



# VIEWS



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## VM at 65: Nowhere Near Retiring!

Sometimes, you just need to turn to an archivist to figure out your roots. In this case, the archivist, [Kristen Buvala](#), works as an intern at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. Her search through SAA records boxes revealed that the Visual Materials Section is not 25, not 30, but 65 years old. Quite a respectable age!



### CHAIR'S CORNER

Like many genealogical searches, this one involved bushwhacking through a trail of family name changes. Yes, we are 25 years old as the Visual Materials Section (circa 1980, first chair Diane Vogt O'Connor). But, we are also over 40 years old as the Committee on Aural-Graphic Records (1973), and 65 years old as the Audio and Visual Records Committee, formed in 1951 along with other core committees (heads up, y'all – are your knees creaking too?). Correspondence from the first few years reveals the difficulty of getting the committee off the ground, but it was fully functional in 1952, led by Dorothy Barck of the NY Historical Society. See the VM website for selections of [correspondence](#) kindly scanned by Kirsten.

Through those name changes and through a succession of generations, the mission has remained the same: to ensure that libraries, archives, and information studies remain aware of the importance of visual culture and those who preserve visual media. It has been forged in response to the urgencies of the times by committed, energetic, passionate, and often opinionated men and women who worked hard for the survival and growth of the section. Our continued relevancy is seen in our membership – the largest and strongest SAA Section, at just under 900 members.

And now we are dealing with a world that is so changed since we formed in the 1950s.

A recent [Nielsen's Total Audience Report](#) estimates that Americans aged 18 and older spend more than 11 hours a day watching TV, listening to the radio or using

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smartphones and other electronic devices – short on text and long on images. Pinterest, Tumblr, and Instagram were the [fastest-growing social media platforms](#) in 2014-2015. The evidentiary use of photographs, film, and video is expanding into every corner of our society – from traffic camera stills used in courtrooms to amateur videos used in investigations of refugee camps conditions. Online news streams are primarily transmitted - and consumed - through images. We are also seeing a rising interest in data visualizations, new forms of photography (including hybrid creations using historical manuscript sources), and documentary media studies.

With this enormous rise in the production and consumption of images comes a parallel expansion of an intense and dynamic debate on the meaning of visuality, and the effects of what Martin Jay, a visual historian at UC Berkeley, has called the “ocularcentrism” of modern society. At stake in this debate is no less than an understanding of how race, gender, politics (think of presidential races), economics, and human identity are forged, in all their contradictory qualities, from *what* we see, and, perhaps most urgently, *how* we see it. What percentage of these phenomena and spectacles - and which ones - will be available for research and inquiry in 10, 50, 100 years?

Most archivists, including those in larger institutions, are forced to manage notoriously “needy” visual formats even as they deal with the ongoing crush of paper and print materials. They often feel isolated and uncertain of where to turn to for guidance: not only on dealing with visual materials but also on how to successfully cast arguments for a share of institutional resources to preserve them. This is where we come in.

As members of a specialized interest group of the archival profession that invests its energy in developing best practices in collecting, analyzing, reformatting, and preserving society’s visual artifacts, we must respond to this historic “long moment” just as urgently as those who study and debate it. I am particularly concerned about the lack of curriculum on visual materials in information studies programs, and the minuscule percentage of resources spent on creating positions whose sole scope is archiving all forms of visual media. We can work together to change this, even if change does come slowly. Ideas? We could establish a network of local/regional consultants to assist small institutions in surveying their collections; assist archivists applying for grants to preserve visual materials collection by serving as professional readers; produce more educational content on our website and push it out directly to relevant audiences.

I’m happy to report that even as VM turns 65, we’re expanding in new ways and feeling pretty young. Last year we completely redesigned our

## CHAIR'S CORNER

web site, and launched our own Facebook page and Twitter and Instagram feeds. Thank you to the *awesome* social media-savvy members who made this possible! So, VM friends and allies, I hope you'll start sharing your amazing collections, questions, and expertise with our new (and old) audiences and keep us forever young!

We will be celebrating our milestone sapphire-blue

anniversary all through 2016 and 2017. In Atlanta this August, expect our first preconference, swag (of course), and a *big* party – to which all members and friends are invited. We'll celebrate our long road to now with full sails toward the future!

**Paula Jeannet Mangiafico**

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

## Midwinter 2016 Wrap-up

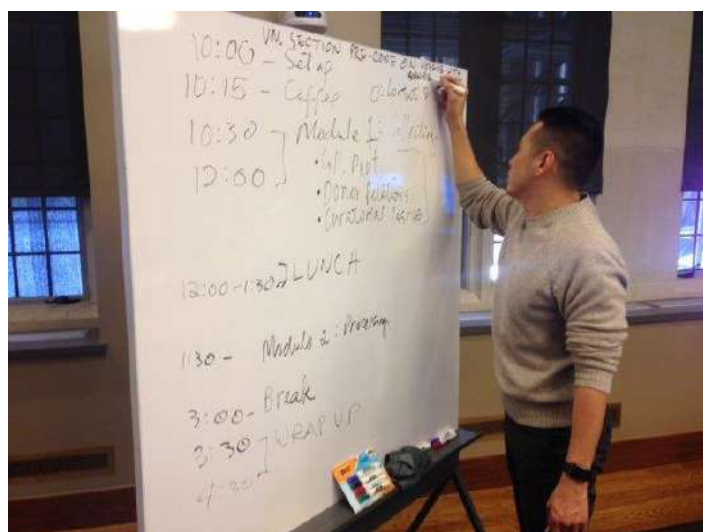
by Kim Andersen

AV Materials Archivist, State Archives of North Carolina

Midwinter this past February 26-28 in Durham, NC, felt more like mid-springtime. A small but dedicated group of Visual Materials Section members gathered at the home of Chair Paula Jeannet Mangiafico to do some section work and plan for SAA Atlanta 2016 (and have a little fun). Paula lives in a beautiful wooded neighborhood just beside Duke University's campus and her kitchen table provided our group with a cozy and comfortable place to tackle our to-do list. It also provided us with a gorgeous view of an expansive backyard and a very popular birdfeeder where an eclectic array of songbirds entertained us outside while her two cats assisted us with our discussions indoors.

Although originally designed as a working meeting for the Steering Committee, all Visual Materials Section members are welcome and encouraged to participate in Midwinter Meetings. This year non-committee members outnumbered the steering committee members and two relatively new members came! Being a local Triangle area resident, I commuted to the meeting from Raleigh, but out of town participants typically bunk at the home where the meeting is taking place in order to keep costs down. There is no registration fee for the Midwinter meeting; everyone simply contributes to meals, which are prepared family style and eaten between and during discussions. The atmosphere is informal and the dress code is nonexistent!

This year's participants included yours truly, Paula (our host), Laurie Baty, Gerri Schaad, Ricky Punzalan, Patrick Cullom, Stephen Fletcher, Beth Bilderback, Nicolette Bromberg, and through the magic of modern technology, Deborah Rice, Alan Renga, and Matthew Mason, remote



**Ricky Punzalan** during Friday's pre-conference brainstorming.

conferencing in at various times during the weekend. Paula arranged Friday morning to give us a few glimpses of downtown Durham and some of the exciting programs Duke University has underway. We began the morning with a brisk walking tour of Durham's [American Tobacco Campus](#), where we peeked in at an art exhibit and enjoyed the grounds and historic architecture before popping over to Duke to begin the intellectual portion of our day. It was an invigorating and lovely way to start the day!

After parking illegally at Duke in an overflowing parking deck (!) we zigzagged our way between gorgeous stone Gothic-inspired buildings to the Bostock Library and to the high tech lair of Molly Bragg, Digital Collections Program Manager. She and her colleagues gave us a fascinating overview of their work and philosophy, and we got to ask questions and really get a feel for their operation and workflow. Over way too soon, we said goodbye and headed up to the Carpenter Board Room in



**Friday** lunch discussions at the Perkins Library.

Perkins Library where another treat awaited us – lunch! Over lunch we had an extremely productive talk about what we wanted our pre-conference program to be in Atlanta. Both Patrick Cullom and Stephen Fletcher, who had together conceived of the idea for the program, and Ricky, our Education Committee Chair, were on hand for this discussion. A white board was rolled in from somewhere (!) and ideas flowed freely. By the time we were done eating (and talking with our mouths full), the initial seed idea had germinated and was blossoming beautifully. Pre-conference program = check!

And right on time because the speakers Paula invited for the afternoon had arrived and we were treated to several very interesting demonstrations of complex online projects happening at Duke that present serious challenges for archiving. Libi Striegl, Artist/Technologist/Instructor, Art, Art History and Visual Studies Department (AAHVS) at Duke University screened her experimental art that includes film recordings of 3-D printer data; Ed Triplett, CLIR Postdoctoral Fellow, Duke University Libraries and AAHVS Wired! Lab showed two digital projects whose archival components pose a challenge in the complexity of their interactive data and potential future simulation; Angela Zoss and Eric Monson, Duke University Libraries, Data and Visualization Services, Duke Libraries, discussed interactive GIS data and the challenges they present in preserving and simulating their data, feel, and function; Craig Braden, Audiovisual Archivist, Duke University Libraries showed his project on H. Lee Waters films and his use of Oral History Metadata Synchronizer, to sync the films' sound data, and managing those components after reformatting; Sean Aery, Digital

Project Developer, Duke University Libraries talked about capturing complex visual collections by using new digital collection tools, specifically Tripod 3; and Will Sexton, Head, Digital Projects and Production Services, Duke University Libraries discussed managing large, complex digital projects and the future of preserving digital visual materials.

The conversations that followed were enlightening and delved into the most foundational of archival conundrums: “We cannot save it all so how do we decide what to allow to perish?” We were still talking about this when we left Duke (sans parking ticket). That evening we went into downtown Durham to a great gallery where Stephen had recently shown some of his stunning art photography and still had prints on display. Patrick and I had to get back to Raleigh, but I understand that some of the rest of the bunch took in some authentic eastern style NC BBQ and may or may not have painted the town later in the evening...

Saturday dawned, and I found myself back in Durham at Paula's enjoying a bagel with lox and cream cheese, orange juice, and tea – at Midwinter the eats are always good because they are enjoyed in the comfort and unrushed tranquility of home! With caffeine in hand, we all sat down to the nuts and bolts of steering work/planning for the future! Hammering this stuff out can be tedious but we make it fun, and it is always rewarding – meetings like this are so much better with friends – new and old. Before we knew it, it was past lunchtime. Laurie Baty made sundried tomato soup and we had delicious sourdough bread from some awesome bakery, ripe avocado and tomato, fresh



**Saturday's** section business meeting (l to r): Gerri Schaad, Laurie Baty, Kim Andersen, Nicolette Bromberg, Ricky Punzalan, Beth Bilderback, and Paula Jeannet Mangiafico

crisp local lettuce, and fried bacon! I don't even eat meat but there is nothing like the smell of bacon to just make you feel good!

After a break for some walking around outdoors in the wonderful sun on Paula's quiet street, we got back to it! With sandwiches in hand and the aroma of bacon still lingering in the air, we settled down for the final session. Even the cats got in on the action (could it have been the bacon that caught their interest? Certainly it was our riveting topics of conversation...)!

Please take a look at the official report/minutes from the Midwinter meeting, available [online](#). A lot gets done in a short period of time and participants have fun doing it! Midwinter is a great way to get familiar with what the Visual Materials Section of SAA actually does (and what it is supposed to do – sometimes the same, sometimes not!). It is a fantastic way to meet, learn from, and become friends with your peers in the visual materials profession. Please consider joining us next year.

## MEMBER NEWS

### Selections from the Standard Oil Photography Collection



**Waiting room** at bus terminal, Greyhound Bus Terminal, 242 West 34th St, New York City, New York, 1947. Esther Bubley, photographer.



**Photomatic machine** in terminal waiting room, Greyhound Bus Terminal, 242 West 34th St, New York City, New York, 1947. Esther Bubley, photographer.

One of the most significant documentary photography projects of the twentieth century is now becoming accessible online for all to view. Images from the Standard Oil (New Jersey) Collection, held by the University of Louisville's Photographic Archives within the Archives and Special Collections (ASC) Library, join the more than 40 collections in the University Libraries' [Digital Collections](#).

The [Standard Oil \(New Jersey\) Photography Collection](#) (SONJ) resulted from a public relations initiative by SONJ to rehabilitate its flagging reputation. What emerges is a visual document of everyday life between 1943 and 1956, captured by some of the nation's top photographers. The project was led by Roy Stryker, who came to SONJ after directing the government-sponsored Farm Security Administration documentary program during the Great Depression. He enlisted more top photographers in the

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SONJ effort, including Charlotte Brooks, Esther Bubley, John Collier, Jr., Harold Corsini, Russell Lee, Sol Libsohn, Gordon Parks, Edwin and Louise Rosskam, John Vachon, and Todd Webb.

Currently several series within the SONJ collection are available online, and ASC will be adding more in the

future. The full collection includes approximately 80,000 black and white negatives, 2,000 color transparencies, and 70,000 gelatin silver prints.

**Elizabeth E. Reilly**

Curator, Photographic Archives  
Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville



**Individuals** standing in front of bakery, Tomball, Texas, 1945. Esther Bubley, photographer.



**Reciting** pledge of allegiance at school, Tomball, Texas, 1945. Esther Bubley, photographer.

## News from the Cambridge Historical Commission



**Portrait** of Emily Gonzalez, archivist for the Cambridge Historical Commission.

The Cambridge Historical Commission, the historic preservation agency of Cambridge, Massachusetts, recently hired its first full-time archivist, Emily Gonzalez (Simmons GSLIS/CAS '13). The archivist will manage the Commission's public archive and library, which focus on the city's architectural and social history. One of the archivist's major initiatives this year will be the digitization of

several of the Commission's visual materials collections. Two Simmons College GSLIS interns are currently processing two collections containing historically significant images: the Lois Bowen Collection and the Frederick Hastings Rindge Collection. The Bowen Collection features images of important local architecture, including many buildings worked on by The Architects' Collaborative; while the Rindge Collection features photographs and blueprints related to buildings donated to Cambridge by Rindge (including Cambridge City Hall and the Cambridge Public Library). Selected images from both of these collections will be available online in the coming months.

For more information on the Commission's collections please visit: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/researchaids>

**Emily Gonzalez**

Archivist, Cambridge Historical Commission

## MEMBER NEWS

## Published Article on 19th Century Portraitist

Gary D. Saretzky, Archivist for the Monmouth County Archives, recently published an article in *Garden State Legacy* 30 (December 2015), titled “Last Man Standing: E.S. Dunshee, Veteran Trenton Photographer.” The article examines the long career of E.S. Dunshee, a prolific portraitist of the 19th century and practitioner of early photographic processes, such as the daguerreotype and ambrotype. The article also features over a dozen images that illustrate the various formats and techniques that Dunshee mastered over his lifetime. Available online, the article is a must-read for anyone interested in 19th-century portrait photography.

**Gary D. Saretzky**  
Archivist, Monmouth County Archives



**Examples** of E.S. Dunshee's work.  
Courtesy of Gary Saretzky.

## The Edward Stanton Photographs: Portraits from Detroit's Black Bottom Neighborhood



**Three boys** (identities unknown) pose in front of a five and dime store.

The Reuther Library is pleased to announce the acquisition of the Edward Stanton Photographs. The collection features the earliest surviving work of the Detroit-born artist, Edward Stanton (1914-2006).

Stanton was a self-taught photographer, and a member of a group of local artists, including Frank Cassara and Alex Minewski, who were active in Detroit during the Great Depression. Inspired by photographers such as Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange, and with Detroit as his muse, Stanton created a rich body of work that is a mixture of both portraiture and street photography. His collection was generously donated to the Reuther Library in November 2015 by his nephew, Professor Tom Stanton.

The Edward Stanton Photographs are composed of 96 original large format and 35mm photo-negatives, along with two photo prints. The bulk of the images are part of a series, shot throughout several seasons, that features portraits of local

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**A pair of boys** (identities unknown) spar as their friends laughingly cheer them on.

children, both posed and at play, as well as neighborhood views. These stunning images offer a rare glimpse into what it was like growing up in two of Detroit's earliest Black neighborhoods, Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, before they were lost to urban renewal projects in the 1960s.

Highlights from the collection will be on display in the Reuther Library's Woodcock Wing from February through April 2016. A large selection of images have been digitized and are available to view in the [Edward Stanton Image Gallery](#) on the Reuther Library website.

**Elizabeth Clemens**

Audiovisual Archivist

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University



**Portrait of a young boy** in the snow (identity unknown).



# The Photographic and Audiovisual Archives Working Group of the International Council on Archives

by David Iglésias Franch

Technical Archivist, Centre for Image Research and Diffusion, Girona City Council (Spain)

and Stephen J. Fletcher

North Carolina Collection Photographic Archivist, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## The Historical Roots of PAAG

In 1980 UNESCO issued a report titled, *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images*. Two years later, five organizations—International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA), International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), International Association of Sound Archives (IASA), and International Council on Archives (ICA)—formed the Roundtable of Audiovisual Archives. The roundtable's initial efforts led to the creation of the first [Joint Technical Symposium](#) held in Stockholm in 1983, and made contributions to UNESCO's Records and Archives Management Programme ([RAMP](#)) *Studies*, "creating the first set of [technical literature](#) for the profession."

In order to expand its mission and reach, the roundtable reorganized in 2000 to form the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations ([CCAAA](#)), which added three new organizations to its ranks: Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA), and Southeast Asia-Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA).

Although ICA was an active member of CCAAA, some ICA members believed ICA's involvement "could have been greater." After the 2009 CCAAA annual meeting in The Hague, ICA appointed Joan Boadas as Commissioner for Photographic and Audiovisual Archives to create a working group that would focus on these types of records. As Boadas considered ICA's role within CCAAA, he made the following observations:

- CCAAA member organizations focused exclusively on moving images and sound recordings, but not still photography.
- CCAAA did not sufficiently know the real necessities of non-member archives, so it could not adequately

select topics on which to offer training. ICA, thanks to its organizational structure, was well-positioned to try to understand the broader realities of audiovisual heritage.

- CCAAA specialized in audiovisual records, so ICA could consult CCAAA for information regarding technical archival needs. Of the CCAAA member organizations, only ICA and IFLA did not focus solely on audiovisual records.
- There was no global agency that contributed to improving the management of photographic heritage.

Boadas concluded that ICA could be a leader in the area of photographic heritage by creating a working group to focus on both photography and audiovisuals. This group became known as the [Photographic and Audiovisual Archive Group \(PAAG\)](#) with the mission of attending to the needs that arise from the safekeeping of both photographic and audiovisual archives.

It was important at that point in time to clarify what comprises audiovisual heritage because most CCAAA members had created their own definitions. For example, in the UNESCO white paper *Audiovisual Archiving: Philosophy and Principles* written by Ray Edmonson in 2004, photography is not included in the general definition of audiovisual heritage. ICA therefore made its own definitions, as follows.

Photographic heritage comprises

- photographic documents, from the daguerreotype to still digital images; and
- textual documents related to photography, such as photographic registers, account books, technical documents, correspondence, invoices, price lists, lists of materials purchased, and personal documents (training received, awards, etc.).

Audiovisual heritage comprises

- film, video, and digital moving image records;
- audio records;
- photographs related to audiovisual records;
- scripts and other textual information; and
- stage material, etc.

### PAAG Today

The main goals of PAAG are:

- to establish the basic guidelines for intervention in photographic and audiovisual collections;
- to provide to archivists working tools to do works of description, conservation, digitization, etc.;
- to promote activities and resources for training; and
- to create a virtual place for communication and dissemination of resources.

Establishing these goals took into consideration that while some archives collect audiovisual and/or photographic records exclusively, many more maintain visual material as part of a wider array of archival materials. For archivists working in the latter environment, their general training is often insufficient to attend the specialized needs of photographic and audiovisual heritage, and complementary training options are usually limited or inadequate because generalists are not, and probably never will be, specialists in this area. PAAG's goals also recognize that many archivists work alone inside their institution, and at a local level there may be significant audiovisual records that come from local television stations, local production companies, or amateur filmmakers. The existence of archival specialists in audiovisual and photographic materials in some institutions, however, enables PAAG to enlist specialists to create educational resources for the broader archival community.

From these considerations PAAG formed a steering committee consisting of at most ten visual materials archivists who reflect worldwide representation. Steering committee members work with an existing network within their own countries, thus representing an extensive group of professionals.

### Activity and Projects

Since its inception, the PAAG Steering Committee has completed various projects, while others are ongoing. The **Survival Kit** is a pilot project that directed the initial work of PAAG. The kit provides basic resources

to those archivists who face the challenge of organizing and managing photographic and audiovisual material. Archivists can consult the Survival Kit when faced with the question, "what do I need to know to perform an appropriate archival operation on photographic or audiovisual records?" Targeted for non-visual-materials archivists, the resources are:

- presented in four categories: methodology, standards, software, and preservation;
- not too specific, as they are intended for non-specialists;
- properly justified and accompanied by an explanatory summary; and
- accessible [online](#).

The Survival Kit includes thirteen resources (seven concerning photography and six related to audiovisual). It is imperative that the working group continually update the Survival Kit with new resources to remain relevant.

The second PAAG project was to write **Case Studies** to address the fundamentals of processing photographic and audiovisual archives, with an eye toward future research. For each case the specificities of a collection are highlighted and solutions are explained. There are, however, only six case studies and PAAG would like to significantly increase its offerings.

ICA's Programme Commission (PCOM) has funded translations of three PAAG projects: Concise Guides, a chronology, and Best Practice Guides.

Concise Guides offer a general approach to subjects concerning photographic and audiovisual materials. To date, PAAG has produced three concise guides, available in English, French, Catalan, and Spanish: Guide 1. *Digital Image Archive*; Guide 2. *Digital Video Archive*; and Guide 3. *Management of Photographic Repositories*.

A *Chronology of Photographic and Audiovisual Media* depicts the evolution of different technologies and media: cinema, photo, sound and video. The chronology compares what is happening for each technology in different periods using nearly 100 illustrations. The chronology can be experienced as a poster highlighting the most remarkable events in the evolution of photography, film, television and video, and sound, or as a more thoroughgoing website with more text and images than contained in the poster. There are versions in four languages from both,

poster and website: English, French, Catalan and Spanish.

The *Best Practice Guide for Establishing a Permanent Observatory for Archives and Local Television* systematizes all of the work carried out thus far by the Permanent Observatory for Archives and Local Television (OPATL) in Girona, Spain. OPATL is an ongoing joint project of several organizations and institutions whose mission is to safeguard local television and other producers of local audiovisual documentation. The best practice guide, however, goes beyond the particular needs of Catalonia and Andorra, with a more generic approach to realities that may exist elsewhere. ICA published the [guide](#) in four languages: English, French, Catalan, and Spanish. There is also a reduced version in Arabic, Russian, Hindu and Japanese.

### Collaborations and Connections

PAAG needs to collaborate and network with other associations and projects. ICA is a member of CCAAA, so PAAG has a connection there. This is a big challenge for PAAG, however, because PAAG is a subgroup within ICA, which itself is a subset within CCAAA. As the smaller entity, PAAG may not be able to provide extensive services for audiovisual professionals, but PAAG has a direct lineage to associations that are creating resources of high interest for the archival community.

PAAG's most important collaboration to date has been with the European Commission for Preservation and Access (ECPA) through its projects Safeguarding European Photographic Images for Access (SEPIA) and Training for Audiovisual Preservation in Europe (TAPE). ECPA was established in 1994 to promote the preservation of the documentary heritage in Europe, but its work came to a close in July 2008. The surveys to understand the reality of the photographic and audiovisual heritage in Europe and the SEPIADES standard for the description of photographic records are now accessible in the online publications section of PAAG's website, thanks to an agreement between ECPA and PAAG. It is an opportunity to re-use the valuable ECPA materials that can rarely be found elsewhere.

Last year PAAG reached an agreement with the International Consortium for Photographic Heritage. Commonly known as Photoconsortium, it is a nonprofit organization formed in October 2014 from the collaboration experience of Europeana Photography—sixteen European archives that digitized hundreds of thousands

of pictures from the first one hundred years of photography and contributed their content to Europeana, the European portal of cultural heritage. Photoconsortium promotes and enhances the culture of photography and photographic heritage by organizing and managing conferences, exhibitions, awards, training courses, and publishing activities. In order to be linked to all cultural institutions with photographic collections, they designed one member of its Executive Council to serve as a link to the archives field via PAAG. The aim of this connection is to disseminate the activities and accomplishments of Photoconsortium to archives and to foster collaboration.

PAAG has other connections with European projects, such as Training the Trainer Resource Packs from the program Leonardo da Vinci. This project aims to create pedagogical resources for people who are beginning digitizing projects in an archive. The final outcome will be a toolkit that will be published on the ICA website. Some chapters of this toolkit are dedicated to digitization of photographs and audiovisuals.

### Future plans

During PAAG's fifth year, the ICA board suggested a partial renovation of the Steering Committee, which is currently under way. The main goal of this renovation would be to create real networks all around the world so that many people could participate and benefit from PAAG initiatives. With new members and broader networks, the first aim will be to focus on existing projects: updating the survival kit, case studies and concise guides. We need much collaboration to achieve good results. A resource with only six case studies, for example, has limited usefulness. We hope to undertake additional projects so we may continue providing service to archivists worldwide, always keeping in mind our current mission to attend the needs arising from the safekeeping of photographic and audiovisual archives. A bibliography is one new project that PAAG would like undertake. The Visual Materials Section already has a bibliography, but it needs to be updated, and PAAG's bibliography includes only nine resources. A joint effort between PAAG and VMS to expand and update their bibliographies into a single document would result in an invaluable resource for a global audience, and could serve as a solid first step toward a lasting international partnership.

*Franch and Fletcher are members of the Photographic and Audiovisual Archive Group (PAAG) Steering Committee. Iglésias is the PAAG Coordinator.*

# 104<sup>TH</sup> Annual Conference, College Art Association

by David Haberstich

Curator of Photography, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

In early February I attended my fourth annual conference of the College Art Association (CAA), this iteration conveniently located in Washington, D.C. CAA is a professional organization for teachers and students of art, embracing both art history and studio arts. The range of interests was most physically evident in the trade fair which accompanied the conference: one could view many new releases of art histories and monographs from academic and popular publishers, as well as peruse actual tools and materials for artists, such as brushes and paints—and a variety of electronic and digital products. CAA's general program and membership interests mirror those of the Society for Photographic Education (SPE), another organization whose meetings I have attended. SPE was established primarily to convene photographers who teach, as well as academics and theorists who teach the history and criticism of photography. Undoubtedly SPE was patterned after the much older CAA. Indeed, this was CAA's 104<sup>th</sup> annual conference.

Speakers tended to highlight documentary photographs that they implicitly considered works of art, in addition to having informational or historic value. Although I have not perused past CAA programs to determine the percentage of sessions devoted to photographs, I strongly suspect that there was a time, prior to the photography “boom” of the 1960s, when lectures devoted to photographs were few and far between. It should be heartening for lovers of photography to realize that we no longer need to be obsessed with the crusade to prove that photographs and films deserve to be considered works of art and can discuss them freely in any venue, including among art historians. Intentionality is not even an issue, and we can call photographs “art”—including news and documentary photographs, plus “vernacular” snapshots—even when their creators never claimed to be “artists.” That selected photographers can be considered “artists,” without objections from traditionalists and art snobs, has long been accepted; the battle won. Perhaps more remarkably, it is also acceptable for art and cultural historians to analyze the significance of a photograph as part of a shared visual and cultural

heritage, without concern over exactly which rung of the “art” ladder it occupies. Perhaps this leveling effect has accompanied a revolution in art history that makes it possible to get beyond the old-fashioned “masterpiece” school of connoisseurship which characterized art history until art scholars began to expand their attention to archival research—that even great paintings and sculpture reflect the social, cultural, and political realities of their periods. Art historians were once obsessed with narratives revolving around stylistic evolution, but in recent decades they have expanded their intellectual horizons and research methods by delving into archives for aid in dating art works, replacing guesswork based on style with solid written documentation, as well as probing the complex relationships between artistic creation and its historical, cultural, and political milieus. This is my pet theory, unconfirmed by actual research or even casual conversations with the cognoscenti, about how such a revolution in the assumptions of art history might have occurred.

At the same time, some erudite and seminal texts about the intellectual concept of archives (usually termed “the” archive, somewhat analogously to “the ether”) have resonated with both archival theorists and art historians. We have Jacques Derrida's *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1995), which tends to focus on the written word, and Allan Sekula's *The Body and the Archive* (1992), which, despite its specific political polemic, suggests the existence of a vast, unified photographic archive. These texts were mentioned in passing several times by CAA speakers, especially regarding photographic imagery, so in my mind the concerns of SAA and CAA are loosely complementary. I wanted to report on this conference because I believe archivists of visual materials should be aware of the theoretical and critical discourse swirling around in the background for some of the types of imagery that they manage within archival settings. Although the CAA conference certainly contained its share of sessions on highly specialized and/or traditional “fine-art” masterpieces, artists, and art movements, there were also sessions about documentary photographs and

film, photograph albums, 19<sup>th</sup> century photographic processes, etc., and other graphic materials. On one hand, there was an intriguing session on a traditional subject, the connoisseurship of paintings by Caravaggio, employing photography as a tool, and on the other hand, discussions of web design. Some sessions were not presented within a standard “fine art” context and might have suited an SAA conference—if SAA could be persuaded to include more visual materials programming. To be sure, the papers concerned content, including research value and historical significance, rather than management issues of processing, description, etc. The materials discussed were primarily housed in fine art and library collections rather than “archival” collections, but some might just as well have been appropriate in archival repositories, depending on the preferences and orientation of donors, and other factors.

I was struck by the ways in which lectures about photographs and film were scattered throughout the CAA program, although there were a few sessions specifically about photography as well. A session on folk art contained a lecture, *American Selfies*, whose subjects ranged from nineteenth-century itinerant portraitists—including painters, daguerreotypists, and tintypists—to smartphone imagery. The montage session included the use of photographs by avant-garde European artists of the 1920s and 1930s. *The Visual Politics of Play* was devoted to video games as both art and cultural artifacts. A session entitled *Anthropocene and Landscape* included a presentation on “Photographing Slow Violence in the Global South.” *Defining the Third Wave: Art, Popular Culture, and Millennial Feminism* included a paper on “selfies” and Instagram. *Establishing Ownership: The Image of the Indigenous American* highlighted ethnographic photographs in Library of Congress collections. *Photography In and Out of the Pacific* included a paper on documentary photography and studio portraits chronicling the peoples of Hawaii, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. *Activating the Archive* described the use of archival exemplars for teaching purposes. The work of famous photographers such as Francis Frith, Manuel Alvarez-Bravo, Helen Levitt, Paul Strand, Carrie Mae Weems (her art as identity politics), and Francesca Woodman, was discussed in a variety of contexts. Two sessions on photograph albums, from August Salzmann’s Jerusalem album and a Julia Margaret Cameron album, to Noel B. Livingston’s *Gallery of Illustrions Jamaicans*, discussed albums largely in terms of their cultural and

political significance (hence, archival research value). *Unmapped Routes: Photography’s Global Networks of Exchange* combined lectures on Swahili Coast studio photography, Korean art photography and mass media, modernist photography in illustrated magazines of 1927-1937, and expeditionary photographs. The fascinating *Montage Before the Historical Avant Garde: Photography in the Long Nineteenth Century* (meaning its philosophical extension into the twentieth century) analyzed Nadar’s photographs, Harvard’s composite student portraits, Henry Peach Robinson’s combination prints, self-portraits by Hannah Maynard, and “Surrealist Experimentation in Early Illustrated Song Slides.” There was also a session on conservation issues, including the care of photographs.

The above examples include sessions I attended and others I couldn’t squeeze in. It was a rich and daunting smorgasbord to chew through, leaving me both exhilarated and exhausted. I attend a variety of conferences from time to time and can’t help but compare both their programs and their general atmosphere. I encountered nothing at CAA that made me feel bored or discontented. Frankly, I can’t say the same for some sessions at SAA annual meetings, which may strike me as repetitious and uninspiring. Dare I say they are sometimes unduly concerned with process (including collection processing—how many examples of MPLP implementation do we really need?) and keeping up with the latest acronyms, etc? Although it may appear that comparing a “typical” SAA annual meeting to a typical CAA annual meeting risks the usual apples-and-oranges putdown, there is obvious overlap among the concerns of archivists, especially visual materials archivists, and scholars who study art and visual culture. A CAA conference makes me wonder, moreover, why we can’t see more SAA sessions emphasizing the content and research value of collections—especially collections of visual materials! In VM we have complained about a dearth of visual materials programming at the annual meeting, and I agree we are getting short-changed. But it isn’t merely a question of getting a fair share of the programming pie: adding VM sessions could be a strategic maneuver (or would that be tactical—I forget the difference). I think programs about visual materials (including discussions of actual pictures in archival collections) can spice up a lackluster schedule. Clever titles for bland dishes can attract customers, but they leave them panting for flavor.

# Photo Archives V: The Paradigm of Objectivity

by Anne Cuyler Salsich  
Oberlin College Archives

This year, instead of using my institutional support to go to SAA or another professional archives conference, I elected to attend Photo Archives V, a free, two-day international symposium held on February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at the Getty Research Center and the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens in greater Los Angeles. It was the fifth in an open-ended series sponsored by the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence. The first two symposia (*Photographic Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History I-II*) were held in 2009, at the Courtauld Institute and the Kunsthistorisches, respectively. The next two were held in 2011 at the Institute of Fine Arts in New York (*Hidden Archives*) and in Florence (*The Photographic Archive and the Idea of Nation*). Proceedings were published for all but the New York symposium. Discussions are currently underway for the next symposium, anticipated to be held in Oxford, England in 2017.

The topic of this year's symposium was *The Paradigm of Objectivity* (program on the Getty Research Institute [website](#)). Photography's supposed objectivity would seem to have long been adequately debated and examined, but the statement introducing the symposium explains why this topic has been taken up by scholars anew:

Today, the neutrality of photography has been deconstructed; nevertheless, the rhetoric of objectivity continues to shape the uses of analog and digital photographs, which are deemed "evidence," even if one is aware of the possibility of technical manipulation and the influence of social conventions. Similarly,



**Symposium** speakers in front of the Huntington Library on Day 2. Left to right: Friederike Kitschen, Jennifer Tucker, Martha Sandweiss, Issam Nassar, Casey Riley, Glenn Willumson, Joan Schwartz, Kelley Wilder, Costanza Caraffa, Hilary Macartney. Taken by Jennifer de la Fuente; courtesy of Joan Schwartz.

there is little awareness that archives are far from neutral guardians of memory. This symposium explores the relationships among photographic reproduction technologies, archival practices, and concepts of objectivity, with an interdisciplinary outlook and a focus on art history.

For those of us who specialize in visual materials as archivists, two of the speakers and their positions are well known: Joan M. Schwartz and Martha A. Sandweiss. Both made compelling presentations that underscored the materiality and complexity of analog photographs, and their historical significance. Schwartz, an SAA Fellow, chair of the department of Art History and Art Conservation at Queen's University, and former chief of photography acquisition and research at the National Archives of Canada, gave the opening keynote, entitled "Shared Vocabularies of Modernity: Photography, Archives, and the Paradigm of Objectivity." Her talk laid the historical

ground for the rest of the symposium, drawing attention to the close relationship between the beginnings of modern archival practice and photography's inception. She elaborated on the way archives and photography were regarded as fixing moments in time, mirrors on the past, surrogates for direct observation, and tools for an illusion of control in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The role of light and the mechanistic nature of the camera in the production of photography were proof, to 19<sup>th</sup> century users, of its legitimacy as an unmediated record of reality.

Martha Sandweiss, Professor of History at Princeton University, gave her talk "The Photograph as Historical Evidence in the Digital Age" in the session titled *Historical Evidence? A* previous talk provided a counterpoint for Sandweiss in the form of a presentation by Paul Conway, a professor of Information Science at the University of Michigan, "An Archeology of Seeing: Toward a Unified Theory of User Perspectives on Digitized Photographs." His talk (derived from two published articles, one in the *American Archivist* in 2010), couched in information science methodology, argued that certain types of users of digital surrogates on the Library of Congress website were not only well served in their research goals, but that only digital presentation could enable full exploration of the materials for their purposes. He interviewed seven users, of which one stood in for scholars as a group. For that user, only direct contact with the photo album that was the subject of her research would suffice. Sandweiss drove home that point, stating that digital surrogates do not serve her needs as a scholar primarily because the digitizing agency doesn't capture important information during the scanning process. Furthermore, these images reinforce the assumption on the part of most history academics that photographs are simply illustrations, not rich primary sources in their own right as objects in a cultural milieu.

Of particular interest to me were two presentations having specifically to do with personal collections that are part of large archival entities within museums. Glenn Willumson, Director of the Graduate Program in Museum Studies and University of Florida Research Foundation Professor of Art History, investigated study print collections at the Getty Center amassed by the art historian Ellis Waterhouse and the architectural historian and photographer Jan

van der Meulen. His talk, "Personal and Institutional Photo Archives: Changing Subjectivities," had special resonance for me as I had recently processed study prints and architectural photographs in the collections of two 20<sup>th</sup> century art historians at Oberlin. Willumson posed important questions in any re-thinking of the photo archive as a digital instrument, including "how the digital archive will reconnect the viewer with the indeterminate nature of photographic meaning and the ways in which that meaning is dependent on its circumstances of production, its presentational possibilities, and its reception by individual viewers."

"To Make a Case: Isabella Stewart Gardner's Archival Installations at Fenway Court" was given by Casey Riley, a curatorial research fellow at the Gardner Museum and curator of the exhibit [\*Off the Wall: Gardner and Her Masterpieces: From the Archives\*](#). Riley reported on the museum's use of historical photographs that documented installations of Isabella Stewart Gardner's personal archival materials, arranged by her, in glass exhibit cases.



**Berenson Case, Blue Room, 1941.**  
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston.

The cases were undisturbed from 1924 until 1941, when the contents as well as many of the works of art were packed for safekeeping during World War II. The cases were reinstalled using the exhibition photographs and remained untouched until the contents were microfilmed by the Archives of American Art in 1972. At that time the layers of material were documented and thinned to leave only the top layer. The bottom layers were

removed, de-acidified and stored. Isabella Stewart Gardner's personal archive is a significant trove of correspondence, photographs, programs and musical scores reflecting her relationships with many of the leading writers, artists, art historians and composers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Riley's work explores the meanings of Gardner's exhibit cases as self-commemoration strategies, and evidence of the social history of the museum Gardner founded. The early photographs of the cases preserved Gardner's own hand in the arrangement of her materials, another example of subjectivities and layers of meaning that accrue over time, a topic further explored by the closing keynote.

The new director of the Photographic History Research Centre at De Montfort University, Kelley Wilder, gave a cerebral coda to the symposium. Staking the opposite ground as in the philosopher Thomas Nagel's 1986 work *The View from Nowhere*, Wilder delved into the multiplicity of points of view in the photo archive in her talk "The View from Everywhere: Objectivity and the Photographic Archive." She projected a photograph taken during an exhibition of large-scale photographs by Lala Meredith-Vula as a powerful visual expression of layers of subjectivity in photography. Meredith-Vula, a Kosovan artist and photographer in residence at DMU, photographed the blood feud reconciliations in 1990. Her photographs, taken as an insider in that culture, bear witness to the historic moments in which forgiveness was offered in order to stop the cycles of generational violence. The photographs were exhibited as huge prints in 2015 at the National Gallery in Kosova; the exhibition was visited by the president of Kosova and the president of Bulgaria, and they were photographed with the director of the National Gallery in front of Meredith-



**President of Kosova, Atifete Jahjaga; President of Bulgaria, Rosen Plevneliev; Director of National Galley in Kosova, Erzen Shkololli at the exhibition of Lala Meredith-Vula photographs, 'Blood Memory' in Kosova, April 2015 in the National Gallery of Kosova. Photo by Enver Bylykbashi.**

Vula's works. This photographic representation of the leaders of Kosova and Bulgaria over the exhibit in 2015 of the photographed historic events of 1990 will itself take on new meanings over time, and so it goes on and on with photography.

The symposium underscored that it is through appreciating the subjectivities in the production and use of photographs that we can arrive at some of their multivalent meanings, and several of the speakers expressed concern that some current digitization strategies distort or destroy the properties that scholars need to assess their significance, particularly those that aggregate images from multiple institutions such as the Digital Public Library of America. While there were mentions of the subjectivity of archives, the inclusion of more archivists as speakers who have been publishing on the topic would have enriched the discourse. I was able to present on this symposium to my colleagues in the Oberlin College Library in a monthly professional forum. If each of us disseminated this kind of ground-breaking research to our colleagues, more librarians and archivists not expert in visual materials would understand that scholars are not benefitting from most digital representations of photographs, paving the way for the adoption of better approaches with our guidance.



# Voices from VMCAR

## Cataloging and Access Member Spotlight

by Shannon M. Erb

Chair of Visual Materials Cataloging & Access Roundtable

Globe Poster had been in business in Baltimore since 1929, and was well known for bright show card posters advertising music concerts, carnivals, sporting events, political campaigns. It was a favorite of top acts in soul, R&B, blues, and hip-hop, such as James Brown, B.B. King, and Run DMC, to name just a few.



With the help of a Council on Library and Information Resources Hidden Collections Grant, the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and Johns Hopkins University (JHU) is resurrecting this special piece of Baltimore history.

To see how archivists tackled the preservation and description challenges of the collection, and to provide a successful collaboration case study, the Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable (VMCAR) reached out to one of the leading archivists behind the project for an interview.



Interviewee is Emily Hikes (EH), Archivist for the Globe Collection and Press in Balti-

more, Maryland. Hikes is currently overseeing the two-year collaboration between MICA and JHU.

**SE:** How did you become interested in the visual material archiving field?

EH: I have been working in some capacity as an archivist since 2008. After completing a BA in Art History at the University of Kentucky, I went on to receive my MLIS at the University of Pittsburgh in 2011. What drew me to the Globe position was my interest in the study and creation of visual arts, my love for hip hop music, and the opportunity to play a key role in a dynamic collaboration between two distinguished institutions.

**SE:** Describe how collaboration came about for processing the Globe Collection.

EH: After MICA acquired the Globe collection in 2011, they approached JHU to discuss the archival resources and expertise needed to preserve and provide access to the collection. A team was formed to work toward securing a Council on Library and Information Resources Hidden Collections Grant for processing the materials, and I was hired to oversee the processing of all of these items by 2017.

**SE:** What variety of materials comprise the Globe Collection?

EH: The primary format of the collection is posters, which came in various sizes and were printed on poster board using UV inks. The remainder of the collection is banners, a few hundred linear feet of business records, and related ephemera. There is also a selection of coroplast



## VMCAR

and metal signs and thick paper panels pieced together to create large billboards.

What is unique about this collection's variety of materials is the letterpress cuts that were used to print the images that also make up a bulk of the collection, as well as materials associated with the planning, design, and proofing stages leading to the final poster print. Many are standard business ledgers or printed sheets, but others are sheets of paper taped together, plastic sheets known as rubyliths with smaller pieces taped or glued to them, fragile sheets of onionskin paper, photographs, and even a box of LPs.



### SE: What is the historical value of these materials?

EH: The Globe Collection tells the story of American music and other forms of entertainment, including carnivals, circuses, boxing matches, motorsports, political campaigns, and night life. Globe show cards help us see popular culture that flourished on local, regional, and national levels.

Music historians will find value in the records of many African American acts like soul, R&B and hip hop—this is an especially well-documented theme of Globe posters. Political posters show election races in the broader Washington D.C./Baltimore region, and show the advent of tickets including the rise of African American and female candidates. We also find an overview of the business of printing show card posters, signs, and flyers in the materials.

### SE: How is this project supported?

EH: Through a combination of word of mouth and social media. MICA held a variety of public events to raise awareness about the collection and created a website, which is the main online resource about the collection. The CLIR grant provided the greatest amount of financial support needed to process the collection.

### SE: Have there been any implications with processing this collection?

EH: The posters were printed on poster board in varying sizes using multiple printing methods and types of ink. Since the collection will be stored off-site, there was some difficulty in deciding a storage vehicle that allowed for proper preservation and their transportability. The posters are therefore interleaved with acid-free paper and placed in corrugated, custom-made, acid-free boxes to resist acid migration and other deterioration, but also allow for mobility.



Another challenge is the letterpress cuts. These blocks of wood will need special treatment, so we are determining the best way to house and catalog them in a way that both preserves them and allows for use of the items as part of our teaching collection.

### SE: With a grant deadline, how do you prioritize processing?

EH: We have to strike a balance for priority items (the posters) while adequately describing the rest of the

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collection, so an Access database is used by interns to “tag” each poster with some key information instead of doing item-level metadata.

### **SE: What cataloging standards and software are you using?**

EH: This project’s outcome will be DACS compliant and we will use EAD to encode the finding aids. We will eventually use EAC-CPF to supplement this collection, but these standards work well for the needs of basic access to the collection in these preliminary stages. We are using Archivists’ Toolkit to store and manage the information we generate through processing, but hope to implement ArchivesSpace in the future.

### **SE: Do you see the Globe Collection continuing to grow?**

EH: We consider this a complete collection as-is, but we would love if some gaps were filled, as Globe has earlier history that has been lost over time for various reasons. With that in mind, we hope that at some point we will crowdsource digital surrogates of some of the missing

pieces and offer users the most complete and helpful picture of the company’s history.

### **SE: What can we expect to see in the future for the Globe Collection?**

EH: We are currently exploring options for digitization, and we are promoting use of the materials in classrooms. MICA teaches the process of printing and design, so they have already established two courses specific to the Globe method of letterpress. JHU is using the Collection for research in printing and the history of American culture as displayed in the posters. Both institutions see this as a unique opportunity to provide the community a new way to engage with history and continue forging partnerships in Baltimore.

*Interested in learning more about the Globe Collection project? Contact Emily at [ebikes@jhu.edu](mailto:ebikes@jhu.edu), or consult the team at MICA in charge of teaching the project at [globe@mica.edu](mailto:globe@mica.edu). Also be sure to check out Globe on Instagram [@globeatmica](https://www.instagram.com/globeatmica) for highlights of the collection!*



## EXHIBITS

## Pitt Jazz Music Students Collaborate with Archives Service Center

by Miriam Meislik

Media Curator, Archives Service Center, University Library System, University of Pittsburgh



What happens when you bring together an archival collection encompassing the career of one of the most celebrated jazz pianists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century with a jazz scholar who has a background that includes historical ethnomusicology and archival theory? You get the course *Music, Media, and the Archive: Jazz Collections of Pittsburgh*. This unique Fall semester seminar course, taught by Dr. Michael C. Heller, provided PhD students the opportunity to study a little archival theory, work with an archival collection, and design an exhibit.

In June 2015, the Archives Service Center at the University of Pittsburgh acquired the perfect collection for such a class, the Erroll Garner Archive. As part of their investigations, the students in Dr. Heller's class used the collection to create blog posts on the Archives Service Center's Tumblr page. These posts called, *Erroll Garner Tuesdays*, highlighted the research of each student and Dr. Heller, as well as a couple of guest authors discussing an aspect of Garner's life or career. All thirteen posts can be found at <http://pittarchives.tumblr.com/archive>. The penultimate goal of the class was to create an

exhibit to be installed in the International Academy of Jazz Hall of Fame exhibit space located in the University's William Pitt Union.

When working with the Erroll Garner Archive, it's easy to become overwhelmed with the number of story possibilities. Taking the design of the exhibit space into consideration, the students decided to tell the story of the relationship between Garner and his longtime manager, Martha Glaser. Garner and Glaser were close friends and business partners for over two decades. Glaser acted as his advisor, his encourager, and his enforcer. She made sure that Erroll

was paid fairly and that he and his group didn't play for segregated audiences. Both were strong supporters of racial equality. She worked diligently on behalf of Garner with the record companies to make sure that he was not taken advantage of when it came to his recordings, contracts, and artist rights. Of course, on the personal side, Glaser also made sure to give him needed



Images courtesy of University of Pittsburgh.

## EXHIBITS



advice regarding how to handle autograph hounds, a move to a new house, and even the occasional chastisement, among other guidance. They were so close that Glaser is listed as Garner's primary contact on his hospitalization card.

On February 4, 2016 the University of Pittsburgh launched its exhibit honoring the jazz pianist. This collaborative effort was co-curated by the graduate students in Pitt's Music Department, Dr. Michael C. Heller, and Miriam Meislik of Pitt's Archives Service Center. The exhibit received additional support from the Archives Service Center and the Hillman Library. A [LibGuide](#), was also created, which highlights the Garner Archive, Garner's music, and the [exhibit](#). The exhibit will be on display throughout 2016.



## EXHIBITS

## Common Touch: The Art of the History of the Senses of the Blind

April 4 – October 21, 2016

Library Company of Philadelphia



***The Students' Magazine*** (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, 1838).  
Library Company of Philadelphia.

*Common Touch: The Art of the History of the Senses of the Blind*, an exhibition of the library's [Visual Culture Program \(VCP at LCP\)](#), on display April 4 - October 21, 2016, explores the nature of perception and the history of the education of the visually impaired during the nineteenth century. Curated by artist-in-residence Teresa Jaynes, the multisensory and multimedia exhibition challenges our historical and contemporary conceptions of sight and knowledge.

Jaynes, an installation and book artist, uses literature, visual material, and artifacts to create works with a

historical context that are both engaging and thought provoking. The Library Company's diverse visual culture collections related to the history of the education of the blind, including raised-print texts and ephemera; nineteenth-century personal narratives and textbooks; and reports, pamphlets, and periodicals issued by educational institutions for the blind informed the conceptualization of *Common Touch*.

Comprised of Jaynes's original art works and historical materials, the exhibition engages four of the five senses — touch, sight, hearing, and smell — with displays that

## EXHIBITS

include a tactile map and key showing the travels of a 19th-century English blind surveyor and sculptural letters based on the handwriting in the correspondence of a young blind woman writing to a benefactor in the decades following the Civil War. Other installations immerse visitors into a cocoon of sound and scent conveying a micro-narrative of the life of Victorian blind musician Thomas Greene Bethune, known as “Blind Tom.” Pedagogically-inspired patterned wall art and geometric forms, and facsimiles of printing for the blind

by Jaynes, as well as an 1838 edition of the first raised-print periodical *The Students' Magazine* (1838-1845) will also be displayed in this innovative exhibition.

*Common Touch* has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

**Erika Piola**  
Co-Director, Visual Culture Program  
Library Company of Philadelphia

## Do It Yourself: Participatory Art in the 1960s and 1970s

February 23 – May 13, 2016

Perelman Building

Philadelphia Museum of Art Library Reading Room



**Claus Oldenburg**

*Do It Yourself* examines the many ways Pop artists invite viewers to take an active role in the creative process. The installation brings together artist books, exhibition catalogues, mail art, and photographs from the museum's library and archives. Special attention is given to events and partnerships in the Philadelphia community.

From the Goldie Paley Gallery at Moore College of Art & Design to the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania to the Great Stair Hall at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pop artists bring the local art scene to life.

Innovative publications from Something Else Press and Gemini G.E.L. will be featured, along with George Maciunas's *Fluxus 1*, given to the Museum by Alexina

Duchamp and on display for the first time. This signature work is Maciunas's first attempt at a “yearbox,” or collective anthology, of the international Fluxus community. Musical scores, performance documentation, and plastic and paper ephemera from 16 artists are interspersed inside manila envelopes bound together by metal bolts.

Additional artists in the installation include Richard Hamilton, Jasper Johns, Ray Johnson, Robert Indiana, Claes Oldenburg, Christo, Jeanne-Claude, and Yoko Ono.

**Karina Wratschko**  
Library Assistant for Cataloging and Collections Management  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Claus Oldenburg and Anne d'Harnoncourt**

## BOOK REVIEWS

# THE LUMIÈRE AUTOCHROME: HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY, AND PRESERVATION

By Bertrand Lavédrine and Jean-Paul Gandolfo

*Paperback, 380 pages - Getty Conservation Institute - 2013*  
\$70.00 Available from [www.getty.edu/publications](http://www.getty.edu/publications)

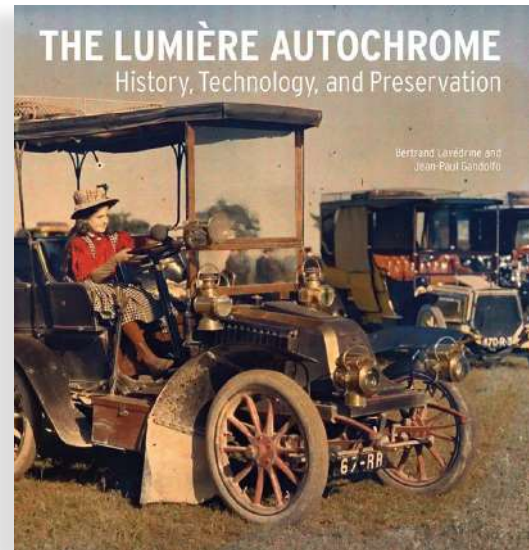
Louis and Auguste Lumière began as imaging pioneers, and developed an industry for color photography with the introduction of their autochrome, patented in 1903, and commercially released in 1907. Their process was the most widely used in color photography until Kodak's Kodachrome was introduced in 1935. Lavédrine and Gandolfo's treatment of the work of the Lumière Brothers is the result of decades of research and collaboration between the two authors.

Bertrand Lavédrine is a professor at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, and the Director of the Centre de Recherche sur la Conservation des Collections (CRCC), both in Paris. Jean-Paul Gandolfo teaches at the École nationale supérieure Louis-Lumière in Paris.

Woven into the well-illustrated historical and technical elements of the book is the story, which leaves the reader with not only an insight into the creation, technology, and preservation of the autochrome, but an understanding of what it meant visually and industrially to the world. As with Lavédrine's other two texts on photographic materials, there is a deep level of technical information that is explained and diagrammed in such a way that experienced archivists as well as photographic enthusiasts will find accessible. The use of both example photographic images, and full color images of cameras, plates, and other apparatus combined with process descriptions, give the reader a multi-dimensional comprehension of the material.

The first chapter introduces the Lumière family, beginning with Antoine who was already working in photography, the development of the business, their competition with Kodak, and the company's eventual incorporation into CIBA in the 1960's. The following chapters discuss the technical challenges of creating the autochrome, while at the same time offering context to their creation. The final chapters discuss conservation, as well as the historic implications of their use in the physical and social sciences, as well as in art photography.

There are three elements incorporated into the book that are important to highlight. Firstly, the appendices that include



reproductions of parts of the Lumière Notebooks and Patents referenced throughout the book. The notebooks and patents are in full color, and the notebooks are meticulously translated from French on the opposite page. There is an impressive thirteen page bibliography citing sources on every aspect of autochromes, including resources on how to make them, process them, view them, print them, etc.

The third chapter, Technical Challenges in the Manufacture of Autochrome Plates, includes a section of interviews with individuals connected to autochrome production. These include the son of the man who was commissioned to produce the starch use for the autochrome plates, the daughter of an employee who worked in the Lumiere workshop producing plates, and a man who worked and processed autochromes while in the field.

Lastly, the history of Albert Kahn (1860-1940), French philanthropist and banker, is intertwined with the story of the autochrome. His role in promoting documentary photography, specifically his active collection of images of the natural world and of cultures around the globe, is referenced throughout the text. Examples from his collection of approximately 73,000 plates are included as well as a section on their digitization at the Musée Albert-Kahn outside of Paris.

Throughout the text, the use of multiple methods of presenting the Lumière Autochrome leads to an experience, versus simply a "read" of the text. This is an essential resource for those interested in or working with early color photography.

**Sandra Varry**

Heritage Protocol & University Archivist, Florida State University, and President, Society of Florida Archivists



## BOOK REVIEWS

### A STRANGE AND FEARFUL INTEREST: DEATH, MOURNING, AND MEMORY IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

By Jennifer Watts, Steve Roden, and Barret Oliver

*Hardcover, 176 pages – The Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens – April 2015*

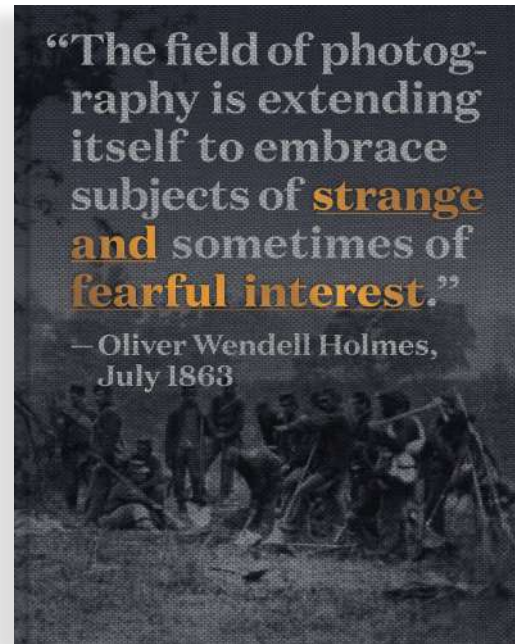
\$29.95 Available from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

*A Strange and Fearful Interest* is a powerful 176 page volume of photographs, albumen prints, tintypes, daguerreotypes, and printed ephemera detailing photographers' and the public's fascination with death and the American Civil War. Watts' volume offers the reader a glimpse into the turmoil of the Civil War through photographic documentary evidence of conflict and loss that resonates through time and space. The photographers' imagery grips twenty-first century viewers just as powerfully as it did our forefathers.

The book's chapters encourage the reader to follow the chronology of the war and the photographers' journeys in search of their loved ones, guiding the reader through chapters on Faces, Battlefield, Assassination, Commemoration, and Reflection. The author begins the book in text and image with Oliver Wendell Holmes' search for his beloved son in the faces of the dead. However, the photographs curated within the text are not simply stoic portraits of generals and captains but are largely comprised of otherwise undocumented fallen soldiers upon the battlefields — slain forms of the dead that reverberate through time and viewed with heartbreaking awareness.

The volume does not heavily rely on large, full-frame photographs that bleed to the edges to convey its message. Conversely, the images are given space to breathe on the pages, thoughtfully offering respite to the reader and eliciting reverence for the subject matter. Images can at times be rendered in shadow, dark greys and blacks obscuring faces and details, challenging the reader to look with nineteenth century eyes and consciousness. When modern viewers gaze at such historically significant images, our thoughts unwittingly meander towards the deceased contemporaries and families: their reactions, thoughts, ideas, and losses.

The power of the photography is not only in the images captured — that of the dead fallen on the battlefield — it is also in the knowledge that photographic technology of the time required lengthy exposure times. The photographers here were not given the luxury of a point-and-shoot medium that we have today,



instead they were required to stand by in deference to craft and corpse alike. Considering the limitations of the photographic technology of the time, many photos are overexposed or underexposed. This effect can be disruptive at times and the emotional resonance of the image can be limited as such.

The photographs in *A Strange and Fearful Interest: Death, Mourning, and Memory in the American Civil War* challenge readers to tamp down our modern expectations of airbrushed, color-corrected, and contrast-balanced images. Instead we are assaulted with the import of the battlefield's fallen, the excruciating slowness of the photographic process, and the reminder that although we are viewing historic photographs it was the photographer that was standing near the deceased for hours as equipment was set up and an angle decided upon, minutes as the chemicals blended, and less than a second as the image was captured.

*A Strange and Fearful Interest: Death, Mourning, and Memory in the American Civil War* is a wonderful companion to The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens exhibition that ran from October 2013 through January 2014. Aside from the inherent technical issues, the photographs speak to the horror of war and the deafening silence after a battle, and are likely to elicit undeniable fascination from the book's readers.

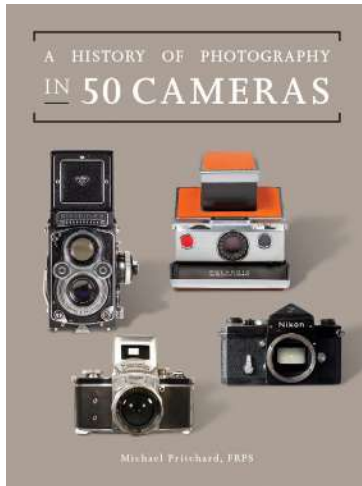
**Emily Wittenberg**

Archivist, Louis B. Mayer Library

AFI Conservatory, American Film Institute

## NEW IN PRINT

## PHOTOGRAPHY

**A HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN 50 CAMERAS**

By Michael Pritchard

*Hardcover, 224 pages – Firefly Books – 2015*  
 \$29.95 Available from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

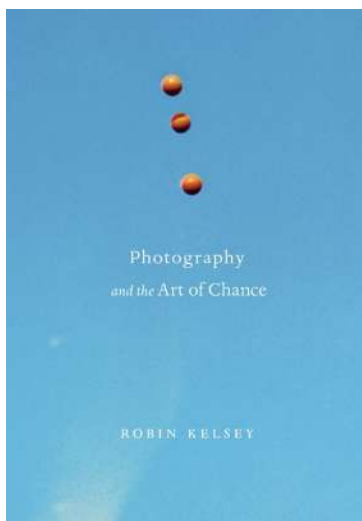
“*A History of Photography in Fifty Cameras* explores the 180-year story of perhaps the most widely used device ever built. It covers cameras in all forms, revealing the origins and development of each model and tracing the stories of the photographers who used and popularized them. Illustrated throughout with studio shots of all fifty cameras and a selection of iconic photographs made using them, it is the perfect companion guide for camera and photography enthusiasts alike.”

**HISTORY & TECHNOLOGY****DAGUERREOTYPES: FUGITIVE SUBJECTS, CONTEMPORARY OBJECTS**

By Lisa Saltzman

*Hardcover, 232 pages – University of Chicago Press – July 2015*  
 \$35.00 Available from [www.press.uchicago.edu](http://www.press.uchicago.edu)

“By examining this idea of photography as articulated in literature, film, and the graphic novel, *Daguerreotypes* demonstrates how photography secures identity for figures with an otherwise unstable sense of self. Lisa Saltzman argues that in many modern works, the photograph asserts itself as a guarantor of identity, whether genuine or fabricated. From Roland Barthes’s *Camera Lucida* to Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*, W. G. Sebald’s *Austerlitz* to Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home*—we find traces of photography’s ‘fugitive subjects’ throughout contemporary culture.”

**CULTURE****PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE ART OF CHANCE**

By Robin Kelsey

*Hardcover, 416 pages – Belknap Press – May 2015*  
 \$32.95 Available from [www.hup.harvard.edu](http://www.hup.harvard.edu)

“Photography has a unique relationship to chance... Although this proneness to chance may amuse the casual photographer, Robin Kelsey points out that historically it has been a mixed blessing for those seeking to make photographic art. On the one hand, it has weakened the bond between maker and picture, calling into question what a photograph can be said to say. On the other hand, it has given photography an extraordinary capacity to represent the unpredictable dynamism of modern life. By delving into these matters, *Photography and the Art of Chance* transforms our understanding of photography and the work of some of its most brilliant practitioners.”

**THEORY & ANALYSIS**

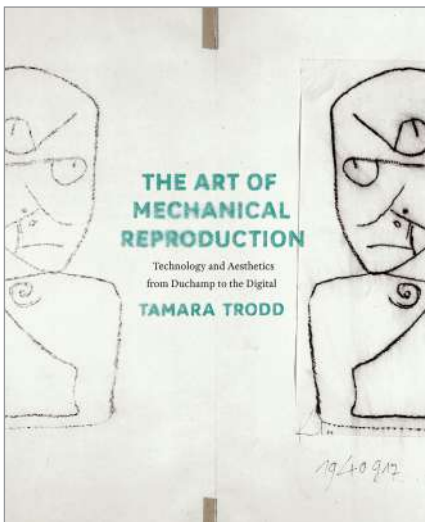
## NEW IN PRINT

**SOULMAKER: THE TIMES OF LEWIS HINE****PHOTOGRAPHER**

by Alexander Nemerov

*Hardcover, 220 pages – Princeton University Press – March 2016**\$45.00 Available from [www.press.princeton.edu](http://www.press.princeton.edu)*

“Between 1908 and 1917, the American photographer and sociologist Lewis Hine (1874–1940) took some of the most memorable pictures of child workers ever made... Using his camera as a tool of social activism, Hine had a major influence on the development of documentary photography... Concentrating on these photographs, Alexander Nemerov reveals the special eeriness of Hine’s beautiful and disturbing work as never before. Richly illustrated, the book also includes arresting contemporary photographs by Jason Francisco of the places Hine documented.”

**FINE ART, PRINT & GRAPHIC ARTS****THE ART OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION: TECHNOLOGY AND AESTHETICS FROM DUCHAMP TO THE DIGITAL****HISTORY & TECHNOLOGY**

By Tamara Trodd

*Hardcover, 368 pages – University of Chicago Press – September 2015**\$50.00 Available from [www.press.uchicago.edu](http://www.press.uchicago.edu)*

“*The Art of Mechanical Reproduction* presents a striking new approach to how traditional art mediums—painting, sculpture, and drawing—changed in the twentieth century in response to photography, film, and other technologies. Countering the modernist view that the medium provides advanced art with “resistance” against technological pressures, Tamara Trodd argues that we should view art and its practices as imaginatively responding to the potential that artists glimpsed in mechanical reproduction, putting art into dialogue with the commercial cultures of its time.”

**PICTURE TITLES: HOW AND WHY WESTERN PAINTINGS ACQUIRED THEIR NAMES****HISTORY**

By Ruth Bernard Yeazell

*Hardcover, 352 pages – Princeton University Press – September 2015**\$35.00 Available from [www.press.princeton.edu](http://www.press.princeton.edu)*

“A picture’s title is often our first guide to understanding the image. Yet paintings didn’t always have titles, and many canvases acquired their names from curators, dealers, and printmakers—not the artists. Taking an original, historical look at how Western paintings were named, *Picture Titles* shows how the practice developed in response to the conditions of the modern art world and how titles have shaped the reception of artwork from the time of Bruegel and Rembrandt to the present... Examining Western painting from the Renaissance to the present day, *Picture Titles* sheds new light on the ways that we interpret and appreciate visual art.”



# VIEWS



SOCIETY OF  
American  
Archivists

NEWSLETTER OF THE VISUAL MATERIALS SECTION

July 2016

Volume 30, Number 2

## VISUAL MATERIALS @ 65!

Special Anniversary Edition

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*Join us online!*

Official website:

[saavms.org](http://saavms.org)



Visual Materials  
Section



@saavms



@saavms

## Our History, and the South, Remembered

We're headed to Atlanta, and as we join our SAA colleagues for sessions, meetings, and memorable dinners, we can be proud to know that we are celebrating 65 years as a visual materials community! Our history is both twisty and fascinating, as all histories are: along its course, it has played an intricate dance with other forces at work in American culture and politics. Here is just one necessarily brief tribute to our first two decades as a community.



CHAIR'S CORNER

As mentioned in March's newsletter, working with an online finding aid and with the essential help of [Kirsten Buvala](#), a wonderful intern at SAA's archives at the University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee, I discovered last winter that our Section's story begins in 1951, with the founding of the SAA Committee of Audio and Visual Records, which had no named chair. In January 1952, a letter was sent on behalf of the SAA Chair inviting Dorothy Barck of the NY Historical Society to serve as chair of a committee that "did not function last year [1951]." (Reminder: you can see a selection of scans kindly supplied by Kirsten on the [VM web site](#).)

After an apparently difficult first year, the Committee benefited from Barck's leadership until 1952, when Hermine Baumhofer, archivist at the US Air Force Central Motion Picture Depository in Dayton, Ohio, accepted the chair. Two members of the committee, which for some time consisted of only five or six members, were also film specialists: [Raymond Fielding](#), on the faculty of film schools at UCLA, USC, University of Iowa, Temple University, University of Houston, and The Florida State University; and Forrest L. Williams of the National Archives. The background of the members of the Committee on Audio

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## CHAIR'S CORNER

and Visual Records thus partly explains its strong emphasis on moving image issues, revealed in the Committee's records and online issues of *American Archivist* (although it must be pointed out that in 1956 Minor White from the Eastman House was collaborating with the Committee to publish information on preserving historic photographs).

After 1969, the attention to moving images continued, under the leadership of Committee Chair [Sam Kula](#) (National Film Institute and then National Archives of Canada), who took over after Baumhofer's retirement, joined (among others) by film/media archivists [John Flory](#) of Eastman Kodak, and [John Kuiper](#), then media and film historian and head of the Motion Picture Section of the Library of Congress. In addition, the presence of Owen Bombard, supervisor of the Oral History Section of the Ford Motor Company Archive, and James W. Moore, Director of the Audiovisual Archives Division of the National Archives, meant that an additional locus of energy was given to magnetic media issues. From the online reports and scanned records I have read, photographic collections – not to mention architectural and graphic arts collections – were clearly on somewhat of a back burner during this period!

If one stops to consider the twin cultural phenomena of film and television sweeping through and forever altering American life in the 1950s, the concentration on these media by the newly founded Committee on Audio and Visual records begins to make more sense beyond the influence of its members. Its continuation into the 1960s makes even more sense when you consider the political and societal crises of those decades, beginning with civil rights and going on into the Vietnam War and the free speech and anti-war protest movements: turning points in these confrontations were often triggered by televised footage, such as dogs and police attacking schoolchildren marching in Birmingham, or white mobs confronting sit-in protesters. Still images, such as the photo of a young woman crying out as she knelt over the body of a fellow protester at Kent State, also were catalysts, moving people both to despair and to action.

In Atlanta, the 1966 Summerhill race riots brought images like these to the media - resonating with the terrible events in our



## CHAIR'S CORNER

nation this summer, almost exactly 50 years later.

While our Section was taking its first steps, and the civil rights movement under Dr. King gained momentum across the South, archivists at key institutions were collecting and preserving negative rolls and reels of film, and photographs, in addition to documents, to allow for as full a record as possible for future research.

Take, for example, this entry in “News Notes” from *The American Archivist*, Vol.20, No.4, October 1957 (pp.384-398):

Mary Givens Bryan, director of the Georgia Department of Archives and History, is starting an audiovisual section with the purchase of a Bell-Howell film-sound projector and an open file cabinet for film storage. Managing Director Glenn C. Jackson of Station WAGA-TV, Atlanta, has announced a policy whereby the bimonthly film reports of U. S. Senator Herman Talmadge and Georgia's Governor Marvin Griffin will be turned over to Mrs. Bryan after their use on the air. In addition WAGA-TV expects to deposit with Mrs. Bryan's institution some 300 feet, or 90 minutes, of selected newsfilm reports of Georgia events. Some of the 11 other television stations in the State may also be expected to cooperate.

One has to wonder about WAGA's selection process mentioned above, but if it weren't for this pioneering work of Mary Bryan, and subsequent efforts of the staff at the [Georgia Archives](#) (not too far south of Atlanta), footage of the civil rights era such as [these resources from the Attorney General's office](#), including a WAGA 16 mm film, would probably have been completely lost.

The work of preserving images that document protests – as well as every other kind of human activity – continues into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and much of the effort comes from Visual Materials Section members. Thanks to archivists, technical experts, and others at the University of Virginia, for example, [thousands of Roanoke, Virginia television station news films](#) and scripts were cataloged and digitized in an ambitious project launched in 2013; those films were used by historian William G. Thomas III for his must-read [research essay](#) on how television media helped shape

local community and national responses to civil rights issues, especially segregation.

And this brings me around again to Atlanta, to our annual meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup>! [Allen Tullos](#), co-editor of the journal *Southern Spaces*, where William Thomas's article originally appeared in 2004, will speak to the continued role we archivists have in the struggle to represent all sides of history (in real *and* imagined spaces, as the journal's logo suggests). I hope you'll join your fellow VMS members and other interested SAA attendees as we listen to Allen's perspective as *Southern Spaces* editor, digital projects collaborator, American Studies professor, and expert in regional music, film, archives, and above all, the documentary impulse. During our brief time in this wonderful city of Atlanta, I hope we can learn more about its most turbulent times – and how people remember and study its past.



The Visual Materials Section has seen a lot in its 65 years, and there is still plenty of road ahead of us if we are to successfully capture and keep safe the historic visual record for future generations. Our work also hasn't gotten any easier – on the contrary! Image streams have progressively become more complex and more vulnerable, prone to disappear from online spaces from one hour to the next. This calls for continuing our efforts to apply all the professional and personal energies as a Section to keep the history stream present for all time. First, we celebrate in Atlanta together!

*Warm thanks go to Helena Zinkham for providing some preliminary context to the early SAA Committee members, and for sharing the excitement of discovering more about our historical roots.*

### Paula Jeannet Mangiafico

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library,  
Duke University

[For further insight, see also Helena Zinkham's “Our Visual Roots from 1953” in *Views* Volume 3, Number 2, April 1989.]



## CHAIR-ELECT'S COLUMN

Greetings from hot and humid Florida. Atlanta will be hot and humid also, but I look forward to seeing all y'all there! We have a great variety of [tours, meet-ups, and meals](#) to look forward to where we can say "hi" to old friends, and welcome new faces. The Business Meeting will have a little business, and a great [speaker](#), so please make time to attend. We are voting (in person) on [bylaws](#) changes that will allow us to vote electronically for any future changes to our bylaws.

Also, please mark your calendars for the Midwinter Meeting sometime in January or February – exact dates to be determined in early Fall. The location will be central Florida (less than an hour from Disney World, if that is an incentive) where it will still be humid, but not as hot!

Please e-mail me with thoughts, ideas or concerns about the Section. I look forward to the coming year and I hope you do, too.

**Gerianne Schaad**

The Sarah D. and L. Kirk McKay, Jr. Archives  
Florida Southern College



## VM Section Highlights

### Wednesday, August 3

- Collaborative workshop (9am)  
*More Than Meets the Eye: Negotiating the Landscape of Born-digital Visual Materials*

### Thursday, August 4

- VM annual meeting (3:30pm)  
Election news & section activities  
**\*\*Bylaws [revision](#) vote \*\***  
Guest speaker Allen Tullos
- VM 65th anniversary dinner party (7pm)!!

Want further information on these and more meet-ups, sessions, tours, and events in Atlanta during the SAA 2016 Conference?

It's all online at the VM Section [website](#).



Detroit News Photograph Collection, Walter P. Reuther Library,  
Wayne State University.

# History Repeating?

As the SAA annual meeting approaches, the Section votes in new leadership, prepares for the [preconference workshop on born digital visual materials](#), and heightens engagement through its [web site](#) and [social media](#) outlets. And while maintaining this forward momentum, it's important to understand where we've been. Below are a few select columns from past issues, going back 20 years, that demonstrate time-honored section values: active participation from its membership; adaption to demands of the profession; and agile and creative communication. As many of the points made therein seem germane to today's Section, hopefully they serve to not only applaud our recent accomplishments, but perhaps more importantly, to energize future Section endeavors.

political organizations is down dramatically from 15 to 20 years ago. Everyone I know professes to be busier than ever, with no time for anyone or anything. All organizations big and small are dependent on volunteers. How many of us look forward to that wonderful retired man or woman who comes in for half a day a week? SAA needs volunteers, too. The office and its wonderful staff in Chicago provide incredibly valuable services to us as members, yet they're simply the tip of the iceberg. SAA depends on individuals with an interest in the profession and a willingness to DO something for their profession, whether it's as an elected member of Council or a volunteer staffing the information booth at the annual meeting.



[ABOVE] "WWII Women's Volunteer Service Uniforms." Detroit News Photograph Collection, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.

## Volunteerism and What it All Means

Reprinted from *Views* Volume 10, Number 2, April 1996

A few weeks ago, I was driving home on my third portion of a three-part commute when an All Things Considered segment on volunteerism caught my attention. From it I learned that the number of people willing to and who actually do volunteer for professional, social, civic, and

Many years ago I was the volunteer office assistant to the Executive Secretary of the Maryland Society of Professional Engineers. I distinctly remember a passage in the letter sent to new members: We encourage you to be more than just a name on the membership roster. In other words, if you're going to be a member, be an active member. Back in 1988 the Visual Materials Section had fewer than 80 members. Today the Section's membership has grown to over 350 members. This dramatic growth is due, in large part, to a small group of volunteers who have put their ideas and vision to work for the Section. In the last few years, however, even with the expanded Section membership, it has been increasingly difficult to find

individuals willing to work for the betterment of the Section.

In the next few months, the Nominating Committee will be talking to many of you to see if you would be willing to stand for Chair-Elect. The requirements for the position, for all intents and purposes, are minimal: membership in SAA and the Section, a commitment to the Section for two years (one as chair-elect and one as



chair), a willingness to spend perhaps 50 hours over the course of each year (that's an average of an hour a week) to work for the Section. As chair-elect the workload includes three columns for *Views*, some work putting together proposals for the annual meeting, and preparing the Section's three-year plan. As chair, there are similar tasks required, but again, a minimum amount of time. Please consider standing for this important volunteer leadership position. If you're unwilling to make that kind of minimal time commitment, please consider some other ways in which you can aid the Section and its work:

- Read and comment on SAA's report on Sections and Roundtables (see Stephen Fletcher's column)
- Put together a proposal for an annual meeting
- Give a paper or chair a session at an annual meeting
- Send your ideas and comments about the Section to the chair or chair-elect
- Write an article for *Views* (Bob Sink did, unasked, and it's on page 8 of this issue)
- Send exhibition, book, WWW, or other information, even gossip, to *Views*
- Volunteer to work on the Section's bibliography (see Stephen Fletcher's column)
- Put *Views* on your institution's press release mailing list
- Volunteer to highlight your collection for "Collection Snapshot" in *Views*
- Volunteer to do a book review (you get to keep the book!) for *Views*
- Volunteer to sign the petition to establish a moving-image materials roundtable (see Stephen Fletcher's column)
- Vote for effective section leadership when you receive your ballot in the August issue of *Views*
- Attend the annual section meeting
- Bring or send (if you can't come to the meeting) a recently published book to show off at the Book Fair at the annual section meeting
- Stop by to chat with section leadership at the Section's office hours at the annual meeting
- Go on a section-sponsored tour at the annual meeting
- Join SAA and the Section (if you're reading a pirated copy of this newsletter!)

And remember, if you've volunteered to do something, DO IT!

**Laurie A. Baty**  
Views Editor, 1988-2006

[Similar sentiments can also be found in Stephen Cohen's Chair's Column in *Views* Volume 25, Number 1, August 2011.]

## From the Chair

Reprinted from *Views* Volume 23, Number 4, October 2009

*For the King, yes, of course. But which King? ... Unless we ourselves take a hand now, they'll foist a republic on us. If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change. Do you understand?*

—Tancredi in *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa

It is the next to last sentence above that's often quoted from Tomasi di Lampedusa's classic historical novel. It is, however, Tancredi's entire statement to his aristocratic and somewhat oblivious uncle, Prince Fabrizio Corbera, that is more enlightening because it reveals the constancy he desired and hints at what needed to change to maintain that constancy.

*The Leopard* begins its fictional story in May 1860, coinciding with Francis Frith's actual return from the last of three photographic expeditions to Egypt and Palestine first begun in 1856. In Frith's realm, the wet collodion process had become king, supplanting the daguerreotype and calotype. Today we recognize a new king: Digital Photography. But do we as visual materials archives understand that reality?

As an SAA section, we have been slow, almost reticent, to address the issues that stem from our new "republic." The digital photography revolution is not new. Only a few days ago, October 29th, *The Economist* honored Steve Sasson, the builder of the first digital camera in 1975 (almost 35 years ago) for his invention. When our *Views* editor asked me for a portrait for this column, I almost posed by a large early 20<sup>th</sup> century studio portrait camera. Instead I symbolically selected a modern view camera equipped with a medium format digital back. Where Frith returned from the Holy Land with hundreds of glass plates, today's photographers return from their shootings with hundreds of megabytes—even hundreds

per image. True, the digital photography revolution was slow to develop, but it has unquestionably been foisted upon us now for at least the past decade, ever since the technology reached the point of practical usability. Over the years, the Visual Materials Section has become relevant to our colleagues and ourselves because we have provided useful and important information about our primary area of concern: photography. Why have we been so slow to tackle the issues of digital photography? We will only revere the old kings? How do we as a section stay relevant? If we want to stay relevant, what do we need to change? That shall be the theme for this year's midwinter meeting, and we'll start by addressing the first issue of SAA's Strategic Priority #1: "Rapidly changing information technologies challenge archival principles, practices, and communication protocols, demanding effective leadership from the archives community to access, capture, and preserve records in all formats."

For us, that primarily (but not exclusively) means digital photography. Do we understand?

**Stephen Fletcher**  
Section Chair, 2009-2010

## From the Chair

Reprinted from *Views* Volume 24, Number 2, August 2010

### 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. Coincidentally, 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.

**Stephen Fletcher**  
Section Chair, 2009-2010

## Share with your colleagues!

In the same vein as the Gallery ([May, July, and October, 2009](#)) or The Archivist Photographer ([February 2010](#)) sections of past *Views* issues, we invite you to submit [favorite images](#) from your collections, images you've taken yourself, or documentation of the work you do everyday. Contact our social media experts and get involved!



**Just some of the cool old equipment** in the AV Materials Collection offices at the State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, NC! #saavms #nc\_archives\_photos Photograph and [post](#) by Kim Andersen.



Have photos or video of past VM members, events, or activities? Consider submitting digital copies to any leadership or communications working group member through the end of 2016, for inclusion in an online scrapbook.

[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP] Lauren Goodley. With Stephen Fletcher, Miriam Meislik Lee, Laurie Baty and Helena Zinkham.

San Diego 2012 meet-up.

Miriam Meislik Lee and John Slate, WWII Museum in New Orleans during SAA Friday night reception.

SAA Visual Materials Section tour group behind the scenes look at some collections in the Louisiana State Museum's permanent storage facility on Chartres St in NOLA!

Breakfast at Cafe D'Or on Ursuline, right across the street from Villa Convento where Laurie Baty and I stayed during all of SAA! L-R: Laurie Baty, Brett Carnell, and new VM member, Nancy from London!

DC 2014: All those meet ups, tour, and delicious dinner brought to you by...Kim Andersen, Laurie Baty, and Lauren Goodley. We're already thinking about next year and can't wait to do it again!

SAA 2013 NOLA: Tony, art curator at the LA State Museum, gives SAA Visual Materials Section tour group a behind the scenes look at some collections in their permanent storage facility on Chartres St in NOLA! Here he unveils a piece of his collection that was packed up with masking tape over the glass when moved after Hurricane Katrina.

[MIDDLE] Ferry to Algiers - Me, Laurie Baty, and Lauren Goodley

All images and captions courtesy of Kim Andersen.

# A History of *Views*

*Views* has been an important aspect of the VM Section for just under 30 years. Perusing [past issues](#) gives one a good sense of the evolution of the Section – its priorities, administration, activities, events, membership, and communications. Who were the VM members that made this happen? The below timeline captures just

some of the individuals and milestones associated with the Section’s newsletter and larger communications working group. Digging a bit deeper, there follows brief accounts by two past editors’ of their respective tenures and how the newsletter reflected the Section at that time.

## Timeline

by Anne Salsich, with edits by Laurie Baty and Deborah Rice

- 1987** First issue (April) by Chair Larry Viskochil, for the Aural and Graphic Records Section.  
Consisted of a 1-page photocopied text document.
- 2 issues that year.
- 1988** First issue (August) as Visual Materials Section (changed from the Aural and Graphic Records Section).
- First issue (December) by Editor Laurie Baty. Southworth & Hawes sun painting chosen as logo.
- 2 issues that year.
- 1989 - 2000** Published 3 times a year.
- 1996** First issue to include photographs.
- 2001 – 2004** 4<sup>th</sup> issue published every year in June, with election ballots and t-shirt order forms only.
- 2004** First issue (December) to be distributed only electronically.
- 2006** Last issue (December) by Editor Laurie Baty.
- 3 issues that year.
- 2007** First issue (April) by Editor Martha Mahard.  
Alternate version of sun painting used as logo.
- 3 issues that year.
- 2008** Last issue (August) by Editor Martha Mahard. Design change, including no use of a logo.
- 2009** First issue (February) without an editor; guest edited by Stephen Fletcher.  
Experimentation with different design.
- First issue (May) by Editor Tim Hawkins.  
New design using desktop publishing software. Original sun painting icon is back as logo.

- 2011** Last issue (August) by Editor Tim Hawkins (only issue that year). Logo colorized by Hawkins.
- “Parting Shots” column by editor, with lengthy discussion of section identity crisis.
- First Life in the Shop regular photo essay initiated by Anne Salsich, titled “Deena Stryker: Photographs.”
- 2012** First issue (February) by Editor Anne Salsich
- Tim Hawkins becomes communications coordinator.
- Liz Ruth, longtime contributor for New In Print, added as contributing editor.
- Lisa Snider becomes webmaster.
- 2013** Issues back up to 3 per year in 2013.
- Kerri Pfister brought on to do layout (March).
- Hanon Ohayon becomes new Member News contributing editor (July).
- Emily Gonzalez becomes new Exhibitions and Digital Publications contributing editor (November).
- 2014** Deborah Rice becomes new Member news contributing editor (March).
- Deborah Rice becomes co-editor (November).
- Anna Raugalis (Twitter) and Stephanie Caloia (Facebook) become new social media contributors.
- 2015** Last issue (March) by Co-editor Anne Salsich (remains editor for Life in the Shop).
- Eve Neiger becomes new Books contributing editor and redesigns layout for book reviews and new in print sections.
- Elizabeth Clemens becomes new Member news contributing editor.
- Voices from VMCAR debuts.
- First issue (July) by Editor Deborah Rice.
- Rose Chiango becomes new Exhibitions contributing editor (November).
- Kaitlyn Dorsky (Instagram) joins the social media team (November).
- Kim Andersen becomes new communications coordinator and Alan Renga becomes new web master.

## Editors' Reflections

### Anne Salsich

Associate Archivist, Oberlin College  
Views Editor, 2013-2014; Co-editor, 2014-2015

I was one of the first two Members-at-Large, elected in 2010. My first Midwinter meeting was the following February, held at Stephen Cohen's house in the New Haven area. Like then-editor of the newsletter, Tim



Hawkins, I had experience in professional publishing; we had similar ideas about making the newsletter more visual. I offered to edit a new photo essay feature, "Life in the Shop," which debuted in August 2011. That was the only issue that year, and it was becoming clear that Tim needed to get out of the editorship. I volunteered to

take over in 2012, as long as Tim would take a new slot as the Communications Coordinator, to finish up with work he had begun with Lisa Snider on the new website. The enlarged VM Section communications team that we have now is a result of work by the Steering Committee during my years of active service. It was a crucial time for the Section in terms of leadership, newsletter and website design, and social media communication. I had a lot of fun, and after a few years I recruited Deborah Rice from the cadre of sub-editors to step into my shoes, in 2015.

*Views* is not so much about Section news as it once was; web-based communication is far more expedient for that. As with publishing in general, there is still a place for a Section publication that is primarily print-compliant for several reasons. "Life in the Shop" articles can boost a portfolio and communicate with other members in a way that other media cannot. And I wanted to provide a place for an author to begin with a piece in the newsletter that could be enlarged for publication elsewhere, since visual materials articles are not plentiful in archival literature. It is too soon to tell whether that experiment will bear fruit.

### Laurie Baty

Executive Director at National Capital Radio & Television Museum  
Views Editor, 1988-2006

My first Section meeting was in 1987. I believe Larry Viskochil from Chicago Historical Society and Andy Anderson from Louisville were two of the primary movers and shakers of the VM Section. Maybe 10 people attended that year – not much fewer than total Section membership.

Larry asked for volunteers to do the newsletter and passed out an example, consisting of a photocopied set of sheets, of what he had in mind. Although at that time I wasn't a member (I was working at NHPRC and was reluctant to join SAA when I was working with grant applications), I was able to volunteer to do the work, beginning with the December 1988 issue. There were no guidelines, no rules, no nothing. I established columns,



set submission guidelines, used the Southworth & Hawes logo (it's so happy and representative of what we do), and thought that we might be able to actually have a newsletter that members were involved with.

That was still the early days of personal computers (I don't think we even had email at that point), so we had to be specific about how items could be submitted. I did lots of retyping in the beginning, and layout was in Word with two columns. The logo and mail frank were cut and pasted onto the heading and hard copy sent to SAA in Chicago for reproduction and mailing. We were limited to 2 sheets of paper, 4 times a year. I immediately went to our Council rep with my ideas and asked for more pages. And, the newsletter just grew. We sold t-shirts at the annual meeting and through the newsletter (thank you Joan Schwartz and Miriam Meislik) to offset the cost of publishing more than our allotment. If I'm not mistaken, we were at about 18 pages when I left the editorship. People submitted items, officers and liaisons were fantastic about getting reports in, publishers

sent me books to be reviewed, and folks reviewed exhibitions.

Under my editorship, we were the first section to: publish a real newsletter (with multiple pages and color) on a regular basis; co-publish (with the Preservation Section) a joint newsletter; and begin electronic editions.

Every year I would tender my resignation to the incoming chair, and every year, the chair would ask me to stay on one more year, which I did, and gladly. When I finally resigned, due to work responsibilities, the Section had grown to over 800 members and we regularly had between

40 and 50 people at Section meetings. We had an active section, a robust, well-regarded newsletter, packed annual section meeting, and cool tee shirts. What more could there be?

[Read past *Views* and see for yourself what it was like! For a complete run, see the newsletter [archive](#) online.]

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## VM's Anniversary Issue

**Deborah Rice**

*Views* Editor

This issue is a compilation of ideas brainstormed at the Midwinter Meeting that are intended to highlight a bit of the Section's past, particularly in regards to its longstanding means of communication - *Views*. My thanks to Anne Salsich, Laurie Baty, and Kim Andersen for their contributions to the issue. And thanks to Laurie and Stephen Fletcher for allowing reprints of

their columns. You may have noticed in recent months several posts on the VM listserv (and notices in this issue) asking for content that may further help illustrate our Section's past: photographs, in particular. You still have a chance! I hope that as you may get ready to meet up with colleagues old and new in Atlanta in a few days, you'll consider sharing some of these. The Communications Group is eager to continue the celebration through the end of the year on social media. It can only be successful with your help!

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# VIEWS



NEWSLETTER OF THE VISUAL MATERIALS SECTION

November 2016

Volume 30, Number 3

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#saavms

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Views Gets a Retouch

Join us online!

Official website:

[saavms.org](http://saavms.org)



## #saavms

The term “visual materials” encompasses a wide range of non-textual as well as moving image forms, including photographs, video, film, paintings, drawings, cartoons, prints, and architectural drawings. Some can be categorized as fine art, and others as documentary record, but as archivists or librarians we might have to deal with any or all of these items. For the 65-plus years the section has been in business, no matter what its title, the Visual Materials Section has offered to its members a venue for learning, discussion, and sharing.



CHAIR'S CORNER

But, have we been sharing like our more textually inclined colleagues? We have photographs, etchings, posters, and graphic labels, both in analog and digital form, but who knows about them? In other words, are you utilizing social media outlets appropriately?

The definition says that “*social media* are computer-mediated technologies that allow individuals, companies, governments, and other organizations to view, create, and share information, ideas, career interests, and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.” Social media programs are interactive Web 2.0, Internet-based applications that allow for user generated responses and comment. From one business or person to another, people create online communities to share information, ideas, or personal messages.

So, are you sharing items from your collections to solicit a response? Don't forget, we can also call this “marketing” and make our supervisors and directors happy! If you haven't been sharing, I do recommend trying. And since we all have visual materials, pictures are easier to post than thinking about what to write, so you are even closer to the finish line. You might have to include a few metadata tags, oops.... “hashtags,” but that can be fun and amusing, and not onerous. Luckily, the VM Section has a handy hashtag for you to add to your visual materials post: #saavms.

C'mon everyone! Let's make the rest of SAA, heck the world, look at our collections. Just do it #saavms!

**Gerriane Schaad**

The Sarah D. and L. Kirk McKay, Jr. Archives  
Florida Southern College



## MEMBER NEWS

VIEWS IS PUBLISHED THREE TIMES EACH YEAR BY THE VISUAL MATERIALS SECTION OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

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**Paula Jeannet Mangiafico**  
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## Restoration Complete on a WPA Treasure

by **Elizabeth Clemens**

AV Archivist, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University

In 1937, United Auto Workers Local 174 sponsored the creation of a series of murals to enliven their Union Hall and celebrate their rich, if relatively young, history. The resulting work proved to be one of the most memorable pieces of Detroit's New Deal-era artwork.



The restored mural now hangs in the Reuther Library Reading Room.

This mural features vignettes from pivotal moments in the union's history, including: the 1936-1937 Flint Sit-Down Strike, the "Battle of the Overpass," and a painted rendering of Local 174's first union contract. In the center of the piece, an auto worker holds hands with a female industrial worker who carries the CIO flag, symbolizing the hope of the worker and the solidarity between the two organizations. A unique feature of the mural is the addition of historical union buttons pinned and glued to the breasts of some of the workers. The historical reenactments featured in the painting were modeled directly from photographs, many of which are part of the Reuther Library's collections. The mural was originally part of a series that explored the history of the modern labor movement, however, other sections not able to be removed from the building were lost when it was demolished in the 1950s. The lost panels highlighted the relationship between agricultural and industrial labor, commemorated important events, such as the Ford Hunger March, and highlighted the role of women in early UAW organizing efforts.

The mural was painted by two artists employed with the WPA's Federal Art Project (FAP): Walter Speck and Barbara Wilson. Speck was an influential

## MEMBER NEWS



**Walter Speck** puts the finishing touches on the mural, December 1937.

member of Detroit's art scene in the 1930s-1940s. Known primarily as a ceramist, he also created paintings, murals, and lithographs and exhibited both locally and nationally. Much of his career was spent in educational and mentorship roles. He taught at the Detroit School of Art, the Minzinger Art School, and the National Arts Camp at Interlochen. Wilson worked primarily within various New Deal cultural programs, and created murals, easel paintings, and illustrations for the FAP, the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA), and the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts.

*Untitled* has a long, transient history. In 1954 the mural was painstakingly removed from its home at 2730 Maybury Grand in Detroit, Michigan and installed in a building located at 6495 West Warren after its former home was razed to make way for a freeway project. The mural stayed in place until 2002 when it was moved to Local 174's new headquarters in Romulus, Michigan. In 2015, the mural



**Members of UAW Westside Local 174** remove the mural from their hall, 2015.

was donated to Wayne State University with the hope that it would be preserved and made available to the public for generations to come. Extensive restoration work, which repaired decades of wear and damage, was made possible through the generous support of members and retirees from UAW West Side Local 174, the Michigan Labor History Society, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and private individuals. The mural is now on display in the Reading Room of the Library.

Visit the [blog post](#) to see a time-lapse of the installation.



**A view of restoration work** which cleaned off years of dirt and smoke, repaired tears, and in-painted areas damaged by water.

## MEMBER NEWS



**Buddhist temple**, Terminal Way, Terminal Island. Los Angeles: 1932-33 by Anton Wagner, PC 17, California Historical Society.

## California Historical Society Launches Digital Library

The California Historical Society recently launched its [Digital Library](#), which features the work of Anton Wagner. The digitized collection currently features 438 black-and-white photographs taken of Los Angeles by Wagner between 1932-1933 as he conducted research for his doctoral dissertation on the city. These beautiful images depict the Depression's impact on the rapidly growing urban landscape and demonstrate the socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural diversities of the Southland.

## New Additions to the NYARC Discovery Tool

Two incredible visual resources are now available through the New York Art Resources Consortium's (NYARC) research tool [NYARC Discovery](#): the NYARC web archives and the Frick Art Reference Library's Photoarchive. The NYARC web archives include six thematic collections, as well as the consortium's institutional website collections. These themes and institutional websites include: Art Resources, Artists' Websites, Auction Houses, Catalogues Raisonnés, New York City Galleries, Restitution of Lost or Looted Art, Brooklyn Museum, The Frick Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, and the New York Art Resources Consortium. The Frick Art Reference Library's Photoarchive is a study collection of more than one million photographic reproductions of works of art from the fourth to the mid-twentieth century by artists trained in the Western tradition. As of summer 2016, nearly 200,000 catalog records and over 75,000 digital images are accessible through NYARC Discovery. Cataloging and digitization of this collection is ongoing, so be sure to check back for new additions.

## VM Member Given Highest Honor by Royal Society of Canada



Photo credit: Bernard Clark.

VM member and SAA Fellow Joan Schwartz was recently elected as a Fellow to the Royal Society of Canada (RSC), one of the highest honors for Canadian academics in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Dr. Schwartz is an internationally recognized photographic historian, archival theorist, and historical geographer who currently serves as professor and head of the Department of Art History and Conservation at Queen's University, Kingston Canada. Dr. Schwartz is a former specialist in photography acquisition and research at the National Archives of Canada (1977-2003) and is known by many as being the leading authority on early photography in Canada and as an advocate of its importance to archival collections. Congratulations, Dr. Schwartz!

# LIFE IN THE SHOP

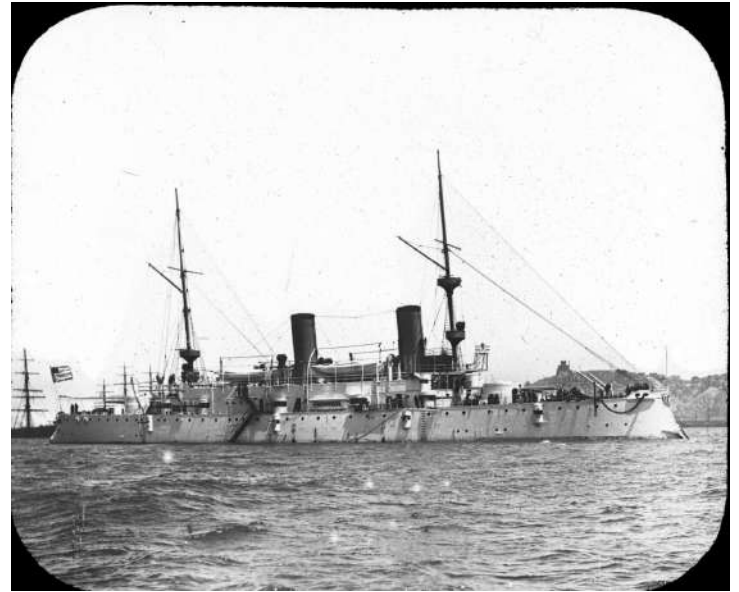
## Accidental Treasures: Lantern Slides from the Spanish-American War

by Lisa Crunk

Photo Archivist  
Naval History & Heritage Command  
Washington Navy Yard, DC

As archivists at the Naval History & Heritage Command, the staff of the photo section (all three of us) on a daily basis comes into contact with historic and significant imagery related to the US Navy as we process donated collections from our backlog. But on occasion we find something we hadn't planned for and weren't even aware we had. This was the case on February 5th of 2014. During the survey phase of an upcoming renovation project, archivists Dave Colamaria and Jon Roscoe discovered two large wooden boxes tucked away up high on a shelving unit.

Once they were brought down and opened, what was uncovered was a truly significant find - approximately 325 original (and unbroken!) glass slides from the Spanish-American War (1898). On one of the boxes was the following etching:



WHI.2014.07 [Admiral] Dewey's Flagship – USS Olympia.

**Photographic Slides  
US Naval Military Activities  
In and Around Manila  
Spanish – American War – 1898  
and Philippine Insurrection  
Douglas White  
War Correspondent.**

WHI.2014.17 **Crew of Reina Christina**  
in prayer before battle, April 24 1898

## LIFE IN THE SHOP



Paperwork noted that the collection was donated to the Naval Historical Foundation in 1948, from the Estate of Lieutenant C. J. Dutreaux, whose image appears in one of the slides. The Foundation transferred the collection to the Naval History & Heritage Command in 2008, however it was never processed. Each slide was individually wrapped in tissue paper and included full captions and dates, which were likely prepared by the photographer, Douglas White (who also worked for the *San Francisco Examiner*). Based on the delicate paper wrapping that still encased the majority of slides, it appears they had not been looked at in decades. The glass slides were in perfect condition and housed in two large wooden boxes with a leather strap on one, which likely allowed for it to be carried by the shoulder for a glass lantern show. Given the presence of images of the battleship Maine being excavated (1911-1912), we believe the slides were created around 1912.

Once it was realized what we had uncovered, there was tremendous excitement amongst the staff, especially the historians at the Command. The collection is significant because the Navy played a central role in nearly every aspect of the Spanish-American war from logistics to diplomacy. Some of the most interesting images include Colonel Theodore Roosevelt in San Juan, various Spanish shipwrecks, the raising of USS Olympia's flag over Manila, captured and imprisoned Spanish troops, execution walls, and even waterboarding (referred to in the caption as "water cure").



[TOP] WHI.2014.03

**Wreck of the Maine**, raised 1912

[BOTTOM] WHI.2014.29

**Apprentice boys** onboard USS Olympia

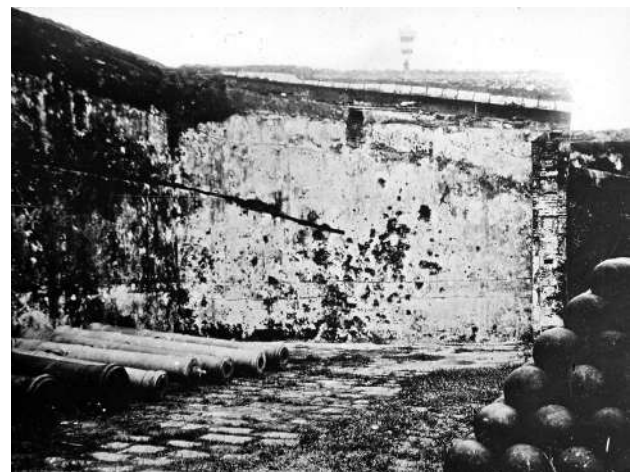
## LIFE IN THE SHOP



The images were an amazing find, though they were never really lost – they were simply waiting to be rediscovered. The staff has digitized all the slides and is in the process of loading them to our website. As we continue to process our backlog we will likely continue to find significant treasures, but none perhaps as notable as the Spanish-American War glass slide collection. This collection can be found on the Naval History and Heritage Command [website](#) by clicking through: Our Collections » Photography » Wars and Events » Spanish American War.

[LEFT] WHI.2014.36x

**Admiral Camara's fleet** in the Suez Canal



[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT] WHI.2014.44 **Warrant Officers** onboard USS Charleston: Phelps, Glynn & Gill; WHI.2014.30 **Old shellbacks** with Purdy: Dave Ireland, Purdy, Tom Griffin, John King; WHI.2014.61 **Execution Wall**, Cavite, P.I.; WHI.2014.57 **Arsenal Battery**, Cavite, P.I.

# Voices from VMCAR

## Cataloging and Access Member Spotlight

by **Kait Dorsky**

Chair-Elect of Visual Materials Cataloging & Access Roundtable



The Chester Library (CL) in Chester, New Jersey, has recently revamped its Local History Department (LHD) under the helm of Debra Schiff, the inaugural Local History Librarian. With a mission to serve as a “resource for education about historical events, people, and places of Chester and its environs,” the

LHD collects and provides access to the history of this former farming town.

Over the five years since she was hired, Debra has reshaped the position, creating video oral histories, online multimedia exhibits, and digitized images from loaned materials. She devised the Memories of Chester project, collecting oral histories from local residents. Starting with the [Herman Rademacher Series](#), the result is a collection of raw video interviews, edited videos on YouTube, a digital collection of items loaned or donated, and a multimedia online exhibit.

In an interview with Debra, the Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable (VMCAR) gathered more details about how she devised and implemented this project, and the benefits of using oral histories and multimedia tools to contextualize and add detail to archival collections.

**KD: How did you become interested in the visual material archiving field?**

DS: My interest is in archives and special collections, as a whole. But between an internship at the Zimmerli Museum and an independent study at Alexander Library at Rutgers working with a collection of artists’ books, I was hooked!

**KD: Describe how the Memories of Chester project came about.**

DS: That’s a funny story. In the fall of 2014, Jack Rademacher, a third-generation Chesterite, dropped by to show me his collection of Chester postcards. I asked to



borrow them to make a digital copy for the library and an online exhibit on the CL website. He readily agreed. The exhibit was a hit, and locals kept asking to see all of the postcards. I put high-quality enlargements in a binder at the Library’s front desk for patrons to see at their leisure.

Jack’s father Herman stopped by in mid-2015 with some of his own postcards. He told me, “If you think Jack’s collection is something, you should see mine!” He was right; it was much larger, had older items, and was in good condition. He also started telling me stories, which he allowed me to record while he looked through the postcards. Having an object-centric interview was a great way to jog the 83-year-old’s memory, while giving CL a unique online exhibit.

**KD: What variety of materials comprise the Memories of Chester project?**

## VMCAR

DS: HD digital video recordings; lower-quality, MPEG video clips; digital TIFFs and JPEGs of the postcards; transcripts of the interviews; and multi-media online exhibits including the MPEGs, JPEGs, transcripts, and detailed descriptions. I also mounted an in-person exhibit in 2015 featuring photos of Herman holding the postcards, facsimiles, and exhibit text including quotes from Herman.

This year I began interviewing charter members of the now-defunct Chester Optimist Club. They have donated 9 linear feet of materials, including scrapbooks, photographs, ephemera, organizational records, and more, documenting their many fundraising activities. The artifacts and records help remind the interviewees as they talk about their experiences.

### **KD: What is the historical value of these materials and oral histories?**



DS: The postcard images in the Rademacher Family Collection document a northwestern New Jersey town over more than 100 years. The oral histories provide context to the images, as well as to other collections in the Library and other local organizations. Many Chester residents aren't natives, so it's even more important to record folks like Herman, who has lived in town for 80+ years.

The Optimist Club items document local efforts to raise funds for Chester youth. They showed how these men (and later women, who were allowed to join in the mid-1990s) sponsored the Science Fair and scholarships, held turtle races, and led many other youth-friendly efforts.

### **KD: How is this project supported?**

DS: Initially I used my own video equipment. At the end of last year, the Friends of the Library raised funds to buy the LHD its own equipment. The Library Director and I agreed that this ongoing project is of high priority, so it's now part of my job description. Two former members of the Optimist Club are on the Library Board, and are enthusiastic supporters.

### **KD: How have you chosen the topics covered in these oral histories and online exhibits?**

DS: The topics stemmed from the postcards and other photos. When an interviewee viewed a given image, a story would come right away. There are some universal experiences, like dinner at Larison's Turkey Farm, a restaurant that is now closed. When a volunteer transcribed Herman's clips on Larison, she had her own stories from a frame of reference about 20 years later. She and her sister were interviewed earlier this year for the project.

### **KD: What cataloging standards and software are you using?**

DS: CL is part of a county-wide consortium using a catalog system not suited for special collections. We don't have an IT department, and I'm a Lone Arranger working at CL three days a week, so we make do with what we have. I back up to two different external units, as well as Amazon Drive. I use the free version of Lightworks to edit videos, which is pretty sophisticated. I'm working on html finding aids that will be discoverable through Google and the library catalog.

### **KD: How do you see the Memories of Chester project continuing to grow?**

DS: The project is growing on its own steam, thankfully. I've recently interviewed two sisters who grew up in another part of Chester from Herman, about 25 years later. I also interviewed Tommie Barker, a Chester native who was one of the original women professional baseball players. I have been recording the Optimists this summer, and more participants have emerged as word of the project spreads. After the Optimist interviews,





I'll work on more online and in-person exhibits. Other than Tommie, we've had two other famous residents who would be great interviewees as well.

**KD: How do you see the Memories of Chester project, and the Local History Department, fitting into and/or supporting the larger mission of the Chester Library?**

DS: The mission of the LHD directly supports the overall CL mission. The Memories of Chester project provides a

lively and interesting way to examine the people, history, and locations of Chester. Because the people and places of Chester are the focal points, both the project and the department help further CL's mission as an educational resource for the community.

## Views Gets a Retouch

by **Deborah Rice**  
Views Editor

As you may have read in the July issue, the newsletter has had a long history and one in which it played a seminal role in disseminating information to and facilitating communication amongst its members. Now, with multiple outlets like the listserv, revamped website, and social media options filling much of these roles, we are refocusing our section publication.

I am pleased to announce the relaunch of *Views* next year as a bi-yearly magazine. It will feature more in-depth articles, conference papers, opinion pieces, essays, reviews and more. Regular departments like the Chair's Column, Life in the Shop, Books, and VMCAR will remain, alongside new offerings such as Viewpoint (members share thoughts on the magazine, section, or other VM topics) and In Focus (a compendium of VM-related "sound bites", facts, and information).

If you'd like to be a part of the editorial and design team, please indicate your interest to me ([drice@wayne.edu](mailto:drice@wayne.edu)) by December 20th. We are currently soliciting for the following:

- Reviews Editor (exhibits, conferences, workshops, symposia)
- Essays Editor (opinion, project experience, collection or format focus, or even fiction)
- Feature Articles and Conference Papers Editor
- Designer

I am excited at the prospect of growing *Views* as a rich resource with opportunities for discourse on topics, events, and ideas pertinent to our profession, as well as a creative outlet and publishing platform for VM members. Further information on submission guidelines and a publication calendar will be posted to the web site soon.

The magazine can only be successful with member participation, so I invite you to **submit your ideas and content now for the first issue: Spring 2017.**

*Let's think big!*

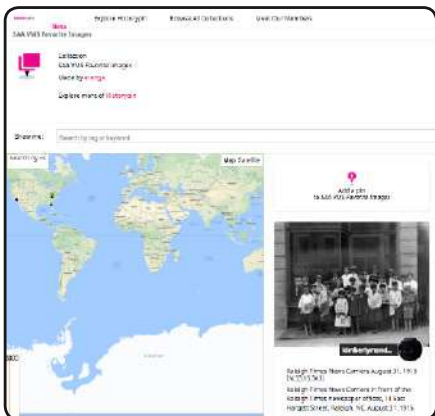
**See following page for other ways members can share content previously found within the newsletter.** Contact the VM Communications Committee ([kim.andersen@ncdcr.gov](mailto:kim.andersen@ncdcr.gov)) with questions about how to get involved or suggestions on how to maximize impact. **Share often and much!**

Do you have an announcement you'd like to share with other VM Section members?  
Write it on our Facebook page!



Are you at an interesting event or conference and can't wait to tell someone?  
Tweet it and use our hashtag #saavms!

Want others to see that amazing image you just uncovered?  
Post it to our Instagram by using #saavms!



Want to share favorite images from your collections?  
Pin it on our History Pin map!