The Team

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The Report

https://digpublishing.github.io/catalogues-study

Why This Study? Why Now?

- **We know <u>how</u> to do this, but to what end?**
  - Are our publications reaching the people we intend?
  - Are they worth our investment?

- **Giving voice to the users, not the makers**
  - What is the value of online scholarly publishing to our target audiences?
  - A comparative study of features, contents, user expectations

- **Benefiting the field**
  - Have user expectations changed since the OSCI final report in 2017?
  - First cross-institutional user-centered study of online publications since 2016
  - Can we start to build benchmarks? Can we reignite a conversation?

The Projects

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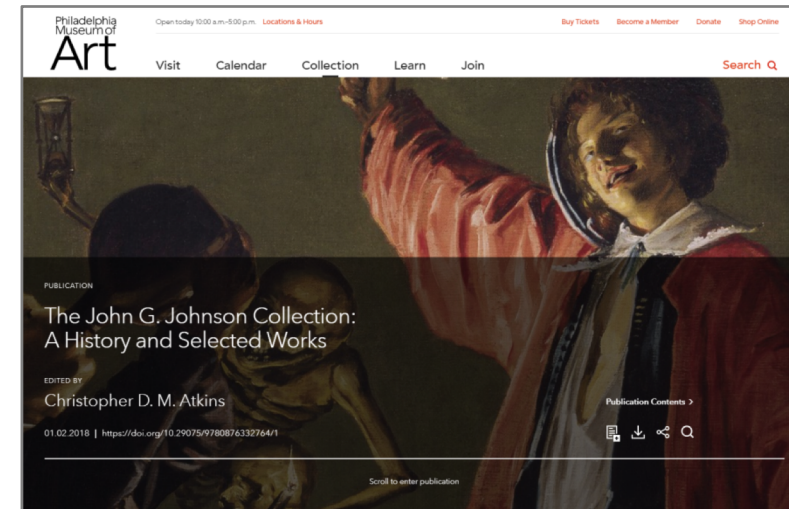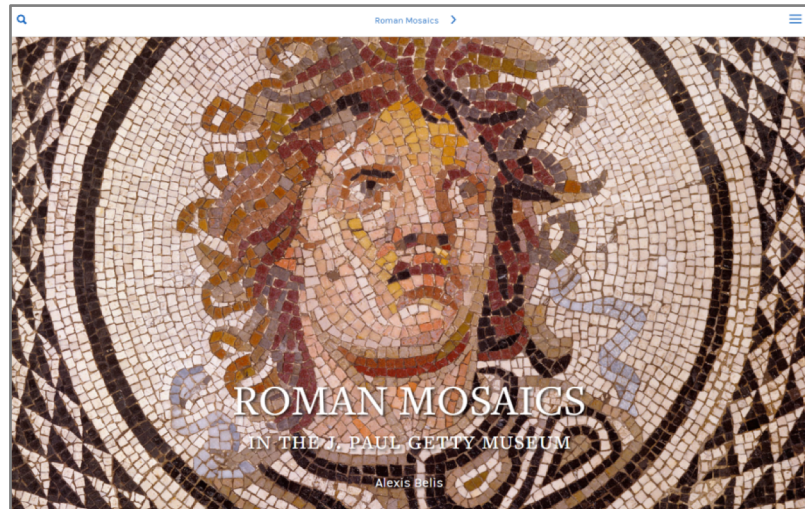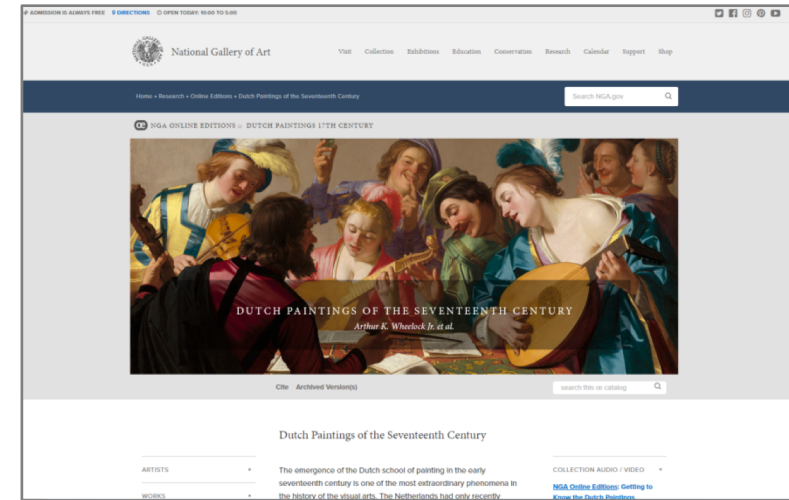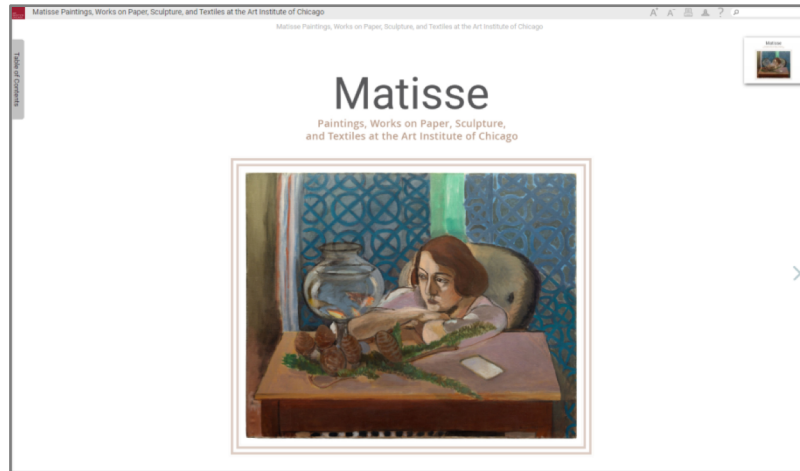
Art Institute of Chicago Digital Publications

artic.edu/digitalpublications
artic.edu/digitalmatisse
artic.edu/digitalmonet

- 14 publications since June 2014

- Evaluated two catalogues: *Monet Paintings and Drawings* and *Matisse Paintings, Works on Paper, Sculpture, and Textiles*

- Features: zoomable images, 360° rotating images, layered and annotated images, book-like navigation, citation tools

- What has changed since 2014?

- What do users expect in terms of tools and scholarly content?
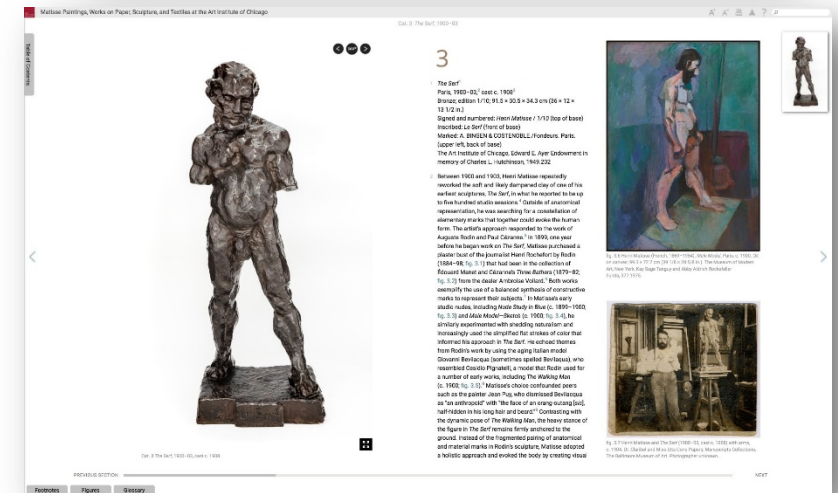
Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century

https://www.nga.gov/research/online-editions/17th-century-dutch-paintings.html

- Launched spring 2014 as first Online Edition

- Integrated in NGA collection pages

- Six catalogues (full or partial) published through spring 2019

- Are our target audiences finding and using this resource?

- What are the effects of collection page integration?

- What features should be preserved or changed?
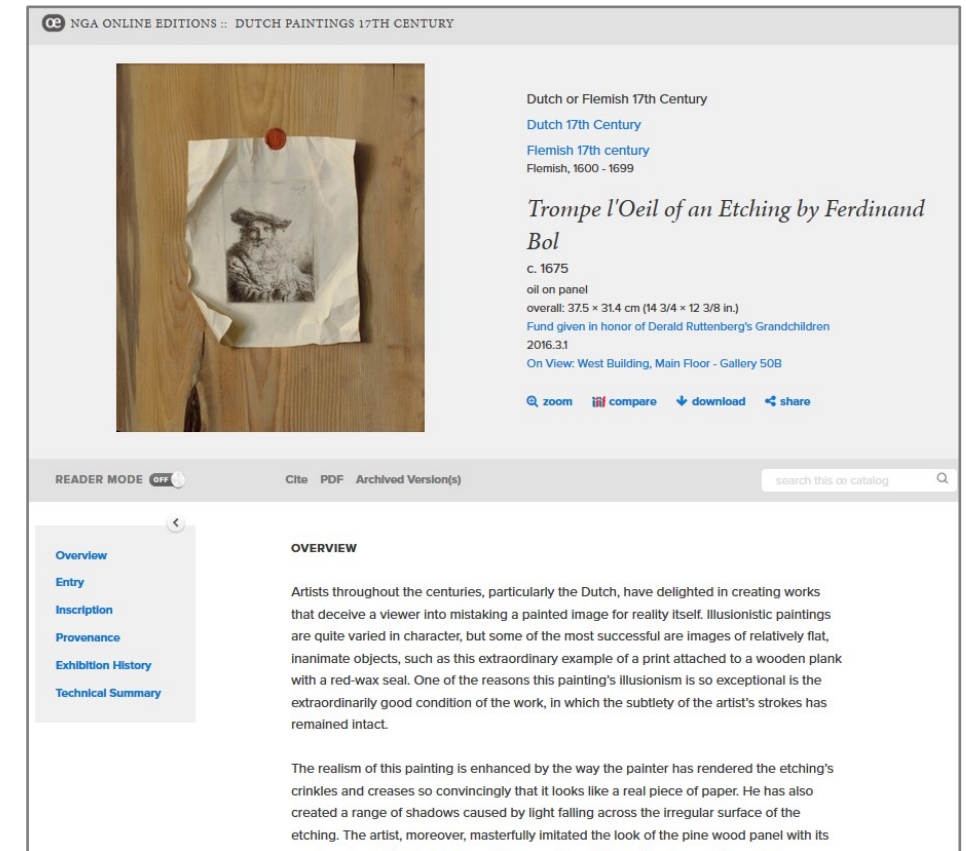
Roman Mosaics in the J. Paul Getty Museum

http://www.getty.edu/publications/romanmosaics/

- Launched spring 2016

- Getty's third online catalogue; second using Quire

- Features interactive maps, a number of different pop-up features, zoomable images

- Available online, in PDF, e-book, and paperback

- Linear organization and simple reader-oriented design

- Does our approach resonate with readers? Are the benefits clear? What improvements can we take into future catalogues and build into Quire?

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The John G. Johnson Collection: A History and Selected Works

https://publications.philamuseum.org/jgj/vol1

- Launched spring 2018

- PMA's first online scholarly publication

- Extensive benchmarking and formative evaluation

- Guiding principles:
  - Clear scholarship
  - Credible and engaging
  - Useful and usable
  - Persistence matters

- Did we succeed in meeting user expectations?

- The first of many to come; how can we improve?
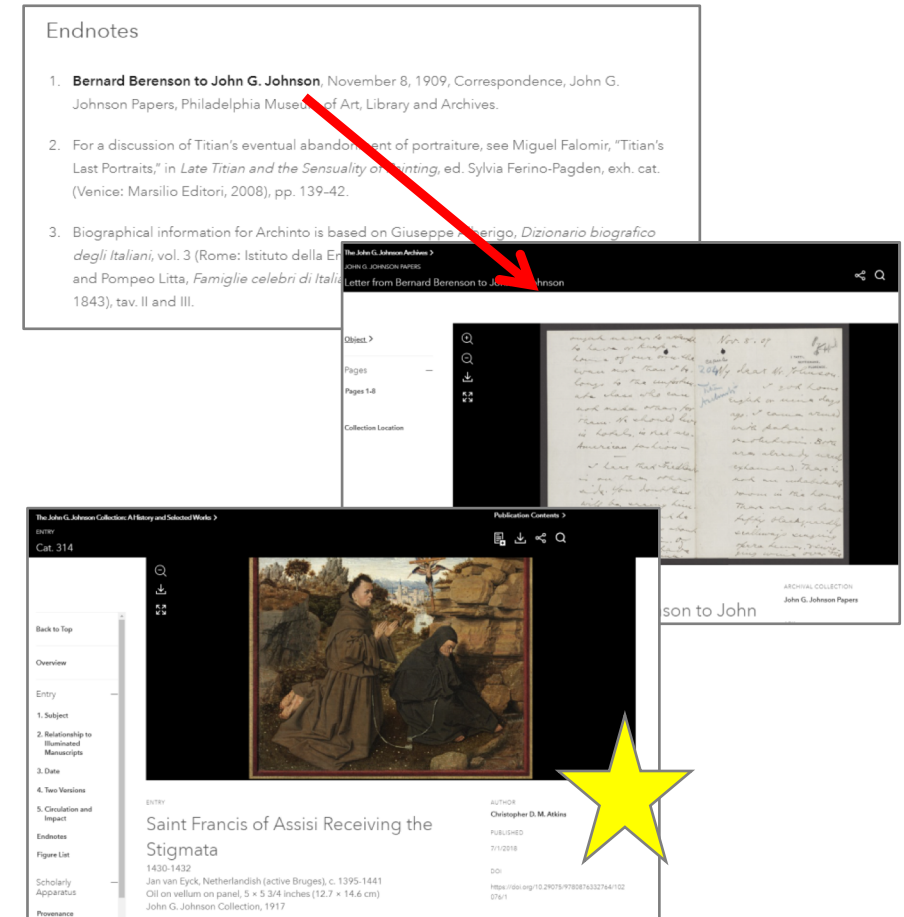
Research Questions

- **Marketing and Demographics**
  - Who is using the catalogues, and why?
  - How can they be marketed effectively?

- **Functionality and Design**
  - How do the catalogues perform in terms of usability?
  - What design and features work well for users, and what could be improved?

- **Scholarly Content**
  - Do users trust the scholarship of the catalogues?
  - What kinds of content are most useful?

- **Measuring Success**
  - How can we set quantitative and qualitative metrics for the success of these catalogues?

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Methodology

Review of past evaluations and related literature	Provided context for study Helped team to refine research questions
Interviews with catalogue developers and contributors	
Web analytics review	Provided hard numbers on traffic, visitor flow, depth and breadth of catalogue use, pages that receive most focus
Pop-up survey for existing users (n = 336)	Provided data on users' professions and motivations to use the catalogues
Email survey for potential users in target audience (n = 308)	Captured target audience's impressions after a surface-level review of a single catalogue, generated quantitative data on catalogue performance
Catalogue homework with focus group debriefing (n = 25)	Deep dive on functionality and content feedback, special focus on scholarly value and future possibilities

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"While immediately convenient, [digital publications are] bound to destroy Western perception of culture and downgrade us all to a literally prehistorical and pre-critical stage, highly technocratic, but devoid of human sense."

—Survey participant

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Major Findings: A Large and Diverse User Base

- Thousands of visitors each year

- Roughly evenly split between target (scholars/researchers) and non-target audiences

- Driven by interest in individual works

Catalogue design should be considered from a diverse array of user perspectives.

Target versus Non-Target Audiences among Catalogue Visitors

n = 334 (pop-up survey data)

Target Audiences 53%

Non-Target Audiences 47%
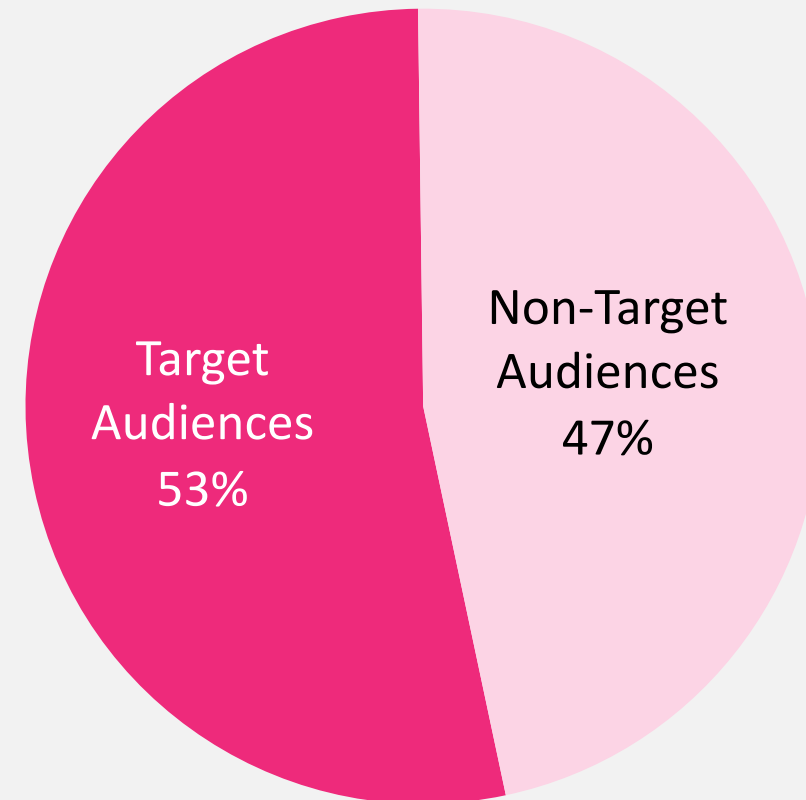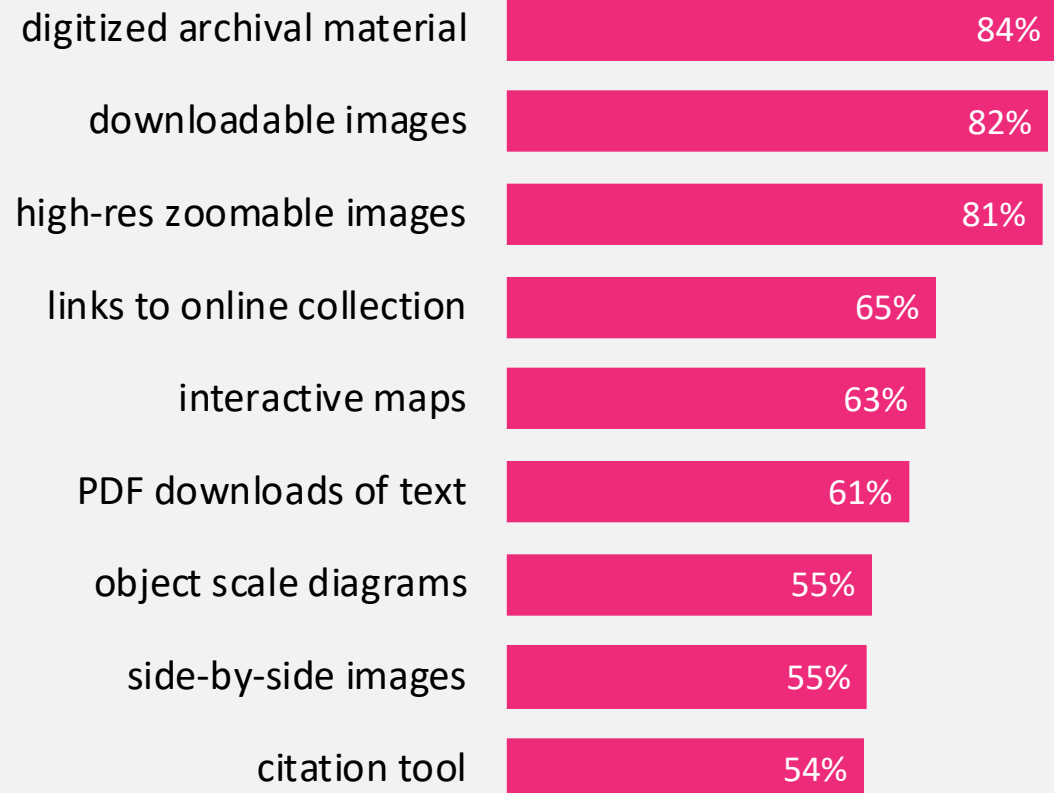
Major Findings: Value of Digital Tools

- Participants want all the information (but not all at once)

- High-quality images are of utmost importance to users

- Citation tools can highlight scholarly value of the catalogues

Provide information in layers. Invest in image-viewing tools, and make sure users can cite content easily.

Tools That "Greatly Enhanced" User Experience
n = 32–289 (email survey data)

■ Percent of survey respondents who gave tool this rating

Tool	Percent
digitized archival material	84%
downloadable images	82%
high-res zoomable images	81%
links to online collection	65%
interactive maps	63%
PDF downloads of text	61%
object scale diagrams	55%
side-by-side images	55%
citation tool	54%

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Major Findings: Design Preferences

- Participants today favor the continuous flow of a website over book-like navigation

- Participants need to be able to quickly assess where they are in the publication

- Users tend to prefer obvious tools and menus over sleek design

*Provide breadcrumb trails, easily accessible links to contents page, and labels for icons.*

The John G. Johnson Collection: A History and Selected Works >

Publication Contents >

ENTRY

Cat. 234
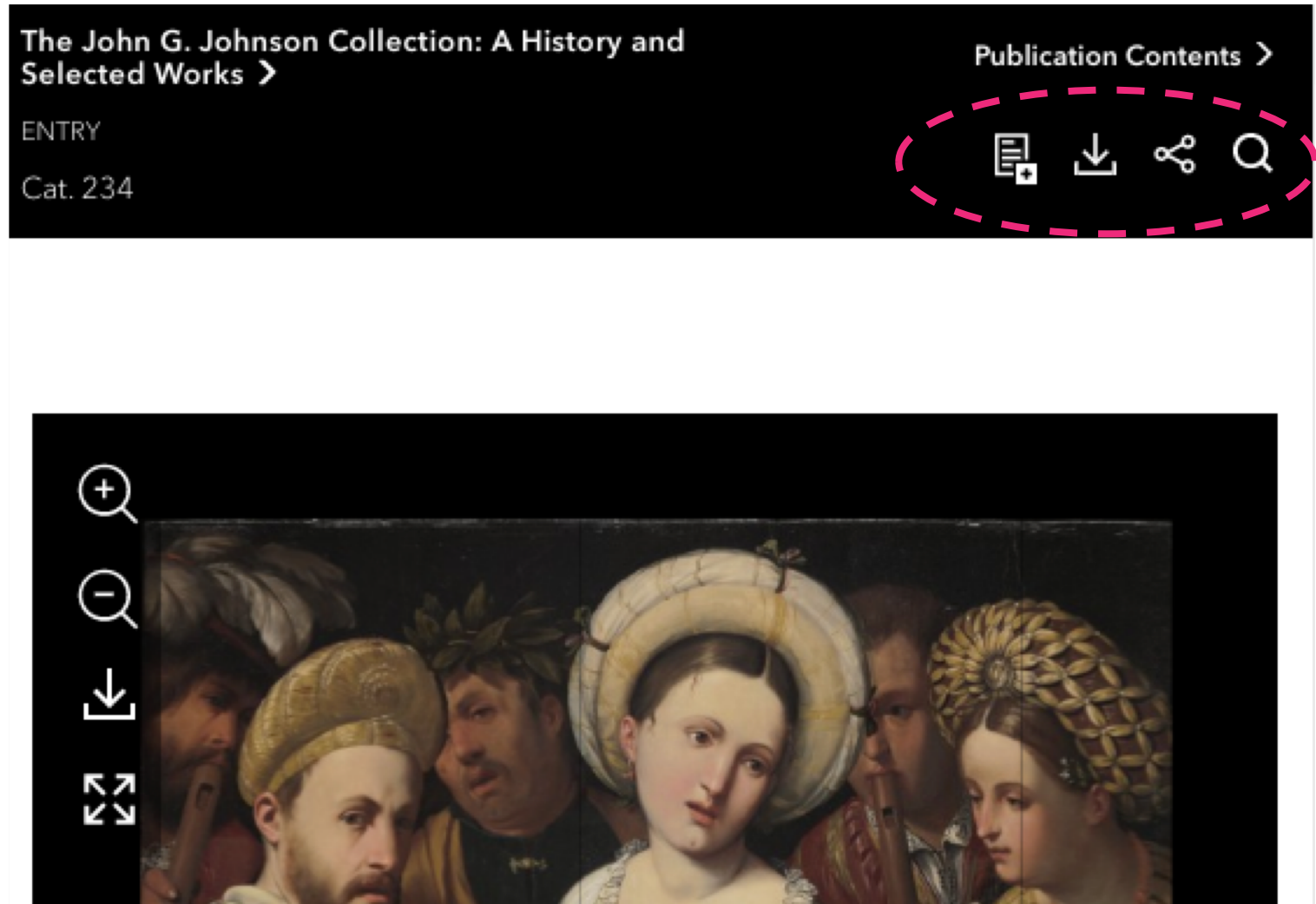
Major Findings: Scholarly Value

- The name of a museum can engender trust in catalogue content

- Users especially value the provenance, conservation, and technical information that museums can provide through firsthand experience with artworks

- Some users suspect museum biases in scholarly interpretive essays

Peer review and authorship matter and need to be emphasized.

Is This Resource Something You Would Feel Comfortable Citing for Your Work?
n = 300 (email survey data)

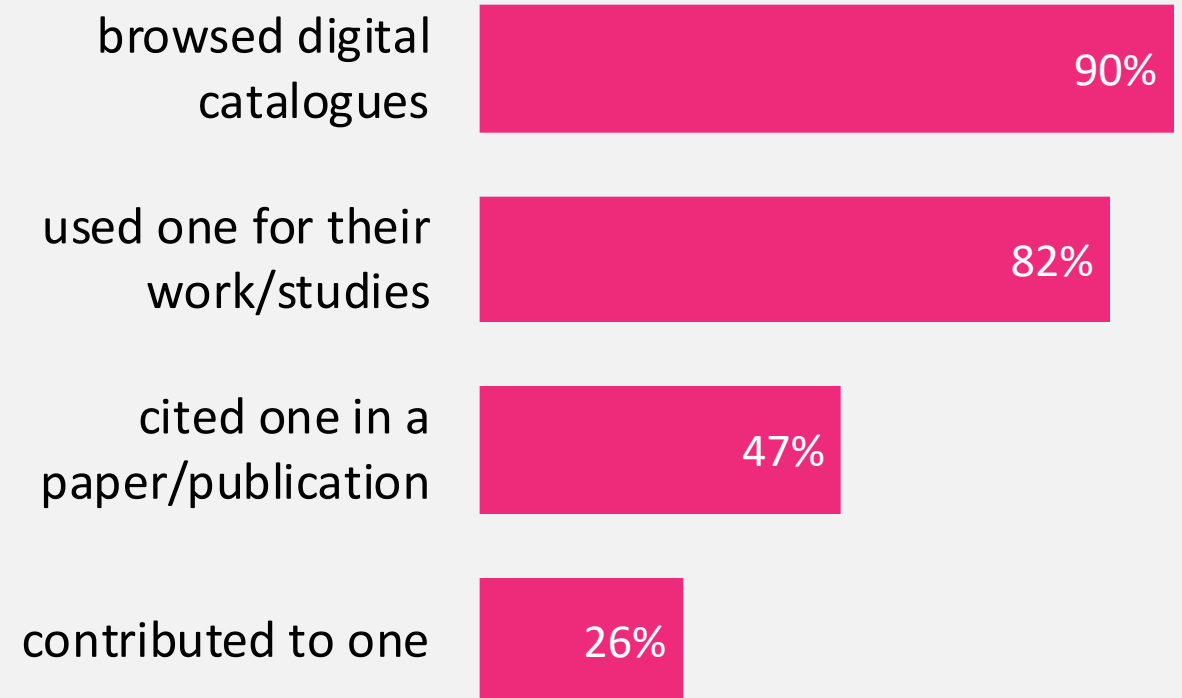|	
yes	80%
no	9%
N/A	11%
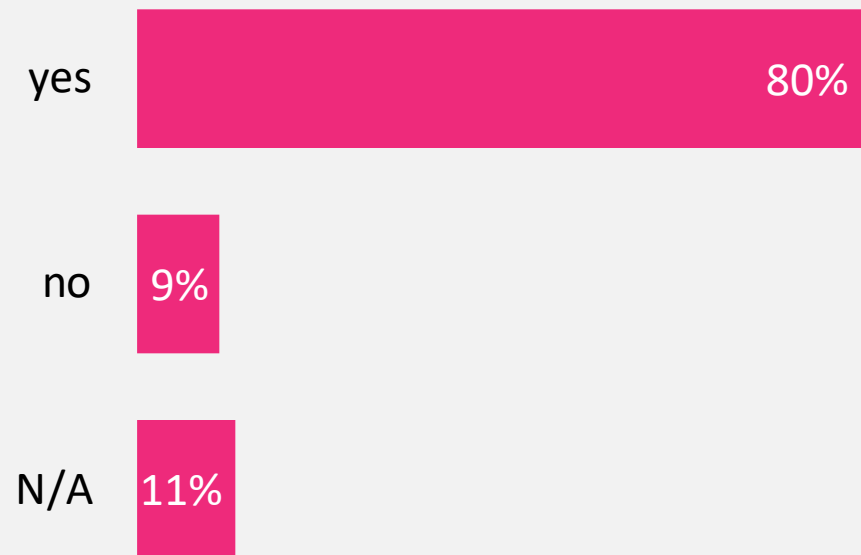
Major Findings: Digital Resources and Permanence

- Citing online materials does not cause as much hesitation/anxiety as it once did

- Users expect and even want change and updates

- Transparency about updates is important

Updates to catalogues should be indicated clearly. Catalogues should also include previous versions when possible and permanent links to content.

Target Audiences Who Say They Have...
n = 292–307 (email survey data)

browsed digital catalogues — 90%

used one for their work/studies — 82%

cited one in a paper/publication — 47%

contributed to one — 26%

What's Next: AIC

- **Perceptions of Scholarly Value**
  - Highlight contributors/peer reviewers better
  - Unnecessary book-like navigation

- **Clearer Contents and Tools**
  - Label and explain tool functionality
  - Highlight digital-only capabilities
  - Enhance linking

- **Keep Going**
  - Users are excited about the contents!
  - Less white space!

IVAN ALBRIGHT
PAINTINGS AT THE
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
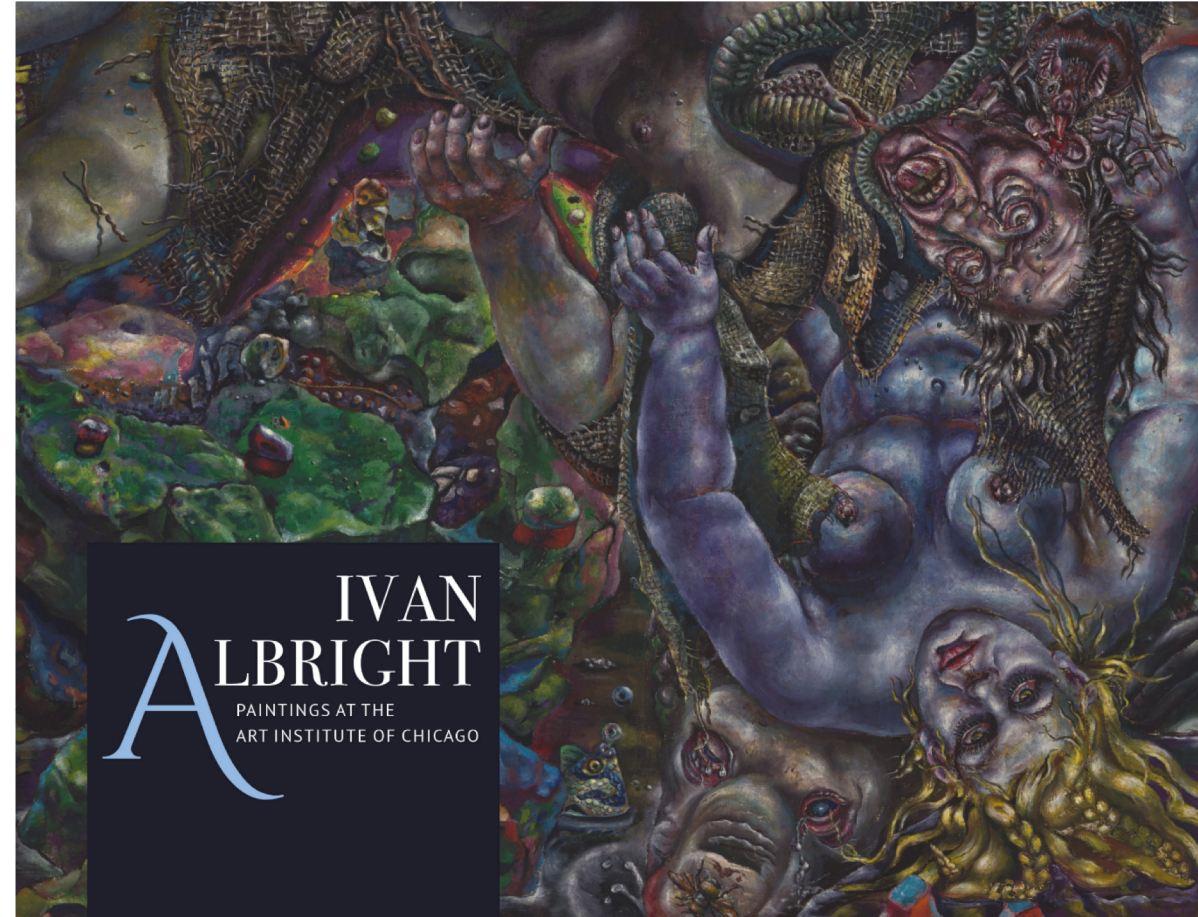
What's Next: NGA

- **Collection Page Integration**
    - Continue to evaluate the impacts of collection page integration on traffic and audiences
    - Improve findability for target audiences
    - Look at existing referral traffic
    - Improve users' sense of catalogue scope
    - Highlight navigation options within catalogues
    - Address duplicate or confusing tools

- **Feature: Reader Mode**
    - Improve experience for laptop users

French Paintings of the Nineteenth Century

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What's Next: Getty

- **Signpost Navigation**
  - Expose a singular TOC early and often
  - Help users know what a link does before they click it
  - Make it easy for readers to get back to where they were

- **Show Them the Money!**
  - Downloads (full catalogue and individual pages)
  - Revision history and policy
  - Permanence
  - Peer review

Ancient Carved Ambers, French Sculpture, Rococo Furniture, Etruscan Art

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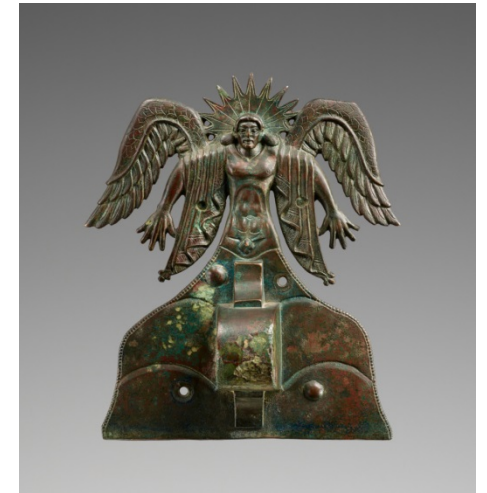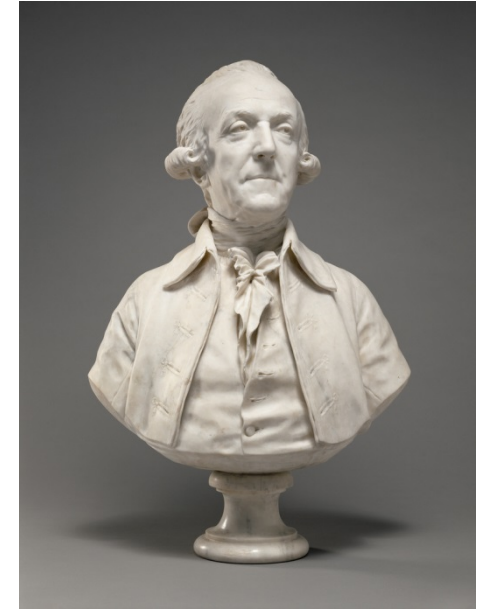
What's Next: PMA

- **Improve Findability**
  - Strategies to improve organic/search
  - Search and linkages within philamuseum.org

- **Navigation**
  - Design of sticky header and persistent site-wide navigation
  - Clearly signal publication structure and contents
  - Connections between archives and object pages

- **Signal Scholarship**
  - Explain DOIs
  - Peer review matters

What's Next: You

Read and share the report

https://digpublishing.github.io/catalogues-study

Join the conversation

https://digpublishing.github.io

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Thank you!
Questions?

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