



ART LIBRARIES SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

**35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
**Sheraton Colony Square, Atlanta, Georgia, April 26-May 1**

**Museum Library Division Meeting**  
**Saturday, April 28, 2007, 3:30-5:00 p.m.**

Suz Massen (Moderator), Amy Ballmer (Moderator-elect), Jacqueline Rogers (Recorder)

Welcome and introductions from Moderator Suz Massen (Frick Art Reference Library). The minutes from the 2006 Banff meeting were approved. Kristen Regina (Hillwood Museum & Gardens) will continue as the ARLIS Website (AWS) news editor, Karyn Hinkle (Brooklyn Museum) will be the new Moderator-elect, and Amy Ballmer (Art Institute of Chicago) the new Moderator.

Joan Benedetti announced the publication of the *Handbook of Art Museum Librarianship*, co-published by Scarecrow Press. She thanked all the authors and other contributors, and passed around her personal copy asking all who participated in the publication to sign it. The initial reception of the book has been so promising that Scarecrow is already considering a reprint. Any needed corrections should be sent directly to Joan by e-mail, to be incorporated into future editions. Additionally, Joan encouraged the MLD members to continue their professional writing and other contributions to the field of museum librarianship.

Nancy Allen of ARTstor presented current ARTstor initiatives of interest to museums.

- 1) ARTstor in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art launched in February 2007 a new service, Images for Academic Publishing (IAP). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, recognizing the difficulty and expense for scholars to obtain publishing rights, is collaborating with ARTstor to allow scholars to download and use, free of charge, high-resolution digital images for scholarly publications. An extensive number of images representative of the broad range of the Metropolitan Museum's encyclopedic collection will be available through the ARTstor interface to users at all ARTstor participating institutions. Additionally, a virtual collection has been compiled for scholars without access to ARTstor. This virtual collection can be accessed by contacting either ARTstor or the Met's Licensing Department. Users can download and publish IAP images by agreeing to the IAP Terms and Conditions of Use,

determined by the Met's Licensing Department. Nancy asked the group to make their users aware of this service, and to please consider becoming participants in this project.

- 2) ARTstor has signed agreements with the Artists Rights Society and the Virtual Artists and Galleries Association (VAGA). Institutions can now host on ARTstor images licensed by these groups.
- 3) ARTstor has developed a Museum Educator's License, for use by K-12 educators. Teachers can be registered within the umbrella of a museum license. The registration will last 120 days, at which time the teacher would need to return to the museum to renew his or her registration.

Nancy also encouraged institutions to consider contributing to ARTstor both existing hi-res digital images, as well as content for digitization by ARTstor. She emphasized that collaboration with ARTstor is an excellent way to promote your collections on your own Website.

Incoming ARLIS/NA Board President Deborah K. Ultan Boudewyns (Wilson Library, University of Minnesota) and incoming Vice President, President-elect Kenneth Soehner (Thomas J. Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art) came in and spoke for a few minutes about the ARLIS/NA assessment task force (ATF) and the forthcoming "Year of Transition." The goal of the ATF is to make the structure of the society more nimble and effective and to implement new technology that will provide more effective means of communication. Deborah and Ken encouraged the MLD to have a discussion about who we are, what we do, and what our mission is, and report the outcome of our discussion to the executive board.

A number of ideas were presented for conference proposals. Deborah Smedstad (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) proposed library collaboration and consortia. Deidre Lawrence (Brooklyn Museum) suggested that a representative of the newly formed New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC) – a collaboration between the Brooklyn Museum Library, the Frick Art Reference Library, and the Museum of Modern Art Library – participate in this topic. Suz Massen (Frick Art Reference Library) volunteered to work on a proposal for this topic. Other ideas included an analysis of reporting lines between library management and higher institutional boards (perhaps a topic for a survey rather than a conference session), proposed by Patricia Barnett (Frick Art Reference Library); museum librarians' role in information management and responsibility for digital images, proposed by Nancy Allen (ARTstor); self-definition in the age of blurred work roles – where do you draw the line?, proposed by Evelyn Stone (Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art); museum libraries as independent research centers, proposed by Inge Reist (Frick Art Reference Library); and library funding, proposed by Deidre Lawrence (Brooklyn Museum).

Joan Benedetti called for an update of the Survey of Small Art Museum Libraries, compiled in 2002, and asked for volunteers.

Conference proposals were followed by personnel and project announcements. Evelyn Stone of the Watson Library at the Metropolitan Museum of Art announced that the library's auction catalogs are finally undergoing full retrospective conversion. With the dedicated and enthusiastic participation of 30-40 professional and paraprofessional staff members, the expected timeline is 2-3 years. Records will be created in the Met's opac WATSONLINE, and later uploaded into OCLC. Susan Augustine of the Art Institute of Chicago announced that the library has started cataloging new items in the Library of Congress classification system. Only reading room material will be reclassified from the existing collection. Amy Ballmer announced that Susan Augustine has replaced Peter Blank as the Head of Reader Services at the Art Institute of Chicago. Sharon Wasserman announced that Anne Simmons has joined the staff of the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Patricia Barnett of the Frick Art Reference Library announced that Lily Pregill is the Project Coordinator of the newly formed New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC).

Moderator-elect Amy Ballmer called for new business. None was announced.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the assessment task force (ATF) as it relates to the MLD. At issue were the questions posed earlier by incoming ARLIS/NA Board President Deborah K. Ultan Boudewyns (see above). Moderator Suz Massen also asked whether the division should consider moving to a more informal format, doing away with moderators and moderator-elects.

After a slow start, this discussion turned into a lengthy and heated debate. Deidre Lawrence (Brooklyn Museum) called for a reading of the MLD mission statement. Moderator Suz Massen reported that the division does not have a mission statement, and an attempt to form one the previous year did not come to fruition. A number of the members expressed confusion over what was expected from the MLD by the ATF, and concern that the MLD was being asked to justify its existence or disband. In response to this concern, a number of members voiced their opinion that the high attendance of the annual conference MLD meetings, Joan Benedetti's book, and the division's ongoing production of conference programs and useful surveys suggests that it remains a vital group within the larger organization, and should remain a division, have moderators, and be recognized by the executive board. Lynda White (University of Virginia), a member of the ATF committee, clarified that disbanding the divisions is not on the agenda of the ATF. Rather, the ATF is attempting to simplify the organizational structure of the society in order to eliminate red-tape and make the process of gathering, meeting, and communicating easier and more streamlined. Moderator Suz Massen passed around a sheet with charts comparing the current organizational structure (<http://www.arlisna.org/organization/orgchart.pdf>) and the proposed new organizational structure (<http://www.arlisna.org/arlistmembers/assessment/orgchart-prop.pdf>). Lynda White reminded the group that the ideas proposed by the ATF came directly

from the ARLIS/NA membership survey, so it is the members who have called for a restructuring.

Throughout the discussion, certain members agreed that the current organizational structure is overly complicated, making conference scheduling difficult and exerting a financial burden on the society since the conference hotel must be able to accommodate the numerous meeting rooms required by the large number of sub-groups within the society. The current approach to conference scheduling makes it difficult for librarians with multiple interests to attend all the necessary division and section meetings. The society's current modes of communication also need to be readdressed. On the one hand, it appears that new members never receive an introduction to the society's structure and modes of communication. This lack of fluidity and transparency is especially challenging for librarians in remote areas. On the other hand, the executive board and the society at large are rarely informed of the conference and year-long activities of and level of participation in the sections and divisions. Moderator Suz Massen expressed that when she called for information for the MLD annual report, no one responded. She took it upon herself to gather this information from chapter Web sites and newsletters, with the consequence that any chapter without such resources is underrepresented in the 2006 annual report. This annual report is available on the ARLIS/NA Web site in the Members' Area ([http://www.arlisna.org/arlistmembers/annreports/2006/div\\_museum.pdf](http://www.arlisna.org/arlistmembers/annreports/2006/div_museum.pdf)).

Other members opposed a restructuring of the division. Some felt that the current structure of the MLD is sufficiently informal, and that to lose any further degree of formality would be detrimental to achieving the (unwritten) mission of the division, since people often do not have the self-motivation to monitor their own work and progress. It is the work of the divisions, such as the development of conference programs, and not the work of the committees that attracts people to the society and the conferences. The moderator position should take *more* responsibility to encourage activity and communication within the division, rather than be dissolved. Hotel scheduling will always be a hassle, no matter how the organization is structured, and is therefore not a justifiable reason for restructuring.

Suggestions arising from the discussion were to have a two-tier approach to MLD-sponsored sessions – creating one formal session and one informal session which might follow the "AskARLIS" format (Pat Barnett, Frick Art Reference Library); to schedule sessions and division meetings at separate times to avoid conflicts for those wishing to attend both (Lynda White, University of Virginia); to schedule section and division meetings consecutively in one room, reducing the number of hotel meeting rooms needed (Rodica Krauss, Frick Art Reference Library); to have round table discussions (at real round tables) guided by moderators, perhaps during the lunch hour – although this format might not work for a group as large as the MLD (Lynda White, University of Virginia); to make it easier to establish interest groups from emerging discussion groups, the latter of which are not

currently recognized by the society's by-laws (Lynda White, University of Virginia); to gather and report to the executive board statistics of division meeting attendance (Rodica Krauss, Frick Art Reference Library); and for local chapters to be more proactive in reporting their news to the moderator for inclusion in annual reports (Suz Massen, Frick Art Reference Library).

Also, emerging from the discussion of who we are and what we do, came a proposal from Deborah Smedstad (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) for a library salary survey. Nancy Allen (ARTstor) reported that she recently searched for similar surveys in order to establish a sliding pricing scale for ARTstor. The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) conducted such a survey in the last year, but Nancy found the statistics for library salaries insufficiently granular and therefore not useful for her purposes. The results of the survey are nonetheless informative and surprising. In the 15-20 museum libraries surveyed, there was a vast amount of difference in support of the library from institution to institution, especially in regards to the amount of the institution's operating budget in comparison to the percentage available for the library. Susan Augustine (Art Institute of Chicago) also referenced the ALA salary survey, but commented that the drawback of this survey is that it does not compare like to like in terms of types of institution and regional location. Moderator Suz Massen proposed that salary information be incorporated into the management survey earlier proposed by Patricia Barnett (Frick Art Reference Library – see above). Suz volunteered to work on the survey, and called for additional volunteers. Jessica McIntyre (Minneapolis Institute of Art) and Amy Ballmer (Art Institute of Chicago) volunteered.