



# ARLIS/New York News

The Newsletter of the Art Libraries Society of North America/New York Metro Chapter

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Spring 2004

## From the Chair

By Judy Connorton



Now two months into my term as chair of our chapter and with one board meeting behind me, I can assure all our members that we're working hard to provide you with what we expect will be a productive and fun year ahead.

I take this opportunity now to thank those who've worked especially hard in 2003. We recognize Paula Gabbard

who steps down after serving three years as chair-elect, chair, and past year. Her experienced and sensible counsel will be missed. She also planned a rocking holiday party!

We thank too outgoing board member Heather Topcik for her fine work as member-at-large for membership. Thanks to her efforts and others, our chapter membership is closing in on 200 strong! We're the largest chapter in ARLIS/NA and in our case I freely assert that quality goes with quantity. Not only do our members represent the best of art librarians in academia, museums, and elsewhere, they participate eagerly in chapter events, elections, and attendance at the national conference. It is an honor to be associated with this group.

I must offer a special thank-you to Debbie Kempe, who will serve on the board for a third year, now as past chair. I know I speak for all of us, when I salute Debbie for her wonderful and gracious leadership in 2003.

It's a pleasure too to recognize continuing officers Alexandra de Luise, Heidi Hass, Caitlin Kilgallen, Suz Massen, Jamie Mitchell, Jim Viskochil, and Faith Pleasanton who contribute so much to our chapter.

New to our board this year are Chair-Elect Ken Soehner (the Met's Watson Librarian) and Erin Elliott (Bard Graduate Center Library) who fills Heather's position. It is she to whom you can still send your membership renewal in case that's slipped your mind. See [www.arlisny.org](http://www.arlisny.org) to find the renewal form online.

The big event, of course, in our immediate future and vicinity is the ARLIS/NA 2004 conference here in NYC, April 15–20. Many chapter members have answered our online call for volunteers to staff the registration and hospitality desks at the Roosevelt Hotel during the conference. Here's a chance to show our colleagues from all over how hospitable we New Yorkers REALLY are and how eager to make their time in this great city an enjoyable one. If you've been meaning to volunteer but haven't gotten to it, please contact our secretary Heidi Hass ([vhhass@morganlibrary.org](mailto:vhhass@morganlibrary.org)) who is co-chairing our local efforts.

Special guests at the conference will be the winners of our Celine Palatsky Travel Award, this year shared among five outstanding students attending local library schools. They are Henry Baker, Jessica Cline, Shalimar Abigail Ordonez Fojas, Rita Nannini, and Billy Parrott. Congratulations to all! Please look for them during the conference and welcome them to our chapter then and at future events.

**Inside:** Spring meeting at the Met. Report from Germany. And lots of news, ads, and announcements!

*continued on page 2*

**2003 ARLIS/NY Executive Board**

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This publication is distributed free of charge to members of ARLIS/NY. Membership dues are \$20.00 for the calendar year.

**Send renewals, changes of address, and contributions** to Erin Elliott, Membership Coordinator, ARLIS/NY, Bard Graduate Center, 38 West 86 St, New York, NY 10024.

**Announcements, articles, and artwork are welcome.** Send to Alexandra de Luise, Queen's College, Flushing, NY 11367, adeluise@qc1.qc.edu; or to James Mitchell, jmittell@folkartmuseum.org.

**Advertising Manager:** Faith Pleasanton, 212-650-2857, faith.pleasanton@metmuseum.org.

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**From the Chair, continued**

Once we've enjoyed all that this conference offers us, we'll be inviting you to join us at our April 28th membership meeting at the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a fascinating program with Fr. Justin Sinaites, librarian at the Monastery of St. Catherine in Mt. Sinai, Egypt, on the digitization project for preserving the monastery's ancient texts. We're planning meetings too at the Queens College Art Center and campus museum in early June, at The Brooklyn Museum in the fall, and at the Frick Art Reference Library for our holiday party. The board is discussing other events that we hope will capture your interest also, so stay tuned, read your chapter's newsletter, and visit our Web site every now and then to stay updated.

We hope to facilitate communication with a re-design of this site, one that will include a chapter listserv for all general interest postings. Our Web designer Jim Viskochil is hard at work and will be unveiling the new look very soon, perhaps even as you read this.

In closing, I want to thank all members who continue to contribute funds to our chapter this year. Your generosity along with that of our sponsors allows us to offer you an array of events that go beyond the ordinary. Speaking of support, I would like to welcome and thank Knoedler & Co., our chapter's newest sponsor. Yes, New York is the greatest city, but it's also an expensive one, and you all help us make our events possible. Salut!

**ARLIS/NY Financial Report for the Year 2003**

By Caitlin Kilgallen, Treasurer

INCOME

Bank Balance as of January 1, 2003	\$ 4553.74
2004 Dues payments/Contributions from members	\$ 4290.00
Sponsorships (Octavo, Prestel, Eastern Book)	\$ 1200.00
Advertising 2003 Newsletter (Ebsco \$90 and Ocker & Trapp \$260)	\$ 350.00
Dia: Beacon Trip (admission fees & boxes lunches)	\$ 785.00
Holiday party travel award raffle	\$ 215.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11393.74</b>

EXPENDITURES

ARLIS Annual Conference 2003 welcome party contribution	\$ 500.00
NY Technical Services Librarians (NYTSL) meeting contribution	\$ 50.00
Celine Palatsky Travel Award	\$ 500.00
Newsletter v. 24, nos. 1-4	\$ 369.59
New York Botanical Garden Trip (June 19)	\$ 1218.50
Dia Beacon Tour (September 13)	\$ 785.00
Business Meeting at FIT--refreshments (Nov. 5)	\$ 300.00
Holiday party at Columbia's Butler Library (December 16)	\$ 704.29
Election '04 mailing costs	\$ 109.20
Bank service charges (Jan.-Dec.)	\$ 171.42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 4408.00</b>
<b>BANK BALANCE AS OF December 31, 2003</b>	<b>\$ 6685.74</b>

## Annual New York Technical Services Librarians Reception

**When:** Friday, March 26, 2004 (3–5 p.m.)

**Where:** The New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue @ 42nd Street, Trustees Room (Room 206)

**Why:** This is an opportunity for information professionals from the metropolitan area to meet informally. It is also a chance for library school students to learn about the various professional organizations in the metropolitan area and to meet future colleagues and employers. You are welcome to bring announcements of professional opportunities to the reception

*Wine & Cheese will be Served.* This reception is co-sponsored by ARLIS/NY.

For more information, contact Zimra Panitz, NYTSL President, at [zpanitz@sva.edu](mailto:zpanitz@sva.edu).

## ARLIS/NY Meeting at Metropolitan Museum of Art, April 28

The Chapter's Spring meeting will feature a special presentation on one of the world's most extraordinary libraries, the Library of Saint Catherine's Monastery. Founded by the Byzantine emperor Justinian I in 527 at the base of Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's contains the largest collection of Christian manuscripts and icons outside of the Vatican. A number of treasures from the library are included in the Museum's exhibition, *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, which opens to the public on March 23rd. The monastery has recently embarked on a comprehensive digital preservation program involving the use of ultra-high-resolution digital photography. On Wednesday, April 28, at 3:30 p.m., it will be our privilege to welcome Father Justin Sinaites, Saint Catherine's Librarian, who will speak on *The Library at Saint Catherine's Monastery: Preserving the Heritage*.

Father Justin's presentation will take place in the Museum's Douglas Dillon Board Room, on the fourth floor. The program will begin with a short business meeting at 3:30. A reception will follow.

## Conference Volunteers Needed

With the ARLIS/NA NYC'04 conference just around the corner, it's time to think about volunteer opportunities. Volunteering at the Registration or Hospitality desks is a great way to meet people, share your knowledge of New York, and make the conference a success.



### What's involved:

**Registration desk:** Hand out registration packets, answer questions, give room directions. (Headquarters staff handle all cash transactions).

**Hospitality desk:** Preside over desk containing reference and give-away materials on New York; give basic directions and advice on transit options, restaurants, neighborhoods, etc.

### Schedule:

Registration desk:

Three-hour shifts from April 15 (Thurs.) through April 21 (Wed.).

Hours vary; on most days, the desk is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Hospitality desk:

Three-hour shifts from April 15 (Thurs.) through April 20 (Tues.)

Hours vary; on most days, the desk is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering, the schedule is now posted at <http://www.arlisna.org/nyc04/volunteering.htm>. Please e-mail Heidi Hass ([vhass@morganlibrary.org](mailto:vhass@morganlibrary.org)) with your preferences, including which desk, and time and day. We'd appreciate it if you can sign up for multiple slots, but it's not required. There will be a brief orientation for hospitality desk volunteers on Wed. April 14 at 6:00 p.m. at the hotel; if you're unable to attend this session then just sign up for the registration desk.

We look forward to working with you to show our visitors:

A million people-manners free and superb-open

voices-hospitality-the most courageous and friendly young men [and women]

City of hurried and sparkling waters! city of spires and masts!

City nested in bays! my city!

Walt Whitman (1819–1892), from *Mannahatta*

# Report on Study Tour of German Libraries

By Linda Seckelson

The Study Tour to selected German art, university and special libraries was sponsored and partially supported by the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation, a Berlin-based organization that fosters projects involving German-American collaboration. Ten American librarians were funded for land transportation, accommodation, special tours, and a few concerts.

The program involved visits to 15 libraries in 10 cities over a period of 12 days. With the exception of Karlsruhe, Heidelberg and part of Berlin, the locations were all in the former Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR), also known as East Germany.

We visited libraries and museums in a variety of settings, including major university libraries, special libraries which originated as princely collections, museum libraries, special archival collections (such as the Bach Archive), and several libraries that function as a kind of national library network for unified Germany.

The experience was completely fascinating. Here are some of my observations:

**There is lots of stuff there.** The larger institutions have enormous and deep collections, which have been growing for hundreds of years. Typical German thoroughness and systematic acquisitiveness has been at work. The University of Heidelberg and the Saxon State University Library in Dresden have especially strong art collections and have ample funding to continue the development of these collections. Heidelberg is responsible for art history until 1945; Dresden for 1945 to the present.

**The sheer enormity** of some of these collections is staggering, and raises the question of bibliographic access. The bulk of these collections' catalogs have not been retrospectively converted beyond the past 10 or 15 years. So, bibliographic access is essentially non-existent for most of these riches. They are working on it, but it will take at least a lifetime, in many cases, to get these records all online.

**There are no nation-wide union catalogs** equivalent to RILIN or WorldCat. Instead, there are a number of regional databases (*verbunde*), and several overlapping networks of art libraries. On top of that, there is another group of 7 libraries, which divide the art pie into 17 subject subdivisions. These include special libraries in Munich, Cologne, Berlin, Nuremberg, Florence and Rome (which has 2 of the 7 libraries in this consortium).

**Furthermore**, there is a joint effort of these 7 libraries, the University of Heidelberg, and selected other libraries, including some in other consortia, whose catalogs can be searched simultaneously through the Virtuelle Katalog Kunstgeschichte (VKK). [[http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/vk\\_kunst.html](http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/vk_kunst.html)] The database includes more than 2 million records as of the beginning of 2004. In addition to some of the main German libraries with strong art collections, selected libraries in other countries are included, such as art libraries in Switzerland, Italy, and France. Let me emphasize that the search is simultaneous, rather than consolidated or combined. The results are arranged by library, so a search may show no results for some of the contributing libraries. This is clearly a very strong and important resource for locating art material. The administrators are actively seeking additional partners to increase the international scope of this database.

**German libraries are not consistently in the habit** of using each other's cataloging data; the same item may be cataloged differently in the same database (we have the equivalent situation, but fewer databases). There is clearly less emphasis on utilizing pre-existing cataloging data, and I do not know if the VKK is being used as a shared cataloging utility.

**The existing catalogs** are in book form and (after 1945) in card form. The old inventory books are still the only extant catalog record for some of the material, and the information contained in them is not always sufficient to create an online record (as one might imagine). We saw some of these old inventory books, which are still very much in use.

**All of the libraries** are willing to share information by way of photocopying, and some are willing to lend material even to libraries outside Germany. The trick, of course, is to figure out if they have what you need, if the material is not yet cataloged online. Libraries are willing to check their inventory lists for specific items if they receive inquiries.

**The larger collections** are not arranged physically in a classified system. "Shelfmarks" are locations for items shelved basically in accession order. So, except for open shelf collections in reference areas, classification is not something to worry about. Some collections were arranged by subject at the start and, as they grew, gave way to accession order. Upon reflection, I think that our attachment to classified collections and the browsing function is partially cultural. And in our largest collections (NYPL, LC, etc.) it has been jettisoned as well, because it is logistically and economically untenable when a collection reaches a certain size.

**German libraries** use a national, standard system for establishing subject headings, called the Regeln für die Stachwort Katalogisierung (RSVK). Book selectors, who in some libraries must have doctorates in their subject specialty, have the responsibility for establishing subject headings. The Regeln für die Alphabetische Katalog (RAK) provides the rules for descriptive cataloging, which may be done by librarians who do not have doctorates.

**There is far less emphasis on reference** as a service or skill in itself in the libraries we visited. It was never mentioned as a crucial component of library activity. When we inquired, we were told that there is someone who can direct people and help them, but our impression was that help with a capital “H” was not a particular concern.

**Researchers in Germany** seem to be less dependent on the use of periodical indexes; most of the libraries we visited did not have electronic access to the standard art historical indexes which we consider basic (Art Index, BHA, ArtBibliographies Modern).

**Many of the libraries** we visited have extensive digitization projects underway, especially for manuscript collections. The notable exception was the Kunstbibliothek of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, which is concerned that digitized information could become a surrogate for onsite visits to the collections.

**A number of the libraries** we visited had substantial collections of auction catalogs. Most were not aware of SCIPPIO, but some are listed in Lugt. The Kunstbibliothek in Berlin has been encouraged to enter its important auction catalog holdings into SCIPPIO, and is planning to do so. The Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Kunst- und Museums Bibliotheken (AKMB) surveyed its membership to learn about the holdings (estimated numbers) and bibliographic control of auction catalogs; the results of this survey will be conveyed to the SCIPPIO taskforce.

**All of the libraries** we visited were in very cared-for condition; they were extremely clean, as one would expect in Germany. Furniture and lighting in both public spaces and offices were up to date and spiffy looking. Nothing looked shabby, neglected, rundown, or cobbled together.



**The librarians** who spoke to us were conscious of the need for temperature and humidity controls, and were aware of the huge amount of work ahead caring for the quantities of very old books (millions), which are or will soon be in need of conservation. There is no long-range program in place to conserve all of these, but there is awareness.

**Funding is provided** by local or federal governmental sources, including funding for special projects, which comes from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), or German Research Group. Almost every library we visited had some funding from the DFG. There is growing awareness of the decreased availability of government funding and great concern about how to carry on. Fundraising as we know it doesn't exist, but I believe this is beginning to evolve. The Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek in Weimar (which we visited) was slated to benefit from the proceeds of a concert given in Berlin. Some libraries charge a modest fee to users, including the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

**Germany's tumultuous history** is palpably present as one visits these institutions. It is incredibly complicated. There was no German nation prior to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; unification was succeeded by World War I, then World War II, then the division of Germany into East and West, and, just recently, reunification. Whole collections were removed and replaced at various times for various reasons, with the predictably resulting disarray still being sorted out. The administrative reunification of the former East and West portions of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin alone is formidable and still very much a work in progress. By comparison, our library landscape is simple and straightforward.

**In addition to visiting** the libraries included in the Study Tour, I was invited to give a paper at the conference of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Kunst- und Museums Bibliotheken in Dresden. Here I had the opportunity to visit the libraries associated with the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, which are moving into newly renovated space in the Dresdner Schloss (see photo at left) and are being consolidated (no more separate departmental libraries throughout the museum complex); the library is also being made available to the general public.



**I also visited** the National Art Library (NAL) at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Their access policies are undergoing a radical change. All users are welcome to use the NAL now, and planning is underway to renovate the Reading Room facilities to include a general art collection and to encourage all museumgoers and everyone else to use it. This initiative is explicitly linked to governmental funding policies.

# International Center of Photography

## Reception and Tour for ARLIS/NA Photography Librarians

Monday 19 April 2004, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

International Center of Photography School, 1114 Avenue of the Americas, Concourse

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Concurrent 20 minute tours:

**Tour the ICP School and Library:** With Phil Block, Deputy Director of Programs; Deirdre Donohue, Librarian; and Natalia Rand, Associate Librarian.

**Tour the ICP Photography Collection:** With Cynthia Young, Collections Manager; Ed Earle, Curator of Digital Collections; and Brian Wallis, Director of Exhibitions.

### Guided Tours of the current exhibitions in the galleries:

Gustav Kluttsis and Valentina Kulagina: Between the Public and the Private

The Art of Science [Part of Imaging the Future Series]

Expanding Vision: Laszlo Moholy-Nagy's Experiments of the Nineteen-Twenties

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Reception in the ICP Museum Lobby, 1133 Avenue of the Americas. Welcome greetings from Buzz Hartshorn, Ehrenkranz Director of the International Center of Photography.

The ICP Bookshop will be open exclusively for the ARLIS/NA attendees during the tours and reception.

PLEASE RSVP to [library@icp.org](mailto:library@icp.org) or (212) 857-0004 by 10 April 2004.

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## Member News

**Gerald Beasley** has been hired as the next Avery Librarian at Columbia University. Formerly the Head Librarian and Associate Chief Curator of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, he is to begin his duties on June 15. As announced on January 29 by University Librarian James Neal, Beasley “brings to Columbia extensive experience as an architectural librarian and bibliographer,” including positions as Editor of the Early Works Catalogue of the Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and Assistant Curator of Rare Books at the Library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.

**Eric Wolf** is now Director of the Library at the New York School of Interior Design. Eric was formerly Associate Cataloguer at the Frick Art Reference Library, and continues to serve as editor of the *ARLIS/NA Update* Cataloging Section Column.

**Tony White** has begun work at the Pratt Institute as Art and Architecture Librarian. He recently graduated from the Indiana University MLS program, and previously received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Welcome to New York, Tony!

*Do you have any personal or institutional news you'd like to announce? New staff, building renovations, grants, notable acquisitions ... Please send them to the editors. We love to brag about you!*

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**Art Libraries Society of North America:  
Members' Exhibition  
Queens College Art Center, Flushing, NY**

**April 15 – July 15, 2004**

Gallery talk and reception: Sunday, April 18, 2004, 1:00 – 5:00 pm



Photo by Judy Chiang

Sponsored, in part, by the ARLIS/NA and the Queens College Office of Research and Graduate Studies

For more information, please visit our website at:  
[http://qcpages.qc.edu/Library/art/artcenter03\\_04.html](http://qcpages.qc.edu/Library/art/artcenter03_04.html)  
For directions: [www.qc.edu/directions](http://www.qc.edu/directions)

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