Chair’s Corner
David Benjamin
Center for Creative Photography

I would like to report that I have hit the ground running as Chair of the Visual Materials Section, but to be honest I pretty much just hit the ground and am still trying to get back up! Despite the slow start, there are two areas I want to tackle right away.

The first is sorting out Visual Materials Section liaisons and Working Groups. At the annual meeting in Chicago, Laurie Baty steered me to back issues of VIEWS where I discovered there have been a plethora of liaisons and working groups associated with the Section over the years. Below are the results of my perusal.

With the help of the Visual Materials Section Steering Committee (VMSSC for short … if that is really any shorter!) I want to look at this list and determine if all these liaisons and working groups are still relevant and what positions need to be filled. After each liaison or working group I have included the name/names of the person/persons currently serving as a liaison or on a particular committee. If you are currently a liaison or on a working group and your name is not listed, please, please do not take this as a slight. Take it for what it is … my lack of experience, or just plain ignorance!

After the VMSSC and I have flushed out this list, I will be making a pitch for volunteers to fill vacant positions. Also, if your name is listed here but not on the VMS Leadership page on the VMS web site (saavms.org), then that means that we are awaiting verification from you for continuing in the position.

**Liaisons**

- Academy of Certified Archivists
- American Institute of Conservation (AIC) – Robert Burton
- Architectural Records Roundtable
- Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) – Tim Wisniewski
- AMIA Cataloging and Documentation
- Descriptive Standards Committee
- Listserv Coordinator – James Eason
- SAA Council Liaison – Scott Cline
- SAA Standards Committee – Marci Flynn until Fall 2011
- SAA Program Committee – Tomaro Taylor (?)
- Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable – Mary Alice Harper
The next deadline for material for the newsletter is June 15, 2012. Opinions expressed are those of the authors.

Published three times yearly by and for the Visual Materials Section.

For membership information go to www.archivists.org, or call or write:
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Tel: 312-606-0722
Toll-free: 866-772-7858
MIDWINTER 2012: COMING TO A CAPITOL NEAR YOU!*  
The Year of the RE  
March 2 – 3, 2012 in Washington, D.C.

*OK, so maybe it will be near you if:

1. You live in the DC/Metro area (and, being a former Midwesterner and now a Southwesterner, I assume that the entire East coast is the DC/Metro area!)

2. You plan on flying/driving/taking a train/hitching a ride to the DC area for the Midwinter meeting.

The theme of this year’s Visual Materials Section Midwinter Meeting is “The Year of the RE” … reinvigorating, redefining, reexamining, reprioritizing, reestablishing, reducing, relaxing, re-special-touring, re-getting-together, and lots of re-socializing! Midwinter is a great chance to provide input into the future of the Section and into what we need to do to remain a vital part of the visual materials archival community. It is also a great time to get together with your visual materials colleagues, making new acquaintances and … wait for it … reconnecting with old friends!

The Steering Committee is in the process of finalizing plans and setting an agenda for Midwinter. Up-to-date information about agendas, tours, and meeting locations will be posted periodically on the Section’s web site (http://archivesinaction.com/VMS/) and on the Visual Materials Section listserv.

Relook at your calendar and make sure you clear the dates, March 2-3, 2012, so you can attend be sure to attend. Trust me, you will regret it if you miss this year’s meeting!

With regards,
David Benjamin, Chair

Things to see and do in Washington during VM Midwinter  
Brett Carnell, Chair-elect

Washington, D.C. is packed with places to see and things to do. Below is just a selection of the many things that may be of interest to you. There is a lot of work to do during the Midwinter meeting but we encourage you to stay a few days and enjoy the VM-related activities offered in the nation’s capital. Because we’ve listed many venues featuring visual materials you can always enjoy yourself and honestly say you were working when you get home. Join a special tour of the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress for the SAA VM Section: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/current/.

AFI Silver Theater and Cultural Center  
http://www.afi.com/silver/new/

American Art Museum  
Multiplicity (Prints from the permanent collection)  
http://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/  

Anacostia Community Museum  
Artuare (Works of Steven Cummings and the work of Creative Junkfood, a multi-media production studio)  
http://anacostia.si.edu/exhibits/current_exhibitions.htm

Archives of American Art  
Memories Arrested in Space, a centennial tribute to Jackson Pollock  
http://www.aaa.si.edu/exhibitions
Things to see in D.C. during Midwinter (cont.)

Arena Stage
Red (Award winning play about Mark Rothko)
http://www.arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery / Freer Gallery of Art
Winged Spirits: Birds in Chinese Painting
http://asia.si.edu/exhibitions/future.asp

Corcoran Gallery of Art
Shadows of History: Photographs of the Civil War from the Collection of Julia J. Norrell
http://www.corcoran.org/onview/index.php

DC Environmental Film Festival
http://dc.about.com/od/artsandentertainment/a/EnvFilmFest.htm

Dumbarton Oaks
Depending on the Washington Spring weather, the gardens at Dumbarton Oaks can be spectacular
http://www.doaks.org/

Folger Shakespeare Library
Shakespeare’s Sisters: Voices of English and European Women Writes, 1500-1700
http://www.folger.edu/whatson.cfm

Hirshorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Black Box: Ali Kazma
http://hirshhorn.si.edu/exhibitions/view.asp?key=19&subkey=562

Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Check out the free Millennium Stage performances every weekday at 6:00
http://www.kennedy-center.org/

Library of Congress
Join a special tour of the Prints and Photographs Division for the SAA VM Section
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/current/

Museum of American History
http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/index.cfm

Museum of Natural History
The Beautiful Time (Congolese photographer and videographer Sammy Baloji explores copper mining in Democratic Republic of the Congo)
http://www.mnh.si.edu/exhibits/

Museum of the American Indian
Behind the Scenes: The Real Story of Quileute Wolves
http://americanindian.si.edu/subpage.cfm?subpage=exhibits&s&second=dc&third=current

National Air & Space Museum
Aircraft: The Jet as Art
http://www.si.edu/Exhibitions/Museum/2

National Archives
The Public Vaults
http://www.archives.gov/nae/visit/vaults.html

National Building Museum
Unbuilt Washington
http://www.nbm.org/exhibitions-collections/

National Museum of African American History and Culture
http://nmaahc.si.edu/section/programs

National Museum of African Art
African Mosaic: Celebrating a Decade of Collecting
http://africa.si.edu/exhibits/view.html

National Museum of Women in the Arts
Royalists to Romantics: Women Artists from the Louvre, Versailles and Other French National Collections
http://www.nmwa.org/exhibition/previews.asp

National Portrait Gallery
The Black List: Photographs by Timothy Greenfield Sanders
Portraiture Now: Asian American Portraits of Encounter
http://www.npg.si.edu/exhibit/current.html

Phillips Collection
Snapshots: Painters and Photography, Bonnard to Vuillard
http://www.phillipscollection.org/exhibitions/upcoming/index.aspx

The Renwick Gallery
Something of Splendor: Decorative Arts from the White House
http://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/archive/2011/splendor/

The Textile Museum
Dragons, Nagas, and Creatures of the Deep
http://www.textilemuseum.org/exhibitions/upcoming.htm

Washington DC Independent Film Festival
http://dc.about.com/od/filmfestivals/a/DCIFF.htm
Our Beloved Friend: 
Life in a Newspaper Photographic Morgue

By Deirdre A. Scaggs
Associate Dean, Special Collections, 
University of Kentucky Libraries

When I first relocated to Lexington, Kentucky I moved into a downtown apartment and spent a great deal of time walking around to explore my new city, among the Victorian architecture, the parks, the old Courthouse and finally into what was once the heart of downtown Lexington. Near the corner of Main and Limestone, I crossed over a bronze plaque. It caught my eye even though it was fairly small—there was a dog in the center of it, with some text about “our beloved friend.” I assumed that this must have been a memorial to someone’s favorite pet, perhaps a wealthier person who once lived in the downtown area. Honestly, I did not think much about it again until months later.

During this time, I had been hired as a Project Archivist to coordinate the preservation and access project for the Lexington Herald-Leader photographic morgue; a collection of over one million negatives from 1939-1990 documenting 20th-century life in central Kentucky and beyond.

Probably a year later or more, quite by chance, I ran across a photo of a somewhat dirty looking dog getting some food from a downtown proprietor in 1950. I thought it was sweet and a little odd that a photo of a seemingly stray dog would make the news, but photojournalism and newspaper content was very different in the mid-20th century, so I accepted it.

Figure 1. Robert Arthur, Del-Tor Clinic attendant, holds Smiley Pete as the dog looks at his mate Patsy and their newborn puppies. February 18, 1952.

Figure 2. Smiley Pete getting his daily handout of dog food from Tommy Taylor, of the Carter Supply Company. October 2, 1950.
Time passed and then the little dog reappeared. This time he was dressed for Christmas and in the news again. He was a much cleaner, very happy looking dog with a grin from one dog ear to the other. I was forced to think about this chronic news maker since it was apparent that he was becoming a habit. I found the corresponding newspaper clipping and actually read the caption this time.

Smiley Pete—this was the “beloved friend” memorialized by the bronze plaque that I had seen so many months before in downtown Lexington. I searched the photographic database, did a little internet searching, and found a great deal of information on “Lexington’s downtown dog.”

According to an August 10, 1984 article in the *Lexington Herald-Leader*:

He [Smiley Pete] usually had breakfast (hamburger and waffles) at Brandy’s Kitchen at Main and Lime. Then he would wander out to the University of Kentucky campus, where he often sat in on classes, mooching tidbits along the way. ... Sometimes you could see him having a bowl of draft beer at Elliston’s Turf Bar. And he was always good for two or three Hershey bars a day at Paritz’s Short & Lime Liquor Store. ... At 4 p.m. each day, he showed up at Carter’s Supply on West Short Street for his regular dog biscuit and bowl of water. Each evening he dropped by the Opera House--in those days, a third-run movie theater--for handouts of popcorn and candy.

Stories of Smiley Pete helped me to imagine how different Lexington was in the 1950s. How different America was then in fact. The post-war era brought a bustling downtown life to Lexington. Spirits were high. A stray dog was loved and adored by an entire city. Some speculate that Smiley Pete’s death marked the end of Lexington’s life as a town and marked its beginning as a city. A city soon to be affected by highways and suburban sprawl.

Figure 3. Smiley Pete, the dog that hangs around Main and Limestone streets, in holiday attire. December 8, 1950
Finding stories about Lexington’s downtown dog never ceased to make me smile. When the fatigue of data entry had set in, or a student assistant failed to make it to work, or when the computer crashed, it was the little moments and stories like this one that remind me of why I love being an archivist. Smiley Pete went on to have many downtown adventures.

Smiley Pete may have caused a little trouble when he roamed the downtown streets but he made friends everywhere. He drank beer, ate chocolate, got regular baths, and assisted with civic events. He even helped with downtown pest control. One day, I ran across another plea in the newspaper asking downtown residents to stop feeding Smiley Pete chocolate because it was bad for his health.

Figure 4. Smiley Pete, Lexington’s favorite dog-about-town, is shown with Red Cross band on his side as Paul Wisegarver makes contribution to Red Cross fund. March 1, 1956.

Figure 5. Smiley Pete standing in the front window of Hart Drug Store after being locked in the store. February 14, 1954.

Figure 6. Smiley Pete bags opossum. June, 1955.
I am in awe that a stray dog could have so great an impact on a community. Smiley Pete was a part of the 1950s collective memory and the community of downtown Lexington. Today there is a publishing company in Lexington called Smiley Pete. As recently as 2007, a Smiley Pete Award was given annually by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to recognize an individual “who makes others enjoy being downtown.” After he died in June of 1957 at approximately 14 years of age, Smiley Pete was buried under a sycamore tree at 904 North Broadway. His gravestone says: “Smiley Pete—A Friend to All and a Friend of All.”
Timely and Timeless: New Comic Art Acquisitions at the Library of Congress through March 10, 2012

Cynthia Wayne
Exhibition Director, Interpretive Programs Office
Library of Congress

Political and social satire, comic-strip and comic-book drawings, New Yorker magazine illustrations and graphic narratives—original cartoon art that was added to the Library of Congress collections during the past decade—will be featured in a new exhibition, *Timely and Timeless: New Comic Art Acquisitions*.

The exhibition opened September 15, 2011, in the changing-exhibit space of the Graphic Arts Galleries on the ground level of the Library’s Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First St. S.E., Washington, D.C. The exhibition closes on March 10, 2012. The galleries are open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Admission is free.

*Timely and Timeless* celebrates and demonstrates the multi-faceted development and impressive growth of the comic art collections at the Library of Congress. The 48 works on display are grouped primarily by genre, including editorial cartoons, caricatures, comic strips, cover art and humor cartoons, comic-book drawings and graphic narratives. Among the cartoonists represented are historical masters James Gillray and Honoré Daumier, as well as modern and contemporary creators such as Jazz Age cartoonist John Held, Jr.; African American artist Oliver Wendell Harrington; *New Yorker* cartoonists Charles Addams and Roz Chast; and comic-strip creators Bill Griffith and Aaron McGruder.

John Held, Jr. [Female vocalist flanked by musicians], ca. 1927. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (024.00.00)
© Estate of John Held, Jr. Courtesy of Illustration House, Inc.

Honoré Daumier. Emotions Parisiennes. L’or est une chimère—pour ceux qui n’ont pas le sou, ca. 1839. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (003.00.00)
The selection in this exhibition also responds to recent trends in cartooning, which include growth in mainstream and alternative comic-book industries and the related, rapidly rising importance of graphic novels or narratives, as represented by the work of Steve Ditko, co-creator of Spider-Man, and graphic novelist Eric Drooker.

The title of the exhibition, *Timely and Timeless*, refers to the nature of comic art. Comic art relates closely to the times that give rise to it—in terms of content, aesthetic sensibility and conceptualization. Timeliness is, in fact, a defining feature of much comic art, which often comments on current events. Timeless reflections of the human condition and society are also represented in the drawings and prints selected for this exhibition. The messages and artistic expression embodied in these creations transcend the periods in which they were created.
The development of the Library’s comic-art holdings can be attributed to the support of the Swann Foundation for Caricature and Cartoon, which was established to encourage appreciation for the dynamic and evolving field of cartoon and illustration arts; to special funds; and to the generosity of numerous donors, many of them artists who have given original work. The breadth of the selection presented in *Timely and Timeless* provides an opportunity to explore and experience the richness of these collections.

The Library’s Prints and Photographs Division holds the largest-known collection of American political prints, the finest assemblage of British satirical prints outside Great Britain, and holdings of original drawings by generations of America’s best cartoonists and illustrators. Extensive runs of rare satirical and comic journals from Europe and the United States can also be found in the division. In addition, the division holds photographs, posters, historical prints, fine-art prints and architectural and engineering designs.

![Image of a comic page](image-url)
NEW in Print

Liz Ruth-Abramian
Los Angeles Maritime Museum


NEW in Print (cont.)


Photography Exhibitions
Shawn Waldron
Condé Nast Publications

Selections from Steven Perloff’s online newsletter The Photography Collector, plus some personal favorites

Ansel Adams: The View from Here at the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona  www.creativephotography.org.

Lyonel Feininger: Photographs, 1928–1939 (through March 11) and Images of the Artist (through February 12) at the J. Paul Getty Museum  www.getty.edu.

Francesca Woodman (through February 20) at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  www.sfmoma.org.


Harry Callahan at 100 at the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC  www.nga.gov.


Annie Leibovitz: Pilgrimage (January 20 – May 20) at the Smithsonian American Art Museum  www.americanart.si.edu/exhibitions.


Curtis Wehrfritz: Fluidrive—Modern Daguerreotypes (January 27 – April 22) and Douglas Kirkland: Retrospective—Fifty Years of Photography (through February 19) at the Southeast Museum of Photography Daytona Beach, Florida  www.smponline.org.

Sound and Vision: Monumental Rock & Roll Photography (through April 1) at Columbus Museum, Columbus, Ohio  www.columbusmuseum.com.

August Sander: Face of Our Time (through April 22) at the Nevada Museum of Art, Reno  www.nevadaart.org.


The Unseen Eye: Photographs from the W. M. Hunt Collection (through February 19) at the George Eastman House, Rochester  www.eastmanhouse.org.


19th Century French Photographs at the Art Gallery of Alberta, 2 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  www.youraga.ca.

Diane Arbus (through February 5) and Berenice Abbott and Ai Weiwei: Entrelacs (February 21 – April 29) at the Jeu de Paume, Paris  www.jeudepaume.org.

Chair-elect’s Column

Brett Carnell
Acting Head, Technical Services Section
Prints and Photographs Division
Library of Congress

It’s hard to believe that five months have passed since the annual meeting in Chicago. I am still cogitating on the many ideas that were explored at the meeting and it’s now time to look at new ideas for Midwinter. I goad each and every one of you to actively think about how the Section can more effectively meet your needs and flood Chair David with your ideas. It is a great diversity of viewpoints that make for lively discussions at the Midwinter meeting.

I also encourage you to actively participate in the Section by attending Midwinter in my home base, Washington, D.C., and to plan a little extra time to take in the multitude of great exhibitions featuring visual materials that the cultural institutions of your nation’s capital have created exclusively for your benefit (as well as for the “billions” of tourists that flood the fair city later in March).

Attending the Midwinter is a great way to get better acquainted with others in our profession in an environment more intimate than the annual meeting. The meeting facilitates communication and the smaller venue amplifies the voices of those who attend. I believe one of the primary purposes of the Section is to promote communication among archivists with an interest in visual materials and the Midwinter is a great way to communicate directly with your peers. However, if you can’t see your way clear to attend Midwinter, the Section’s Communications Working Group is busy enhancing our on-line communication tools. Anne Salsich has taken the editorial reins of VIEWS and, building on the extraordinary work of past editors, is bringing her personal touch to the all-electronic newsletter with an emphasis on featuring more images, something that new technologies allow. Lisa Snider continues to build on the work of past web-masters, using new web tools, the latest design concepts and her own sense of style to insure that the Section has a knockout Web presence. These communications tools, along with an active listserv, are critical to an efficient functioning of the Section and I know I will appreciate the efforts of David Benjamin and the Communications Working Group to enhance our communication channels when I rely on them as Chair next year.
Parting Shots
Tim Hawkins
VM Communications Director

I’d like to extend a special thank you to Anne Salsich and Lisa Snider, for managing the reins at VIEWS and with the web site during a bit of a down period for me. Their contributions to the VM Section in the past year have been exceptional.

This time around I’ll try to be brief, honest and to the point. Since the SAA Annual Meeting last August there’s been a significant amount of chatter among the current and past leaders of the VM Section. Not much of this has appeared in regular channels that would be picked up by the membership at large. I perceive that as unfortunate and a bit undemocratic, so I’ll make an effort in the next few months to broaden the communications channels.

Most of this chatter has related to the ways that the VM Section has changed over the years, to activities that may have been more vibrant in the past, to activities that we should be conducting that are not occurring, or to general discussions about the relevance of the section in a changing technological world, and about the nature of our identity as a section.

Tackling that last issue first, we seem to have a bit of an identity crisis at the moment. I think that many, both inside and outside the section, perceive us as a camera club – archivists who are only interested in photographs. With our work on the web site, and with Views, we’re trying to expand that identity into the wider world of visual materials that is so much broader. I also sense that with the expanding possibilities of technology maybe we yearn to be more than just archivists – getting out into those glamorous social media worlds of YouTube, Facebook, Flickr and whatever else is on the horizon. I certainly encourage that, but not at the expense of losing our heritage.

I’d like to embrace the suggestions and criticisms that I’ve been hearing, and call upon the current and past leaders to help us rediscover the roots of our identity, while also calling upon newer members to help us adapt our identity to a changing world. My suggestion is to begin with the basics, by going back to the things we’ve done well in the past:

1. Publications. We’ve prided ourselves for many years on the quality of VIEWS. The newsletter staff is working to keep VIEWS in that stature while the world of publishing rapidly evolves. The web site will become the source for time-sensitive news and announcements, to help us to communicate efficiently to the membership as we have in the past. Most importantly though, I call upon past leaders to step up and develop the scholarly publications that the section should be producing to be a leader in the professional sphere of visual materials archives.

2. Education: We’ve done well in supporting workshops, primarily at beginning to intermediate levels. We should continue this while also encouraging the development of advanced workshops. Also, with the realities of the economy and our budgets it would benefit the membership to develop online webinars that would foster more inclusive participation. In particular, I call upon a past VM leader to develop a webinar dealing with the ever prominent subject of born-digital photographs.

3. Management: If you look at past issues of VIEWS, as many of us in the leadership have been doing, you’ll find that VM was once a much more robust organization. Liaisons have lapsed, working groups have disappeared, VM sessions at the annual meetings have suffered, some events have languished, and leadership has waxed and waned. In my view it’s fair to say that the success of VM in the past has hinged on the heroic efforts of just a few leaders. With all of our positions being volunteer staff, some elected and some appointed, it’s difficult to imagine a period
Editor’s Two Cents
Anne Cuyler Salsich

As the new Visual Materials Section web site takes a more active position as a nimble communications vehicle for the section, VIEWS will carry content better suited to the slower pace of production and print-style layout for content such as brief articles and image-driven essays. With this issue I assumed Tim Hawkins’ former role as VIEWS editor, freeing him to coordinate content on the web site and in the newsletter, and to look at the larger picture of communications for the section in general.

Rather abruptly I needed to learn InDesign for layout, and collected the various pieces that make up the content of VIEWS for this issue. I will continue to work with Tim in serving section members by managing the logistics of calling for submissions and working with authors, and will strive to publish the newsletter on a regular schedule.

My first contribution in an editorial capacity was the initiation of Life in the Shop, now a regular photo-essay feature to highlight the nature of work with visual materials and to provide members with a venue for introducing themselves and their perspectives. In at least one essay per issue, VIEWS now publishes visual material as content in primary position relative to text—something other professional archival publications do not. I hope our example may have a positive effect on the way visual materials are treated in such literature, including the journal of our parent organization.

After reading Tim’s Parting Shots, I want to add that my job as an archivist at Oberlin has entailed more time as a digital projects manager in the last two years, and, increasingly, a larger role as a digital humanist. With these roles comes the need to attend colloquia and seminars in those directions, forcing me to pass on attending an SAA conference, at least for this year. I suspect others of you may find yourselves in a similar situation. I wonder whether digital arts, humanities, and sciences sessions (as opposed to sessions on “digital projects”) will need to become part of the SAA conference agendas to meet this growing field in which archivists have a critical role. I’ll be speaking on that topic at this year’s Digital Humanities Summer Institute in Victoria, B.C.