

ARLIS/NA Annual Conference
Atlanta, GA, April 26-30, 2007

This is the first time I attend the ARLIS/NA conference. As I was hoping, the conference provided many great opportunities to attend many interesting presentations and to meet art and architecture librarians from across North America.

Presentations ranged from Picturing Place: Perspective on Photography in the South to Communication and Collaboration: Working with Faculty for Information Fluency.

Following are highlights of a couple of the presentations I attended.

In Expanding Horizons: Developing and Accessing Diverse Collections three speakers looked at different aspects affecting diverse collection development. Terri Boccia (Acquisitions Librarian, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute) talked about how she is making decisions to increase the representation at her institution's collection of Contemporary Art of Asia, Latin America and Africa. She provided practical information about where and how to find relevant titles including journals, and publishers and book dealers concentrating on those areas. Jennifer Strickland (Fine Arts Librarian, Ithaca College) focused on strategies for providing access to materials as new angles of inquiry emerge that don't match current access points. She also touched on problems with existing cataloguing practices and the use of LC Subject Headings that do not provide enough information or contain problematic terms. Finally, Vanessa Kam (Fine Arts Librarian, University of British Columbia) presented a case study on how the Library and Archives Canada is creating Subject Headings for Aboriginal Peoples as an attempt to provide better access to those works by and on First Nations that are currently relegated to LC call numbers around E98 under Indians of North America which places this works in the past. Vanessa also mentioned other classification systems currently in use, such as the Brian Deer Classification system which is used at the Xwi7xwa Library at the University of British Columbia.

The Evolving Data Standards Landscape: Leading the Way to Integrated Access focused on the major standards that are being developed to provide access to collections that include cultural objects and images. G0nter Waibel (Program Officer, OCLC/RLG Programs) began the session with a quick history of collection description from cabinets of curiosity to library and archival collections that include both physical and digital objects. He touched on RDA (Resource Description and Access) and CCO (Cataloging Cultural Objects) and the need to develop standards that can be shared across cultural heritage communities. Matthew Beacom (Metadata Librarian, Yale University) and Maria Oldal (Head of Cataloging and Database Maintenance, The Morgan Museum and Library) expanded the discussion on CCO as a standard that offers librarians guidance on documentation of objects in their collections. Maria and Margaret Webster (Director, Knight Visual Resources Facility, Cornell University) presented implementations of CCO for object cataloguing at their institutions. They both encountered problems as CCO is not fully developed. Margaret mentioned particular difficulties in trying to follow VRA standards, as they do not always match CCO and she concluded that this particular pilot project might have been too ambitious. The general consensus thus was that work needs to continue to provide more efficient access to collections in an increasingly online environment.

I attended meetings for two committees (Public Policy and Diversity) and the Architecture section where one of the main topics discussed was possible changes to structure of these groups as part of implementing the recommendations after ARLIS/NA Organizational Assessment. As part of each discussion questions were brought up about the mission of each group and its relevance to the ARLIS/NA membership at large. I am now a member of the Public Policy Committee and the Diversity Committee. My main task in the coming year will be to monitor issues relevant to these committees in Canada.

I also attended the meeting for the ARLIS/NA Canada chapter where I met other Northwest chapter members including incoming chair, John Burchard.

The convocation reception was held at the High Museum housed in buildings designed by Richard Meier (1983) and Renzo Piano (2005) which provided a beautiful space for an animated social gathering.

Over all I had a very enjoyable and interesting time in Atlanta, and hope that this will be the first of many ARLIS/NA conferences I attend. I thank ARLIS/NA Northwest Chapter for their contribution to make this trip possible.