

ARTstor- A Digitized Library of Art Images

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Abstract

This session will introduce users to ARTstor, a non-profit organization created by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It is a digital library of art images, associated information and software tools designed to enhance learning, teaching and scholarship. It contains approximately 400,000 images from a wide variety of culture and time periods. ARTstor documents artistic traditions across many times and cultures and embraces architecture, painting, sculpture, photography, decorative arts, and design as well as many other forms of visual culture. In its richness, scope and variety, this service supports the needs of professors and scholars throughout the arts and humanities.

This presentation will demonstrate how to utilize ARTstor and how it is used at Franklin College. It will also walk through the process of searching for art work as well as downloading and manipulating images.

The Offline Image Viewer will also be demonstrated. This presentation tool gives you the capability of giving reliable, internet-independent classroom presentations as well as creates presentations of personal/institutional images with or without ARTstor images.

Content for ARTstor comes from many Collections, The University of California, San Diego, Museums, and First Fleet Collection to name just a few. There are also specialized Collections such as Art History Survey Collection, and the Huntington Archive of Asian Art.

Artstor contains digital images of art, architecture and archeology browsable by collection, category and Image Group. Artstor's definition of 'art' is all-encompassing. It includes:

- architecture
- painting
- photography
- prints
- drawings
- sculpture
- decorative arts and design
- archaeological objects
- anthropological objects

Each image contains descriptive data about the image including creator, title, object date, creator birth/death dates.

Shared Folders can be created in Artstor giving the ability to create image groups within the folders. You can control the access that other users will have to these shared folders and image groups. There is also the capability to create student folders.

You do not have to be a registered user to utilize ARTstor. As an unregistered user you can search, browse, open images and analyze the image data. In order to save images into groups, and use the higher-level features you have to be a registered user. ARTstor has over 25,000 people from 470 participating institutions that are registered users.

Background

The Franklin College Art professors used to present curriculum by utilizing a slide projector. Downfalls with using slide projectors included the cost involved in replacing damaged slides, slide organization was burdensome and time consuming and not having a database of the slides and their related information was inconvenient.

As the art professors' technology skills advanced, the slides were then being scanned and the images were being inserted into Microsoft PowerPoint presentations and the curriculum was being presented via a laptop and multimedia projector.

In the spring of 2004, Franklin College received an e-mail informing us about the site of a new digital art library, posted that day in the Chronicle of Higher Education / Information Technology. The art professor immediately investigated all the information available in reference to this online repository of art images, called ARTstor, and decided that this might be something very useful for all art classes (and other classes that make use of art images) taught at Franklin College. They were able to obtain a two week trial and tested the performance of this online repository in the classroom.

They were impressed by the quality of the images within ARTstor, the user friendliness of the software and the capabilities within ARTstor to display and zoom in on artwork. ARTstor was then purchased for use campus wide at Franklin College.

ARTstor is utilized greatly by the art professors at Franklin College. Faculty and students have access to this online service. Artstor is accessible on campus as well as off campus through our EZ Proxy server.

We continue to train and educate the Faculty and students at Franklin College on the utilization of this software.

Pros of Artstor

Downloaded images are not pixilated and the quality is not diminished. Sharpness is incredibly important for art history classes.

Artstor's Image Viewer provides the capability to view enlarged views of images and enables you to zoom in on details, pan to different sections and rotate the image 360 degrees.

Multiple images of a specific piece of artwork can be displayed side by side.

Offline Image Viewer gives reliable, internet-independent classroom presentation capability.

Cons of Artstor

Some categories display such a magnitude of images it is time consuming to examine all and determine the best images.

Modern Art is very limited in Artstor.

Cost factor

In conclusion it is the opinion of some at Franklin College that Art history majors or major programs would be very well served to utilize Artstor. We hope to see Artstor get more images of Modern Art and continue adding to their current collection.

1. The ARTstor Digital library provides professors with a resource that allows for the expansion of pedagogical practices and techniques in the classroom, introducing new exercise and creativity into lessons.
2. Cross-Discipline Research: ARTstor's large and broad collection of high quality images has resonance across a variety of disciplines.
3. Information Integrity: Professors and students value ARTstor as a trusted source of credible data, especially at a time when students rely heavily on the internet as a source for images and data. The information that accompanies each ARTstor image enables access to relevant content in the appropriate context.

References:

<http://www.artstor.org>