VIEWS

From the Chair
Stephen Fletcher
UNC-Chapel Hill

Staying Relevant . . . from 30,000 feet.

When all else fails, look up . . . or down. I was having the hardest time writing this, my final column as Section Chair, trashing a half dozen attempts. I wanted to talk about the three-year plan and just didn't know where to go with it, getting bogged down in the minutia. Finally, way (way!) past my final deadline it hit me: look at it from 30,000 feet.

The theme for the midwinter meeting was "staying relevant." We discussed many ideas from different perspectives, and many of the specific initiatives can be found in the document now in formation. But when I stepped back from the individual discussions or specific ideas, the overall picture—the view from 30,000 feet—pointed to new emphasis on staying current in order to stay relevant.

One of our section's trademarks has been pushing the frontier, with VIEWS and our section's web site being two shining examples. As meeting attendees looked at both of these, however, they were looking a bit dated—not only stylistically, but more importantly, in their functions. A quarterly publication and static Web 1.0 website stand little chance of being relevant in the current realm of Tweets and social networking. The most important revelation that emerged from this year's Midwinter Meeting was the need to converge our best assets, making the web site more informative and interactive, and being able to convey information on a regular basis rather than every few months. As the section goes forward, you will begin to see this convergence with a newly designed web site based upon the content management system Drupal. Coincidently, SAA has recently implemented Drupal for its redesigned web site. But as VMers, we want to do more than SAA can currently implement. By pushing the VM web site beyond what SAA headquarters can currently provide, the Visual Materials Section can stay relevant with timely information and interaction, once perhaps more importantly, staying on the frontier.

SAA Annual Meeting, Washington DC
VM Section Events and Sessions of Interest

Wednesday, August 11
10:00 AM – NOON:
• Library of Congress Open House: viewing special collections, new housing ideas, and hopefully a stack-tour

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM:
• Architectural Records Roundtable Meeting

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM:
• Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable Meeting

Thursday, August 12
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM
• Real-World Digitizing for Humble Shops Undertaking Hefty
• Digitization Projects.

10:30 AM – NOON
• Providing Web Access to Medical and Health-Related Visual Materials for Diverse Users
• The Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative: Case Studies of the Guidelines at Work

2:30 PM – 4:00 PM
• Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division behind-the-scene tours. Appointment required.

6:15 PM
• Visual Materials Section dinner at Madam's Organ in Adams Morgan

9:00 PM – 10:15 PM
• Archives in the Movies

Friday, August 13
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
• That Was Easy! Making Digital Archives a Pleasure to Use

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
• On the Case with the "History Detectives": Public Television and Archival Advocacy

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
• Visual Materials Section Meeting

Saturday, August 14
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM
• Working Toward Clarity on Copyright Publication for Visual Works
• Perspectives on Cartoons: Art, Archival Objects, Assets

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
• The World at our Doorstep: Digitizing Historical Maps

Perspectives on Cartoons

Susan Kline, Assistant Librarian/
Cartoon Archivist
Special Collections Research Center,
Syracuse University

Later this year, the Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) at Syracuse University will be wrapping up a grant project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to process 189 collections of work by cartoonists. In the 1960s, then curator Martin Bush contacted dozens of cartoonists asking if they would like to donate their original artwork to Syracuse. However, over the last forty years, the resulting collections have remained minimally processed.

To reveal these "hidden collections", SCRC applied for, and was awarded, an NHPRC detailed processing grant to complete a two year project involving the processing and description of these resources. The project has proven an exciting way to reveal the holdings of one of SCRC's larger collecting areas, which documents the medium of cartooning, particularly in the twentieth century. Cartoons are an especially accessible medium with nearly universal appeal. They hold the power to entertain while also providing social and political commentary. SCRC hopes the processing of these collections will attract scholars interested

in exploring the medium of cartooning or studying the subjects depicted in the cartoons. Spanning approximately 1,000 linear feet and amounting to tens of thousands of unique cartoons, SCRC's 189 collections include primarily original artwork. However, selected collections also contain sketches, proofs, and correspondence. Excitingly much of this correspondence is in the form of letters from readers.

Generally, the cartoon collections at SCRC fall into two categories: comic strips and editorial cartoons. While the contents of cartoon collections at SCRC span the twentieth century and late nineteenth century, they are particularly strong in material from the 1950s and 1960s. Artwork for original comic strips held at SCRC includes familiar titles such as Archie and Beetle Bailey, as well as material from Prince Valiant and Mutt and Jeff, which is often regarded as the first daily comic strip.

Our editorial cartoons document defining events of the twentieth century such as the Cold War, Vietnam War, and the presidencies of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, as well as localized issues related to the cartoonists' home papers. Included is work that was published in geographically diverse locations and projects positions along the political spectrum. Several Pulitzer Prize winners are represented, including Paul Conrad and Don Wright. Also of interest are sports cartoons, such as those by Bill Gallo of the New York Daily News.

While not all of the cartoonists remain well known today, the work of lesser known names reflects the moment in time in which it was created and remains valuable documentation of American society and culture.

The grant project commenced with a survey of the collections to determine the general scope and contents of each collection and possible preservation issues. The survey led to discoveries of material SCRC was unaware it had. Following the survey, very basic finding aids and MARC catalog records were made available

Detail of original artwork for Roy Crane's Captain Easy strip, August 20, 1933.

Sorting and processing of editorial cartoon artwork.

online for each collection utilizing existing paper based finding aids (when they existed) and information gleaned from the survey.

With these initial finding aids and records in place, the processing and description phase began. The extent of prior processing has varied from collection to collection and has ultimately influenced the nature of what has been done to each collection during the project in terms of physical arrangement and description.

Biographical information obtained at the time of donation or initial processing has been confirmed and expanded utilizing specialized cartoon reference sources as well as some contributions of amateur scholars and fans, particularly in the form of blogs, which have proven very useful for describing lesser known comic strips. The format has also required creativity in terms of storage and preservation. It was determined that comic strips, having distinctly unique dimensions, best fit into boxes that were custom made by an archival supplier. Other cartoons, generally ranging in size from 11"x14" to over 18"x 24", have been relocated to newspaper boxes and occasionally odd sized items have been placed in map case drawers. Of concern, as well, has been the need to interleave editorial cartoons featuring charcoal and crayon shading, in order to prevent smudging.

Perhaps the most crucial aspect to the project has been the process of describing the cartoons so they may be of use to researchers. This process has provided challenges and opportunities for experimentation when it comes to working

with visual materials. Description of the comic strip collections was carried out in a fairly straightforward manner with inventories of dates. The editorial cartoons, however, generated discussion about how to best communicate their subject matter while balancing the cartoonist's intent and what exactly is depicted in the artwork.

While clearly appreciated by researchers, item level descriptions have not been feasible, except in a few circumstances where typed lists (and therefore OCR scannable) already existed, due to the volume of original art and the project's timeline. Instead, for editorial cartoons, SCRC has experimented with the EAD tag <index>, as a way to provide subject descriptions at the folder and box level. Carefully selected specific LCSH terms have been used to document the dominant people and subjects depicted in comic strips and editorial cartoons.

Another objective of the grant was to contribute to the Wikipedia articles for several dozen cartoonists. For cartoonists for which SCRC holds a large quantity of material, links to the respective finding aids have been added to their Wikipedia articles. In some cases biographical information in articles has been expanded using resources in the collections. SCRC's EAD finding aids are also indexed by Google. Because Wikipedia and Google are often the starting point for many casual (and serious) researchers (as well as comic art fans), promoting SCRC collections through these avenues will allow SCRC to reach more potential researchers. A final aspect of the project has been making other archivists, scholars and the public aware that SCRC is home to these unique collections through conference presentations and articles.

If you are interested in learning more about the issues involving these collections and cartoons in general, plan on attending session #508, Perspectives on Cartoons: Art, Archival Objects, Assets, at the Society of American Archivists annual meeting. For more information about SCRC, visit: http://www.scrc.syr.edu. For a list of finding aids for all the cartoonists see: http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/ead/subj_list_from_db.htm#cart

NEW in Print
By Liz Ruth, Assistant Editor
Los Angeles Maritime Museum

Falconer, John and Louise Hide.
Points of View: Capturing the 19th Century in Photographs.
Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009. 176 p.
Cloth $55.00. ISBN: 9780712350815
Paper $29.00. ISBN: 9780712350822
Available from http://www.press.uchicago.edu/new_releases/38.html

Fanning, Patricia J.
Through an Uncommon Lens: The Life and Photography of F. Holland Day.
Boston, MA : University of Massachusetts Press, 2008. 320 p.
Cloth $40.00. ISBN 978-1-55849-668-2.
Available at: http://www.umass.edu/umpress/subject/art.html

Kopelow, Gerry.
All Our Changes: Images from the Sixties Generation.
University of Manitoba, 2009. 180 p.
Paper $39.95. ISBN 978-0-88755-714-9
University of Manitoba, available at http://msupress.msu.edu/

Mraz, John.
Looking for Mexico: Modern Visual Culture and National Identity.
North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2009. 360 p.
Cloth: $84.95. ISBN 978-0-8223-4429-2
Paper: $23.95. ISBN 978-0-8223-4443-8
Available at: http://www.dukeupress.edu/

Potter, Russell Alan.
Arctic Spectacles: The Frozen North in Visual Culture, 1818-1875.
Montreal, CAN: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007. 272 p.
$39.95. ISBN 9780773533332
Available at: http://mqup.mcgill.ca/browse_books.php?by=subjects

Schulz, Constance B., editor.
Bust to Boom: Documentary Photographs of Kansas, 1936–1949.
University Press of Kansas, 2007. 160 p.
Cloth $29.95. ISBN 978-0-7006-0799-0
Available at: http://www.kansaspress.ku.edu

Shand-Tucci, Douglas.
Built in Boston: City and Suburb, 1800–2000. Revised and expanded edition.
Boston, MA : University of Massachusetts Press. 506 p.
$32.95. ISBN 1-55849-201-1.
Available at: http://www.umass.edu/umpress/subject/art.html

Siegel, Elizabeth.
Galleries of Friendship and Fame: A History of Nineteenth-Century American Photograph Albums.
Yale University Press, 2010. 216 p.
Cloth $50.00. ISBN: 9780300154061.
Available at: http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/ArtAndArchitecture/index.asp

Great Googie-Moogly!

Exhibit Reviews by John H. Slate, CA, Dallas Municipal Archives

A Record of Emotion: The Photographs of Frederick H. Evans
February 2 – June 6, 2010
Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA

Las Vegas Studio: Images from The Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown
March 21 – June 20, 2010
The Museum of Contemporary Art,
Los Angeles - Pacific Design Center,
West Hollywood

Two exhibits in the Los Angeles area featured similar yet very different areas of historic photography. While both showcased historic and artistic photo documentation, each had a different agenda. In one case, it was the artistry of late-19th century photographic prints and lantern slides. In the other, it was the use of film and photography as a learning and teaching tool. In the former, the object itself is in many ways as artistic as the subject matter; in the latter, the subject matter is the focus.

In A Record of Emotion: The Photographs of Frederick H. Evans, the subject is mostly architectural photography, punctuated with the occasional celebrity portrait (GB Shaw, Aubrey Beardsley). On first glance, it was a gallery filled with repetitive soft-lighting British cathedral and church interiors and exteriors. All have a very carefully constructed, ethereal sense of space. But what becomes more apparent upon individual inspection is the distinct and consistent quality of the prints themselves. Their beauty as physical objects are almost more impressive than what they are as visual documents. The haunting and enduring quality of platinum continues to charm.

Evans' work moves from monumental buildings to more intimate ones, such as studies of Dante Gabriel Rosetti's home and William Morris's Tudor farmhouse turned homestead, Kelmscott Manor. If you ever wondered where Morris's personal tastes ran in interior design, this would answer your questions. A side gallery containing a generous sampling of Evans' lantern slides took a greater look at depth of field and dimensionality in that format, one he actually favored over paper prints. Also included were a few examples of his microphotography.

If British architectural photography is new to you, you'll want to become familiar with Evans' work. The photographer (1853–1943) was very popular in his heyday. However, if you are a printing nut, and into something as specific as platinum prints, this show is also for you.

In an entirely different look at architecture, Las Vegas Studio: Images from The Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown was actually a meta-exhibit: it's documentation of documentation. In preparation for what became the landmark 1972 book Learning from Las Vegas architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, together with students from Yale University, made a critical study of what is generally considered the classic tawdry architecture, signage, and cityscapes of Las Vegas. What made this a meta-exhibit is the display of original research materials, including over 80 photographs and a selection of films shot during the authors' 1968 research that figured into their study.

During the 1968 trip, both color transparency (most likely Ektachrome) and color eight millimeter film were shot of street views, signage, and buildings later used in classes and in a lengthy dialogue about the meaning of mixed building styles.

On one wall, an oversized graph created for classroom use incorporated photographs of then-famous hotels with corresponding reductive information about its elemental styles – Moorish design elements in the Sands, Neo-classical elements in Caesar's Palace, Space-Age "Googie" style, and so forth. At one end of the exhibit space a slide carousel projected duplicates of the slides. Beside it a more modern projector looped the silent films completing the "work in progress" feel. Cases for two-dimensional paper items displayed original notebooks. In another case, a sampling of the many foreign printings of Learning from Las Vegas offered a vivid demonstration of the book's

lasting importance and how it redeemed Googie and other modernist architecture styles.

The exhibit was organized by The Museum im Bellpark, Kriens (Switzerland), and followed presentations at Museum im Bellpark, Kriens,; Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt; and Yale School of Architecture.

A Little Background and Context on the Chair-elect

Stephen Cohen. MetLife

Of late, I am performing as a records manager at MetLife in New York City. As it sounds, it does not leave much room for involvement with visual materials. My days are spent mostly with text-based legal records like pleadings, correspondence, agreements, certificates, and so on. My colleague and I provide reference/retrieval support on inactive records, ensure the records management database runs smoothly, investigate solutions to strengthen the records management program (since it can only facilitate the legal hold and discovery process). Additionally, I am also the fire warden for my floor, and the Continuing Legal Education administrator for the company's 400+ lawyers and paralegals. To its credit, Snoopy's insurance company is serious about staying out of trouble. And for that, it keeps its lawyers, paralegals and me very busy.

Let me digress for a while…

"How did a records manager get to be elected chairman of the SAA Visual materials Section?" you might ask. The short answer is, "I was elected, that's how." Here's the longer answer: While I am now pegged as a records manager, I do not draw distinctions between a records manager andan archivist. To me they are two sides of the same coin. Now that I've reconciled that part, the VM piece is easy. I see all records as equal, whether they're legal, personal papers, lab notebooks, microforms, or even visual materials. I also do not like to draw distinctions between human-

eye readable and machine-readable records. I think all archivists/records managers should be knowledgeable to a degree with visual materials as in our lives we are constantly confronted with visual information that we must understand.

Digressing a little more, my educational background is in the fine arts (University of Connecticut), specifically photography, printmaking (lithography and intaglio), and a wee bit of graphic design. And not to overlook my graduate education in archives and records management at the University of Texas at Austin, where I took every elective on visual materials that I could.

To get my "fix" of visual materials while living as a records manager, I do periodic consulting work for the Yale Swimming Association, processing their records which include a wealth of photographs, ephemera, albums stretching back more than 90 years. I also am an amateur photographer who tinkers with Photoshop and recently got a snazzy Epson V700 photo scanner to begin reviewing and printing selections from my 20 year backlog of medium format film.

I urge everyone to look over the blogged conversations from our late mid-winter/vernal equinox meeting (http://vm3yr2010.wikispaces.com/) and to be able to contribute one way or another toward improving the communication and knowledge of our constituents. Contributions needn't be grandiose or require significant time commitments. An hour of your time, whether it's writing part of an article, providing expertise on a specific topic or project, or just making a few phone calls is all that's need in most instances. If you think you can help, whether in a small way or a big way, let me know so I know who to reach out to when the opportunity arises.

Visual Materials Section Midwinter Meeting participants visit the Skull and Bones building at Yale University during a break in the action. (L – R: Stephen Fletcher, Chair; Anne Salsich, Steering Committee Member-at-large; Tim Hawkins, Newsletter Editor; Stephen Cohen, Chair-Elect.)

To review the 3-year plan developed during the meeting, or to revisit the entire discussion, go to http://vm3yr2010.wikispaces.com/

Cooliris:a browser based method for image viewing

By Scott Prouty
American Institute of Physics (AIP),
Emilio Segrè Visual Archives (ESVA)

Cooliris[1] has been around since 2006, but has only recently experienced a large pick-up in use of its free tools.[2] Why the interest? At its essence, Cooliris is a browser plug-in that works with Firefox, Internet Explorer, Safari, and Google Chrome to allow users to quickly browse and view large numbers of images and videos as well as partnering television and cable channels. More specifically, the tool allows you to drag or scroll through image sets at any speed while viewing any number of rows (these features can be adjusted). Users can also zoom in and out and see the image filenames and file size when hovering over an image. Once installed in your browser, you can activate Cooliris by clicking a browser toolbar icon or a browse over icon in the corner of any website image you pull up.

For photo archivists, this has the potential to be a powerful tool as Cooliris works not only with content on the web but images stored on your hard drive and networks as well. For instance, if someone sends me a large donation of electronic images, whether on CD or via FTP, I can quickly scan through them in order to appraise which images will receive full cataloging. In addition, a newly developed features is Cooliris Express, which is a "version of the Cooliris Wall you can embed into your [web]site."[3] Using Express, you can share content you may have already posted to certain social media sites by publishing an embedded wall on another such site. While the service is free, if you register, Cooliris allows you to save and edit your embedded walls. Google Analytics also provides statistical support to registered users. For archivists with limited time and budget, tools such as Cooliris and Cooliris Express may be useful in fulfilling the appraising, processing, and publicity functions for your collection.

1 http://www.cooliris.com
2 http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/technology/2010/04/cooliris.html
3 From "Facebook, Flickr, Picasa, YouTube, or any Media RSS feed" to "Facebook, Twitter, Blogger, WordPress, or your website."

QR Codes: Could You Use These to Promote Your Collection's Services?

By Karen Holt, Digital Assets
Instruction, and Outreach Librarian
The University of Texas at Austin

QR codes…They're big in Japan! They have also been cropping up recently on everything from San Francisco restaurant windows to library catalogs. But what are they exactly? Like a barcode, the quick response, or QR, code stores data. While the typical barcode is capable of storing a maximum of approximately 20 digits, the QR code can store up to 7,089 characters.

QR codes are capable of storing a URL, a social network address (like your collection's Facebook page), your contact information, an SMS, text, a Google maps location, and an RSS feed. If you have a phone with a camera and you can download a QR code reading app, then you are set to read these codes. Your phone will decode the symbol and then point your phone's web browser to the encoded info.

Creating QR codes is super easy with a QR code generator. These can be found online from a variety of sites. Some of the most popular include Kaywa, Delivr, and QR Stuff. Popular QR code readers include Beetagg, Google Zxing, and NeoReader.

Libraries are beginning to do a number of interesting things with QR codes. The University of Bath and the University of Huddersfield have embedded QR codes into their catalogs, so that their users can download call numbers by snapping a pic of the QR code. They can then take these call numbers into the stacks with them and find the books they need.

The Sacramento Public Library has a QR code on their blog grandCENTRAL that will offer to add the phone number for their new "My Info Quest: text 4 answers" service to the user's cell phone. With the phone number added to their contact list, it will be easy for the user to call the library whenever they have a library-related question.

The Columbus Metropolitan Library has put codes in their stacks that, when scanned with a QR code reader, take users directly to the mobile catalog. This service makes it much more convenient for patrons to find books while they are in the stacks, and there is the added bonus of not having to wait in line to use a library computer to access the catalog.

At the University of Texas Fine Arts Library, I am currently working on a project to create QR codes to be placed with items in our exhibition spaces. When scanned, these QR codes will take our users to call numbers for books that they can check out to learn more about the objects on display.

QR codes are a relatively new technology to the libraries and archives world, so there will probably be a slight curve in introducing your users to this technology. However, I think that possibility of introducing your users to a new technology is an exciting opportunity to show off your tech savvy, while promoting your collections and services. Try them out and let your users experience your collection in a new way!

Resources:
QR Code generators:
Kaywa - http://qrcode.kaywa.com/
Delivr - http://delivr.com/qr-code-generator
QR Stuff - http://www.qrstuff.com/
BeeTagg - http://generator.beetagg.com/?a=facebook
QR Code readers:
Beetagg - http://www.beetagg.com/
Zxing - http://code.google.com/p/zxing/
NeoReader - http://www.neoreader.com/

Exhibits
By Shawn Waldron
Archive Director
Conde Naste Publications

Photographing the American West
Palm Springs Art Museum
Palm Springs, CA
May 29th to January 3rd

**Beat Memories: The Photographs of
Allen Ginsbergs**
National Gallery of Art
Washington, D.C.
May 2nd to September 6th

**Twilight Visions: Surrealism, Photography, and
Paris 1924-39**
Telfair Museum
Savannah, GA
June 11th to October 10th

**Out of the Box: Photography Portfolios from
the Permanent Collection**
Decordova Museum
Lincoln, MA
Ends on October 1st

Walker Evans: Decade by Decade
Cincinnati Art Museum
Cincinnati, OH
June 12th to September 5th

Imogen Cunningham: Everything Under the Sun
Seattle Art Museum
Seattle, WA
Ends August 29th

Parting Shots...
By Tim Hawkins, Editor

Where's my VIEWS?

If you're one of those Visual Materials Section members who anxiously scans your email waiting for the announcement of the release of the latest VIEWS, then I sincerely apologize. Actually, I apologize even if you're not.

This issue of VIEWS has been sitting "in the can," to use the film term, since last April. Unfortunately, there have been a couple of key items missing, so it hasn't been possible to publish the issue until those were in place. That's the reality of working with limited resources and a completely volunteer staff on a publication that "goes to press."

At the Midwinter Meeting we had lengthy discussions about our VM communications strategies. A key issue is making our communications timely. Even with the move from a printed version of VIEWS to circulation as a PDF, it's difficult to get the issue out while all of the content is still relevant. Maybe you've seen announcements for exhibit reviews or events that have already passed? I know that I had to delete a number of them from this issue, and now I just hope that I can get it to you before the SAA Annual Meeting.

We're planning to premiere the beta version of a new Visual Materials Section web site at the meeting in Washington DC. Our intent with this site is to make it more current, more in tune with the new design for the SAA web site, but more importantly, to make the web site serve some of the functions of this newsletter for information that is time sensitive.

Certainly I want to continue to publish VIEWS, but I'm also thinking that some of the contents, like the articles, might be of interest to a wider audience who would look at them on the web site. In addition, publishing on a web site has the advantage of being "on-demand," rather than having to wait for a specific publication date.

I'm very much looking forward to showing our work on the new web site and getting feedback from the VM membership before going too far with it. I hope to see you all there.
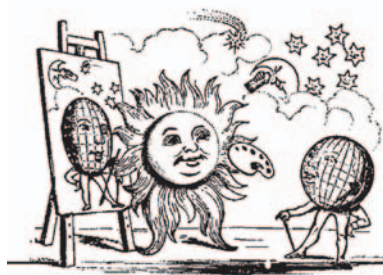
VIEWS

The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section
Society of American Archivists

From the Chair
Stephen Fletcher
UNC-Chapel Hill

Think Globally, Meet Locally? The Visual Materials Section Midwinter Meeting Revisited.

In January, 2003, twenty Visual Material Section members traveled to University Park, Maryland, for our section's first Midwinter Meeting. It was the culmination of more than ten years of discussion about how to accomplish the business of the section in a way impossible to accomplish within the tight confines of the SAA Annual Meeting structure. The meeting was successful; as then Section Chair Laurie Baty reported in Views, "I easily can say that we left the meeting re-energized and committed to increasing our volunteer base, improving our work with Council on visual archival education, and in providing up-to-date information and information resources in Views and on our Web site. We were also exhausted from two very full days of considering Section activities."

During this economically challenging time, I am concerned about people's ability to travel to Midwinter, and as I began thinking about where to meet for this year, I became curious about past meetings and their attendance records. A little digging revealed some interesting numbers.

Of the twenty attendees for the first Midwinter Meeting, thirteen were from the immediate Washington, D.C. area and three lived as close as an eight-hour drive. Only three Section members visited from afar. After its initial success in 2003, as an informal trial, SAA sanctioned Midwinter as an official meeting, which enabled participants to be reimbursed by their employers if applicable. This seemed to have little effect, however, on travelers. Seventeen Section members attended the 2004 meeting in Boston, but again only three archivists made a trip farther than a day's drive. The third Midwinter Meeting returned to University Park, with sixteen attendees, and once again there were only three "distance" travelers. For 2006, in San Francisco, the first Midwinter meeting away from the East Coast, only ten participants were on hand, four being from the West Coast. The 2007 meeting in Durham, North Carolina, saw an even smaller gathering of seven, only two of whom traveled from the West Coast, with the balance being from the Carolinas or nearby Kentucky. The 2008 meeting had to be cancelled, but last year's return to Maryland saw a rebound to twelve attendees—but again all were local, or nearby, save one long-distance traveler.

Social Movement Visual Archives: Unusual collections require unusual approaches

By Lincoln Cushing

When Free Speech Movement activist Michael Rossman died of cancer in May, 2008, he left behind a huge collection of American political posters from the period known broadly as "the sixties." In fact, the collection consisted of almost 25,000 distinct titles, mostly from the San Francisco Bay Area, and mostly dating from 1965 to 2007. As a long-time friend and information management professional, it fell to me to help the family find a home for this remarkable body of work. The nature of the collection and the process of situating it in a suitable repository offered unique opportunities that are worth sharing with the archival community.

Rossman was a natural scientist, radicalized by Berkeley in the 1960s as an activist in the Free Speech Movement. In 1977 that combination prompted him to begin gathering posters as a tool for teaching young people about social movements, a passion which he continued until his death. He was not wealthy, so this collection was largely built through shameless pleading, dumpster diving, and flea market prowling. Fortunately, aside from a few narrow genres, such as rock posters and Black Panther art, this field was under the radar of commercial exploitation. And Michael's definition of "political" was very broad. Of course, it is rich with the expected – movement basics, including demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, support for Puerto Rican independence, and feminist challenges to the patriarchy. But it pushed that envelope. Sex, drugs, rock and roll, yes; human potential movement, vegetarianism, leather bars- why not? If it involved people trying to change their world, it was in. His personal subject expertise guided the collection. Much of this material is so provocative that it would make the (in)famous "Sun Mad Raisin" AA cover look like something from Reader's Digest.

Partially because he didn't have much money or space, and partially because he was inventive and iconoclastic, Rossman shunned flat files for an amazingly robust and compact storage system. He designed and built a series of Masonite folders, sturdy things with square bottoms and rope handles. With four different size categories, he filled these files so that the posters kept each other flat while in an upright position. These folders, in turn, were stored in custom-built cabinets that kept out dust and water. One example of the virtue of this system is that when we had to move the entire collection out of his house it took four of us less than a day.

Although an archival amateur (as many collection-builders are), as a scientist Rossman understood the importance of taxonomy. Beyond certain cryptic notes the collection was not cataloged, but it was arranged by size and subject. Folders for "R/E HA" contained materials about "Race and ethnicity, Hispanic-American" and were further subdivided into subject breakdowns.
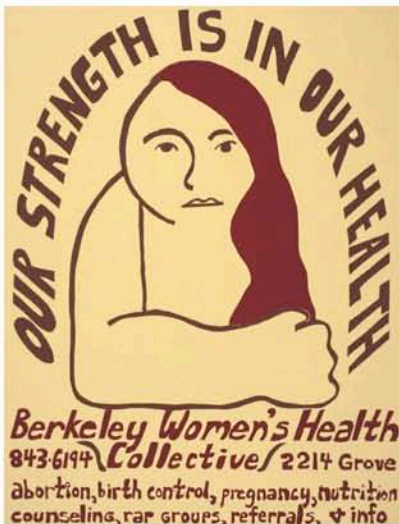
Above: Michael Rossman in his Archive
Clockwise: 1970s posters

Rossman was clear about his wishes regarding the collection after he was gone. It should remain intact, it should remain in the Bay Area, and it should be processed and accessible to the public. The family was willing to donate the collection, but also wanted to make sure that it didn't drift around as an unfunded processing mandate. After much research and inquiry, the suitable institutional candidates came down to the Bancroft Library and the Oakland Museum of California, each with their strengths and weaknesses. In order to assure processing, I am to accompany the collection for a minimum of three years at half time.

To best promote the concern for public access, I have jump-started the challenging task of digitization by beginning it myself. The archive is currently housed right next to my photo studio, where I have shot a selection of over 1,500 posters at MOA standards. This was partly done in order to facilitate the appraisal process, which was very challenging due to the scale and the fact that much of this material is outside the market valuation sphere. I believe that such collections are best processed if digitized before cataloging, a position that I realize is unheard of. But since such marginal materials require that item-level cataloging involve real research rather than rote data entry, and the ability to share images with other scholars is essential to building an accurate record.

As of this date, the disposition of the collection is still being negotiated. At the family's insistence, both institutions have committed to preparing for full, mass digitization as part of the overall processing project. All parties are excited about the impact of this donation and the rich cluster of historical imagery that will become available to scholars all over the world.

Lincoln Cushing has served as cataloger of Spanish-language posters at UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library and as Electronic Outreach Librarian at UC Berkeley Institute of Industrial Relations. He has written several books on poster art history. His work can be seen at www.docspopuli.org

Exhibits

By Shawn Waldron
Archive Director
Condé Nast Publications

Photographs of Frederick H. Evans
Getty Museum
Los Angeles, CA
February 10th to June 6th

Irving Penn: Portraits
National Portrait Gallery
London, England
February 18th to June 10th

Ansel Adams: Early Works
San Jose Museum of Art
San Jose, CA
Ends February 28th

**Faster Than the Eye Can See:
Photographs by Harold Edgerton**
Delaware Art Museum
Wilmington, DE
February 21st to April 11th

Portraits from the American West
National Portrait Gallery
Washington, D.C.
Ends January 24th

The Scurlock Studio and Black Washington
National Museum of American History
Washington, D.C.
Ends February 28

Atget, Archivist of Paris
International Center of Photography
New York, NY
January 29th to May 9th

**Alias Man Ray:
The Art of Reinvention**
Jewish Museum
New York, NY
Ends March 14th

Big Shots: Andy Warhol Polaroids
Nasher Museum of Art
Durham, NC
Ends February 21st

**Catching a Shadow: Daguerreotypes in
Philly, 1839-1860**
Library Company of Philadelphia
Philadelphia, PA
Ends February 26th

**Edward S. Curtis: The North American Indian
Amon Carter Museum**
Fort Worth, TX
Ends May 16th

Robert Doisneau
Foundation Cartier
Paris, France
January 13th to April 18th

**Playing with Pictures: The Art of
Victorian Photocollage**
Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, NY
February 2nd to May 19th

**Framing the West: Survey Photographs of
Timothy H. O'Sullivan**
Smithsonian
Washington, D.C.
February 12th to May 9th

**Material Witness: Photographs of Things:
Atget, Fenton, Fox Talbot**
Clark Art Institute
Williamstown, MA
January 15th to April 11th

NEW in Print
By Liz Ruth, Assistant Editor
Los Angeles Maritime Museum

Blair, John.
The Glossary of Digital Photography
Sebastolpol. CA Rocky Nook, O'Reilly Media,
2007. 350 p.
ISBN: 1933952040 $39.95.
Available from O'Reilly Media,
http://oreilly.com/

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**For All the World to See Visual Culture and
the Struggle for Civil Rights**
Yale University Press, March 2010. 224 p.
ISBN: 9780300121315. $39.95.
Available at http://yalepress.yale.edu/

Chang, Joshua; with contributions by Steven W.
Zucker and Allan Chasanoff
**First Doubt Optical Confusion in Modern
Photography: Selections from the Allan Cha-
sanoff Collection.**
New Haven, CT : Yale University Press, 2008.
220 p.
ISBN: 9780300141337
ISBN-10: 0300141335. $50.00.
Available at http://yalepress.yale.edu/

Darlow, Andrew
**301 Inkjet Tips and Techniques: An Essential
Printing Resource for Photographers (Digital
Process and Print)**
Boston, MA : Thomson Course Technology, 2008.
ISBN 10-59863-204-3. $49.95.
Available at http://www.amazon.com

DeWolfe, George
**Digital Masters: B&W Printing: Creating the
Digital Master Print (A Lark Photography
Book)**
Asheville, NC: Lark Books, 2009. 208 p. ISBN:
9781600591655 $29.95.
Available at: http://www.larkbooks.com.

Frey, Franziska. Jeffrey Warda, editor
**The AIC Guide to Digital Photography and
Conservation Documentation.**
Washington, D.C. : American Institute for
Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works,
2008. 111 p.
ISBN: 9780976050124 (pbk.)
0976050129 (pbk.) $30.00
Available at http://www.conservation-us.org/

Jurovics, Toby, Carol M. Johnson, Glenn Willum-
son, and William F. Stapp;
Foreword by Page Stegner.
**Framing the West The Survey Photographs of
Timothy H. O'Sullivan**.
Yale University Press, March 2010. 272 p
ISBN: 9780300158915.
ISBN-10: 0300158912. $60.00.
Available at http://yalepress.yale.edu/

Keller, Corey. With essays by Jennifer Tucker,
Tom Gunning, and Maren Gröning;
Additional contributions by Marie-Sophie Corcy,
Erin O'Toole, and Carole Troufléau-Sandrin.
**Brought to Light Photography and the Invis-
ible, 1840-1900.**
Yale University Press, 2008. 216 p.
ISBN: 9780300142105;
ISBN-10: 0300142102. $50.00.
Available at http://yalepress.yale.edu/

Steinmueller, Uwe, Juergen Gulbins.
**Fine Art Printing for Photographers:
Exhibition Quality Prints with Inkjet Print-
ers, 2nd Edition (Paperback).**
Sebastolpol. CA: Rocky Nook, O'Reilly Media,
2009. 298 p.
ISBN 933952172. $44.95.
Available at http://oreilly.com/rockynook/

Search Engine Optimization Techniques for Your Web Site

Karen Holt
Digital Archivist
Advanced Micro Devices
karen_holt@hotmail.com

While I was working in the School of Architecture's Visual Resources Collection at The University of Texas at Austin, I noticed that the foot traffic in our image collection was steadily decreasing. Our core user group still needed images for teaching, research, and publication, but instead of coming to our collection, more and more of these users were going online to find images. Because our site was not easily found by search engines, we were missing out on opportunities to introduce our collections to users.

I realized that one way we could reach this group was to utilize search engine optimization (SEO) techniques so that our collection would rank higher in the search results, and our patrons would be directed toward the high quality, fair use images in our collection. SEO is the process of optimizing a Web site in order to increase the traffic a site receives from search engines. In this article I would like to discuss a few simple things that you can do to optimize the way your site is ranked by search engines.

One of the major ranking factors for Web sites is the quantity and quality of links to a particular URL. Search engines use these links to establish the relevance of a site. Links from .gov and .edu sites are weighed more heavily in ranking algorithms, because these domains are considered more trustworthy. If there are university departments or governmental institutions that you work with that have a resources page on their Web site, you may want to ask them to add a link to your collection.   Additionally, internal links, such as a link from your institution's home page or from a sitemap, can improve that page's ranking. If you have too many irrelevant links, however, this can hurt the ranking of your site in Google. To see which sites currently link to your site, simply enter "link:YourURL" into Google's search box, and the results will show all of pages that link to your Web site.

The page title is another factor that can influence page ranking. The page's title is defined in the <title> element in the <head> section of the page's HTML, and the title is displayed in the headline of a search result. (See Figure 1 for an example.) It is important that each page in your site has a descriptive title. You may also want to include targeted keywords in the page title as this will make the page rank higher in the search results when your users search on those keywords. You can use the free Google Search-based keyword tool (www.google.com/sktool) to identify the keywords that led users to your collection's Web site. A meta description tag is a great tool that you can use to direct traffic from a search engine to an individual site. This tag serves as a short text "advertisement" that allows you to describe the content of a page succinctly as well as display targeted keywords that indicate content to searchers. In addition to being descriptive and interesting, meta description tags should also contain keywords that are searched on by your users. A meta description tag consists of HTML code located in the <head> section of a Web page. The text in the tag is displayed in the search engine results, and Google has a display limit of 160-characters. Without a meta description tag, the search engine results will show the keywords in context, which may not necessarily inform potential users about your collection's contents. Below is an example of the meta description tag that my company uses.

```
<head>
   <meta name="description" value="Advanced
   Micro Devices is an innovative technology com-
   pany dedicated to collaborating with customers
   and partners to ignite the next generation./">
</head>
```


Figure 1 – AMD Page Title and Meta Description Tag Display in Google

Even though meta keywords are generally regarded as unimportant to search engine rankings, it is prudent to use a few major keywords and misspellings that describe the page's content in the meta keywords tag. Meta keywords are not displayed in the search engine results, but they may help to elevate your page ranking. Like the other tags mentioned above, the meta keywords tag is contained in the <head> section of the HTML document, and below is an example of a meta keywords tag.

```
<head>
    <meta name="keywords" value="photo,
    photographs, lantern slides, photgraph"/>
</head>
```

With the vast majority of our users searching for information online, I believe that it is important to make our collections findable in search engines. SEO offers a very inexpensive way to do that. You can assess the effectiveness of the SEO techniques that you implement by using web analytics software. If your Web site does not already have an analytics tool in place, Google offers a free and easy-to-use service entitled Google Analytics that allows you to analyze traffic to your site and create reports. This information will be invaluable when evaluating the traffic that your site receives.

If you are interested in learning more about this topic, there have been a number of books published on it. I have listed several informative online resources below.

Search Engine Blogs and Web Sites:
Search Engine Watch
http://searchenginewatch.com/
SEO Book
http://www.seobook.com/blog
SEO Black Hat
http://seoblackhat.com/
The Official Google Blog
http://googleblog.blogspot.com/
SEO Egghead
http://www.seoegghead.com/blog/

The Midwinter Meeting
Stephen Fletcher
Visual Materials Section Chair
UNC-Chapel Hill

With all the snow in the Mid-Atlantic states this winter, perhaps we are fortunate to be meeting in late winter this year! Having spring on the meeting's doorstep will be fitting, because the meeting will focus more on the future than reporting about the past. Hopefully many talented Section members from points nearby, and afar, will be in attendance, so let's maximize the constructive time we'll have together by reading reports in advance to inform our discussions. If you are a liaison, chair, or lead a working group, roundtable, etc., please send me a report, by the end of February, about your group's activities and plans. I'll post the reports on a wiki I've set up for the meeting so that everyone can see them. Watch for the wiki address in a future message to the section listservs.

The theme for this year's meeting will be "Staying Relevant." I really want the meeting to be forward-looking, because I believe we are at a critical juncture. We will be looking at SAA's strategic plan (http://www.archivists.org/governance/strategic_priorities.asp) to see how we can stay relevant to Section members, and the larger SAA membership, but also to see what we can be doing as trendsetters. For the meeting's agenda, Friday will be "expansive thinking" day, with Saturday being the day we coalesce what we discussed on Friday to make it substantive, especially with follow-up assignments to carry us forward.

Cheers!

Friday attendees at last year's Visual Materials Section Midwinter Meeting pointed the way forward for 2009. You can help lead the way for 2010 and beyond by attending Midwinter this year in Bethany, Connecticut. Photo by Stephen Fletcher.

The Archivist Photographer

We feature work by three of the Visual Materials Section archivist photographers. See "Parting Shots" for the full story. And if you'd like to see more historical photos from your own repositories published in the Gallery, then just send them in!

.
Photos by Stephen Fletcher, from
A North Carolina Album

Above: Church, Princeville, North Carolina.
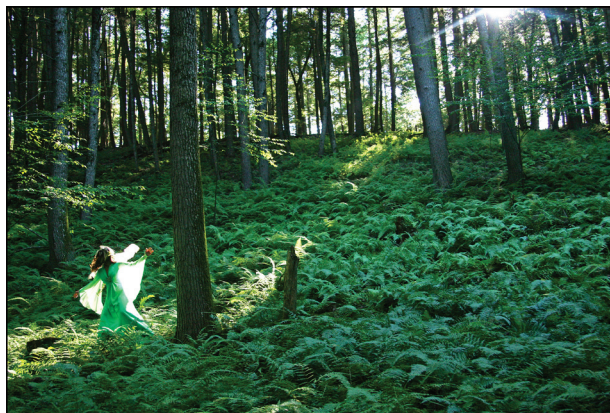
Right: Bodie Lighthouse, 2005

Photos by Deidre Scaggs, from a continuing series, Mother's Unrealized Vacation(s)

The Badlands, Interior, South Dakota, 1988. (Printed 2008).

Photos by Deidre Scaggs, from a continuing series, Mother's Unrealized Vacation(s)

The Castle, Versailles, Kentucky, 2004. (Printed 2008).

.
Photos by Tim Hawkins

Middle: Catskills Faerie, from the Mythic Creatures series, 2008.

Right: Mosca Pass, Great Sand Dunes National Park, Colorado, 2009.

From the Chair *(Continued from page 1)*

What can we learn by looking at the above numbers? One obvious observation is that the preponderance of section members residing in the Northeastern United States contributes to better attendance when we hold the meeting in that portion of the country. Last year's meeting in the Washington, D.C. area occurred during the early throes of the economic downturn. That situation may have held numbers down because even those not in the immediate area of the meeting, but living within a day's driving distance, still have lodging, transportation, and food expenses, and many institutions cut travel funds at some point during 2009. Numbers for previous years, however, suggest that "tough times" may have had little to no bearing on travel decisions. I think, circumstantially, that attendance has more to do with most people's limits on travel funding; even in good economic times, those with travel funding typically have a dollar and/or numeric limit on professional travel that covers only one trip in whole, or in part, so most select the larger Annual Meeting. Good attendance, therefore, seems to be based more on selecting a location close to where many visual material archivists live. With that in mind, this year we selected a location within two hours of New York City.

If the above reasoning is true, how do we get more people involved in Midwinter regardless of funding or where they live? Or on a broader level, after seven years with attendance down from initial years, is Midwinter still relevant? And if it is still relevant, is there a way we can engage more members so they may contribute to the ongoing mission of the section especially given our long-time goal of broad-based participation?

Our section Bylaws do not require a Midwinter Meeting, but they do allow the Chair to call for additional meetings that, if scheduled, must follow certain announcement and reporting protocols. Having attended three Midwinter Meetings, I can attest to their vitality and importance, and wholeheartedly endorse its continuance. Section leaders, and others who attend the SAA Annual Meeting, typically return from the home to play

catch-up from having been gone a week, followed by leadership drumming up session proposals and endorsements, to be followed relatively quickly by the holidays and end-of-the year deadlines in our workplaces. Autumn can disappear in a flash, so Midwinter is the perfect time to refocus on Visual Materials Section matters and engage in meeting our goals in time for the Annual Meeting.

Our current three year-plan calls for an examination of the Midwinter Meeting, which we will undertake this year. I'd like to suggest one question for the study: "Are we locked into having Midwinter at one location?" Last year we tried to counter the difficult economic conditions that we thought might limit attendance with a last-minute idea to blog the meeting, so others could contribute from their home bases. We know from use statistics that many followed along, and some commented on blog posts covering specific topics. Can we use a blog or other technologies—even as simple as telephone conference calls on speaker phones—to widen member participation? An idea I've been contemplating since last year's meeting is the possibility of having multiple, simultaneous Midwinter Meetings: Section members in various parts of the country (to be determined by archival demographics, willing hosts and hostesses, and available facilities) could have discussions akin to breakout sessions that report back to the large whole periodically during the meeting. One agenda would be followed by all participants. Ideally, some form of teleconferencing or computer conferencing software could be used. Perhaps university or corporate archivists who have facilities available could serve as hosts or hostesses for a region. Agenda items that lend themselves to breakout sessions could be discussed at the various meeting sites, which in turn would share a report during agreed upon conferencing times to minimize tying up airtime or bandwidth. Perhaps Visual Materials Section funds could pay for a hosted Web conferencing site. Meeting regionally might even permit the bonding that occurs through shared dinners and downtime, like those we have experienced in the past. Is that too far-fetched? Without traveling far, or maybe not at all, would you give part of your time during a two-day meeting to contribute to the Section's future?

Parting Shots…
By Tim Hawkins, Editor

The Editor, photographing in the Great Sand Dunes National Park, Colorado.

Are you a photographer?

Well, I am, and I have been for many years. One of the underlying rationales for originally becoming a photo archivist was to have a regular paying job in a field that's very difficult to make a living. Then I discovered that working with collections of photos really energized me to spend my personal time working on my own photo projects.

I know a few other archivists who are serious photographers. I consider this to be a level that goes beyond the usual connotation of the term "amateur" - a term for which I hold a certain fondness – because it connotes that we don't do it for the money. It's our passion.

And we're not alone. There's a long history of very accomplished photographers who pursued other occupations to make a living. Although maybe a bit arrogant, there's a sort of purism that goes along with a non-commercial attitude for our work.

One of my all-time favorite photographers is Ralph Eugene Meatyard. His subtly surreal staged photos set him apart from the mainstream of his time. But mostly I admire him for embracing his "amateur" status, working as an optometrist at Eyeglasses of Kentucky, photographing in his spare time, often on weekends, while exhibiting

alongside photographers like Emmet Gowin and Van Deren Coke, and eventually being represented in a score of major photo collections.

From the other end of the spectrum, Edward Steichen was possibly the best known and most highly-paid photographer of the 1920's-1930's, on assignment frequently for such high end publications as Vanity Fair and Vogue, then after WWII moved on to become Director of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The point I'm trying to make is that some of us have become photo archivists because we're first photographers. We do it for the love of the medium, as dedicated amateurs, in the best sense of the word. And I'm guessing that there's a significant body of photographic work created by archivist photographers.

I've asked around about that a little bit, and I've found that the leadership of VM includes a number of accomplished photographers. I'm wondering how many more of you there are out there.

I'm also wondering if you'd be interested in participating in a group effort to showcase the creative side of archivists. Are any of you interested in trying to produce an exhibit about archivist photographers? I'd like to pitch it to some potential venues in Chicago for the 2011 SAA annual meeting. If you're interested, then send me some samples of your work.

Announcement

Submissions for the April issue of VIEWS are due on March 31st. Send us your articles, images, or announcements!

VIEWS is seeking a Photo Editor. Do you like to research images and share them with your colleagues. VIEWS needs a Photo Editor who can actively reach out to the visual archives community and help us fill the Gallery pages in every issue. If you're interested, contact tim.hawkins@steelworks.us