

VIEWS: *The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section* Society of American Archivists

Volume 21, Number 3

July 2007

SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE

From the Editor:

Dear friends and colleagues – The annual conference will be here soon and many of us will have a chance to get together and enjoy the many visual charms of late summer in Chicago. The schedule is crowded with interesting programs, many of interest to visual materials specialists. For me just being in the same city with all that great architecture and the Art Institute is pretty stimulating! The Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable has its annual meeting on Wednesday evening, August 29th, from 6 to 8 p.m. and the Visual Materials Section annual meeting is on Friday, August 31st, from 12 to 2 p.m. I hope to see many of you there.

This issue of Views contains candidate statements from our two nominees for in-coming chair for the VM Section. On-line voting is now available by going to

<http://poll.icommons.harvard.edu/poll/taker/pollTakerOpen.jsp?poll=1-4278-27144>

We will also have paper ballots available at the meeting for those unable to access the online option. Next year the voting will be entirely online.

And speaking of the **Art Institute** we wanted to call to your attention their Target Free Summer Evenings which continue through August 31st giving us a chance to enjoy some time away from the “maddening crowd” as my friend used to say.

They have Music in the Garden on Thursday and Friday nights as well as Gallery tours and family events. Check the schedule on their website at http://www.artic.edu/aic/visitor_info/summerhours.html.

For the fans of Alexander Calder the Museum of Contemporary Art will be opening an exhibit called “Alexander Calder in Focus” in late July. The MCA will also be showing “Record Times: 40 Years from the MCA Archive” from August 11 – October 21, 2007. According to their website this sounds like something right up our collective street with displays featuring artist’s correspondence, photographic documentation, catalogues, models, and exhibition materials. For more information see their website at:

http://www.mcachicago.org/exhibitions/exh_detail.php?id=175



Photo by User:Pinotgris 2007

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Beth Bilderback

Visual Materials was the first section I joined when I became an SAA member as a graduate student. I have been the Section liaison with the Architectural Records Roundtable since 1997 and a regular contributor to Views. The VM Section meeting and dinner are the parts of the SAA annual meeting that bring me back every year: meeting new people, seeing friends, and always learning something in the process. The mid-winter meetings are now an important part of my calendar for the same reasons. I encourage my students to join VM not only because it is one of the most active sections in SAA, but also because they can meet fascinating and supportive people who can help them grow in their professional development.

Over the years I have been increasingly impressed with the work of the Section. I believe the mid-winter meetings allow the Section to really plan and execute initiatives to benefit Section members and the archival profession as a whole. These meetings provide time to thoroughly discuss advanced workshop proposals and ideas for future session proposals as well as ideas for outreach to archivists who cannot attend SAA meetings. They are a way also for members to become more involved in the Section's activities, thus making the Section a vital part of SAA. The book fair provides a grand opportunity for members to showcase the work of their institution or their personal work, and I would like to see this continue. The Section website has the potential to become a valuable source of information to archivists who have visual materials in their collections as well as to laypersons wanting to preserve their materials.

Today, as the Visual Materials Archivist for the South Caroliniana Library at the University of South Carolina, I am confronted on a daily basis with the care of a variety of visuals formats and the access to these collections: photographs and born-digital images, architectural records (both paper and digital,) and works of art on paper. The digital age has caught us all, and we need to learn together how to preserve, care for, and make accessible these often non-tangible visual materials. I believe the VM Section can take an active role in making digital preservation relevant to visual materials. I also see a need to push for better ways of understanding and caring for negatives and visual ephemera in our collections. As chair, I would welcome the opportunity to continue the work of the Section and to see it move forward in ways that benefit the archival community.

Stephen Cohen

The Visual Materials Section leadership made great strides in developing the section into a community of professionals who can freely and openly share ideas. The success of the mid-winter meetings of the last few years has proven this to me. Since becoming an active member four years ago, I have found this group to be the one SAA group that not only pursues professional endeavors in the form of workshops, guest speakers, and reference tools, but also succeeds in building real relationships among the members. I find this aspect unique to the VM Section; it is unlike any other group under the SAA umbrella.

As a records manager, one of my personal/professional goals is to educate colleagues and clients that records come in all formats and media, and that graphical information is as valuable and important as textual information. As an archivist, I maintain the same goal: to treat all records equally. Records are records, whether they are letters, electronic databases, photographs, contracts, architectural plans, medical forms, models, artifacts, or any other type of human-made record. There are instances when the best way to express an idea is not with words but with an image/object. It is our duty to make sure that the visual materials in our repositories are represented in a manner that respects the quality of information they contain, and to make that record accessible.

For too long, visual materials were (and in some places still are) treated as unwanted stepchildren. Archivists steeped in the written record often do not know what to do with visual materials, especially when they physically do not fit neatly in a letter sized folder or box. Consequently, a wealth of historical records has had limited access. Through efforts undertaken by the VM Section, we can continue to educate our colleagues on the value of visual materials.

If elected Section chair, I will do my best to involve more of our membership. To this end, I am a strong supporter of developing local VM social/professional gatherings, and encouraging non-visual material archivists to embrace (or at least consider) visual materials as archival records equal to the written word. In this way, we can further our goals within the group as well as to the broader archival community.

I am the Document Controls Manager for Marnell Corrao Associates, an architecture-construction firm in Las Vegas where I am developing a records retention program, assisting in the implementation of a content management system, and leading efforts to improve the overall organization and management of information; information that comes in almost every form and format – text, images, drawings, models with paper, electronic, plastic/wood supports. I earned a MLIS from the University of Texas at Austin (1998) and a BFA from the University of Connecticut in 1993 (photography and printmaking).



Poll Response Form

SAA Visual Materials Section 2007 Election Ballot

Your SAA member number is required for your vote to be counted.

SAA Member Number _____

Vote for ONE OF THE FOLLOWING to be the Visual Materials Section Chair-elect:

Chose ONE

- Beth Bilderback _____
- _____
- Stephen Cohen _____
- _____
- Write in candidate _____

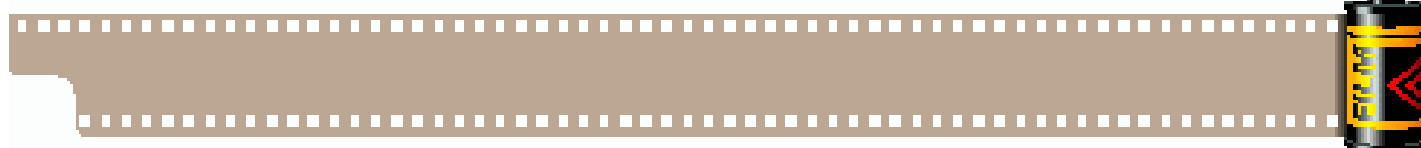


Visual Materials Section

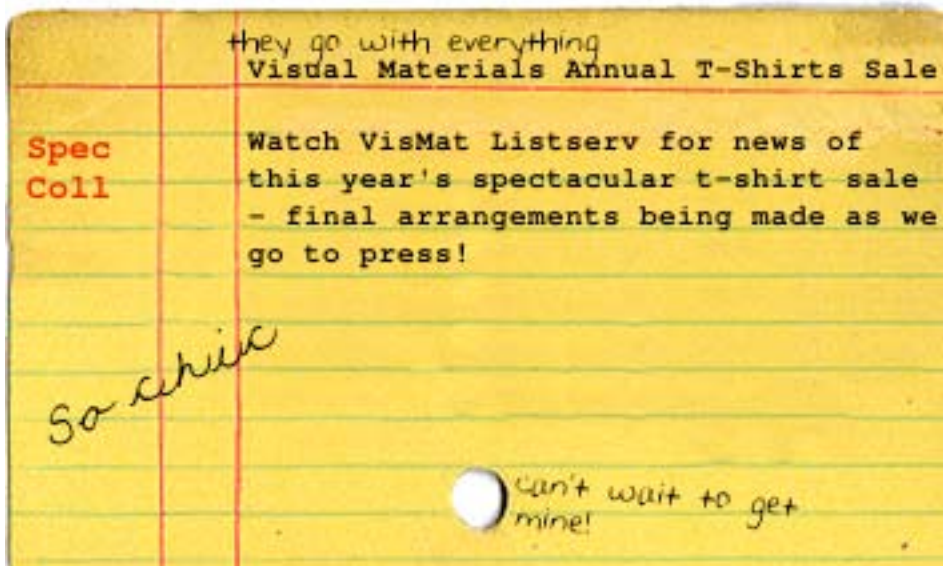
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**T-SHIRTS
ARE
COMING!**



Visual Materials Section Officers 2006-2007

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akozbial@gmail.com

Deirdre A. Scaggs (Chair-Elect)

deirdre@uky.edu

James Eason (Immediate Past-Chair)

jeason@library.berkeley.edu

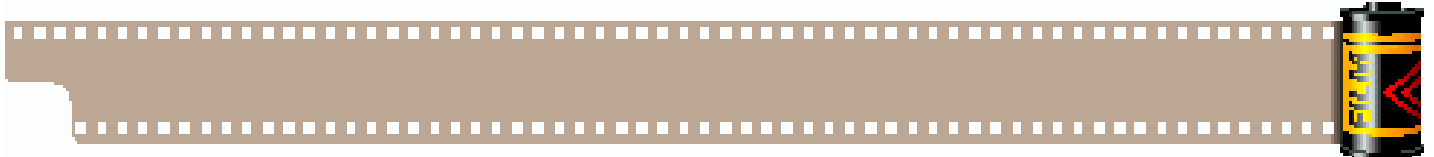
For a complete list including Committee Chairs and Liaisons go to the VM Section web site at:

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/SAA/leaders.html>

Views: The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists is published three times a year by and for the Visual Materials Section. For membership information, call or write the Society of American Archivists, 527 S. Wells St., 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607, (312) 922-0140.

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SEE YOU IN CHICAGO

**AUGUST 29 -
SEPTEMBER 1, 2007**