During the last weekend of February 2015, archivists congregated physically and virtually in south-central Connecticut for the midwinter meeting of the Visual Materials Section. Over two days, attendees participated in focused conversations about graphic resources administered in museums, libraries, and archival repositories, as well as the opportunities for the Section to support this work. The following recaps the proceedings of the meeting, including tours and the business of the Section.

Tours Galore

The group initially visited the Ireland’s Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut during the morning of Friday, February 27. The museum contains a large collection of art related to the Great Famine, a period of mass starvation, disease, and emigration in Ireland between 1845 and 1852. Executive Director Grace Brady shared a recently inaugurated digital database and led a tour of the gallery.

In the afternoon, the group visited the Yale University campus in New Haven and went to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. We met with George Miles, the William Robertson Coe Curator of the Yale Collection of Western Americana, and Kevin Repp, Curator of Modern European Books and Manuscripts, who discussed their strategies related to developing and enabling access to visually rich collections. Dr. Repp also provided background for his exhibition, “Fun on the Titanic: Underground Art and the East German State,” which explores diverse cultural products created by East German poets, musicians, and artists during the 1980s.

The group then visited Manuscripts and Archives in the Sterling Memorial Library at Yale for a behind-the-scenes tour and conversation with Head of Public Services Bill Landis and Head of Arrangement and Description Mary Caldera. This included discussing...
Chair’s Corner (cont.)

the prevalence of visual materials across the repository’s collections, including its extensive holdings of architectural records. The group then briefly toured the recently renovated nave of the Sterling Memorial Library, as well as Bass Library, before enjoying a dinner of New Haven-style pizza. 

Section Business

Initially, we surveyed the recent annual report for the Section. It became clear that we have a number of vacant or undocumented liaisons to organizations. Liaisons report on events and trends related to visual materials from these groups to Section membership via the listservs or in the Views newsletter. According to the most recent records, liaisons include the following:

- Architectural Records Roundtable: Dana Lamparello
- Association of Moving Image Archivists Liaisons: David E. Haberstich and Lance Watsky (for the AMIA Cataloging and Documentation Committee)
- International Council on Archives, Photographic and Audiovisual Archives Group: Stephen J. Fletcher
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference: Hillary S. Kativa and Dara A. Baker
- Society for Photographic Education: Paula Jeannet Mangiafico
- SAA Visual Materials, Cataloging and Access Roundtable: Cathy Martyniak
- Society of California Archivists: Sue Tyson

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: Society of American Archivists 17 North State St., Suite 1425 Chicago, IL 60602-3315 Tel: 312-606-0722

Chair: Matthew Daniel Mason, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University
Chair-elect: Paula Jeannet Mangiafico
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University
Immediate Past Chair: David Haberstich, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian

Steering Committee Members-at-large: Kim Andersen, Irlanda Jacinto, Mary Samouelian

Continued on page 3
Chair’s Corner (cont.)

Vacancies for liaison positions (or undocumented incumbents) include the Academy of Certified Archivists, American Institute of Conservation, and SAA Standards Committee. If members are interested in serving as a liaison for any of these groups or another, please contact me <matthew.mason@yale.edu>. These positions are especially good for students and new professionals to gain experience.

Participants reviewed the distribution of the last three-year plan to membership via the official Section listserv <vms@forums.archivists.org> in early August 2014. We agreed that this year’s three-year plan requires greater transparency. According to our current by-laws, Section membership does not explicitly endorse or disapprove three-year plans. Nevertheless, the steering committee will draft a by-law change to allow the Section membership to comment and vote on future three-year plans.

The group examined the results from the recent survey of Section members in autumn 2014, which revealed that many students and early professionals sought mentoring and support. The Section should encourage participation of diverse voices from its ranks by directly inviting new members to serve on working groups and as liaisons, as well as encourage participatory conversations in meetings.

Participants discussed the communication mechanisms used by the Section. This included recognizing work done by outgoing Communications Coordinator Tim Hawkins. Foremost, this vacant position requires an incumbent. This position manages the varied communication activities of the Section to deliver consistent announcements and chairs the Communications Working Group, which includes the webmaster, newsletter editors, and social media managers. In March 2015, members of the steering committee will identify a successful candidate. If members are interested in serving as Communications Coordinator, please contact me <matthew.mason@yale.edu> and look for a call for candidates on the listservs.

Related to Section communications, the recent survey of membership identified dissatisfaction with the Section website. An initial task for the newly appointed Communications Coordinator is identifying a webmaster to fill the current vacancy and then work with members of the Communications Working Group and others to review the website.

After a lunch of scrumptious vegetable soup, prepared by Paula Jeannet Mangiafico, the participants received a status report from the Education Committee, chaired by Ricky Punzalan, with members Gina Rappaport, Michelle Caswell, and Irlanda Jacinto. In early 2013, then-Chair Brett Carnell charged the group to survey the training landscape for archivists related to visual materials, identify gaps, and recommend ways to meet the needs of the profession. Thus far, the committee has interviewed a dozen archivists. Overall, they found that most interviewees learned skills on the job rather than in their degree programs. Additionally, many desired core competencies, such as greater knowledge of the history of photography and photographic technology, as well as expertise in data management, digital projects management, intellectual property, preservation, and visual literacy.

The Education Committee and meeting participants feel that the Section should advocate for rigorous visual materials-related training to archival educators. To this end, Ricky plans to host a breakout session to discuss visual materials education during the Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI) meeting at the University of Maryland, July 13-17, 2015, which brings together archival educators. Ricky also asks Section members to email him <punzalan@umd.edu> with names of educators and their institutional affiliation with strengths in photographic or visual materials archival education.

The participants then shifted the conversation to the upcoming annual meeting in Cleveland, Ohio. Brett Carnell discussed his experiences serving on the SAA Program Committee. Although unable to provide specific details...
Chair’s Corner (cont.)

about individual paper and panel proposals, he did report that successful submissions were well-written, possessed diverse groups of panelists, and appealed to broad audiences. Brett suggested that papers geared specifically to audiences of visual materials archivists may best serve as content for the annual Section meetings.

In her role as coordinator for local arrangements for the annual meeting, Member-at-large Irlanda Jacinto reported that the Section dinner will take place at the Great Lakes Brewery <www.greatlakesbrewing.com>. Anne Salsich also described her work as part of SAA's Host Committee, which arranges institutional and themed tours, as well as compiling lists of cultural repositories, restaurants, taverns, and other places of interest. If you have a favorite site in Cleveland, please share it with your colleagues via the listservs.

For the Section meeting in Cleveland, the participants brainstormed possibilities for its content and hit on the idea of a panel of diverse image-makers, such as printers, photographers, cartographers, and other visual artists, with breakout sessions with these creators about the challenges they face in their work and preserving it. If you know of an image-maker in the greater Cleveland area who may like to participate, please contact me <matthew.mason@yale.edu>.

The meeting ended with a self-evaluation. Midwinter meetings often prove logistically burdensome, especially with constantly changing winter weather for travelers, as well as financially difficult with diminished or nonexistent travel budgets. Onsite and teleconferencing participants both enjoyed the online participation. The future for the midwinter meeting may rest entirely in online get-togethers.

After concluding the meeting, onsite participants enjoyed a hearty pasta meal, good drink, and conversation well into the evening. I appreciate the time and effort of all those able to participate in the tours and meeting. I look forward to completing our initiatives discussed during the meeting to ensure that the Visual Materials Section maintains its advocacy for visual collections and its membership.

Grace Brady, Executive Director of the Ireland's Great Hunger Museum, leads discussion of the museum's collection.
CLEVELAND: MY PART OF TOWN

Anne Cuyler Salsich, Co-editor
SAA Host Committee Member
Associate Archivist, Oberlin College Archives

In the current Archival Outlook you will see an article by our Host Committee co-chairs on Greater Cleveland’s cultural and recreational riches that await you during the 2015 SAA Annual Meeting. So I’m going to focus on the adjacent areas of University Circle and Uptown, within four miles of the highly ethnically diverse inner-ring suburb of Cleveland Heights where we live. The Circle/Uptown area is only seven miles and an easy bus ride from the meeting site at the Convention Center. If you want an immersive experience in a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly museum and university district with great restaurants (ranging from gourmet to Chipotle) during the meeting, you might want to stay in the new Courtyard Marriott or the Hilton Tudor Arms near University Circle.

Architecturally, University Circle and Uptown represent historic, modernist and postmodern impulses, and a new version of urban redevelopment founded on community collaboration. A pre-Civil War brick house saved from demolition, an assortment of structures from the 20th

East facade, Cleveland Museum of Art’s original building and new additions.
Credit: Gary D. Sampson
Continued on p. 6
century, the dramatic Museum of Contemporary Art (rises 60 feet from a hexagonal base to a square top) by London architect Farvid Moussavi (2012), and Case University’s Peter B. Lewis Center by Frank Gehry (2002) and a new student center by Ralph Johnson (2014) are steps away from each other.

The Cleveland Museum of Art, one of the top five museums in the world, just completed an ambitious renovation and addition project by Rafael Viñoly begun in 2002. The project restored and upgraded the original 1916 museum, and incorporated the 1970 addition by Marcel Breuer and Hamilton Smith into a new conceptual design that expanded the museum’s gallery and public spaces with bold new wings and a huge atrium. With free admission, a restaurant and cafe, and evening hours until 9 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays, the art museum is a must-see. My partner on the Tours Subcommittee, Leslie Cade, is CMA’s archivist.

While most people are aware of Cleveland’s industrial, polluted past, far fewer know that its orchestra has always been and continues to be rated in the top ten in the world. When we moved here in 1999, the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra’s Severance Hall on University Circle was near the end of a project to strip away 60s modernist trappings and restore the Hall to its glittering Art Deco glory. We go as often as we can to performances in the Hall and at the Blossom Music Center’s outdoor amphitheater in the summer. Classical music under the stars...
Cleveland: My Part of Town (cont.)

is great fun with a packed supper with wine or food from one of the vendors with hundreds of others on blankets on the sloped lawn. During the Annual Meeting, the orchestra is performing on Saturday night, August 22. The program features a guest cello soloist, Mark Kosower, for an evening of Bach, Haydn and Mozart.

Even less well-known by those who don't live here is that Cleveland has become a magnet for artists and musicians, and the city is experiencing a cultural renaissance. They come here for the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA), the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), and Case University, all in University Circle/Uptown. Part of the draw is that Cleveland is so affordable. Artists have been creating studios and homes in former industrial buildings in areas with few residents near downtown, and galleries have sprouted up in similarly cheap quarters.

Uptown is a new urban redevelopment project bordering University Circle along Euclid Avenue near MOCA, where new multi-use buildings house condos, apartments, student housing, restaurants, bars, a bookstore, and a small grocery store that create a dramatically more attractive and safe area for everyone. This project, completed last year, was a collaborative civic effort by Case University, University Circle Incorporated and other players. Uptown is a finalist for the 2015 Rudy Bruner award, which honors transformative urban places and celebrates their benefits to the economic, social and physical fabric of America's cities.

Besides the art museums and the orchestra, family-friendly attractions at University Circle include the Cleveland Botanical Garden, the Museum of Natural History, and the Western Reserve Historical Society and Crawford Auto Museum that all hug the Oval, the green space that defines the University Circle area. Events that pull the community together are the Art Museum's annual Parade the Circle and the Winter Lights Lantern Procession, the Cleveland Botanical Garden's flower shows and exhibits, and Wade Oval Wednesdays, summer evenings of live music, food tents and activities for kids.

The Cleveland Institute of Art will, by the time of the Annual Meeting, have moved into its new building that adjoins the school's existing “factory,” a former Ford factory and car showroom on Euclid Avenue. The new building will replace the Institute's main building, art gallery and auditorium that stood on the Oval. CIA seized the opportunity to create space suited to educate 21st-century art students, with a new art gallery and a better theater for its Cinemathéque, a year-round repertory film program and a local treasure. John Ewing, Cinemathéque Director and Curator of Film at the Cleveland Museum of Art, is a treasure himself, named a Chevalier (Knight) in the Order of Arts and Letters of the Republic of France in 2011 for his many years of “promoting culture” at both institutions. If you're looking for evening entertainment, be sure to check out what the Cinemathéque is showing while you're here. I've urged John to project a restored film from 35mm in their new theater just for you!
The Image Permanence Institute (IPI) is university-based laboratory devoted to preservation research and sustainable practice of images and cultural property. Founded in 1985, IPI is sponsored by the Rochester Institute of Technology and the Society for Imaging Science and Technology with the mission to provide information, consulting services and practical tools for image preservation technology to libraries, archives and museums world-wide.

As a educational resource for visual material access, the Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable (VMCAR) wanted to interview some of the forces behind the IPI and highlight their project and efforts.

Interviewees are Alice Carver-Kubik (ACK), Photographic Research Scientist at IPI and Adrienne Evans (AE), a Photograph Research Intern for IPI's Graphics Atlas project, graphicsatlas.org.

SE: Describe how you became interested in the visual material preservation field.

ACK: Starting out as a photography and art history major as an undergraduate, I found my calling in collections care through various internships and my first job out of college. These experiences encouraged me to earn my Masters in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management from Ryerson University. In 2012 I joined IPI to lead the Graphics Atlas project.

AE: I completed an internship at the University of South Dakota's Archives and Special Collections during my undergrad and found that processing, preserving, and providing public access to visual materials was a blast. After graduating from UW Madison's SLIS program, I got an internship at IPI to use my appreciation for sharing image production processes.

SE: Do you believe that knowing visual material processes can help institutions with preservation?

ACK: Absolutely. Knowing processes and materials is essential to proper preservation. Each process has its own preservation needs and challenges. Understanding processes and materials will help professionals know what housing materials are best for each object, how best to handle objects, the light sensitivity of different processes, and the best storage environment. Knowing visual material processes and materials will also greatly aid in disaster preparedness.

SE: What are some characteristics to help determine one process from another?

ACK: Each image-making process is unique and has its own key identifying characteristics. These visual characteristics are directly related to the materials, technologies, and processes from which they were made. There are hundreds of image-making processes; some emulate other processes using less expensive or more stable materials. Generally, characteristics to look for include image color, surface texture and sheen, and the structure of the image using magnification (for example, is the image continuous in tone or does it have a distinctive pattern). A 10x loupe or pocket microscope and a flashlight are important tools in any archivist's process ID tool kit.

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SE: Do you think that professionals in the field should be cataloging the information gleaned from identification of processes in their records?

AE: Yes, in an ideal world. Tracking process ID via cataloging will help caretakers continue to treat visual materials appropriately over time or in the event of staff turnover. Additionally, process identification can yield contextual information concerning image content and provenance. For instance, the use of a certain image process can tell you a lot about the time period of an image's creation, or the economic station of the image's subject or producer. Specifically, I think it would make the most sense to place this information in the format field of a Dublin Core based schema and source controlled vocabulary terms from AAT or TGM.

SE: Why did you decide to start a project like Graphics Atlas?

ACK: Graphics Atlas grew out of a history of photographic identification, characterization, and materials-based research at IPI which began with the 1986 publication, Care and Identification of 19th Century Photographs. The intention of the website is to provide an interactive web resource for the characterization and identification of prints using high-quality, high-resolution images. The capability of digital imaging paired with the interactivity of the web provides a significantly better platform for illustrating physical characteristics of graphic objects than print-based publications. Graphics Atlas was officially launched in 2010. A three-year grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded in 2012 has allowed us to continue to add information to the site, including photographic objects with non-paper supports and additional processes examples. We now have over two hundred objects on the site!

SE: Who is your intended audience for Graphics Atlas?

ACK: This is a great question. Our intended audience is anyone charged with caring for prints and photographs in cultural heritage collections as well as anyone interested in prints and photographs. It is our goal to make this resource a central resource for the study of graphic materials with emphasis on identification and characterization. In order to achieve this goal and to broaden our audience we are currently working on ideas for entry points to the site. This will include a sophisticated search engine to help users narrow down the list of process options and to better navigate the site. We are also planning a suite of video tutorials to teach users methods for process identification, such as how to use magnification and lighting to enhance certain physical characteristics.
SE: Describe the interface of Graphic Atlas and how the features can aid in discovery.

AE: One of the site's primary goals is to help visual materials professionals visually distinguish image types in their own collections from the vast spectrum of image processes and formats out there. Site users can read about and visually explore the key identifying features of many processes using our Process ID pages, which include images and text on multiple examples of each process. Users can also learn more about each object included on Graphics Atlas in the Guided Tour module, which provides an illustrated (via image capture and video) breakdown of process identification and individual image characteristics. Finally, the Compare tab allows users to view examples of different processes side-by-side at different magnification levels and in different lighting environments. This feature can be a great help as many processes are quite similar or are visually indistinguishable with the naked eye.

SE: What is the “Interesting Picture of the Week” feature on the website?

ACK: We realized that we have many really great objects in our collection that, for a variety of reasons, will not be put on the site. In order to share our collection and bring a little weekly joy to email inboxes, we send out the Interesting Picture of the Week. In the captions we try to include a little contextual information as well as information about process and materials. This is a nice reminder for us all to stop and enjoy a great image and to think about the context of the object before bringing out the loupe.

Interested in learning more about IPI or Graphics Atlas or would like to subscribe to the “Interesting Picture of the Week?” Visit graphicsatlas.org or email Alice at ackpph@rit.edu. IPI is happy to share information, answer questions or take suggestions for the site.
LIFE IN THE SHOP

Mid-century St. Louis through the Lens of the Mac Mizuki Photography Studio Collection

Lauren Pey
Elkington Architectural Photo Processing Archivist
Missouri History Museum

All photographs by Henry T. (Mac) Mizuki, from the Mac Mizuki Photography Studio Collection, Missouri History Museum Photographs and Prints Collection.

The post-war period was a time of great change for our nation, and St. Louis was no exception. Citizens poured out of St. Louis City and into the booming suburbs of St. Louis County. The car became essential to this new life in the suburbs, as malls, shopping centers, and subdivisions sprang up throughout the county. The Mac Mizuki Photography Studio Collection, held at the Missouri History Museum, captures this boom, extensively documenting the new houses, churches, schools, libraries, offices, and malls that made up the growing suburbs. These images provide a glimpse into the everyday lives of mid-century St. Louisans, showing us where they lived, worked, learned, and shopped.

Mizuki was born in Parlier, California in 1919. His interest in photography began as a child, but he didn’t seriously consider a career as a photographer until after returning from World War II. He began by studying at the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, then headed to the House of Photography in Wichita to study color photography and printing. After graduation, he found a job in St. Louis working for a color printing company. He left this job about 1953 to pursue freelance photography, opening his own studio under the name Mac Mizuki Photography. Mizuki operated his independent studio until his retirement at the age of 67 in 1986, and the collection includes material from roughly 1,600 of his job assignments from this time.


Right: Christmas display at Stix, Baer, and Fuller department store, probably at Westroads Shopping Center in St. Louis County. November 27, 1955.

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Life in the Shop (cont.)

Although he did not intend to specialize in architectural photography, he quickly developed a word-of-mouth reputation, and his client list in this area began to grow. His early clients included architects Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, responsible for Lambert Airport and many other buildings in the collection; and Fisher & Frichtel, developers of several subdivisions in St. Louis County. While architectural photography became his specialty, Mizuki also photographed industrial facilities and products; merchandise and posed shots for advertisements; and individual and group portraits.

The strength of the Mac Mizuki Photography Studio Collection is Mizuki’s architectural photography. Throughout his career, Mizuki worked with a variety of architects, builders, and engineers in the St. Louis region, many of which were prominent local architects designing in the Modernist style. He worked with these architects on all phases of their projects, photographing architectural models, construction sites, and completed buildings. On many of these assignments, Mizuki photographed complete walk-throughs of finished buildings. These photos provide us with remarkable detail about the interior structure and furnishings, whether furnished rooms in a newly built house or a school classroom.

Below: Interior view of a classroom at Bristol Primary School, 222 West Cedar Avenue, Webster Groves, Missouri. The school was an early project from the architecture firm of Hellmuth, Obata, and Kassabaum (HOK). August 8, 1955.


Above: Living room in a “Gold Medallion” home built by Fischer & Frichtel, probably at 1340 Zurich Drive in Florissant, Missouri. The house was a display home demonstrating experimental, all-electric living. May 7, 1958.

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While the collection is largely focused on the expanding suburbs in St. Louis County, Mizuki also captured changes happening in the city of St. Louis. He photographed post-war slum clearance efforts, such as construction of the ill-fated Pruitt-Igoe housing project, as well as the construction of new offices and civic buildings. He also documented efforts to revitalize several historic buildings and neighborhoods in St. Louis. These efforts included the Old Post Office, which opened in 1884, but had fallen into disrepair by the mid-20th century. Photographs documenting the building’s historic architecture were commissioned by the Landmarks Association of St. Louis and others during the successful fight in the 1960s to save the building from demolition. And no mid-century St. Louis collection would be complete without Busch Memorial Stadium, home of the St. Louis Cardinals, photographed the winter after opening season.

Above:
Construction progress on the Pruitt-Igoe housing project. January or February 1954.

Below:
Exterior view of the Old Post Office, 815 Olive Street, taken for the discussion program “Eye on St. Louis.” August 17, 1964.

Continued on p. 14
The 1,590 job assignments in the collection include over 37,000 individual images, dating from 1953 to 1989. The bulk of the collection consists of negatives, although there are also some prints and associated documents. Over the course of the year I spent processing this collection, I became immersed in Mizuki’s St. Louis, cataloging and rehousing each film sheet and negative strip. Mizuki was every archivist’s dream, leaving detailed and legible notes about the date, client, and subject of nearly every job assignment—including many identified individuals, and even building addresses! This certainly made a welcome change from captions such as “Unidentified man in unknown location.”

As few of the Missouri History Museum’s processed collections include post-war material, we are very excited to share this collection with our researchers. Since the processing work ended, we have had a team of interns digitizing and cataloging select images. These images, as well as catalog records for every job assignment in the collection, are all publicly accessible via the Museum’s Cross-Collection Search: http://collections.mohistory.org. We have also curated a Pinterest board dedicated to the collection in order to share highlights and staff favorites: http://www.pinterest.com/mohistorymuseum/mac-mizuki-photography-studio-collection/. We’re regularly scanning new images, so check back with us often!
Digital Exhibitions

Object:Photo - MoMA
www.moma.org/interactives/objectphoto/#home

This interactive photography exhibit corresponds with MoMA’s exhibit, “Modern Photographs from the Thomas Walther Collection, 1909-1949”, on view now until April 19, 2015.


Amalia Ulman: Excellences and Perfections
www.newmuseum.org/exhibitions/view/amalia-ulman-excellences-perfections

Analog Exhibitions

Shirin Neshat: Facing History
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
May 18 - September 20, 2015
www.hirshhorn.si.edu/collection/shirin-neshat/#detail=/bio/shirin-neshat-facing-history/&collection=shirin-neshat

“An important exhibition, and a big get for the D.C. museum, “Shirin Neshat: Facing History” will present the artist’s unapologetic take on the Islamic world, with the works from her “Women of Allah” series, video installations and two photography series made in the wake of the Arab Spring.” - The Observer, “Spring Arts Preview”

Basquiat: The Unknown Notebooks
The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY
April 3 - August 23, 2015
www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/basquiat_notebooks/

Barnett Newman: The Late Work
The Menil Collection, Houston, TX
March 27 - August 2, 2015
www.menil.org/exhibitions-upcoming.html

When the Stars Begin to Fall: Imagination and the American South
The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA
On view through May 10, 2015
www.icaboston.org/exhibitions/exhibit/whenthe-starbegin-to-fall/

This Was Tomorrow: London 1956 - Geoffrey Holroyd
Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UC: Santa Barbara
On view through May 1, 2015
www.museum.ucsb.edu/news/feature/313

The Contained Narrative: Defining the Contemporary Artist’s Book
Minnesota Center for Book Arts
April 8 - July 26, 2015
www.mnbookarts.org/containednarrative/
BOOK REVIEW

by Elizabeth Ruth-Abramian, Archivist
Los Angeles Maritime Museum

Maynard L. Parker: Modern Photography and the American Dream
by Jennifer A. Watts

Hardcover, 279 pages – Yale University Press and the Huntington Library – 2013
$40.00 Available from www.yalepress.yale.edu

The story of photographer Maynard Parker’s (1900-1976) professional life, told largely from the point of view of his editorial assignments, is one of great success in communication. Parker’s photographs of interiors, gardens, and architecture were featured in American popular magazines and editorials of the mid-twentieth century.

His talent lay in interpreting design for unsophisticated readers and he had the ability to create familiar yet stirring domestic scenes tinged with glamour. His photographs were one half of the editorial message in the medium called “shelter magazines,” which sought to cultivate a consumer response to regional design.

In the heyday of shelter magazines, the pages of House Beautiful and similar magazines of the 1940s-1960s, instructed Americans to covet the effects of the good life, where “space, time and food” were abundant (May, 132). Generations have since passed. Still, our attitude towards modern design was once orchestrated as a response to the idea that American design was preferable to imported, European archetypes. It is this basis of thought that informs the essays in Maynard Parker: Modern Photography and the American Dream, edited by Jennifer A. Watts, published by Yale University Press, 2013.

Generally the essays by Edward R. Bosley, Daniel P. Gregory, Christopher Hawthorne, Elaine Tyler May, Monica Pesnick, Charles Phoenix, and Sam Watters make similar points about Parker’s career and business relationship with shelter magazine editors. In his introduction, D.J. Waldie, a Los Angeles Times editor, gives an overview of Parker’s professional career, depicting Parker’s enthusiasm, creative capacity, and ability to illuminate featured articles in the magazines. Watts’ essay and those of her peers attest to Parker’s effectiveness as a photographer for shelter magazines during his years of work under House Beautiful editor, Elizabeth Gordon.

Gregory, in “Promoting Ranch House Living,” discusses the relationship of architect Cliff May and photographer Maynard Parker as one of close friendship. Hollywood stars, glamorous and alluring, as Watters attests in his “A Star is Born,” were admired as trend-setters, having the ultimate in everything, especially good taste. A favorite essay of mine is Bosley’s “Looking Both Ways: Modernizing the Past to Shape the Future,” about architect Frank Lloyd Wright and architecture firm Greene and Greene, icons in American architecture who were illustrated at length by Parker. These examples of bold and finely constructed design represented an American archetype for the twentieth century. In the essay “Shelter Me: the Suburban Dream in Cold War America,” May describes how the intersection of the Cold War with developing suburban lifestyle helped galvanize community opinion on safe and secure housing style and the American dream.

Maynard L. Parker: Modern Photography and the American Dream offers a thorough overview of Parker’s work and an analysis of American taste and culture. Footnotes at the end of each essay are rich with the author’s comments and bibliographic information. A particularly fine quality of the book is large-sized reproductions of the photographs. Many images are full-page, with careful attention to the quality and mood of the eras in which they were first taken. The illustrated timeline is a thoughtful addendum, showing more of Parker’s work and his portraits, which show him as a young man, and then an older man, always at work. The book’s index presents each type of architectural trend, lists every single photograph in the book, as well as every magazine and editorial or article. In chronicling Parker’s career, this book provides a well-crafted discussion of photography as an artistic and commercial platform and political views of domestic architecture for the middle class.
New in Print - Photography

The Lumière Autochrome: History, Technology, and Preservation
Bertrand Lavedrine and Jean-Paul Gandolfo
Paperback, 380 pages – Getty Conservation Institute - 2013
$35.00 Available from www.shop.getty.edu

“Louis Lumière is perhaps best known in the U.S. for his crucial role in the invention of cinema, but his most important contribution to the history of photography was the autochrome. Engagingly written and marvelously illustrated with over 300 images, The Lumière Autochrome: History, Technology, and Preservation tells the fascinating story of the first industrially produced form of color photography.”

Memory Unearthed: The Lodz Ghetto Photographs of Henryk Ross
Maia-Mari Sutnik, editor
Hardcover, 240 pages – Yale University Press – March 2015
$40.00 Available from www.yalepress.yale.edu

“From 1941 to 1944, the Polish Jewish photographer Henryk Ross (1910–1991) was a member of an official team documenting the implementation of Nazi policies in the Lodz Ghetto in Poland. Covertly, he captured on film scores of both quotidian and intimate moments of Jewish life... Memory Unearthed presents a selection of the nearly 3,000 surviving images—along with original prints and other archival material including curfew notices and newspapers—from the permanent collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario.”

Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity
Maurice O. Wallace and Shawn Michelle Smith, editors
$27.95 Available from www.dukeupress.edu

“A Pictures and Progress explores how, during the nineteenth century and the early twentieth, prominent African American intellectuals and activists understood photography’s power to shape perceptions about race and employed the new medium in their quest for social and political justice.”

A Strange and Fearful Interest: Death, Mourning, and Memory in the American Civil War
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

“Drawing on more than 200 works from the superb Civil War collections at the Huntington Library, many never published before, A Strange and Fearful Interest explores how photography and other media were used to describe, explain and perhaps come to terms with a national trauma on an unprecedented scale.”

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SPOTLIGHT ON COLLECTIONS

OBJECT: PHOTO. MODERN PHOTOGRAPHS: THE THOMAS WALther COLLECTION 1909-1949

Edited by Mitra Abbaspour, Lee Ann Daffner, Maria Morris Hambourg. Essays by Quentin Bajac, Jim Coddington.

$75.00 Available from www.momastore.org

“In 2001, The Museum of Modern Art acquired 341 modernist photographs from the Thomas Walther Collection. OBJECT: PHOTO explores these brilliant photographs from the first half of the twentieth century—the most dynamic period in the development of modern photography—using a new approach: instead of concentrating on the content of the images, it considers them as objects—as actual, physical things created by particular artists using particular techniques at particular times, each with unique histories. Essays by conservators and historians of photography provide new insight into the nature of these pictures while also acknowledging the cultural importance of photography from the interwar period—as well as the rarity of its best examples.”

Information about the accompanying exhibition and website can be found at: www.moma.org/interactives/objectphoto/

GRAPHIC ARTS

POSTERS: A GLOBAL HISTORY

Elizabeth E. Guffey

$40.00 Available from www.press.uchicago.edu

“Telling the story of this ephemeral art form, Elizabeth E. Guffey reexamines the poster’s roots in the nineteenth century and explores the relevance they still possess in the age of digital media... Guffey charts the rise of the poster from the revolutionary lithographs that papered nineteenth-century London and Paris to twentieth-century works of propaganda, advertising, pop culture, and protest... Featuring 150 stunning images, this illuminating book delivers a fresh look at the poster and offers revealing insights into the designs and practices of our twenty-first-century world.”

FLAGS AND FACES: THE VISUAL CULTURE OF AMERICA’S FIRST WORLD WAR

David M. Lubin

Hardcover, 124 pages – University of California Press - February 2015
$34.95 Available from www.ucpress.edu

“Flags and Faces, based on David Lubin’s 2008 Franklin D. Murphy Lectures at the University of Kansas, shows how American artists, photographers, and graphic designers helped shape public perceptions about World War I... Engaging, provocative, and filled with arresting and at times disturbing illustrations, Flags and Faces offers striking new insights into American art and visual culture from 1915 to 1930.”
Lake County Discovery Museum Awarded Illinois Department of Natural Resources Public Museums Capital Grant

In June 2014, the Lake County Discovery Museum near Wauconda, Illinois was awarded a $750,000 Illinois Department of Natural Resources Public Museums Capital Grant, the highest award amount possible for an individual institution. The grant supports design and construction of a storage facility for the Museum’s two archival collections: the Lake County History Archives and the Curt Teich Postcard Archives. The new storage facility will be located at the General Offices of the Museum’s parent organization, the Lake County Forest Preserves. The lower level of the General Offices building will be renovated to create a controlled environment with the ability to manage light, temperature, and humidity levels required to carefully protect and preserve the historic collections. Total estimated project cost of the renovation is $1.24 million. Construction begins in spring of 2015, and the Archives' move will be completed within the two-year grant period, ending in June 2016. A reading room on the main floor will allow the collections to be accessible to researchers and the public in June 2016.

Submitted by: Christine Pyle, Historical Resources Manager
Lake County Discovery Museum

Washington University’s Special Collections Department Welcomes New Staff Member

In October 2014, Alexis Peregoy joined the special collections department at Washington University in Saint Louis as the project archivist. She obtained an MSI from the University of Michigan School of Information in 2014 with a focus on archives, records management, and preservation of information, and has an undergraduate degree in Art History from Lourdes University. Alexis is responsible for processing collections in the Modern Graphic History Library, which is comprised of original artwork, reproductions, magazine tear sheets, books, and other printed ephemera.

Alexis recently processed the original artwork for the Walt Reed Illustration Archive (founder of Illustration House), which includes 160 works on paper and board by 47 different artists and illustrators. Highlights in this collection include Garrett Price’s cover illustrations for the *New Yorker*, Eric Pape’s book illustration of the “Headless Horseman chasing Ichabod Crane” from Washington Irving’s *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, and Cream of Wheat advertisements. Some of


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the artists include Edwin Austin Abbey, Otto Bacher, Dean Cornwell, Walter Everett, Bernard Fuchs, Jessie Gillespie, Henry Raleigh, and Elihu Vedder. In addition to the processed original artwork, there are over 250,000 magazine tear sheets, 8,000 magazines, and 1,200 books that are unprocessed.

Focusing on 20th century illustration, other collections within the library include Al Parker, known for his women's magazine illustrations through the 1940s and 1960s, and Robert Weaver, a pioneer in visual journalism. The finding aid for these collections, and more information on the Modern Graphic History Library, can be found by visiting http://library.wustl.edu/units/spec/MGHL/

Submitted by: Alexis Peregoy, Project Archivist
Modern Graphic History Library
Washington University in St. Louis

Forthcoming Library Company of Philadelphia Exhibition Explores Nature of Perception

The Library Company of Philadelphia is pleased to announce it has started work with artist-in-residence Teresa Jaynes on “Talking with the Fingers in the Language of the Eyes” (working title), a multimedia exhibition generously funded by The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage. The exhibition, developed under the auspices of the Library's Visual Culture Program, will explore historical embossed and raised-letter documents for the visually impaired as a starting point for a multi-sensory exploration of the nature of perception.

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 printed texts and ephemera, nineteenth-century personal narratives and textbooks, and reports, pamphlets, and magazines issued by educational institutions for the blind, will inform the conceptualization of the themes of “Talking,” set to open in February 2016.

Submitted by: Erika Piola, Co-Director, Visual Culture Program
Library Company of Philadelphia

Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives Oral History Project


The initiative's aim is to speak directly with individuals related to ICFA's holdings, whether they participated in key fieldwork or research projects documented by our collections, or who have managed ICFA's collections over the years. The project was launched in 2011 with the support of the Dumbarton Oaks Archives (DOA) Oral History Project, which commenced in 2008.

While DOA interviews focus on affiliates' memories of Dumbarton Oaks and their perceptions of how it has changed over time, ICFA's oral history interviews center on targeted questions about the people and fieldwork projects represented in ICFA's collections. Our main goal is to gather information, such as first-hand descriptions of fieldwork or personal recollections of key individuals, who may not otherwise be captured in documents or photographs. Together with DOA, these interviews provide a vivid portrait of the institution and the remarkable individuals who participated in its myriad activities over the past 75 years.

Each interview is represented with a page that includes a brief biographical sketch of the interviewee, a video of the interview, and corresponding transcripts (when available). All videos are available, full length, on ICFA's website and

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The ICFA Oral History Initiative site will continue to grow as we conduct additional interviews and create new transcripts. Very special thanks to ICFA Summer Intern Caitlin Ballotta, who creatively and meticulously planned and created the ICFA’s Oral History Initiative webpage.

Submitted by: Rona Razon, Archivist
Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (ICFA)
Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection

Massachusetts Launches Collaborative Online Collection

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), and the Massachusetts State Archives jointly announce the availability of 8,800 photographic images documenting the Metropolitan Water Works (MWW) System, through the Digital Commonwealth website. This treasure trove of photographs documents real estate, construction and early operation of the water supply distribution system throughout metropolitan Boston as it expanded westward from 1876-1926. The collection covers the Wachusett Reservoir, Wachusett Dam, Wachusett Aqueduct, Sudbury Reservoir, Sudbury Dam, Weston Aqueduct, Weston Reservoir, and associated pipe lines, pumping stations, reservoirs, and standpipes. Images include homes, businesses, mills, town buildings, schools, churches, cemeteries, and railroad stations. About 50 different cities and towns, as well as several Boston neighborhood districts, can be seen in this collection. These pictures, mostly derived from 7,839 surviving glass plate negatives, represent the Boston area’s drinking water system prior to the 1926-1940 expansion that culminated in the construction of the Quabbin Reservoir. The Boston Public Library Digital Services, through partnership with Digital Commonwealth, utilized federal and state grants to digitally transform the collection at no cost to the inter-agency collaborators. https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/collections/commonwealth:g732dh56k

An expanded MWW continues to operate under the joint stewardship of the MWRA (water distribution system) and DCR (water supply reservoirs and their watershed management), and original photographs in this collection are now in the safekeeping of the Massachusetts State Archives (OCLC No. 89834983).

Comprehensive histories of the MWW Photograph Collection and the over 14-year preservation and digital access effort are available at http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/cultural-resources/archives-management.html

Submitted by: Sean M. Fisher, Archivist
DCR Archives, Office of Cultural Resources
Bureau of Planning, Design and Resource Protection
MA Department of Conservation and Recreation


Wachusett Dam, laying the last stone, laid by John Mercer, laborer, Clinton, Mass., Jun. 24, 1905 (MWW Image No. 5883).