

# **The AMICO Testbed @ RIT**

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**Michael Robertson**  
**Software Specialist**  
**Wallace Library**

**Samantha (Sam) Powell**  
**Visual Resource Manager**  
**Educational Technology Center**

**The Rochester Institute of Technology**

# Team AMICO @ RIT

- **Pat Pitkin**
  - Director of Library Services, Wallace Library
- **Christine Geith**
  - Co-director, Educational Technology Center
- **Samantha (Sam) Powell**
  - Visual Resources Manager, Educational Technology Center
- **Sue Mee**
  - Media Specialist, Educational Technology Center
- **Michael Robertson**
  - Software Specialist, Wallace Library
- **Kari Horowicz**
  - Art/Photography Librarian, Wallace Library
- **Marcia Trauernicht**
  - Head, Cataloging/Serials Dept., Wallace Library
- **Franziska Frey**
  - Research Scientist, Image Permanence Institute

# Recruiting Faculty

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- **Campus Newsletter Cover Story**
- **Multiple campus-wide electronic mailings**
- **1 overview session**
- **8 hands-on seminars to over 30 faculty**
- **Flyers distributed in key departments**

# RIT AMICO Web Gateway

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- **Internal RIT survey**
- **Creation of Help Guides (HTML - PDF)**
  - User Instructions
  - Help with Searching
- **Thumbs-up/Thumbs down for permitted uses**
  - link to PDF of full license
- **AMICO access links equals agreement to follow license**

# Who was our Testbed?

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- **Over 30 Faculty Participants from:**
  - Imaging Science
  - Photography
  - Fine Arts
  - Liberal Arts
  - School of Printing

# Using the AMICO Library in a Studio Class Environment

- **Professor Roberly Bell and Kari Horowicz**
  - Multi-quarter collaboration
- **3 classes: over 136 students**
  - 3D Design (2 Classes)
    - » Undergraduates - freshmen
    - » Assignment organic forms - Fall Quarter
    - » Assignment on solids and voids - Spring Quarter
  - Graduate Seminar in Installation Art (1 Class)
    - » Spring Quarter

# Assignment 1: Organic Form

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- **Create a unique organic abstraction**
  - Based on visual research of the natural world
  - Artists dealing with organic form
- **Concept Scroll**
  - Including AMICO Library printouts
  - Sketches
  - Description of process
    - » concept to sculpture

# Assignment 1: Organic Form (cont.)

- **Session with Kari in Library**
  - Bibliographic Lab - hands on session
    - » computer projection and 15 IBM computers
- **Searching techniques demonstration:**
  - Simple
    - » pre-selected artists dealing with organic form
      - Henry Moore, Isamu Noguchi, etc.
  - Advanced -20th century sculpture
    - » using Boolean operator AND
    - » type: sculpture
    - » date: 19?
- **Students**
  - Searched database and printed out images

# Assignment 2: Solids and Voids

- **Using a geometric form**
  - Create a solid and a void of that form
- **Required to use AMICO**
  - Print samples
    - » Solids
    - » Voids
  - Present Story Board
    - » print-outs of images from AMICO Library
    - » brief comparative text of AMICO Library images chosen
    - » sketch of student's idea for sculptures
- **Final result**
  - 2 sculptures exploring aspects of solid/void

# Assignment 2: Solids and Voids (cont.)

- **Session with Kari in Library**
  - Bibliographic Lab - hands on
    - » computer projection and 15 IBM computers
- **Kari demonstrated searching techniques:**
  - Advanced: Sculpture of the 1980s and 1990s
    - » using Boolean operator AND
    - » type: sculpture date: 198? or 199?
- **Students**
  - Searched database and printed out images
- **Roberly Bell Lecture commented on:**
  - Various examples presented
  - Discussed formal aspects

# Sample Images Discussed in Class



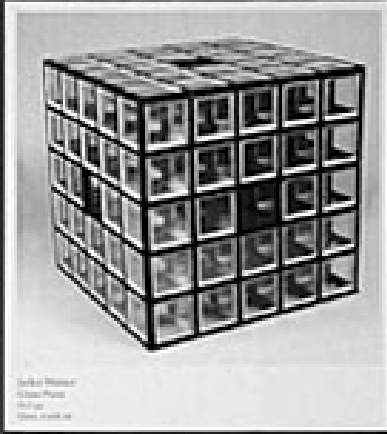
Scott Burton  
Seat-Leg Table. 1986/1991  
Sandstone -28 ? x 56 x 56 overall  
Gift of Honeywell Inc. in honor of  
Harriet W. Spencer, 1992  
Walker Art Center  
AMICO Library



Jac Leirner  
Blue Phase. 1992  
Brazilian bank notes,  
Polyurethane Cord - 63" diameter  
Butler Family Fund, 1993  
Walker Art Center  
AMICO Library



Ted Nelson  
Wife 2-Pg  
1975  
10 1/2 x 11 x 17 inches  
Paper

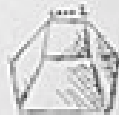


Jackie Wilson  
Clear Piece  
1976  
14 x 14 x 14 inches

# SOLID | VOID

Through an AMCCD search on sculpture, I was able to find two works of art that exhibited these properties in a complex manner. Ted Nelson's representational piece *Wife 2-Pg* is interesting because it depicts the thin, filmy qualities of an actual garbage bag, yet is carved from marble, an extremely dense, permanent substance. The ability of the marble to withstand our own personal experiences with garbage bags and this is what engages the viewer. Jackie Wilson's *Clear Piece* plays along this theme of the void, use of materials as well. Despite this piece being a solid construction, the use of the modular glass cubes allows us to see inside of the piece, and the holes through the middle of each plane allow us to see through it. Once we look into the sculpture, our eyes have nothing to focus on but what is trapped inside of the glass cubes, the void space.

In creating my solid / void pieces, I combined Wilson's notion of trapped space with Nelson's use of weighty marble as an integral part of the sculpture. In the process of researching this project, I realized that the theory of solid and void space in comparison, meaning that anything can be considered a solid or a void unless it is compared to something else. Working with this, I constructed a simple geometric mold into which I could pour plaster. The first casting would be poured regularly to represent the solid, and the second casting would be done to form a shell to represent the void. When the mold was removed, both pieces looked identical except for missing interior of the void piece. The only way to tell the difference between the two is by picking them up and seeing the weight difference or by turning them over and seeing the empty space in the void piece. So despite looking solid, the plaster shell exhibits the qualities of void space in comparison to its solid counterpart, an irony that should interest the viewer.



solid



void



# Benefits to Students

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- **New Image Resource - research tool**
- **Tested understanding of organic form**
- **Introduction to information literacy skills in library**
- **Exposure to a vast digital database**
- **Individualized learning**
  - Professor selected images
  - Exposure to images of interest to students
- **Digital collections Vs. textbook browsing**

# Graduate Students: Installation Art Class

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- **Requirements**

- Search AMICO Library for:
  - » installation art
  - » mixed media
- Select and printout two images for comparative purposes
- Write a one-page comparison of images

# Graduate Students: User Feedback

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- **Incredibly Valuable Resource**
  - Images otherwise not easily accessible
  - Right at your fingertips
- **Would have liked to have:**
  - Multiple views of 3-dimensional works
  - Video footage of work
    - » The ability to visually walk around the piece
  - More contextual information
  - More commentary
    - » Particularly artists' statements

# Benefits to Graduate Students

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- **Introduced to new pieces**
  - Pieces otherwise limited to viewers within museum
- **Introduced to key works in installation art**
  - Museums collecting interests
- **Able to tour multiple museums in virtual environment**
- **Became interested in artist's works**
  - Expanded research to books and periodicals
  - Circle of enriched resources in learning

# Benefits to Faculty

- **Excellent resource for studio experience**
- **Solid/void design problem**
  - 1st introduced this year
  - Prior to AMICO, research would have taken about 30 hours to compile slide lecture from books and magazines
    - » Using AMICO took far less time
- **Broader range of work to be found and used**
- **More productive use of faculty time**
- **Students work is better in many cases**

# School of Printing: Use of AMICO

- **Robert Chung**
  - Color Perception and Measurement
    - » **Part I** -- Appreciation of Art Images
      - Examine 3 different art styles
      - Look at techniques in terms of
        - value contrast
        - hue contrast
      - Talk about why they are interested in particular painting
    - » **Part II** -- Reproduction of Art Images
      - How to render faithfully without originals?
        - Hard copy Vs. Displayed Image
      - Springboard for discussion on reference of exactness and standards

# School of Printing: Use of AMICO (cont.)

- **Michael Riordon**
  - Color Separation Systems
    - » **Part I** -- Locate samples of Raw Scanned Image Files
      - Including those available through:
        - AMICO
        - Gardner: Art Through The Ages
        - Other Web Sources
    - » **Part II** -- Examine File Consistency from one source to next
      - How do the original files differ from one source to another
      - What technical information is available with each image
      - Springboard for discussion on reference of exactness and standards

# School of Printing: Discoveries

- **Robert Chung**
  - Need for more than one view when 3D
  - Need for more detailed technical information
    - » Tag the monitor profile to image
    - » What RGB Color Space was used?
- **Michael Riordon**
  - Resolution Difficulties
    - » Limited to 5-6 MB
    - » Limited printing sizes
  - Inconsistencies in images scanned (color casts)
    - » No standardized (loss of information)
      - Lighting
      - Scanning technologies

# Other Classes @ RIT: Uses

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- **School of Art Faculty**
  - Heidi Nickisher - Art and Civilization
    - » Use of Live AMICO Library Images in Student Presentations
- **School of Photographic Arts and Sciences**
  - Lynne Bentley-Kemp
    - » Gallery Management Class
      - Virtual Exhibitions

# Image Quality

## (Dr. Frey, Image Permanence Institute)

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- **Quality of Projected Image**
  - General Studies
    - » Image quality is good enough
  - Art History Faculty
    - » Quality does not compare to 35mm
    - » Loss of detail (often dark and too much contrast)
  - Color Management Classes
    - » Inability to reproduce colors accurately
- **Consistency of Images**
  - Variations in image display and quality
    - » Color and Gray Scales
    - » Cropping and Rotating

# Image Quality (cont.)

## (Dr. Frey, Image Permanence Institute)

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- **Problems when Printing TIFF Files (Why?)**
  - Scanning and archiving into output space (monitor) without characterization data attached to each image file
- **Result:**
  - Images are device specific
    - » (most likely different for every participating institution)
  - Re-purposing is difficult or even impossible
    - » (e.g., printing instead of viewing)

# Image Quality Recommendations (Dr. Frey, Image Permanence Institute)

- **First,**
  - Answer the following questions:
    - » *Who are the users?*
    - » *What are the uses?*
- **Then,**
  - Bring standardization among participating institutions
    - » build common framework for image capture
    - » Metadata collection including ULAN or other naming standard
- **Otherwise, you've created legacy files**
  - Limited long term usability over many disciplines

# Image Quality Recommendations (cont.)

## (Dr. Frey, Image Permanence Institute)

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- **Critical to have good Archive file**
  - 1st generation, original digital image
    - » Can be referred back to when standards for Access files change
- **Access Files, less critical**
  - 2nd generation, processed copies
    - » Browsing
    - » Indexing
    - » Delivery
- **Consistent and thorough Metadata**
  - Printing of TIFF files; viewing of images across platforms
  - Color matching for any high quality printing/testing

# Image Quality Help

## (Dr. Frey, Image Permanence Institute)

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- **Digital Library Federation**
  - Publication coming out later this year
    - » published on RLG Web site
- **National Information Standards Organization (NISO)**
  - Spring 1999 Initiative on Image Metadata
    - » focusing on Technical Metadata

# Internal RIT Survey Questions

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- **Difficulty connecting?**
- **What images are you looking for?**
- **Did you find the images you were looking for?**
- **Description of searching techniques**
- **Access points used**
- **Useful descriptive & commentary info?**
- **Reasons for using AMICO Library**

# Internal RIT Survey Results

- **Trouble connecting**
  - 10 yes & 30 no
- **Navigation problems (back button)**
- **Found what they wanted?**
  - 24 yes & 14 partially
- **Searched by:**
  - 31 type; 26 subject; 22 date; 15 creator; 3 owner by place; 2 owner name; 2 title
- **Additional access points desired:**
  - art movement, mediums, and techniques
- **Descriptive info & commentary very useful**
- **Desire to download image & text together**
- **Images Sizes were adequate**

# AMICO in retrospect @ RIT

- **Expanded access to art**
  - 23 museums around the world
- **Aid to Faculty in teaching**
  - Digital Vs. Traditional teaching methods - preparation
- **Learning curves**
  - Technology and new resources
- **Available technologies in the classroom**
  - 113 classrooms, 70 with projection equipment
- **Descriptive Metadata inconsistency**
- **Image Projection Quality varies**
- **Just getting started (need for additional year)**

# Future of AMICO @ RIT

- **Planting the Seed**
  - Faculty sharing experiences and resources
- **Increasing availability of Technology**
- **Faculty Institute on Teaching and Technology**
  - May 24-28, 1999 ~ 40 faculty across disciplines
  - 3 hour class on Image Databases / Collections available
    - » AMICO
    - » Gardner
    - » Polish Posters, Jacqueline Casey Posters
    - » AP Photo Archive
  - How to download and import
    - » excited & hopeful about using AMICO in future classes;
    - » plans to use summer to incorporate into lectures / supplemental

## Future of AMICO @ RIT (cont.)

- **Consider integration**
  - AMICO descriptive metadata w/links to AMICO into RIT Library online catalog (at faculty suggestion)
- **Faculty believe would aid students**
  - Increased visual resources
  - Availability of otherwise limited image collections
- **Look at use of different image viewer software**
  - Integrated ability across various image collections
    - » One front-end for multi-collection research: ImageShare & CONTENT  
<http://content.engr.washington.edu/>
    - » Consistent Metadata including ULAN & other Standards