

NEWS**Judd Library Project Update,
December, 2004**

Good news! At the suggestion of Richard Shiff, Professor of Art and Art History at UT Austin, I spoke with the Marianne Stockebrand, Director of the Chinati Foundation, on November 15. She indicated that both the Chinati and Judd Foundations are interested in a Judd Library Project. Sam and I will be working on a proposal to send to her mid-December. There are still many unanswered questions at this point but we do know they are enthusiastic about providing access to the Judd Library. A huge thanks to Sam for initiating this project. If you are interested in working on this project, please let Sam or I know.

This is a very exciting time for ARLIS/Texas-Mexico.

Submitted by Laura Schwartz

THE Medium

v. 30, no. 3 (fall/winter 2004) | [issues](#)

► PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By now we have all had some time to relax after our Chapter meeting last month. My sincerest thanks go to the 25 members who attended the meeting. I admit to having some bias on the matter, but I think it was a very successful event. I want to acknowledge the individuals who helped make it so:

- Beverly Carver, Chapter Treasurer: for receiving and processing all the registrations and invoices;
- Jon Evans, Past President: for hosting the Chapter Business and Conference Planning Meetings and for organizing and hosting the Collecting Contemporary Art in Houston presentation, which was highly interesting and relevant to our upcoming conference;
- Margaret Culbertson: for organizing the Museum District walking tour by Stephen Fox and for leading the Downtown Architecture walking tour; both held fascinating revelations about the city's development;
- Conference Program Co-Chairs Elizabeth Schaub and Laura Schwartz and Local Arrangements Co-Chair Jon Evans: for steering the Conference Planning Meeting; and to all CPAC members for updating the Chapter on the various aspects of the upcoming conference;
- Elizabeth Schaub: for suggesting the sunset tour of the Live Oak Friends Meeting House, which was truly sublime;
- Sam Duncan, Chapter Webmaster: for uploading Chapter meeting files in a most expeditious fashion.

I also want to thank the members of the Nominating Committee, Jon Evans and Janine Henri, for providing the Chapter with its newest officers-to-be: 2005 Vice-President/President-Elect Elizabeth Schaub and 2005-2006 Secretary Merriann Bidgood. Thanks and congratulations to Elizabeth and Merriann for volunteering to serve the Chapter in these capacities.

I want to acknowledge other notable participation by Chapter members: Chia-Chun Shih for taking over the Chapter website while Sam Duncan concentrates his efforts toward developing the Houston Conference Website, and to Charles Burchard and Selene Hinojosa for agreeing to translate a portion of the Chapter website into Spanish.

The success of the Chapter rests squarely on the volunteer efforts made by its members. In addition to those listed above, many of you serve the Chapter in quieter ways, perhaps as a contributor to *The Medium* or as a member of the Lois Swan Jones Award Committee, for example. Your efforts are no less noteworthy and I want to thank you for them. Please forgive the oversight if I have omitted any name.

Onto another item of business: you may have noticed from a recent posting that, yes, the Chapter is indeed headed to Marfa for the 2005

Chapter meeting. Dates have not yet been selected. If you have any suggestions of a specific item or destination within Marfa or the area, please contact me. Hosting a meeting without local representation will require more people to be involved; judging by the excitement at the decision to meet in Marfa, this should not be a problem.

In synergistic conjunction with the Marfa meeting, interest in a Donald Judd Library cataloging project has been revived by several of the members who will be providing updates via our Broadcast discussion list. Thanks to them for their interest and efforts; this could be a groundbreaking and fascinating endeavor for the Chapter.

Please look to the next issue of *The Medium* for full meeting summaries and business meeting minutes.

Thanks again for your continued interest and participation in the Chapter,

Mark
--

Mark Pompelia
Director, Visual Resources Center
Dept. of Art History
Rice University
PO Box 1892, MS 21
Houston TX 77251-1892

Art Libraries Society of North America
2005 Annual Conference
HOUSTON April 1-5

President, ARLIS Texas-Mexico Chapter
e-mail: pompelia@rice.edu

.....
► 2005 MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the ARLIS/Texas-Mexico Annual Business Meeting held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston on October 23, 2004.

President Mark Pompelia called the 39th Annual ARLIS/TX-MX Chapter Meeting to order by welcoming the attendees, each of whom introduced themselves.

Attendees included:

- Merriann Bidgood
- Craig Bunch
- Beverly Carver
- Margaret Culbertson
- Gwen Dixie
- Sam Duncan
- Jon Evans
- Margaret Ford
- Stephen Gasset
- Janine Henri
- Selene Hinojosa

Ann Jones
Mark Pompelia
Jet Prendeville
Bonnie Reed
Elizabeth Schaub
Laura Schwartz
Chia-Chun Shih*
Tara Spies

*Departed before meeting adjourned.

Pompelia requested a motion to approve the 2003 Business Meeting minutes. Janine Henri made the motion and Laura Schwartz seconded. By acclamation, the Chapter voted to approve the motion.

President's Report

Mark Pompelia began by thanking Chapter members for their support during his unexpected ascendancy from Vice President/President-elect to President. In particular he acknowledged Jon Evans, Laura Schwartz, Sam Duncan and Beverly Carver. Additionally, Pompelia recognized Evans for arranging the Chapter's business meeting at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Gwen Dixie for accepting the invitation to become Vice-President for 2004, Duncan for expeditious web updates and Margaret Culbertson for leading a walking tour of downtown Houston and arranging the Museum District walking tour led by Steven Fox.

Pompelia reported on activities related to the Society's upcoming Annual Conference hosted by the Chapter. There have been a series of Conference Planning Committee Meetings including one hosted in Houston attended by members of the Society's Board:

Jeanne Brown, President
Margaret Webster, Vice-President/President Elect
Lynda White, Treasurer
Allen Townsend, Past-President
Sue Rawlyk, Conference Manager

as well as Chapter members:

Elizabeth Schaub & Laura Schwartz, Co-Program Chairs
Jon Evans & Mark Pompelia, Co-Local Planning Chairs
Janine Henri, Exhibits
Bonnie Reed, Members' Art Exhibit & Auction Coordinator
Margaret Culbertson, Tours

Session proposals, special events and other local arrangements issues were discussed at this meeting. Pompelia believes that we will be offering a program strengthened by the inclusion of time-honored traditions such as Convocation and Membership Luncheon speakers. The Hilton-Americas provides a gorgeous space for meetings and events and will add to the attendees overall conference experience. Additionally, the conference web site, developed by Sam Duncan, is the most dynamic in the Society's history. Further, the tour offerings organized by Margaret Culbertson are enticing and will provide attendees an opportunity to experience the very best that Houston has to offer as well as the option to explore several sites outside the city limits. Pompelia mentioned conference sponsorship and development initiatives headed by Allen

Townsend.

Pompelia acknowledged the following members for their dedication to making the conference a success:

Bonny Reed for organizing the Members' Art Exhibit & Auction; donated works in the exhibition will be auctioned and funds will benefit the Society.

Janine Henri for her work on the Exhibitors' Prospectus

Sam Duncan for a gorgeous and elegant website.

Margaret Ford for committing to organize volunteers to staff the Conference Registration Desk.

Pompelia noted the past year's contributions to the Society made by members Allen Townsend, ARLIS/NA Past-President and Laura Schwartz, South Regional Representative.

Laura Schwartz was promoted and became Head of the Fine Arts Library at the University of Texas at Austin. Margaret Culbertson became Library Head at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Beverly Carver became a proud grandmother.

Additional milestones and accomplishments were cited by members:

Ann Jones reported that the McNay Art Museum will begin celebrating its 50 th Anniversary with the exhibition *A Collection for San Antonio: The McNay Celebrates 50 Years*, beginning November 6, 2004. Craig Bunch contributed to the 5th edition of *Texas Reference Sources* published in 2004 by the Texas Libraries Association. Janine Henri co-authored *The Library and the Accreditation Process in Design Disciplines: Best Practices* (ARLIS/NA Occasional Paper No. 14) with Jeanne M. Brown and Paul Glassman. Mark Pompelia will become editor of the *VRA Bulletin* in March 2005 after having served as Associate Editor.

Treasurer's Report

Beverly Carver distributed the Treasurer's Report covering the period from January 1-October 20, 2004.

Beginning balance	\$988.51
Income	
Membership dues 2004	60.00
Membership dues 2005	405.00
Lois Swan Jones Travel Award	375.00
Conference registration	570.00
Chapter dinner	735.00
Total income	\$2,145.00
Sub-total	\$3,133.51
Expenses	
Lois Swan Jones Travel Award	750.00
Hostway	167.40

Postage	18.50
Chapter dinner (est)	744.00
Breakfast (est)	240.00
Stephen Fox-walking tour	50.00
TOTAL	\$1,969.90
Ending balance	\$1,163.61

Carver noted that last year's Chapter conference in New Orleans was slightly more expensive than anticipated.

Carver reported that to date, \$375 had been contributed to the Lois Swan Jones Travel Award fund.

In response to Janine Henri's question as to how many members the Chapter had in 2003 versus 2004, Carver thought that there were 28 and that she was sure that there would be a few more individuals who would become members.

Secretary's Report

Elizabeth Schaub reported that the columns she submitted to ARLIS/NA *Update* were published in issues number 1 and 4 (2004). The deadline for the last 2004 issue of *Update* is December 10 th. Schaub stated that she will be submitting a column focused on the Chapter's 2004 annual meeting.

Vice-President's Report

Gwen Dixie plans to edit one more issue of *The Medium* in December and may draft contributors.

Dixie reported that she doesn't always hear from column editors and since Brandon Pope has left his position at Southern Methodist University she will need to recruit a new academic libraries editor. She asked current column editors to continue and if they do not wish to they should contact her.

Discussion ensued regarding current column editors. Mark Pompelia suggested that the Chapter complete the year with the current slate of editors and will discuss restructuring after the start of the new year.

Webmaster's Report

Sam Duncan posted three new issues of *The Medium* ([v.29:3](#), [30:1](#), [30:2](#)) on the Chapter's web site. Duncan pointed out that the depth of the archives has grown and there are currently seventeen issues of *The Medium* (v. 24:3-4 through v.30:2) available online and searchable via the search engine loaded on the site.

Duncan reported that he found a method to archive the Texas-Mexico exhibition listings and they are now available via the [Chapter's site](#).

Duncan noted that the Chapter's listserv is not immune to spam; he receives one or two spam messages a day that must be dealt with. All new subscriptions to the listserv are approved before being added so this helps manage potential abuse.

Duncan is investigating alternative web hosting services for the Chapter's site. Yahoo may be a viable option.

Discussion regarding the Chapter's broadcast list was initiated by Duncan. He passed around the list of individuals who are included so that members could update it. Jon Evans suggested that adding vendors to this list would be acceptable.

Duncan continues to work with Phil Heagy on the Exhibits Listing.

Duncan broached the subject of stepping down from his position as Chapter webmaster stating that he did not want to monopolize the position and suggested that another member may want to gain the valuable experience afforded by this position. Chia-Chun Shih volunteered to fill the position under Duncan's tutelage.

South Regional Representative's Report

Laura Schwartz reported that the ARLIS/NA Executive Board met in Calgary, AB July 26-27, 2004.

The day before the meeting the Executive Board went on a day trip to Banff in anticipation of the Society's Annual Conference May 3-11, 2006. The Banff Springs Hotel is a lovely conference venue and amazing architectural structure. The planners of the 2006 meeting are putting together a financial planning and logistics document for members who want to begin planning their trip to Banff. The planners want to clarify any misconceptions the membership may have about Banff as a conference site. Schwartz will encourage Banff conference planners to have this document completed by the 2005 meeting. Future meeting sites are as follows: Atlanta in 2007 and Indianapolis in 2008. Neither one of the hotel contracts has been signed and dates have not been firmed up.

At the mid-year meeting following the trip to Banff, the Board spent time thinking about and discussing strategic planning. The Board would like the Strategic Planning Task Force to address the following four themes as they create their plan: professional development and support, visibility and advocacy, communication and cooperation, and standards and best practices.

Schwartz reported that after researching the legal relationship between Chapters and the Society's headquarters, it appears that this is not an issue of concern at this juncture and is being tabled; from a legal perspective the relationship between the respective Chapters and the Society is in good order. In retrospect, it may have been a bit premature to discuss it with the membership prior to fully researching the issue. Janine Henri asked that this information be communicated to the members at large to alleviate any anxiety that the initial discussion may have provoked.

Schwartz noted that the new Conference Documents Editor position has been filled by John Taormina and will join the Conference Planning Team. Taormina will gather and edit the conference proceedings for the Society's annual conference. Jon Evans asked if the incumbent received a stipend to which Schwartz answered "no."

All bylaws changes were approved by the membership. These included simplifying the membership structure, placing the standing committee list in the policy manual instead of the bylaws allowing for more flexibility with committee creation and dissolution, and allowing email or other forms of electronic communication in voting.

The ARLIS/NA website is currently being examined for redesign. A contract with Q Ltd. has been signed. Schwartz stated that she was not certain of the project's timeline but expected that the newly designed site would be ready by summer 2005.

Schwartz reported that we will only have a conference Internet Room (or Internet workstations for members) at the 2005 Houston conference if we can find a sponsor. Allen Townsend is working with the Houston local arrangements team to identify potential sponsors. Mark Pompelia suggested that Townsend approach Artstor about funding.

Schwartz invited the members to ask questions about any of the items she reported on noting that additional information can be found in the Board minutes on the Society's web site.

Schwartz concluded her report by saying that she has really enjoyed representing the Chapter over the last 2 ½ years as the South Regional Representative. She has learned a lot about the Society and about what it takes to lead an organization and looks forward to handing off the responsibility to Heather Ball who will undoubtedly do an excellent job as the Chapter's liaison. Schwartz encouraged members who are interested in Society leadership to make themselves known.

Election of Vice-President/President-Elect

Janine Henri, representing the Nominating Committee, informed the Chapter that Elizabeth Schaub's term as Secretary would end in 2004 and that someone would need to be elected to fill the position.

Henri thanked Gwen Dixie for accepting the Vice-President position in 2004 after Mark Pompelia became President following Mary Leonard's resignation. Henri thanked Pompelia for his flexibility and for taking on the presidency in advance of when he had expected.

Henri presented nominations for Vice-President/President Elect and Secretary: Elizabeth Schaub and Merriann Bidgood respectively. She called for further nominations and none were offered.

By a vote of acclamation, Schaub was elected to serve as Vice-President/President-Elect and Bidgood was elected to serve as Secretary for 2005-2006.

Beverly Carver's term as Treasurer ends at the end of 2005. She will not seek reelection.

Pompelia thanked Henri and Jon Evans for serving on the Nominating Committee.

Lois Swan Jones Committee Report

Merriann Bidgood, representing the committee, reported that Elizabeth Schaub was last year's recipient of a \$750 award to attend the Society's

annual conference in New York City.

Janine Henri expressed concern that the award be large enough to substantially defray the costs of attending the conference. She offered a history of the award stating that around 1992 it was established to provide financial assistance to the recipient. When Lois Swan Jones retired from the University of North Texas, the Chapter voted to name the award in her honor. The award is meant to assist a member who is a first-time conference attendee or someone who is participating in the conference but has not received full institutional funding; only members of the Chapter are eligible to apply. The recipient is asked to prepare a report for *The Medium* documenting his/her experience. Money to fund the award is contributed by the members.

Laura Schwartz encouraged members to apply for the award. John Hagood will be coming up with a timeline for applications and a decision.

Mark Pompelia requested that Bidgood continue to serve on the Committee and stated that he would like a third member to join. Margaret Ford volunteered to serve.

Henri moved to offer a \$500 award to assist the 2005 Houston conference attendee. Evans seconded. No discussion ensued. Henri moved to vote and Evans seconded. By acclamation, the chapter voted to approve the motion.

Website Translation Update

Jon Evans reported that the Chapter received a \$250 grant from the Society to fund translation of the Chapter's home page and membership form into Spanish. Evans stated that Chuck Burchard has offered to work on this project; Selene Hinojosa volunteered to help as well and Evans suggested she contact Burchard so that they might work together. Janine Henri wondered if Elsa Barberena might comment on the translation once it is completed.

Laura Schwartz noted that the \$28,500 Getty grant to support the attendance of ten Latin American librarians at the Houston conference provides a good opportunity to involve potential members, some of whom will speak Spanish.

Special Cataloging Project

Sam Duncan provided background about a proposed Chapter sponsored project to inventory Donald Judd's personal library located in Marfa, Texas. After Chapter members expressed an interest in this project at last year's meeting, Duncan contacted Larry Fransell, a librarian at the Sol Ross Library in Alpine seeking advice about how to proceed.

In response to Jon Evans inquiry as to how the inventory would be made available to a broader audience, Duncan suggested that it could be published and would be a great scholarly contribution to the field. Such an effort and subsequent publication would also serve to elevate the Chapter's profile. Laura Schwartz concurred with Duncan's assessment referencing the recent publication of a book about Robert Smithson that included a list of the publications in his library adding that she thinks scholars find this type of information very useful.

Mark Pompelia suggested that drafting a letter to the Judd Foundation regarding the Chapter's interest in such a project would be the logical next step to move the project forward. In addition, it was agreed that an estimate of the number of items in the library should be obtained to further assess the project's scope. Following up on Ann Jones suggestion, Pompelia agreed that researching who makes up the Judd Foundation's board to determine potential contacts was also important. Bonnie Reed volunteered to talk to a professor at Texas Tech who might lend some insight into the project. Laura Schwartz noted that she would contact a faculty member at UT who had worked on a book about Judd last year. Duncan agreed to draft the letter.

2005 Chapter Meeting

Mark Pompelia distributed a map of Texas including a breakdown of the locations the Chapter has held meetings since 1990. During the period from 1990-2004, the preponderance of meetings has been held in Houston, Dallas or Austin.

Pompelia has informally approached both the Southeast and Mountain West Chapters about having a joint meeting in the future. In 2005 the Southeast Chapter is planning to meet in St. Petersburg, Florida and Mountain West is planning to meet in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. The Mountain West president has suggested meeting with our Chapter in Tucson in 2006.

Pompelia suggested that the Chapter may want to consider Marfa, Texas for the 2005 meeting. Janine Henri pointed out that since no current members are located in Marfa, Pompelia and Elizabeth Schaub, as incoming Vice-President/President-elect, would need to have a level of comfort planning a meeting without the help of a local arrangements team. Both Pompelia and Schaub agreed that they were comfortable with the idea.

Gwen Dixie moved to hold the 2005 Chapter meeting in Marfa, Texas. Janine Henri seconded the motion. By acclamation, the Chapter voted to approve the motion.

Pompelia returned to discussion about the location for the 2006 Chapter meeting and solicited feedback from the members regarding the proposal to meet with Mountain West in Tucson. Dixie believes that it is a good idea. Beverly Carver stated that from a Treasurer's perspective it is a more complex venture to hold a joint meeting. Jon Evans confirmed that the Chapter made less of a profit on the joint meeting in New Orleans in 2003. Laura Schwartz reminded the members that the Society's annual conference in 2006 will be held in Banff and will cost more to attend so the Chapter may not want to have a meeting that would require traveling out of state. Bonnie Reed suggested Galveston as a possible locale.

In the interest of time, the discussion was tabled and it was agreed that a dialog about the 2006 meeting location would be initiated on the Chapter's listserv.

Conference Call for Volunteers

Margaret Ford passed around a sign up sheet requesting that members indicate whether they might be available to staff the Registration Desk at the upcoming annual conference in Houston.

Laura Schwartz suggested that the 2006 Banff conference organizers should be encouraged to volunteer to staff the Registration Desk in order to gain experience.

Jet Prendeville inquired as to whether we should solicit the help of non-members such as students.

Jon Evans stated that Chuck Burchard would inform fellow UNT students about volunteer opportunities. Evans will compile a list of staffing needs, such as tour proctors, that will include the number of hours required. Schwartz suggested that a call for volunteers go out on ARLIS-L listing all areas where volunteers may help.

ARLIS/NA 2005 Welcome Party Donation

Discussion regarding the Chapter's contribution to the conference Welcome Party was preceded by Treasurer Beverly Carver stating that she would like to maintain a healthier bank account balance than has been the case in the past.

Jon Evans asked about whether there was a precedent for the amount donated by the chapter hosting the annual conference. Janine Henri responded that the hosting chapter funds the bulk of the Welcoming Party. Carver stated that a donation of \$250 would leave approximately \$400 in the Chapter's account.

Laura Schwartz brought up the point that the Chapter's dues are currently \$15 and wondered whether we should consider raising them. Mark Pompelia remarked that he would like the Chapter to give a healthy donation since this is a party that the Chapter itself is hosting.

Pompelia moved that the Chapter donate \$250 to the Welcome Party. The motion was seconded and by acclamation, the Chapter voted to approve the motion.

New Business

Mark Pompelia addressed the fact that two past presidents are currently serving on the Nominating Committee. He suggested the Chapter have a built-in administrative structure to guide the composition of the Nominating Committee. The Chapter agreed.

Raising chapter dues was discussed. Pompelia called for a motion to raise dues to \$20 in 2006. Merriann Bidgood made the motion. Tara Spies seconded. Pompelia called for the vote. No discussion ensued and by acclamation, the Chapter voted to approve the motion.

Janine Henri would like to nominate [name intentionally left blank] for the 2005 Distinguished Service Award. She needs letters of support from colleagues to include in the packet that will be submitted for review that is due in two and a half weeks. Pompelia suggested that Henri contact the committee reviewing nominations and petition for a deadline extension.

Henri provided a brief update on the status of the Chapter's archives. At last year's meeting in New Orleans, Henri and Beth Dodd volunteered to investigate whether a student from The University of Texas Information School might be interested in a Capstone project to describe the Chapter's archives. Henri requested additional information about the proposed project and its scope so that an accurate job description could be drafted. It was suggested that this would be a good topic to bring up on the Chapter's listserv for further discussion.

Jon Evans requested assistance for the workshop They Never Covered This in Library School: Research Tools in Pre-Columbian, Colonial, and Contemporary Latin American Art that will be offered at the upcoming annual conference. Craig Bunch volunteered to assist.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

Respectfully submitted by:
Elizabeth Schaub
Director, Visual Resources Collection
School of Architecture
The University of Texas at Austin
512.471.5003

► SOUTH REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Laura Schwartz reported that the ARLIS/NA Executive Board met in Calgary, AB July 26-27, 2004.

The day before the meeting the Executive Board went on a day trip to Banff in anticipation of the Society's Annual Conference May 3-11, 2006. The Banff Springs Hotel is a lovely conference venue and amazing architectural structure. The planners of the 2006 meeting are putting together a financial planning and logistics document for members who want to begin planning their trip to Banff. The planners want to clarify any misconceptions the membership may have about Banff as a conference site. This document will be ready by the 2005 meeting in Houston. Future meeting sites are as follows: Atlanta in 2007 and Indianapolis in 2008. Neither one of the hotel contracts has been signed and dates have not been firmed up.

At the mid-year meeting following the trip to Banff, the Board spent time thinking about and discussing strategic planning. The Board would like the Strategic Planning Task Force to address the following four themes as they create their plan: professional development and support, visibility and advocacy, communication and cooperation, and standards and best practices.

Schwartz noted that the new Conference Documents Editor position has been filled by John Taormina and will join the Conference Planning Team. Taormina will gather and edit the conference proceedings for the Society's annual conference. Jon Evans asked if the incumbent received a stipend to which Schwartz answered "no."

All bylaws changes were approved by the membership. These included simplifying the membership structure, placing the standing committee list in the policy manual instead of the bylaws allowing for more flexibility

with committee creation and dissolution, and allowing email or other forms of electronic communication in voting.

The ARLIS/NA website is currently being examined for redesign. A contract with Q Ltd. has been signed. Schwartz stated that she was not certain of the project's timeline but expected that the newly designed site would be ready by summer 2005.

Schwartz reported that we will only have a conference Internet Room (or Internet workstations for members) at the 2005 Houston conference if we can find a sponsor. Allen Townsend is working with the Houston local arrangements team to identify potential sponsors. Mark Pompelia suggested that Townsend approach Artstor about funding.

Schwartz invited the members to ask questions about any of the items she reported on noting that additional information can be found in the Board minutes on the Society's web site.

Schwartz concluded her report by saying that she has really enjoyed representing the Chapter over the last 2 ½ years as the South Regional Representative. She has learned a lot about the Society and about what it takes to lead an organization and looks forward to handing off the responsibility to Heather Ball who will undoubtedly do an excellent job as the Chapter's liaison. Schwartz encouraged members who are interested in Society leadership to make themselves known.

Submitted by Laura Schwartz

► VISIT TO LIVE OAK FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

The Live Oak Friends is a forty-year-old congregation of Quakers in Houston. For many years they met in various church buildings at times when the home congregation was not using the building. At one of these borrowed buildings they planted a live oak tree and afterwards gave themselves the name.

In 2000, the Live Oak Friends completed their own modest church building. In its own way is as interesting as a Gothic cathedral. The light artist, James Turrell, a practicing Quaker, heard about their efforts in 1995 and donated his ideas and one of his renowned skyspaces. Leslie Elkins, who was very familiar with spiritual designs, was the architect of the building. It is located in an old historic Houston working man's neighborhood, The Heights or Houston Heights, lately become popular for gentrification.

The building itself is modest-- a one story rectangle, with large roof overhangs, surrounded on all sides by a wide sidewalk, which is actually an extension of the foundation. Its outside is made of concretewall, a new and cheap material. The rectangle is divided into three parts. The two smaller parts at either end are service areas: the first part or vestibule, is for visiting before Meeting; and the last part, is a use area with restrooms and committee and eating meeting space. The larger, center part is a square and is used for the Meeting (what Quakers call their religious service). The center's contents and arrangement are at the heart of Quaker beliefs. Four sections of equal rows of plain, white oak pews, also designed by Turrell, surround the center of the room. The center is empty. There is no pulpit or altar. This is not a proscenium

stage, but a theater in the round. And the round is empty of furniture or person, unless someone who is called by the Inner Light chooses to address the congregation.

The showstopper and reason for great public interest in this building lies in the empty space over the center. There is located a huge hole, square and open to the air, by light sculptor, Turrell. Though giving the appearance of blank space, it is actually surrounded with florescent light and has a motorized, moveable closing. The space is always open on Wednesday and Friday nights (weather permitting). Recently the Friday night meetings have been dedicated to meditation about war in keeping with the Quakers' belief in pacifism. I think it would be impossible to visit this building and gaze upward through the skyspace and not be moved. To sit in silence in the room either alone or with one hundred other people, all viewing the vast sky as it changes ever so minutely, cannot help but effect a change in one's body and thoughts. Several of us were almost moved to tears as we left. Some compared it to a Rothko painting, particularly the dark ones at the Rothko Chapel in Houston.

Turrell has another skyspace at the new Nasher Sculpture Garden in Dallas-exceptionally beautiful, but no religious dimension. He also did the underground walkway between the old building of the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston and the new Beck wing-- No open spaces here except the tunnel, just the effect of his special lighting on the space. He is an original and indeed one of the geniuses of art of our time.

Submitted by Gwen Dixie

► VISIT TO THE FEDERAL RESERVE BUILDING, HOUSTON

Art librarians were allowed a very special tour of the work site of the Houston Federal Reserve Building, designed by Michael Graves. Since it was raining, and at a work site, the group took a chance on broken bones and dirty shoes and clothes and slid in the infamous Houston clay from cars to oversight shack to Federal Reserve building. Here they donned hard hats and walked through four floors of unfinished building escorted by the onsite architect and a Reserve employee. They saw what a vault looks like before it is finished, where the Governors of the Federal Reserve will have offices, and where the library will be (third floor front with a gorgeous view of the greenbelt along Allen Parkway). From all floors, except the vault, there was a panoramic view of Houston. The vault, which is entirely enclosed except for very high up windows, is made to withstand car bombs, missiles, fires and tornados. As the Reserve employee said, "The money is better protected than the people." It was mind-boggling to see two story movable shelving and know that it will sometime soon hold bales of bills, a few of which at least will be provided from your very own overworked, tax-paying librarians .

Since the building site had formerly been several blocks of low-cost housing, the design pays tribute to the "shotgun" house so prevalent in the past in that part of Houston. Indeed, the location on Allen Parkway is nearby what was once Allen Parkway Homes, a large public housing project since removed. To suggest the "shotgun" analogy, Graves outlined large sections of the building in a different colored tile from the rest giving the impression of large bricks. To mimic the shotgun's typical front porch, the Graves building is fronted with a portico supported by

classical pillars and containing a very high entrance. Taken all together and seen from the parkway it does give the suggestion of an overly large shotgun house.

For those who don't know---A shotgun house is a cheaply built, usually Southern, form, one room wide, in which the rooms are built in a string following each other. There is no space wasting hall, vestibule, or closet. It usually had no indoor plumbing or built in kitchen. It does have a small front porch for a lot of street interaction. It was said that you could fire a shotgun through the front door and the bullet would go through the middle door and out the back without ever hitting a wall. Thus the name, "shotgun house". It is some kind of Yankee misunderstanding that it is called "shotgun" because there are lots of spent shells in and around the house; Southerners save that for the woods. Just recently, on NPR, someone described a New York apartment as a "railroad apartment", one in which each room was entered from the one before, just like moving from car to car on the railroad. Same idea.

In keeping with Federal Reserve rules, the building will be decorated with art from local sources. At this time there was no public information on what artists would be included. Former Treasury Secretary Arthur Burns (think full head of white hair and bow tie) originated this concept of each building's collecting. Noticing the wonderful art displayed in foreign buildings when the Federal Reserve had occasion to meet abroad, he insisted on the best local art from the Federal Reserve District served by each Reserve Bank. The Dallas Federal Reserve Building owns the art of Earl Staley, Ann Stautberg, Joseph Havel, David Bates and Melissa Ethridge, among others. It even has its own curator with a Ph.d in art history. Despite all this your chances of seeing any of it except the huge and moving "Plowman" by Luis Jiminez which dominates the lobby and can be seen from the street outside, are practically nil. After being discouraged by the public relations arm of the building, having everyone's social security number checked ahead of time, waiting for six months, and being met at the entrance by shotgun-welding guards, a group from the Dallas Public Library was allowed to view the collection. The docents and the collection were delightful, but most people are not going to go through this to see art. Before getting too enraged, you need to know that the Federal Reserve is a quasi-governmental agency which actually is a money maker for the federal treasury. It is under no obligation to share its art with anybody and its buildings are not really open to the public. Well, it's good for the artists to make a sale. Though acknowledging a budget for the art collection, the only piece of art mentioned on the tour of the of the Houston Federal Reserve Bank was the huge "golden" American eagle with a wingspan as wide as the building which will sit over the front door of the portico; it is now being made by a Colorado artist. The library's window will actually look out directly on it from the third floor.

All in all a very interesting visit.

Submitted by Gwen Dixie

► EXHIBITIONS IN TEXAS AND MEXICO

The [exhibition list](#) is now published and updated on the the Web site.

► **SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

SPRING issue: April 1, 2005

► **COLUMN EDITORS**

Academic Libraries	vacant
Architecture Libraries	Janine Henri jhenri@mail.utexas.edu
Museum Libraries	Mary Leonard mleonard@DallasMuseumofArt.org
Public Libraries	Gwen Dixie gdixie@dallaslibrary.org
Visual Resources	Jacqui Allen jallen@DallasMuseumofArt.org

► **COLOPHON**

Editor:
Gwen Dixie, Art Librarian
Dallas Public Library
1515 Young Street
Dallas, TX 75201
Office: 214.670.1632
Gdixie@dallaslibrary.org

Subscriptions:
Beverly Carver
Architecture and Fine Arts Library Manager
University of Texas at Arlington
Architecture and Fine Arts Library
P.O. Box 19497
Arlington, TX 76019-0497
office: 817-272-3225
fax: 817-272-5067
bcarver@uta.edu