ARLIS/NA MIDSTATES

SPRING 2019 CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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Letter from the Chair

Anna Simon

Greeting Midstates Chapter Members and happy spring to you all! Throughout the long winter our membership has been busy in their libraries and with ARLIS/NA. At the Salt Lake City conference in March what organizers have known for some time was finally made public—Midstates will be hosting the 50th anniversary ARLIS/NA conference in Chicago in 2022! Chicago was the site of the Society’s first conference in 1972 when a group of ten art, architecture, and design librarians met during the annual American Library Association. Led by Judith Hoffberg, they gathered to reimagine the future of the profession. In three short years we’ll again gather to discuss the dynamic directions that lay ahead, but also to honor, celebrate, and reflect upon our foundation and history. Many thanks to Doug Litts, Rebecca Price, Viveca Pattison Robichaud, Melanie Emerson, and Cara List for developing our winning proposal.

As we prepare for the Chicago conference we will continue to build upon recent efforts to expand our membership base and incorporate students into our chapter. Last fall I (remotely) participated in a Nontraditional Library Careers Panel Discussion hosted by the Special Libraries Association at the University of Illinois iSchool. Organized by Melanie Emerson, Dean of the Library and Special Collections at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and joined by fellow panelist Stephanie Fletcher, E-resources and Reference Librarian at Ryerson & Burnham Libraries,
we discussed our career trajectories and answered questions for 37 total participants--who I’m told really enjoyed the experience. I know many of us counsel individual students about the field of art librarianship and special libraries, but this was a great opportunity to efficiently broadcast (dare I say proselytize?) on the details of our field. We hope to repeat this event at the University of Wisconsin-Madison iSchool, and I encourage others to participate in or initiate similar events in your area.

I first joined ARLIS/NA as a Midstates student member when I was in graduate school at Indiana University Bloomington, some 10 years ago. I hold dear many of those early friendships and the mentoring provided by ARLIS/NA members. The welcoming, supportive community of art and design librarians that I found confirmed for me that I was in the right field. This year’s winner of the William C. Bunce Travel award exemplifies this spirit. Mackenzie Salisbury, Reference + Instruction Librarian at the John M. Flaxman Library at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, spoke on two panels at the 2019 conference, helped to co-organize the New & International Attendees Reception as a member of the Mentoring Committee, and serves as an ARLIS/NA Midstates Chapter mentor. She’s also our Midstates Newsletter Editor. Mackenzie, congratulations and thank you for all your contributions--particularly your support of new members!

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Fall meeting (details forthcoming). Before then, some things to look forward to include: the possibility of a joint meeting with the Ohio Valley Chapter in Fall 2020, a new ARLIS/NA website portal on which our chapter blog will be hosted (coming later this year), and the selection of our 2022 Conference Chairs. Behind the scenes I’ll be working on moving Chapter documentation to Basecamp, our official project management website, to ensure our records are easily available for future leadership. And speaking of leadership--thank you so much to Sarah Carter, Melanie Emerson, and Stephanie Fletcher for leading the Midstates meeting in Salt Lake City and (for Melanie and Stephanie) continuing to assist with Chapter responsibilities after their appointments have officially concluded.

Finally, thank you to all our Midstates chapter members for the work you do in your libraries everyday!

Sincerely,
Anna Simon | Chair, ARLIS/NA Midstates Chapter
Spring 2019 Meeting Recap

BY MACKENZIE SALISBURY

The spring meeting was held against the dramatic backdrop of the Wasatch Mountain Range at the annual conference in Salt Lake City. Larissa Garcia, our new Secretary/Treasurer, joined Melanie Emerson, Past Chair, and Sarah Carter, Vice-Chair/Chair Elect, in leading the meeting in lieu of Chair Anna Simon, who could not attend this year’s conference.

Rebecca Price discussed the progress in transferring our current website to a Wordpress hosted and designed site. We also put a call out for images of the conference or other ARLIS/NA meetings that can be used to enhance our web presence. Additionally, members spoke about the new website’s potential for recruiting members and students.

The majority of the meeting was spent discussing the 2022 Conference that will be hosted by Midstates in Chicago. It’s the 50th Anniversary of ARLIS/NA! There were many logistical questions from those in attendance, and Doug Litts gave the group some insight into the timeline and expectations. Later this summer a call will go out to Midstates members asking for conference planning co-chairs, and these names will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

While it was not discussed directly at the meeting, Melanie Emerson did share the original proposal documentation that was submitted to the ARLIS/NA Executive Board. This document highlighted the kinds of accommodations, travel options, and attractions that make Chicago a great choice for 2022. Lyn Korenic inquired about the organization’s archives, and suggested we consult them for photographs and information about the 20th annual conference, which Chicago also hosted (there were costumes?!). There was also discussion around our chapter commissioning and selling an artist’s book as a fundraiser, potentially by the pop-up artist Shawn Sheehy.
Final announcements included Karen Stafford, Head of Technical Services at Ryerson & Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago, mentioning changes to their artists files collection (to learn more ask about her conference presentation “The Changing Shape of an Art Museum Library Pamphlet File,” part of the session “Better to Receive?: Approaches to Building, Managing, and Promoting Artist Files Collections”). Also, the next Midwestern Art Cataloging Discussion Group (MACDG) meeting will be October 4, 2019 at Notre Dame.

Terrie Wilson announced that the Michigan State University fine arts library will open in the fall and Lyn Korenic said the 50th anniversary of the Kohler Art Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison, is in 2020. Korenic is co-curating an exhibit of UW-Madison alumni artists’ books and their oral histories; Anna Simon is editing an e-catalog to accompany the exhibit.

The meeting ended with discussions of locations for the Fall 2019 meeting. Potential cities include Cincinnati, Cleveland, Bloomington, IN, and Madison. If anyone is interested in hosting, please contact Anna Simon.

I also wanted to (and forgot to at the meeting), extend a sincere thank you for receiving the Bunce Travel Award this year. I was honored to have been able to attend and participate in this year’s conference, in no small part because of this award! It was an eventful conference and I was glad to be a part of it.

Snapshots of Salt Lake City by Mackenzie Salisbury
NEW CURATING AND EXHIBITIONS INTEREST GROUP

by Carol Ng-He, Exhibits Coordinator, Arlington Heights Memorial Library
Founder + Organizer, Chicago Area Archivists’ Curating and Exhibitions Interest Group

In my current role as an exhibits coordinator, learning about strategies, best practices and trends in exhibit development fascinates me. I have had the fortune to be able to plan and deliver different types of exhibits for a wide range of audiences in my library. For me, exhibits are not only information powerhouses, they are also effective vehicles to call the public to action for any given topic.

In Chicago, while there are groups and networks that engage professionals in museum exhibitions, I found that resources and educational opportunities on curating and exhibitions for librarians and archivists are limited and it deserved more attention. Exhibits have been gaining more traction and interest across public libraries as a way to engage the community, and it makes sense to me that it would be a perfect time to draw together folks in the library field to discuss curating and exhibitions. Thus, a new Curating and Exhibitions Interest Group was born in January 2019 as an affiliate to Chicago Area Archivists, a volunteer-run organization dedicated to providing opportunities for local archivists, historians, and librarians and others in the Chicago metro area for discussion, social interaction and education.

Snapshots of the tour. Image Credit: Carol Ng-He.
The first meeting of the group included a special tour with Will Hansen, Director of Reader Services and Curator of Americana, who curated Melville: Finding America at Sea (January 18 – April 6, 2019) at Newberry Library on March 23, 2019. The exhibition showcased about 150 items from Newberry's rich collection of Melville's works and was on view in the Roger J. Trienens Galleries. The theme of our event was named “Exhibition as Visual Storytelling: Curator Tour at Newberry Library.” A small group of the Chicago Area Archivists members and interested individuals from the general public participated in the event, learning about the conceptualization and design process of the exhibition, ranging from developing narratives, labeling strategies, staffing, branding, exhibit programming, logistics, to funding. The event started with a presentation by Will Hansen, followed by a tour in the exhibition in the galleries.

The Curating and Exhibitions Interest Group is open to all and does not require membership of the Chicago Area Archivists to join. Some future potential topics that the group may explore include but are not limited to curating exhibitions in academic libraries, exhibition policies, digital exhibitions, diversity and inclusion in exhibit design, interpretive planning, community-curated projects, and teaching exhibition development for archivists.

To learn more about the group or join the group, please visit http://www.chicagoarchivists.org/Interest-Groups or email info@chicagoarchivists.org.
AN INTERVIEW WITH MEREDITH KAHN
by Mackenzie Salisbury

Hi Meredith! Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you came to librarianship?

I started my first library job almost twenty years ago as a college freshman—working circulation at the University of Michigan Shapiro Library. Later, while in graduate school at the University of Colorado-Boulder, I worked in both the campus library and a departmental visual resources collection. I enjoyed working in libraries because it allowed me to help people solve problems, and gave me an opportunity to learn about a range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. I went to library school at the University of Michigan after finishing my MA in art history, and then returned to the University of Colorado-Boulder for a job as an art and architecture librarian. In 2011, I returned to the University of Michigan (again!) to take a position as a scholarly communication librarian. Outside of work, I enjoy drinking natural wine and live-tweeting my local city council meetings.

What is your current role and institution affiliation?

My role in the University of Michigan Libraries has changed quite a bit since 2011. As a scholarly communication librarian, I got to work with a fabulous group of colleagues in the library’s publishing division, including editorial, production, and marketing staff at the University of Michigan Press. In 2015, I had the opportunity take what I had learned back to the work of liaison librarianship when I moved into a new position as the Women’s Studies Librarian. In this role, I am the liaison to the Women’s & Gender Studies Department. I teach research instruction, offer specialized reference services, and handle collection development for the areas of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies. I think my scholarly communication experience makes me a better liaison librarian because now I have a deeper understanding of open access, the economics of academic publishing, and emerging trends in resource management and licensing.

Where did you first hear of ARLIS and our chapter?

While in graduate school, I had excellent mentors who were deeply involved in both ARLIS/NA and the Midstates chapter, and they encouraged me to get involved as well. The society and the Midstates chapter were a big part of my early career development. I was able to attend my first ARLIS/NA annual conference in 2008 thanks to the William C. Bunce Travel Award! In 2016, I was asked to serve on the ARLIS/NA Open Access Task Force, which gave me an opportunity to re-engage with the organization after several years away. As with my liaison librarian role, I was happy to bring my experience in scholarly communication to my work with the society. In 2018, I co-chaired the ARLIS/NA Humanities Commons Planning Task Force, and was appointed as the society’s first Open Access Coordinator.
Can you tell us a little about the Humanities Commons project?

Humanities Commons is a non-profit network for scholars and societies in the humanities. It provides tools for communication and collaboration as well as a repository for sharing research and creative output with the academy at large. CAA and the Modern Language Association are among its founding societies, though anyone (yes, anyone!) in the humanities (including independent scholars) can join.

I think the truly radical idea behind the Humanities Commons is building tools to support scholarly communities that are owned by those communities themselves. As a non-profit supported by foundations, libraries, and scholarly societies, Humanities Commons gives us an alternative to big commercial publishers and their “pivot to workflow.” Rather than buying services from a vendor and allowing them to monetize the data they extract from our content and interactions, we can take advantage of a platform that was designed to meet the needs of humanists, and that provides a robust technical infrastructure for communication and collaboration.

...the truly radical idea behind the Humanities Commons is building tools to support scholarly communities that are owned by those communities themselves.

Humanities Commons has three main functions:

- Groups: flexible communities for discussion of shared interests
- Sites: easy to create and manage WordPress sites for both groups and individuals
- CORE repository: a trusted repository to share and preserve a range of digital objects, including tools for citation and attribution.

The folks behind this initiative are looking to recruit new societies the join the network. ARLIS/NA will be one of the first groups of information professionals to join, which gives us a unique opportunity to bring our expertise and needs to the development of the Humanities Commons.
How do you see this as potentially being useful for chapters and the general membership?

I am so excited about the benefits Humanities Commons will bring to our membership. It will make our (non-Art Doc) publications more visible by improving their search engine optimization. Members and groups within the society will be able to create and manage Wordpress sites easily. And we’ll have more tools beyond listservs to communicate with one another. For chapters, all of this means we will have significantly more options (and support!) for communication and collaboration. As any of us who have served as chapter officers, committee chairs, or SIG moderators know, these service opportunities come with a lot of labor on our part to manage documentation, websites, communication channels, and the like. An ARLIS/NA Humanities Commons will make a lot of this work easier on us, and will help the society and its chapters be more responsive to the needs of our members.

In addition, we can participate in scholarly conversations, groups, and websites with other humanists using the Commons network. This gives us the opportunity to strengthen relationships with organizations like the College Art Association, or any other allied organization that might join Humanities Commons in the future. Disciplinary repositories and networks have received quite a bit of attention in the social sciences of late, and I’m confident we’ll see similar developments in the humanities. By joining the Humanities Commons network now, I believe ARLIS/NA members will be ready to participate in newly developing scholarly practices in the humanistic disciplines in which we are embedded.

Any favorite experiences from your first ARLIS in Salt Lake City (session or otherwise related)?

I participated in the tour of Spiral Jetty, and I’m still thinking about the arresting beauty of the landscape, including the grazing lands we drove through on our way there and the lakebed itself. Even the smallest details of that landscape—including the lichens on the hillside looking out over Spiral Jetty—were astonishingly beautiful.

Thanks to Meredith for sharing this interesting new project! You can connect with Meredith via email: mkahn@umich.edu | twitter: @m_kahn
EXHIBITION RESEARCH GUIDES: A DEPAUL UNIVERSITY MUSEUM AND LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP

by Alexis Burson

In 2016, DePaul University Museum of Art and DePaul University Library partnered to support the museum’s newly-refined teaching mission by providing access to resources in support of teaching and learning(1). This partnership culminated in the creation of comprehensive research guides to accompany every exhibition held at the museum. The guides serve as a starting point for conducting research on the artists, works of art, and exhibition themes and are accessible from the exhibition summaries on the museum’s website and from the library’s Art History Research Guide.

The museum’s new commitment to teaching was catalyzed in 2015 when Julie Rodriquez Widolm was hired as the new Director and Chief Curator alongside Assistant Curator, Mia Lopez. Widolm had worked as a curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago for sixteen years(2) and brought to DePaul not just a wealth of knowledge of contemporary art but an interest in showcasing the works of emerging artists from the varied populations and communities in Chicago as well as Latin American, African Diaspora, Asian Diaspora, women, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and artists from other underrepresented groups. In keeping with DePaul’s commitment to social justice, she provides a platform for politically active and socially engaged artists(3).

I created these guides using Springshare’s...
LibGuides platform, which the library uses for our subject guides. Each guide can take one to three weeks of preparation, depending on the complexity of the exhibition. The platform is easy to use and includes features, which enable linking to websites, catalog records, databases and embedding a variety of media. To ensure consistency and save time, I created two research guide templates: one for solo exhibitions and another for group shows. Each guide begins with an overview page, which provides information on the library/museum partnership and includes the themes for each exhibition. A table of contents is displayed on each section of the guide and includes biographical material (often with links to an artist’s website and CV); curator profile, list of relevant books, articles, databases, and videos; citation information; how to get research assistance; and press coverage of the exhibition.

Discover

Key Themes
Biography
Articles
Books
Videos

Although the process of creating the research guides has evolved over the past three years it has always included consultations with the curators, subject experts, including faculty and librarians with knowledge in pertinent academic fields, and occasionally the artists featured in an exhibition. If a catalog is published, I collaborate with the library’s Digital Services Department and DePaul’s Special Collections and Archives to ensure a print and digital copy is available in the library and on Via Sapientiae, the University’s institutional repository.
One of the challenges is providing relevant resources not just for DePaul students but to students across the city. As the use of the guides has increased, the need to incorporate more resources accessible to those who do not have remote access to DePaul’s digital resources has increased as well. I plan to add more freely available material and develop a way to indicate which items are open educational resources and which require a university password.

If you’re interested in learning more, feel free to contact me and if you’d like to create similar guides, I’m happy to share the templates. Additionally, if you have ideas for labeling open educational versus DePaul resources or have suggestions for other improvements, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me at aburson1@depaul.edu.

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About DePaul: DePaul University is the largest Catholic University in the United States with an enrollment of more than 22,000 students. The university was founded in 1898 by the Congregation of the Mission (or Vincentian) religious community, which follows the teachings of 17th-century French priest St. Vincent de Paul. DePaul’s mission emphasizes academic excellence, community service, access to education and respect for the individual.

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*Graphics and images in above article are courtesy of Alexis Burson.*

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**References:**


2/ “Faculty and Staff Spotlight,” DePaul University, https://offices.depaul.edu/human-resources/Pages/spotlight-julie.aspx.

Greetings from the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC). This past year I has the opportunity to serve as a National Digital Stewardship Resident, hosted by the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries. Part of the second cohort of the NDSR Art program, I was one of 4 residents working at different institutions on projects focused on the preservation of art information. As I wrap up my 1-year term, I wanted to share a few resources produced by my cohort that I thought may be of interest to Midstates members.

NDSR Art webinars on the ARLIS Learning Portal. This a great resource (and is open access!) for documentation of ARLIS programming on-demand. There is a category specifically devoted to NDSR webinars designed to be professional development and learning focused. There are 4 great resources added within the past year centered on wikidata for digital preservation, AV preservation metadata, archiving performance media, as well as strategies for conserving time-based media (TBM), featuring myself and AIC’s TBM conservator. You can view the recordings here: https://www.pathlms.com/arlisna/events/614

Resources for archiving art and design theses. As part of her project, NDSR Art resident Cristina Fontánez Rodríguez put together a number of resources about the preservation and archiving of student theses. Of particular interest for ARLIS members at higher education institutions is a report Archiving Art and Design Theses: Report on Institutional Repositories, which provides an overview of existing literature and practices of art schools. The report is available online via Maryland Institute College of Art’s (MICA) website: https://www.mica.edu/libraries/decker-library/about/projects-and-publications/

NDSR Capstone - The Art of Digital Stewardship: Content, Context, and Structure. As the culminating event for NDSR Art, the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) will host The Art of Digital Stewardship: Content, Context, and Structure. During this symposium, residents from MICA’s Decker Library, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, and Small Data Industries will present possible solutions for the acquisition, preservation, and access of digital art and art information, from preserving born-digital documentation of the museum experience to working with at-risk artists’ archives. Check out the program and register online: https://inside.mica.edu/nds/program
And finally, be sure to keep an eye out for each resident’s final report and other materials that will be published and accessible online starting in the middle of July 2019. I will be sure to share a publication announcement will the Midstates chapter and the broader ALRIS community.

Molly is working on the project titled “Capturing the Museum Experience: Saving Electronic Media in the Galleries.”

A recent graduate from the University of Michigan School of Information, Molly’s interest in digital stewardship was born from 10+ years working with community-based organizations and seeing an urgent need to manage, preserve, and create access to critical digital resources. As a NDSR resident, she hopes to engage reciprocally, learning from hands-on experience while also helping to develop sustainable, standards-based tools to capture the user-experience at the Art Institute of Chicago.

For more on Molly and the other NDSR Residence, check out the website here:
http://ndsr-pma.arliswa.org/
FINANCIALS
AS OF MAY 7TH, 2019

MIDSTATES CHAPTER
ACCOUNT BALANCE
March 25, 2019
$1925.16
$40.00 Dues (Checks)
$465.00 Dues (PayPal)
$40.00 Donations
$75.00 Donations (PayPal)
-$24.34 PayPal Fees
-$300.00 SLC Conference Donation

AS OF MAY 7TH, 2019
$2220.82

BUNCE TRAVEL AWARD
ACCOUNT BALANCE
March 25, 2019
$737.95
$255.00 Donations (Checks)
$30.00 Donations (PayPal)

AS OF MAY 7TH, 2019
$1022.95

MEMBERSHIP
As of May 7th, 2019 ARLIS/NA Midstates Chapter has 37 members in good standing. Thank you to everyone and friendly reminder to send in your dues if you haven’t already!

Information Submitted by Larissa Garcia, Secretary/Treasurer, larissagarcia@niu.edu