

# Letter from the Chairman and Executive Director

November 2005

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Since January, over 25,000 people from 470 participating institutions have registered with ARTstor. This simple registration process gives them the ability to do far more than search and browse the more than 400,000 images in the Library. They are able to create and save image groups, or access groups of images made by others. Through training sessions or discussions at conferences, we have learned much more about the ways in which users are exploring ARTstor's capacity to be a part of their teaching and research. At a conference called "*State of the Art Art History*," held recently at Grinnell College and convened by NITLE (National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education), Professor Elizabeth Lee (from Wabash College) demonstrated how she uses ARTstor for student assignments. Her students select three images that depict the body in motion from ARTstor's renaissance images, and create an image group which she can then review. She then adds notes and questions, and even sometimes drags another image into their group for them to consider. "It's a much more active way for them to engage with the works than shuffling through flashcards in a rote fashion," she noted. We are eager to continue to learn from what our users like more – or like less – about ARTstor.

Since our Summer Newsletter, we have also continued to try to build the Library in ways that serve users from different disciplines across the educational community. Some recent steps include:

- We have built an important partnership with the Artists' Rights Society, and have added many thousands of images of 20th and 21st century works to ARTstor;
- We are now making ARTstor available to K-12 schools;
- We have begun pilot programs with institutions in the UK and in Australia;
- We have reached an important agreement with Scala, which will make available in ARTstor 12,000 images of major works of the European tradition. These high resolution images will derive from Scala's archive of large format transparencies;
- We have added 80,000 images, formerly in the AMICO Library, to the ARTstor Library (with more images to follow soon), as well as 22,000 images from archives of the original expeditions to Giza (conducted by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Harvard);
- We now have reached an agreement with the Grove Dictionary of Art to work with their taxonomy; this resource will allow us to provide "style" and "period" information to enhance the ARTstor data and to expand the various ways that users can access the ARTstor collections;
- We have released a new version of the Offline Image Viewer, which permits users to create and show presentations without having to be connected to the internet. The new version allows users to pre-script presentations and to include text as well as images;
- We have created new software tools that allow individual users to add their own personal images to the ARTstor server, which are only then available to that individual and, if one wishes, to other users at that individual's institution.

Continuing to build partnerships with universities, museums, and other institutions represents an exciting and central part of what ARTstor is now doing. Along with colleagues from the Getty Research Institute, our Chief Technology Officer, Bill Ying, will be presenting the results of one such partnership at the Fall meeting of the Coalition for Networked Information. This project – in which our staff have worked with the talented people at the Getty to test a means to harvest museum data and images – could serve as one step toward the "distributed" infrastructure which we all believe to be the network of the future.

The collections that we add, software tools that we create, and partnerships that we embark upon, add in some way to the creation of such an expanding network. It will eventually become a network that ties together users (and their own images), the information that lives in institutional archives around the world, and the images from ARTstor's library. From teachers, scholars, and students in many different disciplines, we look forward to learning about what needs they see this network serving. As we continue to build ARTstor, all suggestions, criticisms, or reminders are very welcome indeed!

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

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