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VRAB Volume 36, Issue 3: VRA Twenty-Seventh Annual Conference, Part I

Abstract

- Association News
 - 2009 Annual Conference Reports and Awards
- Feature Articles
 - 2009 Southeast College Art Conference (SECAC): Facilities Planning for the Digital Visual Resources Center of the Future
 - Advocating for Visual Resources Management in Educational and Cultural Institutions

Keywords

visual resources, 35mm slides, digitization, facility planning, advocacy, career transition, conference report, affiliate conference

VRA Bulletin

Visual Resources
Association



VRA Twenty-seventh Annual Conference, Part I

Fall

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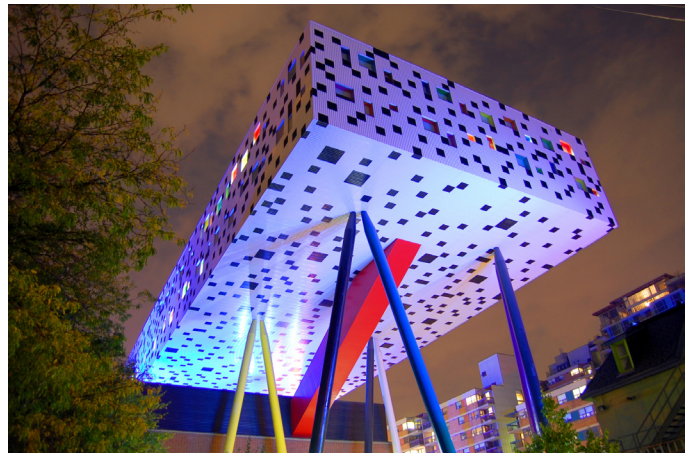
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On the Cover:

Sharp Centre for Design, Ontario College of Art and Design, architect: Will Alsop (British, 1947–), completed 2004, site: Toronto, Ontario. Photo by John Vetterli courtesy flickr.com via Creative Commons License.





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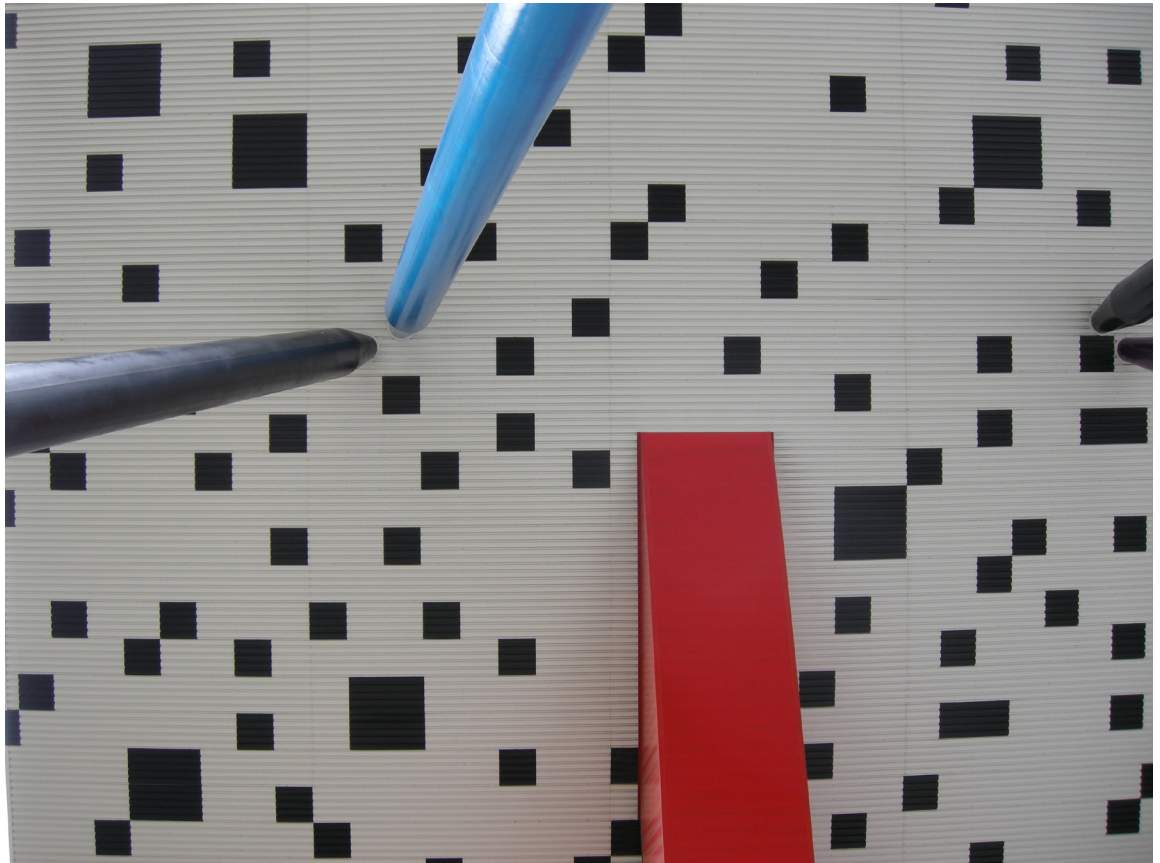
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Association News



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Notes from the President

August 2009

During this busy, festive, end-of-semester, end-of-year season, holiday preparations take center stage. You've already renewed your membership for 2010 and sent in your dues payment. You voted in the Executive Board election, and even mailed off your paper ballot to approve the revised Association Bylaws. Registration for our 28th annual conference isn't open yet, and it seems too early to book a flight to Atlanta now—after all, March 17 is three months away. So it's all too easy to push your Association membership temporarily to the back burner.

The Romans had a two-faced deity named Janus (from whom our month of January appropriately takes its name). Janus was the god of thresholds, and hence of changes and transitions; with his two faces, he looked simultaneously forward, into the future, and backward, into

the past. I suppose that might make him a good symbol for an organization, and a professional field, both of which find themselves in the throes of momentous, and often disconcerting, transformations. Sometimes it's difficult to face the unknown future with equanimity, especially when so many of the changes we are navigating seem to have negative consequences. It's all too tempting to look fondly backwards to "the way things used to be."

But life in the VRA is constant and ongoing. For most of us, that day-by-day continuum is provided by our participation in the VRA Listserv (VRA-L). This invaluable forum keeps us in touch with our colleagues across the continent and around the world. In its dozens of daily messages we request the assistance of our professional community in providing for our immediate information needs; we seek advice about purchasing and licensing decisions; we recommend to others the sources and resources we have found helpful. We invite our peers to share alike our accomplishments and our disappointments. And sometimes, we just need a safe space in which to vent our frustrations.

One of the many tasks I set for the Executive Board this fall was a review of the VRA-L Listserv Guidelines. We made a few additions and revisions: clarifying, for instance, that although use of the VRA-L for commercial advertisements is prohibited, our members are welcome to send brief messages announcing the availability of projects, products, and services that are likely to be of interest to this community, providing links to additional information which the individual reader may follow if desired. While requesting that Listserv users refrain from posting partisan political messages, we welcome and facilitate objective discussion of public issues or proposed legislation relevant to the visual resources constituency.

You can review the revised VRA-L Listserv Guidelines at <http://www.vraweb.org/vra-l/guidelines.html>. Amid these days of comfort and good cheer, I invite each of you to re-read these Guidelines thoughtfully. Most of them are simply specific ways of reminding each of us to approach our messaging with common sense, professional comity, and personal courtesy.

Are you beginning a message string? Try to keep things brief, concise, and to the point. Don't keep your readers guessing: clearly identify the topic of your message in the Subject field. If possible, use keywords that will make it easy for someone to locate your message in the VRA-L Archives. Very long messages have caused problems for some subscribers' mail systems. As a general rule, lengthy, dense messages are less likely to be read by busy people with many demands on their time. Perhaps the information you wish to convey would be more effectively presented in a well-reasoned summary, or as a series of talking points.

Please keep in mind that we were all once newcomers to this community. Even though a particular question or issue may have been discussed at some previous time on VRA-L, a newcomer (and, thankfully, we have dozens of these each year!) may not be aware of this. Older hands might take a moment to guide a new member through the process of searching the VRA-L Archive, suggesting a useful point of entry. These days, we must do everything possible to nurture and support our new members: frankly, we need them all!

Remember that old plait: "It isn't what you said, it's how you said it" Professional courtesy is most critical when we express differences of opinion. Collectively, we bring to the table many different backgrounds, skills, personalities, and life experiences. Reasoned disagreement that proposes alternative answers may be appropriate, but should always be grounded in a spirit of courtesy and mutual respect. No flaming allowed!

Are you replying to a message that someone else has posted? The default setting for most of our subscriptions will send your response out to the entire listserv, rather than to the individual who sent the original message. If you wish to reply directly to the message sender, cut and paste the sender's name into the address in place of <VRA-L@LISTSERV.UARK.EDU>. It is particularly appropriate to do this when you are making a personal response, or when your message contains

potentially sensitive information.

In fact, we should all take time to re-read any message we address to the VRA-L, as well as any response that will go out to the entire listserv, before we hit that "send" button. Review what you've said not only for clarity and accuracy (not to mention syntax and spelling!), but for the tone of the message as well. Could what you have said (and the way that you've said it!) strike someone else as being unnecessarily critical, confrontational, or condescending? If so, perhaps the same information or opinion ought to be stated more diplomatically.

Does it take more time for a message sender or respondent to do this? Or to direct a response to a specific individual rather than to everyone? Of course it does. But weigh this investment of your time against the value of the time and effort required for 800 or so of your worldwide colleagues to read your words!

If all you want to do is unsubscribe, or re-set your subscription preferences before an upcoming vacation, we don't all need to know this. Just follow the simple instructions found at <http://www.vraweb.org/vra-l/index.html>. As the commercial says, "There's an app for that."

One final point: each message posted to the VRA-L should include the submitter's full name, institutional or professional affiliation, and email address at the end of the message.

Old two-faced Janus has a particular significance for me these days, as I count the waning days of my Presidency while recalling the challenges and accomplishments we have shared during the past two years. We will mark the dawning of a New Year with the unveiling of the VRA Strategic Plan, a forward-looking blueprint for the future success of our organization and its individual members. During this time of reflection, I'm grateful for all of you who have chosen to be part of the ongoing life of your Association.

October 2009

In my message to the membership a year ago this October, I outlined the Association's budget projections and constraints, noting the many ways in which these reflect the state of the larger economy. Those of us who serve on your Executive Board are all too aware of how our membership and conference attendance numbers are affected by the fiscal stability of our employers, and by our own disposable income. Of the seven current Board members, one has suffered job loss this year, while another narrowly avoided the fall of the budget-cutting axe by agreeing to assume the responsibilities of another staff member who was let go. So in our annual and mid-year meetings, we've been keenly sensitive to the stresses so many of you are feeling, and have worked to position the Association to provide each of you with the ongoing support you need today more than ever, while also trying to be prudent stewards of the resources you have entrusted to us.

Two major forward-looking projects are now in their final stages of preparation. The Strategic Planning Task Force, ably led by Macie Hall and Betha Whitlow, is putting the final touches on the VRA Strategic Plan, an outline for positive change over the next five years. A final draft of the Plan will be posted on the VRA web site early in the coming year, with an official roll-out session scheduled for our 28th annual conference this coming March in Atlanta.

Meanwhile, President-Elect Maureen Burns and the White Paper Task Force are projecting the publication of their document during the fall semester. While the Strategic Plan focuses on our organization, the forthcoming White Paper addresses the state of the entire visual resources profession in a time of rapid transformation. The participants in these two major projects have devoted their careful deliberation, positive energy, and literally hundreds of hours of their valuable time to these projects because they believe in the continued relevance of the VRA and our tradition of voluntary service to our colleagues.

Every so often, I take a moment to re-read the candidate statement I wrote for the 2006 election; I did so again recently after reviewing on the VRA web site the statements by the candidates for this fall's election. In my statement, I said that I valued inclusiveness and transparency in decision-making. So you're all entitled to an honest appraisal of the Association's financial health. As I said at this time last year, our revenue (primarily from membership dues and conference income) has not kept pace with the actual per capita costs of our doing business. Accordingly, I sought and received the Board's approval this year for a general increase in VRA membership dues and conference registration fees. But at the same time, we were all aware how this burden could fall on our individual members, who have very different access to personal and institutional resources. So we also took a number of steps to mitigate the negative impact of these increases.

For the 2010 membership year, we will be retaining the multi-tiered dues schedule based on income, with an urgent request that each member select the level that honestly reflects your actual salary. We have clarified requirements for Student membership to ensure that this heavily subsidized category is reserved for the full-time degree program individuals who truly need it. All too aware of the number of our colleagues who have lost their jobs in the past year, and wanting to keep these individuals among our ranks while they network and seek new employment, we added a new Unemployed dues category at a reduced rate comparable to those available to Student and Retired members.

When the preliminary schedule for the Atlanta conference is announced later this month, you will note that "Early Bird" on-line registration fees are only slightly higher than those of the previous year; larger increases will fall upon late, on-site, and non-member registrants.

(In other words, to save money, remember to register online by the February deadline—watch for more specific information in the near future). Our ability to control expenses

and realize net income from our conferences is increasingly tied to our being able to provide our host hotel with firm numbers in advance of each event. Because so many of our members face cutbacks in travel and professional development support from their institutions, we have adopted for Atlanta a streamlined conference schedule of 72-hours over four calendar days, but requiring only three nights hotel stay. We were able to negotiate both a smaller conference room block obligation to the hotel and a substantial reduction in the room rate for attendees. Once again, that's fewer nights, at a much lower rate per night!

This fall we are implementing the Bundled Chapter Membership program along with your Association membership renewal process. With a single transaction, you can pay your VRA and regional Chapter dues (and, even for those who must separate these transactions, you may still use your MemberClicks account). Our hope is that Bundled Membership will ease burdens on Chapter officers by reducing the present volume of paper-based transactions, allowing them greater opportunity to concentrate on program development and enhancement of educational opportunities at the local level.

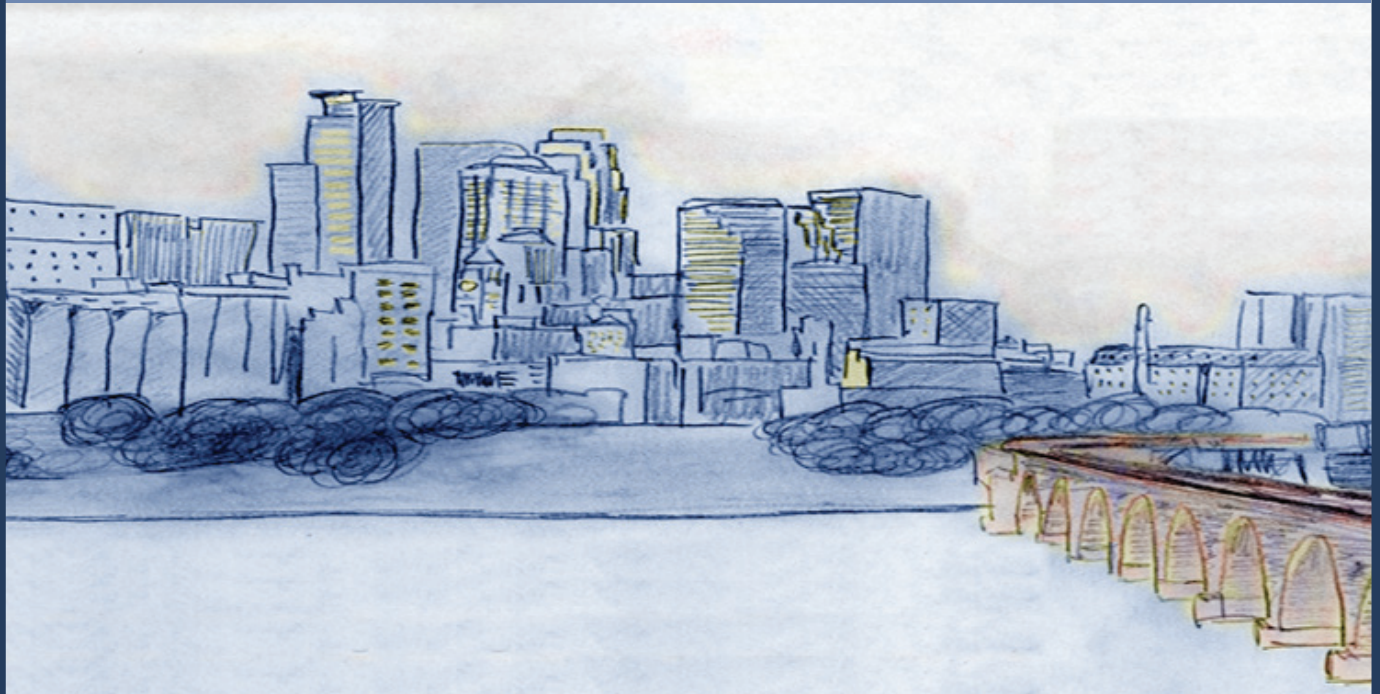
The MemberClicks renewal form that every one of us will fill out in the coming weeks also offers opportunities for each member to make an additional donation to the Association. This past year, less than 1% of our individual members chose to do so. If your personal financial situation would allow you to make an additional gift to your Association, know that your generosity will be appreciated by your fellow members, and that the Executive Board will make sure that your donation is used wisely and well. For the 2010 fiscal year, with our projected operating expenses once again exceeding our anticipated revenues, we face the unfortunate prospect of a second consecutive deficit budget. This situation is not necessarily cause for alarm: our accumulated assets are sufficient to allow us to ride out the current recession as long as it is not too protracted.

Change is a daunting prospect in the best of times. And it's all the harder to face when we're worried about our budgets, our staffs, the security of our own positions, and sometimes even the continued viability of the institutions to which we have devoted our professional lives. Sometimes the sense of anxiety, exhaustion, or frustration floats near the surface in our comments and exchanges on the VRA-L. Let's all resolve to do our best to help each other make it through these trying times with civility and compassion. Thanks to you all for your continued dedication to the VRA.

Allan Kohl
VRA President
Minneapolis College of Art & Design

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2009 VRA Annual Conference State of the Association

Until recently, the President of the United States often led off his annual State of the Union message with the reassuring formula: "The State of the Union is sound!" (this followed by a minimum of fifty-five seconds of thunderous applause, even more prolonged from the partisans of the President's own party)

Even in the face of recession and budget cuts and anxiety about job losses and the tanking of our retirement funds, we have much for which to be grateful this year. One of the most important is that we are here, more than two hundred of us, together, for these concentrated and intense four days, to share ideas and information, and to celebrate and renew our identity as a generous, resourceful, caring group of professionals. That in itself is an expression of faith in the future of our profession, and in the continued relevance of this organization.

Actually, we have many positive accomplishments over the past twelve months to celebrate: eighty-two new members for 2009; a successful 2008 conference in sunny, hospitable San Diego. July saw a well-attended 2008 Summer Educational Institute, the last held under the joint direction of the VRA and ARLIS/NA. This past fall, governance of both the SEI and CCO projects was conveyed to the Visual Resources Association Foundation, even though this move results in a modest loss of annual income from SEI. This is an important expression of our confidence that the Foundation is in a stronger position to attract significant external grants funding to maintain these two valuable projects in a position of strength, and to provide consistent financial oversight for them. Also this past summer, we successfully supported one of our members in his status hearing before the U.S. Immigration Service, demonstrating that this professional organization stands ready to assist its members as they assist their Association. We had a much higher than average participation in our fall 2008 election, as we chose the new members of the Executive Board who will assume office later this morning.

In an effort to increase efficiency by making more intensive use of electronic transactions, the Executive Board proposed to strengthen our regional chapters by offering Bundled Association and Chapter Memberships through each individual member's MemberClicks account, and to offer Chapter Bursary services to any chapter that wishes to participate. In preparation for these initiatives we conducted a detailed, comprehensive review of the bylaws of all thirteen chapters, and in conversation with chapter leadership began the process of guiding chapters to adopt new bylaws providing for their voluntary participation in Bundled Memberships and the Chapter Bursary program. When these two initiatives are implemented (which we hope to do this summer), they will relieve chapter officers of a lot of burdensome paper

work, streamline chapter leadership transitions (especially for chapter treasurers), and, by making it easy to join a regional chapter along with your basic Association membership renewal, encourage more members to become active in their local chapters. At present, fewer than 45% of individual Association members have joined a chapter—we would like to see this number rise, since local networking is an important complement to national affiliation.

So, wouldn't it be nice for me to use this upbeat list of accomplishments and promising proposals to say to you all: "The state of the Association is sound!" And then everyone could applaud, and we could all feel good about ourselves.

But I'm not going to do that. What I have to say, instead, is this: The state of the Association is sound ... enough . . . for now, but . . . And it's in those qualifiers "*enough*," "*for now*," and especially "*but...*" that the difficulties loom, the details in which the devil lurks, which must realistically be a large part of my theme this morning.

Just when we were all thinking that things seem to be going well after all, it comes time to turn the coin over. Offsetting those 82 new members, for instance, were 282 lapsed individual memberships: colleagues who were with us in 2008, but who did not renew for 2009.

Our Association has been hard hit by the current recession. This past year, the Executive Board has had to put aside conference planning and bylaws revision to deal with the more immediate concern of how our organization is to survive the current recession intact and solvent. As your Treasurer, Jane Darcovich, and I will be explaining in some detail, we have had to deal with the realities of our first deficit budgets in many years: last year, this current year, and the likely prospect of another yet to follow.

The troubled economy has also affected our individual members in ways that negatively impact the health of our Association, including position cuts, budget reductions, and the disappearance of travel and professional development funds on which our members have depended for their conference participation.

As I read through the State of the Association messages and Treasurer's Reports from previous conferences, one through line was clear: the Association's main sources of operating income have always been membership dues, conference profit, and donations. For a number of years now, our membership dues have not been sufficient to cover the organization's operating expenses. The problem is that there is a basic cost of running an organization of the size and complexity of the VRA. Beyond a certain point, whether we have one thousand or eight hundred or six hundred members makes little difference in terms of our expenses; but it makes a great deal of difference in terms of our income.

Earlier in the current decade we were able to cover this growing shortfall with income from our for-profit conference model. But over the last several years we have seen the margin of conference income grow smaller and smaller, as hotel room block and catering obligations rose, along with the

cost of AV equipment rental and network access.

Unlike the U.S. government, we cannot postpone hard decisions by printing money. We also cannot go into debt by borrowing, or by putting our expenditures on plastic for any reasons other than temporary convenience. So our options really come down to the same three basic choices we each have as individuals having to deal with a sour economy:

1. We can increase our income (which the Association can do primarily by raising membership dues and conference registration fees);
2. We can reduce our expenses;
3. Or we can draw down operating funds from our accumulated assets.

Because we, like the rest of the world, were to a certain degree blindsided by the sudden onset and severity of the current economic crisis, the Executive Board has had little choice in the short run but to make up for the current

year's income-expenditure gap by drawing on funds from our accumulated assets. These assets are in effect serving as our "rainy day" funds, and we are benefiting from a number of years during which the Association was able to accumulate a healthy net balance, due in large part to a series of profitable conferences earlier in the present decade.

Today, the ground rules have shifted dramatically. We face declining membership numbers at the very moment when we need everyone to pull together. Our operating costs continue to rise, the unavoidable result of the increasingly complex environment in which an organization of our size and nature must function. But perhaps most seriously of all, the conference model that has served us so well for so long may no longer be sustainable—at least until the larger economy pulls out of recession. Expenses continue to rise exponentially, while more and more of our members have had their travel funds slashed.

Figure 1

Visual Resources Association 2007 Professional Status Survey

Question 47: What is the range of your current salary in U.S. dollars?

	Frequency	Percent
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11	4.0
\$25,000 - \$34,999	30	10.8
\$35,000 - \$44,999	84	30.3
\$45,000 - \$54,999	62	22.4
\$55,000 - \$64,999	54	19.5
\$65,000 - \$74,999	17	6.1
\$75,000 - \$84,999	8	2.9
\$85,000 - \$94,999	4	1.4
\$95,000 - \$104,999	2	.7
\$105,000 - \$114,999	2	.7
\$115,000 - \$124,999	3	1.1
Total	277	

This year’s conference will at best break even, but will more likely result in a net loss, making the gap between income from membership dues and the actual cost of running the organization even more pronounced. There is no longer any cover. We can, of course, continue to spend down our assets—but we all know that this practice, while it may get us through a temporary rough stretch, is not sustainable over time.

How about donations? Even during good years, only 2–3% of members made donations to the Association. This year, the percentage has fallen below 1%.

Let us return to the first of those three choices: increasing our income. Can we afford to raise membership dues levels and conference registration fees during a recession? Or, to put the ball in the other court, can we afford not to?

[See Figure 1]

The 2007 Professional Status Survey included among its array of questions one about salary range. Results were returned by 277 respondents—most of them VRA members, a smaller number of them ARLIS/NA members, and a few individuals who belonged to both organizations.

Given these self-reported income figures, we might expect our five VRA individual membership dues categories to follow a distribution like this:

[See Figure 2]

But actual registration figures for our five hundred regular individual memberships are instead distributed as follows:

As you can see, there are way too many members in the lower priced levels and way too few on the top end, suggesting that some of us may be under-reporting our income to get those lower membership rates, whether to spare ourselves or our employers the expense. If this is true,

Figure 2

**2007 Professional Status Survey
Anticipated Salary Level Distribution**

Under \$20,000	10	2%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	38	7.5%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	102	20.5%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	130	26%
\$50,000 and above	220	44%
	500	100%

**Visual Resources Association
Individual Memberships FY08**

Under \$20,000	48	9.5%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	66	13%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	112	22.5%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	135	27%
\$50,000 and above	139	28%
	500	100%

there are consequences; and the net result is serious harm to the organization.

Only those at the topmost level are actually paying the per capita operating cost of keeping the Association running—every level below that is, in effect, subsidized—some very heavily subsidized. This is one reason the Executive Board voted this past year to tighten the qualification for student membership status. This category should be reserved for full-time students and/or those enrolled in a graduate degree program and making satisfactory progress towards the attainment of that degree.

[See Figure 3]

This table compares the membership dues levels of the VRA and several of its peer organizations. It has now been four years since the last general increase in VRA membership dues, and we now face the unpleasant necessity of having to raise dues by 10–15% across the board. If we

raise membership dues rates too high, we might increase our income from this source, but this gain might also be offset if more members choose not to renew.

If we choose to keep membership dues rates artificially low, how about raising conference registration fees? Our conference fees have also not increased in four years, despite our skyrocketing costs. Here again, we face the uncomfortable necessity of implementing a modest increase in conference registration fees to bring our revenue more closely in line with our actual expenses.

We learned from our post-conference survey this past year that for two-thirds of our attendees, VRA was the only conference they planned to attend in 2008. Of the other one third, many planned to attend ARLIS/NA, with much smaller numbers also attending CAA or MCN. The conferences of these peer organizations are similarly “tech-heavy,” hence expensive to provide, and yet you can see here where we stack

Figure 3

Annual Membership Dues Levels VRA and Peer Organizations 2009

	<i>Regular Individual</i>	<i>Introductory (first year only)</i>	<i>Student</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>Foreign/ International/ Outside North America</i>	<i>Institutional</i>
ARLIS/NA	\$120	\$90	\$50 (3 year maximum limit)	\$60	\$85	\$190
CAA	\$60 - 185 (4 levels based on income)	N/A	\$50 (limited to full-time students in degree program)	\$60	\$175 (“Associate Membership”)	\$340 - 825 (3 levels based on institutional type)
MCN	\$75	N/A	\$35	N/A	N/A	\$250 (non-profit entities only)
VRA	\$35 - 125 (5 levels based on income)	N/A	\$25 (<i>NEW THIS YEAR</i> -- limited to students in degree program)	\$25	\$100	\$145

up in terms of conference registration fees—again, at or near the bottom.

[See Figure 4]

If we raise conference registration fees to a level closer to that of our peer organizations, we may increase potential income, but this may be offset if the fee increases make it more difficult for a sufficient number of members to attend. The affordability of conference hotel facilities, such as the space in which we are meeting right now, is directly tied to how many hotel rooms our attendees occupy and how much we pay for hotel catering over the course of our days here. There is a break point below which a poorly-attended conference will lose money, even if individual registration fees go up. We are very close to that break point this year.

What about exploring various options for trimming costs without compromising the integrity of the conference? Responding to the overwhelming majority of post-conference

survey responses this past year, the Executive Board voted to reduce this year’s conference schedule to four days, and to keep Sunday as a return travel day so that our attendees would not have to miss work on Monday. This year we booked several tech-heavy events on the campus of the Ontario College of Art and Design, a model of partnership with a local educational institution we hope to repeat in future years. In a return to our roots, we have abandoned the big bus tour model in favor of shorter, more affordable walking tours customized to the interests of our membership. Unlike the past several conferences, we haven’t had to cancel any tours this year, and will realize a modest income from them.

[See Figure 5]

There is one particular area in which we can all take pride: our conference travel award program. No other organization among our peers devotes such a substantial portion of its resources to helping its members participate in

Figure 4

Annual Conference Registration Fees VRA and Peer Organizations 2009

	<i>Regular Individual ("Earlybird" or on line in advance)</i>	<i>Regular Individual (on site)</i>	<i>Student/ Retired</i>	<i>Non-Member (in advance online vs. on site)</i>	<i>Daily Rate</i>	<i>Guest Rate</i>
ARLIS/NA	\$225	\$325	\$95	\$300-400	\$135-150	\$35 per event
CAA	\$225	\$270	\$130 / \$155	\$350-400	\$125 Members \$90 Student/ Retired \$160 Non- Members	N/A
MCN	\$425	\$475	\$200 / \$250	N/A	N/A	\$105 social events and exhibit hall
VRA	\$195	\$225	\$120	\$325-350	\$100	N/A

its annual conference. But this very success carries with it a liability. Those twenty-six awards mean that around 13% of this year's attendees have received assistance to be here. Our travel award program is heavily dependent on each attendee's voluntary participation in the Tansey Event and the VRAffle, our two principal sources of travel award funding. If these events are not well supported, the following year's travel award pool will have little to work with. You may consider this the windup to a pitch: Attend the Tansey Event performance by Toronto's famed Second City improvisational comedy troupe this evening—tickets still available! Buy more VRAffle tickets and attend the VRAffle event tomorrow night—prizes and surprises and hilarity galore in a worthy cause.

I enjoyed a social visit this past summer with a fellow member who once wielded the presidential gavel, and at one point during the course of our conversation she remarked sympathetically: "Well, Allan, you certainly picked an

interesting time to be VRA President."

And of course I thought at once of the final line of that supposed ancient Chinese triple curse:

May you come to the attention of the authorities;

May you obtain what you desire; and . . .

May you live in interesting times.

Well, we certainly are living in interesting times.

And to boil it all down to the essence, the central challenge we face (though, let's be honest, all of our predecessors also had to face in varying degrees) is this: how can we manage effectively the inevitability of change without being overcome by anxiety, frustration, or disappointment in the process?

We are creatures of habit, routine, and custom—and especially in terms of our conferences, we are sometimes a bit too apt to regard a successful experiment as a precedent, and then a precedent as an expectation, and then an expectation

Figure 5

Conference Travel Awards

ARLIS/NA offers 5 travel awards to general membership, averaging \$750 - \$1000 each

There are also 5 awards available under very specific eligibility requirements (including 2 specifically for students), also averaging \$750 - \$1000 each.

MCN offers 5 conference scholarships, which include the registration fee and a stipend towards partial conference attendance expenses.

VRA this year is making available **26** full and partial travel awards:

2 International Awards @ \$1000

13 full awards @ \$850

11 Top-Up, Partial, and Student awards @ \$250 - \$500

as an entitlement. But we are also a community of shared vision and purpose, full of forward-looking, creative people who aren't afraid to ask: "What would happen if we did it *this* way instead? Must we lower our expectations as we learn to live with less? Perhaps we are only reflecting a broader shift away from consumption that outstrips our means, and towards a new awareness of our interconnectedness in a world of limited resources. Perhaps the challenges of refocusing on the core values and strengths of this organization may actually draw us closer together. What's important, in the end, is not always what we have, but what we *do* with what we have.

Thank you.

Allan T. Kohl
President, Visual Resources Association
Minneapolis College of Art & Design



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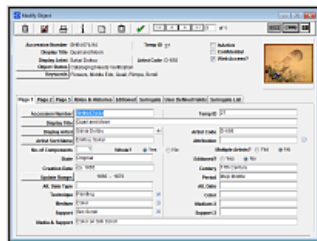
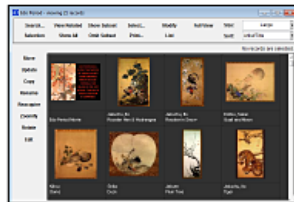
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2009 VRA Annual Conference Annual Business Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2009; 8:30-10:30 am
Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

1. Call to Order

On March 20, 2009, at 8:27 AM, President Allan Kohl called to order the 27th Annual Visual Resources Association Business Meeting. The meeting was held in a ballroom of the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, Toronto, Canada. A Quorum of the membership was present.

2. Approval of Minutes

President Kohl called for a motion for the approval of the 2008 minutes of the Annual Association Business Meeting held on March 14th, 2008, in San Diego, California, as published on the Community page of MemberClicks. It was so moved, and the motion passed.

3. Recognition and thanks to the Toronto Conference Team, Sponsors and Contributors

Vice President for Conference Programs Vickie O’Riordan and Vice President for Conference Arrangements Brian Shelburne acknowledged the following individuals and corporate donors who contributed to the success of the 2009 conference: Irene Goss, Ontario College of Art and Design, designer of the conference logo; Anita Regan and Leslie Bell, Canadian Chapter members and Registration Desk coordinators who scheduled desk volunteers, who are also deserving of recognition for their time devoted to working at the desk; Eric Schwab, Jackie Spafford and the VRA Canadian Chapter for their arrangement of convenient and interesting conference spaces, stimulating tours and for booking the internationally recognized Second City Troupe for the Tansey Event. The local committee was recognized for their efforts to inform the VRA conference attendees of the many attractions of the vibrant city of Toronto. The vice presidents thanked the incoming VRA Board members, Maureen Burns, Heidi Raatz and Marcia Focht for the conference publicity campaign “What’s On in Toronto.” The vice presidents expressed appreciation to Empress Patti McRae and the VRaffle volunteers and Vraffle Rousers for the VRaffle arrangements, noting this year’s

theme The Call of the Frozen North (distant sound of howling dogs). The Development Committee, co-chaired by Steven Kowalik and Emy Nelson Decker, were hailed for their creativity in planning the exciting Vendor Slam; praise also was given to the vendors for being open to the new format. Vice Presidents O’Riordan and Shelburne lastly expressed appreciation to the VRA Executive Board, Allan Kohl, Jane Darcovich, Mark Pompelia and Jolene de Verges.

4. State of the Association Address: Allan Kohl, President

President Kohl began with an account of the Association’s successes over the past year: the addition of 82 new members, a well-attended conference in San Diego, full registration for the 2008 Summer Educational Institute, and conveyance of oversight for the SEI and CCO projects to the VRA Foundation. Efforts are well under way to introduce the new Bundled Membership and Chapter Bursary programs. The Fall 2008 election, our first to use electronic balloting, saw much higher participation by the membership than in previous years’ elections.

Nonetheless, the recession has seriously affected the Association, and we will be operating this year and the next under deficit budgets. Neither of the Association’s two main sources of income – membership dues and conference profit – has kept pace with inflation and the rising cost of conducting essential business. Modest increases in both are overdue. In order not to place undue burdens on our individual members, we will draw down funds from the Association’s accumulated assets to make up the balance over the next two years. The Executive Board has also implemented various options for trimming costs as long as these do not compromise the integrity of the organization and its activities.

President Kohl concluded by noting that “perhaps we are only reflecting a broader shift away from consumption that outstrips our means towards a new awareness of our interconnectedness in a world of limited resources. Perhaps the challenges of refocusing on the core values and strengths of this organization may actually draw us closer together. What’s important, in the end, is not always what we have, but what we do with what we have.”

5. Treasurer’s Report: Jane Darcovich, Treasurer

Treasurer Darcovich provided a summary of the current financial state of the VRA, explaining that she would be reporting on the close of the fiscal

year 2008 books (July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008) and on financial activity of this fiscal year to date. She reported a balance of \$413,225 at the close of the 2008 fiscal year. She then reported the total assets of the VRA, as of March 10th, 2009 at \$ 527,803, which includes income from dues, bulletin subscription and conference income and donations. The largest expense is the annual conference and professional services, which include the Membership Services Coordinator position, professional accounting, and MemberClicks. Treasurer Darcovich noted that the VRA investment income declined during the recent economic downturn in the market. She reported the current value of investments is approximately \$182,000, which reflects a drop in value of nearly \$21,000 since this point in time last year. She also noted a decline in donations, however remarked that donations to the Travel Fund remain steady and this year, two new donors supported the fund, John Taormina and his mother and an anonymous donor, with gifts totaling \$6500. Treasurer Darcovich reported that the Strategic Planning Task Force is also addressing strategies for maintaining financial stability in future years.

6. Report of the Visual Resources Association Foundation: VRAF Chair Elisa Lanzi

Ms. Lanzi reported that the legal ability of the VRAF to accept tax-deductible donations and apply for grants gives it the potential to be a vital engine for enhancing the mission of the VRA. As such, the VRAF can further develop existing projects like CCO and SEI as well as develop new initiatives whose scope and audience reach beyond the VRA membership. Ms. Lanzi reported on the accomplishments of the first full year of the VRAF:

- a web presence devoted to describing the VRAF mission and goals, projects, and news and events
- successful transfer of oversight of the CCO and SEI projects from VRA to the Foundation
- VRAF received a \$26,400 grant from the Getty Foundation to develop training tools for CCO and involvement in the broader standards community
- VRAF received a Kress Foundation grant to support two library students' attendance at the 2009 SEI in Boston
- VRAF developed its first annual fundraising drive targeted at the VRA membership which raised \$4800.

Goals for the coming year, reported Ms. Lanzi, are to propose a session at the 2010 annual conference in

Atlanta, continue to develop fundraising strategies and support the mission, goals, new initiatives and projects of the VRA. Ms. Lanzi recognized outgoing VRAF chair Loy Zimmerman who will stay on as a director and serve as secretary and Emy Nelson Decker who is stepping down. She announced that Christine Sundt has been appointed as a new director and Ann Thomas will continue as treasurer.

7. Recognition of the 2008 VRA Travel Award
Recipients: Jacqueline Spafford, Travel Awards Committee Chair

President Kohl introduced Jacqueline Spafford who presented the 2009 Travel Awards. Ms. Spafford announced that since the founding and underwriting of the VRA Travel Awards program in 1994 by Luraine Tansey, there have been a total of 116 Tansey Travel Awards and 32 corporate sponsor awards for a total of 148 travel awards. Ms. Spafford reported that this year, a total of 26 eligible travel awards will be distributed out of 44 applications. She announced the individual recipients: The Luraine Tansey Travel Awards in the amount of \$850 were presented by Ms Spafford to Heather Seneff, Elizabeth Schaub, Amanda Rybin, Michael Donovan, Andrea Schuler, Astrid Otey, Kevin Ford, Juling Doring, and Adrienne Lai. The Kathe Hicks Albrecht Travel Award in the amount of \$850 was presented by Ms Hicks to Erik McRae. Ms Spafford presented the New Horizons Travel Award in the amount of \$850 to Dearthra Fuzzell and Maria Lindsay. Rob Detleffs presented Jodie Double with the Gallery Systems Travel Award in the amount of \$850. The \$1,000 Saskia, Inc. International Travel Award was presented by Renate Wiedenhoft to Birgit Plietzsch. The VRA International Travel Award in the amount of \$1,000 was presented by Ms. Spafford to Catherine Worrall. New Horizons Student Award, in the amount of \$300 was presented by Ms. Spafford to Keri Kauffmann. Tansey Top-Up Awards, in amounts ranging from \$250-\$400 were presented by Jackie Spafford to Betha Whitlow, Carolyn Caizzi, Pamela Hawkes, Zaneta Hong, Mark Braunstein, Anita Regan and Beth Wodnick. Karl Cole presented the Davis Art Images Award, in the amount of \$500 to Mary Hughes. The Joseph C. Taormina Memorial Travel Awards, in the amount of \$250 were presented by Ms. Spafford to Ryan Brubacker and Francine Stock.

Ms. Spafford thanked all of the applicants and Travel Awards committee members, corporate sponsors and all members who have supported the Tansey Travel Awards in the form of raffle tickets, Tansey event tickets and contributions.

8. VRA Leadership Recognition: Allan Kohl, President

President Kohl recognized the VRA appointees, committee and chapter chairs by asking each to stand.

Appointees: Martine Sherrill, (Archivist); Mark Pompelia (Bulletin Editor); Marlene Gordon (Images Newsletter); Sherman Clarke (MARC Advisory Committee Representative); Dustin Wees (PLUS Board Representative); and Amy McKenna (Website Editor).
 Committee Chairs: Brenda McEachern (Awards Committee); Trish Rose-Sandler and Margaret Webster, co-chairs, (Data Standards Committee); Steven Kowalik and Emy Nelson Decker, co-chairs, (Development Committee); Maureen Burns and outgoing co-chair Jacqueline Erdman (DIAG); Betha Whitlow (Education Committee); Ann Woodward (Financial Advisory Committee); Gretchen Wagner and Christine Sundt, co-chairs, (Intellectual Property Rights Committee); outgoing chair Amy Jackson and incoming chair Elaine Paul (Membership Committee); Ann Burns (Nominating Committee); Jacqueline Spafford and Heidi Eyestone, co-chairs, (Travel Awards Committee).

Chapter Chairs: Eric Schwab, Canada Chapter; Marlene Gordon, Great Lakes Chapter; Billy Kwan, Greater New York Chapter; Nicole Finzer, Greater Philadelphia Chapter; Liz Gushee (outgoing) and Macie Hall (incoming), Mid-Atlantic Chapter; Jodie Waltz Double, Midwest Chapter; Megan Battey, New England Chapter; Howard Brainen, Northern California Chapter; Jeanette Mills, Pacific Rim Chapter; Emy Nelson Decker, Southeast Chapter; John M. Trendler, Southern California Chapter, Mark Pompelia (outgoing) and Katherine Moloney (incoming), Texas Chapter; Jeanne Keefe, Upstate New York Chapter.

President Kohl presented certificates of appreciation to the following: Christine Hilker and Margaret Webster, co-chairs of the 2006-2008 Professional Status Task Force; Jeanne Keefe, chair of the 2007-2008 SEI Implementation Team; Jeanne Keefe, chair of the Upstate New York Chapter; Mark Pompelia, chair of the Texas Chapter; Amy Jackson, chair, 2007-2009, Membership Committee; Wendy Holden, Special Bulletin Editor, 2001-2008; Linda Reynolds and Joseph Romano, co-chairs, 2007-2008, Archives Task Force.

9. Recognition of Outgoing Executive Board members: President Allan Kohl

President Kohl acknowledged the work of outgoing Vice President for Programs Vickie O’Riordan and Secretary Jolene de Verges, noting their contributions and dedicated service to the VRA. Each was presented with a gift.

10. Welcome to Incoming VRA Executive Board members: President Allan Kohl

President Kohl welcomed the incoming Executive Board Members:

- Heidi Raatz, Vice President for Conference Programs
- Marcia Focht, Secretary

11. Report of the Strategic Planning Task Force: Macie Hall

Macie Hall introduced the members of the SPTF: Betha Whitlow (co-chair), Eric Schwab, Greg Ressor, Christine Hilker, Liz Gushee, Leigh Gates, and Jen Green. Ms. Hall reported on the charge of the Task Force, which was convened during the 2008 Annual Conference in San Diego. She and Ms. Whitlow described how information was gathered by interviewing key leaders of the VRA and inviting all members to contribute their ideas through a survey. They reported on the timeline for submitting the final draft report to the Executive Board, which will be in advance of the Mid-Year Board meeting during summer, 2009. With the approval of the Board, the final report will be presented to the membership during the 2010 Atlanta conference.

12. VRA 2010 Atlanta Conference Presentation: Pat Cospér

Pat Cospér delivered a presentation created by Frank Jackson highlighting the host city for the 2010 Annual Conference, Atlanta. She described Atlanta as a city that is easy to navigate using public transportation, which is accessible from the Peachtree Plaza Hotel, the site of the conference. The hotel and several nearby buildings were designed by John Portman and Associates. The hotel is centrally located within walking distance to restaurants and local attractions. The Georgia Aquarium, CNN Center and Centennial Park are all within walking distance of the hotel. Other attractions, particularly the High Museum which is located in Mid-town Atlanta, are accessible by public transportation. She highlighted other museums and attractions throughout the city,

noting the warm spring weather typical for March. The dates, she announced, are March 17-20, 2010.

13. New Business

A question was raised about the publication schedule of the VRA Bulletin. Bulletin Editor Mark Pompelia responded with a brief explanation of the re-organization of the Bulletin staff into a new and more efficient model, with a new content editor position planned.

14. Adjournment

President Kohl called for a motion to adjournment. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion for adjournment carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:30am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jolene de Verges
VRA Secretary
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

VRA President Allan Kohl



2009 VRA Annual Conference Treasurer's Report and Balance Sheet

As you may know, the annual business meeting is the occasion on which the Treasurer reports on the financial state of the VRA, including the progress of the current year and the closing of the previous fiscal year (fiscal year 2008).

Fiscal year 2008 ran from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. At that point, VRA's total assets stood at \$413,225. The remainder of the funds from the Cataloging Cultural Objects grant were spent in the last fiscal year, and the bank account which held these funds was closed.

The current fiscal year began July 1, 2008. As of March 10, 2009, the total assets of the Visual Resources Association stand at \$527,803. This amount includes \$65,420 in income from 2009 membership dues and bulletin subscriptions to date; conference income totals \$48,865, which includes registration fees, corporate donations and Chapter donations.

Donations to our established funds are down. This year to date we have received a total of \$730 in donations to our President's Fund and for general operating support. However, donations to the Travel awards program are still strong: we continue to draw on the funds donated to the Kathe Hicks Albrecht Travel Fund; and this year generous new donations totaling \$6500 from an anonymous donor, and from John Taormina and his mother, allow us to support member attendance at the conference through the New Horizons travel awards, and the Joseph C. Taormina Memorial Travel awards.

Again this year, the VRA's largest expenditures will be those for the annual conference, and for professional services. Compensated professional services include those of the Membership Services Coordinator, whose position has expanded to include processing online conference registrations and donations, and on-site registrations at the conference registration desk. Accountant fees, including fees to process our tax-exempt organization tax return are also a significant expense. MemberClicks, which we use to process online membership renewals and conference registrations, is another part of the increased cost of doing business in the 21st century.

Reflecting the current difficult economic situation, the value of our investments have declined, though not as precipitously as some. They now are valued at approximately \$182,000, representing a drop in value of over \$21,000 since the same point last year.

We are working with the Strategic Planning committee to consider options for long-range planning so that the Association can continue to thrive in years to come.

In closing, I would like to thank our new Member Services Coordinator Lise Hawkos, with whom I have worked closely on Association business, for her diligence and patience.

Thanks are also due to the members of the Development Committee, and the Financial Advisory Committee; to Jeanne Keefe who kept the books for the 2008 SEI; to Ann Thomas, Treasurer of the VRA Foundation, and last but certainly not least, to Ann Woodward for her invaluable help in the Treasurer training process, and for her support during the transition period.

Jane Darcovich
VRA Treasurer
University of Illinois at Chicago

Visual Resources Association	
Balance Sheet	
As of June 30, 2008	
	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Bank of America Checking	4,066.88
Bank of America Money Market	152,193.16
F & M Bank MM Account (deleted)	0.00
Petty Cash	0.00
Trustco Checking (deleted)	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 156,260.04
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	2,005.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 2,005.00
Other Current Assets	
A/R exchange	0.00
Deposit for Conference 2011	1,800.00
Fidelity Investments	205,005.87
U.S. Treasury Bill	38,000.00
Undeposited Funds	135.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 244,940.87
Total Current Assets	\$ 403,205.91
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 403,205.91
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	0.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$ 0.00
Other Current Liabilities	
A/P Exchange	
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 0.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 0.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 0.00
Equity	
Kathe H. Albrecht Travel Fund	3,500.00
President's Fund	5,000.00
Retained Earnings	381,084.02
Special Bulletins Account	0.00
Tansey Fund	11,034.46
Temporarily Restricted	0.00
VRA Bulletin	0.00
Net Income	2,587.43
Total Equity	\$ 403,205.91
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 403,205.91

Visual Resources Association

Donors

The Visual Resources Association is pleased to acknowledge and thank the many members, corporate sponsors, and friends who made generous contributions to the Association during the past fiscal year (July 1, 2008–June 30, 2009). ♡

VRA Patron Members

Cathie Lemon
Margaret Webster

VRA Contributing Members

Andrew Gessner
Jane Goldberg
Virginia M. G. Hall
Elizabeth O’Keefe
John J. Taormina
Two Cat Digital/ Howard Brainen

Kathe Hicks Albrecht Travel Fund

Kathe Hicks Albrecht

Luraine Tansey Education Fund

Joan Beaudoin
Allan T. Kohl
Jacqueline Rogers
Corey Schultz
Maryly Snow
Steven Tatum
Lynda S. White

Luraine Tansey Education Fund - Corporate Travel Awards

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New Horizons and Student Travel Awards

Anonymous
Anonymous

Joseph C. Taormina Memorial Travel Awards

Garneta Taormina
John J. Taormina

President’s Fund

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Victoria Bleick
Linda Callahan
Kathleen Cohen
Jane Goldberg
Terry Kerby
Allan T. Kohl
Madelyn Millen
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Helen Chillman
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Heidi Rempel
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Loy Zimmerman

2009 Annual Conference Sponsors

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Texas Chapter, VRA

2009 Annual Conference VRAffle Corporate Donors

Archivision Inc.
CLS Jewelry
Davis Publications, Inc.
Two Cat Digital Inc.

**2009 VRA Annual Conference
Acknowledgements**

This year in Toronto the members of the VRA once again come together to share information and enjoy seeing old friends and making new ones. We have shortened the length of the conference, but the program still offers the same rich and varied amount of content.

We would like to thank Irene Gotz of the Ontario College of Art & Design for designing this year's dynamic conference logo.

Thanks to Anita Regan and Lesley Bell for their work scheduling the registration desk volunteers and to the registration desk volunteers for taking time from the conference to help all the rest of us figure out where we need to be. Thanks go to Eric Schwab and Jackie Spafford and members of the Toronto local Committee for booking the internationally recognized Second City comedy group as headliners for the Tansey Fundraiser, as well as for their help with tour planning and increasing our knowledge of the beautiful city of Toronto.

Empress Patti



Thanks to this year's incoming Executive Board members, Maureen Burns, Heidi Raatz, and Marcia Focht, who with their excellent publicity campaign have highlighted both Conference and Toronto events in their exciting weekly installments titled "What's On in Toronto."

Once again Empress Patti impresses us with her inventive VRAffle event. This year we'll enjoy the rousing Call from the Frozen North presented by Patti and her VRAudevillians. Special thanks go to the hard working VRAffle table volunteers.

It has been no easy task to devise a new format for the Exhibitor's Hall. Special thanks go to Steven Kowalik and Emy Nelson Decker and the other members Development Committee for their diligent work on this year's new and stimulating Vendor Slam. We also would like to thank the vendors themselves for their willingness to participate in the new format and we strongly encourage everyone to come and see their presentations.

Finally we would like to thank our fellow members of the Executive Board. President Allan Kohl provided wise counsel and kept us on track. Jane Darcovich, VRA Treasurer, has worked diligently keeping the budget on track and having a crash course on moving money between international borders. Hearty thanks go to PRC officer Mark Pompelia and his web team.

Last but certainly not least, special thanks go to VRA Secretary, Jolene de Verges, who was especially efficient this year in creating a smooth and easy online registration.

Vickie O'Riordan, University of California, San Diego
Vice President for Conference Programming

Brian Shelburne, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Vice President for Conference Arrangements

2009 VRA Annual Conference

Nancy DeLaurier Award: Loy Zimmerman

It was 1999 in Los Angeles at the Getty Institute and the surroundings were opulent. A slim figure, hitherto unknown to me, stepped up to the microphone to deliver the Development Committee report. Addressing the audience was a silver-haired gentleman dressed in black who mysteriously managed to simultaneously appear distinguished *and* "way cool." His presence, manner, and voice exuded calm and his low key delivery demanded attention. Little did I realize that several years later we would work together on the formation of the Visual Resources Association Foundation.

This evening Loy Zimmerman is the recipient of the 2009 Nancy DeLaurier Achievement Award for project management. Playing a key role in the establishment of the Foundation, Loy's contributions as project manager, both in laying the groundwork and in implementation, were intrinsic to its success.

As Macie Hall put it, "Loy has been involved with the VRA Foundation from the beginning, when it was merely a twinkle in the eyes of the VRA Board. In 2001, the VRA Ad Hoc Financial Planning Committee recommended that the VRA Board look into obtaining a 501(c)(3) tax status. Loy Zimmerman was a member of that committee." Even earlier, in 2000, "Loy had the foresight to recommend that VRA apply for a 501(c)(3) status when he was a member the Financial Advisory committee." Appointed as a member of the Ad Hoc Tax Status Advisory Committee in 2005, he went on to serve as Chair of the VRA Foundation Task Force and of both the Interim and First Foundation Boards.

With his appointment as Chair of the Task Force Loy assumed responsibility for all aspects of the group's mission. Meeting at the Baltimore Conference, members Kathe Albrecht, Margo Ballantyne, Elisa Lanzi and Ann Thomas began work under his able leadership. Launching an avalanche of emails, Loy began management of the project. In lengthy emails and in conference calls with the attorneys Loy began to determine the principal segments of the operation. Following incorporation in July 2007, the focus shifted to the preparation of the application to the Internal Revenue Service.

Task Force Members Comment on the Process

Kathe Albrecht summarizes the process:

"From its inception, the Foundation Task Force was chaired by Loy Zimmerman, and I observed his strong leadership abilities as he steered the group skillfully and diplomatically, conducting productive and well-organized meetings, dealing with outside legal counsel, and tackling the myriad details involved in establishing such a highly-regulated new enterprise. This intensive work culminated in the

completion of a book-length IRS submission, with lengthy and detailed forms, extensive supporting documentation, historical narrative materials on the VRA as an organization, and a statement explaining the reasons for establishing a (c)(3)."

Margo Ballantyne describes the IRS Application Form and relates an example of Loy's persistence and thoughtfulness in formulating the Bylaws:

"The IRS Application form #1023 (for non-profit status) is as daunting a form as you will ever see. Populated with EIN applications, proof of Certificates of Incorporation, Proof of Filings, etc. it also requires histories, narratives, budgets and bylaws. With the aid of legal Counsel, Loy was the point person for interpreting all the requirements, for delegating research and writing to task force members, and for collecting the data to meet the deadlines for an intimidating list of documents. One of the testiest and most trying sections of the 1023 application was the creation of the Foundation Bylaws. Guided by other non-profit bylaws examples and the strict guidelines set forth by the IRS, the committee began to vet ideas concerning the make-up of the Foundation Board officers, term length and rotation. Every conceivable combination was explored. Each idea contained an element that would not work. No one could untangle it. Finally, as was often the case with Loy, he took the problem home with him and worked out the solution over the weekend. It was not the only solution imaginable, but it was the perfect one for VRA."

Elisa Lanzi characterizes the nature of the conference calls with the lawyers:

"I have the deepest appreciation and respect for Loy's accomplished working methods and incredible commitment to our VRA mission. Loy and I spent many hours on conference calls with lawyers and advisors during the creation of the Foundation. His thoughtful manner and considerate deliberation during the process was invaluable."

Macie Hall credits the swift approval by the IRS to the thoroughness of the documentation:

"Under his astute leadership, the VRA Foundation Task Force jumped the many hurdles of creating the documentation for incorporation of the VRA Foundation...and the herculean task of preparing the application to the IRS for 501(c)(3) tax status. In just over a year from the time the task force began work, the Foundation was incorporated and just two months later, the IRS approved the tax status application. I am certain that the surprisingly rapid turnaround was due to the tremendous amount of work that the VRA Foundation Task Force, under Loy's leadership, put into the application preparation, presenting to the IRS a thoroughly researched, clear and unchallengeable document."

Ann on the finale:

"Loy calmly presided over the entire process until

receipt of the IRS approval notification in early September – a day on which his pleasure bubbled over in the triumphant “Break Out the Champagne” memo.”

From the Letters of Support

Importance of the Foundation, Comments by Former Presidents

Elisa Lanzi

“Loy’s accomplishment in bringing the Foundation to life is a major milestone for VRA, moving us forward into the 21st century.”

Macie Hall

“The existence of the Foundation will allow the VRA to further its goals of supporting research and education in the field of image management and providing leadership on important issues for digital information management. Initially, it will allow for the continuance and growth of SEI and CCO, two projects which will need grant and donor funding to sustain.”

Kathe Albrecht

“An educational Foundation can receive grants, establish educational and research projects, accept tax-deductible contributions from individuals, and otherwise strengthen the parent organization as it increases its sphere of influence in the larger community.”

Working with Loy

Macie Hall

“On a personal level, I feel extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with someone like Loy, who has the ability to deal so capably with such a range of issues—financial, legal and political. The fact that Loy is also always calm and reasonable, even in the face of pressure, with a remarkable sense of humor to boot, made the experience of working with him one of the real pleasures of my term on the Board.”

“Working with Loy is a wonderful experience. He can always be counted on to do what he promises, when he promises.”

Elisa Lanzi

“As our first Foundation president, Loy has set a high bar for the next in line. He is a model of civility and sets the tone for our board deliberations.”

Jeanne Keefe

“Loy has had a seemingly quiet, low key and long affiliation with the Visual Resources Association. It is typical of Loy, as he is so soft spoken and unassuming, that you often

forget that he is always there, always involved, and always working so hard in what always seems to appear a sort of behind-the-scenes manner. When all the time, he has really been quite out front, involved and responsible for serving VRA in so many different capacities.”

“...don’t let Loy’s calm and soft-spoken demeanor lead you to assume he is reserved or dispassionate. Loy has over the many years unselfishly given of his time, energy and expert advice to his fellow VRA members to help them succeed at their own professional endeavors and he has been a role model for many in our organization.”

Trudy Jacoby

“I know few people who have the intelligence, energy, organization, and good humor that Loy displays. Loy is one of the people that I know will always accomplish what he has said he will do.”

“His self-effacing style and ability to build consensus can make others unaware of the extraordinary character of his leadership.”

“Loy is a true professional and an example for all of us. He does it all while being witty and kind.”

Margo Ballantyne

“He is quietly dogged after solutions. He always came up with one. Loy Zimmerman’s talents, dedication and leadership guided us through the long and complicated process of creating the VRA Foundation. We couldn’t have done it without him.”

Kathe Albrecht

“Loy’s diplomatic and reassuring manner, quiet intellect, and his dedication to the cause of expanding our organization in this new and exciting way, made the development of the Foundation possible. A less steady hand at the helm would certainly have prevented the Foundation from getting underway so smoothly. Loy’s stalwart approach to the issues and his determination to see this project succeed were fundamental factors in the creation of the VRA Foundation.”

Thank you, Loy, from all of us for your guidance and perseverance. Hardest congratulations.

Ann Thomas
Union College

2009 VRA Annual Conference

**Nancy DeLaurier Award Recipient Remarks:
Loy Zimmerman**

My sincere thanks to the members of the Awards Committee and the Executive Board for granting me this award and especially thanks to Ann Thomas and all those who put forward the nomination and wrote such kind letters of recommendation. This is truly an honor.

It's more than a little sobering, though, to realize that my name will now appear on the VRA web site in the company of many of the giants of our field. And to be honest it's more than a little embarrassing, too. Because the achievement for which I am being honored is actually not mine alone, or even primarily, but the achievement of my many collaborators. So, tonight I accept the Delaurier Award on behalf of all those talented, hard working colleagues who were really responsible for bringing the VRA Foundation into being, and who deserve to be acknowledged here.

The story of the Foundation's creation goes back a number of years, but the first significant step was taken in March of 2005 when the Executive Board charged the ad hoc Tax Status Advisory Committee to "explore the feasibility of establishing a 501(c)(3) organization as a component of the Visual Resources Association, for the purpose of furthering the significant and growing educational and research efforts of the Association." That committee was chaired by Elisa Lanzi and included Margo Ballantyne, Leigh Gates, Macie Hall, and myself. Following the committee's positive report, in January 2006 the Executive Board created and charged the VRA Foundation Task Force with overseeing the establishment

of the envisioned 501(c)(3) organization. Its members were Kathe Hicks Albrecht, Margo Ballantyne, Elisa Lanzi, and Ann Thomas. As task force chair I can vouch for their exceptionally effective work as a result of which by September 2007 the VRA Foundation had been both incorporated and received its IRS designation as a 501(c)(3) public charity. Following that the members of the Task Force plus Macie Hall and Allan Kohl organized themselves into a provisional Board of Directors pending the election of a new Board in accordance with Foundation bylaws in March of 2008. Both the provisional board and that first official board (with Emy Nelson Decker and Jeanne Keefe replacing Macie and Allan) have since been working hard to put in place the necessary operational infrastructure.

The Foundation is still new and still just getting its feet firmly planted on ground, but I believe that it has great potential for, in the words of VRA's mission statement, "furthering research and education in the field of image management within the educational, cultural heritage, and commercial environments." That's because it's IRS-designated 501(c)(3) public charity status positions the Foundation to more effectively raise funds in pursuit of the VRA's research and educational objectives. Not only are donations to 501(c)(3) corporations tax-deductible, but both private and public funding agencies generally make grants only to public charities. In addition, the Foundation has also received IRS permission to make its own grants. So, in time, the Foundation will itself be able to fund small projects in the visual resources field as well as seek agency funding for larger-scale projects.

In closing, then, I'd like to say how especially pleased I am tonight that VRA has chosen the creation of the VRA Foundation as an achievement worthy of the Delaurier Award.

Thank you all again. 🍷

Nancy DeLaurier Award recipient Loy Zimmerman and VRA President Allan Kohl



Nancy DeLaurier Award recipient Loy Zimmerman



2009 VRA Annual Conference

Travel Awards: Recipient Statements

In 2009 the Visual Resources Association, via the Travel Awards Committee, gave out nine Luraine Tansey/VRA Association Travel Awards, three Corporate Travel Awards (including one International award), the Kathe Hicks Albrecht travel award, two Joseph C. Taormina Memorial top-up awards, two New Horizons awards, a VRA International award, the New Horizons student award, and seven Tansey/VRA Association Top-Up awards. These awards provided financial assistance to VRA members for attendance and participation in the 27th Annual Conference in Toronto. This was by far the largest number of awards ever given out (26) and the largest amount of funding offered (\$16,600). In applying for the 2009 awards, all of the winners clearly and effectively articulated their financial need, their level of conference participation, their professional and institutional goals, and the expected benefits of conference attendance. VRA President Allan Kohl and Travel Awards Committee Chair Jackie Spafford were pleased to present the 2009 Travel Awards recipients with their awards at the Annual Business Meeting and Town Hall held on Friday, March 20.

There were three Corporate Sponsored awards in 2009: The Gallery Systems award for \$850, presented by Robb Detlefs to Jodie Double; the Saskia, Inc. International award for \$1,000, presented by Renate Wiedenhoef to Birgit Plietzsch; and the Davis Art Images award for \$500, presented by Karl Cole to Mary Hughes.

The Kathe Hicks Albrecht Fund Award for \$850 was presented to Erik McRae.

Two Joseph C. Taormina Memorial top-up awards were presented by John Taormina to Ryan Brubacher and Francine Stock.

The first New Horizons awards for \$850 were presented to Deandra Fuzzell and Maria Lindsay, and the first new Horizons Student award for \$300 was presented to Keri Kauffman.

Since the founding of the Tansey Travel Awards in 1993, 146 travel awards in total have been given out. The Travel Awards Committee thanks the Executive Board for their support, as well as all the individual VRA members, regional chapters, and corporate and personal award sponsors for their continued generous contributions to the travel awards fund through direct donation, the Tansey Fundraising Events and the VRAffle.

Following are the conference reports from (most of) our 2009 Travel Awards recipients.

Jackie Spafford and Heidi Eyestone
Co-chairs, Travel Awards Committee

Sponsored Travel Award recipients

Birgit Plietzsch, University of St. Andrews

Saskia, Inc. International Travel Award

I am deeply grateful to the VRA to be selected as the recipient of this year's Saskia International Travel Award. The award has helped a great deal in being able to attend the conference in Toronto, which has been a very memorable event.

Working for the central computing service at the University of St Andrews and with limited contact to visual resources specialists, the conference has put me into personal contact with a number of such specialists and has helped putting faces to names that appear on the VRA-L. Contacts made and discussions I had at the conference are feeding directly into our support for digital images in general and into further developments of our University image database that fully implements the VRA Core 4.0 standard in particular. To this end sessions on new technologies and their potential uses and MDID were particularly useful.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Renate Wiedenhoef for sponsoring this award. I would also like to use the opportunity to thank my mentor, Nicole Finzer, for her time and for making me feel welcome at the conference.

Erik R. McRae, University of Alberta

Kathe Hicks Albrecht Travel Fund Award

As a new VRC Curator and first time attendee, I looked forward to VRA 27 for months and I was not disappointed! I am grateful to Kathe Hicks Albrecht for sponsoring the travel award I received, as it made my attendance possible. I also would like to extend my gratitude to Jackie Spafford, my mentor, who helped me navigate my first conference and introduced me to other VRA members.

I found the conference to be a tremendous learning experience. As a new visual resources curator I found workshops such as Issues in VR Administration and the accompanying Roundtable on Issues in Visual Resources Administration to be extremely helpful in dealing with the administration side of my position; there is no substitute for learning from the experiences of others. I cannot begin to summarize all of the information I gained at the sessions I attended however, I come away revitalized with a new set of tools to improve the functioning of my VRC.

I truly enjoyed meeting other VR professionals: it was nice to put faces to the names I see on the listserv and to those who I correspond with via email. Meeting the vendors and the folks from ARTstor was also extremely valuable. I look forward to working and corresponding with many of you over the next year.

The rewards of attending the VRA 27 are still sinking in and are more than I could have ever imagined. Thank you to all both in front and behind the scenes that made my first conference such a wonderful experience.

*Deadra J. Fuzzell, The College of Wooster
New Horizons Travel Award*

This was my first VRA conference and I feel very lucky to have received a travel award from the organization. Thank you, to the anonymous donor that made my New Horizons Travel Award possible, I would not have been able to attend the conference without it!

I had a wonderful conference experience. I managed to get to all of the workshops, sessions, and events that I set out to attend (if only I could bilocate!). The Issues in VR Administration Workshop and its companion roundtable were especially informative. It is helpful to hear how others are backing up their databases, organizing their budgets, managing their workflow, and generally serving the needs of their respective, diverse institutions. The Photoshop for Artworks Workshop was also excellent, and very information rich; I learned an incredible amount for a mere three hours. The plenary session on Fair Use v. Fair Dealing clarified a number of my copyright questions, and it was great to have the opportunity to hear seasoned professionals discuss such a complex topic. I received a wealth of invaluable information and came home with answers to a number of pressing questions.

One of the best aspects of this experience was simply to talk to other people in the Visual Resources field. My mentor, Astrid Otey, has a wealth of experience and was a pleasure to spend time with. As a solo, part-time Visual Resources Curator, I am a bit isolated in my position. It was wonderful to meet so many professionals willing to share their experiences and innovations. To belong to such a strong, large organization of friendly professionals is immensely helpful and inspiring. This was an expanding experience and I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to attend the 27th Annual conference in Toronto this year. I am now ready to tackle a number of improvements to the Visual Resources Center here at The College of Wooster.

*Maria Lindsay, Utah State University
New Horizons Travel Award*

Winning the New Horizons travel award made the 2009 Visual Resource Association Conference possible for me. Without this award, I would not have been able to attend. I feel especially grateful to the travel awards committee for supporting my first time attendance to the VRA conference. I found all the sessions in which I participated to be very engaging and thought provoking. All of the speakers and presentors were very excited and eager to share their knowledge as well as pertinent information. While my position as the Visual Resource Center Coordinator at my institution was abruptly terminated just before the conference, I found all the information I gathered to be potentially useful for future career endeavors whether as a VR curator, art educator, artist or librarian. Most of all, I found all of the conference participants I met to be extremely supportive, encouraging and resourceful. This was especially comforting to me as I move forward in my career. I want to thank all of you!

*Keri Kauffman, Student, Ryerson University/George Eastman House
New Horizons Student Award*

As a new member of the VRA, I was honored to receive the New Horizons Student Travel Award; not only did it ease my attendance at the annual conference in Toronto, but it also immediately connected me with other members and led me to get more involved in various conference activities.

I arrived in Toronto familiar with the city, but unfamiliar with the characters that make up the Association, and what exactly I would find at the conference. Despite the fact that I was a Collections Management student surrounded (mostly) by Library Scientists, I immediately felt at home. The issues broached at workshops and sessions were the same ones I'd encountered in my studies in a museum/archive setting, and apart from a few new acronyms, I felt from the start like I was sharing the meeting rooms with people who were speaking my own language.

I left the conference feeling that I had begun new friendships and gained useful knowledge from the sessions I attended; perhaps most strikingly, I felt like I had gotten insight into an entire network of institutions and professionals that I hadn't quite understood before, but one of which I would enjoy being a part. I look forward to continuing my involvement with the VRA, and adding to my conference experiences in the future.

*Ryan Brubacher, Occidental College
Joseph C. Taormina Memorial Top-up Award*

First, and most obviously the travel award helped me financially. Fortunately I was in a position where I was allowed to spend my operating budget on the conference if need be. The travel award lessened the amount I had to use, ensuring that I had a bit left to last the rest of the fiscal year. Sacrificing my budget in this way, and attending the conference despite some financial apprehension paid off, however, because after meeting with my chair to discuss the conference she said, "You need to go to that conference every year. We need to make sure that professional development for that is added to your budget." Not too bad, if I do say so myself.

The majority of the conversation with my chair was spent talking about the "Selling Visual Resources: Engaging and Educating the Educators" workshop. This was the superstar of my conference experience this year. I came back with tons of new ideas, and a new sense of excitement. The workshop was valuable in what the presenters shared with us, but also in getting to hear about others and how they handle things in the many different situations VR professionals find themselves in. I felt better ready to handle ITS, more enthusiastic about Web 2.0 possibilities, and confirmed in some positions I held while persuasively turned away from others. I have already commenced projects and started acting on ideas sparked during this session.

As far as more personal experiences and less practical ones, I had a really great time meeting new people and

putting faces to names. Getting to know colleagues better and forging new friendships is really an invaluable part of the conference experience. In sum, I feel like those few short days really grew my knowledge of the field, and my fortunate place in it. I am already looking forward to next year.

Tansey Travel Award Recipients

*Catherine Worrall, University College Falmouth
International award*

Winning the VRA International Travel Award enabled me to attend my first Visual Resources Association conference, which I was very excited about. I was also successful in my application for a top-up fund through my institution.

The conference I felt was excellently organised and welcoming. The workshops, sessions and lectures were, as expected, very informative and have given me many ideas for future developments in image provision here at Falmouth. The workshops and sessions on image metadata I found particularly useful, and will inform my ongoing metadata creation. It was also interesting to learn about other issues associated with visual resources, including administration, and to compare any differences with the UK.

Perhaps more importantly, it was very rewarding to network with other VR professionals, to discuss and share ideas, and to finally meet up with many people who have been so helpful to me on the VRA list-serv over the years.

Overall, attending the conference has encouraged me to be excited about the future of the visual resource profession, and to incorporate new technologies, in order to keep the service attractive to students and staff.

Heather Seneff, University of Washington

I appreciate receiving a Travel Award from the VRA to attend the annual conference in Toronto this year. I would not have been able to attend the conference without this generous award.

I enjoyed and benefitted from all of my conference experiences, including organizing the Session on Materials Libraries and interacting with the three presenters I would not have otherwise known, leading the Architecture Curators Special Interest Group, and presenting my image-sharing projects at the Image Matchmaking Special Interest Group.

I intend to share the information from the Materials Libraries Session with my colleagues here in the College of Built Environments, where a materials library is in the infant stages of development. Using feedback from the curators who attended the Architecture Curators meeting, I will further explore methods for sharing architecture-related resources with that group.

I also volunteered at the VRAffle desk (always enjoyable) and got a lot out of the Vendor Slam, a format I thought was very productive and informative. The sessions I attended were very good, and the keynote speaker was excellent and inspirational.

Since I was the only conference attendee from my institution this year, I will make every effort to share my experience with my colleagues. I brought handouts from the MDID Users session to send to all of them, and will look forward to sharing other information of interest.

I thought this year's conference was exceptional (in location, content, and activities) and am glad I was able to attend because of this generous Travel Award. Meeting with other VR professionals is invaluable to those of us in the profession and to the institutions we represent.

Elizabeth Schaub, University of Texas at Austin

My attendance at the Visual Resources Association's 27th Annual Conference in Toronto (March 18-21, 2009) was an educational and inspirational experience. I attended a variety of programming including part two of the Engaging New Technologies session where I learned about new content and technologies I am eager to explore and implement. My one-on-one meeting with Megan Battey, who shared her experience and insights about ARTstor faculty instruction, was enlightening and I look forward to employing some of the techniques she shared with me during future faculty instruction sessions. One of the most satisfying aspects of my attendance this year was being able to collaborate with my colleagues as a panelist on the Roundtable on Issues in Visual Resources Administration, as a speaker for the session Training Millennials at Work: Strategies for Training a New Generation and as a speaker for the workshop Selling Visual Resources: Educating and Engaging the Educators. It was not only wonderful to receive positive feedback from attendees after these presentations but also to learn something from my fellow presenters, and attendees, in the process.

Amanda Rybin, University of Chicago

The Tansey Travel Award allowed me to attend the Visual Resources Association annual conference for the first time. Not only was I able to meet colleagues who were, before, faceless names on the listserv (albeit very helpful faceless names!), but I was also able to gain tangible skills that are relevant to my day-to-day work. This especially includes time-saving and image-enhancing tips from an excellent Photoshop workshop, which have already boosted my confidence in editing student-created images.

Perhaps what I enjoyed most about the conference, however, was the camaraderie. I was able to discuss issues from how to manage faculty requests to how to troubleshoot classroom equipment. I learned that though we face many of the same challenges, each of us deals with such challenges in different ways. These discussions underscored my belief that I am very lucky to be joining a profession with so many enthusiastic, bright, and generous peers. Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend!

Michael Donovan, DePaul University

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Visual Resources Association and the VRA Travel Awards Committee for providing me with funds to attend the 2009 VRA Conference in Toronto, Canada. Having not attended a VRA conference in a number of years, being given the Tansey Travel Award could not have come at a better time. It allowed me to meet with colleagues and attend sessions and workshops that I know will benefit me professionally.

My conference experience began with the plenary session on copyright entitled, "Fair Use or Fair Dealing, Which Should Give you more Comfort?" held at the Ontario College of Art and Design. I found the session incredibly interesting and both speakers brought clarity and insight to the issues of copyright and fair use. I now have a much better understanding of how the courts in both the U.S. and Canada view these issues, and while neither country offers an easy solution, I found the suggestion that organizations like ours develop a set of "best practices" guidelines both smart and comforting.

Additionally, I attended sessions, workshops and a luncheon that I found very useful and enlightening. The sessions entitled, "New Strategies for Digital Asset Discovery" and "Engaging New Technologies" focused on ways in which new technologies can assist visual resource professionals, not only in terms of providing the means for better access, but also in how we communicate. As imaging technologies change and grow and modes of communicating on the web expand, I find that many Visual Resource professionals are not only aware of these developments, but often ahead of the curve in adopting them and encouraging others to do the same. As a supervisor of student workers, I found the session entitled "Training Millennials at Work" both pertinent and informative. I came away with more than a few ideas of how to engage student employees and encourage them to be the best at what they do.

Finally, meeting new people, as well as reconnecting with those I haven't seen in years, was a very powerful and important function of the conference for me. Since many of us work alone within a library or museum, it is extremely gratifying to connect with others who share similar experiences as visual resource professionals. There was a pronounced sense of shared responsibility toward the betterment of our professional lives as well as a conviviality amongst those present that left me feeling both proud of what I do, and inspired to do even better.

Andrea Schuler, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

I'm so grateful for the opportunity I had this year to attend the VRA Conference in Toronto with the generous support of a Luraine Tansey Travel Award. In my application for the award I wrote that I hoped to leave my first VRA conference with new skills, new ideas, and having met new people, and the conference succeeded beyond my hopes in all of these areas. All of the sessions I attended were relevant and

interesting, and VRA members were generous with sharing their knowledge and experience both in these sessions and outside of them.

In particular, I enjoyed the mini-workshops I attended on VRA Core, CCO, and XML, as the content was directly relevant to my job, and the sessions on engaging new technologies that provided new information about some tools I was familiar with and introduced me to some I was not. I especially enjoyed both the plenary session on fair use and fair dealing and the keynote address at the member's dinner, as the dynamic speakers in both of those addresses offered a number of thought-provoking ideas. The New Members' breakfast was a wonderful opportunity to meet other members at a similar position in their career as I am as well as veteran members. I am relatively new to the profession and I feel like I left Toronto with a better sense of visual resources as a whole and the many, varied, facets and opportunities there are within it. My sincerest thanks to Jackie Spafford and the Travel Awards Committee for making my attendance at this year's conference possible, and I look forward to Atlanta next year.

Astrid Otey, Miami University (Ohio)

I greatly appreciate receiving one of the Tansey Travel Awards this year. I would not otherwise have been able to attend the Toronto conference, as there was no funding provided by my institution. This year, I and many of my colleagues are acutely faced with major changes which accompany the digital transition. The economic downturn and the shift toward new technologies are necessitating fundamental evaluations of our profession. It was helpful, as always, to be able to talk to colleagues and to realize that we are not alone in our corners of the world, but that many of us are grappling with the same problems.

The annual conference sessions and workshops addressed many of our issues, and offered routes to follow to continue to move forward with our collections and to assert our relevance in these changing times. Colleagues presented options for using new resources to enhance our image offerings, and there were clear explanations of some difficult concepts. I think my highlight was the Selling Visual Resources workshop, where we were given a wealth of practical information, along with examples that we could take back to our collections and apply immediately. All in all, the conference was, as always, stimulating and gratifying. Thank you again for providing this award, which allowed me to participate.

Kevin Ford, Columbia College Chicago

In fulfillment of the requirements for receiving a VRA Travel Award to attend the 2009 VRA Conference in Toronto, Canada, I am writing to report on my conference activities and to thank the Travel Award Committee again for awarding me this very nice travel fund. With so many institutions cutting professional development funding, including my own, I deeply appreciate the funding – without it, I would have been

unable to attend or I would have had to assume 100% of the expenses.

I found Karin Whalen and John Taormina's workshop about Issues in VR Administration and their following panel discussion on the same topic extremely informative from a number of perspectives. Not only did the meetings discuss daily or yearly issues such as budgets, staffing, planning, report writing, and—though not part of the official program but extremely illuminating—professional status within one's field and institution, but the meetings also covered how those issues change and continue to change over time. The organizers' and presenters' depth of experience in the field of VR made these sessions very educational. In a similar vein, Friday's session, "Training Millennials at Work," also delivered insight into a variety of strategies currently employed at a number of institutions to accommodate student workers so that they are comfortable and productive in the workplace. I am comforted to hear of others managing similar work-related issues that I currently face in my position and, more importantly, I look forward to the opportunity to try alternative strategies introduced to me during the workshop and sessions.

I also had the opportunity to attend a few functions that focused on cataloging. I enjoyed hearing Jodie Double describe how the University of Minnesota College of Design Digital Collections and Archives employs CCO and VRA Core4 principles and schema. Finally, I found the session that explored the organizational and classification challenges of the Materials Library to expand my appreciation for all that can be cataloged, and should be.

Julie Doring, Duke University

Receiving a Tansey Travel Award was a tremendous honor, because it enabled me to attend and present at my first professional conference. It was such a pleasure to attend a conference in which every session had some practical application to my daily work. For example, after attending the mini-workshop on metadata, I later learned about an application relating to its creation and storage that I had not seen before in Greg Reser's presentation on embedding metadata in image files.

On Saturday, I attended the MDID session, and chaired the meeting of the IRIS usergroup. This opportunity was invaluable to me, since here I was able to discuss the metadata and presentation tools I use every day basis. Also, hearing attendees' questions offered so much insight into how others use the tools, and demonstrated that we all face the same challenges.

At the VRA meeting, the opportunities for discussion and camaraderie showed me the collaborative nature of the Visual Resources field. I gained a great deal of information and support from informal meetings and casual conversations. I think it's important to discuss shared joy and frustrations with colleagues. Generally, these discussions usually germinate the seeds for collaborative opportunities in the future, and they allowed me to return to Duke with new resources, ideas, and

friendships. The ability to connect faces with names removes any of the trepidation I might have had about participating in listserv discussions, and I look forward to the opportunity to jump into the fray. I returned from the conference excited to become more actively involved in the Southeast Chapter, and I will be attending the meeting in Raleigh in June. Going to the VRA conference made me feel like the profession is alive and well during this period of economic crisis.

Adrienne Lai, University of British Columbia (MLIS student)

The 2009 Visual Resources Association conference in Toronto provided me with a fantastic introduction to the profession and the people who work in it. My first conference experience began with the "Issues in Visual Resources Administration" workshop, which gave me a broad overview of the main issues facing Visual Resources curators. Next, the VRA Plenary Session on copyright was an insightful and entertaining look at copyright exceptions on both sides of the border. Other highlights included the new members breakfast and the session on interacting with millennial students.

I was very impressed with the supportive and collaborative atmosphere engendered by the VRA members. My VRA conference mentor, Heather Cleary, provided a friendly and familiar face at the conference's social events and facilitated introductions and conversation with other VRA members. In every session I attended, the audience actively participated and shared useful tips and experiences. My short volunteer stint at the VRAffle table introduced me to a number of prominent VRA personalities and I witnessed many examples of the VRA members' good humour and generosity. Overall, the conference provided me with an inside look at the visual resources profession that I haven't had so far in my MLIS program. Without the support of the VRA travel award, I would not have been able to get this valuable experience.

Tansey Top-Up Award Recipients

Carolyn Caizzi, Yale University

Receiving one of the Tansey Top-up Travel Awards allowed me to experience the Visual Resources Association conference for the first time. I found the experience to be inspiring and energizing as I engaged in conversation with many individuals from a wide range of institutions. The willingness of participants to share knowledge about the issues of managing digital image and media content was extremely striking and refreshing.

I am grateful to the Travel Award Committee as I was able to attend two workshops in addition to the conference sessions that I may have not been able to without the receiving the award. In particular, the workshop, "Selling Visual Resources," was very relevant to my position as a technology specialist which entails promoting the visual resources collection and services we provide at my institution. This workshop provided me with specific ideas and tips that I

have brought back to my workplace and plan to utilize.

Lastly, the conference truly made an impression on me with its various speakers, especially the keynote address given by Michael Edson. This dinner was a wonderful opportunity to socialize as well as listen to an invigorating speech about organizational commitments (or lack thereof) to its mission of creating access to cultural/visual collections. I really benefited from the conference and hope to be a more active participant in the future.

Pam Hawkes, The College of William and Mary

I'd like to thank the VRA for supporting my attendance at this year's conference in Toronto through one of its Top-Up Awards. We are all feeling the results of a hard hit economy and educational funding/budgets have suffered. Because of this Travel Award, I was able to justify to my institution the importance of attending this conference. It is an honor to be a part of this professional organization and I have gained so much from every conference I have attended... including Toronto 2009!

For me, this conference was about technology: where it is and where it is going. What we need to know now on copyright issues, image and cataloging issues, teaching and communication tools and what we need to understand for the future of our profession. From the "VRA Core 4.0 and CCO Mini Workshop", "Digital Asset Discovery", "Metadata in Action" to the "New Technology" sessions, I have gained more insight into the importance they each carry for Visual Resources. One of my favorite sessions was the "Training Millennials at Work". It was very insightful and exciting. As a Baby Boomer, I look forward to starting a blog, a wiki or maybe even a facebook connection. It will depend on which one will appeal and involve my millennial student assistants (and campus community) the most! Another highlight was this year's Keynote speaker, Mr. Michael Edson, Director of Web and New Media Strategy at the Smithsonian Institution. His enthusiasm was contagious and his vision for the future of the Smithsonian was inspiring.

I am indebted to all the session and workshop leaders for their time and expertise. The dedication they have to our profession is why I always feel empowered and ready to take on any VR challenge!

Anita Regan, Dalhousie University

Many thanks to the VRA/Tansey travel fund for the Top-up Travel Award. As a first time conference attendee, I was very happy to be able to take the travel award to the Faculty Committee when I approached them for conference support and I believe it added to their willingness to contribute to conference expenses.

I found the conference helpful in several ways. Firstly, as affirmation that I am on the right track in my work in our Resource Centre. Secondly, meeting others, sharing information and being able to have a conversation about concerns meant that the sense of working in isolation which

I felt as a one-person Visual Resource Centre operator was dispelled. Attending the conference also gave me an energy boost and I have already begun to implement plans that were previously languishing.

Everyone was so friendly and helpful that I now feel like part of professional community. And it's great to be part of a group with such a highly developed sense of humor!

Betha Whitlow, Washington University in St. Louis

I would like to express my gratitude for my top-up travel award to attend the 2009 VRA Toronto Conference. The award enabled me to arrive at the conference a day early and stay through the end. This allowed me to participate in the day-long meeting of the Strategic Plan Task Force, of which I am co-chair, prior to the conference. This meeting was integral to the process of drafting a Strategic Plan for the VRA that will guide the Association through the next several years. At the conference, I was also the moderator and speaker for the two-part "Emerging Technologies" sessions, an instructor for the sold-out "Selling Visual Resources" workshop, and the organizer of the Birds-of-a-Feather luncheons. I also ran a very productive meeting for the Education Committee, of which I am co-chair.

In addition to my conference participation, I benefitted as always from the interaction with and astute presentations of my colleagues. In particular, I enjoyed the "Training Millennials at Work" session, which provided fresh insight to me on how to manage and leverage the increasing generation gap between me and my staff.

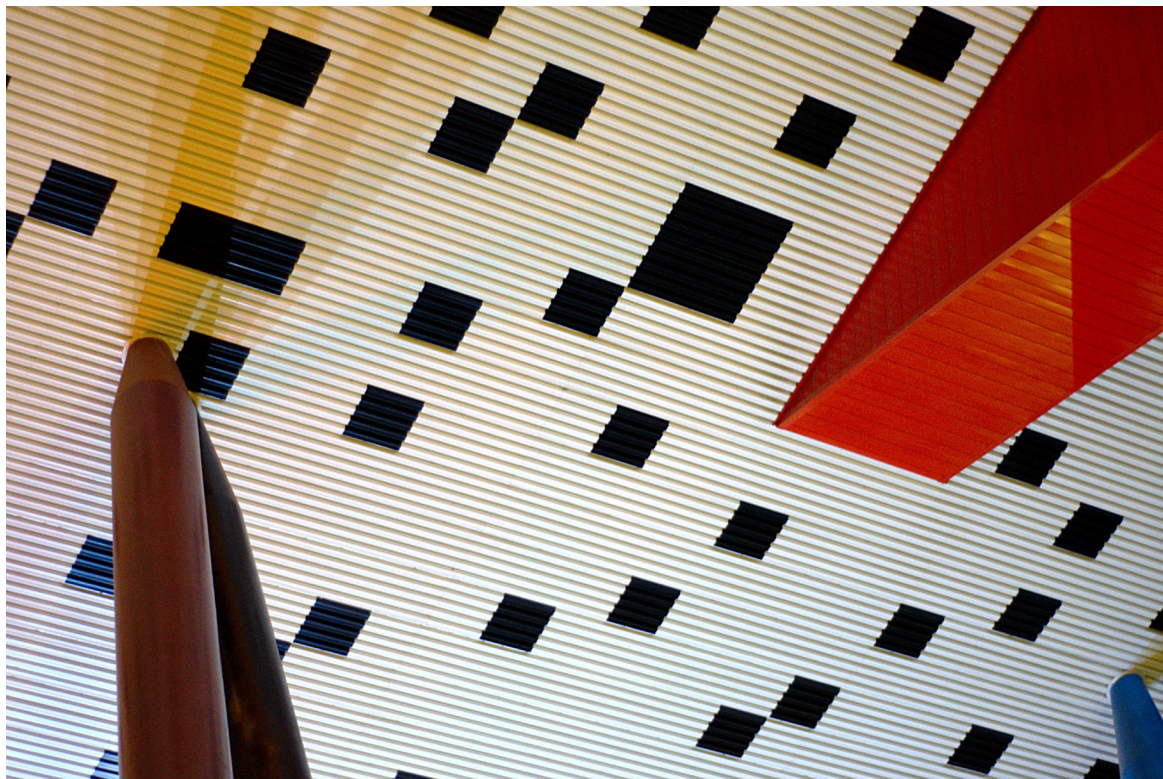
Beth Wodnick, Princeton University

The Toronto Conference was a great opportunity to connect with colleagues and meet new people in the field. As a first-time attendee and new VRA member, I was excited to attend many of the sessions and meetings as well as the New Professionals Birds of a Feather Lunch, First-time Attendees Breakfast and the Cataloging Roundtable. At every event I attended, I was happy to see familiar faces, but also made an effort to introduce myself to people I didn't know. It was great to walk away from the conference being able to put faces with so many of the names that I see on the VRAlist.

I especially enjoyed the Engaging New Technologies sessions and was excited to learn how other collections are using technology in innovative ways. I appreciated the opportunity to attend sessions related to ARTstor and the Getty Vocabularies and am looking forward to what they have in store for the future.

I left the conference feeling energized, renewed and connected to the organization in ways that would not have been possible had I not attended this conference. The Tansey Top-Up Travel Award made it possible for me to attend the conference, and I am grateful to the committee for this opportunity. ☺

Feature Articles



Sharp Centre for Design, Ontario College of Art and Design, architect: Will Alsop (British, 1947–), completed 2004, site: Toronto, Ontario. Photo by Ian Muttoo courtesy flickr.com via Creative Commons License.

2009 Southeast College Art Conference (SECAC) **VRC Session: Facilities Planning for the Digital Visual Resources Center of the Future**

Session Chair, Kathe Hicks Albrecht, Visual Resources Curator,
American University

Session Introduction

As we are all aware, visual resources collections are quickly transitioning to the digital environment. In order to make that transition, visual resources professionals must develop plans for new, technologically advanced spaces to accommodate digital workflows. The challenge is that most of us manage new digital imaging processes in facilities largely designed for analog needs. Furthermore, many of us still maintain analog workflows, with the resulting need for dual-purpose spaces. What should we do with our analog components as we shift to digital: the slides, the light tables, the work stations for masking and mounting slides? How do

we fit the new digital training station and image database server into existing spaces? These are questions we will address in this session.

Between the planning and the presenting of this session, the U.S. economy, indeed the global economy, has settled into a deep recession. Our 401(k)s have become 201(k)s, the real estate market has sagged dramatically, and many mortgagees face foreclosure. States, caught short of expected revenue, and burdened with massive pension obligations, seek to cut back wherever possible, and even where it seems impossible. Universities and museums are forced to make cuts in staffing, services, and building plans. The primary issue for visual resources professionals has become one of survival. Space issues are trumped by financial concerns. Some of us have been asked to curtail our activities and many of us have lost staff. Colleagues have had their operations folded into the campus library or media center. In this climate, it is vital to keep focused on what we do, how we do it, why it is important to our institutions, and what kinds of spaces are necessary for success. We must fight for our territory. I hope this session's papers will give us ammunition, if you will, to

return to our individual institutions better equipped to stand up for our profession and for our individual careers. We will look at issues of space planning from the perspective of those who have developed new facilities from the ground up, as well as those who have altered their existing facilities to accommodate changing workflow and patron needs. We will also touch on the adverse affects of the global economy on our profession, and how we can maintain our relevance in this shrinking economy.

Each one of us has a story. We will delve into our panelists' stories first and then open up a dialog to consider space and work issues we all face. I know we will learn from each other's experiences and observations. ♡

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Space Planning for the Analog to Digital Transition

Betha Whitlow, Washington University in St. Louis

This is the story of the Sam Fox School of Art and Design building project at Washington University in Saint Louis. When discussions for this project began in 1995, my duty as slide curator was to manage a collection of slides for the dozens of faculty who used them. By the time the building was finished in 2006, fewer than ten faculty members on campus were still using slides in the new Visual Resources Center (VRC). Three years later, only two faculty members are still using the mostly archival collection of slides that remain. The facility and faculty have otherwise gone digital.

Over the course of the building project the entire landscape of providing access to visual resources has changed: that which was an analog collection characterized by physical access to slides fifteen years ago is now a center devoted to digital image development and instruction.

Given the glacial pace of building projects—which hinge upon factors as abstract as the politics of space and as concrete as budgets—visual resources facilities must be designed to accommodate the needs of the present while also anticipating different needs in the future. This is a particularly challenging task when building plans are finalized several years in advance of project completion.

When plans for the Sam Fox School of Art and Design were finished in 2003 it was still necessary to retain the slide collection and maintain classrooms with both digital and analog equipment. At that point in time ArtStor did not exist; only three faculty members at Washington University taught largely digital-based courses; and barely 5,000 images populated the VRC's digital image database. Part of planning for the future and the transition from a physical to a virtual realm involved justifying the VRC's spatial requirements. By teaching the project architects about visual resources and the needs of those engaging in visual pedagogy, the VRC ended up with nearly double its previous space while many other units experienced a reduction in size.

Many other visual resources professionals may not be faced with a building or remodeling project in the near future. In the current economic climate most institutions are downsizing by eliminating positions, programs and facilities as finances become scarce. However, effectively advocating for an image collection during a building project requires that we navigate through and negotiate for contested resources. The knowledge gained from my experience—what was done the right or wrong way, and the impact of moving to a new space—has broad applications.

Before the move to the Sam Fox School of Art and Design the VRC at Washington University was known as the Slide Collection. The collection consisted of two rooms:

a small curator's office which also served as an assistant's office, primary storage space and copy photography room; and a larger room with slide cabinets, tables and light boxes. The Slide Collection was funded by an endowment in the Department of Art History and Archaeology and resided in the Department's administrative offices. The collection was located across the hall from the Art and Architecture Library; above the University Art Museum; and between the Schools of Art and Architecture. Though accessible to any faculty member on campus the primary users of the collection were faculty from the Department of Art History, Art and Architecture.

In 1995 Washington University announced plans to create a center devoted to art and design studies in which several units—namely the School of Art, School of Architecture, Art and Architecture Library, Department of Art History and the University art Museum—would not only share space but also collaborate programmatically.

Collaborative skills are one of many that visual resources professionals have acquired as we become increasingly versatile. Institutional transitions can be a time to evolve and even thrive. Here are some basic tenets to keep in mind when faced with a new building project:

Don't be afraid to put yourself out there

When the Sam Fox School of Design building project began I was new to my position and hesitant about contributing. Nonetheless I quickly realized that education was—and remains—the most empowering tool I had. It was important to stay one step ahead of faculty and other staff members on issues that seemed nebulous at the time but eventually proved to be significant. As the building project moved ahead I learned enough about the World Wide Web, digital image production and management and electronic classrooms to make myself a leader in a community that was still feeling its way. My knowledge improved the working lives of art history faculty and they began to recognize and trust me as an authoritative voice on the sometimes mystifying issues of the digital age. As a result I had the freedom to speak for my facility and often for the faculty during the design and building process.

Knowing that the use of technology would be an important part of my role in the future, I pushed for a dialogue with other members in the Sam Fox School who had potential common interests. Committees were formed and conversations devoted to integrating and leveraging technology in the operations of the School. By becoming familiar with one another and gaining respect for our individual contributions, the various entities thrown together in the building project became less likely to compete for highly contested space and resources. The collaborations forged within these committees still exist, to the benefit of all.

Learn to work with your architects and contractors

Being proactive and assertive early on in the brainstorming phase of a building project will almost certainly

ensure your participation in the design process. At the very least you should insist on seeing plans for your facility early and often. Ask that you be given the opportunity to represent your unit at meetings with architects and designers. It is not unreasonable to assume that most architects have never designed a visual resources facility, or to assume that an architect may not be aware of such a facility's special or unusual needs. It is the job of a visual resources collection manager to teach an architect about the recent transition from analog to digital images and the need for space that can accommodate both an archival slide collection and a wired infrastructure sufficient for digital production. To do so with finesse will hopefully ensure that the architect will be receptive.

Architects are often highly concerned with aesthetics—often at the expense of practical needs. For example, the architect for the Sam Fox School project initially designed art history classrooms with attractive windows, not considering the darkness required for visual presentations. I gave the architects a tour of our existing classrooms, including those retrofitted with blinds, to illustrate the effectiveness of spaces designed without windows. Their plans for windows in the new art history classrooms were quickly abandoned. Architects and designers are visual people, so use this to your advantage. If an architect has trouble understanding your requests, show them what you mean by using pictures, diagrams and tours or demonstrations.

Contrary to popular opinion architects are not always sticklers for detail, particularly when their creative vision is hindered by spatial and financial limitations. Be aware that in any building project some spaces may be unworkable no matter how attractive they appear to be in a schematic plan. In early plans for the VRC at Washington University, the primary room for both slides and digital imaging workstations had good square footage but was long and quite narrow. The plans did not make clear that slide cabinets would have to be stacked in a way that would render them unusable for anyone under 6'7" tall. After I lightheartedly suggested that a height requirement be created for all future faculty and staff hires, the architects carved out a wider and much more functional space. This would not have happened without a willingness to scrutinize what appeared on paper to be a good amount of space.

Construction managers, contractors and subcontractors are different from architects: they are concerned with the bottom line and keeping the building within cost. Know what is important to you and what you can live without. If you've cultivated the sense of give and take throughout the process, contractors are more likely to listen when you absolutely insist on something.

Share your cookies

In the spirit of cooperation it is important to learn the art of compromise. In a project with limited space and finances, what is given to you will often mean something

being taken away from someone else. For example, when I effectively advocated for a wider space for the slide and digital imaging room in the VRC, the architects simply turned around and took space away from the adjacent Art and Architecture Library. The library director was understandably upset: losing space easily leads to feelings of marginalization. Recognizing that a turf battle was not in our best interests, the library director and I instead thought about our common goals. We considered how sharing facilities could benefit two entities concerned with enhanced digital access and overall service. The result is several shared spaces that create a physical and collaborative flow between our staff.

Flexible infrastructure is everything

What you perceive to be the primary function of your facility today may be different five years from now, but a new building will not be built for at least another fifty. In the rapidly changing digital age a visual resources facility can never have too much access to electricity or data ports. This ensures that equipment can be added, workstations moved and spaces reconfigured over time. For the VRC at Washington University we requested and received maximum wiring: dozens of electrical outlets and Ethernet ports spaced just a few feet apart around the perimeter of our four rooms and located inside floor hubs. Though we were criticized for what was perceived to be superfluous hardwiring during the design process, insisting on it was a particularly good move because wireless access to the Internet is not always reliable in the VRC's below-grade location.

In the future our heavily wired space will easily allow us to push slide cabinets to the margins and utilize the center for collaborative, digital workstations. A workspace crisscrossed with extension cords is dangerous and unattractive. Keep your space and perceptions of it positive by wiring it properly from the outset.

Protect yourself

Retaining a paper trail is extremely important during a building project. Anything you request should be asked for in writing, signed off on and preserved in a form that can be accessed at a moment's notice. Keep all plans, proposals and correspondence in an organized filing system long after the project is complete. Our requests for wiring in the VRC were documented on a plan covered with color-coded dots to indicate the specific type and location of each port. Upon submission of the plan, it was noted as being rather obsessive in its level of detail. Later, when an entire room in the VRC was built without any outlets or ports, we had our signed and dated plan to prove that the request for outlets and ports had been made, clearing us of any financial responsibility involved in retrofitting the space.

Fill your purse

Money matters: a visual resources professional needs to know how to get funding and keep it coming. At private

institutions much is funded by outside donors. If you would like your facility to receive special consideration with your university's development office, make sure they know who you are and be certain they are familiar with the mission of your facility. Write attractive descriptions of desired spaces and equipment that can be presented to potential donors as part of a portfolio of fundable projects. In exchange for naming rights, a donor funded the largest electronic classroom under my supervision.

With respect to a building project, know exactly what amount of money has been budgeted to your facility for moveable equipment like furniture and fixtures. The VRC at Washington University was allotted \$20,000 for the purchase of new slide cabinets. When the building project neared completion, buying a sleek collection of cabinets had become far less important than supporting our digital processes. Instead of allowing that money to disappear I was able to successfully argue that image access had transformed from a physical to a virtual act, and that the term "facilities" constitutes more than furniture. The funds for slide cabinets were then repurposed for purchasing four new computers, a digital camera and several new scanners.

Compromise is not always such a bad thing

In order for the VRC to get the amount of space it needed in a building largely devoted to providing a home to the new Washington University Art Museum, we had to accept a less-than-perfect location in the basement. There are many positive aspects to the compromise we made, including more functional spaces and more space in general.

One productive aspect of our location on a lower level of the Sam Fox School is the physical distance it gives the VRC from any particular department. The previous location within the Department of Art History (also our primary funding source) meant that patrons from Art, Architecture and beyond were often viewed as interlopers.

In our new facility we are allowed to operate more independently and in turn we are perceived as being more independent. While continuing to provide high-quality support for art history faculty, we are also approached more often by faculty in other disciplines who no longer think of the VRC as being owned by any one department. This has meant an infusion of additional funds into the VRC budget from other units that use our facility and a greater ability to provide services to a broader range of faculty. With physical independence for the VRC I have been able to retire from some of the other roles I played in our previous site, including triage artist, confidant and peacemaker.

I now have my own office that affords a great degree of privacy but also flows naturally into a work area where the Assistant Curator and a staff workstation are situated. In addition, the common workstations and meeting area we share with the Art and Architecture Library are located just beyond my office. For the first time the VRC enjoys a separate room for copy photography and a large space which

combines slide storage with five computer workstations for our undergraduate staff. Our shared lounge area is popular with graduate students who gather there for lunch, keeping the feel of the place lively despite the inevitably diminished foot traffic in a digital-based VRC.

To remedy the decrease in foot traffic we have also redesigned our service model in order to focus more on outreach, instruction and resource development. The digital nature of our facilities allows us to produce sophisticated webpages; to train students studying abroad in the use of cameras and social networking tools such as blogs; and to make high-resolution digital images for faculty. The time we used to spend helping patrons locate slides we now spend developing classes on topics ranging from presentation skills to Web 2.0 and bringing those classes to faculty and students in our improved classrooms. The approach we've deployed is dynamic, forward-thinking and responsive to the change in service orientation required by the digital age. In no small part, we have our new location in the Sam Fox School of Art and Design to thank for inspiring this model. ♪

Space without Walls: Decentralize Digital Production

Steve Tatum, Virginia Tech

At Virginia Tech, the visual resources facility is in the Art and Architecture Library, which moved into a newly renovated space in the fall of 2008. With the move, visual resources lost half of its space and the ability to perform some of its functions as effectively as before. Instead of a self-sufficient facility, there is now an office that serves partly for production and partly as an administrative center for production that takes place in other locations. Digital production, delivery, and communications have been invaluable in creating a fabric that unifies work in different locations and reduces the need for a complete center. Even so, the fabric is imperfect. A minimal physical space limits the services we offer and the efficiency of our production. On a more positive note, the limitations encourage us to pursue new outreach activities that we can perform beyond our own facilities. After a year's experience with our facilities, I am in a position to critique their benefits and limitations, and to propose an ideal arrangement for our services.

Visual resources primarily serve the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, which encompasses architecture, related fields, the applied arts, the visual fine arts, and art history. The curator's principal responsibilities are managing the art and architecture image database and the collection of architectural drawings (construction plans). Art history faculty and students are the main patrons of the database. Architecture and related disciplines use the drawings. In addition to the visual resources curator, the staff typically comprises three undergraduate students paid by the University Library, two undergraduates provided by the Art History Area of the School of Visual Arts, and two graduate assistants provided by the Architecture Department of the School of Architecture and Design.

The previous visual resources area was on the third floor of Cowgill Hall and occupied approximately 253 square feet, not counting the drawing flat files or patron work areas, which were nearby in the library proper (figure 1). There was a slide and workroom, 22 feet long, which included cabinets for 70,000 slides, a copy stand, and a desk for student workers. The room was a semi-public space where patrons could look through the slides and occasionally use the copy stand to make their own slides. There was a separate office area for the curator just outside the slide room door. An important feature of the third-floor space was the 22-foot room, where the slide cabinets created a distance between the copy stand and curator's area, so that photography did not interfere with the curator's work.

When visual resources moved into the new library space on the first floor of Cowgill Hall, it lost 120 square

feet (figure 2). We now have a pleasant office measuring 133 square feet with several beneficial features, but lost the separate slide and workroom. Giving up the slides has been the main change to our services, but losing space for photography has more affect on our future possibilities. The copy stand is now in my office, behind the computer stand that serves as my desk. The student staff and I use it for occasional work, but the quarters are too small to comfortably accommodate production work. We had always hoped to recruit architecture faculty to use the image database for their courses in the same way the art history faculty do, but without adequate space for photography, we cannot provide custom work for entire courses as we do for art history. Our services for the two areas are now more clearly separated between serving art history courses with the image database and architecture courses with the drawings.

We can still provide images for art history because they have their own visual resources facilities, which include a copy stand and two computers for student staff. Although I supervise students who work for art history and do most of the photography, it would not be appropriate to use art history's facilities and funds for architecture's courses. Instead, I have been concentrating on the drawings with the help of the two architecture graduate assistants. Faculty and students have long requested that the library provide scans of the drawings. For logistical reasons, that had not been possible until this year. When a new opportunity arose, I arranged with architecture staff for the two graduate assistants to begin scanning the drawings. They scan sets of drawings that are frequently used and scan selected pages on request. While the emphasis for serving architecture is on the drawings, I am continuing to develop the architectural component of our image collection so that it will be a useful resource for students and faculty, even if it does not serve the entire needs of individual courses. A donor has been generous in providing his own architectural images, and when we have scanned images from the slide collection.

I have begun to emphasize services that do not make demands on our space and that were in the past more peripheral. For example, we use Luna for our image database, which the university library originally purchased with the intention of providing to any university department to use for images. There were not very many takers, apart from athletics. When the Office of University Relations recently expressed interest in using Luna to display and distribute their photography, I began working with them to implement the database and train their staff. Similarly, a staff member of the GIS area of the main library has been helping the chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture with materials for databases about memories of recreational landscape sites in Virginia. The intention was to use Luna, but no one had the time to learn to use it or to manage it. One of my student workers and I are helping to bring the project to fruition. I have welcomed the opportunity to work with digital libraries personnel on an image archive to be displayed in

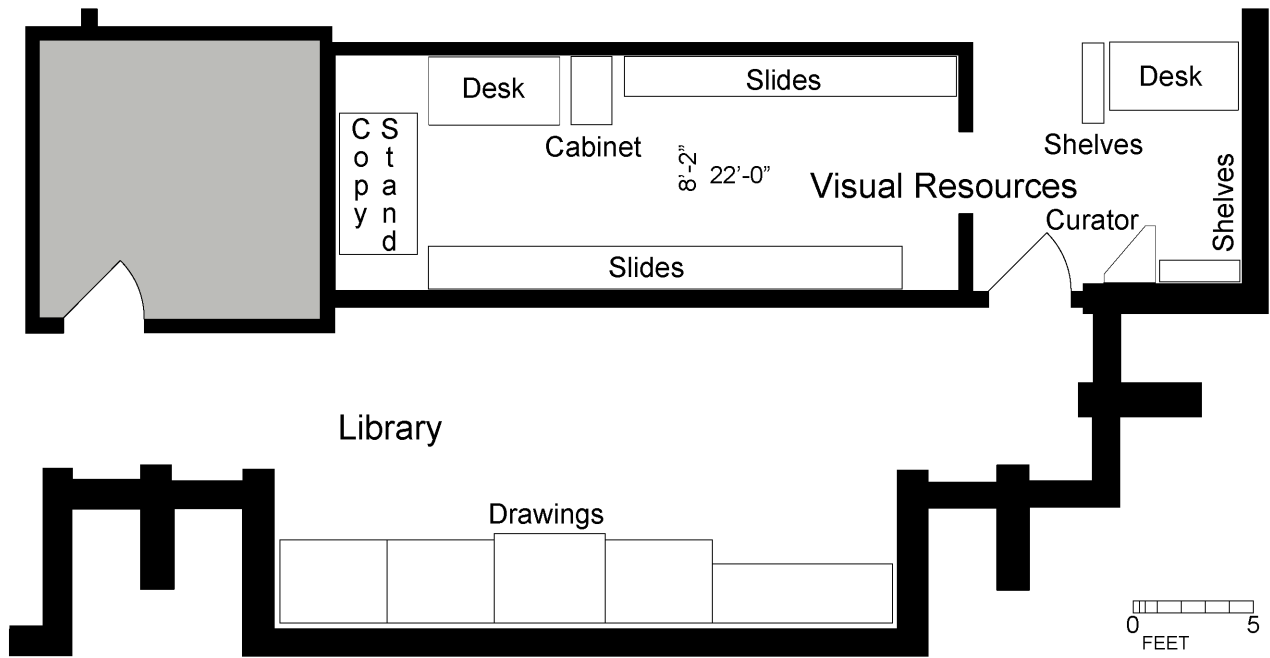
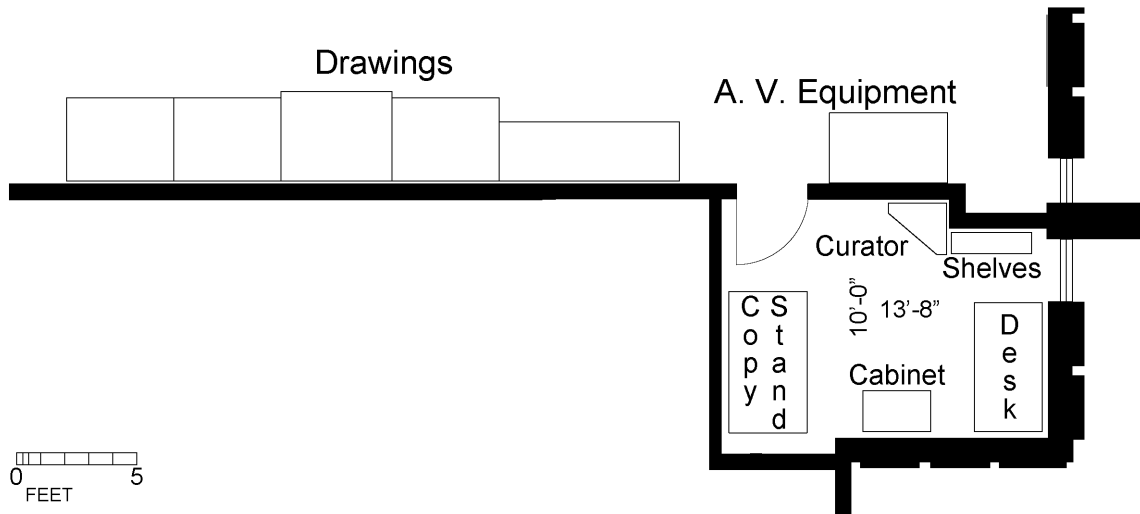


Figure 1. Former Visual Resources area in the Art and Architecture Library on the third floor of Cowgill Hall. Drawing by Marie Williams. 2009-2010. Based on MMM Design Group, Cowgill Hall HVAC & Power, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, Virginia. Working Drawing Submission, Third Floor Demolition Plan. Norfolk, Virginia. August 31, 2006. A3.1.

Figure 2. Current Visual Resources area in the Art and Architecture Library first floor of Cowgill Hall. Drawing by Marie Williams. 2009-2010. Based on drawings by Sruthi Atmakur and Steve Tatum.



CONTENTdm.

In a sense our space is one without walls. The transition to digitization has made decentralization possible. Image and data production takes place in multiple locations and can be uploaded to a server in the main library. Student staff in the Art and Architecture Library can work at the student computer in the curator's office, outside the office with their own laptops, or at the public computers. They can take work home with them. Much of our communication is online. We use a wiki for documenting procedures and keeping track of the workflow. When students are offsite, we communicate via e-mail. The bulk of my communication with the photographers, who work in a different building, is via e-mail. The students use texting and Facebook to communicate with one another. For our purposes, these methods enable better communication and documentation than the older means of remote contact, the telephone. I have embraced decentralization as an advantage of digitization. Yet, a space without walls has its limits. It cannot entirely replace a well-designed, complete physical facility.

Digital technology provides quick, written communication. Even so, written communication needs to be augmented with other forms, especially when teaching and giving non-routine instructions. Face-to-face conversation, along with written instructions, transmits information more effectively. The majority of my communications with the photographers, who work in a separate building, are via e-mail. Through no fault of their own, they do not always follow instructions the way I intend. The problem is that e-mail alone is not always enough. When I visit them in person, they are glad to see me and we have good conversations that are mutually helpful. Because I cannot deliver all aspects of training and supervision with remote communications, I rely on other people to play a part. The photographers have enough contact with the art history faculty to keep them motivated and focused on their work. I provide the initial training in copy stand photography and Photoshop and do some follow-through, but I rely strongly on new hires to work with a more experienced worker. The photographers do have face-to-face with relevant people, just not very much with the curator who oversees their production.

Cataloging on the other hand requires more personal contact with the curator. One of the things I have learned from working with students a few feet away in a small office is that catalogers do better work if they are within easy conversational distance than if they are farther away. Conversations and questions about the cataloging help to maintain consistency. Students who work near me during their regular hours have even been able to sustain their performance over their vacations when I have given them work to do at home. Used to conversation and e-mails in their usual routine, students freely e-mail their questions. Students who have preferred to work at a greater distance during their normal working hours have in general not performed as consistently at work or at home, even if they are able to focus

on their work without a supervisor present.

It is not uncommon for visual resources operations to employ separate photographers and catalogers. A student may be more capable in one area than another or developing two sets of skills that require constant practice may be too much to expect of part-time student workers. For us, the bottom line is the distance between the Art and Architecture Library and the building where art history is located. I do allow catalogers to do some photography if they want to learn. I am right there to guide them when they need help. I would like to allow the art history students to do some cataloging, because the output of the two photographers drives the cataloging that we do. We have little time for other work. The photography is done for art history, so the cataloging is done for art history. The arrangement reinforces our focus on producing art historical material for the digital image collection.

There are additional logistical problems with the distance between art history and the art and architecture library, such as transporting books back and forth, coordinating the students' work in separate locations, and archiving the photographs and cataloging data. I rely on the photographers' judgment for adjusting photographs without my exercising continuous quality control. I address problematic photographs when I notice them or when they are reported to me. Despite supervisory and logistical arrangements that are inefficient at times, the important thing is that we satisfy our patrons, first with the overall quality of the work, and second with our responsiveness when corrections are necessary.

Although we are doing useful work for all of our patrons, the principal charge of visual resources is to provide custom images and cataloging for courses in the entire College of Architecture and Urban Studies. Despite the spatial reach that digital technologies and communications make possible, they are unable to replace a well designed facility that enables close contact among the staff and has all of the material resources necessary for developing an image collection. So I worked with one of my student staff, Marie Williams, who is studying architecture, to develop an ideal plan that draws upon the benefits of our present situation and rectifies the deficiencies (figure 3).

I mentioned to Marie the features we need and asked her to design a visual resources production facility, taking into account the things she was familiar with in ours and her own preferences for a work environment. For the human environment, we need provision for close communication between the curator and the student staff, and for a measure of privacy for each at the same time. The curator requires complete privacy at times for confidential conversations in person and on the phone. There are technical considerations for each stage of production—photography, processing images, and cataloging—that are best served by separate rooms. The room for photography should have black walls and no windows; black walls minimize diffuse light in the room, which can decrease contrast and, on glossy copy, cause glare. The room for adjusting images should optimize

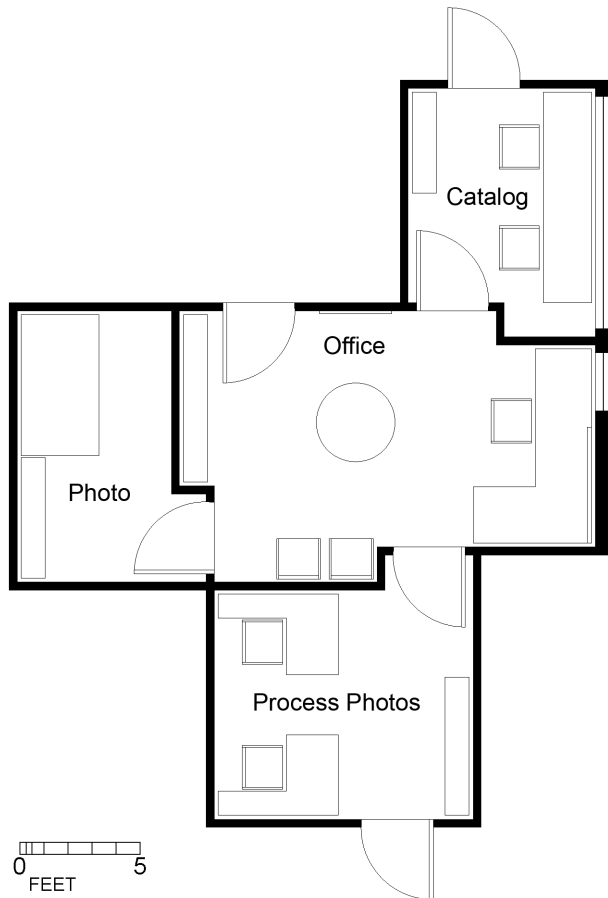


Figure 3. Ideal suite for Visual Resources administration and production. Design and drawing by Marie Williams. 2009-2010.

viewing conditions for computer monitors and reasonably simulate a darkened lecture room where the images will be projected. International Standard ISO 12646 for graphic arts color proofing provides guidance. Walls should be neutral. There should be no windows or if there are, they should be well shaded. The light level of the room should be substantially lower than the white screen of a monitor. Nothing should reflect in the monitors; staff should not wear brightly colored clothing, lest it reflect. The copy being compared to the monitor should have relatively low illumination and a baffle should protect the monitor from the illumination.^{1,2}

In contrast to photography and processing, the cataloging room requires brighter lighting to read easily. It can have ample windows for natural light and an attractive ambience. The curator's office should have lighting capabilities for both images and cataloging. The office can have windows as long as there are effective shades. There should be enough space for small meetings.

Marie's solution is to place the three production

rooms around the curator's office, which provides for close communication between the curator and the student staff doing their various tasks. The four stations with computers she provided are a good number for our normal complement of seven or eight staff, including those employed by art history. The computers are side by side in the cataloging and processing rooms, allowing students to work in pairs when their hours overlap. Each room has a bookshelf and enough surface area for working with books. All computers are connected to a shared drive.

The minimum area for our ideal design is four hundred square feet, which is reasonable for administration and production with our number of staff. An area outside the production suite can include anything that is necessary for a center's public services, such as our architectural drawings. The facility Marie and I propose is notably similar to one for analog production. The office and photography room are the same for each. Cataloging, in the form of making slide labels, had already moved to computers during the analog era. Slide mounting required light tables, which are still useful if one is scanning slides. The most significant addition to the digital workflow is image processing, which is done in-house on computers instead of outsourced to a lab. Ideally the processing is done in a separate area with specialized lighting conditions, which is a new demand on space.

At Virginia Tech, visual resources occupies an office that is too small to perform all of the functions that are within its primary mission of developing and image database for courses in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies. In order to compensate, I have used satellite work areas and developed a network that a digital workflow and digital communications make possible. While a small office is a problematic in some ways, it reveals that the ease of conversation that occurs in close quarters improves the quality of work and also encourages an expansion of services beyond the principal charge. The digital network has been invaluable in expanding services and supplementing communications, but it does not replace frequent face-to-face communications where they are necessary. An ideal suite of administrative and production rooms provides for easy communication between the entire staff, as well as a specialized environment for the technical requirements of each facet of production. ♪

Notes

1. For details see International Organization for Standardization. *International Standard ISO 12646, Graphic Technology—Displays for Colour Proofing—Characteristics and Viewing Conditions*. 2nd ed., June 1, 2006. 4-5.

2. For recommendations for implementing Standard ISO 12646 in prepress work, see Rick McCleary, *CMYK 2.0: A Cooperative Workflow for Photographers, Designers, and Printers*. Berkeley, California: Peachpit Press, 2008. Safari Books OnLine (14 Jan 2010) 60.

A Structured Life: A Media Center Housed in the Stacks of a 1935 Library Building

Christine Hilker, University of Arkansas

The C. Murray Smart Media Center at the Fay Jones School of Architecture is located on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the northwest corner of the state in the Ozark Mountains. The school was recently renamed after Fay Jones (1921-2004) who was in the first class of architects to graduate. The American Institute of Architects awarded him their Gold Medal in 1990 and included him as one of the United States' ten most influential living architects in 2000. The AIA also ranked his masterwork, Thorncrowne Chapel (located in Eureka Springs, Arkansas), as the fourth best building by an American architect in the 20th century. This presentation will give a short introduction to the physical and digital aspects of our media center which is named for Faculty Emeritus C. Murray Smart who taught at the school for thirty years and served as dean from 1976 to 1991.

The media center is located in Vol Walker Hall, a classical revival building that lives in harmony with the collegiate gothic of other nearby buildings. It was originally constructed in 1935 as the main library for the campus. The route through the building to the Smart Media Center takes the visitor through several grand public spaces. The elegance of the Georgian façade is matched by the interior, with its marble walls and columns, and brass railings on two grand staircases. These stairs lead to the second floor space which spans the entire front façade, formerly the old reading room. It now contains design studios for second, third and fourth year students. Our spacious two-story gallery space, also on the second floor, originally hosted circulation, the reference desk and the card catalog during the period when this building was called Vol Walker Library.

As one leaves the gallery one enters the rear, west wing of the building. Here the ceilings are quite low and the feeling is rather claustrophobic. The Smart Media Center is located in the fifth level of this wing which formerly was the stacks of the library. It is filled with a grid of steel, weight-bearing stanchions placed about four feet apart throughout. These stanchions originally served as the backbone of the library's shelving system. Since they are still considered structural they cannot be removed without being replaced with a new support system. They were originally dark gray but we found that painting them white really brightened up the space. Some of the old shelving still comes in handy for storing media center materials and equipment. The grid system also serves to divide the room into work and storage areas. My current office was constructed inexpensively by bolting birch plywood sheets to the steel stanchions. Over the past thirty years I have learned to live with them while also finding good uses for them.

Fortunately we are blessed with old windows that actually open and close and which provide enough light to give the center an open feeling. We have ample space for all of our current activities, plus good air-conditioning in the summer and adequate radiator heat in the winter. In 2005 the building was remodeled with new fire stairs to bring it up to code.

The location of the media center at the rear of the building, two stories above our large lecture hall, has always been an inconvenience. Since we have never employed projectionists, early on we installed a telephone in the projection booth of the lecture hall so that faculty could call for assistance. The telephone saved time and energy for faculty but increased the amount of stair-climbing for the media center staff. We are still lobbying for a location closer to the classrooms we support. However, that will have to wait for the funding required for a much-needed renovation and addition. One good thing about being in a more remote area is that it cuts down on unnecessary foot traffic and interruptions. People do not climb to the fifth floor unless they really need to!

We have made great progress in digitization in this facility. Our early forays (circa 1999) into digitizing slides were for web pages for survey and history classes. These were time-consuming to build. We had to deal with the sizing of digital images, plus entering caption data for each image. Then we had to write the HTML (we used Thumbs Plus software) and finally upload them to the server. We are now using MDID and have about 35,000 images online. 95% of our faculty use digital images in the classroom. They still visit the center to pull slides that have not yet been digitized. They also come in to check out equipment or check out a video to use in class. The greatest amount of media center traffic now comes from our student workers who perform the bulk of the slide scanning and digital copystand work.

As we move more from analog to digital I am starting to view this physical space as an attic in need of a yard sale. We still have many cabinets of slides and I know that one day I will need to embark on both a culling and a preservation project. It will be very interesting to see just how much space we will actually need after that happens. That project might allow us to move into a smaller, more centralized space in the building. But it is not a high priority right now.

One lesson I'm learning in the digital age is that the location of the space is more important than the design of the space itself. Our media center was fairly easy to convert from analog to digital. Installation of additional electrical outlets and network connections were the biggest considerations. However, now that our faculty are not making daily, or even weekly, treks to the media center I feel we are suffering from a loss of communication with them. As we shift to new technology I am finding that I must accept responsibility for keeping my position viable. It will be incumbent on all of us to make ourselves needed, or remind faculty and students how much they require our expertise. I think the legacy of going digital is that we will be the ones going outside of our libraries and centers to make our resources better known to our patrons. ♪

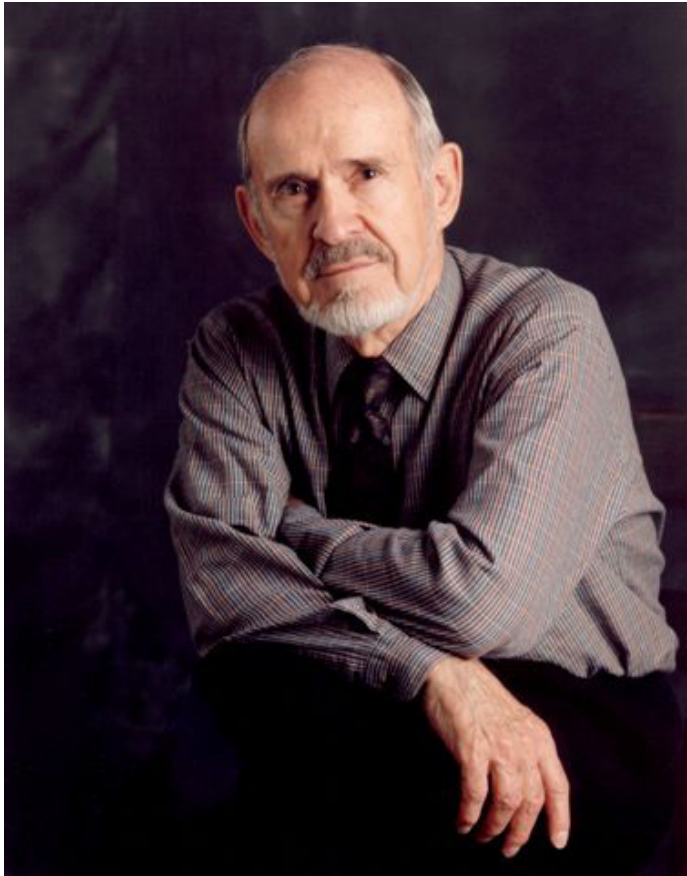








Images:
p. 41: Main facade.
p. 42: Gallery, rear, and stanchions.
p. 43: Shelving and office.
p. 44: Digital workspace and cabinets.
p. 45: Public space, Fay Jones, and design studio.
p. 46: Thorn Crown Chapel.





The Visual Resources Center in the 21st Century

Kathe Hicks Albrecht, American University

Introduction

In the summer of 2004, American University's Art Department and Visual Resources Center (VRC) moved into the Katzen Arts Center, a new 50 million dollar building on the American University campus in Washington, DC. (Figure 1) Because planning for the new spaces had gone on for over ten years, the space needs for the visual resources area had shifted dramatically between the planning and construction phases. In fact, by the time we moved into the Katzen Arts Center, the visual resources world had changed significantly. Many slide libraries in the United States had morphed into digital imaging labs, Kodak had halted production of film and slide projectors, and demands for digitization and new services were being made on the visual resources professional. All these changes greatly impacted the visual resources physical space requirements at American University and at institutions worldwide.

In this paper, I will discuss the move itself, describe the new spaces and subsequent changing workflows, and analyze how the VRC has evolved in its new physical environment. I hope the description of my own experience may serve as a helpful case study. I will also share some thoughts on how visual resources centers can remain viable in today's adverse economic climate.

Planning for the Move

As you develop a plan for any significant physical move, it is important to configure your new spaces as flexibly as possible. Even if you are currently working with a collection that is slide-based, your tasks should evolve dramatically in the near future as you move from the analog to digital format. Be sure to allot sufficient space for traditional methods of slide library work, keeping the general footprint of a traditional slide library, but think in terms of new uses for the space. For example, you will soon need scanning stations and expanded computer work areas. But for most of us, we need to allow enough square footage to function in both the analog and digital worlds for the time being. At American University, the spaces we allotted for light tables and lecture planning remain highly useful, but the function is completely different today from what it was four years ago when we moved to the Katzen Arts Center.

In developing the plan for the new VRC, we requested a work area that tripled the existing footprint of the old VRC. The table (Figure 2) compares the square footage of the old space with both the proposed space for the new building and the space we were eventually given. Clearly, the before situation was abysmal. The VRC consisted of one 350

sq ft (19' x 18') room. This small space contained the curator's desk, two large light tables, a bulky cabinet which housed 10,000 lantern slides, over forty Neumade cabinets containing a total of 100,000 35mm slides, two staff computer workstations, a set of card catalog drawers, faculty shelving, a small slide mounting and masking work area, a typewriter station, and graduate student staff shelving. Six graduate students (one or two at any given time), the faculty, and I shared the space on a daily basis. In planning for the new building, I hoped to alleviate some of the overcrowding and pressed for much-needed expansion, with several task-specific work areas.

One of the challenges of the planning phase was to develop a good working relationship with the architectural team. The architects were not familiar with the academic visual resources profession—what we do, how we fit into the larger university community, and why we are an important component of the academic unit. Because of this lack of understanding, I learned it was easier to explain the VRC functions by justifying space in terms of today's usage, instead of speculating on future use. It was too complicated to explain the current services the VRC provided, existing workflows, and how my professional role and VRC space needs may change in a future fully-digital environment. It was best to concentrate on clearly explaining how the spaces currently functioned and make the case for existing needs. In fact, the few times I proposed possible future usage of the space, the architects began to question all my assumptions and extrapolations. Architects often consider themselves visionaries, and they will tend to envision (on their terms) what your space needs may be in five or ten years. They may adapt your spaces accordingly. So, it is best to keep to current priorities, without speculation.

I also learned that I could not assume the architects would retain the information about VRC functions from one planning meeting to another. After all, my building was just one in a series of complex projects the designers were currently working on. So, I repeated my requests and pressed for my program's interests on an ongoing basis. As my one-and-only workplace, I knew it was up to me to advocate strongly for the VRC spaces.

Building projects often end up with space constraints imposed as the project approaches completion, so it is important to prioritize your physical space needs. If you do not prioritize your needs (and then lobby steadily for them) the architects may eliminate important elements of your workspace. In other words, they may prioritize for you. So, once you have your own priorities in place, it is best not to waver on your requests. With that in mind, you still must be ready to negotiate for space. If you requested generous square footage initially, and carved out sufficient space, you are in an excellent position to negotiate final space allotments after the inevitable squeeze. If you start the process by asking for what you absolutely must have, then you are likely going to be cramped in the near future, especially if last minute constraints

reduce your footprint. In our new building, we lost one classroom during the planning phase, but had asked for two more than we had in the old building. We very much wanted four classrooms, but gave up the fourth during negotiations with the architects and other building tenants who were competing for space. Ultimately, we did not lose any space in the VRC, in part because those spaces were defined early on, clearly described, and repeatedly termed essential. Remember that, in a large building design, the VRC space probably represents just a small percentage of the project. You are probably not the main space hog.

In forging a good working relationship with the architectural team, it is important to understand the architect's overall vision for the project. In fact, you must understand and embrace their vision as much as they need to understand your needs. In our case, the architects envisioned the concept of the "Village Green" or "Town Square" for the common areas of the Katzen Arts Center. They wanted to highlight the sense of community in the new arts building, encourage exciting

and innovative collaborations between faculty members, and forge new intersections of purpose between departments and programs. Their idea of shared meeting spaces and new synergies helped us frame our requests in ways that resonated with their vision.

The New VRC

Work dynamics will change in any new space, but this is particularly true in visual resources centers as we become bustling image management labs and digital database hubs. Using the term "slide library" for these facilities would be totally inaccurate. The new American University Visual Resources Center is housed in a suite of five adjoining spaces, with a large central space at its core. (Figure 3) Fanning out from the central area are a separate graduate work room, the curator's office, a small fine arts library and conference room, and the storage room.

The central room was originally designed as the slide library; however, its function has completely evolved. (Figure

Figure 1



4) There is a large conference-style table that dominates the center of the space, which was designed for faculty slide lecture preparation. But because our images are now on line, faculty members no longer spend hours pulling slides for their classes. They can create online lectures from their offices or at home. With their offices upstairs on another level of the building, faculty members only come to the VRC to drop off images for scanning, chat with staff, or go over the plans for future scanning projects. Only the adjunct faculty members, who do not have assigned offices, use the VRC regularly to meet with students and prepare for class. So, the large central table is now used by graduate student staff or other students working on course assignments. A single computer work station was proposed for this area, but we moved a second workstation to the central table and both are in steady use. We have a flatbed scanner at one of the workstations and Adobe Photoshop on both computers. Often students bring their own laptops to the VRC and since wireless access is available in the building, we no longer need the internet connections installed at the central table.

Where is our extensive slide collection now?
 Currently, the entire slide collection runs along the window

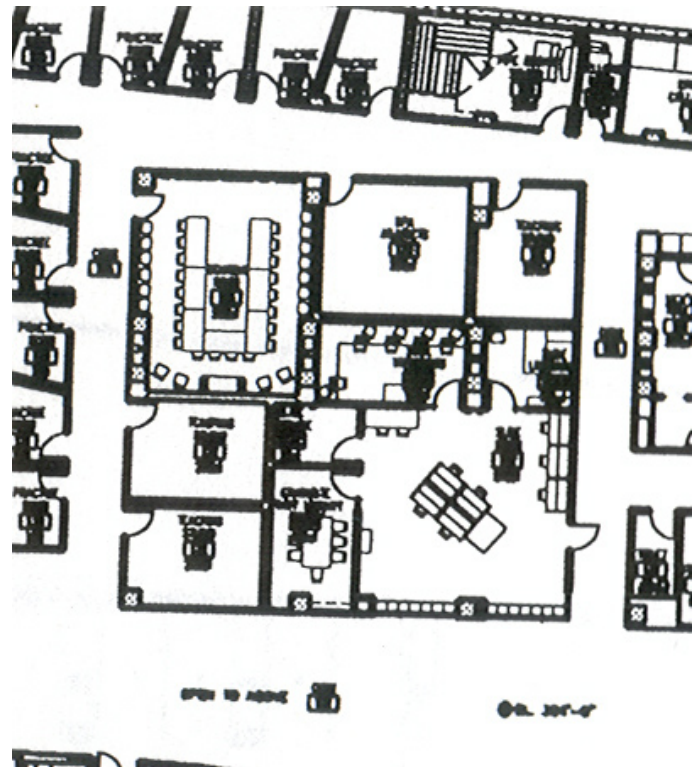


Figure 2 below and Figure 3 above.

**Space Requests and Outcomes
 Art History/Visual Resources Center (Slide Library)**

<u>Room</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Requested</u>	<u>Built</u>
Faculty Office	1 @ 135'	3 @ 135'	3 @ 135'
Adjunct Office	0	1 @ 135'	0
Slide Library	350 sq ft	700 sq ft	700 sq ft
Slide Librarian Office	0	100 sq ft	100 sq ft
Grad Study (library)	0	135 sq ft	150 sq ft
Grad Digital Workroom	0	140 sq ft	140 sq ft
AH Storage	0	100 sq ft	100 sq ft
Classroom (Large)	833 sq ft	1200 sq ft	1200 sq ft
Classroom (Medium)	0	650 sq ft	600 sq ft
Classroom (Medium)	0	650 sq ft	0
Classroom (Small)	427	450 sq ft	300 sq ft

wall in the VRC. (Figure 5) The custom storage cabinets below the slide drawers were inspired by cabinets built for Margo Ballantyne at her institution.

Today, the slide collection serves as an important archival asset, a source for images, and a reference for image cataloging information. Our old wooden card-file cabinet, which served as our slide refiling space, is simply decorative now. Despite the drop-off in slide usage, we do not plan to move the slide collection out of the VRC any time soon. Although there has been discussion on the VRA-Listserv about the merits of eliminating slides, I feel there is sufficient reason to keep our collection. Above and beyond being useful as a reference tool and source for scanning, removing the slide collection may support an argument for phasing out the entire VRC operation. Although the American University VRC is not currently in jeopardy, many campus administrators are not familiar with our function and, therefore, may be willing to eliminate the operation during a budget cut. If we were to de-accession the slides, that may increase the likelihood

that an uninformed administrator would choose to eliminate the “slide library” and the “slide librarian.” These outdated monikers used by the university to describe our operations have only recently been changed to “visual resources center” and “visual resources curator.”

We moved into the Katzen with our slide projectors, remotes, carts, slides, and bulky light tables because we were still working in tandem in the analog and digital formats. For the new space, the interior designers ordered two small lightweight light tables. Within a year we got rid of the old bulky light tables, which were taking up space in the main room and were rarely used. The new lightweight ones are still in the room. Although one is still used for slide viewing, the other has been covered and now serves as a coffee station. Removing the big light tables opened up a lot of usable space and, in hindsight, we should not have brought them from the old building. I recommend thinking carefully about what equipment and furniture to bring from your old quarters, and being ready to rethink those decisions during your first

Figure 4



year in the new space. Other new furniture purchased for the new space consisted of ergonomic adjustable-height chairs, worktables with keyboard trays, and space-efficient file cabinets-- all welcome features in the new space. We had none of those luxuries in the old building.

The 42" high-definition flat-screen TV with desktop computer station, that we purchased a year ago, is an indispensable training tool. (Figure 6) "Zeus," as we have dubbed the workstation, is housed in the central room of the VRC suite. This workstation is a perfect venue for staff and faculty training. I can sit at the workstation with two or three students and we can all easily see the screen and fit comfortably around the monitor. Additionally, this workstation is now the only place where I check graduate student imaging work. On the big screen, I can tell when an image is pixilated, poorly cropped, shows cross-hatching, or has any other small imperfection. Staff members typically review their work with me at the Zeus workstation, especially those who are in their first year as VRC assistants. I noticed recently that students

often check their images on Zeus *before* turning in their work. They want to make sure I am going to be pleased with the outcome of their scans. The big screen TV also provides an easy way for small groups to view images during exam reviews, and individual students practice seminar presentations and conference papers there. We are planning Art Night events for the student cohort and have ordered about a dozen DVDs to display on the big screen for that purpose.

To summarize, the main room now serves as a digital media lab and meeting space. It is a study area, lunch room, lounge, and the venue for departmental meetings. Important task and activity areas include the central table with two computer workstations, the slide collection and small light table, the big-screen training workstation, graduate mailboxes, faculty shelves, a coffee service area, and a small bistro table, used as both a lunch and study perch. During the day, there may be as many as twelve students in the VRC central space.

The Kassalow book collection is in the Graduate Study Library, a small room just off the main VRC space.

Figure 5



(Figure 7) The books were housed in a closet in the old building, and we were eager to expand into an actual room in the Katzen Arts Center. We have new library shelving and follow industry standards for shelving the books. We continue to receive book donations, so we will eventually grow out of the small library. The thesis collection was originally housed in the library space, too, but we moved those into the graduate workroom to free up shelves in the library. As we hoped would happen, the Graduate Study Library is now a popular gathering place for individual and group study. It is also used regularly as a conference room for small departmental meetings. We moved an older computer workstation into the room, and that comes in handy as teaching assistants and adjunct faculty members meet with students.

Also part of the VRC suite is the graduate workroom. (Figure 8) This space was originally planned as dedicated workspace for the graduate student staff. It continues to function that way today. In it, there are four computer workstations: one with a flatbed scanner, two with slide scanners, and one with an external hard drive which houses our archival image records. I regularly have three or four

student staffers at work at one time, so at least two of the work stations in the graduate workroom are busy along with the two in the main room.

Four Years Later: Dynamic Changes

Many changes have occurred since our move to the Katzen building. Some of those changes are due to the new and expanded layout of the VRC space. Others are a result of the adoption of more digital imaging tasks and less in the analog format. Finally, some changes are due to our increased profile in the campus's flagship building.

Due to the expanded footprint of the VRC, now in a suite of rooms, staff supervision has evolved completely. In the old building, students worked in the same small room with the curator, so supervision was easy. Today, because the students are in a separate workroom, oversight must be handled differently. I ask the students to touch base with me as soon as they arrive at work to discuss proposed tasks and the status of current projects. At the end of the day, the students must check in again to update me on their projects. Any reviews are conducted at that time. Additionally, I move through the various workspaces every hour to check students

Figure 6



at their workstations. Being spread out over five separate rooms is great in many ways, as staff can spread out at the workstations and focus on their work, but the supervising style inevitably changes.

In part due to the expanded spaces, we have found that workflows have evolved, too. Eight computer workstations throughout the two rooms are in regular daily use, and we have stations designated for each major task. The single computer used for flatbed scanning became a tremendous workflow bottleneck, so we recently added another flatbed scanner and that has eased the flow. Although we have two computers with slide scanners, we now mainly scan from books or purchase digital images, so slide scanning has slowed down considerably. Another computer workstation hosts the MDID image records on master electronic spreadsheets. One of the two computers in the main area is used as the server access workstation. Because working on the server requires experience and focus on the part of the staff member, I have designated only one workstation for removing

images from the server and generally troubleshooting the image files. There are no peripherals on that station. By dividing up the workstation tasks in this manner, it is easier to supervise staff and oversee VRC activities.

To increase efficiency in light of new digital workflows and policies, I developed comprehensive training manuals for the student staff. The manuals facilitate training by consolidating scanning, cataloging, and MDID database information in one binder. Staff members keep their manuals throughout the two year VRC assistantship and refer to them regularly when working on various imaging tasks. Another improvement we implemented this year was the purchase of a dozen small flash drives for image storage. These flash drives are attached to lanyards with color-coded name labels and issued to each VRC staff member. The drives are kept in the VRC and used to keep track of each staff member's current image files. Staff can move easily from one computer to another without losing track of their image files. At the end of each month, flash drive images are transferred to the external archival image drive.

Figure 7



Some changes in our new space were due to our new physical location on the university campus. Our old building was at the quiet edge of the campus. I had gotten used to not seeing a soul there, except our own faculty and the occasional athlete looking for the water fountain. The new building is very centrally located, just off the main quad and near the entrance to campus. The building is a bold architectural statement, with a sleek modern look and extensive landscaping. The broad fountains and outdoor sculpture

are eye-catching. The Katzen Arts Center attracts walk-in traffic from the university, but also from the community, and the large inviting spaces are used regularly for social events, lectures, and performances. It has been quite a change to deal with the public as part of my regular work day.

Last summer, the Admissions Office Welcome Center moved into the Katzen Arts Center. In addition to enjoying use of the building's ample underground parking and great campus location, the Welcome Center was assigned our

Figure 8



large tiered classroom. As a result, we now hold some of our art history classes in another building. The Admissions Office also outfitted the second floor rotunda with portable office modules, with a waiting area nearby. We now have prospective students and their parents wandering our hallways, stopping in to the VRC to ask for directions and peppering us with questions about American University. The student staff is very gracious and friendly, but we refer to the VRC as the Second Welcome Center. By the way, I think I have sold quite a few big screen TVs with computers as a result of conversations with parents and their pre-college offspring!

Today's Harsh Realities and the Future of the VRC

Today's weak economic climate has impacted the visual resources profession in a fundamental way. Many centers have been closed in response to shrinking university budgets, and other units have been folded into larger library operations, with functions divided among existing library staff. In this age of budget cuts and VRC closings, you often must prove your relevance in order to justify your continued existence. To do so you must learn how to market yourself to the larger university community. As you transform your physical spaces, you must remind the university administration that you bring real value to the community. In my opinion, the worst you can be in a budget-cutting atmosphere is expendable. But the next worse circumstance is to be *perceived* as expendable. Assuming you are not actually expendable, how can you avoid being perceived as expendable?

First, you can enhance your importance to existing clientele by expanding your services in innovative ways.

Scan archival TIFFs of professors' personal slide collections. These faculty legacy collections, often developed over decades, can represent significant contributions to the study of art history, anthropology, or other fields. Consider how these personal collections could augment the digital holdings of your institution and discuss with the faculty member any scanning and cataloging concerns. If you and the faculty member agree to add the images to the institutional database, digital copies of the images could be made for the faculty member's personal use at the same time. If the materials are not deemed appropriate to add to the collection, the faculty member will still appreciate your advice and guidance on scanning procedures, image resolution, appropriate methods of storage, and digital preservation. Working on a project like this highlights your unique abilities and showcases the ways you are invaluable to your institution and its faculty.

Another new service you might provide is to assist faculty with image rights issues for images being readied for publication. Although you cannot provide legal advice, or make recommendations beyond the scope of your own experience, you (and your VRA colleagues) are likely an excellent source of information on intellectual property rights. Your VRA colleagues can serve as an excellent resource for you on these issues. I recently posted a query to VRA-L by an American University faculty member seeking information on

a certain work of art in a European collection. She had been completely unsuccessful in contacting the Italian museum where the painting was held, and was desperate to obtain permission to use the image in an upcoming publication. The one image was holding up the manuscript. My query garnered an immediate response from a European colleague with ties to the museum in question. In fact my European visual resources colleague not only had the contact information for the rights-holder but had already forwarded the request. Within 48 hours, the American University faculty member was in touch with the proper museum staff member.

There are other ways to expand your services.

Some of these may involve moving out of your comfort zone. You can create PDFs of faculty articles for their use or learn to generate Wikipedia entries for prominent faculty. You can offer scanning tutorials to graduate students who are preparing images for thesis papers and professional presentations. At American University, the VRC has become a true media lab by providing some of the above new services.

Secondly, you can assure your primacy in the workplace by expanding your existing client base. Consider the following possibilities.

Offer imaging services to faculty in disciplines such as philosophy, literature, and history. Determine ways to market your expertise outside the art history realm so that faculty members in other disciplines are introduced to the VRC. You could do this through workshops, brown bag lunches, and other university opportunities.

Even within your department you may find new clientele. At AU, we finally convinced our studio artists to use the MDID database. We did that by offering scanning services for their particular curricular needs and conducting regular MDID tutorials for studio faculty. Just as we found with the MDID implementation for art history, the most effective way to expand the MDID program is through MDID "evangelists." One of our early-adopter studio artists raved to the others about MDID so several studio faculty members now use the program. We did, however, have to overcome some special challenges in the studio program's adoption of digital imagery. In order to show images in the studio classrooms, which are not set up with podiums or projectors, faculty members must check out the VRC's small portable digital projector and display the images on the white classroom walls. We have, as a result of the studio artists' input, strengthened our digital collection of contemporary art and the work of emerging artists.

A third way to market your visual resources center is to work collaboratively with others at your institution. By working on important multi-disciplinary projects, you are unlikely to be seen as an expendable member of the campus community. I recently met Bill Mayer, the head librarian of the University Library at American University, and told him about our small fine arts library, which had begun with a substantial donation of books several years earlier. Bill became very interested in finding ways we could collaborate and today we are working on a project to make our collection discoverable

through the main campus library system. The University Library will provide the staffing and expertise, the cataloging and bar coding. They will create a virtual home for our collection, but the physical collection will remain under our auspices in the art department. Ordering of titles could be done through the library, and, as Bill stated, the Library will do everything but shelve the books for us. The project will allow our fine arts book collection to be discoverable as a university asset, bring our program more visibility, and highlight the VRC as a collaborative facility.

Furthermore, you can uniquely contribute to the community beyond your own institution because of your expertise in digital imaging and database management. I recently assisted someone on the staff at the Library of Congress who contacted me for advice on digital imaging. He was helping to put together a proposal for a \$30 million digitizing project there and I was able to give him excellent background information and advice. I also gave him the names of several VRA colleagues who would be excellent image management consultants for the project.

Be sure to present findings of your ongoing work at professional conferences and regional meetings. By regularly taking part in speaking and teaching opportunities, you will increase your professional profile in the visual resources community, which will reflect positively back to your institution. Make certain that your institution's administration is aware of the ways you contribute to the visual resources field by reporting back to them when you have presented a paper or received recognition for your professional work in the community.

Finally, continue to experiment with new media. Visual resources professionals should serve as valuable beta-testers for new media applications for education, digital image database programs, electronic information dissemination innovations, digital licensing models, and hardware used for classroom display of digital materials. We beta-tested new digital imaging and database management software programs and, by so doing, made an impact on their development. As early users of technology, we should experiment with new applications such as blogs, podcasts, and Twitter. As early adopters, we can best analyze ways to use social media in the workplace. Just as we did with earlier new media applications, by experimenting with new opportunities early, we will help shape their development.

Today, the visual resources profession is at a crossroads. Even as we move from analog to digital presentation of information, we face a harsh economy that forces us to justify our very existence as a profession. Moving to a new physical space allows us to turn the process of that physical change into an opportunity to think outside the box and consider how our profession is changing. We can solidify our professional position within our institution, market our work to the larger community, and help shape the future of the profession itself. But, whether or not we are changing our physical location, we must continue to advocate for

visual resources as a profession and for the important and evolving role of the Visual Resources Center in the twenty-first century. ♡

Advocating for Visual Resources Management
in Educational and Cultural Institutions

October 2009

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Direct link to online version http://www.vraweb.org/resources/general/vra_white_paper.pdf
Prepared by the Visual Resources Association <http://www.vraweb.org/>
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Advocating for Visual Resources Management
in Educational and Cultural Institutions

Executive Summary

The Visual Resources Association (VRA), the international organization for image media professionals, endeavors to address the value of images and the educational demands associated with the emergence of new types of visual resources. The goal of this white paper is to promote holistic thinking about how to effectively meet institutional as well as image user needs in an environment of rapid technological change and in the face of challenging economic conditions.

Images increase in importance. Faculty in many disciplines acknowledge that digital images have revolutionized their teaching. The visual learning of students now takes place primarily in a digital realm. Special collections within libraries, archives, and museums have found that providing digital access to their holdings stimulates appreciation and use. The skills and responsibilities of visual resources professionals have expanded in scope. These managers have successfully re-aligned operations to meet digital demands. New technologies, extended responsibilities, and closer alliances with related services—such as information technology, rights management, and course management—typify the changes in the work of visual resources professionals. This work now involves building institution-wide resources tied into central digital information infrastructures for the management and preservation of content in a variety of media. Image management is beginning to involve participation in inter-institutional efforts to share collections and labor demands.

This paper identifies six strategic areas for consideration in planning for the future: multiple sources for images; ways of integrating personal and institutional collections; social computing and collaborative projects; the life-cycle continuum of image assets and their description; rights and copyright compliance; and visual literacy.

VRA argues that eliminating visual resources services carries high risk during this transitional era and does not serve the institution's broader educational mission. Many institutions have begun to re-examine the appropriate administrative home of visual resources collections in response to the changes brought about by the demand for digital media in pedagogy. Several successful administrative scenarios are described to suggest flexible options for continuing to build shared image collections and provide support for the constituents of educational and cultural institutions.

Advocating for Visual Resources Management in Educational and Cultural Institutions

Introduction

In our Information Age, digital media are displacing static media—such as books for words or film for images.¹ Entire industries (publishing and music, for example) must examine their business models and reinvent themselves. Educational and cultural heritage institutions are also rethinking operations while striving to maintain the institution's mission. In this paper the Visual Resources Association (VRA), the international organization for image media professionals that furthers research and education in the field of image management² endeavors to address administrators, faculty, and curators in both higher education and museum environments who must make decisions about the future of image collections and services during this period of economic stress. In recent cases, elimination of professional positions and closure of visual resources collections to meet immediate budgetary crises have often failed to consider the full range of planning issues.³ This report describes the value of images and the educational demands associated with the emergence of new types of visual resources⁴ so that institutions can think holistically about how best to meet needs in an environment of rapid technological change and in the face of challenging economic conditions.

I. The Importance of Visual Resources to Teaching, Learning, and Institutional Identity

Both faculty and students use pictures more now than ever before. In several studies, faculty from nearly all disciplines report that their use of digital images has increased. Many indicate that the use of images has "revolutionized their teaching." They are "using substantially more images, more frequently than they did analog images...[and] discovering how students can be better engaged with materials through the use of digital images."⁵ Interestingly, studies also indicate that faculty expect institutional support and coordination for visual resources, just as they do for computing or library services.⁶ Additionally, accreditation agencies want programs to have access to information resources and technology, which includes the media collections and software applications that visual resources facilities provide. Visual resources professionals have been able to transform their operations, which once served communities using primarily 35mm slides, to focus on the expansive possibilities afforded by digital images. Image content that formerly served a limited group of constituents now has added relevance and accessibility for a much larger community of users, both within a given institution and beyond its traditional borders. (See several innovative examples in the Conclusion below.) Similarly, libraries and archives have found that distributing digital images of their special collections enhances wider public appreciation of these holdings, increases use, and contributes to an organization's reputation. Web sites rich in museum collection images have expanded museum audiences exponentially.⁷ Some museums have capitalized upon the work of packaging high quality images and descriptive data by using it to handle requests for publication images or by distributing their image assets through services such as Scholars Resource or ARTstor.⁸

II. Visual Resources Services and Change

Most visual resources collections provide instructional images for higher education, but these functions are closely allied to image collections found in archives, libraries, and museums. The services commonly provided by visual resources professionals in both the past and present consist of:

- Helping clients find the images they want for teaching, learning, research, and publication
- Creating useful instructional images through traditional photographic, and, now, digital production
- Developing systems of access for image collections
- Describing and categorizing images to make them easily accessible
- Designing and applying shared standards for image quality, descriptive data, archiving, and preservation
- Supporting clients' effective use of image management software, presentation tools, and social networking technologies as well as related hardware
- Providing advisory services for any of the above, as well as for compliance with copyright, licensing, or other rights

Recent changes in the means by which these activities are accomplished have been rapid and profound. New technologies, extended responsibilities, and closer alliances with related services in the parent organization such as information technology,

rights management, and course management typify the changes in the work of visual resources curators.⁹ It now involves building institution-wide resources tied into central digital information infrastructures for the management and preservation of content in a variety of media.

The digital landscape has proven more complex than its analog predecessor, as has been demonstrated in other information service areas such as libraries or computing. Important considerations for decisions about the future of visual resources services should include:

1. Multiple Sources for Image Content
2. Strategies for Integrating Personal and Institutional Image Collections
3. Social Computing and Collaborative Projects
4. The Life-Cycle Continuum of Image Resources
5. Rights and Copyright Compliance
6. Visual Literacy

Examination of each of these considerations follows.

1. Multiple Sources for Image Content

Visual resources are available to an institution from a variety of internal and external sources:

- Collections assembled by individuals¹⁰
- Collections managed institutionally¹¹
- Subscription services¹²
- Services combining these sources¹³

These vary in the degree to which they are:

- Free or fee-based
- Open or restricted access
- Discoverable by search engines or closed to them

A similar range of resources exists for most forms of information such as text, audio, and video. Visual resources professionals expect a future in which this diversity of sources will continue and, indeed, prove essential to sustain educational use. An economic model where any one source dominates can lead to serious inefficiencies.¹⁴

Educational users often complain that images found with Google or other search engines frequently lack the quality required for illustrating lectures or assignments, are inaccurately identified, or of questionable legal status. While some high-quality images may be found “for free” on the open Web, quality always requires financial, technical, and human resources, whether or not the end user pays directly.

Although existing sources supply billions of pictures,¹⁵ teaching and research continually require additional images. As with other information formats, new areas of knowledge and inquiry create fresh needs. Teachers, students, and museum curators constantly invent urgent new uses for pictures. Local production of image assets has always been an effective response to dynamic requirements and should continue to be a significant part of the increasingly complex array of image sources.

2. Strategies for Integrating Personal and Institutional Image Collections

Recent development of image services seeks an optimal relationship between collections assembled by individuals and those managed institutionally. Personal collections are to some extent a natural result of the digital environment where use normally entails copying and repurposing. Research indicates that those individuals with the largest personal collections are also more likely to be frequent users of institutionally managed or licensed collections of images.¹⁶ So, although personal collections abound, they do not supplant licensed or institutionally managed collections, but do complement them. Collections massed by

individuals sometimes offer important assets such as insightful selections, original photography of high quality, and, in some cases, authoritative descriptive data. Of course, by definition they respond well to the variable needs of the individual. On the other hand, the liabilities of personal collections include duplication of effort, idiosyncratic organization that prevents sharing or breaks down as the collection grows, insufficient backup and preservation routines, and haphazard approaches to copyright compliance. Clearly, the existence of independent collections offers the opportunity for visual resources professionals, faculty, and museum constituents to collaborate to reduce redundancy and share important image content with the entire institution and, when possible, scholars worldwide.

Professionally managed collections offer many benefits to an institution. Most notably, they are built to last. Many digital images created just ten years ago—in situations where professional standards were ignored—have been abandoned because they have become inadequate for today's higher resolution monitors and projectors. Some systems have been entirely rebuilt because they were not designed to port to new software. Visual resources professionals work together as a community to establish best practices that maximize return on the labor of collecting, describing, and managing images.¹⁷ (See number 4 below, The Life-Cycle Continuum of Image Resources) They manage rights in a way that helps protect the institution. (See number 5 below, Rights and Copyright Compliance) Working closely with faculty tightly focuses institutional visual resources collections upon the relevant programs and course offerings. Successive faculty teaching in the same or associated areas should be able to access core images, rather than having to start over every time there is a change in a teaching responsibility. Most collections of this type have routines for making additions to the collection at the request of users and can be more responsive in this way than subscription services. Digital libraries such as ARTstor or projects like American Memory do not relieve institutions of the responsibility to maintain local resources. To date, these resources tend to supply strong collections representing the traditional art history canon or the specifics of the American experience, but lack sufficient numbers of contemporary works of art and architecture, non-western material, architectural plans, and other images of new or interdisciplinary interest. Indeed, larger projects such as ARTstor support local production by providing a delivery platform for locally managed collections enabling cross-collection and inter-institutional searching and sharing.¹⁸ Building image collections strategically and collaboratively ensures quality, facilitates sharing, and increases efficiencies for users and contributors.

3. Social Computing and Collaborative Projects

One of the most exciting developments in recent years is the creation of online networks where image collections can be easily built by individuals and openly shared. The casual social computing approach of Flickr is perhaps the most widely known. Projects such as the Library of Congress' Photostream and Lewis and Clark College's accessCeramics use the popularity of Flickr to their advantage.¹⁹ Photostream staff upload historical photographs to Flickr and enlist the public to help tag, comment on, and identify the images for enhanced descriptive data. The accessCeramics partners encourage artists to upload images of their work to Flickr for a jury to consider for inclusion in an in-house designed database providing a Web accessible digital collection for teaching the ceramic arts. In both cases, information professionals facilitate the process of engaging a broader public in image access while extending the reach of their traditional work, such as enhancing descriptive data. Such collaborative resources can maximize the educational potential of digital technology, social networking, and cloud computing. Systems with new collaborative features include the LUNA Commons, the Madison Digital Image Database, and the ARTstor Digital Library also partnering with the Society of Architectural Historians on the SAHARA project.²⁰ Distributed networks of participants including faculty, students, museum constituents, visual resources professionals, librarians, and others contribute to an environment where images, descriptive data, image management tools, and presentation software are coordinated. These resources leave room for spontaneous image uploads while allowing for quality control. With only a few years of practical experience, collaborative image collections point toward learning environments that benefit an entire institution or multiple institutions.²¹ As Clay Shirkey suggests in his book *Here Comes Everybody*, "Collaborative production, where people have to coordinate with one another to get anything done, is considerably harder than simple sharing, but the results can be more profound."²² Image professionals contribute content to these collaborative resources; they help integrate these new initiatives and technologies into pedagogy through outreach and instruction; and in some cases they actively participate in the design of collaborative systems.

4. The Life-Cycle Continuum of Image Resources

As image asset managers, visual resources professionals safeguard the images and metadata that add value to an institution's long-term information portfolio. Key methods of extending the shelf life of image collections are:

- Creation of high resolution images in anticipation of future hardware capabilities
- Coordinating management and preservation of digital and analog formats
- Using standards for description to improve search and retrieval as well as to structure data for mapping to future systems
- Recording rights and reproduction information to support future decision making
- Planning software and hardware upgrades
- Maintaining databases, system security, and appropriate backup protocols
- Staying current with research on emerging technology and participating in experimentation

Image professionals have long cooperated in the development of standards, best practices, and shared labor for visual resources.²³

Like books or archival materials, 35mm slide collections represent a substantial investment of time and institutional resources making good stewardship warranted. While the use of 35mm slides will undoubtedly be phased out, portions of these collections will gain significance in the archival realm because they reflect the pedagogy and research interests of the institution's faculty, students, and curators. Slides and photographs may be historically important in and of themselves, as evidenced by some special collections of lantern slides that have been digitized and made accessible.²⁴ Visual resources professionals should work with image users to make informed curatorial decisions about scanning selected content and preserving it before initiating the storage or disposal of older formats, such as photographs, lantern slides, or 35mm slides.

5. Rights and Copyright Compliance

More often than not visual resources professionals become local experts in copyright because daily operations confront them with complex issues of rights ownership, licensing, and fair use. As a result, they can field questions from administrators, faculty, students, staff, museum curators, course designers, and the public on such subjects as who owns the rights to an image, when the institution should license an image resource, how the institution can manage digital access and minimize risk, and

how fair use may apply to myriad situations.²⁵ Their further familiarity with pedagogical and research practices coupled with careful documentation of the sources of the institution's visual resources enables them to assist with permission inquiries when necessary. In effect they stand on the front lines of institutional copyright risk management, guiding users to make informed choices about how to use resources, consulting legal counsel when necessary, and guiding the institution's licensing and reliance on fair use.

Many people oversimplify fair use, presuming that if a use is educational, it's fair. But the purpose of the use is only the first of four fair use factors:

- Purpose of the use
- Nature of the work used
- Amount and substantiality of the part used
- Effect on the market for the work

To provide guidance on fair use, the visual resources expert must know the media community's fair use norms, keep current on image resource availability on the market, and know the security offered by the technology environment in which the use will take place, in addition to understanding the full meaning of those four factors and their implications for each potential fair use.

A thorough understanding of copyright and fair use also enables a visual resources professional to leverage local collections by sharing images with other institutions. ARTstor's Shared Shelf initiative is a stellar example of collaborative image collection building with a well-considered approach to rights management.²⁶ It owes much of its success to active participation by visual resources professionals who are able to bring their unique collections to the attention of other educators through appropriate reliance on fair use.

6. Visual Literacy

Twenty-first century teaching places great importance on visual literacy. This emphasis motivates image professionals to work one-on-one with faculty, students, museum curators, and other institutional staff to facilitate image access and use. Increasingly, visual resources professionals add instructional activities to the repertoire of services provided. Partnering with faculty and librarians in classroom training activities or offering regularly scheduled workshops in how to create meaningful content with new technological tools are now common practices. In an article entitled, "Visual Literacy in the Age of Participation," Rockenbach and Fabian stated, "The expectation of a more participatory process forces information professionals to rethink their role in the flow of information and suggests responsibility for nurturing a new range of skills and literacies such as higher-level critical thinking skills, problem-based inquiry, and visual literacy."²⁷ They suggest that today's visual learners expect to play a more active role in the learning process and want dynamic educational interactions. Students need assistance using visual information and developing digital literacies for their academic exercises. This includes identifying reliable image sources, judging the quality of images and associated descriptive data, accurate identification of historical content, and understanding intellectual property and how to cite images in their writing and assignments. These are also becoming important life skills. In many fields, images have the status of primary source materials (not mere illustrations), and the ability to "read", interpret, or otherwise skillfully negotiate imagery is imperative. Development of this skill can be limited by problems with image accessibility, quality, or reliability. In many situations, well-equipped visual resources facilities act as a key learning space for teachers and students.²⁸ Institutional constituents often seek assistance from visual resources professionals about technical, legal, and aesthetic matters recognizing their colleagues' authority in these areas of visual literacy.

Conclusion

This white paper argues that eliminating visual resources services carries high risk during this transitional era. Although most visual resources facilities have traditionally been administered in close proximity to image users, many institutions have found that aligning them with audio-visual, information technology, libraries, or other museum departments can result in cost-effective and progressive uses of images in education. This paper provides real examples of several administrative configurations that have met with success. (See Appendix A: Administrative Scenarios.)

In a world increasingly dominated by visual media and visual learners, visual resources services grow more valuable by

providing:

- Collections: Institutionally managed collections fill a wide gap between personal collections and subscription services playing an important role in emerging systems for inter-institutional collaboration.
- Processes: Infrastructure and workflow are developed for building collections that are scalable, sustainable, and preserved for the future.
- Services: Direct image services for faculty, students, and institutional staff who would otherwise need to repeatedly start from scratch are provided.
- Support: Visual resources professionals make technology viable for educators through instruction on classroom use, presentation software, image manipulation, database management, Web interfaces, and the like.
- Guidance: Visual resources professionals partner with campus experts on rights management and the expanding interest in visual literacy.
- Facilities: Visual resources collections have the ingredients of dynamic learning spaces.
- Expertise: Visual resources professionals stay current with the wide range of issues and rapid technological developments relevant to the use of image resources.

Some recent examples of innovative work in the field of visual resources provides a glimpse of what can be accomplished when employing new technology:

- The Society of Architectural Historians is experimenting with new modes of scholarly communication and collection building with the Mellon-funded SAHARA project (www.saharaonline.org), which is a strategy, a resource, and a service. Members of this scholarly organization and information professionals are working together to build an online archive of architectural and landscape images, as well as other content, for teaching, research, and publication. Scholars upload and download images through a shared online site while visual resources professionals, librarians, and technologists assist with metadata and systems.
- With a Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/utsoavrc>), a Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/groups/utsoa/>) image group, bookmarks on Delicious (<http://delicious.com/utsoavrc>), a blog called "Deep Focus" (<http://soa.utexas.edu/vrc/blog/>), and award-winning videos posted on its YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/SOAVRC>), the School of Architecture's Visual Resources Collection (<http://soa.utexas.edu/vrc>) at the University of Texas at Austin uses social networking tools to connect faculty and students to image resources and services.
- The accessCeramics (<http://accessceramics.org/>) project partners in Lewis & Clark College's Art Department, Visual Resources Collection, and Library have created a searchable database to address the dearth of contemporary digital images available for teaching the ceramic arts. Artists are actively engaged in the process when they upload images of their work into Flickr and catalog them in the fields created for this purpose. Image professionals then enhance the metadata to meet current VRA standards thus improving search and retrieval. Financial support from funding agencies, NITLE and NEA, is allowing the resource to be freely available on the Web for educational purposes and extending the reach of the project globally.
- During their research travels, University of California Berkeley faculty can upload their images and data directly to campus servers through the Media Vault project (<http://mvp.berkeley.edu>). By partnering with their local visual resources curators, faculty field images can be harvested from collection databases and shared with the entire University of California 10-campus system.
- Requesting a photograph and permission for publication from the Metropolitan Museum of Art once took days or weeks. Working with ARTstor's Images for Academic Publishing initiative (<http://www.artstor.org/what-is-artstor/w-html/services-publishing.shtml>), the Met makes the images instantly downloadable once the requestor clicks through the online agreement.
- A wiki (<http://digital-image-collections.wikispaces.com>) at Wellesley College seamlessly leads image users to free and fair use Web sites sorted by historical or topical areas of interest. Visitors, including those beyond Wellesley, contribute their own favorite open image sources.

There is nothing static about digital technology. Once collections are reformatted from analog slides to digital files the work of managing the collection persists, as does the need to grow the collection according to local needs. The expertise of visual resources professionals, the services provided, and collections maintained help institutions advance the 2009 EDUCAUSE top teaching and learning challenges²⁹:

- Creating learning environments that promote active learning, critical thinking, collaborative learning, and knowledge

creation

- Developing twenty-first century literacies among students and faculty (information, digital, and visual)
- Reaching and engaging today's learner
- Encouraging faculty adoption and innovation in teaching and learning with IT
- Advancing innovation in teaching and learning (with technology) in an era of budget cuts

Considering the complexity and enormous potential of the digital future, working collaboratively to share resources, staying current with emerging developments, and experimenting with educational implementation is the most logical way to move forward.

Appendix A:
Administrative Scenarios

Digital technology has often transformed visual resources collections from departmental to institution-wide resources stimulating image use in a broader variety of disciplines. Yet disciplinary heterogeneity remains an important factor influencing an institution's choice of the administrative structure for visual resources since some disciplines use a significantly higher number of images in their work. Many institutions have begun to re-examine the appropriate administrative home of visual resources services in response to the changes brought about by the emergence of digital images. Of course, administrative positioning is not necessarily the same as the physical location of staff, services, or collections. This appendix outlines successful administrative scenarios for visual resources in academe and museums.

None of these administrative configurations is inherently superior. The local environment suggests the best approach to placement in the organizational structure. All visual resources operations need to work closely with related services in their parent organization since collaboration is an essential aspect of effective service in the Information Age. Some considerations, which should inform decisions about administrative positioning and physical adjacencies, include:

Users and Services:

- Who are the current and prospective image users?
- What type of support do they need?
- Should visual resources staff act as: Content selectors? Builders of shared image collections? Catalogers? Quality controllers? Copyright gatekeepers? Instructional technology support specialists?

Partnerships:

- What type of partnerships with other institutional services is most important: Library? Central computing? Instructional technology? Classroom technology?

Physical Space:

- What physical locations are in the best proximity to users?
- What are the space requirements of the visual resources collection?
- What are the possible uses of the space historically dedicated to analog collections?
- Can opportunities be found to create a learning space for visual technologies?

Accreditation:

- What do the institution's accreditation organizations expect regarding effective information resources, technology, and facilities?

Budget:

- What are the costs of the new ways of operating?
- Where are these best absorbed and administered?

Five primary types of administrative arrangements for visual resources services have been identified below,³⁰ discussed in order based upon frequency of occurrence.³¹

1. Departments, Schools, or Colleges
2. Libraries
3. Museums
4. Audio-Visual or Information Technology Units
5. Hybrid Models

1. Departments, Schools, or Colleges

Historically, most slide and photograph collections originated in academic departments in order to provide the spontaneous, front-line services necessary for image-intensive teaching, research, and study by the department's faculty and students—services and tasks still important with the use of digital technologies.

Benefits

- **Focused Collecting:** A major advantage of an institutionally managed collection is focusing resources on local needs. (See number 2 above, *Strategies for Integrating Personal and Institutional Collections*) With departmental administration this focus can be more precisely tailored to the programs of the department, school, or college.
- **Proximity:** Proximity facilitates communications. It encourages a wider variety of questions and suggestions. It allows quick handling of "emergencies." Furthermore, a physical location within a department stimulates the informal communications that help build trusted working relationships between faculty and visual resources personnel.
- **Department Visibility:** Digitization has encouraged many academic units to open their image collections to others in their institution. Moreover, the visual resources curator may be the only person on campus with the equipment and experience to scan and catalog images and move them into shared collections. These factors can increase the visibility of the department across the institution and help to broaden the digital collection's client base.

Examples

The University of Maryland's Department of Art History and Archaeology is in the process of transforming its slide room into a new learning space for education and collaboration. The Michelle Smith Collaboratory for Visual Culture, currently under construction, will have state of the art digital projection with a curved projection surface to promote visual immersion in image presentations. The Collaboratory will be central in creating a nurturing environment for academic quality and creative learning. Social spaces have been designed for flexibility with moveable furniture to promote collaborative activities and student study. This new space will provide ample workspace for meetings, workshops, forums, and the execution of large-scale technical projects.

On the ten campuses of the University of California (UC), most visual resources collections are in departments, schools, or colleges, but they work closely with their campus libraries and the California Digital Library. The visual resources curators generally build the collections and the UC Libraries and California Digital Library deliver the images and preserve them for the future. On the UC Irvine campus, collaboration between a faculty member with an extensive fieldwork collection of the Islamic architecture of South Asia, students interested in this art historical area, and visual resources professionals resulted in over 10,000 images being made available not only to all ten UC campuses, but all ARTstor subscribers.³²

At the University of Colorado (Boulder and Denver campuses), the visual resources facilities of the College of Architecture and Planning, the College of Arts and Media, and the Department of Art and Art History share a streaming video server so that academic lectures and films are readily available to faculty and students. Access to the streaming videos is provided through their Luna Insight image collections as part of the University of Colorado Digital Library.

The Image Curator from Hobart and William Smith Colleges has taken on the duties of art bibliographer and art collection curator. She coordinates book purchases with the art department and the head of technical services at the library and has completed a project comparing the book and journal collection with that of comparable institutions. She keeps current on publications in the fields and presents orders to be placed. In addition, the Image Curator oversees the art collections of the Colleges, which includes curating exhibitions and producing exhibition catalogs.

2. Libraries

For many years some institutions have administered visual resources services as part of a library organization. Examples include the University of Oregon, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard Fine Arts Library, and Yale University. In recent years, more visual resources operations have moved, either administratively or physically, from academic departments, schools, or colleges to a library unit—often in response to the changes outlined earlier in this document.

Benefits

- **Service Mission:** Visual resources reside in a service unit, sharing the library's mission to support research, teaching, and learning.
- **Shared Values:** The visual resources collections and the library have similar values (principles of collection development, data standards, digital access, preservation and the like.)
- **Related Skills:** Library partnerships can allow for information professionals who have similar skill sets, such as cataloging, database, subject specialty, and reference service, to work more efficiently together.
- **Shared Staffing:** Sometimes resources for staffing, service hours, or facilities can be shared.
- **Digital Library Development:** Visual resources professionals have much to offer digital library development efforts. Both kinds of digital collection building employ the same basic techniques (and sometimes the same hardware and software.)
- **Interdisciplinary Setting:** The broader user-base of a library can help stimulate the new tendency for interdisciplinary use of digital images, from the arts to the sciences.
- **Teaching Involvement:** Visual resources services thrive on close work with teaching faculty – an involvement that many twenty-first century libraries pursue.
- **Related Image Sources:** Libraries usually license image databases since they resemble bibliographic databases in terms of cost and support.
- **Technological Infrastructure:** Visual resources collections in libraries tend to enjoy a larger infrastructure for hardware and software.
- **Professional Development:** Often library environments allow for more professional development opportunities to stay current with changing technology.
- **Budgeting Flexibility:** When budgets decline, the options for reducing costs might be more flexible in a larger service organization than in an academic department, where faculty and staff salaries constitute most of the department's budget.

Examples

At Stanford, the increasing complexity of visual resources services became an administrative drain on the Art and Art History Department, whose chair requested that the University Libraries consider managing the service. After this change in 2006, the visual resources staff report a more robust infrastructure, more rapid digitization, disciplinary expansion, and increased involvement in user-training and Web site development. The University Libraries administration reports on the growth of the image database as a significant aspect of its digital library development.

At Vassar, the Visual Resources Library (VRL) reports to the Director of the Libraries and has been under library administration for more than a decade. The VRL recently completed digitization of the most critical portions of the slide collection. For several years the visual resources staff were heavily involved with helping art and art history faculty with the transition to digital images. Once these two efforts were accomplished, the VRL increased its interactions to include constituents from a broader range of disciplines and has become active in other types of digitization projects in the Libraries. The staff maintains especially close ties with an "embedded" technologist who reports to Computing and Information Technology, but is permanently assigned to technical support with the Art Department and the VRL.

Yale University has one of the oldest visual teaching collections, founded by the Yale School of Fine Arts in the 19th century (when it contained plaster casts, original prints, photographs, and, eventually, slides). The collections and staff have always been housed with the art gallery, art history department, art school, and school of architecture, but have been under the administration of the Yale University Library since 1951. With a recent move, the collection is now contained within the newly renovated Robert. B Haas Family Arts Library, which sits between the adjacent School of Architecture and the History of Art department, and can now serve a broader spectrum of image use across the campus.

3. Museums

The role of museum visual resources has changed rapidly in response to digital media. Such units were once most commonly aligned with education departments or museum libraries to provide slides and, more recently, digital images for instructional purposes to curators, education staff, docents, and occasionally the general public. Visual resources professionals now leverage their multiple and varied skills to provide new services and address essential museum needs, particularly in the area of digital asset management. All museum functions stand to benefit from centralized visual resources services, including: forwarding research and education, documenting objects, developing a Web presence, producing publications, archiving institutional history, developing interactive media, and contributing to digital learning. The responsibilities of visual resources managers have started to extend into each of those museum functions, and also into rights management – providing image permissions for works in the museum and acquiring and licensing external images. Combining visual resources services with general oversight for a museum's digital image assets has multiple benefits.

Benefits

- **Shared Need:** The productivity of nearly all museum work benefits from effective access to images, particularly curatorial, editorial, educational, communication, merchandising, and Web development activities. Because of this mutual dependency, coordination of images helps to promote these activities.
- **Skill Transfer:** The skills required in successfully managing a traditional visual resources center also suit a broader digital asset management role.
- **Efficiencies:** This new direction for museum visual resources might involve direct or enhanced affiliations with photo services and instructional technology units, and represents a unique opportunity to streamline inefficiencies in museum operations by combining facilities, budgets, or staff.
- **Consistency:** The visual resources curator's experience with data standards can bring a valuable consistency to data created by distinct museum activities. They can coordinate distribution of all images produced by the museum for any purpose, as well as those licensed externally, through a single management system.
- **Outreach:** Well managed image assets serve a variety of outreach functions. In addition to appearing on museum Web sites, images may be distributed through third-party vendors, contributed to ARTstor or to online reference systems such as Oxford Art Online. These broaden museum audiences and sometimes generate revenue.

Examples

In recent administrative restructuring Minneapolis Institute of Arts combined three departments—Photo Services, the Visual Resources Library, and Permissions—to create the Visual Resources Department (VRD). This new department provides photographic services for the museum, handles permissions requests for the museum's permanent collection, and has oversight for legacy collections of film-based images, including 35mm slides from the former slide library. As a member of the VRD team, the Visual Resources Librarian continues to manage digital image collections and data in addition to coordinating copyright determinations and processing permissions requests for image reproduction.

The Image Resources & Copyright Management Department of the Israel Museum is the focal point for several converging areas of museum activity handling imaging policy, creation, preservation, and image bank management. As the copyright advising office of the museum, it deals extensively with image and text copyright management and licensing. The department also works with the dozens of crews who come each year to film at the museum. It advises and provides services both for the museum's own projects and for outside clients including authors, designers, publishers, museums, etc. from around the world.

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Image Library is the museum's central repository and archive of museum images and object photography in all formats, ranging from high-resolution digital images to traditional large-format color transparencies, black-and-white photographs, 35mm slides, and lantern slides. The Image Library oversees approximately 1 million records (including digital images, object and analog image placeholder records) in the museum's central digital asset management system, MediaBin, and the ordering records in the museum's internal online photo ordering tool, IOWA. In addition, the Image Library provides museum staff with a variety of services, such as onsite reference service and instructional programs on image use and research, training and support in the use of MediaBin and IOWA, provision of image cataloging guidelines, maintenance of

the rights information pertaining to the digital images in MediaBin, circulation of analog materials, and image licensing for study, publication or commercial use. The Image Library also plays a pivotal role in building local and special digital image collections from the museum's curatorial and research departments.

4. Audio-Visual or Information Technology Units

As technology has expanded the role of visual resources managers, the duties added often relate to instructional technology (IT) and audio-visual support—everything from managing projectors or smart classroom carts to technology instruction, maintaining servers, and providing labs containing video production and editing tools. In work environments physically located near the classes they support, it can be advantageous to have skills related to the technology chain leading from the image to the actual classroom instruction (Web access > search and retrieval > presentation tools > classroom projection). For a more remote location, skills and knowledge related to the “backend” tasks such as database design, Web design, user interface design, and server maintenance might be more advantageous. In either of these situations, merging with an existing instructional or information technology unit can be an effective approach.

Benefits

- **Tech Allies:** Closer ties can be formed with server, Web, and programming teams. This can lead to better practices regarding database support, accessibility, and long term storage of content.
- **Broad User Base:** Since IT units are often situated centrally, they can facilitate the transition into serving the whole institution, bringing about expansion into other disciplines and a much larger user base.
- **Service Links:** Collaborating with other service units, such as libraries and media centers, may be easier because of already established communication channels.
- **Strategic Planning:** Belonging to a central unit can enhance the ability to affect decisions at a higher level. Sitting at the table during decisions about data storage, staffing options, collaborations, and project management solutions, can keep image professionals informed and able to participate in coordinated progress.
- **Tech Plus:** A visual resources collection can also benefit the larger IT culture by strengthening ties with users and enhancing the professional component of the unit.

Examples

The University of Minnesota's Visual Resources Center (VRC), situated in the College of Liberal Arts Office of Information Technology, serves the entire College of Liberal Arts (which includes the Arts, Social Sciences and the Humanities) and partners with the College of Design to provide services to the whole University of Minnesota system. Among the services is a growing Digital Content Library serving learning objects—images, audio, and video—to a variety of scholarly disciplines.³³ From within IT, the VRC has been able to collaborate with the library, the Weisman Museum of Art, Goldstein Museum of Design, and the Katherine E. Nash Gallery.

Ohio State's Knowlton School of Architecture Digital Library supports the curricula of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and City & Regional Planning, but also has collections that are accessible to the public. They consist of images, video, 3D models, and document files that reflect student work, study abroad programs, the history of the disciplines, lectures, course materials, etc. The Digital Library is currently being redeveloped in Drupal, an open source content management framework, to allow integration of social media tools with the content. The new system will also host their Open Educational Resources (OER)—course materials, videos, and other educational media freely available with open copyright licenses.

5. Hybrid

While the administrative models above illustrate important types, some institutions have had success with a hybrid approach—where functions like management, space, and computing infrastructure are contributed by several administrative units. Ideally, a hybrid arrangement can blend any of the benefits listed above. It initiates cooperation and team building in a very concrete way.

Examples

The Smith College Imaging Center is administered collectively by the Department of Art and IT Educational Technology Services. The Center executes select projects in cooperation with the College Library Special Collections, the Smith College Museum of Art, and the Five Colleges Consortium. The staff of the Imaging Center consists of librarians, visual resources curators, catalogers, information management professionals, digitization specialists, and technology specialists from Art and Educational Technology Services.

James Madison University (JMU) has spent ten years building a campus cooperative system for managing digital media collections and for integrating digital media into the teaching and learning process called the Madison Digital Image Database (MDID). Distributed free of charge under an open source license, it is also used by many institutions around the world. User support and ongoing development news is available through the MDID wiki, email, and a community mailing list of over 340 subscribers as well as through a blog, Facebook, and Twitter. Image collections can be shared across institutions and currently over 10,600 images (Art Images for College Teaching, Madison Art Collection, Otis College of Art and Design's Artists Books, etc.) are being made available to 45 institutions. JMU received an IMLS National Leadership Grant for Libraries to develop an Application Programming Interface (API) to facilitate interoperability between MDID and other systems and tools, such as Flickr and ARTstor connectors, a Blackboard building block, and PowerPoint import/export. This will provide a foundation for institutions to exchange data between MDID and other local systems or repositories. Embracing the social web, MDID3 will soon support rating, tagging, annotating, link suggestions and RSS feeds. MDID illustrates how collaboration among visual resources professionals, instructional technologists, and other campus constituents can provide local resources and tools that can be extended to a much broader community.

Appendix B:
Visual Resources Association
White Paper Task Force

Charge

To develop an organizational statement assessing the ongoing importance of visual resources collections, services, and personnel in helping academic and cultural heritage organizations to fulfill their missions and goals.

Task Force

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Elisa Lanzi	Smith College
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Notes

1. The Information Age is defined as the current stage in societal development that began to emerge at the end of the twentieth century. This period is marked by the increased production, transmission, consumption of and reliance on information. Many consider the new role of information to be changing our social and economic behavior as dramatically as did the Industrial Revolution. See: Harvard Center for International Development, "Glossary of Terms," Information Technologies Group, Center for International Development at Harvard University, <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/readinessguide/glossary.html#>.

2. See the "What is the VRA?" portion of the VRA Web site at: "Visual Resources Association," <http://www.vraweb.org>. Professional development is provided annually at the spring conference (<http://www.vraweb.org/conferences/index.html>) and Summer Educational Institute for Visual Resources and Image Management (<http://www.vrafoundation.org/sei.htm>) where visual resources professionals share expertise and current practices as well as obtain information about emerging technologies. A Strategic Plan Task Force is presently at work on a forward-thinking report (expected publication date, late 2009 or early 2010) to guide the VRA over the next five years. Additional publications provide details about the visual resources profession: Hemalata Iyer, "Core Competencies for Visual Resources Management," <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/SAA/VRCC.pdf> (an IMLS Funded Research Project at the University at Albany, SUNY); "Criteria for the Hiring and Retention of Visual Resources Professionals" (currently being updated), <http://www.vraweb.org/resources/general/criteria.html>; Art Libraries Society of North America, "ARLIS/NA Core Competencies for Art Information Professionals," <http://www.arlisna.org/pubs/onlinepubs/corecomps.pdf>; and Kim Kopatz, ed., *Guidelines for the Visual Resources Profession*, Art Libraries Society of North America and Visual Resources Association, 2000.

3. Spring 2009 first saw the closure of Cornell University's Knight Visual Resources Facility followed by the University of California, Irvine's Visual Resources Collection, and the Art Institute of Chicago's MacLean Visual Resources Center. In all three cases, professional staff were laid off and uncertainty remains about the future of the 35mm slide collections. Although basic support for the digital image databases and online delivery systems might now be provided by libraries or computing units, they will be static rather than dynamic resources, unable to respond to immediate teaching needs.

4. In this paper the terms "visual resources," "digital images," or "image assets" are used interchangeably. The American Library Association has an "Advocating in a Tough Economy" toolkit (<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/advocacy/advocacyuniversity/toolkit/index.cfm>) that might be useful to image professionals. (Thanks to Adrian Turner for this reference.)

5. David Green, "Using Digital Images in Teaching and Learning: Perspectives from Liberal Arts Institutions," *Academic Commons* (October 2006): 9-10, <http://www.academiccommons.org/imagereport>. In a nation-wide, 2002 study faculty ranked pictures as the 4th most-used format of information for teaching after books, journals, and news: Digital Library Federation and Outsell, Inc. "Dimensions and Use of the Scholarly Information Environment," Washington, DC: Digital Library Federation and Council on Library and Information Resources, 2002, <http://www.diglib.org/pubs/scholinfor>.

6. The faculty desire for support is documented in: Michael Dooris, Henry Pisciotta and Michael Halm. "Penn State's Visual Image User Study," *Planning for Higher Education* 34, no.3 (April-June 2006): 27-33; K. Gustafson, "The Impact of Technologies on Learning" *Planning for Higher Education* 32, no. 2 (2003-4): 37-43; Henry Pisciotta, Michael Dooris, James Frost and Michael Halm, "Penn State's Visual Image User Study" *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 5, no.1 (2005): 33-58; and Maureen Burns, "From Horse-Drawn Wagon to Hot Rod: The University of California's Digital Image Service Experience," *Journal of Archival Organization* 4, no. 1/2 (2006): 111-139.

7. Carol Vogel, "3 Out of 4 Visitors to the Met Never Make It to the Front Door," *New York Times*, March 29, 2006, Late Edition East Coast, G18, discusses the importance of Web sites for the missions of three major museums. (Thanks to Günter Waibel for this reference.)

8. Scholars Resource is a marketplace where educational institutions can license digital images in perpetuity from multiple sources for classroom teaching. See <http://www.scholarsresource.com>. Along with a number of museum participants, other contributors include commercial photographers and vendors who previously provided 35mm slides and now license digital images, such as Saskia (<http://www.saskia.com/>), Davis (<http://davisart.com/>), Archivision (<http://www.archivision.com/>), Hartill (<http://www.hartillart.com/>), Bridgeman (<http://www.bridgemanart.com/>), and more. ARTstor is a non-profit organization collecting images in the areas of art, architecture, humanities, and social sciences and distributing them for research and pedagogical purposes with a set of tools for viewing, presenting, and managing images. See <http://www.artstor.org>.

9. Comparison of position postings since 1982 indicated a dramatic increase in the number of responsibilities and qualifications listed for visual resources curators: Henry Pisciotta and Catherine Adams, "Fuzzy Jobs and Fuzzy Matches," (paper presented in a session entitled "Digital (Dis)Order: Implementing Change" at the Visual Resources Association 26th Annual Conference, San Diego, March 15, 2008.) A panel of visual resources professionals explored their changing roles

at the Visual Resources Association 24th Annual Conference in Baltimore. Remarks as well as a table summarizing the roles can be found in Jackie Spafford, Maureen Burns, and Vickie O'Riordan, "Damned If You Do, Damned If You Don't: The Changing Roles of the Visual Resources Curator," *VRA Bulletin* 33, no.3 (Fall, 2006): 33-42. In the Visual Resources Association's 2007 Professional Status Survey, 70.3% respondents reported additional responsibilities as a result of subscriptions to licensed content.

10. Collections built by individuals have always existed, but in the analog world tended not to be shared extensively due to the limitations of the physical media. Digital technology has made it easier to create, copy, collect, and share images thus increasing the number of personal collections.

11. Photograph collections and slide libraries (later renamed visual resources collections to encompass the expanding variety of media) tend to be in the image-intensive departments of architecture, art history, design, education, and studio art. These collections usually contain purchased 35mm slides or licensed digital images obtained from commercial vendors (e.g. Scholars Resource mentioned above in note 8) as well as material donated or developed locally using copy stand photography. When contracts and licenses do not prevent it, the slides in these collections are often digitized and shared more broadly within an institution through password-protected Web services. Other institutional analog and digital image collections in archives, libraries, and museums might be similarly shared internally for educational purposes only or exposed to the world on the Web, depending on their copyright.

12. Straightforward examples of subscription access to a database of digital images include Associated Press Images (<http://www.apimages.com>), Catalog of Art Museum Images Online (<http://camio.oclc.org>), Index of Christian Art (<http://ica.princeton.edu>), and more.

13. Systems that have multiple sources for images include ARTstor (<http://www.artstor.org>), Madison Digital Image Database (http://mdid.org/mdidwiki/index.php?title=Main_Page), and the LUNA Commons (<http://www.lunacommons.org>) For example, LUNA provides the user with the ability to add and work with image content from personal collections and Flickr in addition to the Commons shared collections. Presentations, slides, media groups, search results, etc. can be integrated into blogs, Facebook posts, tweets, courseware and the like for expanded access and discovery.

14. Competition is good for the consumer since it increases choices, encourages development, and holds prices down. There are a number of commercial vendors providing digital images complete with descriptive data, such as the Scholars Resource partners (mentioned above in note 8). Purchased images can be an efficient alternative to copy stand production and help to fill the gaps in subscription services. Decades of consolidation of academic journal publishing into a very small group of companies have produced a highly awkward economic model that strains the budgets of colleges and universities. Literature on this crisis is abundant, especially in the professional literature of librarianship. Two legal scholars have produced a series of studies from the point of view of economics and anti-trust law: Aaron Edin and Daniel Rubinfeld, "Scholarly Journals Project: Final Report to the Mellon Foundation," August 20, 2005, <http://msc.mellon.org/research-reports> and Aaron Edin and Daniel Rubinfeld, "Exclusion or Efficient Pricing? The 'Big Deal' Bundling of Academic Journals," *Antitrust Law Journal (ABA Antitrust LJ)* 72, no. 1 (2004): 128-159. For overviews of the current situation see: Association of Research Libraries, "ARL Statement to Scholarly Publishers on the Global Economic Crisis, February 19, 2009," <http://www.arl.org/news/pr/econ-crisis-19feb09.shtml>; and International Coalition of Library Consortia, "Statement on the Global Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Consortial Licenses, January 19, 2009," <http://www.library.yale.edu/consortia/icolc-econcrisis-0109.htm>.

15. Estimates of the size of the Internet vary widely, but as far back as 2002 the number of images on all Web sources could be estimated at 10 billion, some fraction of which might be useful for education: Henry Pisciotta, "Image Delivery and the Critical Masses," *Journal of Library Administration* 39 no. 2/3 (2003): 127 and 135.

16. Henry Pisciotta, Michael Dooris, James Frost and Michael Halm, "Penn State's Visual Image User Study," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 5, no.1 (2005): 46. Many surveys have reported large fractions of respondents who have personal collections of images, although the numbers vary widely. They are summarized in: Henry Pisciotta, "Understanding the Picture User," *Advances in Librarianship* 29 (2005): 227-228; and David Green, "Using Digital Images in Teaching and Learning: Perspectives from Liberal Arts Institutions," *Academic Commons* (October, 2006): 5, <http://www.academiccommons.org/imagereport>.

17. Two notable projects are the Visual Resources Association's VRA Core 4 (<http://www.vraweb.org/projects/vracore4/index.html>) and Cataloguing Cultural Objects (<http://www.vrafoundation.org/ccoweb/index.htm>) projects. An interesting project report discusses the need to move beyond silos which divide content into piecemeal offerings, see: Diane M. Zorich, Günter Waibel, and Ricky Erway, *Beyond the Silos of the LAMS: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives, and Museums*, OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., 2008, <http://www.oclc.org/programs/publications/reports/2008-05.pdf>.

18. American Memory (<http://memory.loc.gov>) is a cooperative project coordinated by the Library of Congress to provide digital access to written and spoken words, sound recordings, still and moving images, prints, maps, and sheet music that document the American experience. ARTstor is working with more than one hundred participating institutions

to host their local institutional collections on ARTstor servers. Hosted collections are available only to students, faculty, and staff allowing them to access institutional content with ARTstor core images. A second phase of the hosting program is developing a suite of web-based tools for managing hosted collections directly within ARTstor (<http://www.artstor.org/what-is-artstor/w-html/services-hosting.shtml>).

19. The process of creating Photostream (http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress) is described by Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, "Library of Congress Photos on Flickr," http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/flickr_pilot.html. The accessCeramics project is described at: <http://accessceramics.org/about>; and general information about Flickr may be found at: <http://www.flickr.com/about>.

20. In addition to establishing a model partnership between faculty and information professionals, SAHARA is building an image resource with the members of a professional organization, the Society of Architectural Historians, to experiment with new modes of scholarly communication (<http://www.sah.org/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=HOME&category=Sahara%20HOME>.)

21. The following articles reinforce the discussion about the value of cooperative ventures in times of economic difficulty: Sue B. Workman, "Sweating the Assets," *EDUCAUSE Review* 44, no. 5 (September/October 2009): 44-55, <http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Review/EDUCAUSEReviewMagazineVolume44/SweatingtheAssetsforSmarterITS/178415>; Gayle Palmer and Tom Storey, "The Top Trends in Digitization," *Western Trek* 4, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 2-5; and Sara Mudd and Andy Havens, "Library Cooperation in the 21st Century," *Next Space*, no.12 (June 2009): 4-9.

22. Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008), 109. For more information about the new mixed role of user/contributor, see David Weinberger, *Everything is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder* (New York: Times Books, 2007.)

23. An important function of the VRA has been the cooperative development of best practices for digital image preservation and metadata standards. See the "Data Standards," "Projects," "Publications," and "Resources" portions of VRA Web, "The Visual Resources Association," <http://www.vraweb.org/organization/committees/datastandards/index.html>.

24. For example, 2,800 lantern slides (the predecessors to 35mm slides) representing the work of Harvard faculty and providing an historical view of American buildings and landscapes built during the period 1850-1920 are in American Memory (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/landscape>.) The North American Lantern Slide Project surveys lantern slides to coordinate the identification of valuable archival content, most of which is now in the public domain: (<http://arlisna.org/nalss/index.htm>.)

25. The Digital Millennium Copyright Act makes explicit the need for this type of copyright education in educational contexts: U.S. Copyright Office, "The Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998: U.S. Copyright Office Summary," <http://www.copyright.gov/legislation/dmca.pdf>. In addition, the VRA has an Intellectual Property Rights Committee that makes valuable tools and resources available to help guide good decision-making, such as the "Digital Image Rights Computator" at <http://www.vraweb.org/organization/committees/ipr/index.html>. Digital rights management has led to experimentation with embedding intellectual property rights data in digital image files. The VRA has an Embedded Metadata Subcommittee (<http://metadatadeluxe.pbwiki.com>) researching standards, exploring issues, and developing tools for embedding descriptive metadata into image files. The VRA also has appointed a member to represent its interests with the PLUS Coalition. The coalition's work is described by Jim Goldstein, "The PLUS Coalition: Standardized Licensing Codes," *Digital Photo Pro*, <http://www.digitalphotopro.com/business/the-plus-coalition-standardized-licensing-codes.html>.

26. For more on ARTstor's Shared Shelf, see <http://www.artstor.org/news/n-html/an-090714-shelf.shtml>. For an authoritative discussion of the future of shared collections from the legal standpoint, see: Gretchen Wagner, "New Angle of Repose," *EDUCAUSE Review* 42, no. 6 (November/December 2007): 85-104, <http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Review/EDUCAUSEReviewMagazineVolume42/SharingVisualArtsImagesforEduc/162067>. In addition, social networks like Flickr and the Wikimedia Commons (<http://commons.wikimedia.org>) have led to increased awareness of Creative Commons licenses (<http://creativecommons.org>) and other new legal frameworks.

27. Barbara Rockenbach and Carole Ann Fabian, "Visual Literacy in the Age of Participation," *Art Documentation* 27, no.2 (Fall 2008), pp. 26-31. See also the International Visual Literacy Association at: http://www.ivla.org/org_what_vis_lit.htm

28. The need for such learning spaces and examples can be found in the following special issue on learning spaces, *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* 32, no.1 (2009), <http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EQVolume322009/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/163844>. For an example specific to visual resources, Duke University's Department of Art, Art History and Visual Studies repurposed half of the Visual Resources Center space to support an Architecture/Design Lab. Faculty and graduate students use the lab to introduce 2D and 3D design assignments and 3D reconstruction projects into the architectural history and archaeology classes.

29. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, "The EDUCAUSE Top Teaching and Learning Challenges 2009," EDUCAUSE, <http://www.educause.edu/eli/Challenges>.

30. A more comprehensive list of administrative scenarios might have included for-profit collections and non-profit subscription services, but have been omitted as peripheral to this document.

31. The determination of these administrative types and frequency of occurrence are based upon two VRA professional status surveys from 2007 and 1999. Using the more current data, most respondents to the surveys (primarily VRA members) managed collections in academic departments (about 40% in both 2007 and 1999) followed by those in libraries (18.6% in 2007, up from 14.5% in 1999).

32. For more information about Alka Patel's South Asian and Cuban Art and Architecture, see <http://www.artstor.org/what-is-artstor/w-html/col-s-asian-cuban.shtml>. A recent article provides information about UC's experience, see Lena Zentall and Maureen Burns, "University of California Shared Image Collections: Convergence and Expansion," *VRA Bulletin* 35, no. 2 (2008): 56-68, a special issue on digital collaboration. This article was also posted as part of "University of California Image Service: UC Shared Images," California Digital Library, <http://www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/image/#News>.

33. For additional information about the University of Minnesota's Digital Content Library see: http://dcl.umn.edu/static_content_items/about

Visual Resources Association Bulletin

Mission Statement

The Mission of the *Visual Resources Association Bulletin* is to serve the membership of the Visual Resources Association by providing a professional forum for the discussion and dissemination of ideas and information directly relating to visual resources and image management.

Content Guidelines

1. Contributions to the *VRA Bulletin* should conform to the journal's mission statement.
2. Authors should note that the views expressed in submissions to the *VRA Bulletin* are attributed solely to the author and not to the *VRA Bulletin's* editorial staff, Rhode Island School of Design, or the Visual Resources Association. Publication in the *VRA Bulletin* does not constitute an endorsement of the views expressed by the author of the submission. The editors and the Visual Resources Association disclaim responsibility and liability for any statements of fact or opinion made by contributors.

Submission and Editorial Guidelines

1. News items and articles should be sent to the editor: Mark Pompelia, *VRA Bulletin* Editor, Fleet Library, Rhode Island School of Design, 2 College St, Providence, Rhode Island 02903-2785; ph: 401-709-5935, fax: 401-709-5932, e-mail: mpompeli@risd.edu.
2. Contributions should be submitted on a compact disc or via e-mail attachment using Microsoft Word for either the Macintosh or PC platform. A hard copy of the news item or article should accompany the disk; authors are encouraged to retain a hard copy of their original manuscript. Disks will be not returned to authors. When submitting a hard copy, it should be on 8-1/2 x 11-inch paper, double-spaced, in 10- or 12-point type. For all submissions, the author's name and institutional affiliation must appear at the top of the text. To facilitate communication with the editorial staff, authors must provide their name, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address. Submissions by fax will not be accepted.
3. All photographs and reproductions should be clearly documented with appropriate caption information. Contributors are responsible for obtaining permission for the reproduction of copyrighted materials and for reproduction fees. This permission must clearly state that the material may be reproduced in the *VRA Bulletin* in its print edition and full-text indexing. Only camera-ready illustrative material will be accepted. Image files that are placed within a Word document should be submitted as separate files, either on CD or as e-mail attachments, and are clearly named, such as PompeliaFig1.jpg. Images should be no more than 6" in width and scanned at a resolution between 150–300 dpi, preferably in color. All illustrative material will be returned to the contributor.
4. To ensure conformity, contributors should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed., and *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. Please refer to Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* for basic guidelines for formal writing. Contributors should also request the *VRA Bulletin* style sheet and deadlines from the editor.
5. The editorial staff makes every effort to return a substantially edited copy of a submission to the author for approval. When extensive rewriting is required before a submission is publishable, the article will be returned to the author with suggestions for rewriting. The editorial staff will not seek approval for editing done for style and grammar.

Information for Advertisers

Members of the Visual Resources Association are individuals who administer image collections in the United States and around the world. These professionals make decisions concerning the acquisition of slides, photographs, films, videos, CD-ROMs, digital images and other visual materials as well as the purchase of equipment, supplies, and furnishings for the storage, processing, and projection of these materials. With its specialized readership, the *VRA Bulletin* attempts to put vendors of such materials in direct contact with potential buyers at a very low cost. The Visual Resources Association encourages advertising that is of a professional interest to visual resources curators and librarians.

The editorial staff of the *VRA Bulletin* reserves the right to determine if an advertisement is appropriate. Artwork for advertisements must be camera ready. Should the production staff determine that adjustments in size or location are necessary, the difference in cost will be refunded to the advertiser.

Deadlines for submitting advertisements are as follows: Spring issue—February 15; Summer issue—May 15; Fall issue—August 15.

All payments must be made payable to the Visual Resources Association in U.S. currency. Rates, effective January 1, 2005 are as follows: full page inside cover—\$300; full page interior—\$250; one-half page inside cover—\$200; one-half page interior—\$150; one-quarter page interior—\$100. A discount is offered for the purchase of ads in three or more issues. All correspondence should be sent to the editor.



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c/o

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