



## Annual report of the Art Libraries Section of IFLA

From WLIC 2009 (Milan) to WLIC 2010 (Gothenburg)

### *Satellite meeting in Florence (August 19/20, 2009):*

A few days before the annual World Libraries and Information Congress of IFLA commenced in Milan, the Art Libraries Section organized a two day Pre-Conference in Florence. Of course, Florence was not chosen by chance. As one of the most fascinating Italian cities, the Tuscan capital is extremely attractive. However, the main reason for this choice was its high-ranking position in the field of research in the history of art, based on local institutions and libraries, which are well integrated in a broad and efficient international network.

Four Florentine institutions – the Library of the Uffizi Gallery, the Biblioteca Marucelliana, the Library of the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies (Villa I Tatti) and the Library of the Kunsthistorisches Institut (Max-Planck-Institut) – collaborated by forming a team responsible for defining the conceptual guidelines and organizing the whole event. All of them are involved in research activities on the artistic and cultural heritage of Florence, but each has different key interests and tasks: the Uffizi Library is closely connected to one of the most important art collections of the world; the Biblioteca Marucelliana is an outstanding example of a formerly private collection of books and drawings; the Library of the Villa I Tatti belongs to the Harvard University and is a form of academic department abroad, dedicated to interdisciplinary research in the field of Italian Renaissance; finally, the German Kunsthistorisches Institut is an international platform for research in Italian history of art.

The Pre-Conference had two primary goals: first, to present the host institutions to an international audience and to illustrate the variety of their research activity, their future projects and their institutional organisations; and second, to give guest speakers from 8 countries the opportunity to present new developments and initiatives in art libraries. The conference took place in four different places and included various visits of other places of interest, like the Biblioteca Laurenziana and the Biblioteca Riccardiana. In addition to the papers given by the speakers during the event, the conference included introductions to the hosting institutions. A varied spectrum of institutional and Library activities were presented to a group of more than 60 participants of the conference, coming from 17 countries around the world.

A selection of the papers presented has been published on:

<http://www.ifla.org/en/publications/art-libraries-section-satellite-meeting-papers-florence-2009>

### *WLIC, Milan 2010*

The Standing Committee of the Art Libraries Section came together on Saturday 22 August 2009. The outgoing officers Olga Sinitsyna (Chair), Eila Rämö (Secretary) and Susan Allan (Treasurer) have been substituted with Jan Simane (Chair and Treasurer), Martin Flynn (Secretary) and Lucile Trunel (Information Officer) for the term 2009 to 2011. Minutes of this meeting are available under: <http://www.ifla.org/en/art-libraries/minutes-of-meetings>.

A second SC meeting was organized on 26 August 2009. It was dedicated to the next WLIC in 2010 (Gothenburg) and to discussions on the profile of the Section's website (see <http://www.ifla.org/en/art-libraries>). Furthermore it was decided to organize an off-site event (workshop) in collaboration with the Library Building and Equipment Section of IFLA during the WLIC in 2010.

Open Session: the Art Libraries Section organized an Open Session on August 27, 2009. It was dedicated to the topic: ART LIBRARIES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE: SELECT, COLLECT AND CONNECT. Five speakers from five countries and three continents gave related presentations. A summary of the session and the presentations are available on: <http://www.ifla.org/en/art-libraries/conferences>.

### *Strategic plan 2010-2011*

According to IFLA rules the SC of the Section presented a Strategic Plan for the two years term 2010-2011. See: <http://www.ifla.org/en/publications/art-libraries-section-strategic-plan>.

Two new goals are of particular interest:

Encourage suitable art libraries, represented in the Section, to join the artlibraries.net project ([www.artlibraries.net](http://www.artlibraries.net)) and to involve the SC of the Section in the current process of developing new forms of bibliographic information in the arts.

artlibraries.net – the Virtual Catalogue for Art History is an international specialist meta catalogue allowing the integrated retrieval of bibliographic records and, should the occasion arise, other objects of distinctive art historical databases.

Currently, artlibraries.net gives access to more than 12 million records (as of October 2010), including a high percentage of records for articles in periodicals, conference papers, festschriften, exhibition catalogues and exhibition books, etc., and an increasing percentage of records for archival and photographic materials as well as for online resources. Bearing in mind the advantages of consolidated communication in the wide spread international network of art libraries represented in the SC the members agreed to support the artlibraries.net project and to foster the attainment of new partners worldwide.

An initiative started by the Getty Research Institute (Los Angeles) in 2010 focuses on the development of a modern means of providing bibliographical information in the field of the arts and art history, since the traditional format of a bibliography has been recognized as insufficient for the requirements of current academic practice. An international group of librarians, information specialists and IT-experts is working on this project. The SC of the Art Libraries Section will be an official partner and will support the initiative primarily in communicating and mediating.

### *WLIC, Gothenburg 2010*

The SC met on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2010. An invitation made by the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) in New Delhi, India was discussed. NIFT invited the Art Libraries Section of IFLA to become a joint partner in organizing an international conference on empowerment and digital technologies in art libraries, archives and museums in New Delhi, planned for February 2011. The SC agreed to co-operate in this event. During the

second half of the year three participants and speakers from the SC were chosen to travel to Delhi.

Another important topic of the SC meeting was an invitation made by the Latin American and the Caribbean Section (LAC) of IFLA to organize, together with the Art Libraries Section and the Mexican Library Association, a Satellite meeting (Post Conference) to the WLIC 2011 in Mexico City. This proposal has been approved by the SC. During the WLIC in Gothenburg a programme framework was defined in collaboration with the colleagues from the LAC Section (see <http://www.ifla.org/en/art-libraries/conferences>).

#### Open Session:

The Art Libraries Section organised an open session on the theme: 'Revealing the invisible – Opening access to art bibliographical and research information in a networked environment'. Papers were delivered by five speakers from four countries. Three of these were from the museum sector, one from a university and another from an electronic publishing company. Themes covered included bibliography, cataloguing, subject indexing, content management and user contributed content. A selection of papers can be viewed at: <http://www.ifla.org/en/conferences-session-day/2010-08-11>

#### Off-site workshop:

The Art Libraries Section, in collaboration with the Library Building and Equipment Section, organised an off-site workshop on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2010 at the Gothenburg Art Museum. Three presentations were given relating to the topic : '*Designing Art Libraries in the Digital Age : Promoting Access to Traditional and Modern Sources*'. Cecilia Kugelberg, a Swedish colleague, presented alongside the architect Christer Malmström, the concept behind the new Södertörn University Library which was 'designed with flexibility for changing needs'. The German architect, Dr Werner Möller, outlined the beautiful library project which will be created inside the renovated historic Bauhaus building in Dessau. Lastly the current picture relating to the redevelopment of the Richelieu site in Paris, in its BnF and INHA components, was described by Sébastien Gaudelus, Lucile Trunel and Martine Poulain.

An audience of about 120 people were then given a guided tour of the Nordic museum painting collection, the most important in Scandinavia.

The second SC meeting in Gothenburg on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2010 was dedicated to a discussion on the future of bibliography in the arts (see above 'Strategic Plan'). A few guests who do not belong to the SC attended the meeting and participated in the discussion. The meeting focused on the question what bibliography is today and how it should be in the future, addressing the development of access to a wide range of heterogeneous sources. The roles of the stakeholders have changed as well as the formats of information. The requirements for tools to select, filter and rank the data have to be fulfilled. The SC agreed to monitor the process closely and to continue discussing possible contributions to the Getty project.

March 2011  
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Martin Flynn  
Lucile Trunel