

EDITORIAL

August is not supposed to be the best month in which to visit Paris, but sunlight sparkled from fountains and from the fast-flowing rivulets sluicing the gutters; tourists queued to enter the Louvre, but beneath Pei's dazzling pyramid very nearly 200 art librarians, from some 20 different countries, found themselves the momentary and dynamic centre of a worldwide professional community.

The theme of the IFLA Section of Art Libraries' 1989 Pre-Conference was 'Le patrimoine culturel'; a variety of speakers addressed the role of the art library, of archives, and of museums, and the potential of visual resources, in the context of cultural heritage; more specifically, some speakers explored 'deux domaines de l'heritage culturel: celui très vaste de la religion, et celui de la mode'. In the Louvre, at the Musée d'Orsay, on the Seine in an illuminated *bateau mouche*, and at Chantilly, delegates were very much aware of 'le patrimoine français', and of the care, and flair, with which Paris has succeeded in combining conservation and continuity with creative (if controversial) renewal.

Many of the papers presented to the Section of Art Libraries at Paris will appear in the *Art Libraries Journal*. Some, including several concerned with fashion, are included in this issue. The next issue, due in March, will be a substantial publication devoted to 'Le patrimoine culturel'; other papers will be included in subsequent issues, focussing on, respectively, France and Spain, and in the case of the 'French' issue emphasising both visual resources and archives. A number of papers of a purely art historical nature, which enriched the conference and contributed to its evocation of 'le patrimoine', regrettably fall outside the scope of this journal.

It was announced at Paris that Italian colleagues have succeeded in launching an art libraries association. The Associazione italiana di biblioteche d'arte (BiArte) was launched at a meeting at Prato on 10th July 1989; the first president, very appropriately, is Rossella Todros, who perhaps more than anyone else has been responsible for bringing Italian colleagues together. We send them our warmest congratulations and best wishes. (For the background to the formation of BiArte, see Eve Leckey's article, 'Towards an Italian art libraries' association', in *Art Libraries Journal* vol. 14 no. 1 1989 p. 23-24). BiArte

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The Editorial in the last issue of *Art Libraries Journal* supported earlier pleas from the IFLA Section of Art Libraries, that IFLA should endeavour to remove financial and administrative barriers which discourage or prevent participation within IFLA of smaller associations, and of libraries and individuals with insufficient funds at their disposal. At its first Standing Committee meeting in Paris, the Section unanimously approved a resolution proposed from the Chair:

That IFLA explore and promote ways of eliminating financial restraints which limit or exclude the participation of smaller, or less wealthy, organisations, institutions or regions. To this end, the introduction of a sliding scale of membership fees should be examined.

It is very much to be hoped that IFLA will listen and take effective action.