

AMICO

Art Museum Image Consortium:
creating a collaborative
image database

University of Pittsburgh
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What is AMICO?

- independent, non-profit, consortium of institutions with collections of art
- **Mission:** enable educational access to museum multimedia documentation

Why AMICO?

- encourage broad use of museum collections
- create common library for consistency and ease of use
- administer educational licenses efficiently
- facilitate interchange of experience and ideas
- build links among museum and user communities

AMICO's Challenges

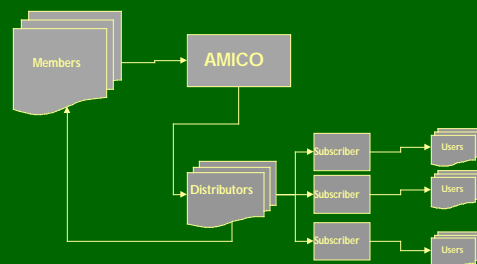
- **Content**
 - What are we going to distribute?
- **Documentation**
 - How will it be described?
- **Technology**
 - How do we digitize, and provide access to it?
- **Intellectual Property**
 - Do we have the rights?
- **Economics**
 - Can we pay for it?
- **Community Building**
 - Why would we collaborate?
 - Who wants it, and what will they do with it?

Shared by all creators of information resources

Who's involved?

- Members
- AMICO
- Distributors
- Subscribers
- Users

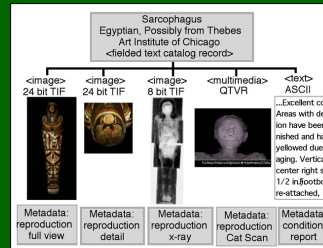
Creating and Delivering the AMICO Library



AMICO Members

- **founded Consortium in Sept. 1997**
 - 31+ members in North America
 - new members welcome, worldwide
- **pay dues**
 - 2,000 - 5,000 \$US based on budget
- **govern consortium**
 - committees: editorial, technical, rights, users
- **contribute to the Library**
 - text, image, multimedia
- **use the Library**
 - in galleries, library, research ...

AMICO Works



Works in the AMICO Library are documented by a catalog record, and image and an image metadata record. Other multimedia may also be included.

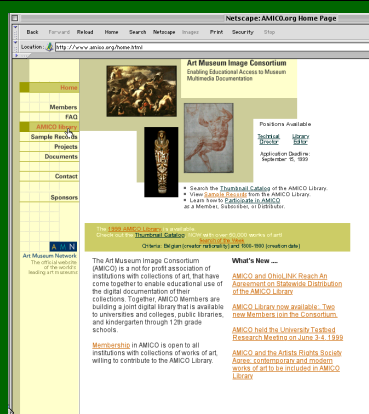
AMICO

- **assists members**
 - advice, training and support
 - specifications, best practices
- **manages agreements**
 - artists rights, distributors, licenses
- **compiles library**
 - verifies data formats, vocabulary
 - enhances indexing and authority control
 - validates image and multimedia files
 - ensures record structure, links
 - transfers to distributors

AMICO Distributors

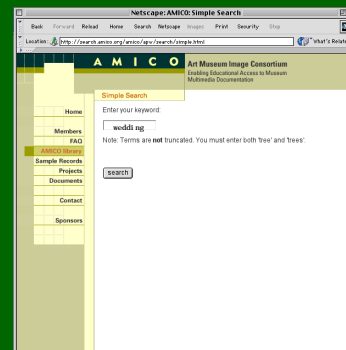
- **AMICO Thumbnail Catalog**
 - on Web for public access
- **Research Libraries Group (RLG)**
 - university access
- **Ohio, California state consortia**
 - statewide college access (under development)
- **Other Distributors likely**
 - Primary & Secondary Schools, Public Libraries and international users
- **Different access for distinct communities**

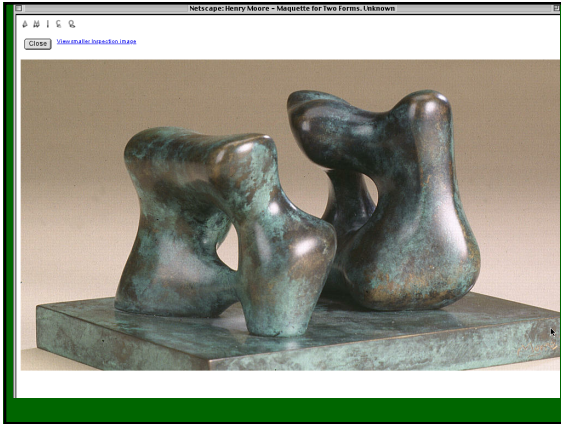
AMICO Web
www.amico.org



AMICO Web
Thumbnail
Catalog

Simple Search
www.amico.org





AMICO Subscribers

- **educational Institutions**
 - universities, colleges, schools, libraries, museums
 - annual subscription fee
- **license specifies users and uses**
 - non-commercial, educational
 - faculty, staff, students, researchers, walk-in users and distance education
 - presentations, papers, theses, lectures, local systems
- **annual subscription fee for unlimited access to a growing library**

AMICO Users

- **integrate image content throughout curriculum**
 - art history, studio, cultural history, languages
 - imaging and printing
- **use content in local and networked systems**

Users in Art History



in depth study



projection of images in classroom

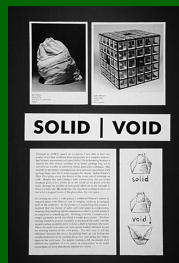


Student assignments

Users in Art Studio

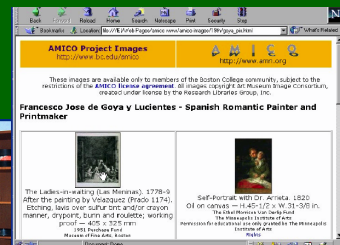
Assignment:

- **Review the AMICO library for works that explore the concepts of solid and void.**
- **Analyse them as you prepare for the creation of your own work.**



Users in the Library

online review replaces slide carrousel



Users in Cultural History

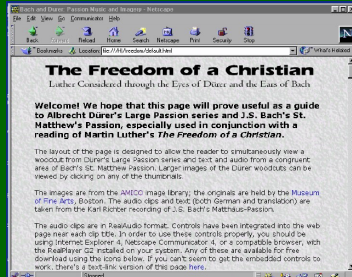
Dürer's
Large Passion

used with

Bach's
St. Matthew Passion

to provide
context for

Luther's
Freedom of a
Christian



Users in Technical Studies

• Computer Imaging

- Review metadata accompanying AMICO images and assess issues in image quality and fidelity
- Identify criteria for creating accurate digital colour reproductions of works of art

• School of Printing

- Assess issues in faithful colour reproduction from digital source

Issues

- Content
- Documentation
- Technology
- Intellectual Property
- Economics
- Community Building

Issues: Content

- collections development
 - at 50,000 works "more holes than cheese"
- consistent documentation
 - text, image, multimedia
- critical mass
 - of what, for whom?
- breadth vs depth
 - lots of things, or lots about a few things?
- persistence
 - access over time to same works

Issues: Documentation

- data specification
 - separate display data from access data
 - field level guidelines (for indexing dates, terms)
- editorial consistency
 - shared authority files and indexing rules
 - existing tools aren't enough (~30% of Names not in ULAN)
- metadata standards
 - descriptions of works and associated media files
- cross-resource discovery
 - AMICO Library links to other resources e.g. bibliography and full texts

Issues: Technology

- Members
 - collections management systems, image capture, audio, video, multimedia, extended text
- AMICO
 - contribution management, image and text validation, multimedia, member and distributor support
- Distributors
 - library access interfaces, collections integration
- Subscribers
 - local on-campus systems, OPACs, Web pages, etc.
- Users
 - own analytical, research, study systems

Issues: More Technology

- **multimedia**
 - common formats, structures, metadata and descriptions
- **consistent and unique naming**
- **verification and maintenance of links**
 - each AMICO work is a multi-part object
- **consistent capture standards**
 - comparable results
- **systems security, user authentication**
- **authenticity**

Issues: Intellectual Property

- **protection**
 - technological vs social and legal mechanisms
- **consistent terms and conditions**
 - common agreements, no special terms
- **distinct licenses for user communities**
 - primary school uses different from university
- **international licenses**
 - global distribution requires review of terms
 - relationships between institutions and users differ
- **artists rights negotiated**
 - agreements with Artists Rights Society (ARS)

Issues: Economics

- **self supporting not-for-profit**
 - cost-recovery required
 - not dependent on grant funding for core activities
 - long-term sustainability a key goal
- **all institutional participants have stake**
 - no money returned to members
 - subscription fees support activities of the consortium
 - incentives for distributors & subscribers to develop tools and add value
- **keep access free at point of use**

Issues: Community Building

- **shared mission enables collaboration**
 - not-for-profit and educational focus
- **consistent terms for participants**
 - common, transparent, formula-based agreements
- **open multi-way communications**
 - public specifications: technical and data
 - known license terms
- **shared risks and benefits**
 - members collaborate online
 - users share experiences
 - all build expertise

AMICO as example

- **building multimedia digital libraries requires new methods and strategies**
- **social, economic, legal and technological challenges**
 - integration of people, institutions and systems
- **technology is an enabler not an end in itself**
 - image databases only one small part of the picture

More info?

Art Museum Image Consortium
<http://www.amico.org>

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