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**ARLIS/SE 2010 Travel Award -- Report on Annual Conference**

I am grateful to have been selected as the 2010 ARLIS/SE Chapter Travel Award recipient. The ARLIS annual conference in Boston, April 23 – 26, was an incredible experience in every regard and I was able to participate in a wide range of activities there. Thank you to ARLIS/SE for providing such an excellent opportunity, and special thanks to Sarah Carter and Kathy Edwards of the travel award committee.

The conference weekend began bright and early on Friday, April 23 with the 8 AM workshop “Televising the Revolution: Designing and Building the Right Channel for Online Instruction”. Led by Kalia Bussert and Susette Newberry (Cornell University), this four-hour course focused on identifying users’ information and visual literacy needs, planning online instruction to address those needs, choosing the best technology tool for the job, and assessing the effectiveness of the final product. This held practical appeal: the Reference Department at SCAD is continually looking for ways to assist users outside of the physical library and there are many possible online tools to consider. I was able to walk away with some new ideas, and discuss with other librarians what tools they are using, and what works (or doesn’t) and why.

Friday evening marked the conference’s opening with the convocation and welcome reception. I met my conference mentor, Alyssa Resnick, Library Administrator at the Glendale (CA) Public Library, and she took the time to answer my questions about ARLIS and introduce me to people I might not have approached otherwise. ARLIS-snap also organized a post-reception pub-stop which was lots of fun. In addition to the Friday socials, I attended the Saturday night Art(tea) Party, which featured some fabulous installations and performances by local artists. One of my favorite aspects of ARLIS are the many opportunities to get to know other librarians in easy-going social settings, and throughout the weekend I caught up with many old friends and mentors, and made new connections with experienced librarians and newcomers alike.

The bulk of the conference (sessions and meetings) took place on Saturday and Sunday. Session highlights included:

- Documenting Now: Living Artists and their Archives. Eumie Imm-Stroukoff (Georgia O’Keefe Museum) discussed her work with the Mitchell Foundation to assist and encourage established artists to document their work using specialized software. Heather Gendron (UNC Chapel Hill) talked about visiting artist Cai Guo-Quang’s NYC studio and the methods used to track the huge volume of artworks, installations, exhibits and other materials he produces. Greg Hatch (University of Utah) presented his work with the Utah Artists Project to provide information about the artists in the state, including producing and preserving documentary video and audio recordings of living artists.

- Information Literacy Theories and Competencies in Practice: Making IL Instruction Relevant to Faculty and Students. Nichole Beatty (Indiana University) presented *Intercultural Visual Literacy*, her research on integrating the many diverse and discipline specific literacy theories in order to expand knowledge of other cultures through meaningful connection of verbal and visual skills. Rina Vecchiola (Washington University, St. Louis) discussed using ARLIS/NA information literacy competencies in collaborative, course integrated instruction. She worked with faculty to identify differing IL skill sets in the research process, and then targeted these in sessions where classes visited the library to use original materials and digital collections for an assignment.
- Teaching Art Research: Two Collaborative Instruction Models. Ellen Petraits (Rhode Island School of Design) presented a concept mapping exercise she developed for freshman art history classes. The maps provided a way for students to examine topics and share strategies in the preliminary research process. Carolyn Cazzi (Yale University Library), presenting on behalf of Barbara Rokenbach, discussed case studies in which students used primary resources to support course research. Examples included a student-created Libguide on New Haven which was based on information from local history materials, use of special collections to inform letterpress studio projects, and high schoolers examining photos of the Freedom Ride.
- Copyright and Redefinition of the Library Landscape. This special session provided a non-art-specific look at two major issues in copyright. Jonathan Band gave an overview of the Google Book Settlement and its context from a legal standpoint. Madelyn Wessel, Associate Counsel at the University of Virginia, discussed “fair use myths” and how recent rulings show that courts are taking a favorable view of fair use. The overall tone of her presentation was hopeful – as librarians, researchers, academics and artists we should not be overly fearful of using copyrighted works (but not reckless either). I appreciated ARLIS’ organizers inclusion of a session that is relevant to our field but that addresses more than art issues specifically.

My own session, Creative Practice in Cyberspace, took place on Sunday afternoon, April 25. This was my first time presenting at a conference; I discussed the results from research completed at UNC-Chapel Hill in spring 2009. In this project I worked with four practicing artists to learn more about how they use the Web to support their everyday artmaking. The artists kept diaries of their web searching and participated in follow up interviews. In the results, they described using the Web to socially network, research exhibition opportunities, scout galleries, maintain personal homepages, search for images and materials, and more. Allison Schulte of the Tom of Finland Foundation moderated, and Heather Saunders of SUNY Purchase opened the session by discussing her personal experiences blogging as an “artist librarian hybrid”. I enjoyed hearing her speak about how documenting art and creative processes on the blog feeds back into her work as an academic librarian and professional artist. Slides from our presentations will be accessible in the conference proceedings (available this summer), and my own research report (PDF) may be viewed at <http://bit.ly/artistsweb>

During the conference I also attended several discussions, including:

- ARLIS-SE Chapter
  - Kathy Edwards introduced me to the group. Some of those in attendance I had met previously and some were new contacts. It was great to meet you all!
  - President Emeritus Kathleen List moderated the first half of the meeting. Updates on current activities, including treasurer's report, webmaster's report, approval of minutes from 2009, newsletter editor's report, reminder that chapter annual meeting will be in Cartersville GA Nov. 10 – 13.
  - Had to leave early to make it to the...
- Professional Development Committee / Continuing Education Subcommittee
  - Continuing Ed. discussed future topics for the ARLIS lunchtime chat series, as well as beginning a webinar series. The chats will remain focused on "hot topics" and discussion based whereas webinars will be learning oriented. The group is open to both chat and webinar ideas from the greater ARLIS community.
  - I am a new member of the Continuing Ed. Subcommittee for 2010/2011
- Collection Development Special Interest Group
  - Collaboration on CD between institutions: examples include using tools such as Gobi; sharing more expensive print materials. Serials sharing: soliciting donations to offset cuts, improving ILL esp. for articles with images
  - E-resources: e-books can help alleviate space issues but art e-book quality is lacking. Coutts is an e-book vendor in which acquisitions are patron driven. Springer offers print on demand services for some digital texts. Institutional digital dissertation / thesis collections are more successful.
- Art and Design School Libraries Division
  - Discussion of increasing visibility of ADSL blog on ARLIS site; keep wordpress format or move to TEI? For now it will persist as-is
  - Stretching dollars / budget woes – making a convincing case to admins is essential to getting funding. Statistics / evidence make this more compelling. Compare your FTE, staff count, volume count against similar libraries/schools. Don't wait for the money to come to you – be proactive and ask
  - Exhibition spaces – some libraries are using moveable shelving, rotating student work monthly, showing theses + sources used to support them, hanging work on interior windows
  - "the fate of the reference collection" – inter-shelve with circulating; keep 1 copy of a high use item in reference; CREDO is a recommended digital reference resource
  - I volunteered as an incoming ADSL vice-moderator
- GLBTQ Special Interest Group
  - This SIG is newly resurrected

- Discussed making library materials and services accessible and approachable for GLBTQ students, especially in places that are more conservative
- Discussed possible social events to arrange in Minneapolis 2011

On the last day of the conference, Monday, I attended “The City Experience” at the Rhode Island School of Design. I had been looking forward to this event for weeks! We traveled by private bus to Providence, where the RISD Librarians provided tours of the Fleet Library. One of the conference attendees in my group remarked that she “had died and gone to library heaven”, and I had to agree. The Fleet is an excellent example of repurposing an old space (a turn of the century bank) to meet modern needs. It was also valuable just to see how another art and design school library operates: what kinds of services and facilities they provide, how the collection is arranged, who staffs their service desks. The second half of the visit revolved around an Artists’ Books Slam, led by Laurie Whitehill Chong (RISD) and Tony White (Indiana University). Everyone in our group had selected examples of artists’ books from the RISD collection to show off in a lightning-round presentation. We also much discussed using artists’ books in the classroom – for example, to show craftsmanship and conceptual intent, or to support research of non-art topics (i.e., African American history, the holocaust, 9-11) – and also shared experiences in developing and managing artists’ books collections.

In summary, the 2010 conference was a memorable event that has reaffirmed my commitment to art librarianship. I will bring ideas from the conference to my work at SCAD, but also give back to our profession through national and chapter service. Again, thanks to ARLIS-SE for helping to make my travel to Boston possible. I hope to see many of you again at the fall chapter meeting in Cartersville, and next year in Minneapolis.

Respectfully submitted May 17, 2010