



VIEWS

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Visual Materials Section
Society of American Archivists

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From the Chair

Stephen Fletcher

UNC-Chapel Hill

"For the King, yes, of course. But which King? . . . Unless we ourselves take a hand now, they'll foist a republic on us. If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change. Do you understand?"

—Tancredi in *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa

It is the next to last sentence above that's often quoted from Tomasi di Lampedusa's classic historical novel. It is, however, Tancredi's entire statement to his aristocratic and somewhat oblivious uncle, Prince Fabrizio Corbera, that is more enlightening because it reveals the constancy he desired and hints at what needed to change to maintain that constancy.

The *Leopard* begins its fictional story in May 1860, coinciding with Francis Frith's actual return from the last of three photographic expeditions to Egypt and Palestine first begun in 1856. In Frith's realm, the wet collodion process had become king, supplanting the daguerreotype and calotype. Today we recognize a new king: Digital Photography. But do we as visual materials archives understand that reality?

As an SAA section, we have been slow, almost reticent, to address the issues that stem from our new "republic." The digital photography revolution is not new. Only a few days ago, October 29th, *The Economist* honored Steve Sasson, the builder of the first digital camera in 1975 (almost 35 years ago) for his invention. When our VIEWS editor asked me for a portrait for this column, I almost posed by a large early 20th century studio portrait camera. Instead I symbolically selected a modern view camera equipped with a medium format digital back. Where Frith returned from the Holy Land with hundreds of glass plates, today's photographers return from their shootings with hundreds of megabytes—even hundreds per image. True, the digital photography revolution was slow to develop, but it has unquestionably been foisted upon us now for at least the past decade, ever since the technology reached the point of practical usability. Over the years, the Visual Materials Section has become relevant to our colleagues and ourselves because we have provided useful and important information about our primary area of concern: photography. Why have we been so slow to tackle the issues of digital photography? We will only revere the old kings? How do we as a section stay relevant? If we want to stay relevant, what do we need to change? That shall be the theme for this year's midwinter meeting, and we'll start by addressing the first issue of SAA's Strategic Priority #1: "Rapidly changing information technologies challenge archival principles, practices, and communication protocols, demanding effective leadership from the archives community to access, capture, and preserve records in all formats."

For us, that primarily (but not exclusively) means digital photography. Do we understand?

Philadelphia on Stone: Library Company of Philadelphia Nineteenth-Century Lithography Project Nears Completion

By Erika Piola

Assistant Curator, Prints and Photographs
Library Company of Philadelphia

As the end of 2009 approaches, the Library Company of Philadelphia enters the final year of work on Philadelphia on Stone, a three-year project researching the first fifty years of Philadelphia lithography (1828-1878). Generously funded by the William Penn Foundation, with additional support from the Independence Foundation, the project explores the professional and personal lives of Philadelphia lithographic artists and printers, their work, and the impact of this printing process on the iconography of the city. Inspired overall by Nicholas Wainwright's *Philadelphia in the Romantic Age of Lithography* (1958), the project takes a more inclusive approach than this previous work. Lesser known, later, and journeymen lithographers, in addition to premier lithographers such as P.S. Duval (1804/5-1886), serve as focal points in the analysis of the importance of Philadelphia lithography in understanding 19th-century visual culture. Administered by the Assistant Curator of the Print and Photograph Department, Erika

Piola, Philadelphia on Stone now proceeds into its final phase following two years of surveys at eight institutions with significant holdings of lithographs relevant to the scope of the project.

Over 1,000 lithographs have been MARC cataloged from the surveys conducted of the collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Atwater Kent Museum, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, the Free Library of Philadelphia, the American Antiquarian Society, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. These prints, to be illustrated and accessible on the library's digital catalog ImpAC (www.lcpdigital.org), provide the foundation to the project, now focused on the compilation of an on-line biographical dictionary, exhibit, and book.

The dictionary, to be illustrated by profiled lithographers' advertisements, portraits, and buildings, will contain more than 500 entries also searchable through ImpAC. Based on the most comprehensive scholarship to date, the biographies will be searchable by name and keyword, and unlike conventional printed dictionaries will be readily revisable with any new information garnered from patrons or further staff research.

The exhibition, opening March 22, 2010 and intentionally scheduled to coincide with the arts festival Philagrafika 2010 "The Graphic Unconscious," will promote the history of Philadelphia lithography as well as assess its impact on contemporary visual culture. The main exhibition



P.S. Duval & Son, Lithographers. S.W. corner 5th and Minor Street. Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1857). Lithograph, tinted with two stones. Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

space will contain installations that explain the history and process of lithography, document the professional and personal lives of premier and journeymen lithographers, and include selections from the Philadelphia lithographs surveyed. In addition, four wall cases in a small exhibit area will display the work of contemporary lithographers Kip Deeds and Roberta Delaney.

The book, a collection of eight thematic essays authored by Library Company curators and other scholars in the field, including Professor

Emeritus of Typography and Graphic Communication Michael Twyman, will provide a comprehensive overview of the new findings garnered from the project research. To be published in late 2011, the heavily-illustrated text will include chapters that provide an analysis of the social, economic, and technological changes in the trade from 1828 to 1878, biographies of seminal lithographers P.S. Duval (1804/5-1886) and James Queen (1820/21-1886), and new insights about genres of lithographs that relate to book illustration, advertising, sensational news, and landscape imagery.

As Philadelphia on Stone heads into its final phase, a revived interest in the importance of Philadelphia lithography for visual culture research will hopefully just be beginning.

To learn more about this project, please visit the Philadelphia on Stone website <http://www.librarycompany.org/collections/prints/stone.htm>



W. H. Rease, Mitchell & Croasdale, Successors to G.W. Ridgway & Co., Dealers in Spermaceti, Whale, Lard, & Tanners Oil, Candles, Rice, &c. No. 30 Nth Wharves, above Arch St. Philadelphia. (Philadelphia: Printed by Wagner & McGuigan, 1856). Chromolithograph, with hand-coloring. Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Max Rosenthal, Rudolph Stein (Philadelphia, 1865). Lithograph, tinted with one stone. Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Exhibits

By Shawn Waldron
Archive Director
Conde Naste Publications

Ansel Adams – Early Works

San Jose Museum of Art
San Jose, CA
September 5th to February 28th

Irving Penn – Small Trades

Getty Museum
Los Angeles, CA
September 9th to January 10th

Looking in: Robert Frank's "The Americans"

Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, NY
September 2nd to December 27th

Documenting our Past: The Teenie Harris Project

Carnegie Museum of Art
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Ends on November 1st

Masterworks of American Photography: Moments in Time

Amon Carter Museum
Fort Worth, TX
June 19th to January 3rd

Norfolk and Western Railway Photographs by O. Winston Link

Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington
Seattle, WA
Ends October 18th

Eduardo Garcia Benito: The New York Years

Museo de la Pasion
Valladolid, Spain
Ends November 1st
Created by yours truly!

The Provoke Era:

Postwar Japanese Photography

San Francisco MoMA
San Francisco, CA
Ends December 20th

Hide and Seek: Picturing Childhood

Nelson-Atkins Museum
Kansas City, MO
Ends February 21st

Steps off the Beaten Path: 19th Century Photographs of Rome and It's Environs

Clark Insitute
Williamstown, MA
Ends January 3rd

Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History

Brooklyn Museum
Brooklyn, NY
Ends January 31st

Le Theatre du crime:

Photographies de R. A. Reiss (1875-1929)

Musee de l'Eysee
Lausanne, Switzerland
Ends October 25th
This is a gorgeous museum!

Faces of the Frontier:

Portraits from the American West, (1845-1924)

National Portrait Gallery
Washington, D.C.
Ends January 24th

Dallas Municipal Archives to Re-Introduce Kennedy Assassination Photos through Portal to Texas History

By John H. Slate, CA
City Archivist
Dallas Municipal Archives

The Dallas Municipal Archives, City Secretary's Office, City of Dallas, Texas, is re-opening for research its Dallas Police Department photographs taken the day and week of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Through a Rescuing Texas History grant, funded by the Summerlee Foundation, the Portal to Texas History of the University of North Texas Libraries digitized 420 images comprising the first-day evidence photography made by the police department during its investigation of the president's murder, as well as documentation surrounding the murders of Officer J.D. Tippit and Lee Harvey Oswald. The photographs series is part of the 11,400 documents making up the collection that is the cornerstone of the Municipal Archives, acquired in 1989.



The only known color image of Lee Harvey Oswald while in custody of the Dallas Police Department. Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives, City of Dallas



Photo from a 4x5 black and white negative, made the same day as the color photo. Note the lighting equipment, which is frequently cropped out in derivative versions. Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives, City of Dallas

This event marks the widest possible access to the collection to date, since it was the subject of a pioneering digitization project in 1992 by Wang Laboratories. Beginning the week of November 16th the virtual collection will be open for research through the Portal to Texas History (<http://texashistory.unt.edu/>), where viewers can see 4x5 inch format images of the Texas School Book Depository Building and Dealey Plaza, the Texas Theater, and other sites.

Besides the photographs, the other 11,000 paper documents in the collection are scheduled to be available through the Portal to Texas History in 2010. Other Dallas Municipal Archives collections that will soon be available through the Portal include an illustrated 1924 Trinity River water quality survey, Love Field images from 1918 to the 1990s, and the Dallas Police Department Historic Cases files (including Bonnie and Clyde materials).

Have You Tried Tineye?

By Scott Prouty

American Institute of Physics (AIP),
Emilio Segrè Visual Archives (ESVA)

TinEye¹ is the first search engine on the web that uses image identification technology to find multiple copies of any given image. It does not search on keywords nor does it have content recognition capabilities (such as facial recognition). Created by Idée Inc., TinEye looks for exact image matches (even when they have been altered with image editing software), not similar images. It does this by searching on the 1,121,525,514 images (as of press date) it has indexed from the web. Idée Inc. recently claimed that it has refined TinEye's crawling ability, with 2-3 million images being added to its index weekly.

The search is executed by either uploading an image (which is not added to their search index, only the web is crawled) or inputting an existing image URL. Once results are returned, users have the option of comparing their own images with search results by using a toggle tool to highlight the differences between them, such as contrast, angle, etc.

The uses of this tool are still being explored; Tineye's website² suggests the following:

- "Find out where an image came from, or get more information about it
- Research or track the appearance of an image online
- Find higher resolution versions of an image
- Locate web pages that make use of an image you have created
- Discover modified or edited versions of an image"

It will be interesting to see what photo archivists and librarians will make of TinEye and Idée Inc's other developing image identification and image

search software, such as PixID and Pixsimilar. As a Photo Librarian, TinEye has been useful for me in finding additional descriptive data about our photos, such as identification and dates, which did not exist on our print copies. This works particularly well if your collection contains more copies of images than originals. TinEye has also eased the process of discovering copyright and provenance information for photos that had only existed for us as orphan works. TinEye reports that members of Wikimedia Commons "have created automated plugins and image checkers driven by the TinEye search engine, to help research photos and locate the source of images"³ in order to determine image copyright and assign appropriate licenses.

³ <http://blog.ideeinc.com/2009/07/08/wikimedia-commons-tineye/>

Small, but Important Note:

January VIEWS deadline is December 15th

Be a Contributing Editor. Submit an article. See the Breakout Session story for more details.

Submit images from your collections for the Gallery. The theme is Winter Wonderlands.

Write a Letter to the Editor. Agree with me. Disagree with me.

Get involved with VIEWS!

¹ <http://tineye.com/>

² <http://tineye.com/faq>

NEW in Print

By Liz Ruth, Assistant Editor
Los Angeles Maritime Museum

Brunet, Francois.

Photography and Literature.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Series: Reaktion Books - Exposures, 2009.

144 pages, 30 color plates, 50 halftones.

ISBN: 9781861894298. \$29.95.

Available from: The University of Chicago Press

1427 East 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637 USA

773-702-7700 Fax: 773-702-9756.

<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Cosgrove, Dennis and William Fox.

Photography and Flight.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Series: Reaktion Books - Exposures, 2009.

144 pages, 20 color plates, 60 halftones.

ISBN: 9781861893987. \$29.95.

Available from: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Foote, Berit Arnestad.

Point Hope, Alaska Life on Frozen Water.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

204 pages, 192 halftones, 1 map.

ISBN: 9781602230651. Cloth \$65.00.

Available from: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Heckert, Virginia A. and Anne Lacoste.

Irving Penn: Small Trades.

Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2009.

272 pages, 259 tritone illustrations.

ISBN 978-0-89236-996-6. \$49.95.

Available from: <http://www.getty.edu>.

Pacyga, Dominic.

Chicago A Biography.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

472 pages, 145 halftones, 7 maps.

ISBN: 9780226644318. \$35.00.

ISBN: 9780226644325.

Available from: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Available electronically: E-book from \$5.00 to

\$35.00.

Piston, William Garrett and Thomas P. Sweeney, editors. **Portraits of Conflict: A Photographic History of Missouri in the Civil War.**

Fayetteville, Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2009. 300 pages, 243 photographs, index. ISBN 978-1-55728-913-1 | 1-55728-913-1.

\$65.00.

Available from: University of Arkansas Press,

<http://www.uapress.com/titles/fa09/fa09.html>

McIlroy House • 105 N. McIlroy Avenue • Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701 800-626-0090 • 479-575-

3246 • FAX 479-575-6044

Spirn, Ann Whiston.

Daring to Look Dorothea Lange's Photographs and Reports from the Field.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

376 pages, 195 halftones. \$30.00.

ISBN: 9780226769851.

Available from: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Van Parys, Michelle.

The Way Out West. With Essays by Lucy R. Lippard and Geoffrey Batchen.

104 pages, 60 halftones. Series: Center for American Places-Center Books on the American West.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

ISBN: 9781930066557. \$32.50.

Available from: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Wilder, Kelley.

Photography and Science.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Series: Reaktion Books - Exposures. 144 pages, 20 color plates, 60 halftones. \$29.95.

ISBN: 9781861893994

Available from: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

Gallery



Niels Bohr with his grandson, 1955.
Courtesy of Niels Bohr Archive, AIP
Emilio Segre Visual Archives.



Christmas Party, Pegram Nuclear
Physics Labs, 1957.
(L-R: Unidentified, Prof. T. I. Taylor,
W. W. Havens, Jr., Unidentified,
Unidentified, Bryce Rustad)
Courtesy of AIP Emilio Segre Visual
Archives.



Christmas tree at Pictou, Kebler Kindergarten, Colorado Fuel and Iron Company coal-mining town near Walsenburg, Colorado, 1903. Courtesy of CF&I Archives/Bessemer Historical Society.

Christmas tree at El Moro Kindergarten, Colorado Fuel and Iron Company coal-mining town near Trinidad, Colorado, 1903. Courtesy of CF&I Archives/Bessemer Historical Society.



Share images from your collections in the VIEWS Gallery!

The submissions deadline for the January issue is December 15, 2009. The theme is "Winter Wonderlands."

Austin Communications Breakout Session

By Tim Hawkins, Editor

At the Visual Materials Section meeting in Austin we held a breakout session on our communications strategy for the section. The meeting focused on VIEWS and the web site – on ways that we can improve both, and ways that we might collaborate in the future.

Clearly, to be more effective in both, we need more participation by Section members. To take VIEWS to the next level I would like to develop an editorial team. In a very short time it has become apparent that this is a publication that can only evolve as a team effort. I was very encouraged to see a number of you step up to help in Austin. I would like to thank everyone who volunteered. You will see their contributions in this issue.

For those of you who might like to be involved in the future, I'd like to put out a call for Contributing Editors. I understand that we all have jobs, this is a volunteer effort, and our time is limited. To be a Contributing Editor you would be required to contribute one article every year

– more if you'd like, but if we had eight editors contributing articles yearly that would be a great start. I would encourage you to contribute articles in your area of expertise – collections, exhibits, technology, news – whatever you feel is current or of interest to Section members.

We also discussed ways that we might make VIEWS and the web site more collaborative and complementary. It's possible that the two might become a single publication in the future. I'm happy to report that Lisa Snider, an experienced web developer who is now enrolled in the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia, has offered to assist Mark Martin in further development of our web site. Her web site is at <http://www.thesnidersweb.com/> We're still working on that, so stay tuned for updates.

If you'd like to be a Contributing Editor, or assist in the development of the web site, contact me at tim.hawkins@steelworks.us

Elizabeth Henry Joins VIEWS Staff

By Tim Hawkins, Editor

Please welcome me in congratulating Elizabeth (Lizzie) Henry in her appointment to Graphic Designer for VIEWS.

Lizzie joined us in the communications breakout session at the Visual Materials Section meeting in Austin. She quickly volunteered to be the designer for VIEWS. I think that you will as quickly agree that she has taken this issue of VIEWS to a new level of elegance. Lizzie is exactly the person I had hoped to recruit to begin building a VIEWS editorial team.

Originally from Steamboat Springs, Colorado, Lizzie graduated with a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from Rochester Institute of Technology in 2006.

After taking a four-month vacation throughout Western Europe she decided to obtain a Masters in Library and Information Science with a focus in archives. Lizzie was accepted to Simmons College in the fall of 2007 and rushed through the program, graduating in May 2009.

Lizzie would like to work at an institution that is arts-related, such as an art library, museum, or a university. She's interested in the future of archives, social media, the rapid rise of digitization, and will doubtless be an archivist that you'll run into in the future.

Welcome Lizzie!

Parting Shots...

By Tim Hawkins, Editor



Last year I went to see the exhibit *Archive Fever* at the International Center of Photography in New York. The curator, Okwui Enwezor, wrote, “Archive Fever explores the ways in which artists have appropriated, interpreted, reconfigured, and interrogated archival structures and materials.” One of the series was copy photographs of images by Walker Evans, cropped and exhibited as new work.

Last year, when I was in Boston, the artist Shepard Fairey was arrested right before his show opened at the Boston Museum of Contemporary Art. Fairey is best known for his appropriation of the Associated Press photographer Mannie Garcia’s image of President Barack Obama.

Appropriation interests me. How much is needed to make a work new and original? Is a cropped copy photograph a new work? Does the phenomenon of appropriation affect the archives profession?

A few weeks ago I went on a photo shoot in Colorado to photograph a sculptor who works only with recycled garbage. It struck me when my reporter partner, who knows that I am an experienced photo archivist, asked, “Do you catalog all of your photos with ‘Bridge’?”

I started working in visual materials archives over thirty years ago. Then it was just the extra stuff in the back room, but we developed standardized ways of working with films, photographs, posters, maps, audio and all of the other “stuff” that wasn’t manuscripts.

Now we’ve reached the point when the word “archive” has become a buzzword. Every radio station has an “archive.” We have mass-market photo products like iPhoto and Bridge, among many others, for managing personal photo collections, and entire industries have grown up to help us “archive” our family histories. Even athletic-shoe companies use the word to sell their products.

Have any of you been involved in developing standards for these mass-market “archive” products? Are professional archivists involved in this industry? Should we be concerned about the mass-marketing of our profession?

Are we being appropriated too?

Send your comments for Letters to the Editor to tim.hawkins@steelworks.us



Window display, Broadway Avenue, NY, 2008
Photo by Tim Hawkins

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Your comments and suggestions for improvements will always receive a cordial hearing. The next deadline for material for the newsletter is December 15, 2009

Opinions expressed are those of the authors.