



VIEWS



NEWSLETTER OF THE VISUAL MATERIALS SECTION

July 2015

Volume 29, Number 2

INSIDE

Chair's Corner	1-2
A Note From the Chair-elect	3
2015 SAA Annual Meeting Guide	3-6
Exhibitions in Cleveland	6-7
Member News	8-9
From the Editor	9
Voices from VMCAR	10-12
Book Review	13
New in Print	14

The Visual Materials web site is now the primary vehicle for disseminating time-sensitive section information and announcements. Please go to saavms.org for additional information.

CHAIR'S CORNER

Matthew Daniel Mason
Beinecke Rare Book and
Manuscript Library, Yale
University

Thoughts on Conflict and Resolution

*People are people, so why should it be
You and I should get along so awfully*

Martin Gore, "People are People" (1984),
a song performed by Depeche Mode



credit: K.R. Mason (b. 2008)

In a few weeks, the Society of American Archivists and our Visual Materials Section will gather for our annual meeting in Cleveland, Ohio. The ARCHIVES 2015 theme directs us to "make the connection" between the people, the ideas, and the tools related to archival work. Nevertheless, recent events in Cleveland, chiefly the death of twelve-year-old Tamir Rice shot by police officer Timothy Loehmann in November 2014, will probably remain on the minds of many attendees at the annual meeting. The following does not seek to diminish the circumstances surrounding this tragedy. It does present my cursory thoughts on managing conflict in our lives as archival professionals, as well as general ideas and tools to address it.

In November 2013, I published a column in Views as Chair Elect for the Section, "Duties as Assigned: Influences on My Archival Career." It introduced my background to the membership and underscored the importance of "leaning in" to difficult situations. Over the past year and half, national events, including the death of the young Mr. Rice and others, as well as personal experiences in and outside my archival repository, moved me to write on how to manage and address challenging circumstances that might escalate toward conflict.

Conflict often simply arises from miscommunication. In an era of instantaneous electronic communication, the nuances of conversation often become lost in bits and bytes. Rather than hastily reacting with an irate reply to an infuriating e-mail or text message, a follow-up clarifying question may defuse a budding disagreement. This tactic also applies to an unintended or misconstrued flippant remark in a conversation.

Related to communication, conflicts may arise from differences in expectations. Developing clear expectations at the beginning of a project can prevent conflict later. For example, most archival professionals develop a written processing work

Continued on Page 2

VIEWS: The Newsletter of the
Visual Materials Section of the
Society of American Archivists

Communications Coordinator:
Kim Andersen

Editor:
Deborah Rice (drice@wayne.edu)

Contributing Editors:
Books: Eve Neiger
(eve.neiger@yale.edu)
Exhibitions/Digital Publications:
Vacant
Member News: Elizabeth Clemens
(elizabeth.clemens@wayne.edu)

Layout: Kerri A. Pfister

Web Master: Alan Renga

Social Media:
Anna Raugalis, Stepahie Caloia

Chair: Matthew Daniel Mason,
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript
Library, Yale University

Chair-elect:
Paula Jeannet Mangiafico
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book &
Manuscript Library, Duke University

Immediate Past Chair:
David Haberstich
National Museum of American
History, Smithsonian

**Steering Committee Members-
at-large:** Kim Andersen, Irlanda
Jacinto, Mary Samouelian

Opinions expressed are those of the
authors.

Published three times yearly by and
for the Visual Materials Section.
For membership information go to
www.archivists.org, or call or write:
Society of American Archivists
17 North State St., Suite 1425
Chicago, IL 60602-3315
Tel: 312-606-0722
Toll-free: 866-772-7858

Chair's Corner (cont.)

plan before arranging, describing, and housing a collection, which outlines all tasks he or she expects to complete. Using a similar approach on an ad hoc verbal or written basis to outline expectations for daily commitments will serve to avoid later conflicts.

We each possess a unique viewpoint, which derives from our cultural background, as well as our personal and professional experiences. We may believe that everyone sees things the same way, but diverse views abound. It recalls an adage that I repeat to students and colleagues I instruct in cataloging visual materials: If you ask a dozen archivists and librarians to describe a photograph, they will do so in twelve distinct ways. Nevertheless, those unique descriptions will likely share similar content. Even with different perspectives, there remain opportunities for consensus rather than contentiousness.

Despite our best efforts, mistakes happen. Although we easily recognize mistakes made by others, it takes maturity and responsibility to acknowledge one's own errors. A sincere apology goes a long way to soothing a cantankerous situation. Still, not everyone has this level of self-actualization. If your adversary in a conflict made the mistake and does not recognize or acknowledge it, then ideally they will with the passage of time.

Emotions play a significant role in many conflicts. In the heat of the moment, powerful feelings of anger, humiliation, or fear can trigger or exacerbate an argument. Additionally, we cannot know the challenges that our colleagues face in their lives, such as financial insecurities or familial disruptions, which influence their emotional outlook and disposition. Simply remaining calm in a conflict often leads toward its resolution.

Overall, resolving a conflict requires de-escalation. It often dissipates when at least one of the opponents commits to resolution and makes a sincere attempt to dampen the disagreement. In some cases, this may require taking a moment away from each other for a "cooling off period" and seeking to discuss the subject later. Resolution of a conflict requires both sides to examine the disagreement while removing hyperboles or judgments. However, resolution may still remain unattainable. Participants may need to agree to disagree, but with any luck, the conflicting parties will harbor little or no resentment after the quarrel.

Many of the ideas and tools briefly discussed herein represent commonsense approaches. Nevertheless, in my experience, archival professionals feel particularly passionate about their work and the material they administer. At our annual meeting in C-Town, I look forward to informally discussing other strategies for conflict avoidance and resolution with you, the people who comprise the Section and the Society.

CHAIR-ELECT'S COLUMN

Paula Jeannet Mangiafico

Visual Materials Archivist

David M. Rubenstein

Rare Book & Manuscript Library

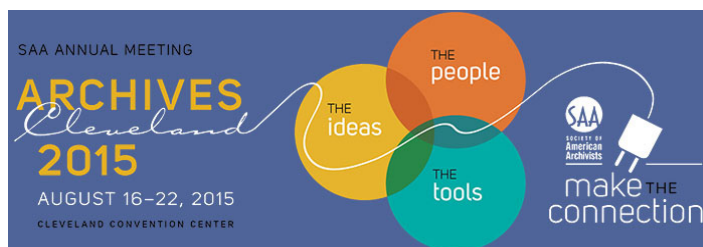
Duke University



A Note from the Chair-elect

Greetings to all VM members and fans of visual materials! Here it is July already, on the cusp of the annual SAA meeting, and our section is buzzing with energy. We had a great midwinter meeting, and I was pleased to note the participation of so many enthusiastic newer members, and the continued and priceless dedication of more seasoned VM'ers. Please take a moment to thank them in person if you see them in Cleveland. In response to the VM survey last fall, the Chairs (past, present, and future) and all of our core VM leaders are planning a more inclusive Section meeting program, launching a redesigned website, and working up a three-year plan that addresses the concerns and desires of you, the members of the Section, and archivists at large. We look to you to offer comments, helpful advice, and we value your direct participation, so speak up. Any medium is fine!

I'm eager to serve as your Chair for 2015-2016 and hope to meet and greet many of you in O-hi-o. If you can't attend, I invite you to email me with your thoughts on our Section. There are so many ways VM can help others navigate and discover the universe of visual materials. Let's go!



2015 SAA ANNUAL MEETING GUIDE

Want to hang out with the VM Section? Yes, yes you do. Here is where you can find us. Please send questions to Member-at-Large Irlanda Jacinto at: irlandasawesomeSAAemail@gmail.com

Tours of Interest for the VM Enthusiast (See SAA conference website for directions)

Tuesday August 18th

9:00am–5:00pm

Dittrick Medical History Center – Open House

11000 Euclid Ave, University Circle

Unique and interesting exhibits, including photography, await you in this fantastic institution (they have a set of letters written by Darwin).

10:00am–4:00pm

Cleveland Museum of Art Archives – Open House

11150 East Boulevard, University Circle

Art + archives = pretty much why we love visual materials. Plus, CMA is recognized as one of the top 5 art museums in the world. Booyah!

Continued on page 4

2015 SAA Annual Meeting Guide (cont.)

Tuesday August 18th (cont.)

2:00pm

Western Reserve Historical Society Research Library - Tour

10825 East Boulevard, University Circle

Huge repository of everything (and huge amounts of visual materials) related to the history of Northeast Ohio, as well as unique photographic collections documenting the Civil War. Reservations are required. Please RSVP to Richard Shrake at <rshrake@wrhs.org> or 216-721-5722, ext. 1522.

Wednesday August 19th

9:00am–4:15pm

Oberlin College and Town and the Allen Memorial Art Museum – Tour

Oberlin, Ohio (bus transportation provided; 40 minutes each way)

Four Oberlin College repositories with outstanding visual materials in the Conservatory Special Collections (featuring: the jazz collection), Main Library Special Collections (starring: collections on and about cinema studies), the Oberlin College Archives (with a stunning and thought provoking collection on antislavery), and the Allen Memorial Art Museum. The Museum is recognized today as one of the five best college and university art museums in the United States. Reservations are required. Please RSVP to Ken Grossi, Archivist, at <ken.grossi@oberlin.edu> or 440-775-8014.

12:00pm–6:00pm

Cleveland Print Room – Open House

2550 Superior Ave, Downtown

Cleveland Print Room is a community photography darkroom, gallery, education center, and workspace. Did someone say community darkroom?! WHAT?!

1:30pm–2:30pm

Intermuseum Conservation Association – Tour

2915 Detroit Ave, Near west side (across the bridge)

ICA was the first of its kind...a regional, non-profit collective dedicated to the preservation and conservation of our art and cultural heritage. Reservations are a MUST. Please RSVP to Jennifer Souers Chevraux, Education & Outreach Officer at <jennifersc@ica-artconservation.org>.

Meet-ups and Meetings for the VM Peeps

Wednesday August 19th

5:00ish pm–7:00ish pm

Happy Hour “Hey how is everyone doing?!” Opening Extravaganza

A.J. Rocco’s, 816 Huron Rd. E.

Come say hello before the madness of the conference starts. A.J’s is a coffee house by day and bar by night...very Dr. Jeckyll. Just a short seven-minute walk from the Convention Center, which means anywhere from 10-15 minutes from our official SAA hotels. #keepitlocal

Thursday August 20th

7:30ish am–8:30ish am

Breakfast Meet-up: Phoenix Coffee Co.

1700 E 9th St.

Just a ten-minute walk from the convention center. Phoenix Coffee Co. has been serving Cleveland for 25 years. Come on and join us at a local coffee shop. If you decide to go to Starbucks REMEMBER: you can get that ANYWHERE! #truth. So why not walk about 10 minutes and have a taste of Cleveland!

Note: New SAA Member/First-Timer Coffee Break starts at 8:00 am at the Cleveland Convention Center (location TBA).

12:00pm–1:30pm

Lunch Meet-up: David’s Deli

CB Richard Ellis, 1111 Superior Ave. #2

Just 11 minutes in Cleveland’s heat will bring you to a local deli! Hooray for locality (Cox, 1996)!

3:00pm–5:00pm

VM Section Meeting: TBA

Interested in photographs, films, maps, posters, and other visual collections? Then come here!

Aside from updates on the recent election, ongoing initiatives, and committee reports, the meeting will consist of breakout sessions on issues related to visual material in archival collections. These sessions will provide opportunities to ask questions and share experiences. General topics discussed by the discrete groups may include appraisal and acquisition of visual materials, as well as the processing challenges related to nineteenth century photographic formats, artwork, architectural records, and born-digital photography. Additional topics may include visual literacy in the archives, digitization of pictorial collections, assessing privacy risks,

2015 SAA Annual Meeting Guide (cont.)

and providing reference services. A survey of membership at the end of July will identify specific topics for the breakout sessions, as well as for ask volunteers to lead them. Until then, if you have a suggestion for a session topic or would like to volunteer to lead a group, please contact Matthew Daniel Mason at <matthew.mason@yale.edu>.

8:00pm–10:00pm

**VM Section Costume Party AKA SAA All-Attendee Reception
Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum**
1100 E 9th St.

Come on everybody! Cleveland rocks! VM Section rocks! So make sure you display VM pride while dressing as your favorite anti-establishment figure within a cultural institution that has historically excluded marginalized people: a museum. Dress as your favorite historical counter-cultural figure! #VMsectionrocks

Friday August 21st

7:30am–8:15ish am (sessions start at 8:30am)

Breakfast Meet-up: Pour

530 Euclid Ave

High rated by Cleveland coffee aficionados Pour specializes in pour over coffee. 10 minutes away from the Cleveland Convention Center and you should be in coffee heaven.

Note: Write Away! Breakfast is happening from 7:30 am- 8:15 am. Write Away breakfast is an opportunity to learn about contributing to our professional literature!

12:30pm–1:45pm

Lunch Meet Up: Graduate Student Poster Presentations and Exhibit Hall Lunch

Show some support to the wonderful future of our profession by attending the Graduate Student Poster Presentations. They spent the time doing the research let's give them our time and attention.

4:30pm–6:00pm

VM Cataloging and Access Meeting: TBA

Do you like to describe mixed media collections? Then this is the meeting for you! Metadata! Metadata! Metadata!

5:00ish pm–7:00pm

Happy Hour Because SAA Decided to Throw the Reception on Thursday Extravaganza
Great Lakes Brewing Pub

2516 Market Ave

SAA took our glorious tradition of dinner on Thursday (#thursday2016) so, VM comrades we will just kick it, kick

back some brews, and discuss the wonderful life of VM archiving. With Special Guests: SNAP!

Saturday August 22nd

7:30am–8:15ish am

Breakfast Meet-up: Networking Cafe

Let's use this last day to give some advice to a student... because we were all in that position once.

5:00pm–7:00pm

Happy Hour So Long Farewell See You In Atlanta 2016 Extravagant Extravaganza
Portside Distillery

983 Front Ave.

Because all good things must come to an end...and end that returns the next year! Come by Cleveland's first distillery since prohibition and say goodbye. Until our beautiful planet completes one revolution folks! Until Earth completes one revolution...

Special Events

Tuesday August 18

6:45pm – 10:00pm

Cleveland Institute of Art Cinematheque, Peter B. Lewis Theater

11610 Euclid Ave

Restored Films Of Richard Myers

USA, 1960-70, Richard Myers

Richard Myers in person! Myers will present and discuss three of the Academy Archive's recent restorations (all in 16mm): *The Path* (1960, 20 min.), *Akbar* (1970, 16 min.), and an excerpt from Myers' dizzying 118-min. opus *Akran* (1969). Total approx. 90 min. Special \$7 admission for badge-wearing attendees of the SAA Annual Meeting.

Ornette: Made In America

USA, 1985, Shirley Clarke

New 35mm restoration! Saxophonist and free jazz legend Ornette Coleman, who died in June, was the subject of the final feature film by pioneering American independent filmmaker Shirley Clarke. With William S. Burroughs, Buckminster Fuller, Yoko Ono, Robert Palmer, et al. Cleveland revival premiere. 85 min. Special \$8 admission for badge-wearing attendees of the SAA Annual Meeting.

For more information: (216) 421-7450 or www.cia.edu/cinematheque

2015 SAA Annual Meeting Guide (cont.)

For Consideration on Your Free Time:

Velvet Tango Room

2095 Columbus Rd.

Speakeasy styled mixology bar with live Jazz music. You need a reservation. The phone number is 216-241-8869. I will most certainly be hitting this place up, so if you want to attend holler!

Chocolate Bar

347 Euclid Ave.

The specialty of this place is chocolate martini's and dessert type martinis. It will soon be chain but right now you can only find it in three locations world-wide.

The Corner Alley

402 Euclid Ave.

Bar and bowling alley! Well most bowling alleys are bars but this one promises to be hip and sweet and stuff. The food and atmosphere have a high rating on good ol' Google and it is extremely close to SAA's official host hotels...so close that it

takes 11 minutes to get there by foot and 15 by bus!

Anatomy

1299 W 9th St., Warehouse District

If you like to go dancing, Anatomy is apparently it. It is considered one of the best upscale nightclubs in Cleveland, which includes bottle service and VIP seating. If you get to Anatomy and it is not your scene just walk around the Warehouse District and you will find several options for cocktail style bars.

Music Box Supper Club

1148 Main Ave.

Great music AND food!

Beachland Ballroom & Tavern

15711 Waterloo Road

Nationally acclaimed concert club, great beer selection and great food!

EXHIBITIONS IN CLEVELAND

Deborah Rice

Editor

Cleveland Museum of Art

My Dakota: Photographs by Rebecca Norris Webb

Mark Schwartz and Bettina Katz Photography Gallery

Through Sunday August 16

On view will be about thirty color photographs and a poem written by the artist; she is a poet of place whose five books include *My Dakota* in addition to projects on zoos, Cuba, and Rochester, New York. *My Dakota* captures not just the state's changing economy and landscape but also a personal catharsis. Norris Webb came to understand the series as a means of addressing her grief—"to try to absorb it, to distill it, and, ultimately, to let it go."

<http://www.clevelandart.org/events/exhibitions/my-dakota-photographs-rebecca-norris-webb>



Blackbirds (detail), from *My Dakota*, 2005–11. Rebecca Norris Webb (American, born 1956).

Type-C photographic print; 26 x 35 ½ in.

Courtesy of the artist and Rapid City Arts Council / Dahl Arts Center.

Continued on p. 7

Exhibitions in Cleveland (cont.)

Cleveland Museum of Art

TR Ericsson: *Crackle & Drag*

CMA at Transformer Station

Through Sunday August 23

TR Ericsson employs photo-based work, sculptural objects, and cinema to create installations that provide a ruthlessly honest, yet tender portrait of his mother, who committed suicide at age 57, and of the triangulated relationships between three generations within one Northeastern Ohio family. Ericsson is involved in an ongoing investigation and reinterpretation of a deteriorating archive of family artifacts, documents, writings, and photographs. *Crackle & Drag* makes a personal struggle public, coming to terms with the archive's power to determine the past and the future, even as it vanishes in time. The exhibition's title is taken from the final line of Sylvia Plath's poem "Edge": "Staring from her hood of bone./She is used to this sort of thing. Her blacks crackle and drag."

<http://www.clevelandart.org/events/exhibitions/tr-ericsson-crackle-drag>

Hostage: *The Bachar Tapes*

Video Project Room

Through Sunday September 13

Hostage: The Bachar Tapes (English version) is a video work in the form of an experimental documentary by Lebanese artist Walid Raad. The video focuses on the Lebanon hostage crisis—and uses this subject to explore notions of fact, fiction, and how the two are so easily and often interwoven. In *Hostage: The Bachar Tapes*, we witness two videotapes in which an Arab detainee is personified by Souheil Bachar. Bachar is portrayed by the well-known Lebanese actor Fadi Abi Samra. In the tapes, Bachar addresses the cultural, textual, and sexual aspects of his detention with the Americans. In offering Bachar's "testimony," the work questions who has the right to shape historical narratives such as this one. Raad has described his complex artwork as "factual fictions," by which "documents, characters, and stories operate between the false binary of fiction and nonfiction."

<http://www.clevelandart.org/events/exhibitions/hostage-bachar-tapes>

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Rare: Portraits of America's Endangered Species,
a compelling exhibit by

National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore

Fawick Gallery

Through September 12

For two decades, *National Geographic* photographer and fellow Joel Sartore has been on a mission to document North American species facing extinction. This exhibition spotlights 60 of these species, including well-known endangered species like bald eagles and sea turtles, and showcases more unfamiliar species in danger of extinction.

The exhibition is based on Sartore's book by the same title, which, like the exhibit, organizes species by the number of living populations remaining. By shedding light upon the endangered species that appear in the book, Sartore raises awareness and brings attention to the species' history and origin. The exhibit also examines the history, purpose and effectiveness of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

<https://www.cmnh.org/visit/exhibits/Rare-Portraits-of-America's-Endangered-Species>

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

Herb Ritts: *The Rock Portraits*

Ongoing

The work of renowned photographer Herb Ritts (1952-2002) will be featured in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's newest exhibit. Presented in collaboration with the Herb Ritts Foundation, the exhibit includes 30 never-before-seen photographs, original video footage, contact sheets with Ritts' red-pencil markings, new video interviews and other well-known portraits from the revolutionary photographer and filmmaker's collection.

<https://rockhall.com/exhibits/herb-ritts--the-rock-portraits/#sthash.pDcsmUhK.dpuf>



David Bowie photographed by Herb Ritts in Los Angeles for Rolling Stone Magazine (1987) / courtesy Herb Ritts Foundation

MEMBER NEWS

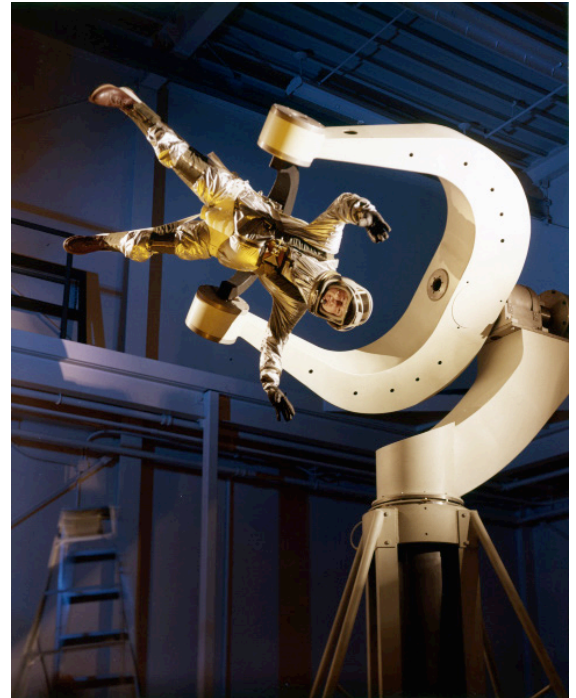
Elizabeth Clemens

Contributing Editor

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University



*Atlas missile 93D being prepared for shipping to launch complex, October 1961.
Credit: San Diego Air and Space Museum.*



Extravehicular activity testing on 6-degree simulator, circa 1961. Credit San Diego Air and Space Museum.

San Diego Air and Space Museum Receives Grant from the NHPRC

The San Diego Air and Space Museum is pleased to announce that the Library and Archives received a two-year National Historical Publications and Records grant in March 2015 from the National Archives and Records Administration to continue our Great Explorations: Increasing Access to Our Aerospace Heritage program. The grant provides for the digitization of 50,000 Atlas missile and space launch system images. Through the digitization of these records from our one-of-a-kind General Dynamics Atlas missile and space launch vehicle collection, Great Explorations will greatly advance research into the history of America's national defense, the space program, the development of the aerospace industry, and the Cold War. Like the rest of our 180,000 digitized images, these Atlas images will be posted on the Flickr Commons at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives>. This work is made possible through the dedication and support of our thirty Library and Archives volunteers who have given 7,279 hours of their time to the Great Explorations project throughout the past year.

Submitted by Alan Renga, Digital Archivist, San Diego Air and Space Museum



Atlas 66D launch from Cape Canaveral, Florida in 1960. Credit San Diego Air and Space Museum.

Continued on p. 9

Member News (Cont.)

University of Washington Libraries Special Collections Moving Image Archive Receives Rare, Historic Film

In 1927, after his historic flight across the Atlantic, Charles Lindbergh took a trip around the U.S. visiting each of the 48 states at the height of his fame. A five-minute long silent film of the event was recently donated to the University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Moving Image Archive. The film was generously donated by Beverly Hitt Ackers, and had been in her family since Lindbergh's visit to Seattle in September 1927.

The film captures the events surrounding the aviator's visit, including: his arrival at Sand Point Naval Air Station on Lake Washington; a yacht ride along the shore of Lake Washington to the University of Washington stadium where he is greeted by a crowd of around 25,000 people; a parade through downtown Seattle; a banquet thrown in Lindbergh's honor; a visit to Volunteer Park to meet with 30,000 school children; and his departure for Portland, Oregon. The film also features Seattle mayor Bertha Landes, the first woman mayor of a major American city.

Funding is currently being sought to make a new print of the film along with digital copies. Once the transfer is complete, the film will be available to the public through the UW Libraries Moving Image digital site.

Submitted by Nicolette Bromberg, Visual Materials Curator, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries



Charles Lindbergh and Seattle Mayor Bertha Landes, 1927

TRANSITIONS

From the Editor

You may have noticed a few new names on the masthead recently, and I wanted to take the opportunity here to both welcome new members of our VM Communications Group and say a heartfelt thanks to those who've served in the past. As elections (taking place even as I type this) will soon give us new officers for the section, so too will recent appointments change our Steering Committee membership and more broadly, our communications.

With this issue, I assume editorship of the newsletter and I would be remiss if I did not devote at least a few sentences to thanking my predecessor, Anne Salsich. If you look back on Views issues over the years, Anne's direction and dedication speak for themselves. Particularly, I know that I personally always enjoy the "Life in the Shop" feature Anne instituted, and I hope it will continue far into the future, with her guidance. I had the pleasure of serving as Anne's co-editor on the last three issues and I am grateful for her mentorship, and excited to follow in her footsteps.

We also say a 'hello' to two new contributing editors: Elizabeth Clemens, who compiles Member News and Eve Neiger, who solicits book reviews as well as compiles New in Print. Both joined us with the March issue. That same issue also marked Emily Gonzalez's last Exhibitions section, so we are now looking to fill that position. If you are interested, please let me know. We need you!

Last, but certainly not least, we welcome both a new Communications Coordinator, Kim Anderson and a new Web Master, Alan Renga, to round out our current Communications Group. Kim, cycling off her tenure as Member-at Large this August, takes over for Tim Hawkins. Alan assumes the role held previously by Lisa Snider. All have been hard at work rebuilding the section's web site, so watch for great things to come!

A huge 'thank you' to all those mentioned above that put in countless volunteer hours both past and present. I look forward to contributing to a great newsletter and working with our Communications Group to further build upon a foundation that helps connect our members and keep them informed. I welcome any and all suggestions and ideas for the newsletter. See you in Cleveland!

--Deborah Rice

VOICES FROM VMCAR

Cataloging and Access Member Spotlight

Shannon M. Erb

Vice-Chair of Visual Materials Cataloging & Access Roundtable

The Filson Historical Society Image Database

[HOME](#)
[KEYWORD SEARCH](#)
[ADVANCED SEARCH](#)
[RANDOM IMAGES](#)
[PHOTOS](#)

The Filson Historical Society is a private, non-profit organization with a mission to collect, preserve, and tell significant stories of Kentucky and the Ohio Valley's history and culture. Founded in 1884, The Filson is the oldest privately supported historical society in Kentucky.



As a perfect example of how archivists at the Filson are using their pre-existing catalog software to bring their collection alive digitally, the Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Roundtable (VMCAR) thought it would be fascinating to interview a leading force behind

the Filson's Image Database and showcase how they used PastPerfect Online to make it happen.

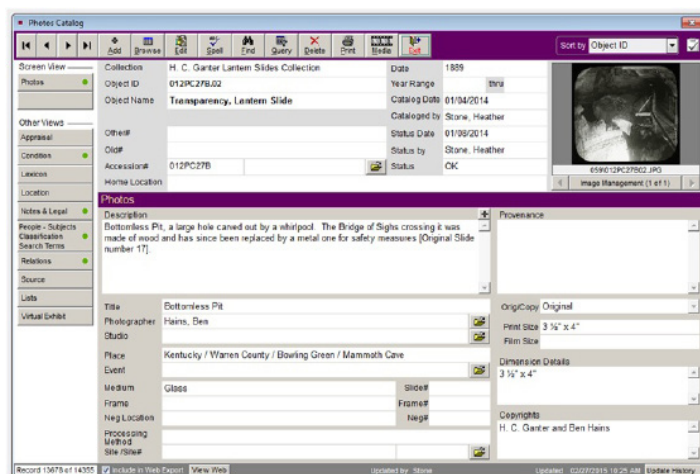
Interviewee is Heather Stone Potter (HSP), Associate Curator of Photographic and Print Materials in the Special Collections Department at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky.

SE: How did you become interested in the visual material archiving field?

HSP: I received my BA in History from Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas, and my MLS with an emphasis in Archives from Indiana University – Bloomington. I always knew that I wanted to work in the history profession, but I wasn't really sure if a PhD was for me. I was guided into library school by a history professor, Dr. Alan Bearman, and it was through him that I was encouraged to learn archival work to combine my love for history and reference services.

SE: Describe the project you are currently working on at the Filson Historical Society.

HSP: I am cleaning up legacy records in our PastPerfect database which we use to describe our museum and audiovisual collection. The cleanup has focused on our photograph collections in order to make sure data was entered into the appropriate fields, to conduct additional research, and to add better quality scans to the records. Over the past 17 years, the data in PastPerfect has been entered by volunteers with various levels of training and without an in-house standards manual. The current catalog cleanup correlates with the Filson's plan to make many of our PastPerfect records available online via PastPerfect Online and make our photograph collection more accessible. I have encountered a wide variety of formats as I continue to work on this project including black and white prints, stereocards, postcards, and your typical 19th century formats such as daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, cabinet cards and glass plate negatives.



Continued on p. 11

Voices from VMCAR (cont.)

Photo Record



Title	Margaret "Maggie" Adelia Walter Long
Collection	Walter-Long Family Photograph Collection
Object Name	Daguerreotype
Catalog Number	014PC2.3
Description	Margaret "Maggie" Adelia Walter Long (May 3, 1840-January 17, 1923). Margaret was born near Charlestown, Clark County, Indiana to Alpha and Margaret Lindsay Walter. Margaret married Isaac Newton Long on November 19, 1863, and they had one child Isabella Long. Margaret died in 1923 at Deaconess Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. Her obituary reads, "Mrs. Long was an old resident of Louisville and a member of the Second Presbyterian Church."
Date	ca. 1860
Search Terms	Walter-Long Family Photograph Collection_010PC26_014PC2



SE: Why did you decide to use PastPerfect Online versus other content management software?

HSP: We have been using the PastPerfect database to catalog the Filson's audiovisual and museum objects since 1998. Given the amount of our collections already cataloged in PastPerfect and the lack of in-house IT staff, it was the practical solution to implement PastPerfect Online versus shifting to a whole new content management system at this point.

SE: Who is your intended audience for the Filson's Image Database?

HSP: External and internal users! While some information on our photograph collections has been visible via our MARC library catalog, the records are rather sparse. Remote researchers have to go through a lengthy reference process to even gain a vague idea of our image holdings, so PastPerfect Online will allow these users more freedom and flexibility to conduct research searches of their own. We also wanted to follow the directive of our Board to provide broader online access to our collections for the benefit of the general public.

SE: How was the process for incorporating your existing PastPerfect catalog records into PastPerfect Online?

HSP: It is a very simple process! We are able to click a "Include in Web Export" button within the individual records or batch upload them to the PastPerfect Online portal.

SE: What do you find the most appealing features for cataloging and searching in the PastPerfect Online portal?

HSP: PastPerfect Online is a very easy database to catalog in and is very straightforward. I really enjoy the "Random Image" feature, which allows you to see a sampling of images without actually searching the system.

SE: Are there any implications or problems that you've encountered with describing your items in PastPerfect Online? If so, how did you overcome them?

HSP: Yes. We currently use the Photos Catalog Module in PastPerfect, which does not allow us to link individual items records into collections within the online module. We solved this issue by adding the collection title as a search term in each individual item record. This is useful to a user as they can

Continued on p. 12

Voices from VMCAR (cont.)

simply click on the title search term and basically generate search results listing which displays the whole collection.

SE: How did you handle and manage copyright for items in the Filson's Image Database?

HSP: Copyright is always a tricky topic for libraries and archives, and it is especially so for photographic material. We are not including any materials that have known rights issues, such as photographs shot by or for our local paper, the Louisville Courier-Journal, or photographs by certain photographers whose collections are owned by other repositories. When we acquire collections now, we are sure to get deeds of gift expressing the transfer of rights information as possible, but this has not always been the case over The Filson's 130+ year history. We do our best not to infringe upon any individual or organization's copyright, and are always open to discussing and working with other individuals and organizations if they believe something has been infringed upon.

SE: Is the Filson's Image Database going to continue to grow? What can we expect to see online in the future?

HSP: We will continue adding materials to PastPerfect Online as time permits. We are currently selecting materials that are easy to update, the "low hanging fruit" if you will, in order to make as much content available online as possible, but we will continue by targeting specific, heavily-used collections as possible. I am currently updating a collection that was processed a few years ago called the All-Prayer Foundlings Home Lantern Slide Collection. The collection was described and many of the slides had quality scans, but I have been breaking up the collection from one record for the whole collection to individual records per image. I am also in the process of going through a great mid-19th/early 20th century African American collection, the Lusby Family Photograph Collection. This collection has 262 photographic items, with additional manuscript and genealogical materials related to the Lusby-Reed families. The collection was processed in 2004, but I am working on improving description and scanning more items for online access.



Fossils



Mary Louise Mays
Native. Tom's secretary
and dental. Had pair
fox many, many years.

Mary Louise Mays



Camp Zachary Taylor.
Catherine Doolan's
property



Camp Zachary Taylor.
Louis Kamber's
property



Camp Zachary Taylor.
Audubon Park Realty's
property



Spears Mill



Rolling barrels onto
steamboat



Mildred Ellis Craig



Camp Zachary Taylor.
Lorena S. Bailey's
property



Split rail fence



Mayean Martin



S. T. Wells

Interested in learning more about the Filson Historical Society or the Filson's Image Database? Visit <http://filson.pastperfectonline.com/> or email Heather at hpotter@filsonhistorical.org.

BOOK REVIEW

By Alexis Peregoy, Project Archivist
Modern Graphic History Library, Special Collections
Washington University in St. Louis

Al Parker: Illustrator, Innovator

Introduction by Kit Parker, essays by
Stephanie Haboush, David Apatoff, and Leif Peng

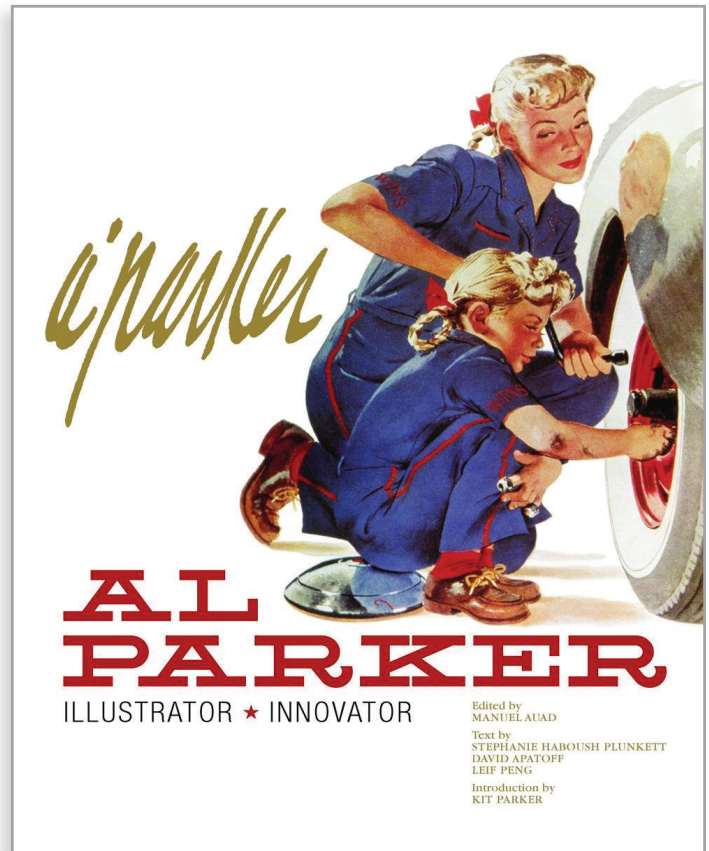
Hardcover, 208 pages – Auad Publishing – 2014
\$44.95 Available from www.auadpublishing.com

This book focuses on the career of Al Parker (1920-1985), an iconic figure in illustration and graphic design. Known as the “Dean of Illustrators,” Parker has been extremely influential on the field, which is why, according to fellow illustrator Leif Peng, “the illustration community [was] crying out for an Al Parker book” (foreword). The majority of Parker’s most popular illustrations were created between the 1930s and 1960s, before photography took over the pages of every magazine.

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Parker studied at Washington University’s School of Fine Art before building his career, as a highly sought after illustrator. While most of his illustrations were crafted for women’s magazines, Parker also created illustrative advertisements for many clients, including American Airlines. Additionally, Parker was one of 12 founders of the Famous Artists School in 1948 (along with illustrator Norman Rockwell), which offered correspondence courses in painting, illustration, and cartooning.

Parker was highly praised and sought after because his work reflected the values, hopes, and desires of American families, especially post-war American women. He was widely known for his “Mother and Daughter” series featured on the covers of Ladies’ Home Journal from 1938-1952. Parker continued to produce work for publication throughout the 1950s and 1960s and in 1965, Parker was elected to the Society of Illustrators’ Hall of Fame. However, by that time, illustration for hire was on the decline. Parker did not have a lot of commissioned work during the 1970s and 1980s, with the exception of his work for Kit Parker Films.

With only about twenty-five pages of full text, the focus of this book is clearly devoted to Al Parker’s illustrations, making it not only an easy read but a captivating pictorial journey. Most of the chapters feature illustrations with minimal descriptive text, and are organized by client, project, or theme. The major magazines, such as Cosmopolitan, each have a chapter dedicated to Parker’s work. There are also chapters based on themes, such as his love of jazz, or on commissions, including the children’s book *Jane’s Blanket* (New York: The Crowell-Collier Press, 1963.)

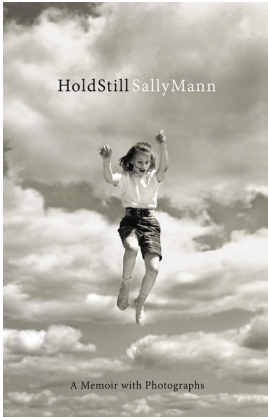


Essay contributions to the book include an introduction by Parker’s son Kit Parker and text from Parker’s niece, Margaret Matchin, both providing a small glimpse of Al Parker as a family man. There are also essays written by Stephanie Haboush Plunkett, the Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the Norman Rockwell Museum, and by David Apatoff, author and illustration scholar. Additionally, an interview with Al Parker by Mary Anne Guitart, from her book *22 Famous Painters and Illustrators Tell How They Work* (New York: D. McKay Co., 1964) provides an intimate look into Parker’s thought process, approach, and style.

Overall, the book is a visual excursion through the realm of Al Parker illustrations, rather than a heavy textual analysis. It is a valuable resource for students and scholars alike, as well as for a general audience. Historically, illustration has rarely been thought of or treated as “fine art,” leading the field to be mostly ignored or overlooked by art museums and galleries. Renewed interest in commercial art has proven the necessity for libraries and archives to preserve illustration history as a cornerstone of modern American culture.

Continued on p. 14

NEW IN PRINT - PHOTOGRAPHY



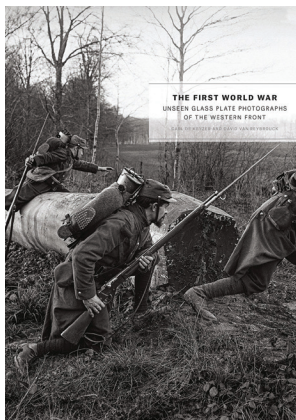
Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs

Sally Mann

Hardcover, 496 pages – Little, Brown and Company – May 2015
 \$20.36 Available from www.amazon.com

“In this groundbreaking book, a unique interplay of narrative and image, Mann’s preoccupation with family, race, mortality, and the storied landscape of the American South are revealed as almost genetically predetermined, written into her DNA by the family history that precedes her... In lyrical prose and startlingly revealing photographs, she crafts a totally original form of personal history that has the page-turning drama of a great novel but is firmly rooted in the fertile soil of her own life.”

PHOTOGRAPHER



The First World War: Unseen Glass Plate Photographs Of The Western Front

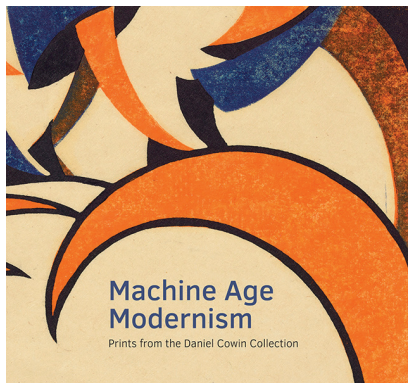
Edited by Carl de Keyser & David van Reybrouck with a preface by Geoff Dyer

Hardcover, 280 pages – The University of Chicago Press - 2015
 \$65.00 Available from www.press.uchicago.edu

“Due to the crude film cameras used at the time, the look of the Great War has traditionally been grainy, blurred, and monochrome—until now. The First World War presents a startlingly different perspective; one based on rare glass plate photographs, that reveals the war with previously unseen, even uncanny, clarity. Scanned from the original plates, with scratches and other flaws expertly removed, [and]... authentic color photographs, products of the early autochrome method... These images, taken by some of the conflict’s most gifted photographers, will radically change how we visualize the First World War.”

HISTORY

NEW IN PRINT - PRINT & GRAPHIC ARTS



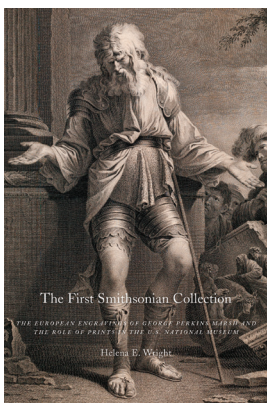
Machine Age Modernism: Prints from the Daniel Cowin Collection

Jay A. Clarke and Jonathan Black

Paperback, 112 pages – Clark Art Institute – March 2015
 \$27.50 Available from www.yalepress.yale.edu

“This group of 40 prints from the exceptional Daniel Cowin Collection captures the tumultuous aesthetic and political climate of the years surrounding World Wars I and II... Influences of Futurism, Cubism, and the short-lived but vibrant abstraction of the Vorticist movement saturate the powerful color images, which are accompanied by artist biographies.”

MOVEMENT



The First Smithsonian Collection: The European Engravings of George Perkins Marsh and the Role of Prints in the U.S. National Museum

Helena E. Wright

Hardcover, 319 pages – Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press - April 2015
 \$39.95 Available from www.penguinrandomhouse.com

“In 1849 the Smithsonian purchased the Marsh Collection of European engravings. Not only the first collection of any kind to be acquired by the new Institution, it was also the first public print collection in the nation, and it presented an important symbol of cultural authority... The history of this first Smithsonian collection enlivens an important stage in the development of American cultural identity and in the formation of the Smithsonian as a national institution.”

COLLECTION