

# Practical Recommendations by Anke Napp, archivist at Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar der Universität Hamburg

This "list of don't" is based on a long experience in digitizing slides and diapositives.

## a. Scanning slides

- Don't try to use your flatbed scanner to make two images of the same object (i.e. slide frame with the information on it and glass plate image) in order to put them together back later in postprocessing. It works, but will take a giant amount of your time. Plus, it often still does not look like the real thing.

## b. Photographing slides

- Mount your camera (tripod or repro stand), so every slide is photographed from the same angle and height (it will save time in postprocessing).
- Don't use a camera without flash as the images will get blurry and yellowish. The working space is seldom bright enough to work without a flash.
- Don't use a camera with built-in flash that can't be switched off, as it comes down directly onto your slide and its glass plate and thus will create a big reflection (you won't see anything from the image content anymore). That said, you'll need a camera with the possibility to add an external flash (no bridge camera, no pocket camera).
- Lights: The whatsoever lighting has to be to the left and to the right of your slide (use a repro stand or make sure your lights hold their position).
- Don't think one lamp on one side is sufficient (it will create shadows and a darker half)
- Don't use normal desktop lamps standing around in your office for lighting (the images will get brown-yellowish). You'll need calibrated white light.
- Don't use normal light bulbs in your light table for the same reason. But the most tables are calibrated anyway.
- Don't forget to clean your light table, slides and camera lens before you start. In most cases, clear water and a cloth for wiping is enough for the slides. Cleaning fluids tend to create 'stripes' and are sometimes harmful to the slide's paper frame
- Make sure you have everything switched on (don't forget the flash lights or the light table, as stupid as it may sound).
- Don't "wobble". Your camera may be fixed, but the whole table might be set in motion as you lean against it positioning your slide. Set the time clock of your camera to a little delay. So you have time to get your hands and body off and everything stands still, before the image is taken.
- Every camera is different. I'm using aperture 0,8 and exposure time 1/100. You should make a few tests to determine your best camera mode, especially have an eye on the white balance in your camera's menu!

verstellbarer Reprorstand





We use now a CANON EOS 07, connected to the monitor to the left. The position of the camera on the reprostand is controlled via remote, visible to the right. The light table is adjusted for white light.