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Special note on SECAC and the Visual Resources Curator's Group

Christina B. Updike

James Madison University, updikecb@jmu.edu

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Special note on SECAC and the Visual Resources Curator's Group

Abstract

An overview of SECAC, the Southeastern College Art Conference, the SECAC Visual Resources Curators Group, and its role as an affiliate society of the Visual Resources Association.

The Visual Resources Curators affiliate group of SECAC, founded by Christina Updike, has been in existence for 35 years. Reflections on the history, growth and impact of the VRC involvement in SECAC is the focus of the article reprinted here from the *Southeastern College Art Conference Review*, Volume XV, Number 2, 2007, pp.139-143. This long standing affiliation and professional activity has had an impact both in the southeastern region and nationally.

The Southeastern College Art Conference (<http://www.secollegeart.org/>) is a non-profit organization that promotes the study and practice of the visual arts in higher education on a national basis. SECAC facilitates cooperation and fosters on-going dialog about pertinent creative, scholarly and educational issues among teachers and administrators in universities, colleges, community colleges, professional art schools, and museums; and among independent artists and scholars. Membership includes individuals and institutions from the original group of southeastern states that founded the conference: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Over the decades, however, SECAC has grown to include individual and institutional members from across the United States, becoming the second largest national organization of its kind. SECAC is an affiliated organization of the national College Art Association and participates in its annual conferences.

SECAC fulfills its purpose in part by sponsoring an annual fall conference (<http://www.secollegeart.org/annual-conference.html>). The conference provides members with a forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns relevant to the practice and study of art. The conference regularly draws participants from the United States and other countries. Individuals who present their research or creative work at an annual conference gain national exposure for their work in the fields of studio art, art and architectural history, art education, museum studies, and visual resources. Membership is open to anyone interested in SECAC's mission, and can be acquired by completing the membership form available on the website and including payment. Membership dates are from receipt of payment for one calendar year.

The organization publishes annually *The Southeastern College Art Conference Review*, a peer-reviewed journal of scholarly articles on art, art education, and art history. It also includes book and exhibition reviews. *The Review* is available in a number of North American university libraries and, through three full text aggregators; its content is available on-line internationally (<http://www.secollegeart.org/publications.html>). The organization also publishes a newsletter three times per year; it serves to keep members informed of SECAC programs, activities, conference plans, and schedules.

In 2009, SECAC formalized its affiliate program with an application process. SECAC welcomes applications for affiliate status from organizations with goals similar to itself. An affiliated society must be primarily, or in large part, committed to the serious practice and advancement of the visual arts or to the study of a major area of the history of art.

Affiliated societies must possess a formal organizational structure including elected officers, an identifiable membership, and evidence of ongoing activity, e.g., newsletter, periodical, exhibition record, or other documentation.

The current affiliated societies include: AHPT (<http://www.ahpt.org/>), Art Historians Interested in Pedagogy and Technology; CAA (<http://www.collegeart.org/>), College Art Association; ATSAH (<http://faculty.uml.edu/CulturalStudies/atsah/>), Association for Textual Scholarship in Art History; SESAH (<http://www.sesah.org/>), Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians; FATE, Foundations in Art: Theory and Education; VRA (<http://www.vraweb.org/>), Visual Resources Association; MACAA (<http://macaart.org/>), Mid-America College Art Association; and SGC International (<http://sgcinternational.org/>), Southern Graphics Council International.

On behalf of the VRA Executive Board, Christina Updike who had been serving as the VRA representative on the SECAC Board for so many years, filled out the affiliate application. In December 2009, Debra Murphy, then President of SECAC, sent this response:

“It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge and confirm that the SECAC Board accepted VRA’s SECAC AFFILIATE GROUP application. SECAC has benefited enormously over the years from the many outstanding sessions the VRA has organized and you have been an energetic and dedicated member. We are indebted to you and your organization for your involvement and support. We look forward to many additional years of a happy and productive alliance.”

The designated representative of each affiliated society is invited to the SECAC Board meeting, held at the annual SECAC Conference. The affiliate representative to the Board serves as a resource person when, in the opinion of the SECAC President, issues arise in which his or her expertise is needed. Affiliated society designees give a brief annual report during the SECAC Board meeting. Over the years, I have kept the SECAC Board and membership apprised of VRA activities and issues, such as the Summer Educational Institute (<http://sei.vrafoundation.org/>); the White Paper on Advocating for Visual Resources Management in Educational and Cultural Institutions (http://www.vraweb.org/resources/general/vra_white_paper.pdf); the VRA Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research and Study (<http://www.vraweb.org/organization/pdf/VRAFairUseGuidelinesFinal.pdf>); the VRA Core (<http://www.vraweb.org/projects/vracore4/index.html>); the establishment of the VRA Foundation (<http://www.vrafoundation.org/>); Cataloging Cultural Objects (<http://cco.vrafoundation.org/>); and our annual conference activities (<http://www.vraweb.org/conferences/index.html>), to name a few.

In the years following the Reflections article, the VRA Bulletin has published SECAC conference informational articles, which include the VRA affiliate group session abstracts and activities. Some notable sessions were: "Ask the Experts – Visual Resources Professionals" at the 2006 conference hosted by Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, TN; "Institutional Visual Resources: Strategies for Cross-Campus Collaboration" at the 2007 conference hosted by Marshall University and West Virginia University, in Charleston, WV; "United We Stand: Forging Partnerships in Support of the Digital Classroom" at the joint SECAC/MACAA conference held October 2010 at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA; and most recently in 2011, "Rich Texture: New Resources for Teaching and Learning in an Image-Centric World" at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, GA.

The value of collegiality, the sharing of energy and ideas, the excitement of collaboration has always been at the forefront of the SECAC VRA affiliation and will continue into the future as a new SECAC VRA representative is appointed upon my retirement July 1, 2012.