Visual Resources Advisory Committee Business Meeting

Minutes

March 18, 2000

Art Libraries Society of North America 29th Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA

Members present: Leigh Gates, Linda McRae, Gregg Most, Maryly Snow, Kathryn Wayne, Lynda White, Ann Whiteside

Members not present: Christine Bunting, Brenda McEchern, Marcia Stein

Guests: Patricia Harpring, Mary Wassermann

Recorder: Leigh Gates, Chair, Visual Resources Advisory Committee

Introduction of Members and Board Business:

Gregg Most, Ann Whiteside and Maryly Snow were welcomed to the committee, while thanks were extended to Christine Bunting for her fine service and past leadership.

VRAC members were reminded that budget requests need to be officially submitted to the ARLIS Treasurer by May 30. (A copy of any request should also be directed to Kathryn Wayne.) The deadline for conference proposals is May 1.

Lynda White reported briefly on the joint ARLIS/VRA Professional Status Survey. The survey results are expected to be published in some form during the spring in both VRA and ARLIS publications. The tireless contributions of Christina Bunting and Lynda White helped bring this survey to fruition.

The committee was reminded that an Ask ARLIS session was scheduled for Sunday, 3:45-5:15 pm: “The Visual Resources Professional in the 21st Century”, which will discuss some of the survey results and their implications.

Strategic Plan:

The committee, after reviewing the current strategic plan action items, decided to begin with a clean slate of items, which will address the following areas:

Standards

Professional Development

Outreach/Membership Retention

The following new action items were identified:

Continued support and maintenance of standards and authority programs should be aggressively offered. Mechanisms for contributing to the Getty Vocabulary Program should be developed.

The establishment of a basic workshop to provide education for new visual resource professionals in core issues should be investigated. Possible affiliations and support from host institutions around the country should be explored. Educational components drawing on the experience and expertise of the Society’s membership should be developed.

Professional development and continuing education should be addressed by sponsorship of workshops at either the regional or national levels, on topics of relevance to visual resources professionals. Topics to be addressed could cover training in use of the Getty Vocabulary Program (including the training of trainers) and other standards, training in digital imaging technology and management, and other areas identified by the Visual Resources Advisory Committee.

Membership growth and retention should be addressed by the establishment of a travel award to enable a visual resource professional to attend any of the workshops mentioned above.

Conference programming integrating the interests of visual resources managers and art librarians should be proposed. The opportunity provided by
the joint ARLIS/VRA conference scheduled for 2002 should be taken full advantage of.

Experts and speakers in the visual resources field from outside the Society should be identified who might contribute to programming and continuing education.

New collaborative efforts between ARLIS/NA and the VRA, whether in publications, joint committees, conference programming or workshops, should be identified.

These items will be submitted by Leigh to the Strategic Planning Committee using its reporting form.

2002 Joint Conference Planning:

A true joint VRA/ARLIS conference is being planned for St. Louis. Several possible session proposals with interest to both professional organizations were made: the role of standards, standards and creativity, standards and the redefinition of the profession, and best practices in the implementation of standards or other aspects of the visual resources management. The possibility of sponsoring workshops for using vocabulary standards (the Getty Vocabularies or Iconclass, for example) was discussed. Another suggestion was a session on web-based image management. Non-Western cataloging issues are also of interest.

A coordination of financial contributions to the conference is hoped for. The desirability of using outside participants and trainers was discussed.

Report from Patricia Harpring, Getty Vocabulary Program:

Patricia reviewed the announcement from the J. Paul Getty that the Getty Vocabulary Program has found a new home at the Getty Research Institute, where it will be overseen by Murtha Baca as Head of the Getty Standards Program. Patricia Harpring as Senior Editor of the Vocabulary Program will manage all of the day-to-day editorial work, output to the Web and other publication formats, and processing of contributions.

The three vocabularies will continue to be available on the Research Institute web site. On the average, 100,000 hits are made to the web site monthly. The Art & Architecture Thesaurus, Union List of Artist Names, and Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names will continue to be viewed as valuable resources for both the Getty and for external programs involved in describing art materials, although the current focus is support of internal Getty programs.

During the next few years, the Vocabulary Program will focus on development of a unified technical infrastructure to support Getty-wide contributions and deployment. It is hoped that this will be in place by January 2001. Concurrent with this internal focus, the program will begin to build strategic partnerships with key external organizations, such as the Avery Index, as a means of increasing the scope, depth, and relevance of the vocabularies to the Getty, its public, and the art information community at large.

Patricia emphasized that the Getty hopes professional societies and organizations like ARLIS will play a key role in this work in the future. A suggestion was made that the committee encourage a web site where incomplete vocabulary term submissions to the Getty Vocabularies might be "held" until full literary warrant was met using our collective research.

V. Visual Resource Professional Travel Award Proposal:

The committee addressed the possibility of a travel award designated for a visual resources professional to attend a regional or local meeting or a regional professional development workshop. Leigh will write a proposal for review by the VRAC on its listserv; a list of possible donors will be drafted; and the Professional Development Committee will be contacted concerning the committee’s proposal.