

The Graphics Atlas

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Abstract: The Image Permanence Institute at the Rochester Institute of Technology is currently developing the GraphicsAtlas.org, a new online resource that will bring sophisticated print identification and characteristic exploration tools to archivists. The website delivers four separate ways for the archivist to advance his or her understanding and appreciation of these materials. The Object Explorer allows users to browse and compare traits across processes using a set of 18 views made with various lighting techniques and magnifications.

Characteristics including size, format, color, texture, sheen, and layer structure are explored logically. The Print Identification application guides the user through a concise set of steps that replicate the actual experience of identifying prints using common tools (i.e., a loupe and simple stereomicroscope). The History section helps archivists put a print process in its historical context by outlining the broad time periods of its invention, prominent use and technological evolution. And finally, in the section on Technology users will learn how different materials and manufacturing technologies come together to create an image.

While the site is currently focused only on traditional photographic objects, it will eventually be expanded to include pre-photographic printing processes as well as modern digital prints. This focus of this presentation will be on the new, advanced imaging techniques that IPI has developed to enhance the website users experience especially in the area of print exploration and identification.

About the author:

Ryan Boatright, Research Scientist, Image Permanence Institute at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Since joining the Image Permanence Institute as a research scientist in 2005, Ryan has been involved with the research and development of specialized imaging techniques used for the digital documentation of the specific characteristics of pre-photographic, photomechanical, photographic and digital prints.

He has also spent his time devoted to the development of the Digital Sample Book web resource and has been recently working on the expanded version, called Graphics Atlas. Graphics Atlas is a new online resource that brings sophisticated print identification and characteristic exploration tools to archivists, curators, historians, collectors, conservators, educators, and the general public. Ryan also pursues his own artistic endeavors, utilizing a variety of photographic processes. His work can be seen at www.ryanboatright.com.