Part I: Lessons Learned

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Part II: Recommendations: Visualizing the Future

Respectfully submitted by:
Victoria Morse, Associate Professor of History, Director of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and Viz Initiative Co-director
Susan Jaret McKinstry, Helen F. Lewis Professor of English and Viz Initiative Co-director
Laurel Bradley, Director and Curator in the Perlman Teaching Museum and Senior Lecturer in Art and Art History
Andrea Nixon, Director of Curricular and Research Support and Lecturer in Educational Studies
Steve Richardson, Puzak Family Director of the Arts
Margaret Pezalla-Granlund, Curator of Library Art and Exhibitions
Aisling Quigley, Viz Initiative Program Associate
Part I: Lessons Learned

1. Viz history

The idea for Carleton’s visual initiative, Visualizing the Liberal Arts, began in 2004, when Dean of the College Scott Bierman convened a faculty and staff working group from a wide range of disciplines to discuss the role of the visual in a contemporary liberal arts curriculum.

We live in a culture increasingly saturated with images, and our students are great consumers of visual materials. But it was clear that our students did not have the tools they need to understand images effectively and critically; to perceive the work images do in making arguments and swaying opinion; and to create images to serve their needs. Sometimes called visual literacy, or visual thinking, visualization, or visuality, these are skills that faculty in all disciplines want to foster and develop. We saw these as fundamental skills for a liberal arts college to set alongside writing, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning.

In March 2009, following a prior planning grant, Carleton received a 3 year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a new initiative called Visualizing the Liberal Arts (Viz). The Viz initiative enabled Carleton to be a leader in developing innovative ways to address the challenges that faculty, staff, and students across the curriculum encounter as they work to create, interpret, and employ visual images, media, and models. The grant funded three major areas of activity: an ambitious exhibitions program, a staff development program, and a faculty development program. To foster and support visual collaborations and experiments in all three areas, Viz sponsored winter break workshops for faculty and staff that explored visual approaches to teaching and learning; curricular grants for faculty and staff that supported course and assignment design; and lectures, presentations, and exhibitions for all members of the community to expand and share our visual knowledge. The initiative culminated in a national conference, “Visual Learning: Transforming the Liberal Arts,” that brought together over 150 faculty and staff from 22 states, 46 institutions and 36 disciplines or fields of interest to share their visual work in presentations, workshops, exhibitions, performances, and conversations.

We began the initiative by crafting a set of interdisciplinary curricular goals:

1. Heighten facility with visual inquiry
2. Improve abilities to observe, describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate visual content
3. Sharpen abilities to communicate, make arguments, present ideas, conduct research, and/or otherwise use visual materials to express ideas and knowledge.
4. Acquire competence in using a range of technologies and techniques for creating and producing visual materials.
5. Develop acumen for understanding the ethical issues related to the manipulation and use of visual representations.

Viz was designed to be interdisciplinary and collaborative, supporting and developing visual work in all areas of the college. One of our realizations, at the end of this grant, was how accurately these goals reflect the initiative’s achievements over three years. Here are some of the numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Number of faculty involved</td>
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<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Departments &amp; Programs:</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibitions:</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Performances:</td>
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<td>Rare Looks Lectures:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Grants:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of students enrolled</td>
<td>57</td>
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That is an impressive participation level, both in sheer numbers and in the range of disciplines and departments involved. Our sense that visual materials were everywhere, and that teaching the skills of understanding, using, and creating images should be a fundamental goal for Carleton, was confirmed. The Viz initiative forged interdisciplinary collaborations across diverse departments and staff divisions, involved students as collaborative partners, and developed a culture of visual experimentation and knowledge.

After three years of challenging, multifaceted work, and the contributions of faculty, staff and students across the college, the Viz initiative developed effective curricular goals, interdisciplinary teaching resources, a coordinated staff support system, interdisciplinary curricular collaboration, a vibrant exhibitions program, and a thirst for visual work. Although the grant ended in 2012, the program it created continues to inspire us, and some elements of the initiative have become part of our culture and practice. The Viz website will remain as an archive of the initiative's accomplishments and as a resource for further investigations into visual learning at Carleton and at other institutions. The liberal arts are in a unique position to brainstorm, to innovate, and to visualize education anew, and that was the goal of the Viz initiative.

Because the Viz initiative was designed deliberately to create opportunities for conversation across boundaries, we decided this final report should present separate voices reflecting on the lessons learned from our varied positions, and then conclude with recommendations for visualizing the future beyond the Viz initiative.
2. Coordinated Support Model

From the outset of our planning process for the Viz initiative, members of the Carleton community had a clear sense that the curricular aspirations of the faculty promised to be support intensive. Furthermore, individual projects regularly spanned areas of expertise such as image editing, metadata, copyright, and presentation just to name a few. The Viz grant enabled us to coordinate efforts, effectively communicate resources and expertise with faculty and students, provide professional development opportunities tied to curricular developments, and inform the design of the IdeaLab suite of spaces in the Weitz Center for Creativity.

Members of the Carleton community based their efforts to more effectively coordinate support on our mixed-method study, “Curricular Uses of Visual Materials.” Supervisors of support centers focused the training of student workers to build up expertise on general-use tools such as presentation software and course-specific tools such as 3D timeline creators. Teams conducted eleven production meetings, each associated with a specific course. Production meetings are designed to identify potential resources and expertise on campus by bringing together in an initial meeting all the potential support staff and the faculty member to plan which questions, tools, and staff/student/course interaction would best meet the faculty member’s learning goals for the course. The group worked together to schedule workshops or in-class sessions with assignment deadlines, and create “open labs” in which both faculty and academic support professionals held office hours and work sessions prior to due dates.

The production meetings were particularly helpful in our efforts to study ongoing curricular developments and consider how resources and expertise on campus could be used to greater effect. Academic support professionals drew on descriptions developed in the production meetings and other discussions of curricular support to develop concise descriptions of resources and expertise on campus based on stages of curricular development for faculty and assignment types for students. The lessons learned from the Viz grant have transformed the ways in which curricular support is provided campus wide and resulted in what is now known as Carleton’s Coordinated Support Model.

Throughout the grant, staff members benefitted from professional development opportunities tied to the curricular aspirations of the faculty. Samples include funding to send a team of faculty and staff to the annual conference of New Media Consortium in preparation for the opening of our Weitz Center for Creativity, a workshop on issues of copyright particularly as they relate to visual materials, a workshop on metadata, and workshops for exhibit professionals. Each of these provided additional depth and breadth to the kinds of expertise available on campus.
An impressive array of support professionals and faculty in administrative roles from the following units directly contributed to our coordinated outreach and support: Department of Art and Art History, Academic Support Center (Academic Skills Coach, Math Skills Center, Speakeasy, and Writing Center), Center for Community and Civic Engagement, Dean of the College Office, Gould Library (Exhibitions, Reference and Instruction, and Special Collections), Information Technology Services (Academic Technologists, Communication and Training Coordinator, HelpDesk, and PEPS), the Language Center, Learning and Teaching Center, Office of Intercultural and International Life, Student Activities Office, and the Web Services Group.

Early in the process in 2009, Carleton won the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education’s (NITLE) inaugural award for Innovative Practices for Challenging Times because our broad-based efforts were effective, efficient, and research based. In the Fall of 2012, as the Viz grant was drawing to a close, the Consortium of College and University Media Centers (CCUMC) recognized Carleton with its first ever Collaboration award.

Perhaps the best tribute to Viz’s Coordinated Support Model is the Weitz Center for Creativity. The group planning the IdeaLab suite of spaces drew heavily on the lessons learned in providing curricular support for Viz-related course work. The main lab in this space incorporates a video switching mechanism designed to support critiques or “crits” common in the Arts. Academic support professionals from around campus use the IdeaLab to hold workshops and office hours. The equipment and studios in this space provide campus-wide access to design expertise, high-end printing, video and audio editing. In short, the IdeaLab is a physical instantiation of the lessons learned by effectively providing curricular support, lessons made possible by the Viz grant.

--Andrea Nixon, Director of Curricular and Research Support and Lecturer in Educational Studies

3. Viz Across the Curriculum

We were excited at the diversity and range of projects that were formally proposed for Viz grants and the many projects that happened outside of Viz funding that clearly participated in similar thinking. The “across the curriculum” goal of the initiative was fully met, with projects originating in the humanities, social sciences, sciences, and languages and arts departments. Although the sciences were clearly the least well-represented, this seemed generally to be owing to the availability of other funding sources for those projects, rather than any disinterest. In particular we noticed a tendency for science projects to come to Viz when there was a public communication component and
when preparing visual materials for future analysis was at the heart of the project. The projects from the other disciplines were evenly balanced between focusing on the analysis of visual evidence (including the visualization of data) and presenting results visually to a broader audience, along with a very interesting group of language-learning strategies.

Analyzing the projects in terms of the Viz curricular goals points to some interesting conclusions. The message seems to be that Viz encouraged faculty to design projects that met all the learning goals, even though the Steering Committee was fully prepared to support projects that met at least one curricular goal. Although only a small number of projects had the students creating a visual product as the ultimate point of the course (in other words, most courses supported by Viz do fulfill the Arts Practice requirement), almost all asked for some form of visual creation as a part and parcel of either the analytical or the communicative goals of the course. Clearly visual communication is of great interest to the Carleton community: project evaluations and faculty members’ experiences tell us that students enjoy the challenges posed by communicating with visual materials (often balancing text and visuals); that audiences respond enthusiastically to opportunities to learn by looking; and that other skills like collaboration, writing, and oral presentations are natural partners with the visual, making it possible to meet a number of teaching goals through one project-based assignment.

The analysis of existing visual materials and the use of visuals in analyzing problems are well-represented among the Viz grants. Evaluation and interpretation of visual evidence is particularly strong. The Viz archive contains a number of assignments and techniques for improving students’ capabilities in observing and describing what they see, although this is worth considering as a follow-up program, perhaps in conjunction with the HHMI grant or with Writing Program on observation and description. Design remains something of an unresolved question at the end of the Viz initiative: where it should be taught, how much, and by whom will continue to be pressing questions, deserving of serious consideration. Right now, design is most available via Doug Foxgrover’s work with academic posters and, of course, when working specifically with the exhibitions staff on exhibition-related design issues. How to make support for teaching elements of visual design will be a challenge for all of us moving forward.

A second area that will require very careful consideration and monitoring is the relationship between exhibition and other project-related writing and the kinds of longer writing projects that favor sustained argument, the integration of a large amount of data/evidence and scholarly opinion, and careful research and structuring. These projects (fundamental to the skills that lawyers, business consultants, writers, and other professionals rely on) should not be allowed to seem less appealing in the excitement over the quick sharing and public outcomes offered when you write “shorter.” How we will accomplish this merits sustained conversation and planning.

As we had hoped, the acquisition of competence with technologies and other techniques has been folded quite successfully into specific projects often via staff support, while also being forwarded by Idea Lab workshops and other programming, like the Data
Visualization challenges. There is also evidence that students use their own knowledge from other courses to divide up group work to maximize each person’s contribution, for example making the studio art major in a course the “expert consultant” on a history project.

Finally, we have made a good start at introducing ethical considerations about the visual on campus. These arise especially in the following situations:

1) Off-Campus Studies (OCS) and Academic Civic Engagement (ACE);
2) Copyright and finding images, especially for digital projects like websites.

Viz funded a Copyright Workshop, organized by Matt Bailey, to bring the campus community up to speed on the intellectual property issues posed by exhibitions, websites, and other visual communication forms. That workshop clarified a number of issues, making curricular exhibitions much easier to think about, and emphasizing our responsibilities in educating students about the need to consider intellectual property issues especially for any content that will be shared on the web, whether through a Carleton project or via personal social media accounts. In a similar vein, Creative Commons licensing for student projects is becoming a more familiar component of student work (see Morse/Metadata Project), and resources are now available for locating images for use on the web that are licensed for shared use.

The final winter break workshop and the follow-on OCS photography workshop both focused on ethical considerations for students taking photographs or otherwise recording their impressions of people and cultures off campus. Thanks to presentations by Shana Sippy, Thabiti Willis, and Laska Jimsen, the community gained a sophisticated set of questions to ask students to ponder as they approach the world with a camera in hand. These questions have already been folded in an Economics OCS course assignment and will be used in a History program in Spring 2013 and should become a standard resource for the campus community. All these ethical issues are finding a very natural new home in the Digital Humanities, and I hope they will continue to be discussed and developed in a range of other venues.

--Victoria Morse, Associate Professor of History, Director of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and Viz Initiative Co-Director

4. Curatorial Culture

The Viz report to Mellon (2012) states, “As we have fully embraced the interdisciplinary and inter-departmental potential of Viz-related work, its power to forge connections across habitual boundaries has become clear. So, for example, the distinction between staff development, support services, the visual pedagogy
workshops, and the capstone conference have all blurred, as staff and faculty find it most natural to work together around common interests in events, speakers, and training opportunities.... A similar synergy developed among the categories of course-development grants, distinguished visitors, and large and small exhibitions as we experimented to find the right scale for colleagues’ exhibition aspirations, matched speakers with exhibitions, and deployed our coordinated support model in the service of courses supported by grants to faculty members. [We consider] these interconnections ... one of the key outcomes of our experimentation over the three years” (6).

This articulates what I see as the Viz initiative’s legacy at Carleton: by deliberately supporting such connections, Viz helped to develop a deeply interdisciplinary, collaborative, coordinated, curatorial, and creative culture of curricular innovation. One of the central lessons of the grant was the importance of collaboration at every level: faculty, staff, and student. This led to the coordinated staff support model, coordinated courses around exhibitions and performances, interdisciplinary collaborative assignments, and a growing use of students as research assistants and curators. Many of the staff expressed gratitude for the increased sense of partnership, since staff development was a fundamental part of the grant, and faculty and student enthusiasm for visual assignments and public exhibitions has exploded.

My four experiments in developing visual assignments map out my developing ability to work with this visual culture. My first student-designed curricular library exhibition on “The Pre-Raphaelites” was a muddle: it was exciting, but decidedly unpredictable, and relied completely on knowledgeable staff. The second library exhibition, a Viz-sponsored collaboration with Laurel Bradley (College Art Gallery Director) and Linda Rossi (Studio Art Professor) during the first year of the initiative, was far more focused and effective: I knew what we wanted to accomplish, and I had more skills myself – so I understood what to ask staff and teach students. Most importantly, I learned the pleasure of coordinated courses: the intersecting assignments, created by teams of students from our classes, demonstrated the power of visual learning across disciplines. The third and fourth experiments, both in Weitz Center White Spaces, clarified and developed that principle: in collaboration with Linda Rossi in my Victorian Poetry course, and John Schott (Cinema and Media Studies Professor) in my Victorian Novel course, we created single, intersecting, two week assignments that united the diverse skills of students in the literature and photography classes in order to create something neither could have done alone. Our skills in collaboration, coordination, curation, and communication were enhanced, the exhibitions were extremely successful, and the results could not have been accomplished without our willingness to work together, across disciplines, to shape assignments that challenged the faculty and students to express their visual knowledge in a public forum.

This burgeoning exhibition culture will clearly continue beyond the end of the Viz grant; faculty, staff, and student participation was amazing, wide-spread, and varied
in terms of the form, format, and formality of each project. The Weitz Center for Creativity was at the center of much of this exhibition explosion, in the Perlman Teaching Museum’s two exhibition rooms and in the three smaller White Spaces as well as hallways and stairways. That this visual work enhances the curriculum has been clearly demonstrated. How to support this creativity will be a challenge, since faculty and students need guidance in planning, designing, and creating exhibitions. Although the Viz website has been designed to stand as an archive and teaching resource, we will want to continue to explore ways to share and expand our work.

-- Susan Jaret McKinstry, Helen F. Lewis Professor of English and Viz Initiative Co-director

5. Exhibitions Program

Exhibitions are a format for producing knowledge, telling stories and raising questions through objects, and displaying research through carefully chosen and placed objects identified and interpreted textually. The Teaching Museum aims to use art objects and artifacts as provocations to inquiry, as vessels of experience, and as evidence of research and cultural interrogation. The Viz initiative, focused on visual teaching and learning, supported large and small exhibitions in the Perlman Teaching Museum, in the Gould library, and in the Wetiz Center for Creativity White Spaces and other areas.

Large Exhibitions Program

The Perlman Teaching Museum, and its predecessor the Carleton Art Gallery, were home to several ambitious projects which demonstrate a variety of ways exhibitions intersect with the curriculum, generate a broad palette of programs, stimulate cross-disciplinary conversations and nurture creative dialogues between scholars and artists.

Modernizing Melodrama, (winter 2009) involved intense collaboration between the museum curator and CAMS faculty member Carol Donelan over about a year and a half. While Donelan was an eloquent interpreter of this form in 19th and 20th-century American culture, the exhibition format required rigorous rethinking of concepts and methods of displaying that knowledge. Allowing the objects (only those available for loan) to structure the narrative, and responding to the special limitations of the gallery, the faculty member explored this new rhetorical format by integrating students enrolled in a fall course on Melodrama into exhibition preparation. She experimented with visual assignments, incorporating digital images from MHS collections, and expanded the field of research topics to better align with the exhibition. Selected students were invited to produce interpretive
labels for exhibition objects; two student class projects were incorporated into the exhibition. A complementary Library exhibition curated by Margaret Pezalla-Granlund and Alison Jarzyna, a recent CAMS graduate, extended the topic, and a scholarly illustrated catalogue was produced to commemorate the exhibition.

*The Art of Sight, Sound and Heart: Visualizing Japanese Theater*, presented winter term 2011, is an excellent model for how an exhibition can catalyze a cross-campus Arts Fest, with multiple curricular connections. This exhibition, curated by Laurel Bradley with Art Collection Registrar Jim Smith, featured myriad objects from the college collection, from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and from private collectors, and is preserved in an illustrated scholarly catalogue. An ambitious theatrical project unfolded alongside the exhibition; the theater and dance program teamed up with the Children's Theater of Minneapolis to develop a new play by an important young playwright, adapting stories from Japanese folklore. Visitors to campus also included a Kabuki actor/trainer, and a Japanese mask artist who lectured and offered a mask-making workshop. The exhibition connected directly to an art history seminar; Professor Katie Ryor contributed an essay to the scholarly catalogue, and used the exhibition as a frame for several seminar assignments including prompt for students to virtually curate a “prequel” to the Carleton exhibition and design their own exhibition layouts using Google Sketch-up.

*Seeing is Knowing: the Universe*, Fall 2011, served as a frame-work for an art/science dialogue between Joel Weisberg, Physics and Astronomy and Laurel Bradley, Curator. The curator and senior astronomy faculty member sought common ground by comparing the use of visual images and approaches by artists and by scientists dedicated to discovering new knowledge and communicating that knowledge – often for phenomena beyond human visual capacities. Faculty from history, classics, studio art, and physics and astronomy contributed interpretive texts accompanying the exhibition. Weisberg, on sabbatical in the term leading up to the exhibition, did not connect the exhibition to his teaching – but found the project profoundly stimulating. He came out of the project with a vital new partner - - artist and experimental geographer Trevor Paglen, who visited campus during the exhibition to lecture, and guided night-time satellite-spotting sessions. Weisberg and Paglen subsequently collaborated on the now orbiting *The Last Picture Show*, with Paglen compiling 100 images representing human history and Weisberg designing a temporal map identifying our earthly context for extra terrestrial potential readers. The national press has responded enthusiastically to the visionary aspect of the project. Paglen and Weisberg also co-authored a scientific journal article.

*Two Teaching Exhibitions*, organized over the summer and mounted during fall term, 2012, were successful experiments in integrating art and exhibitions into specific courses in the beautiful new museum. Both Christine Lac, French and Francophone Studies and David Tompkins, History, received curriculum development grants; Lac to select works from the Carleton Art Collection for active “use” by Teaching Assistants in the beginning French course, and Tompkins to plan a loan exhibition...
that would structure his A and I seminar, “Friends and Enemies in the Socialist World.” Lac was delighted to find plenty of “authentic” materials embodying France places and things in the form of prints and photographs from the college’s own collection. She designed a lively assignment to trigger conversation in front of the art, using direct observation and I-pads for simple research. Tompkins collaborated with curator Bradley to borrow and acquire relevant objects; students used the exhibition throughout the term, contributing interpretive labels, and finally making oral presentations within the museum.

The projects described above demonstrate the vitality and flexibility of exhibitions, and of faculty–museum collaborations, as a format for producing and presenting knowledge in a liberal arts college setting. Some projects enlist not only faculty, but also students, as co-curators and expert interpreters. Others may feed directly into faculty research, and afford opportunities for intellectual experimentation and growth without direct links to specific courses. Just as these collaborative projects vary in type and outcomes, time frames for realizing these exhibitions vary widely – from nearly two years of planning and execution for Modernizing Melodrama and Visualizing Japanese Theater, to less than six months for Two Teaching Exhibitions. In all of the examples above, with the exception of Joel Weisberg, faculty members collaborating with the museum staff were encouraged to do so through curricular development or special projects grants.

Keys to successful collaboration: “Large” exhibition projects, with museum staff collaborating intensively with faculty members, require time, good will on both sides, resources in the form of curriculum development grants and for materials and other exhibition expenses, and an adventurous spirit all round. Finding faculty partners requires an evangelical museum director who will reach out to likely partners, stage luncheons and other conversation opportunities with possible fellow-travelers, take advantage of DOC networks and calls for faculty development grant proposals, and more. Regular Viz workshops and LTC sessions were very effective recruiting venues, as faculty over about five years of winter break workshops and LTC sessions were stimulated to think “exhibitions,” and learned from the experiences of their peers. A dynamic library art and exhibition program also contributes to a larger “curatorial culture” which stimulates future partnerships with the museum. Two of the four exemplary projects described above produced scholarly exhibition catalogues, which enhanced the publication record of the faculty co-curators.

While exhibitions presented in the Teaching Museum have proven a crucial and dynamic component of Viz, an even larger success of the initiative overall has been the emergence of a broad-based curatorial culture at Carleton. Small exhibitions, in the Gould Library, the Weitz White Spaces, and elsewhere – nurtured through partnerships, workshops and grants – are vital crucibles of entry for faculty seeking to add curating to their pedagogical toolkits. Exhibitions have flourished because of the emergent culture of faculty-staff collaboration, dedicated curatorial staff providing guidance and developing effective templates, faculty enthusiasts who
mentor their peers through example and by LTC presentations, and the sustained support to faculty in the person of the Viz Associate. Exhibitions are a powerful format for exhibiting knowledge at this time; as a powerful tool of public scholarship, exhibitions add a "real-life" dimension to classroom assignments. Exhibitions – which require succinct and jargon-free writing – are also full of “real” objects, ever more powerfully present in our culture even as the world goes digital. Finally, exhibitions have proven a flexible and appealing format across disciplines, realizing the interdisciplinary goals of the Viz initiative.

---Laurel Bradley, Director and Curator in the Perlman Teaching Museum and Senior Lecturer in Art and Art History

**Small Exhibitions Program**

The VIZ grant provided the opportunity to experiment with a variety of models for object-based and exhibition-based learning, and to develop an active program of small exhibitions on campus that complements the more formal exhibitions in the Teaching Museum. By facilitating exhibitions on a variety of scales, with a range of levels of complexity and formality, the grant allowed us to develop a vibrant “curatorial culture” that supports growing curricular interest in the project-based learning, visual literacy, and public scholarship. Small exhibitions give students the opportunity to:

- Use collections materials – from the library, special collections, teaching museum, and other departmental collections across the college – as objects of study and the subjects of exhibitions
- Practice public scholarship through a variety exhibition strategies: formal, informal, large-and small-scale, and online
- Develop visual literacy skills
- Develop research skills
- Develop the skills required to write for a general audience (the exhibition viewer)
- Share their work – their research, their artwork, their travels, their writing – with their friends, their professors, and the wider public

**Carleton’s Small Exhibitions Resources: What we Have Now**

Today, we have a fledgling but flourishing program of small exhibitions at Carleton that contributes to learning across the curriculum. Small exhibitions include a spectrum of exhibition types:

- Library exhibitions (relatively formal, medium-term, produced with support staff, appropriate for materials requiring special handing or security)
- White Space exhibitions (informal, short-term, produced with a level of support appropriate for the project, great for student work and in-
process projects but able to accommodate some objects requiring special care)
- “Floating” exhibitions (informal, short-term exhibitions that are set up in a variety of spaces and cases, mobile and built-in, i.e., books of botanical exhibitions on display outside the Field Drawing studio classroom)
- Library displays (informal, short term displays often organized by student groups)

Over the past three years, we built a strong physical, curricular, and intellectual infrastructure for small exhibitions on campus. Carleton’s resources include:

- Campus-wide infrastructure
  - Weitz spaces
    - Permanent exhibition resources including secure cases, shelves, and frames
    - Built-in wall display cabinets
    - Knowledge base of display strategies for the Weitz spaces, including media-based projects
  - Library cases
    - Permanent exhibition resources including secure, alarmed cases
    - Camera, lights and light stand
  - “Floating” Spaces
    - moveable cases and small wall cases around the Weitz and other places on campus

- Curricula
  - A collection of curricular exhibitions (as a course resource, an assignment type, and a course project/outcome)
  - Lesson plans documented and made accessible on the Web
  - Exhibitions documented and made accessible on the Web

- Cross-campus relationships
  - Track record of collaborations with faculty in a variety of disciplines
  - Ongoing collaboration between the small exhibits and Teaching Museum staff
  - Coordinated support for exhibitions between library, VIZ staff, PEPS, and Idea Lab
  - Shared resources – including exhibitions supplies and loaned collection objects – between the library, Teaching Museum, and other departments (English, history, biology, geology, etc)
  - Interest and enthusiasm in the faculty, staff, and students for exhibitions

Because we have assembled a strong exhibitions infrastructure, built interest and enthusiasm for exhibits, and fostered campus-wide relationships around exhibition projects, we are in a good position for the future of the program. To sustain what we have built, and make good use of the college’s investment in the program, we need to consider what we need to continue it. Support for a continuing small exhibitions
staff person will sustain this curatorial culture by supporting all types of small-scale, informal, exhibitions.

Role of a Small Exhibitions Staff Person:
- Support curricular exhibitions: work with students and faculty to select objects, develop an exhibition, write and edit labels, and design the display.
- Conduct outreach to faculty and students across the college to increase awareness of object-based and visual projects
- Coordinate with other campus staff – PEPS, Idea Lab, R&I Librarians, Special Collections librarian – to give student projects a public presence
- Teach visual literacy and writing skills through label-writing, label design, and exhibition production workshops and online tutorials
- Curate exhibitions in the library and the Weitz that highlight library collections, special collections, and other campus collections
- Curate exhibitions that connect with course offerings and campus visitors
- Curate exhibitions that connect with and expand upon major exhibitions in the Teaching Museum
- Facilitate the logistics of informal exhibitions in and maintenance of the White Spaces (oversee access to the space, handle scheduling, restock supplies, troubleshoot)
- Work in collaboration and concert with the Teaching Museum to build an exemplary campus-wide program of exhibitions- and object-based learning that will serve as a model for other liberal arts colleges

--Margaret Pezalla-Granlund, Curator of Library Art and Exhibitions

On-Line Exhibitions and Digital Documentation

Online exhibitions serve an important function as archives of virtual exhibits and as an alternative venue for visual analysis. There can be situations where a physical exhibition is impractical, but the pedagogical benefits of creating an exhibition are clear. An on-line exhibition could highlight aspects of the College's collection (especially relevant to Special Collections), give exhibitions a life beyond the gallery, incorporate media and other forms more effectively than a physical exhibition, and function as a model for future work. The Exhibitions section of the Viz website was designed to serve as an example of an archive and resource for on-line exhibitions.

One of the fundamental questions raised in on-line exhibitions is what software platform will be used to support them. We have already tried Pachyderm, Reason, Wordpress, Tumblr, and Opera, and the question of technical infrastructure will need to be explored further as the interest in on-line exhibitions develops.

-- Aisling Quigley, Viz Initiative Program Associate
6. Performances and the Curriculum

Viz’s embrace of performance evolved organically as we developed the range of projects that could enhance curricular connections and visual learning. Viz’s initial foray into performance was part of the multi-headed “Visualizing Japanese Theatre” series in 2011; that successful work encouraged us to explore opportunities in which Viz goals could connect with performance as a powerful method of communicating ideas.

The opening of the Weitz Center in fall 2011 was essential to creating performance opportunities in terms of new spaces and centralized administration. The decision to schedule the various venues in the Weitz through the non-departmental Director of the Arts Office and to hire a non-departmental technical staff at the Weitz made it possible to provide technical support for all performances.

The simplest projects related to a single, specific course, with artists brought in by faculty with specific ideas of how the performance would enhance their syllabus, including Tehreema Mitha Dance Ensemble (History 167), the Hula Halau (Religion 238), and Ibrahim Miari’s one-man show IN BETWEEN to support the Hebrew and Arabic language and culture program.

Viz supported several complex projects in which performance was part of a larger structure, often involving the creation of performance by students as well as professionals. The projects were of varying degrees of success, but all pointed the way forward to large-scale arts events with multiple curricular connections.

“Visualizing Japanese Theatre” (2011 - pre-Weitz Center) offered a model for the intersection of exhibition, creation, performance, but it also showed the need for collaboration in planning: the performance elements, in particular, were not fully integrated into curricular work. Playwright Naomi Iizuka was able to offer a masterclass in playwriting, but the Theatre Department was not teaching playwriting at the time. A longer planning arc could easily tie more courses to work like this.

The Weitz theater opened in fall 2011 with the Player’s production of Shakespeare’s The Tempest, with Pierre Hecker’s Shakespeare students (English 244) creating an exhibition to accompany the production, while Stephen Mohring’s Studio Arts sculpture class developed the set design. There were timing problems – if student designs for a production could be produced a term earlier than the production itself, the course work would be complete and the construction process would be better served.

In spring 2012 the production of the Oresteia involved a co-taught “Oresteia Project” course (Classics/Theatre) that worked directly on and with the production of the
show, involving Semaphore dancers, developing an exhibition, and dealing with design and staging choices and how that affected and reflected the understanding of the play.

Each of these projects revealed an appetite for collaboration and connection going forward. Virtually every conversation about future performances now includes consideration of what other departments are working on, who is teaching related material, and how to support and improve the collaborative process.

The Weitz Production Manager has developed a booking protocol that will help set expectations and vet schedules and technical requirements with artists in a timely fashion. The Director of the Arts is developing a checklist of responsibilities including contracting, payment, accommodations, and publicity that will clarify the role of faculty and staff in the production process, and the Viz website includes Exhibition Planning Pages to explain the process.

As the Arts Committee continues to define itself, it can play a central role in helping faculty bring forward ideas, identify artists, and develop broader communication and connections across the college.

-- Steve Richardson, Puzak Family Director of the Arts

7. Reflections on the Viz Program Associate Position

The Viz Program Associate position represents a microcosm of the initiative as a whole. Like the initiative itself, the position required interdisciplinary, cross-campus collaboration and was incredibly multi-faceted and far-reaching. The three main sections of the initiative were exhibitions, staff and faculty support. I compartmentalized my job duties in roughly three categories, though the lines between the categories were sometimes blurry – an indication of how the initiative succeeded in bringing departments together.

I subdivided my work even further to address the concerns of various departments. Within the exhibitions category, for example, I worked on curricular exhibitions in multiple on-campus venues: Gould Library, the Perlman Teaching Museum, and the White Spaces (2011-2012). Within and among these categories my typical day consisted of various different tasks. To be honest, there weren't many "typical" days, because my experiences varied so greatly. Some weeks were intensely focused on exhibitions (research, preparation, mounting, and installation) while other weeks were heavily focused on conference preparation and other planning details.

I certainly experienced personal and professional growth during the two-year
appointment. Initially, I was delighted to stay "behind the scenes," doing research, organizing grant materials, taking minutes at the Steering Committee meetings, and developing the initiative's website. With the encouragement of faculty and staff involved in the initiative, however, I had the opportunity to gain confidence in my ability to contribute to meetings and play a significant role in the initiative.

Within a few months of starting the job, I applied for and received a professional development grant to attend my first Association of Academic Museums and Galleries conference in Houston, Texas. At the conference, I gained knowledge and met museum professionals from other academic institutions. I had the opportunity to attend the conference again in 2012, in Minneapolis.

During the summer of 2011 I collaborated with Laurel Bradley in designing and organizing a faculty/staff curatorial workshop. I collected materials and thus expanded my own understanding of exhibitions. I also developed an accompanying website that lay the groundwork for documenting future workshops.

With the opening of the Weitz Center for Creativity, I assumed a managerial role in the new White Spaces. I prepared promotional material for the spaces, coordinated the construction of new cases with Victoria Morse, Susan Jaret McKinstry, and Margaret Pezalla-Granlund, and purchased a cart and rudimentary installation tools in consultation with other exhibition specialists. Throughout the academic year, I advised students and faculty on the use of the spaces, and assisted with the preparation and installation of curricular exhibitions in the rooms. My work led to co-authoring an article on developing a curatorial culture through library exhibitions with Laurel Bradley, Margaret Pezalla-Granlund, and Heather Tompkins, published in an exhibitions handbook.

I expanded my pedagogical role by organizing and leading or co-leading workshops for faculty, staff, and students during the 2011-2012 academic year. I helped organize and fully documented the Winter Break workshop in December 2011, led a label-writing workshop for students in February of 2012, co-led a workshop on InDesign formatting in March, and presented at the Visual Learning: Transforming the Liberal Arts Conference in September. During this final year, I also sat on the search committee for a temporary Art Collection Database Specialist and attended a training session on the EmbARK database.

My position culminated in taking a major role in the organization and coordination of a national conference at the Weitz Center, "Visual Learning: Transforming the Liberal Arts." The conference was an incredibly rewarding experience. I created a lively conference website, including pre-conference newsletters and participant pages, met professionals from various institutions and fields, and was delighted to discover the similarities between our initiative and current projects at colleges and universities throughout the United States. I enjoyed witnessing and documenting presentations and conversations shared at the conference.
Finally, I am converting our expansive website into a navigable, long-term resource for future projects. Although the website will no longer be actively maintained, it is our hope that the exhibitions and assignment archives, as well as the grant documentation and exhibition-planning pages, will serve to help future proponents of visual learning.

--Aisling Quigley, Viz Program Associate

**Part 2: Recommendations: Visualizing the Future**

Clearly Carleton became a successful model of the creative conversation and collaboration envisioned by the Viz initiative. How to nurture and support that energy into the future is a challenge that we need to take seriously.

**Viz Across the Curriculum**
- formalize visual learning as the third leg of the curricular stool, along with writing and quantitative literacy; a visual learning course or visual learning encounters should be part of the graduation requirement
- continue to develop the Arts Advisory Committee as “communicative glue,” connecting departments, faculty, arts programmers, to the Teaching Museum, exhibitions, and performances across campus
- the Dean's office should help to promote Viz connections with on-going and new college initiatives, including Public History, American Studies, Digital Humanities, Middle Eastern Studies, Global Engagement, Academic Civic Engagement, and HHMI
- continue to support Viz-related workshops through partnerships with existing initiatives (Writing Program) and up-coming initiatives to continue developing faculty and staff expertise with visual materials, exhibitions, and technologies; help to find funding for periodic smaller workshops a variety of Viz issues
- explore the possibilities of continuing to foster Viz and other initiatives’ goals via the New Faculty Workshop

**Faculty/Staff Development**
- continue recognizing visual work as an important element of the faculty grants process with an emphasis on exhibitions
- continue to provide opportunities for staff development and faculty/staff collaboration
- include administrative assistants and student office workers in staff development opportunities around poster and web design, effective scanning techniques, and
other fundamental visual skills. This would help to close the loop between curricular experimentation and student work experiences.

- encourage staff to develop training sessions on basic visual skills (e.g. poster design, exhibition label writing) to deliver to groups of students, faculty, and staff through Idea Lab workshops and tutorials
- explore ways of funding assignments that require extra materials (posters, magazines, exhibitions), publicity, or expert technical assistance

Exhibitions
- continue conversations about how best to deploy and develop staff support for exhibitions: pursuing connections with faculty, staying involved in the campus conversations that indicate new directions and interests on campus, teaching sessions for classes, providing support for exhibition assignments, and especially reaching out to faculty with the idea of how much coordinating a course with an exhibition can contribute to student learning experiences
- explore the possibility of a Curatorial Fellow position to support exhibitions and to coordinate visual learning strategies across campus. This position could work with the Teaching Museum Director, the Arts Planning Committee, the Director for the Arts, the Curator of Library Art and Exhibitions, and with academic support professionals charged with facilitating exhibitions across campus.

Students
- increasing student research assistantships on visual projects
- develop a program that could provide student workers with consistent training in such areas as exhibition design and visual communication or visual technologies who would then be available more systematically to help faculty develop courses, assignments, and their own skills in these areas

Grant Administration
- develop a set of introductory materials for new grant PIs on topics like: hiring student workers; conference planning; how to read a budget report; how to keep records; suggestions for wrapping up or transitioning your grant; dissemination tips; assessment considerations; list of recent grant directors available to give advice and support