



AMICO Board Meeting
January 26, 1999
2:00pm - 4:00 pm.
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California

Minutes

In Attendance:

Chairman: Harry S. Parker III, Fine Art Museums of San Francisco

Members represented:

Asia Society Galleries, Vishakha Desai
Center for Creative Photography, Terry Pitts
Cleveland Museum of Art, Bob Bergman
Frick Collection and Art Reference Library, Samuel Sachs
George Eastman House, Anthony Bannon
J. Paul Getty Museum, Ken Hamma for John Walsh
Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Marcel Brisebois
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, Hugh Davies & Charles Castle
San Jose Museum of Art, Josie Callan
Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Susan Taylor
Whitney Museum of American Art, Maxwell Anderson

Regrets: Albright Knox Art Gallery (Schultz expected)
Art Gallery of Ontario
Art Institute of Chicago (Wood possibly expected)
Library of Congress
Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Bodell for Beale expected)
Musée des beaux arts de Montréal
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
National Gallery of Canada
National Museum of American Art
Philadelphia Museum of Art
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Walker Art Centre

Guests: Jim Michalko, President, The Research Libraries Group Inc. (RLG)
Mimi Gaudieri, AAMD

Staff: Jennifer Trant, AMICO Executive Director
David Bearman, AMICO Director of Strategy and Research

1. Call to Order

Chairman Harry Parker called the meeting to order.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Chairman asked for and received unanimous approval for the minutes of the previous meeting.

3. Executive Committee Membership

It was moved by Hugh Davies and seconded by Bob Bergman that Samuel Sachs of The Frick Collection be named to the Executive Committee to take up the position vacated by Shirley Thomson upon her retirement from the National Gallery of Canada. Approved unanimously.

4. Update on Activities

Jennifer Trant, AMICO Executive Director, reviewed recent Activities and Upcoming Deadlines (through July 1, 1999) with the Board. These are summarized in an attachment to the Agenda. Deadlines include submission of works to the 1999-2000 Library and research activities, including focus group and other evaluation studies. Trant also reviewed the major targets identified for 1999-2003 including membership growth at a rate averaging one new member per month, Library growth from 40,000 to 250,000 works, extension of the subscriptions to university students, public libraries, and K-12 students, all leading to debt free, self-sufficiency by 2003.

Trant shared with the Board some background on the progress of the University Testbed project, now entering its sixth month. This included publicity attracted by the University of Alberta, descriptions of focus groups research (proposed for funding by the J. Paul Getty Trust Grants program, and evaluation of online usage (conducted by Cornell University on behalf of AMICO). She also provided the Board with an announcement of the forthcoming AMICO meeting with the University Testbed participants on June 3-4, 1999. Finally, Trant reported on the IUPUI project, funded by IMLS, which is scheduled to begin in February, with hiring of a project manger.

Screen shots of the Web Site (www.amico.org) were discussed and reviewed. This site, hosted by the Art Museum Network, is our electronic brochure, offering potential users background information on AMICO and providing a searchable catalog of 'thumbnails' (small images and abbreviated text) of the entire AMICO Library. The chairman thanked Max Anderson and the Art Museum Network (owned by the Whitney Museum of American Art) for providing this service to AMICO.

5. Report from Research Libraries Group, the first AMICO Distributor

Jennifer Trant introduced our guest, Jim Michalko, President of the Research Libraries Group, the distributor of the AMICO Library during the Testbed year.

Michalko began with an introduction to RLG, a non-profit membership organization, that brings together libraries and research institutions to share information online. RLG is not a trade association. He reviewed RLG's mission statement and described its membership (universities and research organizations). RLG members pay annual dues – "general" members at \$40K; and "special" members at \$4k. In addition, they pay for the actual services they use - like the AMICO Library. RLG engages in programmatic activities (such as conservation, development of specialized databases, etc.) and operational activities (ongoing provision of such as bibliographic databases).

This year RLG will launch its newest data service - Museum Resources. At its heart will be the AMICO Library. In addition, it will include Citation Resources, Member Resources, Commercial Suppliers, Image and Reference databases. To illustrate the nature of the service, and the nature of the AMICO Library as viewed through RLG, he then gave a demonstration of "Eureka", the RLG interface to AMICO. RLG has invested significantly in the enhancement of the Eureka system to deliver the AMICO Library and other like resources.

All Museum Members of AMICO have unlimited access to the AMICO Library as delivered by RLG (and any other distributor).

The Board spent a few minutes questioning Michalko after the demonstration. In the course of his remarks, Michalko mentioned there were between 30 and 60 user sessions a day on the AMICO Library. Future challenges for RLG and AMICO include the rapid continuing technical evolution, influencing and responding to evolving museum practice and policy, developing solid business relations and providing AMICO direction for further development. In his view, the crucial issue for AMICO is to "preserve the brand".

Harry Parker thanked Jim Michalko for his and RLG's efforts on behalf of AMICO. Michalko left the meeting at this point.

6. Treasurer's Report

Max Anderson, AMICO Treasurer, reviewed with the Board the budget statements circulated with the Agenda. These included statements of FY 97/98 actual expenses, FY 98/99 Budgets and FY 98/99 Q1-2 expenses. Five year budget projections were also prepared by AMICO staff.

Statements show showed the current year (FY 98/99) with a budgeted deficit of \$49,000 and cumulative debt of \$385,000 which would be paid off by 2002 with an annual surplus projected at \$134,000. Ken Hamma questioned why the five year budget in 2000 shows decrease in cumulative debt (which was explained to be as a consequence of the slight surplus of income over expenses shown that year).

The Executive Committee reported two principles that guide its budget discussions. First, AMICO should break even over 5 years. Secondly, income from licenses should balance that from membership dues as soon as possible.

Harry Parker reminded the Board that the Art Museum Network (AMN), Archives & Museum Informatics (A&MI), and Michael Shapiro Esq., had all agreed to assist the start-up of AMICO by providing services for which they have not billed. AMICO has agreed to provide payment for these services, should it be able to do so in the future. Bob Bergman moved that Board extends thanks, and recognize this debt to AMN, Michael Shapiro, and A&MI. Vishakha Desai seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

It was agreed that a 1999-2000 budget would be prepared by AMICO staff and submitted to the Executive Committee and Board at its meeting in June 1999.

7. Fundraising Status Report

The Treasurer then reviewed the status of AMICO's fundraising activity. We've received a planning grant from the Mellon Foundation, and support from the Delmas Foundation for planning a submission to the National Science Foundation's Digital Libraries Initiative program. Our partner, IUPUI, has also received an IMLS National Leadership Grant for the delivery of the AMICO Library to K-12 and Public Library users in Indianapolis.

We have one application pending at the Grant Program of the J. Paul Getty Trust, for support for a series of Focus Groups to study the needs of users of the AMICO Library.

To date, we have not been successful in our search for operating support for the startup of AMICO. Members of the Board were encouraged to contact Max Anderson with their ideas for development targets.

8. Membership Committee Report

Robert Bergman, Membership Committee chairman, reported that AMICO had three new members join in the fall. He welcomed The Frick Collection and Art Reference Library, The Library of Congress, and the Whitney Museum of American Art to AMICO.

Bergman noted that our membership growth objective is to recruit 1 new member per month on on-going basis, and that thus far, we are not meeting that target. AMICO Members were encouraged to discuss membership with their colleagues and encourage others to join.

Max Anderson suggested that a recruitment strategy might be to encourage some institutions to participate in order to help them do their collections management better (he notes that Willoughby and Gallery Systems have promised to provide "AMICO export" facilities). Bob Bergman pointed out that this might be a two-sided argument in light of reports (Josie Callan, and others) that participating in AMICO is hard. All agreed that more potential members needed to be approached during the upcoming AAMD meetings.

Bergman then introduced the new draft of the AMICO Membership Agreement, that clarifies some terms of membership, as requested by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Walker Art Center, particularly with regard to indemnification and insurance. Changes are shown on the marked-up copy of the Agreement, distributed with the Agenda. Future members will sign this new Agreement. IF approved, existing members MAY sign the agreement, but are not required to as they have Agreements in place already. Copies of the signed Agreement have been circulated to all members. It was moved by Max Anderson and seconded by Hugh Davies that the changes to the AMICO Membership Agreement be accepted. Approved unanimously.

Jennifer Trant summarized questions about AMICO's insurance that had been raised in light of the changes in the Membership Agreement. Members wished to be sure that AMICO was adequately protected. A copy of a letter to our Account Manager at Huntington Block, detailing these questions, was circulated with the Agenda. Trant agreed to report to the Executive Committee on the reply.

9. Library Distribution

The Distributors status report was presented by David Bearman. It shows that we are reaching our goal of developing multiple vehicles for users to access the AMICO Library. Of interest, particularly as they offer a local funding opportunity, are the state-wide distribution prospects with the California Digital Library and the OhioLINK network.

10. Library Growth

AMICO Members have made great strides in creating the first edition of the AMICO Library. However, a 20,000 work collection just begins to scratch the surface. Users will judge AMICO's utility and our success by the size and content of the AMICO Library. A set of Library growth projections were circulated with the Agenda. These were discussed in terms of new contributions by existing members, and in the recruiting of new AMICO Members. The target of an AMICO Library totaling 250,000 works in five years was affirmed.

11. Artists Rights

Jennifer Trant reported on progress being made by AMICO in clearing rights to contemporary art. This is a serious problem for many members, who have to invest a great deal of time and effort contacting individual artists or their agents before they can contribute works to AMICO. The Executive Committee (in September) discussed the question of "mass clearance" of works through collective agencies such as ARS and VAGA..

A model was proposed under which any member could contribute copyright works to AMICO without cost to them with reimbursement from AMICO to the copyright society based on the percentage of copyright works in the AMICO Library by artists represented by that society. For example, Trant explained, if 10% of the AMICO Library is contemporary copyright protected works in 2002, and of that 40% is represented by ARS, AMICO would pay to ARS a royalty (percentage to be negotiated) based on 40% of 10% of AMICO gross income. ARS would then redistribute this income to their artists. Where there was revenue that was attributable to contemporary works, it would be shared equitably with artists or estates, who are copyright holders.

Harry Parker asked for resolution that Board is in support of sharing AMICO income with artists rights societies in the way proposed, with staff negotiating the specifics. Bob Bergman so moved, Max Anderson seconded. Max stressed the importance of our doing this in order to ensure representation of all collections. An agreement would also give AMICO international viability. Sam Sachs wondered if it weakens other positions within the museum, and asked Hugh Davies for his view. Hugh believes that this is a good step but cautioned that it won't solve every problem. Max argued strongly that we should go ahead, and try and break this log-jam. The question was called and the vote was unanimous.

12. Member Services

During the planning of AMICO, a number of Member Services were envisioned that would assist members in their evaluation and implementation of technologies, and in their use of imaging and networks. To date, much of AMICO's activities have been focussed on the creation of the first edition of the AMICO Library.

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Board members were asked to consider how AMICO's Member Services could be developed to meet needs in their organizations. They, or their staff, were encouraged to contact AMICO with ideas.

13. Other Business

Harry Parker asked if there was any other business. No new issues were raised

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.