

The AHDS delivers...

From a database of detailed information on the slave trade to a rich archive of Live and Performance Art, the AHDS continues to add to its diverse range of collections

Live art

AHDS Performing Arts has acquired four new collections of live and performance art material, including the world-class Live Art Archive and Digital Performance Archive.

The Live Art Archive holds information on almost 16,000 events from 1960 to 2003 while the Digital Performance Archive charts developments in the creative use of computer technologies in performance.

These seminal research resources provide access to a wealth of information on live art, performance art, installations, physical and dance-based theatre, multi-media work, and bio-art events that have taken place in the United Kingdom and sometimes beyond.

The collections, freely available and searchable online, give details of artistic events that have included figures such as Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, Damien Hirst and Gilbert and George.

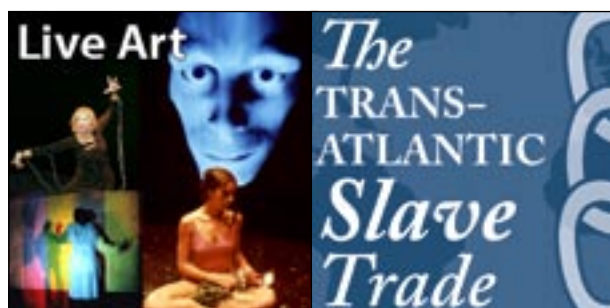
These resources have been developed by Professor Barry Smith (University of Bristol) and Professor Steve Dixon (Brunel University) as well as world-famous performance artist STELARC.

Live art and other AHDS Performing Arts resources freely available online from
<http://performingarts.ahds.ac.uk/collections/>

Slave trade

The trans-Atlantic slave trade remains a major field of academic enquiry and public interest. Coinciding with the bicentenary of the abolition of the trade in Britain, this new database of over 34,000 slaving voyages is the largest single resource of information available for the study of pre-colonial African history.

The resource provides details of the itineraries and characteristics of ships involved in the trade



as well as covering the human dimension, including information such as the numbers of slaves embarked in Africa and disembarked in the Americas and the owners and crews of the ships involved in the traffic.

It provides details of the geography of the trade, notably ports of provenance and return of ships, trading destinations in Africa, and ports of slave embarkation in the Americas, together with the time schedules involved in completing the various phases of voyages.

Professor Philip Richardson of the Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation, University of Hull, built the database from new research and previously published information resulting from three decades of work from numerous scholars.

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A revised and enlarged database 1500-1867 is freely available via AHDS History.

Inside

- 2 | LEAP: new ways to unlock potential of research
- 3 | Stormont's long tail: How do users search a resource?
- 6 | Ban all digital cameras? Two AHDS colleagues debate the value of digital images
- 9 | Windows on the world — new collection gives free access to 18,000 images of stained glass
- 11 | Depositing with the AHDS: a case study

New ways to unlock potential of research

AHDS Archaeology and the e-journal *Internet Archaeology* are working together on the LEAP project: **Linking Electronic Archives and Publications** <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/leap/>.

Judith Winters (editor of *Internet Archaeology* <http://intarch.ac.uk>) provides a short summary of the main aims and objectives of the project

What is LEAP?

LEAP is a project to investigate novel ways to combine the interpretive analysis of publications with the underlying data of archives. To do this, the project will use four exemplars of multi-layered e-publications and e-archives. LEAP will also examine how new ways of combining publications and data can be applied beyond archaeology across the arts and humanities.

Aims of LEAP

- To explore questions of linking between distributed archives and e-publications and to investigate the ways in which e-publications can be interactive, multi-layered and underpinned by supporting data.
- To look at how multiple forms of dissemination can be used for different audiences.
- To implement dynamic interfaces between and within resources that can accommodate different types of user.
- To assess how far tailored interfaces are capable of long-term preservation.
- To examine other questions which arise from this means of dissemination: quality control, peer review, IPR, citation ...

How?

Traditional publication of research projects can often comprise of a series of journal papers, popular summary, academic monograph and sometimes an offline research archive, which is rarely accessible. Integrating these usually separate resources into one has the potential to create a richer experience for the user, allowing them to drill right the way through all the available data and information, test the authors' interpretations, develop their own conclusions and evaluate their understanding of the material.

The LEAP exemplars will enable users to



LEAP has the potential to create a richer experience for the user who can encounter the digital resource via either the publication or archive, and then navigate between the two. For example, users can query spatial data online and then view archived photographs related to their search result.

jump seamlessly to and from interpretation and supporting data as well as further query material via a GIS for example. The intention is that elements of one can be 'drawn in' to the other so that borders between the traditionally separate component parts become blurred.

Exemplars

- An analysis of the urban landscape of Merv, Turkmenistan, with a GIS interface
- The development of House 1, insula 9, Silchester, with searchable datasets and SVG site plans.
- Continuous survey, routine practice and the interpretation of a Cypriot landscape, with GIS interface and searchable datasets.
- Changing settlements and landscapes: medieval Whittlewood, its predecessors and successors, with GIS interface. Published. *Internet Archaeology* 19.

<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/leap/>

<http://intarch.ac.uk>

Stormont's long tail

User queries on a digital resource: The Stormont Papers — 50 years of Northern Ireland Parliamentary debates online <http://stormontpapers.ahds.ac.uk/>

The AHDS has been amassing a large collection of user statistics relating to the use of the Stormont Papers website.

Key findings suggest that the bulk of users may not be looking for the things we expect them to be looking for and pre-arranged hyperlinks on a home page can provide a user-friendly way of letting users get to know the content of a resource.

The 'long tail' of search terms

There are many interesting conclusions to be drawn from the data. One of these is the existence of the 'long tail' pattern within user searches. (See the graph below and the Wikipedia article on the 'long tail' for more about the concept.)

A small number of search terms are repeatedly used. Roughly ten weeks after the website went live in November 2006, there were 12 terms and phrases that had been searched for over 100 times. Searches on these 12 most common terms formed 21% of all searches made (1,911 searches out of the total of 9,136). However, there were a much larger 3,048 terms that had been searched for less than ten times. When combined, this came to 54% of searches.

Even allowing for spelling mistakes and typing errors, solitary or rarely-used search terms and phrases are more than twice as popular as very common search terms. The wide range of terms, phrases and words entered by users indicate a far

greater use of the resource than might originally have been expected.

The point is this — in creating a resource, it is difficult to anticipate how or why it might be of interest.

Limiting the data made available limits the amount of successful searches that can be made over the resource. Freeing up as much of the data as possible gives more users more opportunity to search and retrieve the data they want.

Using pre-arranged links

There's an added context to this. Of the top ten search terms made on the Stormont resource, all ten of them have been provided as ready-made links on the home page. Users click on the

Clicking on a link is easier to do than typing something on the keyboard

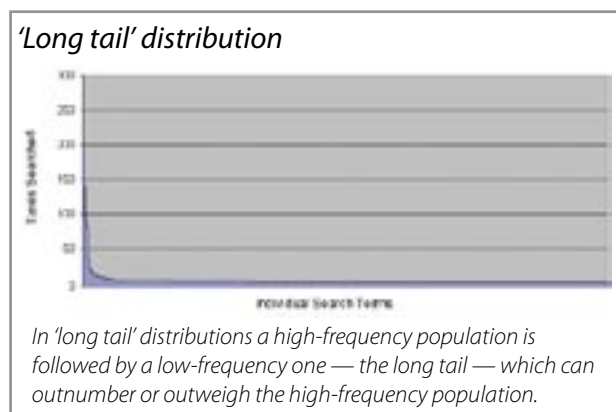
hyperlinks rather than type anything into the search box.

Why might the pre-arranged links be popular? The search terms were created by the scholars responsible for digitising and making available the resource and are derived from their knowledge of the resource. Users will see these search terms and follow them up; clicking on a link is easier to do than typing something on the keyboard.

But there's a further reason. For those users unsure about the precise function of the website, or exploring the website without any particular purpose, such links provide an easier way to investigate the site.

Users tend to expect a positive response from a mechanism with a pre-fixed link; if they type a search term into an empty box they are less sure of getting a response they understand.

Pre-arranged links also have the advantage of guiding users to records or pages that might otherwise be hard to access. In the printed and digitised index to the Stormont debates, the Irish Republican Army is cited as I.R.A.. However, many users search for 'IRA' (without full stops) and are surprised to get relatively few hits. A pre-arranged link (connecting IRA with I.R.A.) is a simple way for this to be circumvented.



Towards a consensus in 3d visualisation

Hugh Denard of King's College London reports on *The London Charter* and how it aims to define standards for methods in 3d-visualisation

3-dimensional visualisation methods are now employed in a wide range of contexts to assist in the research and communication of cultural heritage, within and beyond academic contexts. However, it is increasingly recognized that a domain-wide consensus is needed as to what constitutes intellectually and technically rigorous visualisation.

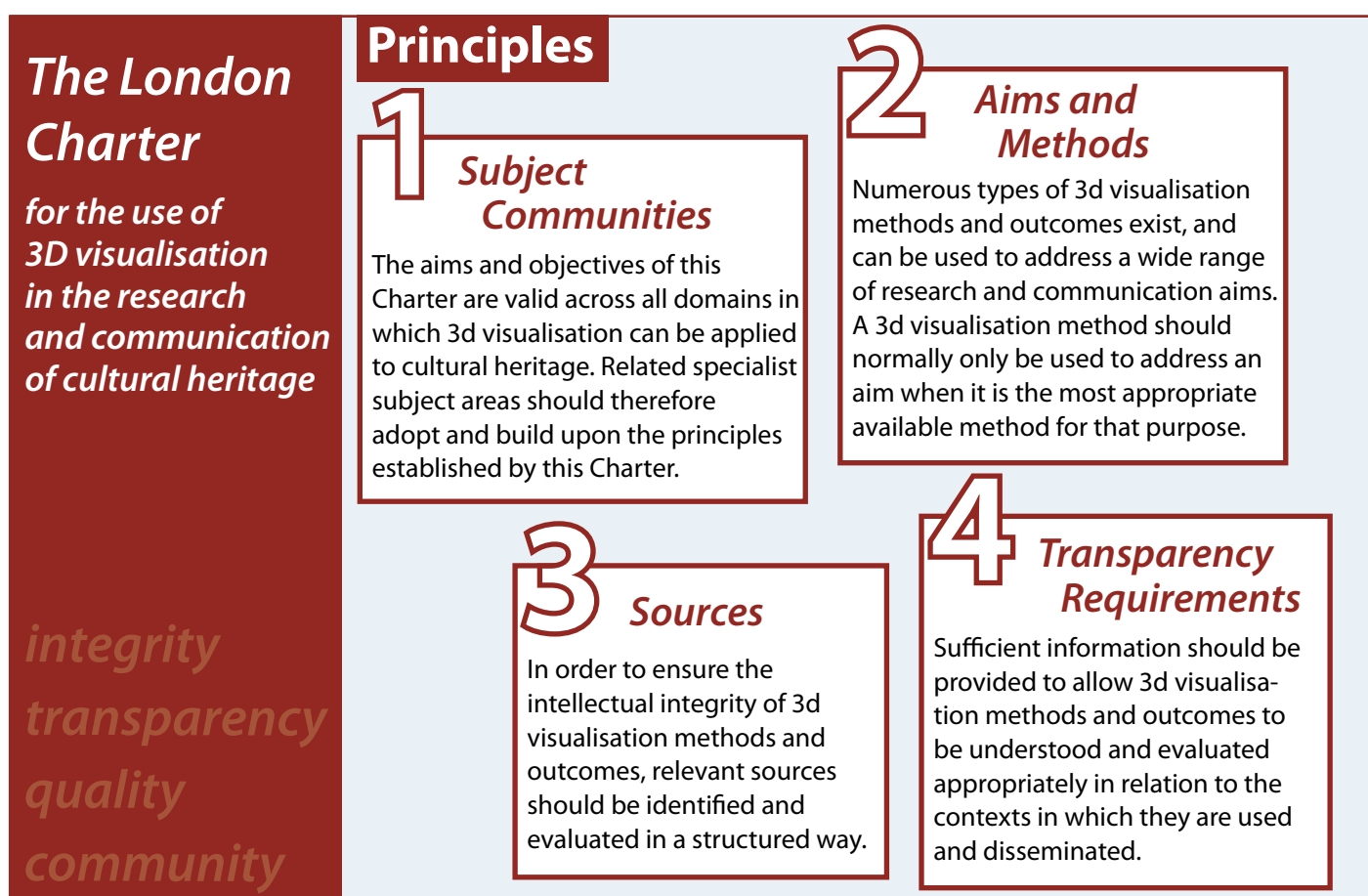
Numerous articles, documents, including the AHDS *Guides to Good Practice for CAD* (2002) and *Virtual Reality* (2002) and initiatives, including the Virtual Archaeology Special Interest Group (VASIG), the Cultural Virtual Reality Organisation (CVRO) and others, have underlined the importance of ensuring that 3d visualisation methods are applied with scholarly rigour, and that visualisation-inclusive research should accurately convey to users distinctions between evidence and hypothesis, and between different levels of probability. However, there is

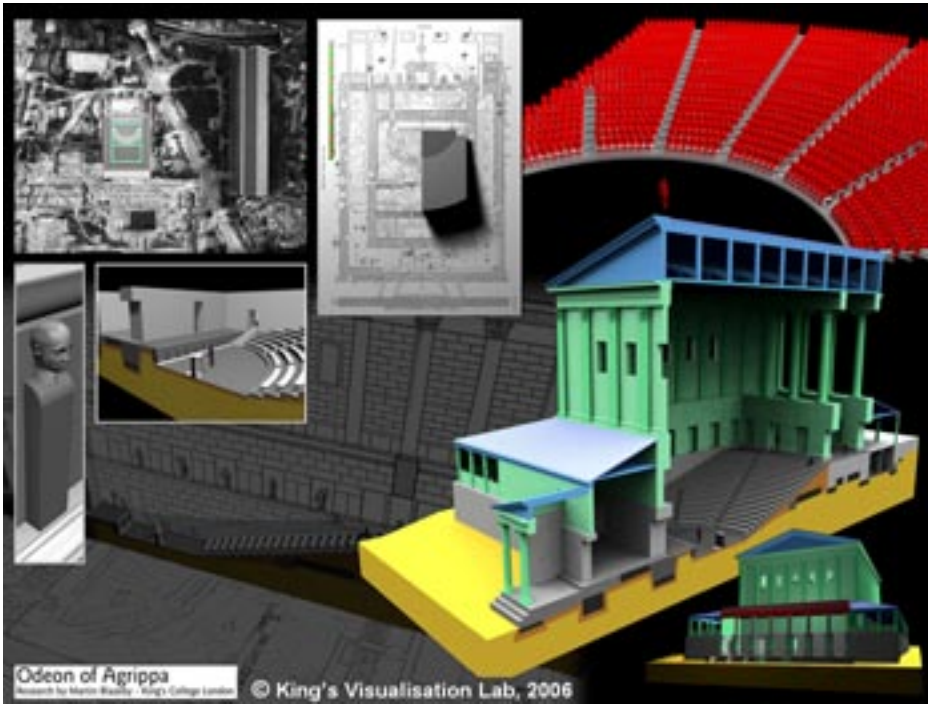
no single benchmark document to which creators, users and evaluators can refer. The London Charter aims to fill this gap.

The Charter aims to define the basic objectives and principles of the use of 3d visualisation methods in relation to intellectual integrity, reliability, intellectual transparency, documentation, standards, sustainability and access.

It recognises that the range of available 3d visualisation methods is constantly increasing, and that these methods can be applied to address an equally expanding range of research and dissemination aims. The Charter therefore does not seek to prescribe specific aims or methods, but instead seeks to establish those broad principles for the use of 3d visualisation upon which intellectual integrity depends.

By contributing to the rigour with which 3d visualisation methods and outcomes are used and evaluated in cultural heritage context, the Charter





Results from 3D research into the Odeon of Agrippa, a theatre/lecture hall from late 1st-century BC Athens.

Research and visualisation by Martin Blazeby, King's Visualisation Lab, King's College London

also hopes to promote understanding of these methods and outcomes, thereby enabling them to contribute more fully and authoritatively to this domain.

The London Charter initiative, which has been welcomed by numerous research and heritage

organisations, including by representatives of UNESCO, the European Union, and national Ministries of Culture, is currently being reviewed by major stakeholders, with a view to the creation of an “authoritative” draft.

<http://www.londoncharter.org>

5 Documentation

The process and outcomes of 3d visualisation creation should be sufficiently documented to enable the creation of accurate transparency records, potential reuse of the research conducted and its outcomes in new contexts, enhanced resource discovery and accessibility, and to promote understanding beyond the original subject community.

6 Standards

Appropriate standards and ontologies should be identified, at subject community level, systematically to document 3d visualisation methods and outcomes to be documented, to enable optimum inter- and intra-subject and domain interoperability and comparability.

7 Sustainability

3d visualisation outcomes pertaining to cultural heritage and created in accordance with the principles established by this Charter, constitute, in themselves, a growing part of our intellectual, social, economic and cultural heritage. If this heritage is not to be squandered, strategies to ensure its long-term sustainability should be planned and implemented.

8 Accessibility

Consideration should be given to the ways in which the outcomes of 3d visualisation work could contribute to the wider study, understanding, interpretation and management of cultural heritage assets.

The question: ban all digital cameras?

AHDS colleagues Alastair Dunning
and Mike Pringle debate
the value of digital cameras



Ban all digital cameras

by Alastair Dunning,

AHDS Communications Manager

There are too many digital cameras in the world. As a result, there are too many images. Let's grab the problem at the source and ban all digital cameras.

Look at Google images. What do you get? A hotch-potch of hackneyed sunsets, drunken

**What do you get
from an image
online? A flat, eye-
straining mish-mash
of faded colour**

student parties and
gawping sportsmen.
Often the quality of the
image is poor, over or
under exposed, or out of
focus. Most frequently,
there is little information

to tell you about the image — who or what it is
of, when it was taken and where it was taken.

The situation is less extreme within the education sector — people are a bit better, but not always, in realising the importance of quality and context.

But even here, in digitisation projects up and down the country, there is never-ending concern with scanners and cameras and resolutions and formats.

Is it really worth it? How much do you get from an image online? Take a Jackson Pollock painting — full of bumps, eddies of paint, stripes of colour, paintings gradually evolving as the paint changes and even falls off with time. What do you get online? A flat, eye-straining mish-mash of faded colour called `mist_lav3b.jpg`, pushed into a corner of a web browser against a stark white background. And then you look again

and what do you find? The same painting but drastically cropped, with achingly bright colours and entitled `Lavendar_Moss`.

It could be done better. A high-quality, luscious, layered digital image embedded in an intelligent website. But we don't yet have the screens big enough nor even, in some instances, the bandwidth to communicate such images.

And imagine the cost of creating such high-quality images! Buying scanners and cameras, finding space to set them up and arranging a plethora of tripods, stands, lamps. And the expertise required too, handlers, conservationists, camera staff, and assistants.

You can see this for a few select images, but not for every single one.

There are other problems with digital images. Chucked into databases they slow everything down; you never find the ones you want — for instance, finding high-quality images of canonical arts history paintings is tremendously difficult. And as for the copyright problems... well, let's not go there.

Cheerleaders for images will make a fuss about these comments. They will talk about physical images being locked away in archives, and interested parties being thousands of miles away from the paintings or sculptures they want to see. Digitising images, for them, solves all these problems.

This may be true. But the obsession with providing access to images for a 'universal' audience gets in the way of the more sophisticated way in which the Internet can act as a communicative tool. An unhealthy focus on the mechanics of digitising images takes time away from

communicating the intellectual work associated with understanding such images: the describing, interpreting and analysing.

A simple example: one could spend a mountain of time taking photographs of a famous building and putting the resulting images on the web.

Maybe what's more interesting is the stuff we can't see

Alternatively, you could spend time identifying the building's date, the architects involved, the materials used, the building techniques employed, the sculptural decorations, its social functions... Without the latter, the resource is little more than a visual reference that will be difficult for people to find on the Internet; include the latter and you are presenting information that might be of use to historians, artists, geologists, engineers, sociologists...

It is this added information, or metadata, that gives richness to a resource, that opens up the many ways in which it can be both discovered and used.

On the Internet, content is little without the contextual information that informs it. We should concentrate less on 'freeing' the objects held in museums, libraries and archives and more on freeing the knowledge that those in education have already inside their head. It is the skills, information and knowledge that are the really valuable assets.

So next time you're about to press that button on your digital camera think about it. Maybe what's more interesting is the stuff we can't see, the ideas inside your mind, rather than the stuff we can already see in the physical world.

Give everyone a digital camera

by Mike Pringle,

Head of AHDS Visual Arts

This is a world of pictures. It always has been.

Pictures allow us to marvel at the prehistoric world expressed in the cave art of Lascaux, and to celebrate the entire wealth of human experience across the centuries since. History is carved into the magnificent statuary of the ancient Greeks, carefully arranged in the geometry of Roman mosaics, and sewed into the patient thread work of the Bayeux Tapestry. What would we understand of the Renaissance without Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling? And would we pay millions of pounds for a written description of Van Gogh's Sunflowers?

But how many people have seen these treasures in the flesh?

In the nineteenth century, photography changed the way we could see the world. With photography, anything can be an image. And anyone can create it; view it; share it; own it; comment on it; enjoy it or hate it.

Photography allows us to watch the world outside our own place in it; brings that world into our space and helps us to become part of it. The human race can watch one of its representatives take a step on the moon; it can recoil at beagles

smoking cigarettes; it can secretly enjoy the thrill of pornography.

Images make us examine who we are: from the base creatures whose actions are captured in stark black and white in 1960's Vietnam; to the sentient beings who warm instinctively to the photograph of a baby's first smile, or carry a tatty, well-viewed picture of a lover with us at all times.

And now, with the inconvenience and expense of film lifted by the digital camera, we are suddenly swamped with images. Hundreds of thousands of buildings captured, a million smiling babies, tens of millions of holiday snaps, and billions of photographs of family and friends. And the average picture is low resolution, blurry, poorly lighted, ill composed and completely lacking in any associated textual information. Yet, people still take pictures. More and more pictures are created, despite the drawbacks. Why don't we learn that the pictures are not good enough, and give up? Why are billions of bad photographs produced? Well, simply, because even a bad photograph is a better, more natural, way of conveying information. Before the digital camera, holiday makers could only convey their joy to those back home through a postcard — a few lines of meaningless text only made coherent by the glossy photograph on the other side. The problem with pictures is not in the pictures,

but in the limitations of current technology.

From the very moment that Tim Berners-Lee conceived his idea for sending packets of text down a wire, the model for the World Wide Web was destined to be dominated by the written word. Even the name behind the idea, *hypertext*, makes it clear where the emphasis lies. This is understandable given the restricted capabilities of the early technologies and, of course, considering the importance of the written word. But the emphasis on primarily text-based information seems to have dominated ICT research and development ever since, sometimes to the detriment of alternative, and possibly better, modes of communication. Indeed, if we

Even a bad photograph is a better, more natural, way of conveying information

consider Berners-Lee's next generation model, the Semantic Web, we see a continuation of an explicit word-led agenda. Nonetheless, the capability for embedding images

into a webpage was an integral part of the earliest instantiations of Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML). It was issues of narrow bandwidth, slow modems and lack of processing power that made the use of images problematic for early adopters of the Web. Just as it is things like lack of decent resolution or problems of camera-shake that often define 'bad' pictures. Such problems will, eventually, disappear but, until technology catches up with the human desire to communicate through pictures, we must rely on words to convey pictures. Unfortunately, in many ways, text is a poor cousin to pictures (although, ironically, text is of course also a visual medium). Frederick Brooks proposes that our broadest-band channel is the sense of vision and, of all the mechanisms for increasing communication, it is imagery that relates most directly with the way we naturally interpret and communicate information¹. Take the following example:

date: c1930s *place:* London
description: Hoover Building,
Western Avenue, Perivale
architect: unknown



“Without the picture, textual information is virtually meaningless”

subject: Art Deco, Hoover

Such information (metadata) relating to a picture contains the pertinent information about the subject matter. But without the picture, it is virtually meaningless.

The reason we rely on text to describe and help us find images is because our technologies are not yet smart enough to be able to understand pictures without such added interpretation. The reason so many people are producing images with their digital cameras, their cheap scanners and their handy mobile phones, is because this is how people want to capture and convey information. Cameras are improving all the time and, as a result, so are the pictures.

Meanwhile, developments into technologies such as content based image retrieval (CBIR) continue to explore ways of interacting with digital pictures, particularly on the Internet.

Developments into technologies such as content based image retrieval continue to explore ways of interacting with digital pictures

Maybe the technology is starting to catch up with us. One day, we hope, machines will be clever enough to rise above the simplistic abstractions of text and allow us to engage with the full richness, complexity and range of valuable information inherent in every image.

Let's give everyone a digital camera and record the world as it is meant to be seen.

This is a world of pictures. It always will be.

1. Brooks F., *The Computer Scientist as Toolsmith*, Communications of the ACM, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 61–68, 1996

Windows on the world

AHDS Visual Arts Information Management Officer, Amy Robinson, reports on a new resource giving free access to over 15,000 images of medieval stained glass

Stained glass has historically been the Cinderella of the medieval arts, largely because the material is so little known. It fell victim to the mallets of Protestant reformers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and has suffered subsequently from weather damage and neglect. The surviving remains are widely scattered and sometimes broken or difficult to see.

Yet during the Middle Ages it was a highly prestigious vehicle for a wide variety of images, brightly coloured and brilliantly lit, as the famous surviving examples in York Minster, Canterbury Cathedral or King's College Chapel in Cambridge still show today.

Following a major digitisation project many of the surviving examples of medieval stained glass in Great Britain are now available to view online. Over 15,000 digitised photographs from the archive of the Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi (CVMA) have been added to the AHDS Visual Arts image catalogue at: <http://visualarts.ahds.ac.uk/>

The Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi (CVMA), or the survey of medieval stained glass, was founded in 1949 as an international research project which aims to photograph, document, and publish everything that survives.

The CVMA has committees in 14 countries

and over 65 printed volumes have been published so far. In Great Britain, the CVMA is a British Academy research project hosted by the Courtauld Institute of Art.

The photographic archive of the CVMA is housed at the public archive of English Heritage, the National Monuments Record, and a large proportion of the archive has now been digitised and made available online with funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

With the addition of the CVMA collection, the number of digital images available via AHDS Visual Arts now totals around 80,000 images.

The images of medieval stained glass can now be cross-searched with other related collections available via AHDS Visual Arts, such as the Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland (CRSBI) and the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association's (PMSA) National Recording Project.

These high quality digital images are freely available for use in research, learning and teaching.

For more information on the CVMA see:

<http://www.vads.ahds.ac.uk/collections/CVMA.html>



*Image copyright:
Trinity Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral © Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi
St Peter Mancroft, Norwich © Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi
New College Chapel, Oxford © Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi*

The Corpus of English Dialogues 1560–1760

Alan Morrison from AHDS Literature, Languages and Linguistics reports on a resource which explores spoken interaction of the Early Modern English period

A recent deposit at AHDS Literature, Languages and Linguistics, The Corpus of English Dialogues (CED) is a 1.2-million-word computerised corpus of Early Modern English speech-related texts.

The corpus was compiled by Merja Kytö from the Department of English at Uppsala University and Jonathan Culpeper from the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University, and the project was funded by the

Dialogues are of prime interest to the study of the development of English because interactive face-to-face communication has been found to play an important role in language change

Arts and Humanities Research Council, the British Academy, and the Swedish Research Council.

The CED forms part of the research project “Exploring spoken interaction of the Early Modern

English period”. The aim of the project is to enable empirical linguistic research on substantial amounts of data drawn from a variety of corpora, notably the CED, but also other sources such as the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts.

Dialogues are of prime interest to the study of the development of English because interactive face-to-face communication has been found to play an important role in language change.

To give a picture of spoken interaction of the past, as mediated through written records, the CED draws both from texts which include constructed dialogue and those which purportedly

record language from authentic speech situations — of the 1.2 million words, some 870,000 words comprise direct speech.

The CED consists of dialogues from a 200-year period, and is divided into five 40-year periods. There are five text types in the CED. The text types representative of constructed dialogue are drama comedy, didactic works (language manuals and other handbooks) and fiction; the text-types representative of authentic dialogue are trial proceedings and witness depositions. In addition, a small group of miscellaneous dialogues is included in the collection.

The corpus texts have been coded to indicate foreign language words, narration, compilers’ comments, editorial interventions, and font changes. Each corpus text is introduced by a number of parameters providing information on the period in question, text-type, name of the text, name of the author (when applicable), and contemporaneity of the source text and the printed version used.

The CED comprises 177 text files and is distributed in plain text file, XML, and WordCruncher formats. A guide accompanies the corpus files and is also available in hard copy distributed by Uppsala University Library.

The Corpus is freely available on request from the AHDS web site, AHDS Collection Identifier : III-2507-1

Further Information on the corpus can be found at <http://www.engelska.uu.se/corpus.html>

“Ha Neighbour...where are you going in all this haste, if a Man may be so bold as to ask you the question?”

“Sit down upon this Ale-Bench, and I’le tell ye...”

Depositing with the AHDS: a case study

Employment, hours and wages in the engineering employers' federation, 1914–1968

This recently deposited resource at the AHDS is an especially rich source of data from payroll records in UK engineering. It covers the period 1914 to 1968 and provides exceptional detail for the inter-war period (including the Great Depression), WWII, and the post-war recovery period. Here, the creators Professor Bob Hart and Elizabeth Roberts of the Department of Economics at the University of Stirling describe the resource and their experience in depositing it with the AHDS.

Between 1914 and 1968, the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) systematically assembled important elements of the payroll data of its member companies. Membership accounts for roughly one-third of total engineering employment over this period and the data cover about 15% of total employment. The core variables are total weekly earnings, basic weekly earnings (i.e. excluding overtime) as well as their hours' equivalents, basic hourly rates and hourly earnings. Basic hours and total weekly hours are also provided. An invaluable, and relatively rare, feature of the data is that these variables are delineated by piece-rate workers and hourly-paid workers. For 28 engineering districts, we also have matching unemployment rates from 1926 to 1968. One important feature is that the unemployment and payroll information combine to permit quite micro-level research into the flexibility of pay and hours to changes in business cycles, including the cycle incorporating the Great Depression.

The original type-written and hand-written volumes of EEF payroll data are officially archived at the University of Warwick's Modern Record Centre. Starting in 2003, the complete EEF payroll data have been transcribed on to spreadsheets to provide electronic access.

This process [depositing] was relatively painless due to the clear documentation provided by AHDS

variables are total weekly earnings, basic weekly earnings (i.e. excluding overtime) as well as their hours' equivalents, basic hourly rates and hourly earnings. Basic hours and total weekly hours are also provided. An invaluable,



LS Lowry, 'Going to Work' (1943), Crown Copyright managed by the Imperial War Museum from Imperial War Museum Concise Art Collection: <http://vads.ahds.ac.uk/collections/IWM>

Warwick arranged for the material to be sent on loan to Archive Services at the University of Glasgow. Glasgow provided space and computer facilities that enabled a group of undergraduate students to transcribe the data on to pre-designed spreadsheets. Both Warwick and Glasgow were exceptionally co-operative and helpful throughout. Checking, data sorting and subsequent related research were undertaken in the Department of Economics, University of Stirling. The work was funded by two ESRC grants.

After receiving permission from the EEF (the copyright holder), all the files were documented and transferred to AHDS History at the University of Essex. Information was provided that allowed AHDS to catalogue the data and to specify the data access conditions. We also gave a few technical details, such as coding schemes and descriptions of field names. This process was relatively painless due to the clear documentation provided by AHDS combined with the very helpful advice of Dr. Zoe Bliss.

In 2008, we will also provide the complete strike records of EEF member companies from 1920 to 1970 in the same manner. This work is currently in progress under another ESRC project 'An evaluation of UK engineering strikes between 1920 and 1970'.

Robert A. Hart and J. Elizabeth Roberts
Resource available at: <http://www.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/collection.htm?uri=hist-5569>

Free events on GIS in history:

Using GIS to research the past

University of Lancaster
20–21 September 2007

The course offers an introduction to the theory and practice of using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to research the past. Suitable for historians, historical geographers, demographers, and others with an interest in the geographies of the past. The instructors are all academics with significant experience in using GIS to conduct historical research. The majority of the course will focus on practical work in an IT lab with state-of-the-art GIS facilities.

GIS in Historical Research: A free one day workshop

King's College London, Strand
Campus
24 October 2007

This free workshop will provide a basic introduction to GIS both as an approach to academic study and as a technology. Its key aims are:

- To establish why the use of GIS is important in the study of history,
- To stress the key abilities offered by GIS,
- To show the pitfalls associated with GIS
- To provide a basic introduction to GIS software.

Further details on both of these events, along with details of a conference in Spring 2008 on GIS in historical research, are available from the AHDS website:

<http://ahds.ac.uk/news/events/>



Doing digital: using digital resources in the arts and humanities

DRHA07: Dartington College of Art
9–12 September 2007

<http://www.dartington.ac.uk/drha07/>

Every year for the last decade the Digital Resources for the Humanities and Arts (DRHA) conference has brought together creators, practitioners, users, distributors, and custodians to share perspectives on their complementary agendas.

Last year, that forum was expanded to include participants from the creative and performing arts, giving the event a new flavour and a new direction. This year, the conference aims to explore further major issues at the interface between traditional humanities scholarship and the creative arts, by focussing on their differing or complementary approaches to the deployment of digital technologies.

The conference web site at <http://www.dartington.ac.uk/drha07/>

will be regularly updated, and includes full details of the procedure for submitting proposals, the programme, and registration information.

DARIAH: Towards a European infrastructure for arts and humanities

The AHDS is one of the leading European partners bidding for EU funding for a European research infrastructure for the arts and humanities. The project, 'Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities', or 'DARIAH' as it is known, plans to introduce a service that will give access to cultural heritage information, and ensure its long-term preservation, Europe-wide.

DARIAH hopes to bring together current best practice as a foundation for launching pan-European initiatives and services in digital resources. Sharing ideas, methods and expertise is one main objective of the new infrastructure hopefully leading to compatibility between different collections of information. A further hope is that a European infrastructure would bring about common technologies and standards.

The new infrastructure could also act as a catalyst in European countries without organisations like the AHDS to form their own national data archives and centres of advice and expertise. DARIAH is currently a partnership of organisations from the UK, Netherlands, Germany, France, Greece, Cyprus, Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, Denmark and Ireland.

Further information at:
<http://www.dariah.eu/>