Status Report on JAC Project

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The Japanese Art Catalog (JAC) Project is a cooperative project by NCC and Art and Cultural Exchange Japan, ACE Japan. Started in 1996, it attempts to develop in the United States a depository collection of exhibition catalogs from Japan. The Library of the Freer Gallery of Art was selected to be the depository library and receives an average of 500 volumes yearly.

As of the end of 1998 the Freer Gallery had received five shipments with a total of 2,463 volumes from ACE Japan. Of that total, 1,972 volumes were exhibition catalogs, 314 volumes were collection catalogs and 177 volumes were non-catalog materials. Non-catalog materials include regular monographs and journals published by Japanese museums. The majority of the exhibition catalogs were on Japanese art consisting of sixty-two percent modern art and fourteen percent pre-modern art. For the project's third-year review this fall, I would like to conduct a more detailed analysis of the subject content of the catalogs.

As of today, we have 1,228 bibliographic records in the RLIN database. The library has received six interlibrary loan requests and numerous inquiries about the collection. The materials are also used regularly by the library visitors.

Last year at this meeting I reported that the Library of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution was interested in housing Western art catalogs. However, the Hirshhorn Library could not meet the project criteria and decided not to become the depository library for Western art catalogs. Meanwhile, ACE Japan excluded Western art catalogs from the fifth shipment because there were enough catalogs on Japanese art.

The following is a message from Art Catalog Library, Japan.

Last year NCC initiated JAC Project Phase II and successfully collected eighty-two Japanese and Asian art exhibition catalogs from U.S. museums to be sent to the Art Catalog Library, Japan. Those catalogs have been highly appreciated by their users since they are not actively collected by Japanese libraries. The Art Catalog Library, Japan hopes that this project will last many years so that they can develop a substantial and rare collection of Japanese and Asian art exhibition catalogs from overseas.

Another major development is that the ACE Japan started a similar project with three other overseas libraries: House of Japanese Culture in Paris, National Library of Thailand in Bangkok, and the University of Heidelberg Dept. of Japanese Studies in Germany.

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