Turning Curators into Web Publishers

Expanding the Digital Library Program Within the Institution
Turning Curators into Web Publishers at Columbia

- **OVERVIEW:** Stephen Davis, Director, Libraries Digital Program
- **PROCESS:** Janet Gertz, Director, Preservation and Digital Conversion Division
- **TECHNOLOGY:** Joanna DiPasquale, Web and New Technologies Developer
Presentation Goals

1. To describe a new, innovative exhibitions / gallery service created within our Digital Program that enables curators to publish digital collections directly to the Web

2. To convey how content created for exhibitions and galleries can be captured & integrated into our core digital library collection
Goals, continued

3. To describe the mixture of organizational buy-in, procedural changes, and new technology tools needed to accomplish this

4. To highlight the specific new Omeka software plug-ins developed by Columbia – and soon available to others -- to support this service
But first some context ...
Columbia Libraries / Information Services

Digital Programs and Technology Services (DPTS)

1. Libraries Digital Program Division
2. Preservation and Digital Conversion Division
3. Library Information Technology Office
4. Center for New Media Teaching and Learning
5. Center for Digital Research & Scholarship
6. Copyright Advisory Office
Columbia Libraries / Information Services

Digital Programs and Technology Services

1. Libraries Digital Program Division
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Columbia’s Collection Digitization

• To serve Columbia faculty and students
• To serve scholars and researchers
• To reduce direct use of fragile originals
• To preserve content on analog media
‘Traditional’ Digital Projects

APIS
Bunraku
Paper Gods
Digital Scriptorium
Corporate Reports
Greene & Greene
John Jay
Herbert Lehman
Joseph Urban
Ling Long
Real Estate
Notable New Yorkers

Et cetera …
Columbia’s Collection Digitization

- To serve Columbia faculty and students
- To serve scholars and researchers
- To reduce direct use of fragile originals
- To preserve content on analog media
- *To support the programmatic goals of Special Collections*
Rising Demand from Curators

• For online versions of physical exhibitions
• For online-only thematic galleries
• For faster implementation cycles
• For less mediation by technology staff
Strategic Solution

- Empower curators to become Web publishers
- Make it as easy for them as possible
- Give them support in following best practices
- Illustrate for them the benefits of contributing to the digital library
DL Content Standards

• Adequate DL metadata (e.g., descriptive, rights, administrative)
• Aquifer MODS format when applicable
• Archival quality scans

This will allow:

• Integration into digital content repository
• Reusable, ‘repurposable’ content
Columbia’s Fedora Environment

• Centralized digital asset management
• Metadata management
• Digital content publishing
• Long-term digital archiving
Interdivisional Coordination

- Special Collections Curators
- Special Collections Directors
- Libraries Digital Program Staff
- Conservation Lab (Preservation)
- Scanning Lab (Preservation)
Over to Janet Gertz ...
New Processes & Procedures
New Track System

1. Digital Project Track
2. Brick & Mortar Exhibition PLUS Online Exhibition Track
3. Brick & Mortar Exhibition Only Track
4. Online Gallery Track
Why multiple tracks

- Large projects consume available staff time
- Pent-up demand for online exhibitions from many curators
- One size of digital project does not fit all needs
• Continuum from complex to simple
• Gives curators the opportunity to choose how sophisticated they want their online presence to be
  – Trade off between highly customized product vs. ease and speed
  – Direct impact on the amount of work they will have to do
Advance Planning

• Curators
  – Often prepare at the last minute

• Central conservation, digitization, and web design units
  – Limited staff size, need predictable workflows

• Tracks
  – Help coordinate everyone’s work
  – Provide scheduling milestones
Track System

1. Digital Project Track
2. Brick & Mortar Exhibition PLUS Online Exhibition Track
3. Brick & Mortar Exhibition Only Track
4. Online Gallery Track
1. Digital Project Track

• Goal: To publish large, multifaceted collections
• Content with complex relationships
• Custom-built interface with many types of functionality designed specifically for that content
1. Digital Project Track

- Significant resources required
- Justified by significant research or curricular value
- Approved at the Associate University Librarian level
- Process starts with an internal proposal
Digital Project Proposal

- Description of content & desired outcome
- Value to Columbia Research & Teaching
- Value to Columbia Libraries Collections
- Conservation Requirements
- Rights and permissions
- Cataloging / Metadata Requirements
- Special Functionality
- Online Presentation Requirements
- Possible Funding Sources
The Bunraku Collection

Bunraku, Japanese puppet theater, is an unusually complex dramatic form, a collaborative effort among puppeteers, narrators, and musicians. Columbia University Libraries' Bunraku collection is one of the most extensive in the world, documenting its rich performance tradition, which has been recognized by UNESCO as a "masterpiece" of humanity. >>

Exploring the Collection

The Bunraku gallery is divided into plays, productions, authors, backstage subjects, kashira, and characters. It documents the form's revival in the second half of the 20th century, through more than 12,500 slides and nearly 7,000 black-and-white photographs of rehearsals and performances.

Search Bunraku

Search:  

Advanced search »

Special Feature

Yukahon and translation of Act 8 from The League of the 47 Ronin / Kanadehon Chûshingura / 仮名手本忠臣蔵

Browse the Collection

Play Titles
Productions
Authors
Performers
Characters
Kashira
Backstage Subjects

Browse the Images

Play Titles
Performers
Characters
Kashira
Photo Albums
Slides

Within each play and production, you will find individual scene, image, and puppeteer information.
New Tracks

1. Digital Project Track
2. Brick & Mortar Exhibition PLUS Online Exhibition Track
3. Brick & Mortar Exhibition Only Track
4. Online Gallery Track
New Tracks

• Quicker planning and implementation
• Little custom design work
• Curators choose from a limited range of pre-established options for display, functionalities, look-and-feel
• No need for AUL approval
New Tracks

1. Digital Project Track
2. Brick & Mortar Exhibition PLUS Online Exhibition Track
3. Brick & Mortar Exhibition Only Track
4. Online Gallery Track
2. Brick and Mortar exhibition plus online exhibition

Goals:

• Support curation of a physical exhibition and a simultaneous online version

• Or, publish an online version of a previous physical exhibition

• Coordinate work of curators, conservators, imaging and web-design staff
2. Brick and Mortar exhibition plus online exhibition

Assist curation of physical exhibition

– Organizing & planning an exhibition
– Generating pick lists, labels, etc.
– Exhibition layout and description
– Enabling curators, conservators, others to share information about items
2. Brick and Mortar exhibition plus online exhibition

• Uses the Exhibition Support Tool (ESTO) for creating both physical and online exhibitions

• Uses Omeka for web presentation
Online Exhibition Planning Form

- Timing / schedule
- Number & type of objects
- Conservation requirements
- Metadata requirements
- Rights & permissions issues
- Need for zoomable images
- Inclusion of document-like objects
- Director approval, not AUL
2. Brick and Mortar Exhibition
Plus Online Exhibition

- Implementation uses *Exhibition Planning & Implementation Checklist*
- Sets timeline for staging the work, from initial selection of objects through installation
# Exhibition Planning & Implementation Checklist

*(Includes procedures for creating online exhibitions using the "Online Exhibition Support System")*

**rev. 3/31/2010**

## A. At least 6 months before opening:

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1. Check with Copyright Advisory Office to determine rights status of all items, clear rights if necessary, and determine appropriate rights labeling at the gallery or item level.

2. Submit copy of completed **Exhibition Planning Form** *(doc / pdf)* to [newproject@libraries.cul.columbia.edu](mailto:newproject@libraries.cul.columbia.edu) (Gertz, Davis, Blitz).

## B. At least 5 months before opening:

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1. Meet with Director, Preservation and Digital Conversion Division:
   - Establish item numbering / file naming scheme
   - Discuss any conservation requirements for any extremely fragile material; schedule work with conservator
   - Discuss any special digital scanning / photography requirements *(e.g., multimedia objects, which may require longer lead time.)*

2. Meet with Digital Projects Coordinator, LDPD, to
   - review metadata options *(Sample metadata from previous projects will be posted for informational purposes.)*
   - choose appropriate Omeka layout template
   - set up new collection in LDPD’s Exhibition Support Software tool, so input can begin
### C. At least 3 months before opening:
1. Curator distributes final list of all items in exhibition to Pres
2. Curator distributes draft case layout and list of labels Pres
3. Curator identifies for early scanning and images needed for PR purposes
4. Curator provides objects to Pres; digitization begins

### D. At least 2 months before opening:
1. Curator finalizes & proofs labels and submits to PRD

### E. At least 1 months before opening:
1. PRD completes digitization, if applicable]
2. PRD completes constructing mounts
3. LDPD pushes final content to Omeka

### F. One to two weeks before opening:
1. Curator installs exhibition
2. Curator reviews and double-checks all digital images and metadata in Omeka

### G. Opening Day:
1. Exhibition opens to public
2. LDPD releases online digital exhibition
Frances Perkins : The Woman Behind the New Deal

Frances Perkins (1880-1965) is no longer a household name, yet she was one of the most influential women of the twentieth century. Government official for New York State and the federal government, including Industrial Commissioner of the State of New York from 1929-1932, Perkins was named Secretary of Labor by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933. As FDR’s friend and ally, Perkins would help the president fight the economic ravages caused by the Great Depression and make great strides toward improving workplace conditions.

Exhibit Curator
Jennifer B. Lee

About the Exhibit »
This exhibit features correspondence, manuscripts, notes, drafts of speeches, photographs, and memorabilia from RBML's extensive collection of Frances Perkins' papers. The physical exhibit opened on November 5, 2009 and runs through March 26, 2010. More material will be added to this web site as images of items in the physical exhibit become available.

Early Years & Family »
Fannie Coralie Perkins, called Fanny by her family, was born in Boston on April 10, 1880. Her parents soon moved to Worcester, but both were from Maine. The Perkins farm, the Brick House in Newcastle, Maine, where they returned every summer, is still in family hands. Today, it is the site of the Frances Perkins Center, created by her grandson, Tomlin Perkins Coggeshall.
The Triangle Fire

The Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire on Saturday, March 25, 1911, was the worst factory fire ever in New York City. Within 15 minutes, 146 workers, most of them young women, perished, almost 50 jumping to their deaths from the eighth and ninth floors of the building at the northwest corner of Washington Place and Greene Street. Perkins was across Washington Square Park at the time and ran over when she heard the alarms. She later remembered, “People who had their clothes afire would jump. It was a most horrid spectacle...There was no place to go.”

A week later at a rally sponsored by the Consumers’ League at the...
Triangle Fire > New York's Worst Fire

Harper's Weekly Magazine

*New York’s Worst Fire*

Leaf from *Harper’s Weekly*, New York, 1 April 1911

Frances Perkins Papers, Box 137

*Harper’s Weekly* printed many of the horrific photographs from “New York’s Worst Fire” on this sheet, kept and never forgotten by Frances Perkins.

Gift of Susanna Perkins Coggeshall, 1970

Frances Perkins

*Draft for addresses at Cornell on the anniversary of the Triangle Fire*

Ithaca, New York, March 24, 1961

Frances Perkins Papers, Box 132

Perkins’s speech begins: “It was exactly 50 years ago tomorrow on a fine late Saturday afternoon...that 147 young working people forced to do overtime on blouses for Easter were trapped and killed in the catastrophe of the Triangle Fire.” She records what she herself witnessed: “I got there as they began to jump 12 stories – girls hanging by their hands to escape...”
Title
Frances Perkins notebook on Triangle Fire

Description
Frances Perkins notebook on Triangle Fire

Creator
Perkins, Frances

Source
Frances Perkins Collection

Date
March 24, 1961

Identifier
Box 132

Spatial Coverage
Ithaca
It was exactly
50 years ago tomorrow
in a first-rate Saturday
afternoon that many
people were enjoying
the spring, including
Jean, a young
person.
New Tracks

1. Digital Project Track
2. Brick & Mortar PLUS Online Exhibition Track
3. Brick & Mortar Exhibition Only Track
4. Online Gallery Track
3. Brick & Mortar Only Track

• Same as Brick & Mortar with Online Exhibition but...

• No digital component

• Assist curation of physical exhibition with Exhibition Support Tool

• Coordinate work across units

• Still little-used by curators
New Tracks

1. Digital Project Track
2. Brick & Mortar PLUS Online Exhibition Track
3. Brick & Mortar Exhibition Only Track
4. Online Gallery Track
4. Online Gallery Track

• Goals:
  – Empower curators to publish small sets of digital content
  – Enable curators to respond to unexpected, near-term deadlines for presenting content

• Presentations usually simpler than Online Exhibitions, with less narrative
Online Exhibition Planning Form
(same as for exhibitions)

- Timing / schedule
- Number & type of objects
- Conservation requirements
- Metadata requirements
- Rights & permissions issues
- Need for zoomable images
- Inclusion of document-like objects
- Director approval, not AUL
4. Online Gallery Track

• Stream-lined planning and implementation
• Ideally work begins 3 months before launch date (with exceptions)
• Simplified checklist is used
# Gallery Planning Checklist
For new galleries being created using the Omeka software tool

**rev. 3/31/2010**

## A. At least 3 months before launch:

1. Check with Copyright Advisory Office to determine rights status of all items, clear rights if necessary, and determine appropriate rights labeling at the gallery or item level.

2. Submit completed Gallery Planning Form ([doc](#) / [pdf](#)) to [newproject@libraries.cul.columbia.edu](mailto:newproject@libraries.cul.columbia.edu) (Gertz, Davis, Blitz).

3. Meet with Director, Preservation and Digital Conversion Division:
   1. Establish item identification / file naming scheme
   2. Discuss any conservation requirements for any extremely fragile material; schedule work with conservator
   3. Discuss any special digital scanning / photography requirements (e.g., multimedia objects, which may require longer lead time.)

4. Meet with Digital Projects Coordinator, LDPD, to review metadata options. [Sample metadata from previous projects will be posted for informational purposes.]

## B. At least 2 months before launch:

1. LDPD sets up new gallery in Omeka, so metadata input into Omeka can begin.

2. Curator provides all objects to be digitized to Assistant Director, Preservation Reformatting Department (PRD), and digitization begins.

## C. At least 1 month before launch:

1. Digitization complete; LDPD loads digitized images into Omeka

2. Curator selects Omeka template, organizes & lays out gallery

3. If problems arise, curator consults with Digital Projects Coordinator or Ass’t Dir., PRD.

## D. Launch:

1. Curator reviews and double checks all images and metadata

2. Curator contacts Digital Projects Coordinator to move online gallery into production.
4. Online Gallery Track

- Limited metadata
- No complex searching or browsing
- Adequately-served by Omeka software features and functionality
- Look is similar to Brick and Mortar/Online Exhibition
In celebration of the 75th anniversary of the building of Butler Library, an exhibit of more than 100 photographs decorate the bulletin board display on the third floor of Butler Library. The photographs span the decades and showcase the excavation and rise of South Hall (as it was originally named), design details throughout the building, reading rooms, services such as research assistance and student activities -- which include sleeping as well as studying.

Special Feature: Your Stories

As part of our 75th anniversary celebration, we are gathering and sharing stories from alumni and students like you about discovery, personal reward, and fun. If you have a story or just a thought to share, we would love to read it.

Credits
Butler 75th Planning Committee
Art

Architecture

Architecture, page 2

HOME

ART & ARCHITECTURE

CONSTRUCTION

PEOPLE

YOUR STORIES
Item Information

Title
Peter Stuyvesant Stained Glass Window

Description
Dr. Wybo J. Goslinga, acting president of Netherlands Antilles Legislative Council, presents 12-foot stained glass window of Peter Stuyvesant to New York City at December 30, 1954 ceremony in Butler Library's College Study, the window's permanent location.

Creator
Manny Warman, Columbia University

Source
Historical Photograph Collection; Box 162; Folder 14 (Buildings & Grounds - Morningside - Butler Library, Interior)
New Exhibition & Gallery Tracks

- Same core set of metadata
- Same high level of image quality
- Allows preservation and content reuse
- Requires more advance planning
- Requires greater internal efficiencies
- Expect increased demand from curators
Over to Joanna DiPasquale …
Turning Curators into Web Publishers

Technology
Specifications / System Requirements

• Flexible
• Use existing tools
• Bridge physical and digital
• Empower curators
• Focus on the library’s needs
Simplified digitization process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digitize</td>
<td>Preservation, LDPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Curators, LDPD, Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>LDPD, Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimize</td>
<td>LDPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Curators, LDPD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can we better merge the paths of the curatorial and the technical?
Environmental Scan: Omeka

- Open source
- Used supported languages / frameworks
- RIA well-developed
- Dublin Core

- Not MODS compliant
- Storage feature assumed standalone system
- No workflow or physical exhibit support
In-house solution: ESTO

MySQL

Item

Item-presentation

Exhibit

PHP internal application

PERL crosswalk / conversion tool

Omeka – exhibit creation

Single sign on

Curation

Web

+ 31 more tables
ESTO + Omeka

For the curators
• Information architecture
• Templates and layouts
• Drag-and-drop features

For “us”
• Reuse of objects in multiple exhibits
• Variety of MIME types supported
• Workflow supported
• Physical exhibit supported
• MODS
Benefits and Drawbacks

• RIA flexible for curators
• Supports many formats
• Allows on-the-fly editing

• Complex object display
• Image display
• Metadata interface
• Dublin Core
• Design constraints*
• Design adequacy*

* “Too much of anything is bad, but too much of good whiskey is barely enough.” – Mark Twain
Lessons learned

• Workflow issues
  – Spreadsheets
  – Timing

• ESTO 2.0 (ESTO beta?)
  – Syncing systems vs plugins
  – Some new directions
Input and Output Methods

Publisher
(no text)

Date
July 12, 1894

Contributor
(no text)

Rights
(no text)

Relation
(no text)

Format
(no text)

MODS

Key Date
1894-07-12

Publication Place
(no text)

Publication Date
(no text)

Place of Origin

View File Metadata

- RBML_NYCCC_100131062.jpg

Output Formats

- dcmes-xml
- json
- mods
- omeka-json
- omeka-xml
**Input and Output Methods**

```xml
<mods>
  <relatedItem type="host">
    <titleInfo type="uniform" authority="difaqcoll">
      <title>
        Columbia University Libraries Digital Program Division: DEV - CUL Exhibitions
      </title>
      <titleInfo>
      </titleInfo>
    </relatedItem>
  <relatedItem type="original">
    <titleInfo>
      <!-- relation -->
      <title>
      </title>
      <titleInfo>
    </relatedItem>
    <identifier type="local">Exhibitions system, Omeka ID #322</identifier>
    <identifier type="local">Box: 262 Folder: 8</identifier>
    <identifier type="local">RBML_NYCCC_100131062</identifier>
  <language>
    <languageTerm type="code" authority="iso639-2b">eng</languageTerm>
  </language>
  <name>
    <!-- creator -->
    <namePart>Hilkenbrand, Wilhelm</namePart>
  <role>
    <roleTerm type="text">creator</roleTerm>
  </role>
  </name>
  <titleInfo>
    <title>North River Bridge Sketch</title>
  </titleInfo>
  <originInfo>
    <dateCreated encoding="w3cdtf" keyDate="yes">1894-07-12</dateCreated>
  </originInfo>
</mods>
```
Achievements

• Twelve Thirteen exhibitions produced (2009-present)
• Template flexibility
• Plugins created
• > 28,000 visits (Nov. 09 – Mar. 10)
Overall

• Combination of LDPD, Preservation, and curators
• Improved metadata, stored with item
• Interfaces becoming more standard
• Decreased turnaround time
• Broad range of communities reached
Turning Curators into Web Publishers

Final Thoughts
Status of New Service

- The exhibition and gallery support tools have been available since 2009
- MODS plugins for Omeka are now complete and will be released into production at CUL in April
- The new procedures are now being followed in our Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- They will be rolled out to other Columbia special collections in April / May
Looking forward, we will need to:

- Support curators in using ESTO / Omeka, and give them guidance in following the new procedures and systems
- Refine our procedures over time as we gain more experience
- Make digitization processes and operations more efficient and transparent
- Continue to refine our software tools and work with the Omeka community on improvements
Success factors

- Ongoing buy-in from curators and special collections directors
- Continued community support for Omeka
- Ability to scale up use of the service without overwhelming internal digitization resources
- Continued progress in building out Fedora
Questions?

More information available at:


or:

- [http://tinyurl.com/ylp36n8](http://tinyurl.com/ylp36n8)