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**Social classification and  
folksonomy in art museums:  
Early data from the steve.museum  
tagger prototype**

**Jennifer Trant**

ASIS&T SIG-CR Workshop  
November 3, 2006

<http://www.steve.museum>

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**Why tag in  
art museums?**

<http://www.steve.museum>

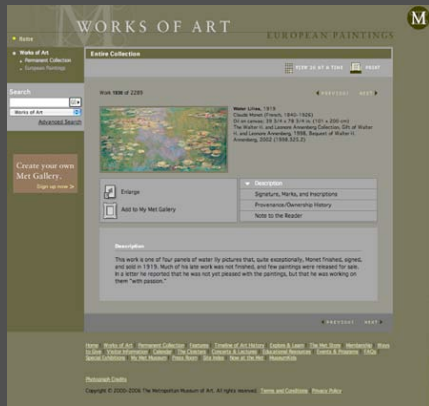
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WHY TAG IN ART MUSEUMS?



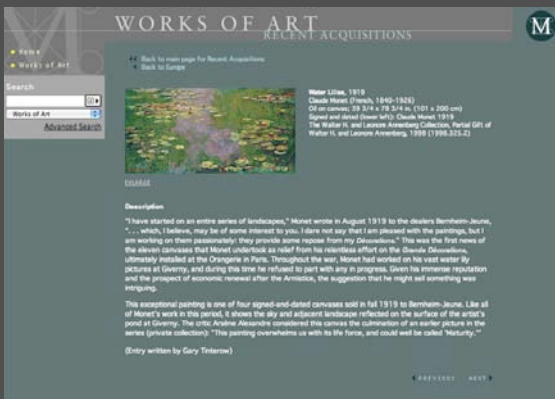
≠ Impressionism

<http://www.steve.museum>



Really Well Documented

<http://www.steve.museum>



Lots of Scholarly Research, but ...

<http://www.steve.museum>

From: J. P. xxxxxx@xxxxxx.com  
 Date: Sat, 26 Aug 2006 11:24:43 -0700  
 To: timeline@metmuseum.org  
 Subject: Looking for a painting

Please help:

I have been looking on and off for years for this painting. The painting is of a very well dressed renaissance man standing in a room (a library) in front of him on a table is a large hour glass. The painting has very rich colors. I have talked to a lot of people and they have said they have seen this painting but can't remember its name or the name of the artist.

Could you please use your resources to find this painting?

Can they help us answer user queries?

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Possibly the desired painting

<http://www.steve.museum>

What "J. P." knows:

- painting
- Renaissance
- standing
- man
- very well dressed
- library
- hourglass
- table
- rich colors

What a Met curator knows:

**Portrait of a Man**, ca. 1520–25  
 Moretto da Brescia (Alessandro Bonvicino)  
 (Italian, Brescian, born about 1498, died 1554)  
 Oil on canvas; 34 1/4 x 32 in. (87 x 81.3 cm)  
 Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.79)

Provenance: Maffei, Brescia (by 1760, as "Ritratto d'uomo con carta in mano, ed Orologio, di Callisto da Lodi"); by descent to contessa Beatrice Erizzo Maffei Fenaroli Avogadro, Palazzo Fenaroli, Brescia (by 1853—at least 1857, as by Moretto); her daughter, contessa Maria Livia Fenaroli Avogadro, later marchesa Fassati, Brescia (in 1862); her son, marchese Ippolito Fassati, Milan (by 1878—at least 1912); [Elia Volpi, Florence, by 1915–16; sold to Knoedler]; [Knoedler, New York, 1916–28; sold to MMA]

Can we help find it?

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- bangs
- beard
- border
- cape
- contemplation
- elbow
- hourglass
- landscape
- learned
- man
- mountain
- moustache
- nobleman
- painting
- portrait
- ring
- robe
- Renaissance
- scholar
- scroll
- time
- trees



volunteer supplied tags might help

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# an experiment in tagging

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MEET STEVE

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### THE ART MUSEUM SOCIAL TAGGING PROJECT

About Steve  
Join the first experiment in social tagging of art museum collections.

Tag Art  
How's that?

Get Code

Application Development  
• Tag Art  
• Museums  
• Researchers  
• Developers

Research  
• Researchers  
• Developers

Discussions

Reference  
What is Steve? Steve is a research project whose participants are building a tagging tool, collecting tags, analyzing data, and engaging in discussion. We hope to apply what we learn to improving access to works of art. Here's a diagram of Steve's world.

Press

Steering Committee

asia harvest river  
red  
collage gold prim  
couple wood art museum social tagging project  
experiment community research development code application discussions reference press steering committee artwork tagging tool access to works of art improving access research project participants building a tagging tool collecting tags analyzing data engaging in discussion apply what we learn diagram of Steve's world

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MEET STEVE

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### THE ART MUSEUM SOCIAL TAGGING PROJECT

Why tag art?  
See art you haven't seen before.  
Look in a new way.  
Describe works of art in your own words.  
Exchange your ideas with the community of art lovers.  
Lead others to artworks they wouldn't normally see.  
Create a personal relationship to works.  
Let museums know what you see.  
This means you tag, the richer the experience for all.  
Log in, register, or just start tagging images.

Login ID

Password

Log in

Learn more about Steve

wood couple prim

<http://www.steve.museum>



**preliminary results**



Tagging the same work

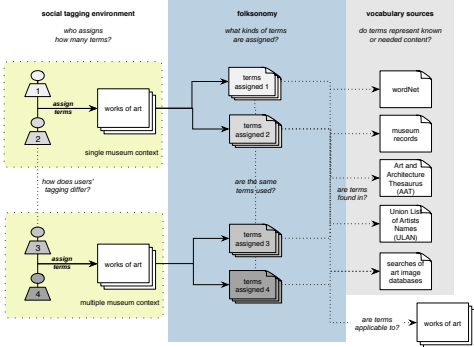
Assistants: 42%  
Librarians: 29%  
Both: 29%

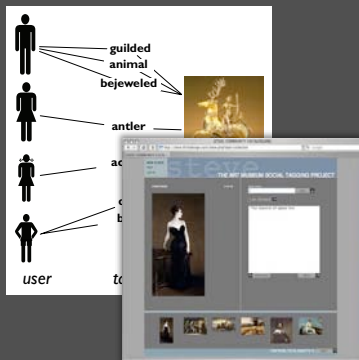
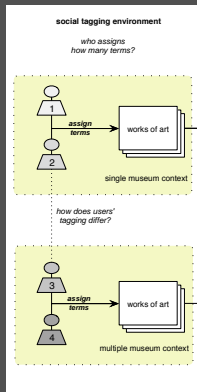


Public vs. Professional Vocabularies

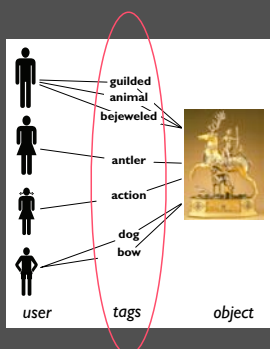
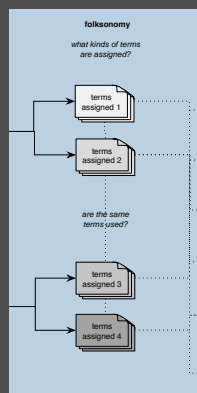
# a research project

### social tagging and folksonomy analysis

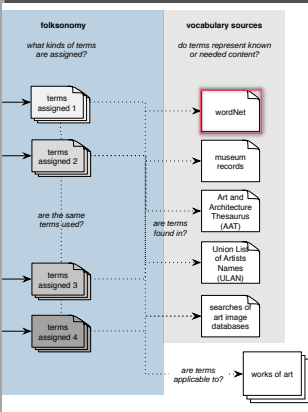




What do taggers do?



How do tags vary?



**WordNet Search - 2.1**

Return to WordNet Home

Privacy - Help

SEARCH DISPLAY OPTIONS: (Select option to change) [1] (Change)

Enter a word to search for:  Search WordNet

KEY: "S:" = Show Synset (semantic) relations, "W:" = Show Word (lexical) relations

**Noun**

- S: (n) **storm**, **violent storm** (a violent weather condition with winds 64-72 knots (11 on the Beaufort scale) and precipitation and thunder and lightning)
- S: (n) **storm**, **tempest** (a violent commotion or disturbance) "the storms that had characterized their relationship had died away"; "it was only a tempest in a teapot"
- S: (n) **storm** (a direct and violent assault on a stronghold)

**Verb**

- S: (v) **storm**, **rage**, **storm** (behave violently, as if in state of a great anger)
- S: (v) **storm**, **force** (take by force) "Storm the fort"
- S: (v) **storm** (rain, hail, or snow hard and be very windy, often with thunder or lightning) "If it storms, we'll need shelter"
- S: (v) **storm** (blow hard) "It was storming all night"
- S: (v) **storm**, **surprise** (attack by storm; attack suddenly)

Return to WordNet Home

Exploring the nature of tags: are tags real words?

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## A RESEARCH PROJECT

**folksonomy**  
what kinds of terms are assigned?

- terms assigned 1
- terms assigned 2
- are the same terms used?
- terms assigned 3
- terms assigned 4

**vocabulary sources**  
do terms represent known or needed content?

- wordNet
- museum records
- Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)
- Union List of Artists Names (ULAN)
- searches of art image databases
- are terms applicable to? → works of art

Exploring the nature of tags: are they terms we use?

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## A RESEARCH PROJECT

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Exploring the nature of tags: are they terms from our discipline?

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## A RESEARCH PROJECT

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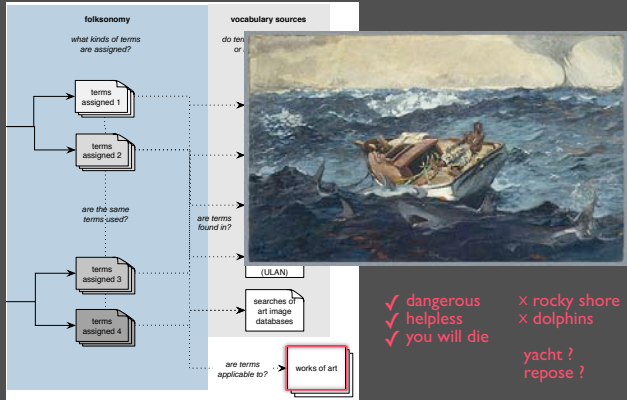
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Exploring the nature of tags: are they terms searchers use?

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Exploring the nature of tags: are they appropriate to the work?

# Can Museums Learn From Tagging?

## CAN MUSEUMS LEARN FROM TAGGING?



Visitor Interests



Teachable Moments



Visitor Involvement



Pathways to Participation

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CAN MUSEUMS LEARN FROM TAGGING?



Edward Hicks (American, 1780-1849), *Peaceable Kingdom*, ca. 1830-32  
Oil on canvas, 17 7/8 x 23 7/8 in. (45.4 x 60.6 cm)  
Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch, 1970 (1970.283.1)  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Co-existence

<http://www.steve.museum>

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thanks

<http://steve.museum/>

[jtrant@archimuse.com](mailto:jtrant@archimuse.com)

<http://www.steve.museum>