporarily moved to a storehouse during the course of the repairs, so that these survived the catastrophe. Certain of the painted wall surfaces had been removed, but these consisted of works of less art historical value since their execution had most probably been entrusted to apprentices. The great loss at Hoeryu-ji was a shock to the Japanese, as well as the art historical community.

Subsequent to the fire, all twelve wall paintings were removed from the kondo. They are presently stored in a Treasure House, or hakai, which is an atmospherically-controlled environment. In their place, reproductions of the original murals have been installed in the kondo. Photographic reproduction thus ensured that these early examples of Japanese painting could be saved for posterity. The printing process used by the Benrido photographers was collotype, a photopolyman process. Collotype produces a more accurate reproduction than the half-tone process since the image is not broken up into dots. The collotype process was considered especially valuable in the reproductions of fine arts works. Color collotypes made in 1939 and examples of the full size black and white collotype reproductions made from the Benrido plates prior to the fire will be compared to photographs taken at the site at the time of the fire. Later photographic images illustrating the present condition of the restored wall paintings will be used to demonstrate the way in which photography has preserved these famous works for posterity.
Attempts at manually classifying the uncataloged collection proved futile. We were adding more slides than we were classifying. Therefore, the goal of making up for staff deficiencies, that is the automation of clerical functions, was the primary purpose and sine qua non of our planning. We chose the IBM-PC with a 10-gigabyte hard disk with a tape backup system and an Okidata 92 Miroline printer to type the labels. We are using dBase III (soon to be replaced with dBase IV) and also purchased Quickcode and MIMI from Fox & Galor. Quickcode proved to be unnecessary although we have made use of its capacity to generate dBase programs (all of which had to be modified).

To save space on the disk and to store as little empty space as possible, we developed four levels of files: a Manifest (giving the level—biographical information on artists stored here), an Artfile (artworks), a Defile (for details and a second label file to store overflow from Artfile). Artfile had originally been broken up into Arcfile, Scifile, Pigfile and Docfile but with the advent of dBase III we combined these into one file (with dBase we had been limited to only 65,000 records per file). The label program draws the information from each of the files and combines to make the label. All searching is done through the classification number which is indexed. Because of utility programs and indexes, what worked neatly on paper will not allow for the entire collection to be stored on our disk. We will need at least 30Mb of storage and are looking exquisitely at the IBM PC-AT. When the database is well underway we receive additional funding, we are planning to make the database available in the Art Library and we will update their computer through the tape backup system.

I will discuss our work in developing a system for indexing slides on the Michigan Mainframe System mainframe computer, and the experience we have had in putting that system into practice. The objectives we set out to meet were to provide both the storage of accession information on each slide, such as source and date acquired, and basic iconographic indexing, to allow retrieval by subject as well as by primary entry.

The advantages of the mainframe system as I see it at this time are:

1) Financially, the project is supported by the Computing Center and the only costs to the History of Art Department have been for terminals.

2) Storage space is many times that available on a microcomputer, even not supplied with several hard disks. This allows for a much more extensive database structure, especially in the area of iconographic indexing.

3) Retrieval time, even in large searches, is measured in hundreds of a second.

4) Backup of database contents, for protecting against information loss, is handled by the Computing Center staff.

The disadvantages have been these:

1) We are using database software developed by Michigan, and therefore not available to very many other collections. This software was originally developed for computer people rather than the general public, and the documentation is not particularly easy to comprehend (not that the documentation for many commercial programs is any better).

2) There is a need, in the development stages, for some sort of consultant who understands your needs as well as the database software you propose to use. However, this sort of person may actually be easier to find at a university's computing center than it would be at a local computer dealership.

3) Data entry and retrieval are not particularly user-friendly.
Visual Resources Association

Incorporated as a General Not For Profit Corporation
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13 August 1982

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1985 PROGRAM (LOS ANGELES)

General Coordinator: Christine L. Sundt, University of Oregon
Graphics & Equipment: A. Zelda Richardson, University of New Mexico
Program Sessions: Helene Roberts, Harvard University & Nancy S. Schuller,
University of Texas at Austin
Workshop Coordinator: Nancy DeLaurier, University of Missouri, K.C.

The Visual Resources Association is grateful to all members and friends who helped in any way to make this program possible.

Brochures describing the Visual Resources Association and applications for membership will be available at the Information/Registration Tables at the Biltmore Hotel and the Embassy Hotel during the conference. Annual membership dues for 1985 are $10.00. To become a member, send your check (U.S. currency only) to Nancy S. Schuller, VRA Treasurer, University of Texas at Austin, Department of Art, Austin, TX 78712.

Publishers of the International Bulletin for Photographic Documentation of the Visual Arts
VRA, ARLIS/NA, & CAA Hotels in Downtown Los Angeles

BH = The Biltmore Hotel, 515 South Olive

EH = Embassy Hotel, 651 South Grand

HR = Hyatt Regency, 711 South Hope