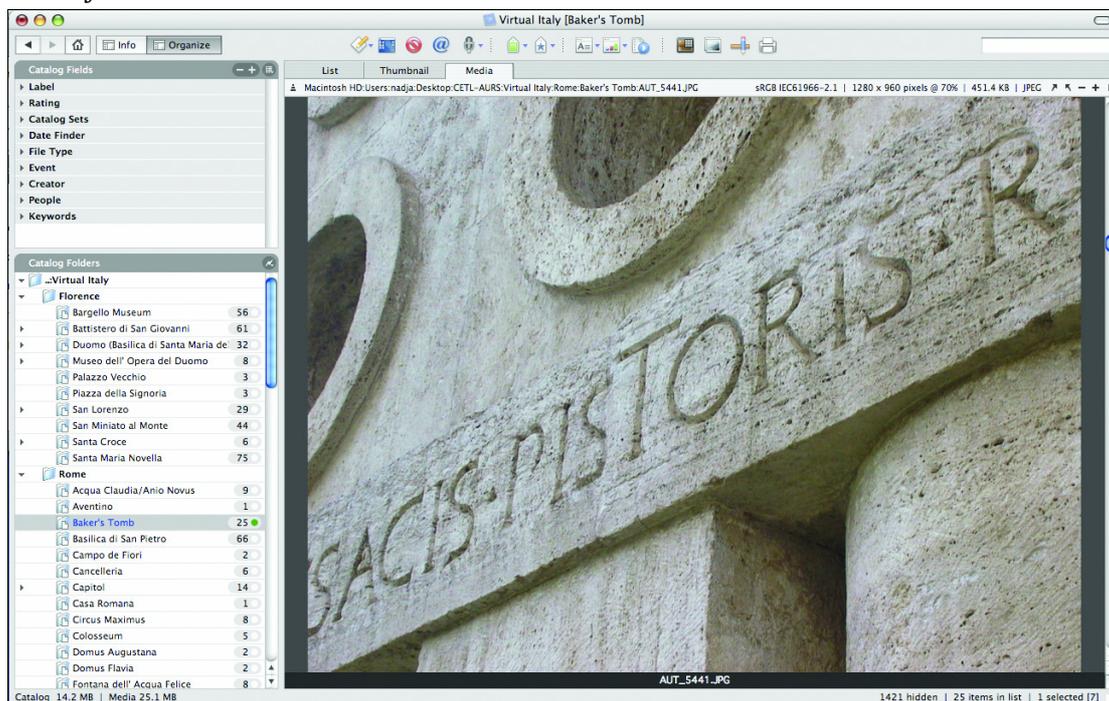


TY-03: Virtual Italy

For many years, Typography has taken students to Rome and Florence to study lettering and architecture. Over the course of these field trips, the Department has built up a large archive of black and white photographs and rubbings. The field trips are due to conclude in 2007, and to continue the 'hands-on' learning they provided to undergraduates, the Virtual Italy project will recreate itineraries in a virtual environment. The project has several objectives, key among them to present ancient, renaissance and baroque lettering in its Roman and Florentine contexts by means of a screen-based interface. The virtual presentation will exploit the present collection of photographs, draw on new images acquired on recent trips, and encourage access of the photographic archive in the Department. The project will involve the reorganisation and rehousing of the existing collection of photographs in archivally sound containers, for protection and to enhance their use in lectures and workshops. The latter activities will also support their use for various forms of visual research and dissertation work among undergraduates.

This project is still very much at the development stage, and is currently focussing on developing virtual itinerary prototypes. Once created Virtual Italy will be a significant resource that will be incorporated in to the teaching of a variety of modules.



Project Code: TY-03 **Discipline:** Typography & Graphic Communication **Project Title:** Virtual Italy

Description: For many years, Typography has taken students to Rome and Florence to study lettering and architecture. Over the course of these field trips, the Department has built up a large archive of black and white photographs and rubbings. The field trips are due to conclude in 2007, and to continue the 'hands-on' learning they provided to undergraduates, the Virtual Italy project will recreate itineraries in a virtual environment. The project has several objectives, key among them to present ancient, renaissance and baroque lettering in its Roman and Florentine contexts by means of a screen-based interface. The virtual presentation will exploit the present collection of photographs, draw on new images acquired on recent trips, and encourage access of the photographic archive in the Department. The project will involve the reorganisation and rehousing of the existing collection of photographs in archivally sound containers, for protection and to enhance their use in lectures and workshops. The latter activities will also support their use for various forms of visual research and dissertation work among undergraduates.

| A What is the perceived problem or challenge? | B Enabling Factors What resources will facilitate the project? | C Processes How is this project going to be achieved? | D Objectives What is the end product or result of the project? | E Evaluation Data What methods can be used to demonstrate the success or impact of this project? | F Unintended consequences What have been the unintended consequences of enacting this project? |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| <p>The staff perspective Problem: To maintain provision and encourage knowledge about lettering and architecture in Italy (Rome and Florence), both in preparation for site visits, but also in anticipation of a loss of funding enabling such visits; thus offering an alternative form of 'hands-on' learning and avoiding the loss of this valuable component of the undergraduate programme.</p> <p>The student perspective Challenge: Students should not only benefit from the specific material of study, but also encounter new learning resources and forms of presentation.</p> | <p>Staffing Staff in Typography will design and implement the Virtual Italy scheme and seek to embed it into teaching and learning practices associated with the Italy field trip and/or the History of Letterforms and Types and other appropriate modules. We plan to involve students in several elements of this work.</p> | <p>This project is being achieved along several lines:</p> <p>The corpus of photographic images and rubbings have been reorganised and rehoused in safe but accessible containers, allowing a first level of access for students</p> <p>Additional digital images will be organised using a Digital Asset Management application</p> <p>Screen-based exploration application will be developed from January 2007, combining the DAM and a navigation application such as Google Earth Pro or similar</p> <p>Images are being used in lectures and for reference in lettering workshops</p> <p>Further images will be collected during the Italy 2007 field course</p> | <p>The student perspective To offer a new and/or alternative learning resource to support knowledge and subject research</p> <p>To offer a learning resource that promotes exploration, both virtual and spatial</p> <p>To encourage and support research in this area of knowledge</p> <p>The staff perspective Virtual Italy aims to demonstrate and promote new teaching practices and opportunities for the presentation of teaching materials on-line.</p> | <p>Evaluation of the individual experience The use of evaluation forms during the development of the Virtual Italy interface. The use of evaluation forms after the several elements of the Virtual Italy project are in place, to gauge the success of the total body of materials on student learning and research activities.</p> <p>Evaluation of the cumulative effect upon the University TBC</p> <p>National Impacts TBC</p> | |

TY03: Virtual Italy

1. Project progress and timeline

1.1 Timeline

| done | project stage post | start date | end date |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------|-------------|
| | from June 2006 | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Review of storage and access | June 06 | June 06 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Re-housing of photographs, rubbings and other images resources | June 06 | February 07 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Organization of raw digital assets (artefact and contextual images) | January 07 | ongoing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Prototyping of itinerary scenario | March 07 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Itinerary testing | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Iterative revisions and roll-out | | |

1.2 Enabling factors: State resources used in this L&T-enhancement project

This project has been managed by two of the Teaching Associates within Typography: Nadja Guggi and Eric Kindel. Nadja spent 10% of her time on the project at its start in June 06, increasing to 50% of her time from January 07 until the project ends. Eric spends approximately 30% of his CETL-AURS time (0.2 fte) on Virtual Italy.

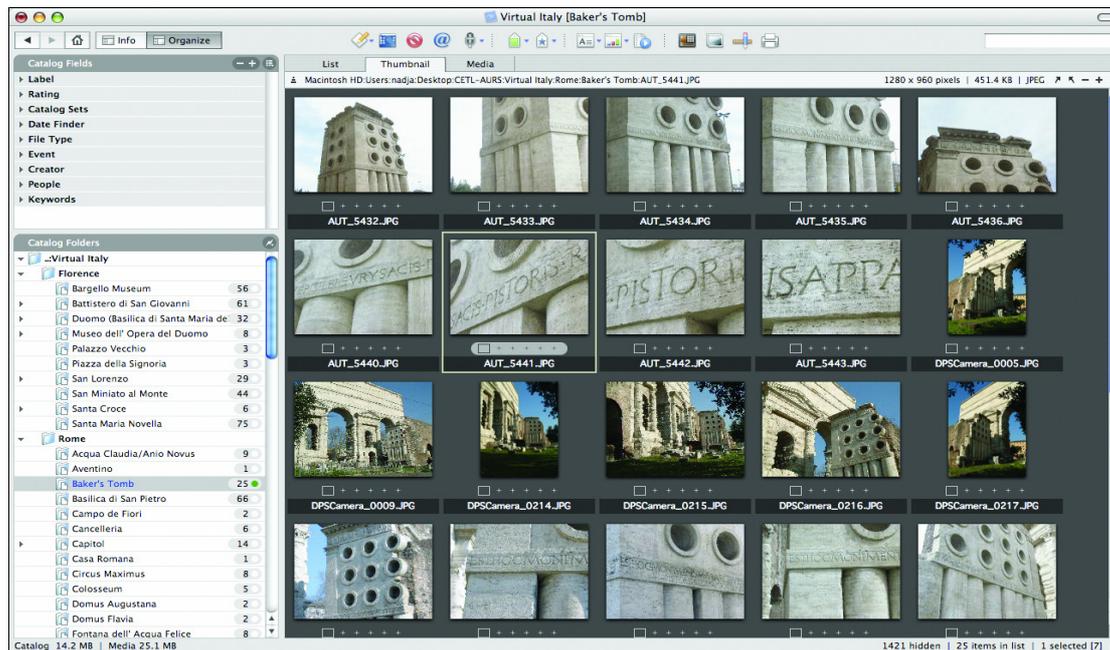
In addition this project has benefited from the capital expenditure on conservation materials, rehousing (mylar sleeves), boxing and reshelving.

1.3 Processes: What were the key challenges in delivering this project?

Within Typography 2nd and 3rd year students have historically undertaken site visits to Italy every second year. However funding for field trips is no longer available, and the project objective therefore is to develop an alternative form of 'hands-on' learning. The existing resource of the Lettering Collection dates from the 1960's, and comprises photographs (including black and white), rubbings and casts of lettering from numerous locations in the UK and abroad, in particular Florence and Rome in Italy. In addition there is a newer digital archive of images acquired on Italy study trips of the past 5-7 years. The key challenges for this project are to catalogue, re-organise and re-house the existing collections, and then to create a 'virtual itinerary' so that future students can use the collections both in a physical and virtual environment.

The review of storage and access took place as part of the overall work to enhance and organise Department collections. As such, improvements in categorising, listing and labelling were completed in line with similar work elsewhere among collection materials. The managing of raw digital assets associated with the Lettering Collections has been progressed using a Digital Asset Management tool (iView MediaPro) to arrive at an initial organising structure. Whilst the cataloguing and organising of the collections is an ongoing activity across the department, the Virtual Italy project is now focussing on developing virtual itinerary prototypes. A key challenge of the latter phase of work is, of

course, to replace the 'hands-on' (literally on-site) itinerary method of encounter with a virtual analogue. The working out of this challenge/problem is currently in progress.



2. Outputs and evaluation

2.1 List the evaluation evidence/data collected

As this project is still very much at the development stage the evaluation of the outputs has not yet taken place. However to date over 8,000 items (prints, slides, rubbings etc) have been sorted, with around 1,450 digital images in the DAMS. Evaluation data planned are detailed in the *Theory of Change* document, and include feedback from students and other users during the development of the Virtual Italy interface, and evaluation longer term to gauge the success of the total body of materials on student learning and applied research activities.

Other evaluation evidence associated with enhancements to collections (storage and access) can be found in the general evaluation summary on Collections Enhancement.

2.2 Summarise the key results from your data

Photos illustrating the reorganisation of the collections can be found in the general evaluation summary on Collections Enhancement. Students and staff have already benefited from the reorganisation in that the collections are now accessible, and there is a dedicated space for students to use the materials.

2.3 How would you, as the PI, summarise the success of this project?

To date, the first phase of this project (review and rehousing) has been a success in its enhancement of the Lettering Collection resource as part of the overall improvements to the collections. The organisation of the associated digital resource, using the Digital Asset Manager, has also been successful. The second phase of the project is currently underway.

3. Impact and consequences

3.1 How many students (and at what level and in which programme areas) has this L&T enhancement project impacted on?

The field trips have contributed to the overall development of hands-on learning for part 2 and part 3 undergraduates, and as such are not a self-contained module. The materials are also used in the part 3 optional module on the History of Letterforms. The development of the Virtual Italy interface to replace the field trips will impact not only the part 2 and part 3 undergraduates, but will also make the material accessible to all students.

The reorganisation of the collections has impacted on all the students within the Typography department, 80-90 undergraduates.

3.2 Has this project positively contributed to the teaching environment and satisfaction of the academic staff delivering this provision?

The project has already improved collection accessibility for staff in support of teaching and research work. Additionally students are now able to access the collections without having to rely on staff, thus freeing up staff time.

3.3 Summarise the unforeseen consequences of this project

None have arisen to date, but the project is still in its development stage.

4. Dissemination

4.1 Log dissemination activities relating to this L&T Project

| Date | Main audience | Type | Dissemination activity |
|--------|------------------|-------------|--|
| Spr 06 | Academic/general | awareness | an article on 'Brunelleschi's epitaph' by P Stiff in <i>Typography Papers</i> 6, drawing on the Lettering Collection |
| Win 06 | Student (UG/PG) | information | Italy preparatory lectures by staff |
| Win 07 | Student (UG/PG) | information | Italy preparatory lectures by staff |

4.2 Beyond this evaluation, do you see any scope for pedagogic research in this area of learning?

The use of digital/virtual analogues as replacements (wholly or in part) for direct, on-site contact.

Project Developer's names:

Nadja Guggi, Teaching Associate, Typography

Eric Kindel, Teaching Associate, Typography

Sue Walker, Fellow, Typography