Just before the official kick off for Mardi Gras this year, I had the pleasure of speaking with David Johnson, Editor and Romy Mariano, Senior Media Editor, with the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, to learn more about KnowLa.org, their online, digital encyclopedia. Romy and David explained the origins of KnowLa as well as the many savvy approaches to partnerships, technology and community that give rise to this digitized resource of art, history and culture.

**Origins of KnowLa**

KnowLa began as an digital project through the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH). LEH is a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The idea to create an online encyclopedia began about 7 years ago. The initial content was based on a magazine, Louisiana Cultural Vistas, as magazine content was something that could be easily converted into a digital resource. Louisiana Cultural Vistas showcases all topics related to the humanities and has been in print for over 20 years and running. The print publication showcases a rich variety of content, focused on the arts and culture of the region and it made an ideal source for seeding the first of their multimedia entries on the KnowLa website.

Since then, in the process of building out the encyclopedia’s content over time, KnowLa has hundreds of well known scholars, historians, artists and famous authors to contribute content. Entries span a diverse range of topics, related to all things Louisiana, from politics, to food and medicine, and are frequently updated with new information.

**Partnerships and Collaboration**

Content for the site is largely obtained through a network of partnerships and collaborations. The partnerships between KnowLa and organizations, such as the Louisiana State Museum, The New Orleans Historic Collection, Tulane University, and New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, represent a joint effort between museum and cultural organizations in the region.

Continued on Page 3
ARIS/SUNY Initiative: a partnership between ARIS Title Insurance Corporation and University at Albany, State University of New York (SUNY) for the development of scientific authentication standards that might be applied to artworks. MALC continues to watch for developments in this program. [http://www.albany.edu/news/48008.php](http://www.albany.edu/news/48008.php)

Interactive Visitor Experiences: Interactive Visitor Experiences continue to present new challenges in areas of technology and privacy for museums.

IP Donations: In-kind donations of intellectual property are on the rise as corporations become more willing to donate in-kind services rather than make strict monetary contributions. Unfortunately for museums, these donations lack the typical warranties, representations and indemnification provisions that are integral to IP transactions as those same donors seem unwilling to stand behind IP products that aren’t generating revenue.

MALC Comment to the Department of Interior. MALC prepared and submitted comments on April 3, 2015 in response to the Department of Interior’s Proposed New Information Collection, OMB Control Number 1084-XXXX Documenting, Managing, and Preserving the Department of Interior Museum Collections Housed in Non-Federal Repositories.

Law Student Outreach: In collaboration with the Section of International Law’s Art and Cultural Heritage Law Committee, MALC is organizing a career-focused brown bag targeting law students and transitional attorneys interested in museum and arts related practice of law. The program is currently planned for the Fall 2015 semester.

Future of Museum Law Book Publication: MALC is exploring the possibility of its first book publication on the future of museum law.

The Legal Guide for Museum Professionals: by Julia Courtney, April 2015, Rowman and Littlefield. MALC members Gil Whittemore and Katherine Lewis were invited to submit essays for this publication, now available for sale. Gil wrote on topics related using museum property statutes to resolve abandoned property issues common to museums. Katherine wrote on topics of social media, digital and information technology and rights and reproductions.

American Law Institute held its 43rd Annual Legal Issues in Museum Administration course in Washington, D.C. at the Liaison Hotel on Capitol Hill on March 25-27th. The Smithsonian Institution cosponsored the course. Distinguished keynote speaker Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole, Director of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of African Art, opened the program by addressing the importance of racial and ethnic diversity in American museums. Notable topics included: access to museums and visitors with disabilities; fair use developments; authentication issues; artist agreements; and a special session on "Immunities for International Touring Exhibitions." The National Gallery of Art and the National Museum of American History hosted receptions for attendees. Next year’s conference will be held in April in Los Angeles, CA.
In order to provide the most robust base of content and resources for this project, the partnership model was an ideal way to approach other institutes, archives and repositories. Museums offer access to their archives and repository and KnowLa offers a platform for museums with content.

The Platform
In turn, the KnowLa platform offers access to their many online users. Although this is an online Encyclopedia, there are also links and information about visiting the brick-and-mortar partner and contributing museums located in New Orleans, such as the Mint, which offers digitized copies of legal documents from the 1800s as well as the World War II Museum, which offers voice recordings of combat veterans’ personal accounts of life and historical events.

The KnowLa site layout is streamlined enough to accommodate structure as well as browsing according to topical interests. The landing page has a Featured Content section that highlights more popular topical areas such as Art, Architecture, French Colonial Louisiana, Tennessee Williams and Reconstruction.

Social Media Presence
The digital resources are but one facet of the KnowLa online presence. Not surprisingly, KnowLa maintains a social media presence that ties into their diverse purposes and roles in the State arts community. KnowLa maintains a Facebook group, which largely serves as a place for people to post information about cultural and arts events, and is an alternate place for posting the latest additions to KnowLa content, for comment (and Likes). KnowLa also uses a Twitter account to announce awards and events. In some cases, tweets also serve as a way to canvas and draw in source information from the community, such as locally known history and cultural treasures.

Additional Roles and Purposes
As an additional use for the site’s offerings as a hub for culture and history, KnowLa Classroom offers an online web portal geared towards teachers and students. The content is inclusive of and makes use of their State curriculum & Critical Historical Thinking Standards, to provide an enhanced range of materials for use in the classroom. By linking the engaging topics on KnowLa with curriculum standards, it serves as a widely relied-upon resource portal for teachers and students alike.

The content is also featured as a teacher’s resource and linked via the National Endowment for the Humanities’ website, via EdSitement. Resources include sample lesson plans as well as research templates for students use, to report their findings from online study.

As a point of contact for so many other programs and resources, KnowLa has a great role in partnering with other museum and arts organizations to make sure that funding reaches deserving members of the vibrant state community. KnowLa and the LEH reach back into the museum and arts communities to award support and funding to local entities, such as the Rebirth Grants and other support that is designed to foster local initiatives.

Users and Analytics
Given the ample attention and focus on technology and social media, KnowLa makes use of its well crafted social media presence and analytics for better understanding and modeling user behavior, such as visits to pages and resource usage. According to their analytics, one of the most popular entries for visitors is the Jim Crow segregation storyline, which includes the story of Plessy v. Ferguson. The interactive online content is related to school desegregation and attracts a lot of students, since 8th graders throughout the state study Plessy. They also learned that content is frequently accessed by journalists for fact checking when information, such as historical accounts about the Mississippi River floods (ca.1927), is relevant to current events.

Behind the Scenes
With seamlessly organized content, presented in a fashion that is useful to the casual browser, the teacher and scholarly researcher alike, it follows that a great deal of care and effort goes into the curation and publication of an online entry.

Entries are created by various authors and are then submitted, according to guidelines, with certain requirements for metadata and file formatting typically, each entry has a Creator, Date, Repository Source, Copyright Status and a Disclaimer, where applicable.
Once submitted, an entry comes to David and Romy for editing and validation of the source material. David edits and Romy researches and verifies the source content, most often through the Library of Congress. Since KnowLa is a free tool, content owners are often willing to give or share images for use on the site.

Once sources have been verified, Romy shares the permissions and rights, typically via Public Domain, Creative Commons 2.0 or 3.0. Occasionally, if the source is unknown, the content can fall under the Fair Use. This process is performed for each piece of media when they put it online. As a matter of policy, all content has to have the metadata about the repository, date and creator (even if the value is “unknown”).

The KnowLa website stands out for its optimal user experience, with very quick load times and virtual absence of issues related to frame loading and platform-specific interfaces. This is, in part, because everything is housed in a custom content management tool. As with many websites of its kind, KnowLa had previously worked on a Encyclopedia content management platform. In 2008, they decided to go with a private software developer and the result speaks for itself. The tool in use today is a highly customized database that gets periodic coding updates to keep things running smoothly.

Related Projects and Future Growth

The organization demonstrates a great knack for connecting its digital offerings with more traditional printed media publications and state historical milestones. Three years ago, the organization released a print publication for the Louisiana Bicentennial, a 350-page book on the History of Art in Louisiana, titled “A Unique Slant of Light: The Bicentennial History of Art in Louisiana.” It can be viewed digitally at this link and is for sale as a print book: http://www.nxtbook.com/leh/uniqueslant2012/uniqueslant2012/index.php.

Where there is content overlap between the print publication and the KnowLa website, the artists’ entries on KnowLa link back to the digitized version of the book. The Bicentennial publication is another example of the collaborative works that have been accomplished, in large part due to the Museums goodwill and professional relationships.

David and Romy explained the significance of the commemorative publication, “The Bicentennial publication is another project that crosses many intersections of art, history and the diverse cultures and presents the story of LA in an engaging fashion”

Looking ahead, KnowLa has plans for expansion of its content related to music and sound recordings of Jazz, Blues and other rich folk musical forms from throughout the region.

When asked about ways that ABA and MALC can help contribute to the continued growth and development of the endeavor, David and Romy shared some more about future plans for KnowLa.

One of the upcoming projects for KnowLa is an expansion of content and entries related to Louisiana’s Legal history and legal decisions that originated from the state and later shaped the law of the United States. Attorneys and legal scholars who are interested in researching or writing on this topic can contact David Johnson at johnson@leh.org to learn more the program and about contributing content for publication on the site.

Romy explained what drives the broad, long term plans for the site, “One of the core visions of the project is to keep looking for ways to place KnowLa even further into the national and international consciousness.”
Lost & Found

Wolsey’s Angels Rescued After Three Centuries
Cardinal Wolsey, who worked hand in hand with King Henry VIII, commissioned four bronze angels in 1524 to sit atop his tomb. After Wolsey’s political downfall in 1529 and death, the angels fell into the hands of King Henry who intended to use them for his own tomb. Unfortunately, the angels never were used and they were eventually sold off for cash. Over the next three hundred years, the angels roamed unknown areas and eventually ended up at a stately English home in 1975. That home eventually became a golf club that featured the angels at the entrance gates. After two of the angels were subsequently stolen in 1988, all four eventually ended up in the hands of an Italian art historian who restored them to their original beauty. The Victoria & Albert Museum, through viral fundraising, successfully raised five million pounds to purchase the angels and give them a final resting place. [http://tinyurl.com/pfqvm9](http://tinyurl.com/pfqvm9)

Royal Celtic Burial Site Uncovered in France
Archaeologists recently discovered a fifth century BC tomb in a small town in France, believed to be the burial site of an ancient Celtic royal. The tomb was uncovered in an industrial construction zone and was over forty meters wide. The prince was buried with prized possessions, the most exciting find being a bronze-decorated cauldron believed to have been created by Etruscan craftsmen from northern Italy. Many of the other finds highlight the trading channels that opened up between the Mediterranean and the Celts at the end of the sixth centuries and beginning of the fifth centuries. [http://tinyurl.com/lmutng9](http://tinyurl.com/lmutng9)

Hiding in Plain Sight: Bronzes Attributed to Michelangelo
In the wake of the Fitzwilliam Museum’s recent attribution of two bronze sculptures to Michelangelo, the idea of discovering “lost art” regains momentum in the art world. The “Rothschild Bronzes” have been on exhibit for several years, but were previously thought to have been created by an unknown Renaissance artist. After a comparison was made between a section of the sculptures and Michelangelo’s Nude Male Figure sketch, experts concluded that the sculptures are likely the only surviving bronzes attributed to Michelangelo. Even though these pieces of art were never technically “lost,” the mysteries surrounding works of stolen or lost art have gained momentum with the rise of hit television shows like Fake or Fortune. According to art historian and dealer Bendor Grosvenor, many pieces of lost art are simply hiding in plain sight, often obscured by false attribution. Grosvenor says, “Trust your own eye, and have an open mind. Question everything.” [http://tinyurl.com/nrnaepk](http://tinyurl.com/nrnaepk)  [http://tinyurl.com/pjaah4p](http://tinyurl.com/pjaah4p)

Copyright Licensing Legal Lab: Giving & Receiving
AAM Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, Tuesday April 28, 2015, 8:30am-9:45am EST

Orphan Works Basics & Best Practices
Webinar, May 27, 2015, 2:00pm-3:30pm EST
Presenter: Barron Oda

Stump the Lawyers
NEMA Annual Conference
Portland, ME, November 4-6, 2015 (Exact Date & Time TBD)

Hey, Can I Use This Image? Navigating the World of Copyright
NEMA Annual Conference
Portland, ME, November 4-6, 2015 (Exact Date & Time TBD)

Art Crime and Cultural Heritage: Fakes, Forgeries, and Looted and Stolen Art
Dates: Jun 4-6, 2015; 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, New York University
CLE credit available for those who qualify.

Art Authentication Issues
June 25, 2015
Herrick, Feinstein LLP, 2 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016
Speaker: Darlene B. Fairman
Moderated by Anna Somers Cocks, Founding Editor and CEO, The Art Newspaper
GET INVOLVED!

WORKING GROUPS: MALC recently launched 4 working groups: Digitization and Archiving Collections, Document Archival and Electronic Communications Privacy, Social Media and Patents In Museums and Arts and invites you to learn more about the goals and objectives of each working group by joining our monthly committee calls.

MONTHLY COMMITTEE CALLS: MALC is currently holding monthly teleconferences the last Friday of each month at 4:30pm EST. Please email Katherine at kitlewis864@gmail.com for call-in information.

NEWSLETTER: We’re accepting submissions for the Spring 2015 Newsletter! Please email submissions, suggestions for topics you would like to see covered and/or questions to Ria De las Alas, our Newsletter Editor, at redelasalas@gmail.com.

WEBSITE: We are looking for volunteers to help maintain our website to keep things updated and interesting! If interested contact Barron Oda at boda@hawaii.edu for more information.

ARTS LIAISON: A major goal of the Committee is to act as a liaison between the museum/arts community and the legal profession. If you know of national, regional or local museum/arts groups we should be contacting, send an e-mail to boda@hawaii.edu.

SUGGESTION BOX: We’re currently accepting suggestions for additional legal topics that would be helpful to museum audiences. Please email suggestions to kitlewis864@gmail.com.

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About Us

The Museums & The Arts Committee is part of the American Bar Association’s Section of Science & Technology Law. *Provenance* aims to provide news and thoughtful, brief discussion on legal topics relevant to museology and the arts. [http://tinyurl.com/scitechmac010](http://tinyurl.com/scitechmac010)

Our committee undertakes a variety of projects related to all types of museums and all types of art that are being affected by new developments. Naturally, this requires an appreciation for how those institutions and communities function in general. The Committee thus welcomes active participation from those involved in museums or the arts. In addition to attorneys and law students, membership is also open to non-attorneys who may join as Associates at: [http://tinyurl.com/scitechmac011](http://tinyurl.com/scitechmac011)

Current projects the Committee is exploring include authenticating artwork, collecting digital forms of art, digitization for archival and commercial purposes, and copyright issues in ownership, derivative use, and online distribution.

In The News

**Lichtenstein Painting Set to Fetch $50 Million**

If you have $50 million burning a hole in your back pocket, a painting by American pop artist Roy Lichtenstein, creator of the comic book homage, is up for auction on May 12 at Sotheby’s Contemporary Art Evening Sale in New York. “The Ring (Engagement)” features a phantom hand placing a ring on another finger, and encapsulates all of the major themes typical of Lichtenstein’s comic book tropes. The painting was on view at Sotheby’s Los Angeles in late March in preparation for the sale, and has been previously housed at London’s Tate and Tate Modern, the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., the Art Institute of Chicago and more. [http://tinyurl.com/pkferav](http://tinyurl.com/pkferav)

**San Francisco Exhibit Features Contemporary Collaboration**

Local contemporary artists in San Francisco were recently selected to work with artists with developmental disabilities for the exhibition “Super Contemporary,” featuring the unique creative process that is collaboration. Creativity Explored, a nonprofit art center and gallery that promotes and exhibits art created by artists with developmental disabilities, gave each pairing a few months to do the collaborative project highlighting the process and friendship that naturally develops. The two artists were encouraged to forge their own artistic path and exhibit whatever work emerged as a result. The exhibit is one way Creativity Explored hopes to ditch the term “outsider art,” which has been used to describe some artists who work with developmental disabilities. Alicia McCarthy, one of the five artists selected to partner with Creativity Explored said, “It's really just like any studio, just a lot of people making art.” The exhibition runs from April 30 to June 17 at Creativity Explored in San Francisco. [http://tinyurl.com/q9jo5qy](http://tinyurl.com/q9jo5qy)

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