Incorporating Museum Multimedia into High School History Curriculum: A Case Study from the Isidore Newman School

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What is AMICO?
- Independent, non-profit, consortium of institutions with collections of art
- Members are museums, galleries, and other collecting institutions
- Creates The AMICO Library

Mission: enable educational use of museum multimedia documentation

What’s The AMICO Library?
- Online reference tool of art images and related multimedia
- Approximately 65,000 works, grows with annual Member contributions
- Provided by Distributors to subscribing educational institutions under an annual license

What’s in The AMICO Library?
- Types of Works:
  - Paintings
  - Sculptures
  - Prints
  - Photographs
  - Videos
  - Arms and armor
  - Costumes and jewelry
  - Decorative arts
  - Textiles

- Cultures:
  - Works from Europe, including ancient Greece and Rome
  - Works from the Americas, including Pre-Columbian and Meso-American
  - Works from Asia, including ancient China

- Time Periods:
  - 5% B.C.
  - >10% Early Christian or Medieval
  - >10% Renaissance or Baroque
  - >10% 18th century
  - 25% 19th century
  - >30% 20th century

Using The AMICO Library
- A rights-cleared resource for educational, non-commercial use:
  - in class use, presentations, papers, theses, lectures, local systems
- Designated users within subscribing institutions:
  - teachers, faculty, staff, students, researchers, walk-in users and distance education
- Over 120 colleges and universities with over a million students now have access:
  - U.S., Canada, and United Kingdom

AMICO Users @ K-12 Level
- Investigate special needs of K-12 population:
  - Summer research project by Scott Howe
  - K-12 Testbed begun with 11 U.S. schools in January 2001
Enter a K-12 Teacher

Teaching Art History and the Limitations of Slides:

- The need to supplement the existing slide collection
- Flexibility to create new courses
- Sharing resource with other departments
- Student access to images for study

These factors led to exploration of digital media and my discovery of AMICO

My Summer Vacation

The Task: How Could the Content of The AMICO Library Fit into Existing K-12 Curricula?

- Would the library be more usefully organized around thematic categories (i.e. Belief systems, politics, economics, etc.) as found in State and National curricula?
- Could the database support such searches? (60,000 images from 23 distinct institutions)
  Not yet.

Re-Discovery of the Wheel

The standard categories of art history mesh well with existing curricula.

Search Strategies Using the Following Fields:
- Creator
- Culture
- Date
- Keyword

http://schools.amico.org/RLG

Back at the Front

Immediate Application for Lectures

Lecture on Dutch Art of the Golden Age

Student Projects

- Web Sites for Non-Western Art
- Class Gallery Project
  A Performance-Based Lesson
  Designed in Collaboration with Beth Krasman

Objectives for the Gallery Project

A task which models what art historians do

- Cite Online Sources
- Document Images and the Ideas of Others
- Analyze Unknown Images
- Incorporate New Images into a Body of Knowledge
- Curate
- Download, Word-Process, E-mail

Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thorough and Insightful</td>
<td>The student appropriately addresses how the formal elements of form, line, and composition contribute to the object's meaning and interact with its function. They discuss these formal elements both in terms of style and the deliberate choices made by the artists. Drawing from a rich array of sources, the student successfully identifies the prevailing ideology influencing the piece. Arguments are convincing and insightful, and even makes a counterintuitive observation of the object's subjectivity. Communication of ideas is fluid, straightforward and eloquent. Scrupulously documented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Understanding</td>
<td>The student correctly identifies the object's style and provides broad characteristics of that style. They do not, however, make direct references to the object. The student also identifies the artist's choice of specific moment or physical point of view to portray. He/she also connects the piece to a prevalent theme of the period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfunctory Citation</td>
<td>Correctly identifies the style of the piece and offers an appropriate connection to an historical period without supporting evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>Correctly identifies the style of the piece and offers an appropriate connection to an historical period without supporting evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete lack of academic citation</td>
<td>Complete lack of academic citation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Choice

Unkown, Greek Dancing Lady, c. 50 BC
Marble, overall: 85.4 cm, base: 6.8 cm x 32.2 cm, without base: 78.6 cm
The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio
John L. Severance Fund 1965.24
The AMICO Library: CM0.1965.24

This Dancing Lady forms part of a long transition regarding the portrayal of the human body in Greek art. As with most Greek subject matter, this is a sculpture of a young, physically fit human. The woman is dressed simply and unornamentally, emphasizing the clarity and rounded health of her features. These characteristics are echoed throughout Greek art, which was focused mainly on depicting physically fit gods and athletes. However, it must be stated that these “physically fit” human bodies were not based on real people, but rather on a canon of proportions. This can be seen here in the slight disproportion of the woman’s large arms to her otherwise slim body; because the statue was based on a canon rather than an actual human, the proportions of these features are not entirely naturalistic.

As the Greeks focused more and more attention on humanism and detailed portrayal of the human form, this canon was altered slowly over time, producing a transition of sculpture from stiff, undetailed, and unexpressive figures such as the Peplos Kore, made in 530 BCE, now at the Acropolis Museum, Athens (Stokstad 171), to active, more naturalistic, and more emotionally expressive figures as seen at the height of the Hellenistic period.

Citation of Works

2. Pomo (Native American), Burden Basket with Strap, Middle 19th century, Willow, redbush or bulrush — 48.3 cm x 61.0 cm, The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan, Founders Society Purchase, Benson and Edith Ford Fund, and the K. T. Keller Fund, The AMICO Library: DIA_.1994.33
3. Ife (Yoruba), Shrine Head, 12th century - 14th century, Terra cotta — H.12 x W.5 - 3/4 x D.7 in., The John R. Van Derlip Fund, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Permission for educational use only granted by The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The AMICO Library: MIA_.95.84
5. Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Don Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuñiga (1784 - 1792), possibly 1790s, Oil on canvas — 50 x 40 in. (127 x 101.6 cm), The Jules Bache Collection, 1949, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The AMICO Library: MMA_.49.7.41
6. Edward Hopper, Early Sunday Morning, Oil on canvas — whole: 35 3/16 x 60 1/4 in. (89.4 x 153 cm, Purchase, with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, Whitney Museum of American Art, The AMICO Library: WMAA.31.426