

TheMedium

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Welcome to the first issue of Volume 34 of *The Medium*. This issue features a session report on the Denver ARLIS/NA conference and a collection profile on the Visual Resources Center at Texas State University-San Marcos. There is also an update on news from the Dallas Arts district, the Dallas Public Library, the Menil Collection, the name change at the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University-San Marcos and the reorganization at the Architecture and Planning Library at UT-Austin. Elizabeth Schaub submitted the ARLIS/NA South Regional report. The annual report submitted by current president Selene Hinojosa is also in this issue. There are reports on other meetings including the VRA conference and the Association of Architecture School Librarians conference.

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A Trip Through Denver Parks and Neighborhoods

A Trip Through Denver Parks and Neighborhoods

Friday, May 2, 2008

Guide Carolyn Etter, a former co-manager of the Denver Parks and Recreation Department, was an expert guide for this trip.

Let me first explain "co-manager." Mrs. Etter had experience in non-profit and charitable managing. Her husband, Don Etter, had just retired from law practice. While reading the Denver Post one morning she said to her husband, "Wouldn't it be fun for us to co-manage the Parks and Recreation Department?" A few phone calls later the newly elected Mayor Federico Pena, later head of the Department of Transportation in the Clinton administration, made a dual appointment of this couple to head the department. They were among the highest executives in the country to have this arrangement.

What could have been an administrative nightmare turned out to be an executive success. Mrs. Etter says their parenting skills came into play. If mama has said no, don't come to daddy for a different answer. Those asking questions soon learned.

The tour began at City Park with its view west over downtown Denver to the Rocky Mountains. We could see all the way to Wyoming, the sky being clear that day. From this park, which had a small lake, we could see surrounding low-story apartment houses as well as one high-rise which interfered with the view. Mrs. Etter said that when the building permit was given it was ambiguous and allowed this high-rise to be built. When citizens and dwellers around the lake realized what had happened they became very vigilant and had stopped other projects. For the first of several times she commented that it takes constant vigilance to keep unwanted commercial interests from taking advantage of public places built and maintained by taxpayers. Mrs. Etter said that keeping commercial interests out of parks was one of the most recurring problems that she and her husband had while being commissioners. Only a citizenry on alert can watch for the sometime small, yet inappropriate encroachments. Commercial interests are always ready to profit from being in or around a public place.

Another problem was balancing park usage among groups. A manager must deny special treatment to organized groups at the expense of disorganized groups. You might not notice that soccer, rugby and Little League are by their very nature organized, demanding fields, lights, bleachers and denying use to others during their game times; while joggers, baby strollers, picnickers and Sunday park-goers are unorganized but deserve the park usage just as much. Each type has to be considered when managing a park.

The tour saw the twenty-three acre Denver Botanic Garden arranged into "rooms" with appropriate art and plants in each.

The tour group got out at Cheesman Park bordering the Capital Hill neighborhood. This park and its nearby wide boulevard streets was mandated by a former Denver mayor (our guide compared him to Robert Moses) during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the Beautiful City era. This movement was characterized by designs featuring broad, tree-lined boulevards, carefully chosen plantings, entry gates into designated areas, and large, urban parks often with lakes, in the middle of the neighborhood. Denver has had the advantage of having several eminent city planners who have laid out such neighborhoods and parks.

Many older neighborhoods in Denver have been at least partially preserved, making for an interesting city. These older neighborhoods range from very expensive to lower middle class. Denver seemed to have a lot of older, but very well-preserved housing stock. To a viewer accustomed to Houston or Dallas, where whole neighborhoods seem to disappear in just a few years, Denver seemed to have a lot of older housing. But Mrs. Etter said many of them had lost 50% of their older housing stock in the last ten years. She said the newly chosen style seems to be the "Tuscan village." That is very reminiscent of Dallas' northern suburbs, or the close-in and expensive Park cities in Dallas where zero lot building is common. I was reminded of a visiting friend, an architect, who was sunning in her mother's backyard in University Park and looked up to see her neighbor waving from his Tuscan tower twenty feet up and away.

Several times Mrs. Etter said that the overriding issue in the United States today is land use: Who owns what. What can be done with the land you own. Does anyone but the owner have rights concerning the land you own. Who has any rights on public land? And only an alert citizenry can assure that the common good is maintained.

We drove through the Highlands neighborhood north of downtown. It was less affluent than the others, but still very interesting. Mrs. Etter pointed out how, on the major street we were traveling, a wide boulevard had once swept, been torn down for increased traffic flow, then partially rebuilt for beauty's sake, but was still not wide enough to be graceful and lovely---a perfect example of competing uses and how changing the original plan seldom works better.

Our last stop in Highlands neighborhood was Lookout Point, a high, small piece of public land that was chosen by Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., riding horseback, to be left as a vista for all time. The park at the Point was not landscaped, but left with native plants, rocks and bare spots like the nearby Rockies. At its end we could see for miles around. Olmstead had even designated certain areas below the park, inaccessible by car, to be as they were always so no building or development could interfere with this magnificent view.

Denver compares very favorably with most cities in beauty and livability. Instead of just growing randomly, or letting developers make all the location and design decisions, in leaving a lot of land for public use, its early citizens showed great foresight. With all of this coming at a time when the land seemed endless, her park planners seem especially prescient.

ARLIS/NA South Regional Representative Report

As many of you know, the ARLIS/NA year-of-transition began at the end of last year's annual conference in Atlanta and came to a close at this year's conference in Denver. Now, at the dawn of a new era in the Society's history, the Regional Representatives have been replaced by functional liaisons who will be providing a conduit for communication between the Board and the groups who are carrying out the important work of the Society.

The new Board liaisons are as follows:

Canadian Member at Large: Liv Valmestad (term ends post conference 2010)

Chapter Liaison: Cate Cooney (term ends post conference 2009)

Communications and Publications: Barbara Romaniski (term ends post conference 2010)

Development and Membership Liaison: Amy Trendler (term ends post conference 2009)

Education Liaison: Elizabeth Schaub (term ends post-conference 2009)

As the Education Liaison, I will be working with the Professional Development Committee, chaired by Tom Caswell, that includes the newly formed Education Subcommittee, chaired by Heather Gendron, and Mentoring Subcommittee, chaired by V. Heidi Hass. In addition, I will be liaising with the Summer Educational Institute Implementation Team, co-chaired by Amy Lucker, Alex Reiskind and Visual Resources Association representative Jeanne Keefe, and the newly formed Summer Educational Institute Advisory Group, chaired by Sherman Clarke.

For additional information about these groups and the SEI program you can visit their respective sites:

Professional Development Committee: <http://www.arlisna.org/organization/com/profdev/index.htm>

Summer Educational Institute Advisory Group:

<http://www.arlisna.org/organization/seiadv/index.html>

Summer Educational Institute: <http://www.vraweb.org/seiweb/introduction.html>

The new Chapter Coordinator, Cate Cooney, will be paving a two way street for communication between the Board and the chapters. Cate can be reached via e-mail at the following address: catecooney@gmail.com. In addition, the Board recognizes how important face-to-face communication is and will be working to ensure at least one member of the Board is present at regional chapter meetings. And finally, there still is an interest in having diverse geographical representation on the Board and this will be something that the Nominations Committee will take into account when recruiting new officers.

This past year it has been a pleasure serving the ARLIS/NA Texas-Mexico Chapter as the South Regional Representative. I look forward to my new role as Education Liaison and my continued participation in the chapter's activities as a member.

See you all in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico this November!

Respectfully submitted by:

Elizabeth Schaub

ARLIS/NA Education Liaison

Annual Report

Annual Report

ARLIS/NA, Texas-Mexico Chapter

March 5, 2008

Submitted by Gloria Selene Hinojosa, Chapter President

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ARLIS/NA, Texas-Mexico Chapter met for our annual conference in Dallas, Texas, October 25th (Thursday) through October 28th (Sunday), 2007. We had a full itinerary that included visiting several fine art museums, the state fair grounds, SMU and the studio of Pam Nelson, working artist and member of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. On Sunday October 28th we had our chapter business meeting.

Carla Ellard, Curator and Librarian for The Wittliff Collection for Southwest and Mexican Photography Gallery at Texas State University- San Marcos was elected Vice-President, President-Elect, of ARLIS/NA, Texas-Mexico chapter. Next year's chapter meeting venue was discussed, and it was voted unanimously to let President Hinojosa explore the possibility of holding the 2008 chapter meeting in conjunction with the Feria Internacional de Libros in Guadalajara, Mexico.

We discussed the strategic plan for the local chapter, to be in line with that of ARLIS/NA. It has been written by the chapter President, who sent it out to the executive. President Hinojosa had confirmed that the first part of the strategic plan she had written was very much in coordination and agreement of the chapter's previous mission statement and goals. The second part was specifically to work towards building relationships with art libraries in Mexico. It was decided that the plan, as written for the chapter would be sent out to all the ARLIS/NA, Texas-Mexico chapter constituents via our online newsletter for them to review and vote on.

President Hinojosa discussed the concept of executive insurance, since ARLIS/NA decided not to provide it. President Hinojosa suggested that others on the ARLIS/NA, Texas-Mexico executive might want to consider what she had done, which was to join the Texas Faculty Association (TFA). TFA is the higher education branch of the TSTA (Texas State Teachers Association), which is the regional chapter of the NEA (National Education Association). Membership in that organization offered, free of charge, initiation, protection, mediation or advice regarding legal matters that might be brought against a member, in performance of their duties and responsibilities, to any member engaged in higher education. President Hinojosa, a member of that regional

groups executive board, had verified and confirmed that responsibilities related to professional development and service duties, as allowed or required by ones employing organization (this includes for most of us, membership in organizations like ARLIS/NA, Texas-Mexico), are covered by TFA protection. There is, of course, an annual membership fee, but as President Hinojosa explained, it can be paid on a monthly basis and is tiered according to salary and membership category. President Hinojosa has been a member of TFA for over 15 years. This was not an endorsement of TFA, but a suggestion on how to deal with this issue of insurance, until and unless the chapter could afford it on their own or the international group could offer it to its chapters.

Treasurer Bunch reported that the Chapter possesses sufficient funds to donate \$300 to the 2008 Welcome Party. Jon Evans explained the importance of providing this funding. Laura Schwartz moved that the Chapter donate \$300. Gwen Dixie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned and the chapter went outside to have the traditional chapter group photo.

Dallas News

Remember Dr. Michael Duty the soft-voiced and scholarly head of the Dallas Historical Society? He invited us into a back office and graciously showed us a collection of small Frank Reaugh paintings owned by the Hall of State in Fair Park. Soon after he spoke to our regional Arlis meeting as a panelist on collecting Texas art, he took a new job as the Texas art expert for Heritage Galleries in Dallas. In February he spoke at a well-attended lecture on his subject in Heritage Galleries' new and supplemental space on Slocum Street. Even after power point failure he went on without illustrations.

In the last few years the Heritage Galleries have changed from a small, rare coin sales house to a powerful auction house handling art, particularly Texas art, sports memorabilia, fine antiques and collectibles. They print beautiful color catalogs picturing each item they offer along with well-researched information and provenance about the artists, coins, silver, and antiques they offer.

Each gallery section has its own expert. As well as Dr. Duty, another familiar name at Heritage is Dr. Edmund Pillsbury, former head of the Kimball Museum and later partner in the Pillsbury Peters Gallery. (After Dr. Pillsbury left to become head of Fine and Decorative Arts at Heritage Galleries, the name reverted to Gerald Peters Gallery.)

The Dallas Historical Society made headlines last fall in Dallas when several irreplaceable items from its collection came up missing after being on display at an awards ceremony at the Hilton Anatole. Artifacts not making it back to the Hall of State were Santa Anna's dress spurs, a Bible from an early Dallas family, a Mexican medal of honor from 1836, the five-star collar insignia worn by Texan, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, at the Japanese surrender ceremony of World War II, along with seventeen other items.

As director of the Society, Michael Duty went on television to ask that the items be returned. He pointed out that their sale was almost impossible and a new owner could never put them on public display. Perhaps someone from the Fox television show, *Prison Break*, then being filmed in the Hall of State might have picked them up accidentally.

It was assumed that the items had made it back to the Hall of State in the box employees packed after the hotel event. Actually the box had been left on the hotel parking lot and put in the hotel lost- and-found by hotel employees. Three weeks later an employee found them in the lost-and-found.

While the Dallas Historical Society rejoiced, Fox Television demanded an apology for being implicated in a theft. The Dallas policeman in charge of the case said Fox needed to "get a life." But Michael Duty did issue an

apology, saying "We deeply regret any implication that the missing items were the result of actions of the film crew."

An historical note: The only theft suffered by the Dallas Historical Society happened when a shirt belonging to Elvis Presley was taken from a display case during the 2005 State Fair of Texas. The thief, suffering from a stricken conscience, returned it the next day.

Little Heroes online exhibit wins award

The [Little Heroes online exhibit](#), created by Tara Spies for the Wittliff Collection of Southwestern & Mexican Photography at Texas State University – San Marcos, was recently awarded a merit citation in the Mitchell A. Wilder award category for Non-Print Media from the Texas Association of Museums.

The list of all the Mitchell A. Wilder awards can be found on the [TAM website](#).

Name change: Wittliff Collections at Texas State University-San Marcos

WHEN THE SOUTHWESTERN Writers Collection was founded at the University Library in 1986, its collecting activities focused on the literature, film, and music of the region. Several years later Bill Wittliff and Connie Todd began to collect photographs, and in 1996 the Wittliff Gallery of Southwestern & Mexican Photography was formally christened at the Alkek Library.

Although sharing facilities and operating as one organization within the university, each collection continued to function separately for the most part in terms of archival activities, exhibitions, and public programming. But it became increasingly complicated to explain how each repository was separate, but not separate in terms of Southwest focus, administration, and origin.

To convey the composite nature of the collections, unite them under a common name, and acknowledge the great and generous contributions of the founding donors—Bill and his wife Sally—the two counterparts will now be known as THE WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS.

Where necessary, the names “Southwestern Writers Collection” and “Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection” will be used to refer to the two components of The Wittliff Collections. We are in the process of changing all pertinent materials and documents. The former term “Special Collections” is no longer being used to refer to The Wittliff Collections, although for now all location codes in the library catalog will remain the same. Bookmark our new web address and watch for updates on all our happenings:

<http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu>.

New Polaris ILS at the Dallas Public Library

On May 29, the Dallas Public Library will begin using its new Polaris ILS. Library staff and patrons alike are pleased at the prospect of moving to a new system that offers so much flexibility and control. This system is used in, among others, Plano, Texas, and Maricopa County, California, but Dallas Public Library is its biggest client so far. Dallas Public Library and Polaris were mentioned in an ARLIS session, What's New in Technology--because Polaris provides graphics.

Those not mastering Polaris will not be provided with a password. This has given your non-technie, Luddite correspondent a powerful incentive to learn the new system. So far, it has seemed simple to use, and that has frightened me.

I tend not to pay much attention to the latest technical news and didn't really know what was meant by Polaris. About six months ago a former employee, who once worked in technical support at this institution, and who is a prolific writer of science fiction, and abstract painter of science fiction subjects sent me a new web page of his latest work and commented "I hear Dallas is going to Polaris," I thought it was the name of one of his paintings.

News: UT-Austin reorganizes the Architecture and Planning Library

The Architecture and Planning Library at the University of Texas at Austin has elected to reorganize its library staffing. Beth Dodd now serves as Head Librarian, charged with the unit's administrative duties. She also continues to serve as the Curator of the Alexander Architectural Archive. The other librarian position, now vacant, has been re-shaped into a subject specialist role, with additional emphasis on shepherding digital projects and resources. The subject specialist's more traditional roles will emphasize a strong liaison with faculty. This is expected to focus more attention on reference, instruction and collection development.

News: Association of Architecture School Librarians in Houston

Last March the AASL met in conjunction with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture in Houston. Janine Henri, formerly of the University of Texas at Austin, served as vice president and planned the conference. Her planning committee consisted of ARLIS/Texas-Mexico Chapter members Margaret Culbertson, Catherine Essinger, Mark Pompelia, and Jet Prendeville. After the business meeting, Janine Henri moved into the role of president.

While in Houston, members attended workshops on information literacy and online tutorial creation. A panel discussion on scholarly communication was also held. Hilary Ballon of the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Chuck Henry of Rice University Press, and Ann Whiteside of MIT's Rotch Architecture and Planning Library and SAH's Architecture Visual Resources Network served as panelists.

AASL members also toured historic downtown Houston, the University of Houston campus, the Rice University campus and its Library Storage Center, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Live Oak Friends Meeting House, and the Menil Collection.

AASL will next meet in Portland, Oregon in Spring 2009.

News: VRA Texas meets during CAA 2008 in Dallas

The Texas chapter of the Visual Resources Association met February 21-22, 2008 to coincide with the annual meeting of the [College Art Association in Dallas](#).

Thursday's activities took place on the campus of Southern Methodist University and included a presentation on XML, an Ask-the-Expert roundtable, and business meeting. Friday's agenda featured a CCO metadata workshop, hosted at the Dallas Museum of Art. The CCO workshop was generously co-sponsored by the [Visual Resources Association](#), the Texas-Mexico chapter of the Art Libraries Society of North America, and [Archivision, Inc.](#)

The chapter's next meeting will take place during the Texas Conference on Digital Libraries in early June 2008.

For more details regarding this meeting and VRA Texas chapter activities in general, please consult its [Web site](#).

Profile: Visual Resources Center, Department of Art & Design, Texas State University-San Marcos

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<http://www.finearts.txstate.edu/Art/resources/vrc/slideshow.html>

Overview

The Visual Resources Center (VRC) in the Department of Art & Design at Texas State University in San Marcos consists of both visual materials collections and the Student-Learning Lab. Both are intended for use in teaching and learning by department faculty and students. The collections were initially established for undergraduate instruction in art history using 35mm slides. Presently, the VRC houses a small donated book collection, film and audio-CD collection, 35mm slides, a digital image archive, and several pieces of loanable projection equipment.

Collection content almost exclusively reflects fine art, cinema, or contemporary commercial art. Emphasis upon particular art styles, art periods, art media, or individual creators reflects the teaching interests of

department faculty.



Staff

VRC staffing was increased to one-full time equivalent (FTE) beginning in January 2007. This position is responsible for all duties pertaining to collections development, storage, cataloguing, materials purchase requests, and daily operations of the VRC. In addition, this staff person serves as point contact to campus-wide Instructional Technology Services (ITS), regarding operation of equipment in art history "smart" classrooms, and is responsible for supporting department faculty in the preparation of university-wide Alkek Library development request forms. Since the licensing of ARTstor by the Alkek Library during the summer of 2006, this position also serves to assist with training for use of ARTstor or Offline Image Viewer (OIV) by department faculty and students.

Part-time undergraduate student workers contribute 70-80 hours per week during the long semesters, and 20-40 hours/ week during the summer terms. The reception area and the computer/learning lab activities are

overseen by student workers during operating hours.



Acquisitions & Data Environment

The content and rate of VRC acquisitions vary annually, in response to faculty needs and voluntary donations. During 2006-2007, most of the collections development occurred in visual and sound recordings (DVD, VHS, and audio CD), particularly recordings that support teaching of the "History of Cinema" and the "Visual Music" courses. The departmental digital image archive, begun in 2002, has been catalogued in Filemaker Pro 5.5 using VRA Core 2, at a rate of approximately 1,600 images per year. In summer 2008, we will convert to Filemaker Pro 9 and the Vireocat collection management system, which employs VRA Core 4. This catalog will later upload to MDID2 for Web access via university email ID & password; MDID2 software will be hosted on a central Instructional Technology Services (ITS) server. Visual Resources Center collection development is funded by the Art History Area, using student fees.

Art History Area Coordinator Dr. James Housefield requested that development of the slide collection be terminated in 2003; however, a few Studio Art faculty still request slide production for their classroom presentations. When needed, slide labels are produced using a 4-D database file.

The VRC copystand was converted to digital photography in 2007. To supplement digital image purchases, digital images are either photographed or scanned with either the Epson Expression 1640 XL (flatbed) or the Nikon Super Coolscan 5000 (slide) scanners. Images are manipulated in Adobe Photoshop. Digital images are stored as tiff files on gold CDs inside a fire-safe media cabinet, presently with a backup on a LaCie external drive. ITS has offered to house the departmental tiff collection on their server in the future, providing needed off-site storage. All digital image work is done within the Macintosh platform, and the Learning Lab includes

only Macintosh equipment, consistent with departmental technologies.



Digital Instruction

Many classrooms within the Art & Design Department are equipped with digital teaching equipment. Both Art History classrooms are “smart” classrooms, equipped and maintained by ITS. At present, only two faculty members, both art historians, are using ARTstor and OIV for instruction. One faculty member is teaching with iView Media Pro, and all others are presenting images via digital projection use Microsoft PowerPoint. Only one adjunct art historian is teaching with 35mm slides.

The Menil Collection Library Gifts

The Menil Collection Library is pleased to announce the recent arrivals of three gifts of artbook collections from the following gracious donors:

1. The late David Whitney, life partner of the late Philip Johnson, independent curator, and a Menil Foundation trustee: his second marvelous gift (35 boxes) of books (first was in 1998) concentrating on United States artists of the post-World War II period. Many of the books are inscribed by the artists, to whom David was a fervent supporter—it includes my favorite “find” so far while pawing through the boxes: an Andy Warhol monograph inscribed on one page “To David with love” and on the following page “To David with hate”. Classic Warholian scampishness!
2. The late Walter Hopps, Founding Curator of The Menil Collection, legendary exhibition designer, buddy of Dennis Hopper and the Menil’s one true celebrity (remember his ad for GAP?): again, a superb collection of books on post-war American Abstract-Expressionists etc., with weird digressions like Louisiana swamp painters and (not-weird) concentrations on women Surrealists. Thanks must also go to his widow Caroline Huber for tirelessly helping me sort through his office bookshelves. Hoppalong, Walter, we miss you so much.
3. A wildly-diverse selection (my doing, naturally) from the artbook collection of the James A. Elkins, Jr. Estate. The late Mr. Elkins (it’s difficult addressing this kind spirit as anything besides “Jim”) was a long-time Menil Foundation trustee whose generosity and personality are missed in equal parts at The Menil Collection. My selections from the Estate ranged from an elephant folio of ancient Buddhist paintings from Japan; a lovely and strange Kiki Smith MoMA catalogue; to a 1964 edition of Art Treasures of the United Nations, (another signed-by-the-author item: Jacob Baal-Teshuva in this instance).

So how am I approaching the accessioning of all these lovely books? Easy decision: the first David Whitney gift (mentioned above) used up most of our existing available shelving space for post-war U.S. artists (oh, those N6537’s will be the death of me yet). So the first two present collections above go immediately to cataloging backlog (sorry to say). We’ve still got space to accommodate the ancient Japanese Buddhist paintings item, believe it or not. Anyway, I can return to the Whitney and Hopps gifts when (if) I get my requested compact/mobile bookshelves project approved, or if we do a major physical reconfiguration/shift of the entire book collection utilizing our existing shelves (volunteers, anyone?)

Phil Heagy

Chief Librarian

The Menil Collection