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Verbundprojekt *Kupferstichkabinett online*

*Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig, Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen und Bildarchiv Foto Marburg*

**Druckgraphik und Zeichnungen bereit für die Vernetzung: Virtuelles**

**Kupferstichkabinett erweitert | Connectivity for Prints and Drawings: Virtual**

**Printroom extended**



In Spring 2011 the project *Virtuelles Kupferstichkabinett / Virtual Printroom* ([www.virtuelles-kupferstichkabinett.de](http://www.virtuelles-kupferstichkabinett.de))<sup>1</sup> of the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum (HAUM)<sup>2</sup> in Braunschweig and the Herzog August Bibliothek (HAB)<sup>3</sup> in Wolfenbüttel was finalised after four years of

<sup>1</sup> Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG / German Research Foundation); presentation of the project given at Herbsttagung des Dt. Museumsbunds | Fachgruppe Dokumentation | Berlin 2011 (Christiane Pagel), see [http://www.hab.de/files/christiane\\_pagel-vkk\\_2011\\_10\\_18\\_musbd.pdf](http://www.hab.de/files/christiane_pagel-vkk_2011_10_18_musbd.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.3landesmuseen.de/Herzog-Anton-Ulrich-Museum.304.0.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.hab.de/en/home.html>

collaborative digitisation and cataloguing of more than 46.000 Early Modern Prints made accessible to the public through the joint online database *Virtuelles Kupferstichkabinett*. Gathering prints from museum and library for a “virtual unification” allowing for comprehensive research across both institutions has been a desideratum as the core holdings of the Collections of Prints and Drawings in both institutions have common roots deriving from the baroque collections of the Dukes of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel. Several transfers not least on occasion of the opening of the Cabinet of Prints and Drawings for public access by Herzog Carl I. in 1765 as well as recent exchange processes up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century fostered the interlacing of both collections. The Virtuelles Kupferstichkabinett enables retrieval even if the current location of an object has not been transferred correctly by means of reference literature which frequently cites elder sources. The International Conference at the end of the project in spring 2011, programmatically entitled *Kupferstichkabinett online*<sup>4</sup>, revealed the potential of the connectivity of metadata using the internet as an intermediary. The conference has been the starting point for an initiative of keepers of Cabinets of Prints and Drawings in Austria, Germany and Switzerland with regard to fostering their activities of networking in the field of online publication; three years later now, the objective of developing a Virtual Print Catalogue takes shape. With coordination from the Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte - Bildarchiv Foto Marburg<sup>5</sup> and intense commitment of a core group of art historians and paper conservators from Graphic Collections collaboratively developing a controlled vocabulary for the indexation the first decisive steps have been taken. The vocabulary will be based on the structure of and mapped to the AAT, starting with the facets of “Materials” and “Processes and Techniques”. The vocabulary work will reuse resp. extend the multilingual vocabulary developed for the enrichment of metadata from 23 international project partners in 16 different languages in the

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<sup>4</sup> For program, abstracts and presentations of the Conference Printroom Online, see <http://www.hab.de/en/home/research/projects/virtual-printroom/printroom-online-conference-abstracts.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.fotomarburg.de/>

course of the EU-co-funded project *Partage Plus. Digitising and Enabling Art Nouveau for Europeana*<sup>6</sup> (<http://www.partage-plus.eu/>) .

*Kupferstichkabinett online*<sup>7</sup> is also the name of the subsequent joint research project of the HAUM and the HAB collaboratively publishing another 40.0000 Early Modern Prints and funding doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships; two further partners are involved: the Bildarchiv Foto Marburg providing the iconographic indexation and the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen with regard to scholarly research closely connected to the process of online publication. Funded by the Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur aus Mitteln des Niedersächsischen Vorab der VolkswagenStiftung (Ministry of Science and Culture in Lower Saxony / Niedersächsisches Vorab of the VolkswagenStiftung) within a period of three years (2014-2017) 26.000 prints from the Braunschweiger Kupferstichkabinett of the HAUM (the Italian prints, the Dutch and Flemish prints and the English prints)<sup>8</sup> and 14.000 selected prints from the HAB are being digitised.

At the same time there is a second project online publication project working in the Kupferstichkabinett of the HAUM which concentrates on the Collection of Drawings. Starting in March 2013, in the course of three years about 10.000 drawings are being catalogued and prepared for online publication in the project *Virtuelles Zeichnungskabinett*, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG / German Research Foundation). The database of the Virtuelles Kupferstichkabinett previously built for print cataloguing demands had been modified and extended in some respects in the meantime relating to specifics of the description of drawings. Basic records of the drawings had to be imported from the internal

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<sup>6</sup> The vocabulary is available for free reuse on the Partage Plus project website, provided in SKOS/RDF representation, in CSV-format or as Excel spreadsheet, see <http://www.partage-plus.eu/en/contents/91,Partage+Plus+Vocabulary> ; for browsing the complete list online, see <http://partage.vocnet.org/> .

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.mwk.niedersachsen.de/portal/live.php?navigation\\_id=6257&article\\_id=117067&psmand=19](http://www.mwk.niedersachsen.de/portal/live.php?navigation_id=6257&article_id=117067&psmand=19)

<sup>8</sup> About 19.000 prints of the German School have been published between 2007 and 2011.

collection's database. Need for postprocessing almost neutralised the possible advantage compared to the cataloguing of prints where the records have to be created entirely new, based on information taken from record-cards with heterogeneous depth of information. Both project teams collaboratively recently revised the concept for a partial modification of the database regarding further standardisation, consistency, differentiation and avoiding redundancy wherever possible. The former in-house developed vocabulary has been mapped to the AAT as far as possible. The preferred spelling of the artists' names is according to the AKL online and the spelling of the natural persons in general follows the preferred spelling of the GND. The rules for the entries of bibliographic references, previously listed as e.g. "Bartsch 455" have been modified to listing the source precisely, thus providing a unique identifier, like "Bartsch XVI.234.455" which allows for grouping and linking all prints relating to this reference within the database resp. in other online publishing environments. As a consequence we had to separate the information on the state of a print from the values in the field of the reference number because we want to be able to differentiate the search according to states. Another act of separation concerned the organisation of metadata in the field of provenance. Previous owners had been organised as a controlled index list of persons with life and death dates added in brackets, followed by the reference number of Lugt; the previous owners like all other persons are now being maintained in the persons' authority which determines the preferred name spelling and provides variant spellings as well as the identifiers of Authorities, like the GND, ULAN etc., but does not aim to provide complete biographical information. The details included help to identify a person, the variant spellings supporting retrieval. The role of a person in relation to an object is defined by means of controlled vocabulary mapped to the AAT; finally the Lugt nr. is located in a separate field allowing for linking to the online resource of the Fondation Custodia<sup>9</sup> with further information. Descriptive titles and titles taken from literature will be displayed within square brackets. We are

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.marquesdecollections.fr/>

currently working on the modification of our documentation concerning related objects which is a crucial group within the records. We will have to split the free text information to several smaller units which may be controlled, such as Type of Relation (Index, in-house), Object Type (AAT), Artist (Authority), Role (AAT), Authenticity (Index, in-house), if possible: Title of the Object, Location, Authenticity of location [current location; in case of information by inscription: previous location], if possible: Inv. Nr.; Link to the related object.

Special fields organise the frequent relations between prints belonging to a series or prints belonging together in a broader sense of editorial context linking the respective records allowing for skipping from one entry to the whole series.

Initially the cataloguing needs of prints and drawings appeared to be more diverging than they turned out to be; the only difference remains the free text description of materials and techniques for the drawings which is complemented by additional indexation. All other fields may be used for both object types based on controlled vocabulary.

With regard to gathering traces of previous handling of the objects diligent inspection documents relevant hand written notes recto and verso as well as specific traces of use like in workshop context, or traces revealing that prints have been cut out of books, or rests of paper fibres testifying former states of storage, e.g. glued in albums, traces of impressions from other prints on the verso, and even damages like worm holes and damage by water may provide valuable hints for the reconstruction of former affiliation in the course of the collection's history. Finally a short excerpt taken from the invitation to the conference in 2011: *“A web-based collective print index cumulating the data pools of many print collections is a logical consequence of the advancement of systematic indexing. Such a tool gives the possibility to reconstruct lost contexts between prints and books or manuscripts, for example. Digital indexing provides further possibilities for the virtual reconstruction of historically related collections. In the digital era the relevance of the graphic image, and therefore also of print collections, depends significantly on a quantitatively and qualitatively convincing*

*presentation and presence on the Internet. From this point of view the further development and networking of virtual printrooms is of great importance.”<sup>10</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.hab.de/en/home/research/projects/virtual-printroom/printroom-online-conference.html>