In the spring of 2015 the University of Iowa Museum of Art and the University of Iowa Libraries collaborated on a project to conserve and digitize four large-format folios of Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s 18th century *Le Antichità Romane* from the UIMA collection.

### Project Catalysts

**UI Museum of Art**
- No permanent museum location due to 2008 flood.
- No suitable space to engage in a long-term conservation project at the temporary location.
- Folios to be featured in an upcoming exhibit.

**UI Libraries**
- Has a conservation lab, but limited staff time to perform treatments on other collections.
- Acquired digitization equipment capable of photographing large-format folios.

### Interdepartmental Collaboration

**Object Conservation**
- Photo documentation showing before and after effects of conservation treatment.
- Light cleaning in the margins and gutters of each page with brushes.
- Mends to tears in the print pages are addressed with conservation papers and wheat paste.
- Sonic humidifier is used to lessen the effect of incorrect folds.

**Digital Image Capture**
- Create a ~300 ppi, uncompressed TIF image of each page spread.
- Use UIMA accession number as basis for file naming protocol to facilitate integration into UIMA database.
- Build supports to accommodate multipage foldouts; largest foldout measured 63 inches.
- Take multiple images of largest page spread to create a merged photo of the entire spread.

Conservation of the Piranesi folios is the greatest collaboration of staff, skills, and space sharing that has occurred to date. UIMA’s Sarah Luko spent ~50 hours treating the folios in the UI Libraries’ conservation lab. The success of this project has made way for new possibilities.

### Takeaways

- Leverage in-house skills.
- Share resources: staff time, space, & equipment.
- Strengthen relationships; maximize knowledge.
- Quicker turnaround and access to objects during conservation treatment.
- Create and implement common metadata standards.
- Preserve physical and digital resources.

### Current/Future Projects

- Conservation/rebinding Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, *Los Desastres de la Guerra (The Disasters of War)*, 1863, Etching and aquatint.
- Loan of UI Libraries Special Collection pamphlet to UIMA exhibition.

---

Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Le Antichità Romane (Roman Antiquities)*, Period bound volumes of etchings, 1756, printed 1784, 16 5/8 x 12 1/4 in. (42.23 x 31.12 cm), 1969:446:A-01, Gift of Owen and Loene Elliott, University of Iowa Museum of Art. We would like to thank the UI Libraries and the UIMA for their generous support of our collaboration efforts in both past and future.