

Bulletin

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM, JUNEAU • SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM, SITKA

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MUSEUMS

Museum Fee Structures for the Use of Photographs

How much should a museum charge for the use of a photograph of an object in its collection, or for a copy of an historical photograph from its archive? Should some users pay more than others and should some not pay at all? Who should decide? These questions have nagged museums over the years, as there has been a lack of readily available data on the subject. Most museums have improvised as needs dictated.

Happily, decisions about pricing can now be made in a more informed manner thanks to a survey published last year by the Rights and Reproductions Information Network (RARIN) of the Registrars' Committee of the American Association of Museums (AAM). The full results of the survey can be found online at the RARIN Web site at: <http://www.panix.com/~squigle/rarin/01rcsite.html>

RARIN received 111 completed survey forms from AAM member museums. While the profile of the museums surveyed differs from that of museums in Alaska – over half the museums were art museums - the information should still be useful, as it is about general practices. Another important thing to bear in mind is that the photographs most of these museums are discussing are images of objects in their collections, as opposed to historic photographs in archives. But again, many of the same conditions apply.

A few other parameters of the survey were: annual budgets of responding

museums ranged from less than \$20,000 to more than 40 million dollars, although most museums declined to state their budget figures; the number of photograph requests museums received per year ranged from zero, or 1 or 2, to 2000; and over half the museums received fewer than 100 requests per year while 80% had under 300 requests.

Fees charged

The RARIN survey breaks down the fees in a variety of ways. This brief overview looks only at some general results. In addition to the variety of fees in any category, there were always one or more museums that said “free” or “cost of materials,” and they are not included in this table. And while the survey asked for commercial, non-profit and scholarly rates, there was little distinction between non-profit and scholarly. The following fees are for the sale of copies of existing photographic materials (i.e. rates do not include new photography).

Type of purchase		Commercial Use	Non-profit Use
Slides	Range:	\$1.25 - \$50.00	\$1.25 - \$25.00
	Average:	\$5.00	\$5.00
Color prints	Range:	\$8.00 - \$125.00	\$8.00 - \$125.00
	Average:	\$25.00	\$25.00
Black & White prints	Range:	\$8.00 - \$85.00	\$5.00 - \$50.00
	Average:	\$25.00	\$15.00
Scans via e-mail	Range:	\$5.00 - \$200.00	Not given
	Average:	\$25.00	Not given
Scans on disc	Range:	\$5.00 - \$250.00	\$5.00 - \$125.00
	Average:	\$50.00	\$50.00

Large transparencies (4x5) were only sold in 6 cases. Otherwise they were rented. See the actual survey for rental data.

In addition to (or instead of) the fee for a photographic image, most museums charge a fee to use it for reproduction. There are many ways to break down the rates for reproduction because of the various ways an image can be used, the number of people who will see it and the potential for profit.

Reproduction		Commercial use	Non-profit use
General use - color	Range:	\$50.00 - \$1,000.00	\$30.00 - \$250.00
	Average:	\$100.00	\$75.00
General use - B & W	Range:	\$15.00 - \$1,000.00	\$15.00 - \$250.00
	Average:	\$70.00	\$45.00

There are a variety of rate structures shown in the RARIN survey, for a range of uses including: book covers, book interiors, magazine covers and interiors, films, TV, Web sites, posters, postcards etc.

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Other survey data

The survey also provides some data on photo use procedures, such as who fills requests, reasons for denials of requests, limitations on usage etc. Regarding denials or limitations, some respondents mentioned “inappropriate uses,” but these are not often specified.

When asked how fees were arrived at, most respondents indicated their museums based their fees on what they thought other museums were charging. Others said they used actual costs, some based their fees on an earlier survey by the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and some said they came to general agreement among the staff.

Additional questions addressed in the survey include the flexibility of fees, who determines fees, royalties, contracts and agreements, use of copyright symbols, credit lines, publication copies and the use of new digital technologies, among others.

A formula for setting fees

Another study, published last year by a British university but surveying American art museums, is called “Reproduction charging models & rights policy for digital images in American art museums.” The study, funded by The Mellon Foundation, can be accessed at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/kdcs/>

As with the RARIN survey, this one is about photographs of collection objects as opposed to historical images. Perhaps most significantly, it provides a suggested formula for establishing reproduction fees.¹ The formula is based on the actual cost of providing the service, a figure which is then adjusted according to the intended use. The author, Simon Tanner, provides a convincing example of how the formula would work in practice.

The survey also provides an extensive analysis of the role that rights and reproductions play with regard to museums’ missions and their importance within the institution.

It finds that most museums set rates based upon what other museums charge; they provide photos as an educational service, not as an income earner; and that most prices are below what the market would normally pay. Tanner focuses on the differential in pricing between commercial and non-profit use, arguing the case that museums could stand to charge more for non-profit usage.

Other fee examples

If you would like to explore the area of fees further, you might go to the Corbis Web site: www.corbis.com, which also includes the Bettman Archive of historical photographs. Corbis is one of

the world’s largest commercial providers of stock images. They don’t have a fee scale, but rather an online shopping set-up where you pick images and the computer calculates the fee. You can look at their licensing terms, which are extensive at: <http://pro.corbis.com/search/searchFrame.asp>

The University of Washington Library Special Collections has a straightforward fee chart on the Web at: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcoll/service/reproduction.html>. It looks like they may actually charge more for digital copies in some cases. Interestingly, for files over 10 megabytes, they also charge by the megabyte.

¹ The pricing formula, in a simplified version, is: $C \times V \times R \times NP \times D = \text{price offered to consumer}$; where C = the cost of providing service, V = number of viewers or size of print run, R = revenue use will generate, NP = non-profit discount, and D = discount for other factors.

It’s not as complicated as it looks and depends upon an accurate assessment of C, which is the only real variable. The other factors represent ranges of values that are then assigned multipliers, which can be less than 1, and once established, do not need to be changed.

Native Artist Demonstrators at the Sheldon Jackson Museum

Every summer for the past 16 years, the Sheldon Jackson Museum has welcomed Native artists from all over Alaska to their Native Artist Demonstrators program. The program features different artists each month, representing the unique Native cultures of the state, who produce art in the gallery and interact with the public. Athabascan beadwork was the focus of the program for May, with Sitka resident Sarah Williams, originally from Fort Yukon.

In June, Tlingit bead artist Cass Pook and Inupiaq carver Charles Pullock will be in the museum gallery. Pook and her sister, Pamela Eby, who also demonstrates Tlingit beading, will demonstrate in July along with Inupiaq artist Myron Wheeler. August programs continue with Wheeler, Sitka Tlingit artist Margaret Gross-Hope, and Tsimshian artist Abel Ryan. Finishing the season during September will be local Athabascan beader and skin sewer, Georjeana Wallace.



Charles Pullock carving ivory.

Big Fish Featured in the Governors Gallery

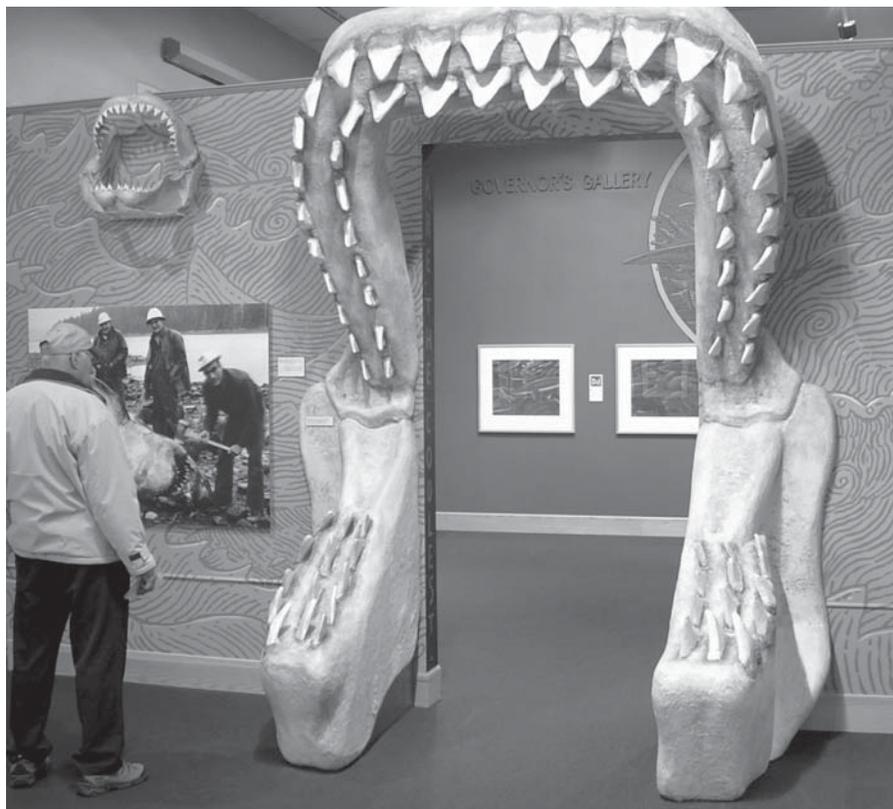
The open jaws of a giant, prehistoric shark serve as the entryway to Ketchikan artist Ray Troll's exhibition *Sharkabet: A Sea of Sharks from A to Z*, currently at the Alaska State Museum. Based on his recently published children's book by the same name, *Sharkabet* features more than 40 original illustrations ranging from Angel Sharks to Zebra Sharks, as well as other shark-related materials. *Sharkabet* opened May 15 and runs through Oct. 15.

Art aficionados nationwide are familiar with Ray Troll's comic fish art, which can be found prominently displayed on tee-shirts and coffee mugs, featuring such captions as: "Twist and Trout" and "Time's Fun When You're Having Flies." The *Sharkabet* exhibition is the result of a project Troll embarked upon several years ago to write a children's alphabet book based on varieties of sharks, both living and extinct.

Written in association with the American Museum of Natural History in New York, with endorsements from several scientists, the book is as much educational as it is entertaining and aims to take some of the scare and myth out of the "beasts of the sea."

The *Sharkabet* exhibition is on a tour that has included the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, the Seattle Aquarium, the Miami Museum of Science, the Science Museum of Minnesota, and several others.

An earlier book and exhibit, *Planet Ocean*, produced in collaboration with writer Brad Matsen, showed at the State Museum in 1997 and also toured to venues such as the California Academy of Sciences. A new book, *Rapture of the Deep*, co-written with Matsen, provides a survey of Troll's art and career and is published by the University of California Press. Troll has also been featured recently in *Sunset* magazine.



The simulated jaws of a prehistoric megalodon shark greet visitors to the summer exhibition, *Sharkabet*, by Ketchikan artist Ray Troll. The museum's exhibit staff, Mark Daughhete and Paul Gardinier, fabricated the jaws and teeth from sheets of foam insulation. Note the real jaws of a great white shark at upper left.

New Online Exhibitions

The Alaska State Museum has made several recent gallery exhibitions available on the World Wide Web. The virtual exhibits highlight the work of two contemporary Anchorage artists, photographer Matt Johnson and textile artist Susan Schapira, who exhibited at the museum this past winter. Also online is "Collecting Alaska," an abridged version of a 2004 exhibition that surveys the museum's collecting activities over the past ten years. The exhibitions may be viewed online at: www.museums.state.ak.us/online.htm.

Viewers can see the art installed in the galleries and link to individual artworks for enlarged views and details. Interviews with the artists are linked to artworks to provide commentary on the pieces. Biographical material on the artists is also provided.

In "Collecting Alaska," visitors can explore the varieties of objects the museum collects, from historical materials, such as World War II artifacts; to fine art; to examples of contemporary and traditional Alaska Native cultures. An essay on the museum's collecting practices by curator Steve Henrikson accompanies the show.

The new exhibits join a growing list of online exhibits available on the museum's Web site, including other solo artist exhibitions and the Alaska Positive photographic exhibit. In addition, the Museum has extensive materials available on two other exhibitions that featured Alaskan quilts and the history of Alaska's flag.

FY2006 Grant-in-Aid awards announced

Fifteen Alaska museums and Museums Alaska, the statewide museum association, were recently awarded grants totaling \$105,600 by the Alaska State Museum. The grants, called "Grants-in-Aid," are intended to upgrade the quality of Alaska's museum operations and provide for improved care for museum collections across the state. They ranged in amount from \$1,200 to \$10,000. There are more than 80 museums in Alaska, with more being planned.

Those institutions receiving grants were:

- Alutiiq Museum, Kodiak. Collection storage shelving.	\$10,000
- Aviation Heritage Museum, Anchorage. CAP survey.	\$2,000
- Carrie McLain Museum, Nome. "Fritz" exhibit conservation components.	\$1,200
- City of Palmer (Palmer Museum). Object registration project.	\$9,825
- Copper Valley Historical Society. Computer and software, hire consultant. ...	\$5,625
- Cordova Historical Society & Museum. Exhibit design for new museum space. ...	\$10,000
- Eagle Historical Society. Reconditioning of keyboard instruments.	\$5,997
- Hammer Museum, Haines. MAP Survey, Collections Management.	\$2,000
- Juneau-Douglas City Museum. New capital city exhibit.	\$9,900
- Kenai Visitors & Cultural Center. Display cases for ethnographic exhibits. ...	\$10,000
- Kodiak Historical Society. MAP survey, collection management.	\$3,000
- Museum of the Aleutians, Unalaska. Conservation of kamleika and spray skirt. .	\$5,024
- Museums Alaska. Newsletter, conference scholarships and support.	\$9,950
- Pratt Museum, Homer. Oral history exhibit component.	\$5,549
- Resurrection Bay Hist. Soc., Seward. Computer equipment for photo archive. \$7,421	
- Sheldon Museum, Haines. Exhibit label upgrade, printer and computer.	\$8,109



Sitka Belle, an inkjet print by Anchorage photographer Matt Johnson, was featured as part of the Alaska State Museum solo exhibition series, December 3, 2004 through February 19, 2005.

Grants-in-Aid are awarded annually, with a June 1st application deadline.

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Edited by Ken DeRoux

Alaska State Museum

395 Whittier Street, Juneau AK 99801
Phone (907) 465-2901 • Fax (907) 465-2976

Sheldon Jackson Museum

104 College Drive, Sitka AK 99835
Phone (907) 747-8981 • Fax (907) 747-3004

To contact Museum Services:
Toll-free: (1-888) 913-MUSE (6873)
Email: ken_deroux@eed.state.ak.us

Website:
www.museums.state.ak.us

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Alaska State Department of
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Alaska State Museums
395 Whittier Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801