The moderator opened the “Border Crossings” session by stating its goals—to explore the relationships and potential collaborations between academic libraries, visual resource collections and campus museums. There is a need for such discussions since visual arts subject specialists at academic institutions often serve as liaisons to the staff of art museums as well as to academic departments. She introduced the speakers, all of whom work at a main college or university library, and not at a branch art library housed within the museum or art department.

Kestenbaum’s interest in such campus collaborations has emerged from her experiences as the art librarian at Purchase College, founded in 1967 by Nelson Rockefeller as part of the State University of New York’s campus network. Purchase is known for providing educational opportunities in the visual and performing arts, in addition to its general liberal arts and sciences curriculum. The campus library is next door to the Neuberger Museum of Art, known for its collections of modern and contemporary art, with a building designed by the noted architectural firm of Philip Johnson and John Burgee. This adjacency, and a recent campus strategic plan attempting to strengthen the alliances between the museum, the performing arts center, and the academic programs, place the art librarian, who also manages the visual resources collection, in a strong position to enhance collaboration, but it is not without its challenges. Traditional services, such as collection development, library instruction, and reference, which are performed with regard to the museum as well as the faculty and students, have the possibility of expanding to include two major potential projects: (1) a system to share book and exhibition catalog acquisitions as well as cataloguing information, and (2) a campus-wide digital collection of images complete with the associated metadata that would include the Museum’s collections.

Simor began her presentation by providing background information about the context in which she has worked for the last twenty-five years as the art librarian and director of the art center at Queens College, in a medium-sized, high quality academic library in the City University of New York (CUNY) system. Her responsibilities include care for the library’s visual art book and visual resources collections, and have also included care for the college’s original art collection.

The art library’s visual resources collection consists of mounted reproductions (60,000), slides (15,000), and serial publications focused on visual materials. All of these are accessible to library patrons and, with the exception of some of the
published series, are available for borrowing. The slide collection is small since most teaching is supported by the much larger art department slide collection (300,000 items) restricted in its usage to art faculty.\footnote{The art librarian and the art department’s slide curator operate independently of each other, yet have cooperated in slide collection development, production, and cataloging.}

Several years ago, the library halted slide collection development and turned to facilitating patron access to digital image resources. A 2001-2002 grant from the president’s competitive program for innovative teaching projects led to the development of a project focused on electronic resources for teaching non-western art, a rapidly expanding area of the curriculum. The electronic resources webpage developed by the art library and preparation of class websites were the start of the process of transition to digital resources in the arts. Planning for the transition to digital visual resources is bringing the art librarian, visual resources curator, art and other faculty and administrators professionally closer than ever before. Each staff member contributes what comes naturally from her respective role. The image curator has the hands-on familiarity with the department’s visual resources collection, infrastructure, equipment, needs, modes and dynamics of operation as well as experience with comparative situation in other CUNY art departments and the shared experience of the local Visual Resources Association chapter. The art librarian brings networking across system-wide libraries, across campus departments, and professional information from the Art Libraries Society, the College Art Association, etc.

Having awakened the interest of the administrators and among the faculty, their goal is to integrate digital visual resources into teaching and learning on campus. They are aware that the key to securing the administration’s support is faculty acceptance of the new resources, and endeavor to secure access to the necessary infrastructure and content. Although there are differences in the partners’ jobs, positions, and professions, the correspondence between their interests and backgrounds makes the collaboration easy, smooth, and rewarding. They have identified a common goal and are working toward it together.

The Queens College Art Collection began in the late 1930s, soon after the College’s founding. Its true start came in the 1950s, and for two decades it was then jointly administered by the library and art departments. The library provided storage and exhibition space, the art library staff was charged with the physical custody and administration of the objects, the art department faculty was responsible for programming. When the art library opened in 1960, with a separate small exhibition room, artwork from the collection was also installed in its reading room and in the gallery, in changing exhibitions.

In 1981, a not-for-profit teaching museum, named after its founders the Frances Godwin-Joseph Ternbach Museum at Queens College, was chartered to care for the growing art collection. The value of the connection between the art collection and the art library was recognized: “Queens College is unique among City University colleges in having an art collection and a substantial art library of 20,000 volumes, a serious scholarly research facility. The two collections support each other and make a significant contribution to maintaining for Queens College a leading position among CUNY colleges in the fields of art history and studio art.”

Soon after the new museum’s founding, Simor was elected a trustee and began service on the board, closely connecting the library and the museum. At the same
time, in the art library gallery, she continued a program of art exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. Preceding the library’s move into a new facility in 1988, with the help of faculty colleagues and the administration’s support, the Klapper Library Art Center was transformed into the Queens College Art Center. Since the relocation into a much larger gallery in the new Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library, the Art Center has gradually become more professional, although it is yet to be line-funded. Into the 1990s, exhibitions changed nearly every month, in the gallery as well as in other venues. To date 134 art exhibitions have been mounted in Rosenthal and approximately 40 in Klapper before that, each with related publications and programs.

The Godwin-Ternbach Museum now maintains an outstanding and substantial collection of over 3,500 works of art in all media from ancient to modern times. It is the only comprehensive permanent art collection in the CUNY system and in Queens, New York’s borough with the largest multiethnic population in the United States. The collection continues to grow and the museum, offering a dynamic schedule of changing exhibitions and a broad range of programs, has been integrated into the life of the college. A vital educational and cultural force on campus and in the community, comparable in character and quality to museums in older, private institutions, the museum is located in the heart of a public, commuter college.

The connection between the museum and the library continues to be close. The library supports the museum’s research and study needs and the art center’s exhibition program complements the museum’s. Junctures in which the art library is a regular partner of the museum include support of the museum’s research and teaching of research modules in museum studies courses that are regularly offered by the art department and based in the museum. The art center’s cooperation with the museum includes occasional co-sponsoring of exhibitions (most frequently those presenting faculty artists, but also others) and linkages in exhibition programming (one party recommending, passing on candidates to the other). Both the art library and the art center cooperate with the museum in publicizing events.

The art library and art center’s cooperation with the museum has been natural given the close alignment of interests and goals as well as the compatibility of the principals’ art history backgrounds and interests. Although time- and energy-consuming, with concomitant political and bureaucratic challenges, it has been interesting, rewarding, and pleasurable. Not in the least, this “outside” involvement has repeatedly rewarded Simor with welcome forays into the active world of art museums.

The library ultimately benefits from connections with relevant partners. Each contribute to each other, and networking can only strengthen their respective contributions to the organizations. By cooperating and collaborating with like-minded partners, the effectiveness and worth of the work is increased and the patrons’ experiences enriched. Simor concluded by sharing some of the newest art initiatives at Queens College, among them an art advisory board and a comprehensive marketing plan for "The Arts @ Queens College" in which the various campus arts-related entities are joining in collaboration, partnership, and outreach that is mutually beneficial for the campus and the community.

Collins next presented the view from Emory University, further exploring how academic libraries, campus museums, and visual collections might work together. The Woodruff Library is the central library facility (there is not a separate art branch)
providing a range of services to support the academic mission of Emory with traditional library resources and electronic information technology. The Michael C. Carlos Museum on campus houses collections that span the globe and the centuries. The largest collection of ancient art in the southeast as well as nineteenth- and twentieth-century collections of American, European, and sub-Saharan African art are housed in a distinguished building by renowned architect Michael Graves. The Visual Resources Library maintains a 160,000 35mm slide collection and a growing number of digital images used to support teaching and research in the Art History Department.

Although these three entities on campus have traditionally been separate, collaborative activities are becoming more frequent in the area of collection management. Since the museum does not have an extensive library of its own, rare books are recommended to the library for special collection acquisitions and museum exhibitions. The library has a standing order with the museum’s bookstore to receive two copies of everything they publish. Collins recently worked closely with a curator to acquire both the book and personal artifact collection of Egyptologist Nicholas Millet (1936-2004), including over seven hundred titles. All the books that the library did not already have were added to the centralized book collection and the duplicate material became the start of a small, private curatorial library to compliment the collections within the museum. The library also works hard to communicate with all parts of the museum: curatorial, conservation, education, and administration.

Digital technology is now facilitating the sharing and access of visual materials through the Visual Information on Emory’s Web (VIEWer) project. This is a scalable, public user interface for the art history visual resources collection with planned expansion to include other types of campus image collections, such as: “low-hanging fruit,” museum, and faculty-owned. In this way, they are trying to ensure that “common good” resources are made available to all of the campus. The group working on the VIEWer project is defining short- and long-term programmatic goals, including staffing, hardware, and software costs, to create and sustain digital image collections. They have applied for federal grant funds through the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The first phase has included 40,000 digital images from the visual resources library and the second phase involved licensing ARTstor. Luna Imaging’s Insight software is presently providing powerful image management and presentation tools, but they are now challenged by interoperability issues since ARTstor developed its own presentation interface rather delivering their images in Insight as it once seemed they might. The next phases plan to draw upon other the other campus partners’ collections and consider additional licensed collections as well.

There are a number of issues to consider when moving from an art history focused image collection to one accessible to the university at large. Among them are the following: (1) policies, (2) collection prioritization, (3) data conversion, (4) collection management, (5) metadata standards, (6) collection licensing, (7) copyright management, (8) marketing, and (9) finance. It has been necessary to include all of the following partners in the process: instructional technology, the libraries, the museum, and the art history department. These partners meet regularly to document the process and to implement the university-wide image service rollout with a Digital Image Steering Committee overseeing the process. The work group has developed criteria to help determine which image collections may be added to the VIEWer project as follows:
• owned or licensed by Emory University,
• have a broad and ongoing application for teaching and research,
• minimum standard metadata elements,
• high-resolution images that meet quality standards, and
• designated human resources to catalogue and manage the collection.

With criteria in place, it is now possible to consider adding collections based on expanded areas academic areas, such as astronomy, botany, and medicine.

In conclusion, collaboration across divisions requires participation on many levels—including those who get the work done and high level decision makers. Good ongoing communication is a must and Emory has found both a group listserv and regular face-to-face meetings necessary. Since digital is an added component to existing professional workloads, supervisors and directors should be kept informed. Collins considers the increased communication, the documentation produced, and increased funding for licensing image collections, such as ARTstor, to be the successes of the project to date. However, there are still challenges with funding and staffing and Collins considers some of the software decisions and inadequate marketing as failures to be remedied in the future.

Boudewyns presentation concluded the session with a more philosophical perspective on what she called “artful collaboration.” From several inspiring publications, Boudewyns determined that collaboration can bridge the gap between separate academic spheres and promote a greater understanding of the scholarly environment. It is a dynamic, not static, process of building relationships that evolve over time with liaisons on the front-line.

When initiating such liaison relationships from libraries, Boudewyns suggested first obtaining a good understanding of the institution by examining demographics and any compacts in place. Then investigate the academic departments by exploring their websites for the degrees granted and curriculum offered as well as to see what outreach activities they may be involved in. Subscribing to print or electronic newsletters should provide a steady flow of information. Learn what you can about the discipline and then introduce yourself to key individuals and get to know the faculty and students by attending functions. Five instrumentals for building partnerships were shared: (1) good communication, (2) social respect, (3) shared values, (4) administrative structure, and (5) responsibility to foster harmony. It was suggested that building partnerships outside of the library might be easier than within due to its hierarchical and bureaucratic nature.

Continuing to define the concept of collaboration, the speaker suggested the following are at the core of such activities:

• shared decision making,
• shared concepts,
• shared resources,
• shared language,
• exchanges of ideas,
• integration of multiple perspectives,
• synthesis of ideas, and
• breaking boundaries.

It might take some combination of vision, opportunity, initiative, risk-taking, networking, implementation, flexibility, humbleness, compromise, and respect to collaborate successfully. If you want to play a leading role, it was suggested that
first guidelines should be established defining common goals complete with timeline and task. Next, one should reinforce the group dynamic using interpersonal skills to facilitate communication. In terms of the budget and administration, one must follow the rules and be timely and efficient.

A number of the University of Minnesota’s collaborative activities were then presented: the art in the Wilson Library project, the book jacket project, information literacy training, a museum book exchange, cutting-edge exhibitions, and the MINERVA symposium. The high-level decision makers for the arts sit on the Art Fund Advisory Board and this group is inclusive of the library, Weisman Art Museum, and the following academic departments: art, art history, architecture and landscape architecture, cultural studies, and education.

Notable among the collaborations is the Minnesota Electronic Resources in the Visual Arts (MINERVA) symposium now in its fifth year. MINERVA encourages “the cooperative sharing of ideas, expertise, and resources among institutions building or considering online image collections, by fostering collaborative relationships between cultural heritage and museum institutions, the academic community and libraries.” It is a statewide collaboration including the Minnesota Digital Library Coalition, the Weisman Art Museum, the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, the College of Liberal Arts, and the University of Minnesota Libraries. A variety of themes have been addressed at the MINERVA symposia to date, including the following: (1) 2001 Creating and Managing Digital Collections, (2) 2002 Defining and Meeting User Needs, (3) 2003 Digital Preservation Policies, Metadata Standards and Pedagogical Practices, and (4) 2004 Intellectual Property and Digital Image Collections. The partnership and work involved in bringing the last symposium together was detailed by the speaker.

Although all were of interest, one of the more exciting campus projects described was the Art in the Wilson Library Project, in which library, museum, and art department students, faculty, and staff collaborate on art exhibitions and performances. The students often design and curate the activities, but this involves close monitoring to comply with library administration policies. Among the other challenges encountered have been: time, trust, competition, processes, personalities, and differing standards of quality.

In conclusion, Boudewyns suggested that there are many benefits to the type of collaboration discussed above and advises other art librarians to consider the following: investigating topics of special interest; working towards increased efficiency and productivity by sharing expertise; building new relationships; sharing the outcome with a greater community; and, earning credit by fulfilling the mission of the institution as whole, including the academic departments, museums, and libraries.

1 I would like to express my gratitude to the moderator and panelists for freely sharing information before and after the Houston conference making the recorder’s job easier. The following is based on their PowerPoint presentations, forwarded papers, and my notes from attending the session.

2 The Purchase College Web site can be found at <http://www.purchase.edu/>.

1 For more information about the Queens College Library, see <http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Library>; for the City University of New York system, <http://portal.cuny.edu/>; for CUNY libraries, <http://libraries.cuny.edu/>.
For more information about the Queens College Art Department, see <http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/art/>.

For more information about the Queens College Art Center, see <http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Library/art/artcenter.html>.

For more information about the Godwin-Ternbach Museum at Queens College, see <http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/godwin_ternbach/>.

For more information about Emory University, see <http://www.emory.edu/>. 

The IMLS Web site is located at the following URL <http://www.imls.gov/>.

For more information about the Insight software, see the following URL <http://www.lunaimaging.com/>.


The University of Minnesota Web site can be found at the following URL: <http://www1.umn.edu/twincities/index.php>.

For more information, see the following URL: <http://minerva.umn.edu/index.html>. 