



Executive Committee Meeting

January 4, 2002

10:30 am – 3:30 pm

The Whitney Museum of American Art

Draft Minutes

1. In Attendance

Present: Maxwell Anderson, Whitney Museum of American Art
Elizabeth Broun, Smithsonian American Art Museum
Ken Hamma, J. Paul Getty Museum
Katherine Lee Reid, Cleveland Museum of Art (by phone)
Sam Sachs, The Frick Collection and Fine Arts Reference Library

Regrets: Jack Lane, Dallas Museum of Art
Harry S. Parker III / Bob Futernick, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
Guy Cogeval, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

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

2. Call to Order

Chairman, Sam Sachs called the meeting to order at 10:30am. He noted that because Katharine Lee Reid could only be with us (by phone) until 1pm, we would address some issues out of the proposed order of the circulated agenda.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Betsy Broun introduced the minutes of the May 3, 2001 meeting. Max Anderson moved their acceptance. Sam Sachs seconded. The minutes were adopted unanimously.

4. Activity Report & Revised Budget for FY 2001/2002

- **AMICO Achievements 2001**

Jennifer Trant introduced the AMICO Achievements from 2001. The committee members expressed their pleasure with both the achievements and the continuing use of the monthly reporting format.

- **Revised Budget FY 2001/2002**

David Bearman introduced the proposed revised Budget FY 2001/2002. It was noted that AMICO was operating under the budget approved as a conservative measure in May. We had hoped then that we would be able to adopt a revised budget based on better than expected actual experience. This has been the case. Questions about specific lines were addressed. In particular, it was made clear that the current proposal involved repayment of more of AMICO's debt to AMN, A&MI and Michael

Shapiro than had been anticipated in the earlier budget. Max Anderson moved to adopt the proposed budget. Betsy Broun seconded. The revised budget proposal was adopted unanimously.

- **AMICO Indebtedness Proposal**

The Committee discussed the proposal for AMICO to formally recognize its indebtedness to A&MI, AMN and Michael Shapiro. After a review of the history of AMICO's founding and the rationale for carrying these obligations informally, the group agreed that AMICO should move to formalize the terms of this obligation and include it in its accounts. Speaking for A&MI and AMN, David Bearman and Max Anderson agreed that they would be happy to acknowledge that their loan to AMICO is interest free and that it is to be repaid when AMICO is able.

Betsy Broun moved that the AMICO Chairman write to Michael Shapiro, the Art Museum Network and Archives & Museum Informatics, recognizing the obligation AMICO has to each of them, stating the terms (interest free), and outlining a schedule for repayment (over five years, if AMICO is able). This was seconded by Ken Hama. The motion passed unanimously, with Max Anderson abstaining, as the matter affected his organization directly.

5. Proposed Budget for FY 2002/2003 and beyond

The preliminary FY03 budget was introduced to the Executive Committee, prior to its introduction to the Board.

- **AMICO Membership Dues**

The preliminary FY03 budget reflects a proposal for AMICO to make membership "dues neutral" for those members in good standing. This has long been a goal of AMICO, but the best mechanism for such "dues relief" has not been clear. The proposal establishes a rebate of membership dues, based on the number of works contributed to The AMICO Library and the nature of their documentation. The proposal for the coming year was for members in good standing to receive \$1 per work with minimum level of documentation, \$2 per work with more than one image and/or extended texts, and \$3 per work those with related multimedia. Members in good standing are defined as those who have contributed an average of 500 works per year of their AMICO membership, and are not in default on their dues.

The Executive Committee agreed that this kind of a system could serve as a means of encouraging members to continue to contribute the sorts of works AMICO needs to build The AMICO Library. The Committee reacted positively to the proposal, though some concern was expressed about how such monetary rewards would change the nature of AMICO. It was acknowledged that the amounts proposed were not sufficient to reimburse members for the full costs of digitizing, and that AMICO's role is not to do this. The group discussed the other ways of calculating a rebate, and reviewed the logistics of administering it.

Sam Sachs wondered what the budgetary impact of this proposal would be. The Executive Committee reviewed the chart of "Rich Records in The AMICO Library" and noted that, should the proportions remain constant, the resulting rebate amounts would represent about 10% of AMICO's budget. This was already reflected in the preliminary draft of the FY03 budget proposal. Betsy Broun wondered about whether all works from all years should be credited, or only just those from any current year. It was felt that some flexibility was needed and that the Board should perhaps set the amount of per work payments on an annual basis

The Executive Committee requested that AMICO Staff develop a full proposal for the AMICO Board to consider at its February meeting.

6. Governance

- **Composition of the Board**

Jennifer Trant introduced the proposal to change the composition of the AMICO Board from a Board comprised of representatives from all member institutions to one of 13 members elected by all members in good standing.

There was discussion of the rationale – a smaller more effective Board – and the implications of a change – simplified governance, but less direct member involvement. Ken Hamma suggested that this second concern could be addressed by holding one meeting of the Board in conjunction with the Annual Members' Meeting.

The Executive Committee suggested that the proposal should be modified to restrict voting to Full Members in good standing (not associate members), and to incorporate the suggestion regarding timing of one meeting.

AMICO staff was asked to make the necessary change in the proposal, and in the revisions to the Bylaws, and to include the proposal to reconfigure the AMICO Board on the Agenda of the Board Meeting in February with the Executive Committee's full support.

- **Slate of Officers for 2002-04**

The Executive Committee agreed that it would act as the first Nominating Committee and propose a slate for the re-configured AMICO Board. It was agreed that continuity in officers and Members, and on-going involvement of those from the Executive Committee would be important for this transition.

The following preliminary slate of officers was proposed for 2002-2004: Betsy Broun, Chairperson; Ken Hamma, Vice Chairman; Katherine Lee Reid, Secretary; Max Anderson, Treasurer.

A further group of at least nine other candidates for the Board of Directors must be developed by the Executive Committee for presentation to the AMICO Board meeting in February. If the proposal is approved by the AMICO Board, then the election of the newly configured Board of Directors would also take place in February.

7. Next Meeting

Sam Sachs confirmed that the next meeting of the Executive Committee would be held next over lunch prior to the AMICO Board meeting, on 21 February at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Time and location are to be determined.

It was reiterated that committee members who are unable to attend, may send a delegate to the meeting in their stead.

8. Other Organizations

- **ArtSTOR**

The relationship between AMICO and ArtSTOR was discussed. Sachs and Anderson felt that it was important for the committee to have a common sense of the differences between the activities and strategies of AMICO and ArtSTOR. Ken Hamma expressed the view that AMICO was one of several, and potentially many, distribution channels for museum digital content and that there need not be any direct relationships between the two. The discussion affirmed that AMICO needed to keep its strengths – as a museum-led collaborative that focused on access to collections information – in mind as it developed and our dealings with ArtSTOR and others should be positive and open to

future collaboration. It was agreed that AMICO's had offered to work with ArtSTOR and that we remained open to collaboration. Since AMICO was understood to be a response by museums to help manage rights requests from educators, and ArtSTOR had quite different purposes, it was not expected that there needed to be any tighter relationship.

- **SCRAN**

The Board of Directors of SCRAN has written to AMICO requesting that we explore collaboration between our organizations, that could result in the formation of a new non-profit entity. This suggested organization would consist of museum membership organizations, like SCRAN and AMICO, which are creating digital content for educational use. The Executive Committee agreed that this might be a strategy of benefit to both organizations, and that it might offer a means to bridge the North American / European divide. The Chairman will respond to the SCRAN invitation, and express the committee's wish AMICO staff explore this relationship further.

9. Executive Director Search

- **Report on Process**

Max Anderson distributed the Curriculum Vitae of the applicants and summarized the results of the first round of the Executive Director search. He reported that a strong candidate had not yet been identified. Anderson suggested that the dual challenge of having to take on the organization and create an infrastructure and staff in a new place presented too much uncertainty and were somewhat daunting to those candidates to whom he had spoken directly. The committee agreed that Anderson should reply to the current round of candidates indicating that they were not selected for as candidates for the position at this time.

- **Transition Strategy**

AMICO staff had begun to explore the issue of housing AMICO following the end of the Archives & Museum Informatics contract. One good venue for AMICO would be to be housed in conjunction with a Humanities Computing or Digital Library program in a university. Such a partnership would help to secure AMICO's technology foundation, space and possibly provide some administrative support.

Explorations of the potential of an RFP for such a university host have received fairly positive indications that the universities see advantages to such an arrangement – AMICO and The AMICO Library could be attractive additions to a campus community, a good source of content for academic research, a project for many dissertation studies, and an asset to the campus as a whole. For AMICO, the possibility of being around digital library researchers has many benefits, including access to expertise and funding. The committee reviewed the pros and cons of such an approach. Katherine Lee Reid asked if the "RFP" approach being considered was normal for the field and was assured that it was. It was agreed that an RFP would help identify the needs of AMICO as an organization and that the drafting process would be instructive. It was also agreed that this would surface the widest range of possible academic partners. The committee felt that any RFP must have a fixed time frame for tenancy and freestanding governance for AMICO specified.

AMICO staff was asked to proceed with drafting an RFP. Betsy Broun offered to review the draft and if the committee felt it was necessary, bring it to the Board in February before release.

Katharine Lee Reid left the Meeting at this point.

10. Membership and Library Development

- **Membership**

Jennifer Trant reviewed the Membership Applications of received by the Newark Museum (Full Membership) and the Terra Museum (Associate Museum).

Max Anderson moved the acceptance of the application of the Newark Museum. This was seconded by Betsy Broun and approved unanimously.

Sam Sachs moved the acceptance of the application of the Terra Museum. This was seconded by Ken Hamma and approved unanimously.

Other potential new members were discussed, including the Victoria & Albert Museum and The Tate Gallery (which a relationship with SCRAN might facilitate) and the other Smithsonian art museums. Max Anderson agreed to contact the Cooper Hewitt and Betsy Broun agreed to contact the Washington institutions. Sachs agreed to contact the Brooklyn Museum again, particularly as their feelings might change with the revised approach to membership dues.

Staff was asked to draft a paragraph explaining how membership recruitment would change, that could be circulated once the Board approved the dues proposal.

- **Library Development**

The chart of existing and proposed contributions was reviewed and the Executive Committee agreed that it would be a significant watershed if The AMICO Library could surpass the 100,000 work threshold this year. This is within the sights, if Members contribute as they have in the past and will be easier if members can be urged to contribute more fully.

The challenge of identifying multimedia resources to contribute to The AMICO Library was recognized and the importance of agreements like the one with Antenna Audio was reaffirmed. We have been able to include over 300 audio clips from Antenna, and are working with them to greatly increase this number in the coming year. To date Acoustiguide does not seem to be interested in a parallel agreement. However, members who have Acoustiguide contracts, and who have rights to those audio files, can contribute them directly.

Other possible sources for multimedia include an offer from Roland Video to link video from biographical films about artists and the Public Media Inc. (the Benton film archive), also for video related to art and artists more generally. Staff will continue to investigate these opportunities as they arise.

11. Distribution Update

The Distribution Report was reviewed, and the possibility that these many new distributors would generate additional use of The AMICO Library from all sectors, including primary and secondary schools was noted and congratulated. The NYLINK subscription was also noted, and AMICO staff were asked to make its details known to all the New York-based AMICO Members.

It was requested that the Members meeting in June highlight the various distribution options and assist Members in making use of The AMICO Library in their own programs.

12. Subscriptions and Use of The AMICO Library

Other state-wide networks were agreed to be likely targets for AMICO Library subscriptions. It was agreed that much general promotion would be left to AMICO's distributors, and that staff would concentrate on the development of relationships with very likely prospects who could also be collaborators in promoting and developing AMICO Library programs.

It was noted that once again, use in the first 5 months of this year exceeded that of the previous year. There was further discussion of how best to encourage use, not just subscription, which has been an on-going concern. Staff expressed the opinion that school and public library usage would exceed what we have seen at universities and that it would be monitored closely. Betsy Broun encouraged the development of non-traditional interfaces, including games, as a way to engage users.

13. Other Business

Ken Hamma reported on the development of a new search engine at the J. Paul Getty Trust that will take advantage of the thesaural searching capabilities of the Getty vocabularies. This new tool will be made available widely, and AMICO could work with our distributors to urge their incorporation of such functionality in their applications. AMICO could also work more closely with the vocabulary programs to ensure that these tools include the vocabulary and terminology actually in use in The AMICO Library. Staff agreed, and will pursue active collaboration, and report on progress to the next meeting.

14. Adjourn

The agenda having been completed, Betsy Broun moved for adjournment, and was seconded by Max Anderson. All agreed, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.