Visual Resources Division Business Meeting

Minutes

April 2, 2001

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


Gregory Most, Moderator, convened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

Announcements: Betha Whitlow, Co-Chair for Local Arrangements of the 2002 ARLIS/VRA Conference, asked the Visual Resources Division to sponsor a session or workshop at the conference, and reiterated the theme and possible broad topics for sessions. Daniel Starr, Executive Board Liaison, introduced himself and said that he was looking forward to the St. Louis conference. Merrill Smith announced a position opening at MIT for a Visual Resources Curator.

Introduction of Officers: Mary Wassermann, Slide Librarian and Associate Librarian at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, is the new Moderator for 2001. Sheryl Wilhite, Visual Resources Curator at Wellesley College, agreed to serve as Vice-Moderator/Moderator-Elect. No other nominations for Vice-Moderator were received and Sheryl was elected by unanimous voice vote.

Year-in-Review: The minutes of last year’s business meeting were posted to the ARLIS/NA web site by Mary Wassermann. Ann Whiteside is now hosting the VRD web site at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. The VRD listserv, formerly hosted by Concordia University, was closed. At the Visual Resources Association’s 2001 Conference in Chicago, Mary Wassermann represented the Visual Resources Division on a panel promoting organizations associated with VRA. The VRD is co-sponsoring three sessions at the 2001 ARLIS/NA conference, and attendance has been good so far.

New Business:

Conference Planning

Mary Wassermann will be coordinating VRD conference planning ideas for the 2002 St. Louis Conference. Ideas for sessions so far include classification systems, non-western cataloguing, and disaster planning. The Visual Resources Advisory Committee had also contributed ideas for sessions. Maryly Snow has proposed a session on the History of Visual Copy, and is looking for speakers on the acquisition and use of lantern slides, the economics of plaster casts, photograph acquisition and use, and architects’ photo collections. Gregg Most expressed interest in a session on the visual memorabilia of World Fairs.

Gregg Most mentioned Martha Mahard’s interest in redeveloping the Fogg classification system as another program possibility. There has been much activity lately on the VRA-L about African art classification. Marty Stein has talked with Robert Beebe, Moderator of the Indigenous Cultures Round Table, and he is interested in co-sponsoring a session on classification schemes for Non-Western art (Oceanic, Pre-Columbian, etcetera). It was suggested that a series of sessions devoted to a particular culture would be proposed. The Diversity Committee may also be contacted about support for such a project. Discussion about soliciting a subject specialist as speaker produced a favorable reaction.

Gregg asked if anyone was interested in putting together a proposal on a disaster planning workshop. Martha Mahard volunteered, and Andrea Cox said she could assist.

An idea that had been presented in the VRAC meeting was the concept of visual collections and institutional identity, ie: where image collections are located outside of traditional image environments. Elisa Lanzi said that the Data Standards Committee had talked about this issue, as well, and they would be interested in co-sponsoring a session on the changing identity and evolving relationships with other areas of the college campus. Elisa volunteered to moderate a session. Betsy Peck Learned reported that there were similar types of proposals discussed in the new Management Issues group. She and Ann Whiteside will be putting together a workshop proposal.

Mark Pompelia asked if the Applying Added Value (Getty Vocabularies) workshop might be repeated next year. Margaret Webster added that there is much interest in a workshop that can pull together the best of what both VRA and ARLIS have to offer in areas of data standards, and that Liz O’Keefe had expressed willingness to help with or speak at such a workshop. Linda McRae offered to talk with Liz about this.

It was agreed that a two-part workshop, divided into a discussion of principles and a “hand’s on” section, would be most beneficial.
Gregg Most reminded everyone to coordinate all VRD conference ideas with Mary Wassermann.

Web Site

Ann Whiteside asked for assistance with the VRD web site by way of providing content. Gregg mentioned that a FAQ page for supplies and vendor information would be helpful, since many of those questions come across the listserv. Betsy Peck Learned said that we might include Ruth Thomas’ list of great image web sites, and Margaret Webster suggested a "cataloguer’s desktop" page with links to utilities. Gregg remarked that we should not necessarily duplicate information found on the VRA web site, but that we want to complement those materials. Jack Robertson said that a page is being developed to point people to Art Library School programs, and suggested that continuing education opportunities be part of the web site.

Publications

Gregg Most asked about the possibility of a new joint ARLIS/VRA publication, and suggested one on classification systems. Martha Mahard is interested in working on this in conjunction with the reorganization of the Fogg system. Maryly Snow and Margaret Webster mentioned that Paula Hardin had posted some slide classification schemes on her web site after last year’s “Lost in the Fogg” AskARLIS session. Maryly is in favor of having classification information appear in both print and electronic formats. Gregg Most reported that he has put the first part of the National Gallery of Art classification manual online, and will post the URL to the appropriate listservs. Miranda Haddock said that a web site tool would help in that we could show it to our administrators and help them to understand what we do and why when classifying images. Sheryl Wilhite commented that Paul Glassman had asked Paula Hardin and her about turning the “Lost in the Fogg” session into an Occasional Paper for ARLIS, but that she would tell him there was broader interest in a joint publication on classification schemes.

Other Business

Bill Keller inquired about using the Thesaurus of Geographic Names in machine readable format. Maryly Snow and Elisa Lanzi commented that the Getty would be making improvements to the Vocabularies with the help of Gallery Systems, and that it might be best to wait for these changes to occur.

Claire Eike thanked the VRD for co-sponsoring the session on Moving Images.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl L. Wilhite
Vice-Moderator