

Letter from the Chairman and Executive Director

October 2007

“Traditional” growth (if there can be any “tradition” in a six year old organization) at ARTstor continues: there are now almost 600,000 images in the library, 850 institutions participating, and of those 77 are now hosting an additional 800,000 images for their own local use on our servers. New agreements have enabled us to release more modern and contemporary art and another 900,000 images from over 35 collections are in various stages of the production queue. But growth is also marked by taking more dramatic steps when we can and when we should.

Earlier this fall, we launched a new version of the public website (www.artstor.org) aimed to help us communicate better with our community. So, for example, users can now see what percentage of an announced ARTstor collection has been launched. Or users can sign up for RSS or e-mail feeds about certain topics. The site, our handouts (also available on the site), and our appearances at the annual meetings of scholarly societies are all aimed at informing the community about the ways that ARTstor is growing and changing all of the time.

During this fall, we will be testing (and you will soon have the opportunity to join the testing) of an entirely re-built ARTstor software — the workspace where users search for images, add their own, make groups for later use, and so on. Written in AJAX (a programming structure that will make the software lighter, faster, and more dependable but every bit as functional as today’s site), the new software will be launched in parallel over the course of the academic year. This will allow users to transition over to the new workspace at their convenience between the test launch this fall and the complete transition next summer.

By the beginning of 2008, we will increase the number of images that can be downloaded at 1024 pixels (typically a “full-screen” size) from the current 100,000 to at least 400,000. While many people use the ARTstor Offline Image Viewer in the classroom, many others prefer PowerPoint or other presentation softwares. By working with our content providers, we have been able to loosen the policy that has constrained the size of the file that we have enabled for download for most of the library. This change will simply mean more flexibility for more users, and we are excited to be able to take such a step.

These changes, both the steady deepening and widening of the collections and the notable changes to our infrastructure and policies are all intended to respond to what we are hearing in the community. We urge you to keep letting us know what directions you think are promising and which you find frustrating. Like everyone, we have constraints of many kinds, but we continue to try to help all parties in the arts and educational community to move forward together. The first step to doing so is always to hear what you think that we should — and should not — do.

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

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