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And They Were There/Reports of Meetings

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by Sandy Paul (SKP Associates)

The CNI Task Force met on November 21 and 22 at the Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City, Arlington, VA. This meeting, as those in the past, had three purposes. (1) To review the efforts of the Coalition and others to frame and develop understanding of the technology, value, cost, price and other variables that are critical to the flow of networked information. (2) To provide an opportunity to review the priorities and progress of each of the Coalition Working Groups. (3) To facilitate communication among Coalition Task Force representatives and between Coalition Leaders and Task Force representatives.

As in the past, the meeting was chock-a-block full, leaving the participants wondering how they ever crammed so much into so little time; the presentations and discussions challenged the limits of today’s knowledge with tomorrow’s possibilities; and the food and lodging were plentiful and spectacular! Even more so than in the past, the attendees represented the very broadest and brightest spectrum of those concerned with technology in academia, libraries, and publishing.

It is impossible to present an in-depth report of the proceedings because they are so diverse and you would have had to be in 10 places at the same time for four sets of concurrent projected briefings and synergy sessions. Suffice it to say that networked information under discussion includes everything from e-mail to multimedia; an extremely wide variety of access, governance and payment alternatives are under consideration; and needed standards are being identified.

Shortly after the meeting, Congress passed and sent to the President, the legislation authorizing the National Research and Education Network (NREN), which is intended to carry this networked information. Those seeking more information about CNI (which is sponsored by ARL, EDUCOM and CAUSE) should contact Paul Peters, CNI Director, 1527 New Hampshire, NW, Washington, DC 20036, 202/232-2466 or peters@umdc.bitnet or paul@cni.org.

Transborder Relations: Art Resources & Services

by Lorelei Tanji

(Fine Arts Librarian, UC-Irvine)

The Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) held a regional meeting with the Mexican Association of Librarians (AMBAC) in conjunction with the Guadalajara International Book Fair on November 23-26, 1991. Participants were able to attend the book fair that drew several hundred publishers and dealers from Mexico, Latin America, the U.S., Europe, and the Pacific Basin and were treated to a series of panel presentations by Mexican and American librarians, archivists, book dealers, artists, museum curators, and editors (headphones provided simultaneous translation of the speeches).

The first meeting was on Art of Mexico: History and Bibliography. Speaker Marion Oettinger, Jr. (San Antonio Museum of Art) spoke on the growing interest in Mexican art and the resulting growth in art publications, art prices, research, and exhibitions. Virginia Armella de Aspe (Pinacoteca Virreinal de San Diego) spoke on the advances in the bibliography of Mexican painting in the Viceregal Period. Robert W. Beebe (San Antonio Public Library) served as moderator.

Clayton Kring (Phoenix Art Museum) moderated the session on Documentation of Artists and Art Exhibitions in Mexico. Lic. Esther de la Herran (Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes) and Elsa Barberena Blasquez (Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico) described the challenges in securing documentation on artists and their art exhibitions. A problem complicated by the lack of publications documenting exhibits, the limited number of copies available for exhibition catalogs that are often the sole source of information on artists, no central distribution centers for publications, and the corresponding difficulty in collecting regional exhibition information. Carlos Rodal (contemporary artist whose work was recently exhibited in the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey) pointed out the exhibition catalogs are not just important to researchers and historians. Catalogs disseminate his work to more people. They increase the demand and appreciation for his work to art collectors, museums, galleries, and the general population of art lovers.

Judith Herschman (Fowler Museum, UCLA) moderated a session on Current Publishing and Distribution of Monographs and Periodicals in Mexico. Alberto Ruy Sanchez (publisher of Artes de Mexico and author) described the different types of publishing in Mexico: university (scholarly research produced on low budgets), regional (poor printing quality made in 2-3 months, projects need political support, small runs), federal (small runs, poor distribution), and corporate (flashy productions put together within a few months, art books used and distributed solely as gifts from corporations). In his opinion, publications on Mexican art have the potential for being a big money-maker and the technology exists in Mexico to produce high-quality art publications. Howard Karno (Howard Karno Books) gave a dealer’s perspective to collecting materials in Mexico. Certain things that he found frustrating were: poor bibliographic citations, errors in printing (volume and issue numbers misprinted and misleading), the need to travel regionally to buy materials, and poor distribution of publications. However, he also expressed great enthusiasm and interest for his work and described the excitement of locating new...
Mexican and Latin American sources for his book-dealing business. James Findlay (Wolfsonian Foundation) distributed a list of acquisition sources for collecting Latin American materials and recommended the collection development publications produced by SALALM.

Moderator, Marla de Guadalupe Zepeda Martínez (Archivo Histórico de Jalisco, Guadalajara), coordinated a session on Conservation and Preservation: A Systematic Approach, and showed an excellent videotape demonstrating the conservation activities at the Public Library of the State of Guadalajara, Jalisco. Sharlone Grant (Arizona State University) described the steps to writing a preservation plan. Christopher Coleman (UCLA) presented a speech and handout on how to write a disaster plan for a library. José Sol Rosales (Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes) discussed alternative financing and the cultural politics of corporate and community support. And Susan Malkoff Moon (Getty Conservation Institute) described information resources in conservation.

New Technology in Visual and Online Resources was a session moderated by Milan Hughston (Amon Carter Museum). Julie Radoyce (Getty Conservation Institute) described the organization and activities of the Conservation Information Network. Angela Giral (Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library) discussed the use of MARC for cataloging architectural drawings and archives. Jeanette Dixon (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston) gave an overview of the Research Libraries Group and the RLIN databases that provide art information. L.e., Raul Novelo Pena (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico and Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes) described two new art databases INBART contains information on Mexican art, music, dance, and theater of principally the 20th century from numerous sources (slides, books, sound recordings, scores, periodicals, video-cassettes, etc.) MEXICOARTE is a database on Mexican art and architecture from the prehispanic period to contemporary times. Information for this database have been culled from books (including exhibition catalogs), photography, slides, etc. Raul Novelo Pena can be contacted at: Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Apdo. Postal 83-150, Deleg. Tlahuac, 13001 Mexico, D.F. MEXICO. Electronic mail address: CICH@UNAMVM1.bitnet

Discussion Tables were formed for: Exchange of Art Publications, Picture and Photo Collections—including Slides, and One-Person Libraries. Facilitators for these discussions were: Helen Wykle (UCI), Nancy Schuller (University of Texas at Austin), Judith Herschman (Fowler Museum, UCLA), Angeles Rivera (Univ. de Guadalajara), Maria Antonietta Hernandez (Univ. de Guadalajara), and Lina Rendon Garcia (Univ. de Guadalajara). Barbara Kittle (Museum of Art, Univ. of Arizona) served as coordinator to these information-sharing sessions.

The ALA International Relations Committee met with the Mexican Association of Librarians (AMBAC). Margaret Chisolm and Helen Ladron coordinated a brainstorming session among librarians on such issues as: continuing education, exchange programs between Mexico and the United States, subject headings, establishing interlibrary loan networks across borders, and partner libraries (exchanges and cooperative ventures vis-a-vis staff and collections).

In addition to these engaging and informative meetings, participants enjoyed the tours, receptions, and concerts that gave us all a fuller appreciation of the arts in Mexico. 

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