

SECAC (Southeastern College Art Conference) 2000 Presentation:

“New Additions to the JMU Digital Image Database: AMICO Images and the Capacity for Comparisons” – abstract

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JMU's art and art history Digital Image Database (DID) instructional system was developed in 1998-99 with a \$45,000 grant from the Center for Instructional Technology in direct response to increased enrollment and instructional needs generated by the new General Education program. The School of Art and Art History was required to shift from teaching ten to twelve sections of the Survey of World Art course per year to instructing a total of twenty-four course sections in the academic year.

The DID instructional system is composed of two individual components: the digital image database and the image viewer. The DID is a secure web site that permits faculty members to generate and package slide shows at their convenience. Instructors search through thousands of digital images, selecting and sorting the images based on a range of instructional criteria. After organizing selected images for classroom presentation, instructors are able to store slide shows for immediate use in class, annotate and edit slide shows, provide online shows for students to review, or archive slide shows for future discussions. Once a slide show has been created, the show may be viewed in class using the second application, the ImageViewer. The Image Viewer permits faculty to download the actual size version of each image in the slide shows they created and project these images in a classroom containing appropriate equipment.

The new improvements to the DID instructional system accomplished this summer 2000 were: the addition of images from the Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO) and new non-western art images from a JMU “mGrant,” new features to the SlideShow Builder, and changes to the ImageViewer to allow split screen, side by side viewing of images. The new features will be demonstrated.

In spring of 2000, the JMU library purchased the site license and high-resolution tapes of AMICO's 48,000-image database. Seven tapes with 40 gigs of information per tape had to be uncompressed, converted to jpeg and sized to fit the new ImageViewer. The cataloging data was converted into a Microsoft SQL server database to interface with two web applications. The faculty query interface allows instructors to choose AMICO images to add to the DID and the administrator interface allows the Visual Resources Curator to verify and edit the text data before sending the image to the DID. An art history professor was awarded an instructional technology grant to add 660 non-western art images to the DID.

The SlideShow Builder's new features are a help menu, additional links to download the ImageViewer and provide administrators' pages to manage

accounts and edit catalog information, and two additional search criteria (“culture” and “country”).

Major improvements to the ImageViewer classroom projection component have greatly enhanced art and art history instruction. Faculty members have the ability to split the screen either vertically or horizontally within a slide show and each side acts independently with the same functionality as a regular slideshow. Additional keyboard commands allow slide navigation and toggling between the zoom, pan, and show info/hide info features. The new version of the ImageViewer was compiled with Director 8.0 and is now available for the Macintosh as well as the PC. There will be an assessment component conducted at the end of each semester gathering information on faculty and student satisfaction with this enhanced teaching and study resource.