

Building a Large Scale Digitization Program at the Archives of American Art

UNC Chapel Hill

March 12, 2009

Moving from Projects to a Program: The
Sustainability of Large-Scale Digitization
of Manuscript Collections Symposium

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Overview of Presentation

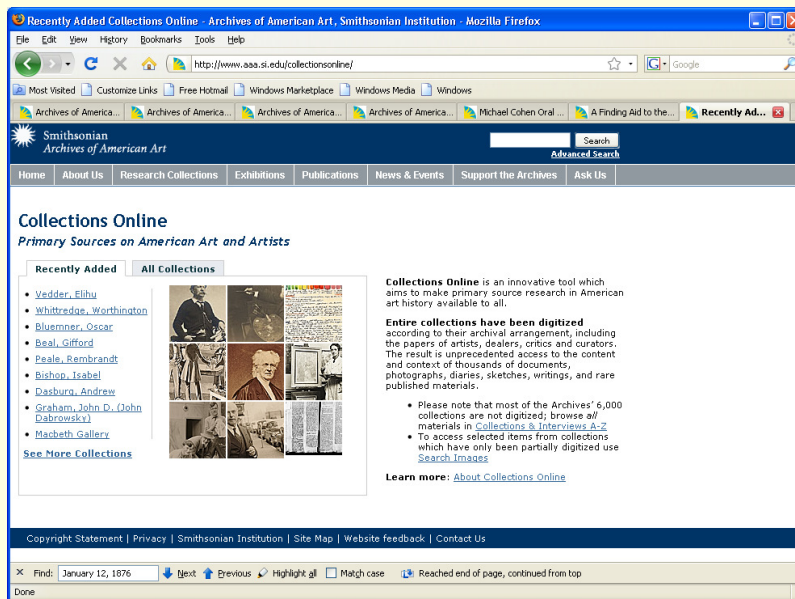
- Introduction to ***Collections Online***
- Background on the Archives' approach to large-scale digitization
- Building the technical infrastructure
- Implementing and sustaining large scale digitization as part of the archival workflow
- Questions and discussion

About the Archives of American Art

- Founded in 1954 in Detroit
- Original goal to locate and microfilm primary resources on American art; not to collect and preserve originals
- Immediately offered donations of papers
- Became part of the Smithsonian in 1970
- AAA currently holds approx. 6,000 collections
 - 15,000 linear ft; 2,000 oral history interviews
- <http://www.aaa.si.edu>

Collections Online: Large Scale Digitization at the Archives of American Art

<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collectionsonline>



- Entire collection vs. selected items
- As of March 2009, 67 collections; 450 linear ft.; 600,000 digital files
- Built upon fundamental archival approaches

Fully Digitized Collection Homepage



Collections Online: Basic Approach

- All descriptive metadata derived from the EAD finding aid
- Access to the digitized documents is through folder level access instead of item level access.
- Box and folder listing forms the file structure for the scanning technician to save the digital files, as well as the primary descriptive metadata for discovery of the digital files.
- In house Digital Collections Database's Finding Aid Table contains the XML data; dynamically driven web presentation + image viewer
- Internal web based workflow support

Terra Foundation For American Art Digitization Grant

- 2005 – Archives of American Art was the first grantee of the Terra Foundation for American Art. Terra's mission:

To help create a worldwide community for American art presentation, research, and interpretation, the foundation is dedicated to facilitating partnerships and communication and to increasing accessibility to needed scholarly resources.

<http://www.terraamericanart.org>

Terra Grant Proposal

Requested funding to:

- Replace microfilming
- Support team of processing archivists, digital imaging technicians, programmer/web developer
- Purchase scanning equipment
- Digitize and provide access to 106 significant collections
- Total digitized: approx. 1,000 linear feet (150 linear ft. digitized from microfilm)
- http://aaa.si.edu/collections/terra_collections_list.cfm#list

Terra Digitization Grant = Processing Grant

- Collection level digitization requires collections be fully processed and EAD finding aid prior to digitization
- Very few finding aids until early -1990s (used microfilm labels and catalog cards as main source of description and in lieu of finding aids)
- Full retrospective MARC cataloging 1985-1988; laid the collection level foundation for implementing finding aids

Microfilm: The Prequel



- In-house microfilm operation
- Microfilmed for access
- Opened network of regional centers and adapted traditional interlibrary loan
- Gained understanding of production; able to microfilm approximately 30% of holdings

50+ Years of Microfilming Supports Large-Scale Digitization

**Microfilming with Zeutschel
microfilm camera 2002**



**Scanning with Zeutschel 10000AI
Scanner 2005**



Collection Digitization Workflow

Microsoft Excel - TerraWorkflow.xls

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Data Window Help

Times New Roman 10 B I U

Type a question for help

C132 5.5

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
101	Pearmain, Robert	3	0.4	0.4	Y	6		Jayna	
102	Peto, John F.	3	1.6	1.3	Y	4	3	Erin	
103	Pippin, Horace	2	0.2	0.2	Y	2	2	Eric	
104	Pollock, Jackson	1	7	7	Y	2	4	Erin	
105	Porter, Fairfield	1	11.6	8.2	Y	2	2	Megan	
106	Powers, Hiram	4	12.2	11.8	Y	5		Erin	
107	Rand, John Goffe	3	0.2	0.2	Y	4		Jayna	
108	Refreiger, Anton	3	40		Y	4			
109	Rehn (Frank) Galleries		21.8	21.8	Y*	2		NA	
110	Reinhardt, Ad	2	4	3.8	Y	6		Erin	
111	Richards, William Trost	1	5	1.8	N			Erin	
112	Roberts, Mary Fanton		3.6	3.8	Y*	2	2	Erin	
113	Rosenak, Chuck	3	17.4	17.4	N			Stephanie	
114	Rossiter, Thomas	2	0.2	0.2	Y	2		Erin	
115	Rush, Olive	1	6.2	5.7	Y	1	1	Megan	
116	Lemoine, Jean re: Morgan Russell	2	0.2	0.1	Y	2	3	Eric	
117	Saarin, Aline and Eero	2	13.5	13.5	Y	3	2	Jennifer	
118	Sage, Kay	2	0.4	0.4	Y	2	2	Erin	
119	Sargent, John Singer	2	0.2	0.2	Y	2		Erin	
120	Schmidt, Katherine	2	0.2	0.2	Y	3	3	Erin	
121	Seitz, William	3	30		N				
122	Shahn, Ben	5	24.3		Y	6		Stephanie	
123	Sheeler, Charles	3	5	5.2	N			Jenny	
124	Smithson, Robert	5	90		N				
125	Soyer, Moses	3	4	3.8	Y	4		Erin	
126	Soyer, Raphael	3	4	3.9	Y	3		Erin	
127	Sternberg, Harry	3	4	3.2	N			Erin	
128	Stillman, James	2	0.2	0.2	N	3		Stephanie	
129	Storrs, John	3	22		N			Erin	
130	Tanner, Henry Ossawa	2	2.4	2.3	Y	2	2	Erin	
131	Taylor, Prentiss		18.4	20.4	Y*	2		NA	
132	Thayer, Abbott Handerson	2	5.5	4.9	Y	3	3	Erin	
133	Vedder, Elihu	1	8.7	9	Y*	2		Jennifer	
134	Vonnob, Bessie Potter	2	0.8	0.8	Y	2	2	Erin	
135	Vose Galleries	4	27		N				

Ready

Workflow web interface

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "AAA Collections Online Workflow - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar displays the URL: <http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/index.cfm?SearchField=Worthington+V>. The page content includes a navigation bar with links for "Getting Started" and "Latest Headlines". Below this, the title "Worthington Whittredge papers" is displayed, followed by a link "(Choose different collection)". A series of tabs are visible: "Collection Progress Checklist" (active), "Check-In (Upload)", "Check-Out (Download)", "Preview", and "Image Processing". The main content area is titled "Collections Online Workflow Progress" and contains a paragraph: "Any tasks that have been ~~eressed-out~~ have been completed. The resource is available to the public once all tasks are completed." Below this paragraph is a numbered list of 14 tasks, each with a completion status and a timestamp. The tasks are: 1. Archivist uploads new XML File to Finding Aid Repository (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/4/09 10:44 AM [Redo](#)); 2. Supervisor approves XML Finding Aid (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/4/09 10:45 AM [Undo](#)); 3. Cataloger provides index terms; archivist adds to XML File (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/4/09 10:45 AM [Undo](#)); 4. Second supervisor approves XML Finding Aid (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/4/09 10:45 AM [Undo](#)); 5. Create Image Directory / Begin Scanning (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/4/09 10:45 AM [Redo](#) | [Undo](#)); 6. Finished Scanning (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/4/09 10:46 AM [Undo](#)); 7. Process Images (Completed by Robin Holladay on 2/11/09 10:41 AM [Undo](#)); 8. Deploy Images to Staging server (Completed by Robin Holladay on 2/11/09 10:41 AM [Undo](#)); 9. Archivist Reviews Collection Online on aaasite.si.edu (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/11/09 11:17 AM [Undo](#)); 10. Archivist reports errors to be corrected (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/11/09 11:17 AM [Undo](#)); 11. Archivist confirms errors have been corrected and approves Collection Online (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/11/09 11:20 AM [Undo](#)); 12. Supervisor deploys XML file, HTML file, and Collection Online to Web (Completed by Karen Weiss on 2/11/09 12:41 PM [Redo](#) | [Undo](#)); 13. Supervisor verifies pages on Web site (Collections Online, Col. A-Z, & Finding Aids), notifies staff; 14. Cataloger Updates Smithsonian Institution Research Information System (SIRIS).

Automated Workflows

- Initial uploading of the archivists' XML EAD finding aid into finding aid repository; subsequent check-in and check-out
- Creation of an internal Collection Online "stub" site for the collection
- Generation of the directory structure (based on the EAD XML container listing) for the digital imaging technician to use when scanning
- Batch processing of the TIFF files to create three jpg derivatives and watermarking
- Linking a representative image to each series description for a visually appealing presentation
- Linking of the digital files to the appropriate folder titles
- Generation of a pdf finding aid accessible from the collection site
- Deployment to the final presentation on the web
- Versioning support

Reporting Capabilities

Collections Online and Images on Web Report from 01/01/2001 to 03/04/2009

Date: 01/01/2001 to 03/04/2009

Number of Collections Online added to website (between dates provided)	66
Total number of Collections Online on website (from 01/01/2000 to end date)	66
Total number of Suppressed Collections Online (from 01/01/2000 to end date)	4
Number of Collections Online Images added to website (between dates provided)	579610
Total number of Collections Online Images on website (from 01/01/2000 to end date)	579610
Total number of Suppressed Collections Online Images (from 01/01/2000 to end date)	107984
Total number of Linear Feet (from 01/01/2000 to end date)	443.05
Number of images added to DCD (between dates provided)	24855
Total number of images in DCD (from 01/01/2000 to end date provided)	24986
Total number of suppressed images in DCD (from 01/01/2000 to end date provided)	1320

List of Collections Online Added to the Web for the First Time: 01/01/2001 to 03/04/2009 *jump to 2nd set of dates*

CollectionID	Collection Title	Collection Online URL	Collection Online Date On Web	Collection Online Image Total	Linear feet
9264	Elihu Vedder papers	http://www.aaa.si.edu/collectionsonline/veddelih/	20090226	21791	9.0 linear feet
9364	Worthington Whittredge papers	http://www.aaa.si.edu/collectionsonline/whitwort/	20090211	1090	1.8 linear feet
5735 RESTRICTED	Oscar Bluemner papers	http://www.aaa.si.edu/collectionsonline/blueosca	20081211	15815	6.6 linear feet
10001	Gifford Beal sketches,				

Web 2.0 Enhancements

- Comments
- Volunteers for transcribing letters
- Links to related Smithsonian collections
- Links to related exhibitions, lectures, events

Website presentation

- New awareness of importance of website presentation and interface design
- New Webmaster position
- Constantly analyzing use and feedback
- Implemented usability techniques and conducted usability studies

Feedback and improvements

- Replaced search engine
- More intuitive, user-friendly design
- Image Viewer improved
- Printing option installed
- New stylesheet for non-digitized collections

Next Steps

- Better integrate digital and non-digital collections information
- Integrate fully digitized collections with item-level /selected images and other resources
- Utilize EAD for subject, date, and controlled name access
- Integrate digitized audio/video
- Transcriptions
- Explore open-source platform

Building Blocks – Beginning Principles

- The focus was on access to collections (which differentiates our approach from archival management systems)
- The information would reside in a database, and that would drive the display, as opposed to using a stylesheet transformation
- All the data would come from the EAD XML document

Building - Technical Overview

- All programming based on Adobe ColdFusion (with some Java programming)
- All data is stored in a MS SQL Server database – the same database used to store our existing collection and digitization information
- The application is built using an object-oriented approach that organizes the structure of the system based on function (i.e. EAD ingestion, PDF creation, image processing, deployment, etc)

Building – Early Stages

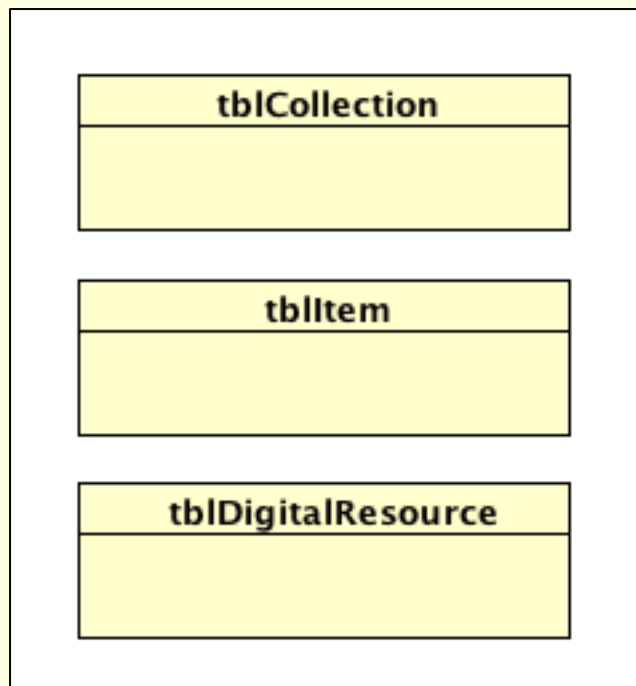
- Simple proof-of-concept in Fall of 2005 that could import portions of a finding aid into a database
- No interface for uploading XML documents
- Lacked support for true complexity or unusual encodings
- Didn't address embedded images
- Served the purpose to prove it could be built in-house

Building – EAD Uploading

- Each EAD XML file is passed through a parser that transforms the XML EAD data into an EAD *Document Object*
- Each portion of the EAD object is transformed into its “real world” equivalent (i.e. descriptive information, series, container listing, etc)
- Most of the descriptive data for the finding aid gets stored in the Finding Aid table, series information is stored in a Series table, container listing information is stored in the Container table

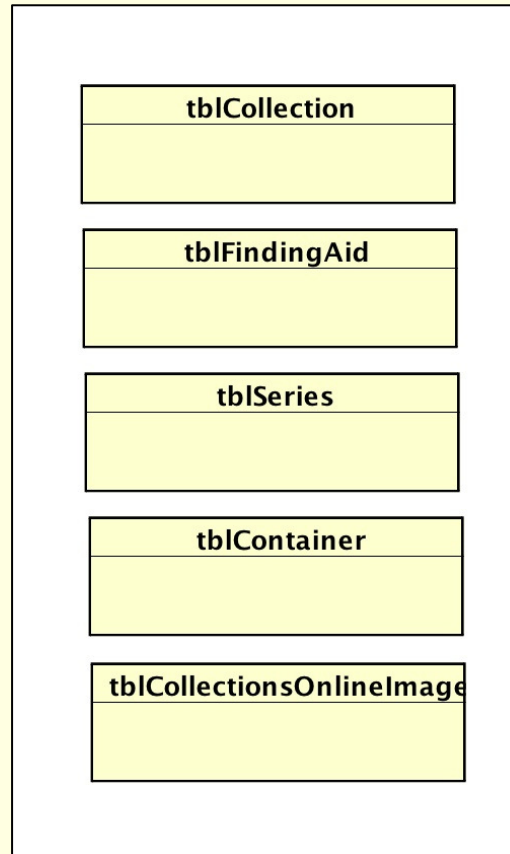
Building – Database Before CO

Digitization as a curatorial/cataloging process
(selected images given full descriptive
images)



Building – Database After CO

Digitization as an archival process (all images with description only at the container level)



Building - More Database (I)

EAD/Finding Aid

- Designed the database around the archival information, not the EAD encoding
- Needed a lot of discussion to clarify archival terms
- Learned a lot about EAD

tblCollection

tblFindingAid

tblSeries

tblContainer

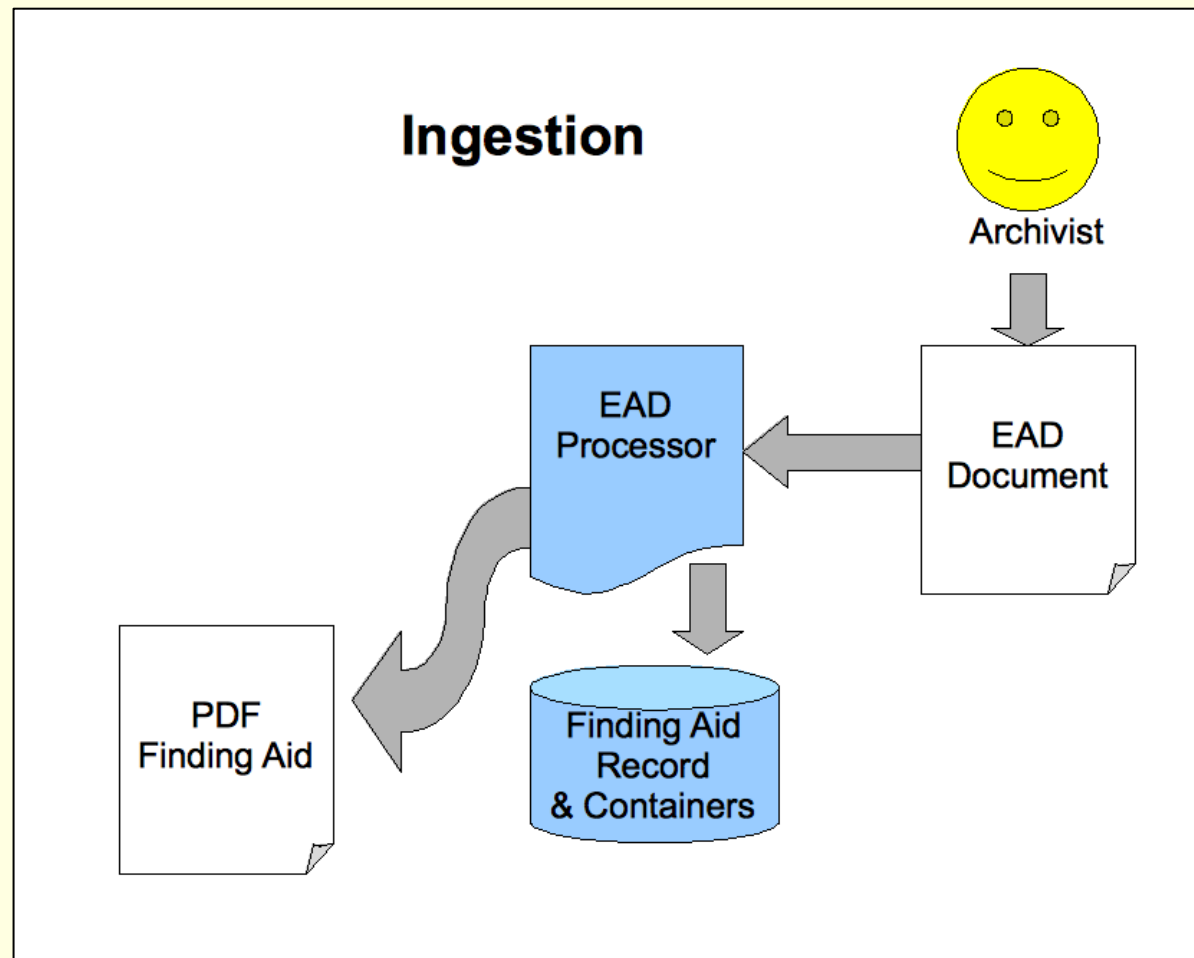
tblCollectionsOnlineImage

Building - More Database (II)

Images

- Struggled to figure out how to incorporate links to images in the EAD using <dao>, <daogrp>, etc.
- Decided instead to associate images based on container / folder heading data
- Ended up being a very flexible system for image association

Building – EAD “Engine”



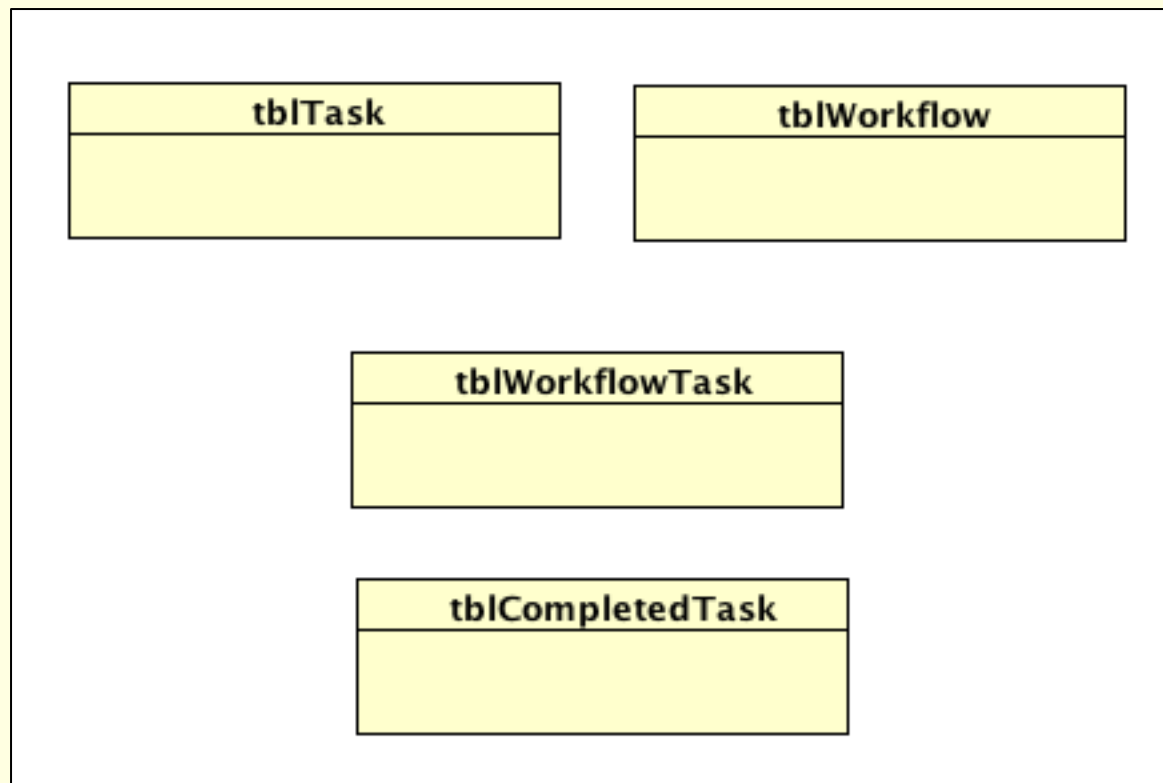
Building – Rethinking Workflows (I)

- The initial interface (Summer 2006) for the system was a simple upload form – the programmer had to manually perform all the steps to get the Collection Online publicly available
- Over time, we added preview options, versioning, and finally full web deployment capabilities
- In 2008, we made some significant changes to the system, that turned the EAD tool into a comprehensive web “workflow”

Building – Rethinking Workflows (II)

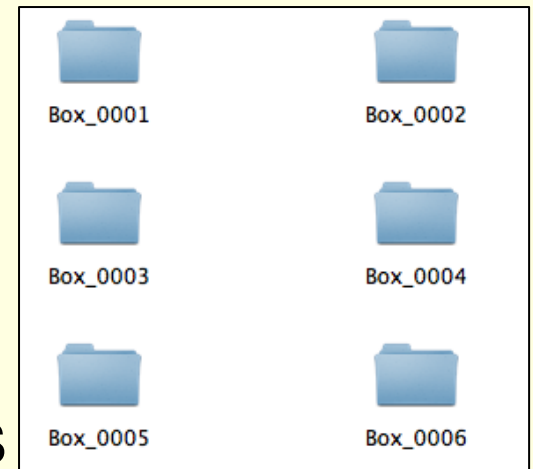
- Workflow system creates a “checklist” to show the current status of a finding aid
- Users can do, undo, and redo actions
- Records who did what and when
- Checklist items can trigger events, like deployment
- Checklist items can also trigger notifications, e.g. letting a supervisor know that a finding aid is available for review

Building – Workflows in the Database



Building –Workflows for Digitization (I)

- Information gathered from the EAD file describes the box / folder hierarchy for scanning
- This allows for automatically generating nested file structures for scanning
- Scanned images are copied onto Network Attached Storage (NAS) devices before processing



Building –Workflows for Digitization (II)

- Image converting, resizing, and watermarking is batch automated on a collection-wide level
- Database records for digital images are created at the same time the images are processed
- Mistakes happen – the workflow supports refreshing metadata for images without processing, or rescanning only a portion of a collection without having to reprocess all of the images

Building – Design (I)

- Again, access was the main goal
- Wanted the site to be visually appealing, and wanted the images to be the stars of the show
- Processing staff very concerned about making sure the context is always clear
- Many in-depth meetings with processing staff and IT staff to get the design right

Building – Design (II) : Image Viewer

- Use an “AJAX-style” image viewer, built in-house
- Inspired by a vendor demo at the SAA conference in 2006
- Originally used for our Search Images interface
- When we migrated it to Collections Online, we used the metaphor of a file folder for browsing multiple images at once

Building – Some Lessons Learned

- Incremental change is best
- You can't anticipate every condition up front – the EAD Engine has changed constantly throughout to accommodate variations in finding aids
- Tools should try to mimic the way people already do their work
- Open Source technologies probably would have been better in the long-term, but we worked with the skill-set and technology at hand

Implementation & Sustainability: What does digitization have to do with archival processing??



Rethink Existing Workflows

Challenges

- Greater expectations from users and demand for access to entire collections.
- Shrinking resources.
- How to integrate large scale digitization and still maintain existing services?

Solutions

- Analyze existing workflows.
- Similarities to new workflows? Any overlap? Any redundancies?
- Re-tool and re-purpose existing resources and workflows to fit new program area.

Re-purpose Existing Archival Methodologies

- Much easier to re-purpose and enhance existing workflows, rather than invent new ones !
- Integrate digitization workflows into archival workflows.

Processing Then



Processing Now



DIGITIZATION AS PROCESSING ?

- Standard archival processing workflows of arrangement, description, and EAD encoding can become part of the digitization workflow.
- Rich, descriptive, and contextual metadata can be derived from the structured and tagged data found in EAD finding aids.
- Additional processing activities can also support digitization.

Sample XML Encoding for Collection to be Scanned

```
<c01 level="series">
<did><unitid>Series 1: </unitid><unittitle>Biographical Material, <unitdate>1928-1954, undated
    </unitdate></unittitle>
<physdesc>(Box 1; 8 folders)</physdesc></did>
<scopecontent>
<p>Biographical Material includes various address lists and business cards kept by Calder, his
    passport, notes, a catalog with handwritten prices, and other writings. Also found are a French
    tax document and other ephemera.</p>
</scopecontent>

<c02><did>
<container type="box">1</container>
<container type="folder">1</container>
<unittitle>Address Lists, <unitdate>undated</unitdate></unittitle>
<physdesc></physdesc>
</did></c02>

<c02><did>
<container type="box">1</container>
<container type="folder">2</container>
<unittitle>Annotated Catalog with Prices, <unitdate>1929</unitdate></unittitle>
<physdesc></physdesc>
</did></c02>
```

AAA Collections Online Workflow - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/

Getting Started Latest Headlines

[Finding Aid / Collections Online Workflow](#)

No user logged in ([Login](#))

Choose an Activity:

- [Upload new XML Finding Aid](#)
- [Continue working on a previous uploaded XML Finding Aid or Collection Online](#)
- [Process Images for Collections Online](#)

View Progress for a Collection:

(Type at least 3 letters of the Collection Creator's name)

Show Status

([SHOW DEBUGGING](#) | [HIDE DEBUGGING](#))

http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/index.cfm?fuseaction=collection.ChooseCollection&mode=existing

start

Internet Explorer Mozilla Firefox

10:53 AM

AAA Collections Online Workflow - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/index.cfm?fuseaction=collection.Choos

Getting Started Latest Headlines

[Finding Aid / Collections Online Workflow](#)

Logged in as **Barbara Aikens** ([Logout](#))

Choose Collection for Uploading a New XML Finding Aid

Choose Collection:

(Type at least 3 letters of the Collection Creator's name)

Go to Upload

([SHOW DEBUGGING](#) | [HIDE DEBUGGING](#))

Done

start

9:58 AM

Elizabeth McCausland papers

([Choose different collection](#))

Collection Progress Checklist

Check-In (Upload)

Check-Out (Download)

Preview

Image Processing

Collections Online Workflow Progress

Any tasks that have been ~~crossed-out~~ have been completed. The resource is available to the public once all tasks are completed.

- ~~1. Archivist uploads new XML File to Finding Aid Repository~~ (Completed by Erin Corley on 3/4/09 02:52 PM [Redo](#))
- ~~2. Supervisor approves XML Finding Aid~~ (Completed by Barbara Aikens on 12/18/08 09:03 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~3. Cataloger provides index terms; archivist adds to XML File~~ (Completed by Barbara Aikens on 12/18/08 09:03 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~4. Second supervisor approves XML Finding Aid~~ (Completed by Barbara Aikens on 12/18/08 09:03 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~5. Create Image Directory / Begin Scanning~~ (Completed by Karen Zorn on 12/18/08 10:41 AM [Redo](#) | [Undo](#))
- ~~6. Finished Scanning~~ (Completed by Robin Holladay on 1/30/09 09:38 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~7. Process Images~~ (Completed by Robin Holladay on 1/30/09 09:38 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~8. Deploy Images to Staging server~~ (Completed by Robin Holladay on 2/2/09 08:07 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~9. Archivist Reviews Collection Online on aaasite.si.edu~~ (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/6/09 03:23 PM [Undo](#))
- ~~10. Archivist reports errors to be corrected~~ (Completed by Erin Corley on 2/17/09 08:16 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~11. Archivist confirms errors have been corrected and approves Collection Online~~ (Completed by Erin Corley on 3/10/09 11:41 AM [Undo](#))
- ~~12. Supervisor deploys XML file, HTML file, and Collection Online to Web~~ (Completed by Barbara Aikens on 3/10/09 11:55 AM [Redo](#) | [Undo](#))
- ~~13. Supervisor verifies pages on Web site (Collections Online, Col. A-Z, & Finding Aids), notifies staff~~ (Completed by Barbara Aikens on 3/10/09 11:55 AM [Undo](#))

AAA Collections Online Workflow - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/index.cfm?SearchField=Elizabeth+McC...

Go

Getting Started Latest Headlines

[Finding Aid / Collections Online Workflow](#)

Logged in as **Barbara Aikens** ([Logout](#))

Elizabeth McCausland papers

([Choose different collection](#))

Collection Progress Checklist

Check-In (Upload)

Check-Out (Download)

Preview

Image Processing

Collections Online Workflow Progress

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- [11. Archivist confirms errors have been corrected and approves Collection Online](#)
- [12. Supervisor deploys XML file, HTML file, and Collection Online to Web](#)
- ~~13. Supervisor verifies pages on Web site (Collections Online - Col. A 7.9 Finding Aids) notifies staff~~

Done

start

I.

M

A

D

10:55 AM

AAA Collections Online Workflow - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/index.cfm?SearchField=Elizabeth+McCa

Go

Getting Started Latest Headlines

[Finding Aid / Collections Online Workflow](#)

Logged in as **Barbara Aikens** ([Logout](#))

Elizabeth McCausland papers

([Choose different collection](#))

Collection Progress Checklist

Check-In (Upload)

Check-Out (Download)

Preview

Image Processing

Pre-Processing

- [Generate Collection Directories](#)

Processing Images

- [Process Collection](#)

Post Processing

- [Refresh Collection Containers](#)
- [Refresh Collection Series Representative Images](#)
- [Manually Set Series Representative Images](#)
- [Add summaries to images](#)

Done

start

I.

M

A

D

11:08 AM

AAA Collections Online Workflow - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://aaastaff.si.edu/Workflow/ead/controller/index.cfm?SearchField=Elizabeth+McC... Go

Getting Started Latest Headlines

[Finding Aid / Collections Online Workflow](#)

Logged in as **Barbara Aikens** ([Logout](#))

Elizabeth McCausland papers

([Choose different collection](#))

Collection Progress Checklist	Check-In (Upload)	Check-Out (Download)	Preview	Image Processing
-------------------------------	-------------------	----------------------	----------------	------------------

Finding Aid

- Internal: [HTML](#) | Public: [HTML](#)
- Internal: [PDF](#) | Public: [PDF](#)

Collection Online

- [Collection Online on Internal Site](#)

XML

- [Preview EAD XML File](#)
(Note: previewing the file puts the file on your computer but does NOT check out the file)

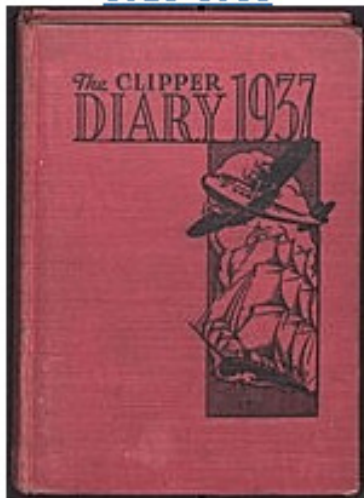
([SHOW DEBUGGING](#) | [HIDE DEBUGGING](#))

Done

start

11:10 AM

Series 1: Personal Papers, 1838, 1920-1951



Series 2: Correspondence, 1923-1960



Series 3: General Writings, early 1930s-1954



Series 4: Alfred H. Maurer, 1851-1951, bulk 1948-1950



Series 5: American Processional, 1949-1951



Series 6: Marsden Hartley, 1900-1964, bulk 1944-1964



Series 7: Other Research and Writing Files, 1896, 1926-1958



Series 8: Subject Files, 1927-1954



Elizabeth McCausland - Collections Online - Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

<http://aaasite.si.edu/collectionsonline/mccaeliz/>

Getting Started
 Latest Headlines

Series 9: Other Exhibition Files, 1939-1941, 1944

Series 10: Teaching Files, 1939-1965

Series 11: Committee Files, 1936-1960

Series 12: Printed Material, 1923-1953

Series 13: Photographs, circa 1905-1950

Series 14: Art Work, 1887-1942, undated

start

P. E. E.

11:19 AM

Series 9: Other Exhibition Files, 1939-1941, 1944

Series 10: Teaching Files, 1939-1965

Series 11: Committee Files, 1936-1960

Series 12: Printed Material, 1923-1953

Series 13: Photographs, circa 1905-1950

Series 14: Art Work, 1887-1942, undated


Betty Parsons - Collections Online - Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://aaasite.si.edu/collectionsonline/parsbett/

Getting Started Latest Headlines

View Collection About this Collection About Collections Online




Betty Parsons standing in the doorway of her gallery, 196-?

This site provides access to the papers of **Betty Parsons** in the Archives of American Art that were digitized . The papers have been scanned in their entirety.

The Betty Parsons Gallery records and personal papers measure 49.6 linear feet and date from 1928 to 1991, with the bulk of the material dating from 1946-1983. Records provide extensive documentation of the gallery's operations from its inception in 1946 to its closing in 1983 and provide a comprehensive overview of the activities of an art dealer at the forefront of promoting contemporary American Art in the latter half of the twentieth century. Included is extensive correspondence with artists, galleries, dealers, art institutions, private collectors, and the media. Also found are exhibition files, exhibition catalogs and announcements, sales records, stock inventories, personal financial records, and photographs. Additionally, Betty Parsons' personal papers consist of early curatorial files, pocket diaries, personal correspondence, and evidence of her own artwork, including sketchbooks, and files documenting her personal art collection. Read more [About this Collection](#).


Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection was provided by Terra Foundation for American Art

Series 1: Artists Files, 1935-1983



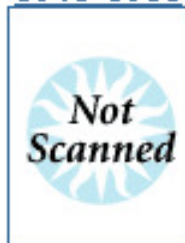
(not scanned)

Series 2: Exhibition Files, 1941-1983




(not scanned)

Series 3: Correspondence Files, 1941-1983




Series 4: Appraisal Files, 1954-1983



(not scanned)

Done

start



11:23 AM

Betty Parsons, Series 1: Artists Files - Collections Online - Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution - M...

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http://aaasite.si.edu/collectionsonline/parsbett/series1.htm

Getting Started Latest Headlines

Series 1: Artists Files, 1935-1983 (Boxes 1-18, 51, and OV 53; 17.8 linear feet)

At least one-third of the collection consists of Artists Files stemming from the the gallery's business relationships (and Betty Parsons' personal relationships) with numerous artists. The correspondence focuses primarily on representation, promotion, exhibitions, and sales. Files contain correspondence with artists, museums, curators, collectors, and dealers, as well as with insurance agencies, and shipping and storage companies. Also found in the files are price lists, sales and expense records, shipping records, exhibition announcements and catalogs, biographical material, clippings, photographs of artwork and artists, writings by and about artists, and related material. [READ MORE](#)

Correspondence with artists can also be found amongst the gallery correspondence files, as well as in Betty Parsons' personal correspondence. Artists Files are arranged alphabetically by artist and further subdivided if needed by format. Files described as "General" typically include records in a wide variety of formats, such as correspondence, sales and expenses records, and shipping records.

This series has been scanned in its entirety, except for duplicates, and slides and photographs of artwork.

Box	Folder	
1	1	Adams, Robert, 1949-1957
1	2	Adams, Robert - Photographs, Works of Art, circa 1948-1950 (<i>Not scanned</i>)
1	3	Baker, Adge, 1974-1983
1	4	Banerjee, 1980-1982
1	5	Barker, Walter - Correspondence, 1954-1976
1	6	Barker, Walter - Price Lists, Sales, and Accounts, 1966-1969
1	7	Barker, Walter - Clippings, 1966-1975
1	8	Barker, Walter - Biographical Material, circa 1954-1976
1	9	Barker, Walter - Announcements and Catalogs, 1966-1977

Done

start

11:24 AM

SCANNING INFORMATION WORKSHEET

(To be completed by Processing Archivist; after scanning, worksheet to be returned to archivist)

- Date: _____
- NAME OF COLLECTION: _____
- NAME OF PROCESSING ARCHIVIST: _____
- Total # of containers _____ : Boxes ____ Hols ____ Pams ____ Sols ____ OVs ____
Other _____

•Location of containers: _____

•Copy of Finding Aid attached?: Yes ____

•Are there oversized materials that can only be scanned by Marv or Amy (circa 2 x 3 feet) No ____ Yes ____ I

•f yes, approximate # of items OR # of OV containers ____

If yes, please list the Containter#/s and folder #/s _____

•Are there negatives, glass plate negatives, transparencies, slides, etc. that can only be scanned by Marv? No ____

•Yes ____ Have you clearly flagged those items ? ____

Container #/s and folder #/s _____ - _____

•Are there Removal Notices within the collection? Yes ____ No ____

If Yes, do you want tech to scan the photocopy attached to the notice and rescan original at a later date Yes ____ **OR**

Do you want a "Marv scan" (high res) inserted at a later date? Yes ____

Container #s/ and folder #/s of Removal Notices _____

(continue on reverse if needed)

•Are there materials that you have clearly identified to be scanned in color that fall outside of our normal color scanning guidelines?

•Yes ____ No ____

•Is there interleaving material in the collection that must be maintained? Yes _ No _

Special Instructions: _____

•Date of meeting between Processing Archivist and Scanning Technician: _____

•Initials _____

Collections Online Final Review Checklist

Name of Collection: _____

Name of Reviewer: _____

Date: _____

____ Confirm/Select representative image in the DCD

____ Edit collection Digitization Note in collection record in DCD

____ Confirm collection Abstract Note added to collection record in DCD

____ Check for errors on the following pages:

____ Collection Homepage

____ View Collection page

____ About the Collection page

____ Series pages

____ Verify Folder Heading Links/Image Display for each series, and list all errors found in Review Table.

____ Route a photocopy of Review Table to necessary staff

Date: _____

•Processing Archivist for errors in XML file

•Toby for programming issues (Also use Devnotes to report programming errors online)

•Erin for images needing re-scanning

____ Upload New Finding Aid

____ Final approval of reviewer Date: _____

____ Notify Karen and Barb that review is complete.

Archival Appraisal and Approach

- Use your processing archivists!
- Take advantage of their appraisal skills and archival expertise.
- Allow them to identify privacy and ethical issues, and non-archival materials while processing.

What About MLP?

- Does processing for large scale digitization of entire collections support Minimal Level Processing? No.
- Does integrating processing workflows and archival approaches into the digitization workflow support Minimal Level Digitization or MLD? Yes.