

2017 ARLIS/NA Distinguished Service Award Introduction
Presented to Kathryn Wayne at the 46th ARLIS/NA Conference, New York City
NY, February 28, 2018

Remarks by Gregory P.J. Most (nominator)

The highest honor the Art Libraries Society of North America bestows is its Distinguished Service Award. The recipient must have made exemplary contributions to the field of art librarianship through active participation, advocacy and leadership in the Society or another related organization, and must meet a number of other criteria such as outstanding service to a library, exceptional creativity, innovation, and scholarship. Finally they should have been an outstanding educator in our field. Only twenty-six people have been accorded this honor including Wolfgang Freitag, Jacqueline Viaux, Betty Jo Irvine, Bill Walker, and Pat Barnett. Today we add one more name to the list: Kathryn Wayne.

Barbara Romanski, formerly of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and now at the San Francisco Opera, says in regard to the many tributes from her chapter members and students, that “while I agree that ... Kathryn has made our profession a far richer place, my interaction with her has been so much more. Kathryn has not only enriched the profession, she shaped my life.” At this time Barbara was trying to find a career path between the academy and the museum but wondered if she had the reserve of time and energy to pursue a PhD. “She heard me out. Succinctly pointed out that I love art, history, books, and research and then just as a matter of fact said – why not be an art librarian? It truly was an epiphany!”

Andy Cahan writes “As a business affiliate, I attended my very first ARLIS/NA conference over 20 years ago. It was Kathryn Wayne who greeted me and made sure that I felt welcomed and included, to the point that she brought several of the attending librarians over to meet the “new vendor of photographic books.” After this conference, I remember receiving a note from her thanking me for exhibiting and inviting me to continue to do so. It should have been I who thanked her for all her introductions and attention.”

Deborah Kempe from the Frick Art Reference Library and former ARLIS/NA President writes “I met Kathryn through the excellent network of ARLIS decades ago, when I was working at Columbia University and she was at the University of Arizona. Soon she invited me to contribute to the Association of Architecture Schools newsletter she edited. In hindsight I now realize that Kathryn’s gesture of engagement and inclusiveness was a signature trait; she has a winning way to get people to produce for a good cause. Her extensive leadership role in ARLIS/NA has been both long and deep. We worked together on the Executive Board in 1999-2000 when she was elected VP/President Elect. It was hard work, as any board role should be; Kathryn saw the organization through some rocky times, with a difficult financial situation and outside management challenges. For example, a revolving door of two different society managers during her tenure would have put another person over the brink, but Kathryn was tough and grounded throughout, determined to lead the board to decisions that were the best for the Society. She was a great president. Aside from her many contributions to ARLIS/NA, she is a damn good

librarian. I have met students and faculty from UCB who sing her praises and vaunt her dedication to education.”

I recall meeting Kathryn at the Phoenix conference, but it was only when she chaired the Travel Awards committee where we served together, that I really got to know her. This is when the committee used to do its own fundraising. She taught me the importance of running an on-time meeting, how to ask donors for a contribution and not take it personally when they said no, and to understand that committee work was hard, but could still be fun.

During my term on the Executive Board, Kathryn was an excellent sounding board and confidant. For both the Pasadena and Washington conference, her contacts and skill at fundraising made those conferences not only break fundraising records but helped firmly plant the Society’s feet on solid financial ground. I would get late night emails, phone calls, and texts, reminding me of people to be thanked, details to complete, and always a joke or story to make me laugh and preserve my sanity.

In the program you have read of Kathryn’s many accomplishments and honors, and a few more of the many tributes from colleagues. Even in retirement, when many would say they had done enough, Kathryn keeps active in our Society, recently taking on the role of Vice Chair/Chair-Elect of the Northern California Chapter. When will she slow down?

Kathryn delights in enjoying life and possesses an insatiable curiosity. She is game for just about anything—as long as it doesn’t alter her coiffure. Some of you might recall her address as incoming president at the Vancouver conference. Allen Townsend and I decided that she should be crowned, so we purchased a tiara, purloined a cushion from the lobby, and planned to crown her after she began speaking. As we approached the podium with the gleaming tiara, her face registered panic but her eyes gave us a steely look that said don’t you dare! Her hair remained immaculate. This may have been the one time she broke her firmly held tenet of not taking herself too seriously.

One final story: Kathryn is a major baseball fan. It was at an Association of Architecture Librarians conference in Los Angeles where I heard tell of her organizing an outing to a baseball game for members of the Little Sisters of Chanel (that would be Kathryn, Lamia Doumato, and Cheryl Romeo). At the game, the dear sisters sat high in the stands wearing their suits, pumps, and pearls and tossed peanuts at some burly men below. When the big bruisers turned around to find the culprits, all they saw were three stylish women chatting and watching the game with a feigned air of innocence about them like a cloud of Number 5.

It is truly an honor for me to introduce *our* friend and colleague Kathryn Wayne as recipient of the 2017 Distinguished Service Award.