

Images in documentation and their future preservation

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It is a long time tradition to enrich object-documentation with images. Drawings and photographs are not only taken to show how an object looks - they also play an important role in the documentation of different states in the history of an object. Restorers use photography to document - but also to analyse - damages. Images of objects are also taken to advertise an exhibition or to be printed in a catalogue. Other images are created to be used as illustrations in museums websites. ... There are many reasons to photograph objects. Quality in such photographs is directly related to the intended use. The turn to digital production devices used to create such photographs caused some changes: The number of photographs of any given object begins to increase. The variety among these photographs seems to be without limitations: While in "analogue times" there were only some defined paper-formats in use, now there are many different digital formats, with different resolution, different colour-spaces, etc. No one will be able to keep all those digital images in relation to every given object.

The paper argues that there can be - and have to be - clearly defined institutional rules defining which images should be kept. It gives some ideas on how such rules could look like and how they could be implemented. Another question the paper asks: Photographs are used to document objects - how to document such documentary photographs?