2008-2009 Gerd Muehsam Award Committee:
Eileen Fry, Kevin Madill (Chair), Maria Oldal, Barbara Rockenbach, Ken Soehner (Board Liaison), Jenny Tobias, Shalimar White

Activities over the past year (April 2008-March 2009):

Denver Conference, May 1-5, 2008:
The following committee members attended a Gerd Muehsam Award (GMA) committee meeting at the Denver conference: Tony White (Chair), Eileen Fry, Kevin Madill, Maria Oldal, Barbara Rockenbach and Shalimar White. Topics of discussion at this meeting included the voting system, the need for an effective means of distributing award submissions among the committee members, and the year’s calendar of activities. The meeting ended with Tony White handing over the position of Chair to Kevin Madill. The committee members expressed great appreciation to Tony for his work during the past two years.

June, 2008:
The committee’s contact list was divided equally among the committee members. Each committee member sent to persons on their list the GMA announcement, as well as a cover letter for faculty, deans or administrators. Announcement communication was restricted to email.

Late September, 2008:
The GMA contact list was edited by Kevin Madill and Jen Kniesch, an MLIS candidate at UBC specializing in art librarianship. Kevin and Jen sent the announcement again to the contact list. The announcement included a cover letter as a reminder urging the recipients to encourage students to enter their papers.

November, 2008:
29 submissions were received in total. Of the 29 submissions, 28 were papers and one was a web-based project. 28 were received by the deadline. One applicant made arrangements for late delivery of their paper because of extenuating personal circumstances. During the summer, 2 students made queries about submission. After some exchange between the Chair and the students, both students concluded that their papers were inappropriate for submission because of subject content.

Mid-December, 2008:
In mid-December, last year’s Google doc site was revived as the means to present the paper submissions to the judges. Committee members were requested to fill out a separate ballot for each submission and to have their ballots returned to the Chair by mid-February.
Mid-February, 2009:
Madill tallied the votes and a clear winner emerged. The committee selected Maureen Whalen as recipient of the 2008 Gerd Muehsam Award for her paper "What’s Wrong with This Picture? An examination of art historian’s attitudes about electronic publishing opportunities.” Maureen is the Associate General Counsel at the J. Paul Getty Trust in Los Angeles and recently received her Master’s of Library and Information Science in June 2008 from UCLA’s Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. Madill notified the committee members of the decision and then Maureen. Thereupon, Madill notified the other applicants, headquarters, the president and the chair of the Awards Committee. Maureen was encouraged to contact (1) Judy Dyki of Art Documentation to apply for the possible publication of her paper and (2) Susan Falls regarding participating in the New Voices session at the annual ARLIS/NA conference in Indianapolis.

Mid-March, 2009:
Madill sent a reminder to committee members to properly dispose of submissions, thanked committee members who were finishing their terms, made arrangements for new members to join the committee, found a new committee chair, developed an agenda for the committee’s meeting in April, and arranged for a meeting space for the committee at the Indianapolis conference.

April 16-21 2009, 37th Annual Conference, Indianapolis:
The following committee members attended a GMA committee meeting at the Indianapolis conference: Eileen Fry, Kevin Madill (Chair), Maria Oldal, Christina Peter and Shalimar White. Topics of discussion at this meeting included editing the voting system, a new reusable Google doc site with generic passwords for distributing award submissions among the committee members, concerns regarding updating the contact list, concerns to review the award web page, and a review of the year’s calendar of activities. The meeting ended with Kevin Madill handing over the position of Chair to Maria Oldal for the next two years.

Addendum:
(1) Regarding the committee’s make-up, it is important for the effectiveness of this committee that judges be included from every aspect of art librarianship. It is important, as well, to recognize that this committee functions as a means to integrate new professionals into the organization. It is not easy to replace outgoing committee members with new professionals and committee members from all aspects of art librarianship – but it is a goal worth striving towards. (2) It remains a constant struggle to update the contact lists. I believe it would be in the interest of the organization for committees to work cooperatively with each other to share contact lists. This has been attempted previously. Because of committee membership turn over, committee connections are frequently lost. I would urge the GMA committee to help establish a permanent connection between ARLIS/NA committees for the sole purpose of sharing contact lists and discovering new ways of connecting with students and library professionals. (3) Working as Chair of the GMA committee has been a rewarding and enriching experience. Participating in this committee has helped me to sustain contacts with old professional acquaintances, helped me establish new connections with colleagues, given me both the skills and environment to participate in mentorship to newer professionals, and allowed me to keep abreast of the ideals and concerns of a younger generation in art librarianship.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Madill
Chair (2009), Gerd Muehsam Award Committee

Cc:
Ken Soehner (Board Liaison)
Susan Moon (Chair, Awards Committee)