

Letter from the Chairman and Executive Director

June 2005

As we approach the end of ARTstor's first year of offering a "live" service, we recognize how much change is taking place in the way that scholars and teachers undertake their work. When, for example, Google announces that it will collaborate with leading research libraries to digitize millions of books, the academic world and the practices of the market outside the academy come together in interesting, exciting, but also disconcerting ways. How will technology affect the lives of libraries and the scholars and students who depend upon them? What are the analogous transformations that are taking place in the world of digitized images? We do not know all that is in flux, but we do know that, for the foreseeable future, change will be a significant constant. While the actual and potential changes associated with digital images in general (and ARTstor more specifically) continue to unfold, it is only reasonable to ask how ARTstor itself is changing to assure that we are playing a productive role within this new and complex "ecosystem."

During the past year, we have added new collections of images and have been enhancing our cataloging data on a continuing basis (as discussed on page 3). But we also have worked to respond to what we know to be our users' needs:

- In October, we added our first Quick Time Virtual Reality files (searchable by typing "QTVR" into the search box) as the first step to moving beyond still images;
- In January, we changed our policies in order to allow direct remote access (such as from home) to individuals who have previously used ARTstor on campus or through institutional proxy servers. This change allows off-campus users to go directly to the ARTstor site in order to log-in. In May, we modified these policies again to allow for a longer period before users have to renew their credentials by signing in on campus;
- In February, we added a commercial grade hosting site (at Level 3 in Denver, Colorado) to supplement the servers hosted at Princeton University. This will assure more reliability of service and protection against large-scale system breakdowns;
- In March, we sponsored a new photographic campaign, funding Alec Hartill's expedition to photograph works by Gaudi, Calatrava, and Nouvel in Spain and France for inclusion in ARTstor. Subsequently, we have also sponsored a campaign to be conducted by ART on FILE to photograph contemporary architecture by Rem Koolhaas, and Herzog and de Meuron and others, in the western and middle United States;
- In May, we reached a major agreement to add to ARTstor the British Museum's segment of the Gernsheim Corpus — nearly 17,000 images from an unparalleled library of over 182,000 photographs of European master drawings;
- Over the course of the year, we have partnered with 12 institutions to learn how we might host institutionally-built collections (in art history and in various other fields such as botany and astronomy) in the ARTstor environment.
- Over the coming months, we expect additional developments and changes, such as the following:
 - We will partner with the Pollock-Krasner Foundation and the Museum of Modern Art to create an "exhibition" of Jackson Pollock's paintings and drawings, drawing upon conservation work and installation photography from the 1998 retrospective exhibition;
 - We will incorporate many important images from leading museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago; The Frick Collection; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Victoria and Albert Museum (see page 6 for the most current list of museums);

- We will conclude the first stage of an experiment (conducted in partnership with the Getty Research Institute) to create a schema for data and a middleware for harvesting museum content in a standardized way;
- We will launch a new version of our off-line viewer that will enable people to “author” presentations — capture details ahead of time, include text, and pre-script the order of images;
- We will define — along with colleagues from the University of Virginia, Princeton University, James Madison University, Tufts, and the Open Knowledge Institute (OKI) — standard protocols that when implemented will allow ARTstor users to search local repositories from within ARTstor, and facilitate the discovery of ARTstor content by using other search engines.

We have been glad to receive — by visiting campuses, and attending meetings that coincide with scholarly and professional societies — many suggestions for improving ARTstor. Having this advice is extraordinarily valuable, and we welcome other comments, criticism, and new ideas at any time.

With all good wishes,
James Shulman, *Executive Director*
Neil Rudenstine, *Chairman*

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