38th Annual Conference
Boston, MA | April 23-26, 2010

Session/Meeting Name: Artist Files Special Interest Group
Date, Time: April 24, 2010, 3 pm – 4 pm

Moderators: Jon Evans (Chair)
Recorder: Pamela J. Eyerdam

Attendance: Approximately 45 attendees

Welcome, Overview, & Marketing:
- Jon Evans greeted everyone and introductions were made.
- Mr. Evans announced that Kraig Binkowski has posted a press release about the Artist Files Best Practices Documentation and the Online Directory on the ARLIS website (http://www.arlisna.org/news/press/artistfiles.pdf), which includes a link to the directory at http://www.artistfilesrevealed.com/tiki/tiki-index.php and to the documentation http://www.arlisna.org/pubs/onlinepubs/artists_files_revealed.pdf
- Unfortunately, Mr. Binkowski was unable to attend our meeting, but he will continue to pursue marketing of the resources throughout the year.
- Group participation in this marketing effort will be one of the goals this year. Individuals of this group and members of chapters will be asked to promote these resources to institutions and to encourage them to create a profile of their artists file collections.

Documentation Update
- Anne Simmons, National Gallery of Art & Linda Psomas have drafted guidelines on the maintenance of Artist Files, which upon completion will be incorporated into the wiki. They are looking for input about the content of the documents, how to better organize the information, and any enhancements to the Best Practices section.

Directory Update
- Mr. Evans complimented Barbara Rominski, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and Sally McKay, Getty Research Institute, Directory Coordinators on finalizing the Directory.
- Ms. Rominski announced that the Directory is now available and they just added two more institutions. They would appreciate any feedback.
- Mr. Evans commented that the Directory is not meant to provide access to individual artist file records, but rather to point to broader institutional records of holdings.
- It was proposed that perhaps OCLC could do a profile on Artist Files as part of their news features.

Artist Files & Digital Records Survey
- Francine Snyder, Guggenheim Museum posted an online survey prior to the conference. There were 58 responses. The full report will be posted but here are some noted statistics:
- 72% posted that their institution uses their Artist Files 1-4 times or more a week.
- 48% noted that researchers would prefer digital access to Artist Files

- 52% have received Artist Files content digitally (more artists are sending materials digitally)
- 41% noted that there has been a drop in receiving physical materials
- 2 responded that their institutions have developed digital migration procedures
- 54% have developed Collection Development Policies associated with Artist Files
- Many responded that they have not pursued digital files aggressively due to the lack of money, staff, equipment, software, etc.
- There were issues with copyright; email announcements, lack of standards; most were collecting digital information through email; some info was collected through a website
- There is more data that was gathered which will be analyzed and integrated into the Best Practices/Directory documentation.

Digitization of Artist Files (potential use of Decapod)
- A significant number of institutions are concerned about the growth of digital Artist Files and about how to best manage materials in this format.
- It was suggested that Best Practices for born digital content relating to Artist Files would be beneficial, including a definition of the notion of "born digital."
- There was a call for volunteers to assist in collaborating on the issue of digital Artist Files Francine Snyder, Guggenheim Museum, Alba Fernanadez-Keys, Indianapolis Museum of Art, and Traci Timmons, Seattle Art Museum, all volunteered to serve.
- Another goal is to investigate the potential use of Decapod – a digitization tool to convert analog files. One of the designers lives in Boston but could not attend the session. Link to the Decapod Project http://sites.google.com/site/decapodproject/
- An issue for Decapod is that Artist Files come in a variety of formats; their tool was designed specifically for bound publications. It was hoped that a prototype could be presented at the 2011 ARLIS conference in Minneapolis.

JSTOR Auction Catalog Project
- While auction catalogs and Artist Files differ significantly it was thought that this group could learn from some of the challenges that The Frick, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and JSTOR faced when confronting the possibility of digitization of Artist Files.
- Deborah Kempe, Frick Art Reference Library, announced that the Frick has digitized approximately 1500 public domain auction catalogs (in English).
- Ms. Kempe noted that the "blowup" feature of the software could correlate well with needs for our project.
- JSTOR has partnered in this project (by doing the scanning) and the Frick is responsible for creating the metadata – see http://auctioncatalogs.jstor.org/
- Some challenges faced were the importance of the auction annotation, formats, font types, etc.
- Günter Waibel, OCLC, thinks that maybe the Decapod software was used (since it was funded by the Mellon)
- JSTOR wrote the funding grant for the "JSTOR Auction Beta"
- Other issues include whether newspaper clippings related to an artist could be digitized – Alba Fernandez-Keys commented that she tried to work with the Indianapolis Star but they were unwilling to grant permission – so such newspaper clippings are only available through the library.
- Another example was cited by Francine Snyder who had digitized some newspaper clippings but the Guggenheim's legal team advised that it be posted with a disclaimer that the clippings would be for educational purposes and available in view format only.
- Mr. Waibel commented that the Pacific Film Archive is digitizing art films and addressing issues related to permissions.

Goals
- Major goal for the next year is to encourage institutional contributions to Artist Files Directory and its use.
- To begin developing Best Practices for born digital and digitally stored Artist Files.

Adjourned