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## Editor's note

This special issue of the *Art Libraries Journal*, dedicated to current developments in catalogues raisonnés and collection catalogues, has been prompted by a range of important projects begun in the last few years which rethink, and in some cases, re-invent, the systematic documentation of sets of artworks for a digital environment. As successive waves of changes in information technology and online communication transform the world around us, art history and the documentation of visual arts are also evolving under the influence of new digital tools and methods.

A standard art reference publication since the 18th century, the catalogue raisonné is an essential scholarly tool for academic researchers, curators, dealers and collectors.<sup>1</sup> Online catalogues raisonnés are a fast growing publishing model, with tens of projects currently completed or in progress, and likely to overtake print ones in the near future. However, in this transitional environment, traditional scholarship methods, developed by and for a print culture, need to be adapted to respond to the challenges of digital media. With the new benefits and possibilities they bring they also raise a number of concerns, from preservation, versioning and historiographic record issues to image quality or legal ones.

Since its foundation in 1994, the Catalogue Raisonné Scholars Association has played a critical role in promoting new initiatives and fostering best practice in this area<sup>2</sup>. I am grateful to its President, Katy Rogers, responsible for the Robert Motherwell and Donald Judd catalogue raisonné projects, for her support and advice. I must also thank Stephen Bury, Chief Librarian, Frick Art Reference Library, for his ever helpful suggestions. Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to all contributors for their generosity in introducing a range of projects, from the experimental to the commercial, to the profession at large, many for the first time. Their contributions provide a state of the art overview of the major changes transforming the systematic documentation of artworks in the second decade of the 21st century.

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## References

1. *The Art catalogue index (A.C.I.): catalogues raisonnés & critical catalogues of artists 1780-2008* (Geneva: Blondeau, 2009) lists ca. 1,500 catalogues raisonnés of 900 artists born after 1780. The first of two planned volumes, it greatly expands the selection offered in *Art Books: A basic bibliography of monographs on artists* by Wolfgang Freitag (New York: Garland, 1997). IFAR (International Foundation for Art Research) maintains online databases of published catalogues raisonnés and of catalogues in preparation, both digital and in print.
2. The CRSA will be holding a two-day conference on current best practices in catalogue raisonné research and publishing, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, on June 13 and 14, 2015.

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Gustavo Grandal Montero

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