

ARLIS/New York News

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

Vol. 26, No. 2

ISSN 0894-3133

Summer 2005

From the Chair

By Ken Soehner

There has been a great deal of activity since our last newsletter. Many of us had the opportunity to attend a successful ARLIS/NA Conference in Houston. The programming was solid, and for many of us first-time visitors of Houston, the city revealed itself as a place of great interest. The city's extraordinary museums exceeded the highest expectations.

New York was well represented in the Awards. Max Marmor received the Worldwide Books Award for Publications; the exhibition catalog, *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, edited by Helen C. Evans and published by the New York institution The Metropolitan Museum of Art (not, as stated in the awards statement, by Yale University Press), shared the Wittenborn award with *Barnett Newman: A Catalogue Raisonné* by Richard Shiff, Carol C. Mancusi-Ungaro, and Heidi Colman-Freyberger, published by the Barnett Newman Foundation (located in New York). Helen Evans accepted the award for her catalog and John O'Neill, the Metropolitan Museum's venerable editor responsible for more than one thousand of the Met's publications, accepted the award for the Newman catalogue, for which he was editor.

There were a number of presentations by ARLIS/NY members, including Carol Rusk, Eric Wolf, Maria Oldal, Roberta Blitz, Barbara Rockenbach, Daniel Starr, Anna-Maria Poma-Swank, Sherman Clarke, Liz O'Keefe, Jennie Rodda, Sharon Chickanzeff, Suzanna Simor, and Joy Kestenbaum. Many other ARLIS/NY members chaired and participated in business and committee meetings (I found myself on three of the latter, or was it four?). This strong participation and representation is a demonstration of the leadership role taken by ARLIS/NY members in

supporting the larger organization of ARLIS/NA.

Back in New York, the chapter soon continued our active schedule of local tours and events. See the reports in this issue about visits to Strand Books, Artists Space, and the offices of D.A.P., as well as the JSTOR presentation held at the Met in April.

I would like to remind you that the next ARLIS/NY program will take place July 14th at Knoedler & Company. I am very pleased that Edye Weissler, Knoedler's librarian, has arranged for us to see the current exhibition of recent works by Mark Di Suvero. (I am told that the artist will attend). Additional details can be found on page 8. I look forward to seeing you there.

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Reports on recent events, including:

ARLIS/NA conference in Houston

Chapter visits to Artists Space, Strand Books, and D.A.P.

Electronic Resources Discussion Group meeting

Renovations at SVA library

And Member News!

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Contributors

Sherman Clarke, Judy Connorton, Lauren Edison, Erin Elliott, Rebecca Friedman, Holly Hatheway, Suz Massen, Ken Soehner, Jenny Tobias.

The ARLIS/NY Newsletter is published quarterly by the Art Libraries Society of New York, a regional chapter of the Art Libraries Society of North America, 329 March Road, Suite 232, Box 11, Kanata, Ontario K2K 2E1, Canada.

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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.

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Copy deadline for vol.26, no. 3 (Fall 2005): September 23.

Report from the Chair, continued from previous page

I encourage you to forward your ideas about additional ARLIS/NY programs and events. If you present an idea and a contact person, members of the board and I would be happy to pursue the lead and organize the program. Please think about it and help us to continue our great tradition of ARLIS/NY programs. We all love to visit other libraries. If you want to arrange a program at yours, let me know.

I would like to ask you to think about a venue for our Holiday gathering. There have been a number of good suggestions, but we would like to explore other options before we settle on a venue. Please contact me if you have any questions or ideas on this.

We could also use your help in building our membership. Current membership is strong, but it could be stronger still. Ask a colleague to join us. If you mention our great programs and the depth, diversity and collegiality of ARLIS/NY members, it should not be too challenging to recruit additional members. Spread the good news. More information including a registration form is available on the ARLIS/NY website (arlisny.org).

Finally, in a few months it will be time for proposing a slate for next year's offices. If you would like to run, or if you wish to nominate a colleague for Chair Elect or for Membership (member-at-large), please let me know. I am impressed and inspired by the professionalism and commitment of my current colleagues on the ARLIS/NY board. Please play a part in ensuring a strong board for next year.

I look forward to seeing my ARLIS/NY colleagues at our next program at Knoedler's on July 14th.

Letter to the Editor

----- Original Message -----

From: Sherman Clarke <sherman.clarke@nyu.edu>

Date: Wednesday, March 30, 2005 4:16 pm

Subject: letter to the arlisny editor

To ARLIS/NY colleagues:

I recently received an email message from Nina Kauder. She is Celine Palatsky's niece and has been to a few ARLIS/NY social functions (but not recently). She had found the notice about the travel award named in her aunt's honor while googling. Nina knew of Celine's devotion to the profession and chapter, and was delighted. Soon thereafter, I was able to forward the message about this year's winner, who is also mentioned in Ken Soehner's letter in the spring newsletter.

Just thought I'd let you know how your membership dues and extra gifts to the chapter have an effect beyond the immediate membership of the chapter and profession.

Sherman Clarke
NYU
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Recent Chapter Events

By Jenny Tobias

Artists Space, Wednesday April 20

On a very warm spring afternoon, twenty-ish ARLIS types gathered at Artists Space in SoHo. There we were greeted by Executive Director Barbara Hunt and two staff members, including the manager of the Artists File collection.

First we enjoyed three exhibitions: *Model Modernisms* in the main space, paintings by Sari Carel in the Project Space and an installation by nARCHITECTS called *Party Wall*.

Focused on sculpture, painting and photography, works in *Model Modernisms* all reflected upon utopian modernism: “while modernism...appears historic and complete...the social and formal products of these earlier moments of utopian thought still define our everyday routines as well as our aesthetic judgments.”

For the viewer, linking works to theme was an intriguing challenge. Take for example a dominant, mysterious wall painting. How to place its wavy gravy motif? Does it refer to Hawaii as one of us guessed? Geological strata? 1970s super graphics? And what about utopian modernism? Hunt explained that artist Olaf Nicolai referenced a traditional Bulgarian ceramic motif, developed by the government into a tourist-industry product. Thus craft was mass-produced in service of the collective masses. Through hand-painting the motif at billboard scale, Nicolai returns the motif to its craft origins, yet renders it new and hip. Ironically, Nicolai didn't do the painting—that was done by Artists Space staff. One of whom described the painstaking work, and the pain of painting it over at the exhibition's conclusion.

Founded in 1972, Artists Space is a considerably more durable effort. Hunt provided a capsule history of this alternative space—one of the first—and outlined impressive current initiatives. A program bridging past and present is the Irving Sandler Artists File. Though we didn't view the collection (and I didn't note its size, or when it started—didn't know I'd be doing the write up!) it's billed as one of the largest and most comprehensive in the country. And it now has an online component, described in some detail by a staff member. Whom I have to get in touch with about ominous use of the word “deaccessioning.”



Wall painting by Olaf Nicolai in *Model Modernisms*

D.A.P., Tuesday May 17

Back in SoHo a month later, the art librarian crowd crowded into the informal library of D.A.P., Inc. (Distributed Art Publishers), white wine in hand. There founder Sharon Gallagher described how she developed and sustains this dynamic art publishing and distribution system.

It quickly became clear that distribution is the key to Distributed Art Publishers. Gallagher's success is based in part on making small art publishers' titles available to a broader audience. In another context she stated, “We knew we could make it easy for bookstores to order these books. We can familiarize galleries and alternative spaces with the discount schedule and standard returns policy—educate them about the publishing industry. They make less per copy but we can get their books into several hundred stores, instead of just a handful.” After a decade of strategic growth, D.A.P. now distributes nearly 200 publishers, including high-profile museums (MoMA, the Gugg, the Walker), art publishers (Aperture, as of July), and important European publishers (HatjeCantz, Steidl, Actar).

Discussing trends in art book publishing, Gallagher addressed the impact of online and big-box booksellers, describing D.A.P.'s strategic—and creative—responses to the changing market.

But wait, there's more. Hearing Gallagher confirmed my sense that D.A.P. is on the pulse, one that quickens as it approaches the avant-garde edge. This is clearest with their publishing and co-publishing ventures. These risk-taking works infuse the catalog with energy. They include artists' books, artist-writer collaborations, and category-defying publications.

Whether published or just distributed, all D.A.P. titles are intended to appeal to “culture workers,” according to Gallagher. “Culture workers” include students, professional “creatives,” collectors, critics, historians, and of course artists. A crowd that art librarians, culture workers themselves, well understand.

Thanks to Entertainment Coordinator Ken Soehner for arranging both events.

Strand Books, Wednesday March 23

By Suz Massen

On March 23, about fifty members of ARLIS/NY converged on Strand Books, located at Broadway and 12th Street. The Strand is an old New York City establishment. It was founded in 1927 by Benjamin Bass in a storefront on Fourth Avenue. Benjamin's son, Fred Bass, took over the management of the business in 1956 and moved the store to its present location. Strand Books takes up six floors of the eleven-story building that it occupies. Fred's daughter, Nancy, now runs the store with him. The Strand can be found in two locations these days. The first is its main location on Broadway. The second is its satellite store on Fulton Street.

The ARLIS/NY program at Strand Books was held in the new second floor expansion, which was completed in the fall of 2004. The added room allowed for the art-related books to occupy a single location on the second floor, instead of being on the first floor and in the basement. Bright lighting, high ceilings, and light-hardwood floors create a relaxing environment to browse the many books that now call the second floor their home. A notable renovation to the store is the newly installed air conditioning for the summer months. The years of spending hot summer days perspiring over books at the Strand are now over. It will become a safe haven from the heat of New York City, as so many other stores are already.

Fred Bass gave an introduction about the history of Strand Books and its expansion project to the ARLIS/NY attendees. In his talk, he revealed the story behind its slogan "8 Miles of Books," which is now "18 Miles of Books." He told the story of a journalist, George Will, who visited the Strand to write an article about it. One of the questions he asked Fred was how many miles of books were contained within the store. Fred measured the books and determined that they were about eight miles in length. After the expansion of the store, the slogan was updated to reflect the increased number of books now available. While the slogan says "18 Miles of Books," Fred estimates that there are actually around twenty-four miles of books on the shelves.

Richard Lilly, the head of the Art Department, followed Fred's introduction with his own reflections on the changes in art publishing over the years. He stressed the expansion of art publishing as including all types of art such as decorative art and Japanese *manga* comic books. He said that the Strand originally collected and sold only second-hand art books, but now buys new titles directly from the publishers. It now has one of the largest collections of fine art books in the United States.

After Fred and Richard talked, there was a lively question and answer period. ARLIS/NY member Sherman Clarke asked if the addition of so many books to the store after the expansion required any structural changes to be made to the building to support the added weight. Fred explained that the building the store occupies was originally designed to support heavy machinery, so no structural changes were needed. Heidi Hass asked if the Strand's inventory was available for searching online. Fred and Richard both replied that about ninety percent of the inventory is available for searching through its website. In response to other questions, Fred explained that the accepting of discarded books from libraries is handled on a case-by-case basis, and paperbacks are currently not included in the online inventory.

The program was followed by a reception in the store. Strand Books was generous in giving all attendees a free Strand zipper-top tote bag to keep all those new purchases nice and cozy.

JSTOR at the Metropolitan Museum, Tuesday April 26

By Suz Massen

On April 26, 2005, ARLIS/NY members met at the Douglas Dillon Board Room of the Metropolitan Museum of Art to hear about JSTOR's inclusion of art and art history journals in its collections. Heidi McGregor, Director of Publisher Relations at JSTOR, discussed the collection development that has occurred in the areas of art and art history, and talked about the new journals being added to JSTOR's collections.

JSTOR began as a project of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 1990 and became an independent non-profit institution in 1995. Its goal is to create electronic versions of print journals to free up library space and to provide easy access to journal content. JSTOR acts as an electronic archive for the back issues of scholarly journals. JSTOR captures images of the original print publication, replicating it in electronic form. It includes humanities and social science journals. JSTOR is developing a collection that will focus on language and literature, music, and the history and study of art and architecture.

Heidi spoke on JSTOR's history over the past decade. JSTOR now has more than 488 journals, from more than forty-one publishers, available in its database. Working with a great number of publishers takes time and good negotiating skills. Copyright remains one of the major challenges, since JSTOR produces electronic surrogates that replicate the original layout of the journals.

Heidi followed her general discussion of JSTOR with more details on their Art & Sciences III Collection, which contains art, art history, and architecture journals. She discussed the eighteen journals that are already available, along with sixteen journals that are in production. She also described the negotiating process that is currently underway with twelve additional journals, including *Apollo*, *Master Drawings*, and *Print Quarterly*.

Following Heidi's presentation, there was a question and answer period. The Museum's Thomas J. Watson Library generously hosted a reception afterward. The program was well attended and gave attendees a glimpse of the future of art publications being available electronically.

Electronic Resources Discussion Group Meeting

By Rebecca K. Friedman

On May 3, thirteen ARLIS/NY members met at the Bard Graduate Center for the sixth meeting of the Electronic Resources Discussion Group (ERDG), begun in 2002. The focus of the meeting this time was on bibliographic instruction, especially in terms of teaching library patrons how to use specific electronic resources. The meeting began with each attendee commenting on how instruction is undertaken at her institution: who instructs? what format is used? has teaching "information literacy" been a factor as of late?, etc.

In a couple of cases, some libraries have shifted from formal classes in the library to scheduling instructional appointments for individuals, as they are needed. In most cases those leading instruction sessions are demonstrating the use of databases rather than having the entire class follow along at individual computer workstations. This is due partly to the lack of "wired" classrooms available to librarians for teaching, especially in smaller institutions.

New "instructional technology" positions were mentioned, along with the need to ensure that librarians and technology-oriented departments in an institution (for academic libraries, in particular) are working together to achieve what appear to be similar goals. Attendees from the Watson Library at the Metropolitan Museum spoke about a recent outreach initiative that library staff had undertaken in order to better serve and understand the needs of the curatorial departments in the Museum. Although a time-consuming process, it was felt that the program was a success.

Other topics that were mentioned included the maintenance of free websites, including whether or not to catalog them, the production of printed and/or web-based guides instructing users on how to use specific databases, pathfinders, etc., and the evaluation of instruction sessions. Several meeting attendees agreed that there could be more sessions on specific electronic resources at ARLIS conferences (not counting image databases), and the group proposed coming up with a future ARLIS session on database topics, and/or having database vendors come to ARLIS conferences or to a future meeting of the ERDG. It was felt that we could all benefit from receiving more information, not only about new content, but also about constantly changing interfaces and search features. A future meeting of the ERDG may include discussion on offering and maintaining remote access to subscription databases.

If interested in receiving the minutes from the meeting, please e-mail friedman@bgc.bard.edu.

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Attending the Houston Conference: A Student's Perspective

By Lauren Edison

I would like to thank ARLIS/NY for awarding me the Celine Palatsky Travel Award Scholarship. I was honored to be the recipient and to have had the opportunity to attend the annual conference. I would like to especially thank Heidi Hass, my mentor for the conference, Maria Oldal, my supervisor at the Pierpont Morgan Library, and Tony White for all their advice and assistance in introducing me to other ARLIS members.

As a library science student, I have heard my professors emphasize the importance of participating in professional organizations. This was an excellent way to begin my involvement in the ARLIS organization. At the First Time Attendees Meeting, Jeanne Brown defined ARLIS as an organization "to foster excellence in art librarianship." The conference promoted this idea by keeping meetings open to all attendees. A few weeks prior to the conference, I was discussing the upcoming event with a few librarians at the Morgan Library, and their advice to me was to attend as many sessions as possible. I kept that in mind as I planned my schedule, and I would suggest to any student or first time attendee to take advantage of as many meetings and lectures as possible because it is the best way to become familiar with the organization and to know about all the wonderful opportunities ARLIS has to offer.

As an intern at the Morgan Library, I updated and created new MARC records for the Drawings and Prints Department, and I was looking forward to attending discussions pertaining to cataloging. I found the Cataloging Cultural Objects lecture and the cataloging discussion sessions insightful. My perspective was broadened, and my knowledge base was expanded. As a cataloging intern and as a student nearing completion of a library science program, it was highly informative to hear the conversations about AACR3, and how it will affect the profession.

For all students, I strongly recommend attending the annual ARLIS/NA conference. This learning experience greatly enhanced my understanding of the profession. I feel I owe much to ARLIS/NA for their commitment to students and professional development. Thank you again to all the ARLIS New York members for allowing me to travel to Houston and for the invaluable advice. I look forward to seeing many of you again next year in Banff.



Janis Ekdahl and Rodica Krauss show off their new boots, while waiting at the Houston airport.



A Frick reunion: Pat Barnett, Eric Wolf, and Debbie Kempe.

Photos by James Mitchell.

School of Visual Arts Library Renovation and Expansion

By Holly Hatheway, Associate Library Director

In the summer and fall of 2004 the Visual Arts Library at the School of Visual Arts underwent a significant expansion and renovation. We now encompass the entire 2nd floor of 380 2nd Avenue, which is about a 30% increase in total space. All areas of the collection have gained additional storage and growth space; and staff space and offices were significantly improved.

The much-needed improvements for the print collection include additional steel shelving; installation of compact shelving for more efficient housing of back issue periodicals; and steel x-ray shelving with oversized x-ray folders to house the picture collection. New features include storage for special collections such as locked, glass-fronted cabinets for rare books and artists' books.

Also, we enhanced the Visual Resources facility (slide library) with twice the overall space, more efficient faculty workspaces and improved staff areas for scanning and collection processing. Additionally, the space for the upcoming Milton Glaser Design Study Center and Archive was built and shares a copy photography room with the Visual Resources Collection.

The new design affords a more logical arrangement of staff offices, e.g., technology support now located near computer labs; head reference librarian's office near reference and circulation desks; and a new "smart" classroom (seats 24) doubles as a general student computing lab when not in use for classes.

Overall, the biggest enhancement is the improved aesthetics in the library. The space is brighter and more open with clear sight lines throughout. Our new "look" includes bright color walls, attractive carpeting, finished wood floors, and new information signs designed by George Tscherny.

Please visit our web page for more information: <http://www.sva.edu>



Photos by Jill Blagsvedt.

Upcoming Chapter Event

The next ARLIS/NY program will take place July 14th from 5–7 p.m. at Knoedler & Company. Edey Weissler, Knoedler's librarian, has arranged for us to see the current exhibition, "Mark Di Suvero: Indoors," consisting of nine sculptures dating from 2002 through 2005. The works range in size from sixteen inches to over eight feet in height, with moving components that, as John Yau writes in the catalogue essay, "invite the viewer to actively participate with the work, to make it turn, spin, and swing, and rock." The exhibition also includes a selection of recent works on paper. We will have the added pleasure of visiting the gallery's extraordinary library, with a reception to follow.

Founded in 1846, Knoedler's is among New York's, indeed the world's, great galleries and this will be a memorable program. Thanks to Faith Pleasanton for helping to organize it, and of course many thanks to Edey Weissler, librarian, and Ann Freedman, President of Knoedler & Company for offering such a great event.

The address is 19 East 70th Street and we will begin promptly at 5 p.m.

Please RSVP to nancy.mandel@metmuseum.org.

From the Field

By Judy Connorton

On April 15 ARLIS/NY member Gerald Beasley, Director of Columbia University's Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, gave a thought-provoking talk on "The Future of the Architectural Library." Given at the Pratt Institute, his talk was one of the ISI Samuel Lazerow Memorial Lectures sponsored by Thomson Scientific to honor the late Samuel Lazerow, who had a distinguished library career. Gerald spoke of a future scenario where there will be both a radical increase in digital archival collections and also a necessary and important place for physical libraries as key players. Larger libraries, equipped with more money and staff, will have an especially critical role in this future that will require world-wide collaboration and the creation of consortia to ensure continuing access to more—and more complex—digital architectural collections for researchers equipped with a broad spectrum of IT skills.

Member News

John Maier has joined the Pratt Institute Libraries as the Head of Technical Services, after five years as the Technical Services Coordinator at the Stephen Chan Library of NYU's Institute of Fine Arts.

Annamaria Poma Swank has left the Cloisters to take a new position as Librarian of the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America at Columbia University.

Tony White, Assistant Professor and Art & Architecture Librarian at the Pratt Institute, has an informative article in the current issue (vol. 24, no. 1) of *Art Documentation*. The title is "Journal Title Overlap Study of Four Major Online Art Indexes."

And we welcome the following new members who have joined the New York chapter since our last issue:

Johanna Bauman – Visual Media Curator, Bard Graduate Center

Susan Bucks – Student, Rutgers University

Roberto Ferrari

Patricia Kim – Student, Pratt Institute

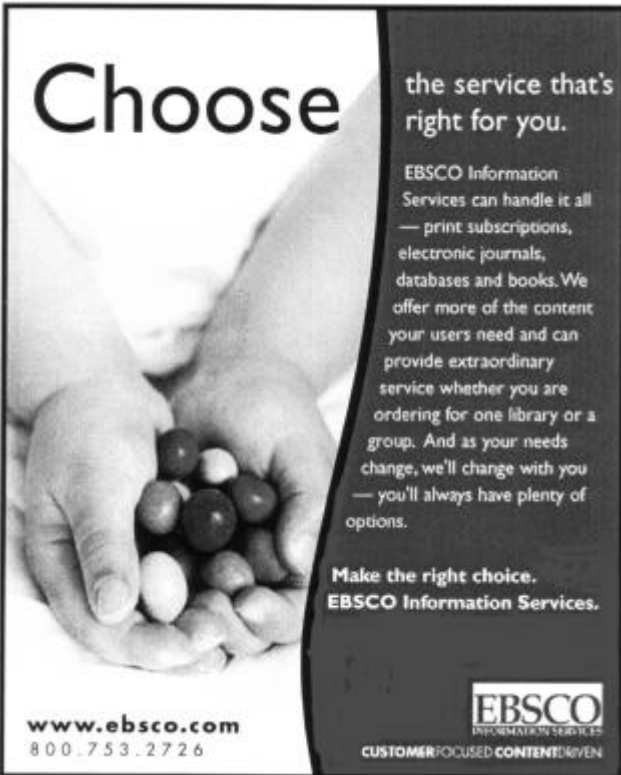
John Lindaman – Library Assistant, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Susannah McDonald – Archivist, Anthony Abbate Custom Design

Sarah O'Holla – Library Assistant, Whitney Museum of Art

Kristen Richards – Assistant Archivist, Whitney Museum of Art

Carol Yoshimura – Library Associate for Public Services, Frick Art Reference Library



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