

# Museum Archivist

Summer 2014

Volume 24, Issue 2

## 2014 Annual Meeting Preview

We can't believe how quickly this year has passed, but we're really pleased with what's been done this year and looking forward to all the great things we'll be doing at the SAA Annual Meeting in August!

Most important: the membership survey. This yielded some really interesting data about who are the members of the Museum Archives Section and what you all really need from us going forward. Our successor, Lorraine Stuart from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, was instrumental in helping us craft the survey, so we know we leave you in good hands, prepared to carry the section forward based on all the helpful feedback we received. I hope that everyone is able to come to the 2014 section meeting, to be held during the SAA Annual Meeting on Friday, August 15 from noon to 2:00 p.m., in Washington 2 (on the Exhibition

Level). And for those of you who can't attend—who we know now are many—we will be live tweeting the meeting to help keep us all connected to the business of the section, so stay tuned for more information on that. We'll discuss the survey results, receive an update from the Standards and Best Practices (S&BP) Working Group, introduce new steering committee members, and be sure to provide plenty of time for new business and networking!

Speaking of the S&BP Working Group: be sure to attend the half-day symposium on museum archives and electronic records at SAA's Annual Meeting this year! The symposium will feature three case studies, five lightning round speakers, discussion, and plenty of time for questions. No registration separate from SAA conference registration is required, so we hope to see you on Wednesday, August 13 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.,

### Meeting Agenda

Greeting and introduction  
Survey results  
Ballot results and new officer introductions  
From the Chair  
Newsletter and listserv updates  
S&BP Working Group update  
2015 Program Committee presentation  
2015 Program brainstorming  
S&BP meeting and social time!

in Washington 1 (on the Exhibition Level)  
We hope everyone is enjoying their summers, and we look forward to seeing some of you soon!

Jennie Thomas  
Heidi Abbey  
MAS Cochairs

## “Performance Archiving Performance” at the New Museum: Re-evaluating a Museum’s Responsibility to Performance-Based Artwork

By Tara Hart

*Digital Archivist at the New Museum*

The mutual dependence of performance and its documentation has been the subject of heated debates for over thirty years. Performance-based artwork in the 1960s and 1970s broke with the standards of tradition, permanence, and categorization that are generally associated with modern visual art museums. In turn, the definition of a work of art—and its markets—has expanded to include art that is considered ephemeral, dematerialized, or time-based. Though it is not always an easy fit, many

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Museum Archives Section Standards & Best Practices Working Group: End of Year Report

**Submitted by Rachel Chatalbash and Susan Hernandez, Working Group Co-Chairs**

The Museum Archives Section's Standards and Best Practices Working Group (S&BP Working Group) has spent the year investigating the topic of museum archives and electronic records. There is no doubt that electronic records pose a challenge to all archivists, and particularly to small repositories with limited IT support such as the majority of the museum archives in our Section.

We investigated the state of the field in two parts. First, we wanted to understand what our colleagues in museum archives had accomplished with electronic records. We wanted to survey museum archivists at all stages of developing an electronic records program. From archivists already implementing digital preservation systems, we wanted to learn about their tools, procedures, and software systems. From those successfully partnering with other museum departments, we wanted to know how institutional support was achieved and how systems across the museum might interface. From archivists only taking their first steps towards establishing a program, we wanted to hear about their test cases, potential approaches, and goals. The S&BP Working Group developed a series of survey questions, which S&BP Working Group members used to conduct over a dozen interviews with museum archivists.

The interviews clearly demonstrated that we are only beginning to grapple with electronic records issues. There is an opportunity for our S&BP

Working Group to partner with Section members to share policies and best practices as they continue to develop. We can also seek out examples from archivists and digital preservation managers working in other types of repositories for adaptation by museum archivists. To start this work, and as the second part of our project, the S&BP Working Group created an online resource guide consisting of links to guidelines, articles, and tools to help museum archivists begin their electronic records work. The compiled references and links have been organized in the following categories: acquisition or transfer of electronic records; migration from old media; storage and disaster recovery; digital preservation systems; arrangement, description, and access; policies and outreach; preservation formats; challenging formats: websites, email, and social media; general resources; and commonly used tools.

Both the interviews and the online resource guide will be posted to the Museum Archives Section microsite before our Section meeting in August. We hope that the interviews will demonstrate trends and common strategies employed by museum archivists, as well as potential tools and procedures for exploration.

The S&BP Working Group has also organized a morning symposium on electronic records and museum archives that will be held on Wednesday, August 13th at the SAA Conference hotel. The symposium will feature three case studies, five lightning round speakers, and plenty of time for discussion of electronic records issues. We also hope to have time to consider the S&BP Working Group's

next steps: what could we as a community develop to help museum archivists throughout the nation with electronic records issues?

If you are interested in contributing to the S&BP Working Group's activities, please join us at our Working Group's meeting at the conclusion of the Museum Archives Section's business meeting on Friday, August 15th, or email the Working Group's Co-Chairs.

We are looking forward to work the ahead!

## *2013-2014 Working Group Members*

Barbara Austen  
Melissa Bowling  
Holly Deakyne  
Ryan Evans  
Eden Orelove  
Dawn Sueoka  
Jennifer Whitlock  
Brian Wilson

## *Co-Chairs*

Rachel Chatalbash

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Susan Hernandez

[shernandez@clevelandart.org](mailto:shernandez@clevelandart.org)

# Electronic Records & Museum Archives Symposium

## *August 13, 2014*

The Museum Archives Section Standards and Best Practices Working Group is holding a half-day symposium on museum archives and electronic records at this year's Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting. The symposium will feature three case studies, five lightning round speakers, discussion, and plenty of time for questions.

Please join us! No registration separate from SAA conference registration is required.

**Marriott Wardman Park (SAA Conference Hotel), Washington I (Exhibition Level)**  
**Wednesday, August 13, 2014**  
**8:00am-12:00pm**

**8:00am - 8:15am:** Introduction

Rachel Chatalbash, Yale Center for British Art

**8:15am-9:45am:** Case Studies

Susan Hernandez, Cleveland Museum of Art

Nancy Enneking, Getty Research Institute

Abby Adams, Hagley Museum and Library

**9:45am-10:00am:** Break

**10:00am-11:00am:** Lightning Round

Shannon Morelli, The Frick Collection and Frick Art Reference Library

Francine Snyder, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Emily Perkins, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Carey Stumm, New York Transit Museum

Brian Wilson, The Henry Ford

Chair: Susan Anderson, Philadelphia Museum of Art

**11:00am-11:45am:** Discussion Led by MAS Standards & Best Practices Working Group Members

Ryan Evans, CCS Bard/Hessel Museum

Holly Deakyne, Getty Research Institute

**11:45am-12:00pm:** Next Steps

Questions? Please email Working Group Co-Chairs Rachel Chatalbash ([rachel.chatalbash@yale.edu](mailto:rachel.chatalbash@yale.edu)) or Susan Hernandez ([shernandez@clevelandart.org](mailto:shernandez@clevelandart.org))

**Performance** (Continued from page 1)

institutions such as The Museum of Modern Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum have more recently developed methods of formally acquiring works of conceptual, installation performance art and dance. These methods include instructions given to an institution by an artist, authorized modes of re-performance, partnership with dance companies or performance institutions, and remuneration in exchange for intellectual property rights.



*Performance views from artists involved in "Performance Archiving Performance." Clockwise left to right: Sarah Wookey, Julie Tolentino, Jennifer Monson, and a canary torsi.*

The New Museum has a long history of showing and supporting performance art, and—in the words of former curator Brian Wallis—it has strived to act as a “repository of ideas.” The New Museum’s activity primarily focuses on presenting and commissioning art, including live art and performance. Although the institution does not seek to own, re-perform, or reproduce works of art, the historical contextualization, memory, and ongoing life of works are nonetheless supported in social and material ways. After exhibitions end or performances are over, records and documentation live on in the Museum’s archives. The life of art in the

archives has provided a vital place for the production of new work and inquiry.

### **Performance Archiving Performance**

In Fall 2013, as part of the New Museum R&D Season: Archives program, produced by the Department of Education and Public Engagement, the curated program “Performance Archiving Performance” brought together artist projects that drew upon the concept of the archive as medium to explore ways in which performance might present a record of itself. Driven by theoretical and pragmatic

questions about the function and constitution of archives relative to performance, the artists involved have disparate practices and different relationships to, expectations of, and desires for archives in relation to their own performance work, as well as a keen interest in preserving the legacies of other artists’ production. The projects

included in this multiplatform presentation—by a canary torsi, Jennifer Monson, Julie Tolentino, and Sara Wookey—conceived of the relationship between performance and archives as individual systems.

Within these projects, the acts of recording, storing, indexing, and redistributing were as much a part of the artwork as the performance itself. As a result, the site of performance—its position in time, space, and form—was put into question and imagined beyond performance’s more typical spaces of presentation. Indeed, the actual processes

of archiving could themselves be interpreted as a mode of performance. “Performance Archiving Performance” was composed of a series of artist residencies, performances, public talks, and open studios that took place in the New Museum Theater, as well as an exhibition in the Museum’s Resource Center. The exhibition component presented moving image, ephemera and realia alongside web-based presentations of works such as *Live Dancing Archive* by Jennifer Monson, and *The People to Come* by a canary torsi. The range of modes for recording and preserving performance offered by each of the projects in “Performance Archiving Performance,” also served as a prompt to reflect on current Museum practices for documenting performance and the role of archives in relation to performance documentation.

The project has sparked important conversations regarding the various ways in which these recent artist projects have influenced the institution’s practices of archiving performance and other live events. As some of the artists—and key theorists of performance—argue that performance documentation cannot fully capture the nuances of ephemeral experience so essential to the form, we asked ourselves, what is the value of archives beyond providing an “authentic experience”? Cumulatively, the artists’ projects assembled for “Performance Archiving Performance” suggested another answer: that perhaps the material remains of performance should not be valued only for how closely they resemble the events they seek to preserve, but more important, for their delineation of productive differences from their initial manifestation, differences that are not inadequacies but rather opportunities to drive art practice—and reflection upon it—forward instead. That is not to say that access to past events is impossible—instead, simply that we should

(Continued on page 5)

Performance (Continued from page 4)

acknowledge how our reading of past events through the archive opens onto multiplicities and is a fundamentally generative, rather than a strictly reflective, process. Although the goal of providing a “total” record may be impossible, this fact makes the call to create an inclusive archive of past events as necessary as ever.

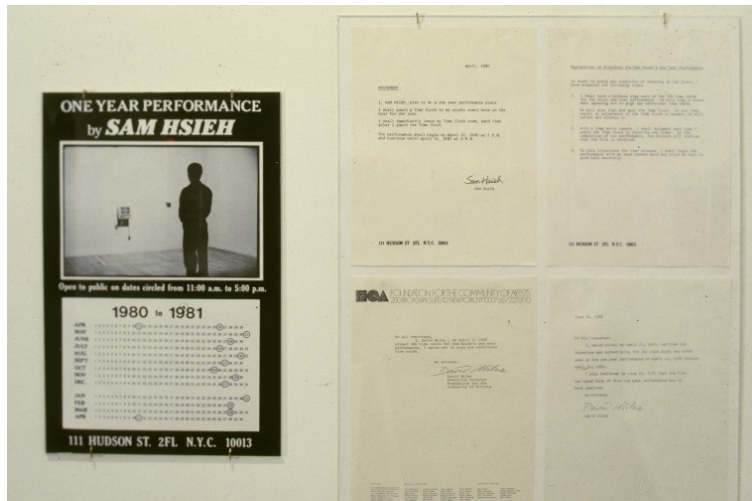
**Presenting versus Collecting: Performance at the New Museum**

The ideas taken up by the artists in “Performance Archiving Performance” are significant given the New Museum’s critical relationship to museological systems of connoisseurship, classification, display, and preservation since its founding. When it opened in 1977, the New Museum’s founding mission centered around challenging the very notion of a museum’s role in society and its position as collector and preserver of revered material artifacts of culture. Founding Director Marcia Tucker envisioned the New Museum as an “exhibition, information, and documentation center for contemporary art made within a period of approximately ten years prior to the present.”

The question of whether to collect presented an interesting challenge. Although the Museum was not a *kunsthalle*, a major concern at the time was that resources taken up by a permanent collection would mean historicizing the present, thus taking the focus away from facilitating contemporary art production. This concern was the subject of one of the Museum’s signal projects. In 1978, the New Museum initiated a “Semi-Permanent” collection

policy that allowed the Museum to critically examine and deaccession works from its collection after ten years to make room for new additions, though the idea was never fully implemented. This collection policy emerged alongside the Museum’s early and path-breaking support of art that was process-oriented, site-specific, and ephemeral, and the presentation of works of experimental performance, theater, and dance.

An early exhibition central to these



*Tehching Hsieh, Posters from One Year Performance, 1980–81. Installation view: “Choices: Making an Art of Everyday Life,” 1986, New Museum. Photo: New Museum.*

considerations was “Choices: Making an Art of Everyday Life” (1986) curated by Tucker. “Choices” presented the work of twelve artists who investigated forms of lived performance by plumbing perceived distinctions between art and everyday life. Tucker investigated the difficult issue of how to curate artworks centered on experiences and ideas rather than material objects—what she called “nonmaterial art activity.”<sup>1</sup> The works of Marina Abramović, Tehching Hsieh, Linda Montano, and others were exhibited primarily through documentation (images, artifacts, and other materials). In the catalogue for the exhibition, Tucker spoke about the challenges associated with presenting this work: “Organizing the exhibition posed problems that I had never had to face before. Since there is so

little of a material nature, which results from the work, how could it be shown? Would it be possible to fill the Museum with ideas rather than objects? How could an event or situation be presented in a manner which would clearly distinguish it from performance, or remove it from the expectation of any entertainment value?”

Within a history of attempts to exhibit and support dematerialized work, the New Museum often presented performance within the space of the gallery with select performances presented offsite. In 2007, when the New Museum moved to its current location on the Bowery with its first dedicated theater space, the production of performance-based events increased considerably. Live performance developed into a primary element of the Museum’s current public programming and now includes performance residencies in which artists are invited to develop ideas and new work over extended periods of time.

Within the residency format, performance is often privileged less for presentation purposes and more for its ability to respond to ideas in real time, through open-ended, process-driven, and participatory modes of inquiry posited as research. Artists are invited to share their research and process through open studios and discussions. In this way, the Museum has begun to forge dynamic relationships between expanding performance practices and various institutional modes of presentation, exhibition, and documentation.



Performance (Continued from page 5)

## Current Methods: New Museum Digital Archive

Over the years, the Museum's approach to history has developed to consider how its institutional past might inform its current program. The New Museum Digital Archive was conceived in 2009 as

The Digital Archive at the New Museum responds not only to the history of past work, but also the historical conditions of the present. Engaging with the artists involved in "Performance Archiving Performance" and the issues explored in their work provided the perfect occasion to examine the Museum's best practices and to think through strategies for preserving the wealth of born-digital

The way performance is described or classified according to archival methods can often give additional meaning beyond that which is embedded in the event itself. It is therefore important to acknowledge that an archivist's decisions carry weight in terms of how an event or work might be received and understood.

Within the Digital Archive, performance projects, art objects, talks and lectures, and exhibitions that were presented at the Museum all appear as "occurrences," or entries based on events that took place at a specific time and location. The attendant documentation—for example, images, audio and video recordings, and publications—of these moments takes the form of digital objects, which are linked to a record of each event in a relational, nonhierarchical structure. This structure allows connections to be made to other records of other participating artists' engagement at the Museum, such as artist residencies and exhibitions.

This approach is made possible by initiating collaborative relationships between the artist, curator, and occasionally the archivist. Artists are asked to help select what documentation is made available to the archives and the public and to examine the materials by which their work will subsequently be apprehended. This invitation also offers the artist an opportunity to include other forms of documentation, such as correspondence, artist sketches, and other planning documents, should they desire. Providing meaningful representation for such a wide array of engagements is always a stimulating, collaborative challenge. While a performance or event is often presumed to exist in the "immediacy of the now,"<sup>2</sup> the life and meaning of a work often extends well beyond the live event. Consequently, we work closely with artists to help produce the means through which the event can best live on.

### NEW DIGITAL ARCHIVE MUSEUM

Browse the Archive

Features

About

SEARCH

EXHIBITION:

## "Performance Archiving Performance"

DATE

November 6 2013 - January 12 2014

DESCRIPTION

Performance archives seek to preserve some legible record of live art's imprint on culture for future study; however, many argue that archived representations of performance cannot fully capture the nuances of ephemeral experience so essential to the form. Projects by a canary toral, Jennifer Monson, Julie Tolentino, and Sara Wookey acknowledge these concerns by conceiving of the relationship between performance and archives as

... [more]

ARTISTS

Julie Tolentino  
Sara Wookey  
Jennifer Monson  
a canary toral

Refine Results



Installation view of...

IMAGE



Sill from The Peopl...

IMAGE



Performance view of...

IMAGE



Installation view of...

IMAGE



CANDIDATE in Concert...

IMAGE



CANDIDATE in Concert...

IMAGE



CANDIDATE in Concert...

IMAGE



\*Performance Archivi...

IMAGE



Sara Wookey, ESP Ses...

IMAGE



Family Day with ILAN...

IMAGE



Sill from The Sky R...

IMAGE



The Sky Remains the...

IMAGE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

NEXT >

*The New Museum Digital Archive, 2014 (screenshot)*

an experimental attempt to provide public access to historical materials that were previously unavailable. The Digital Archive was also developed with the aim of providing ongoing documentation of the institution's activities and ideas. By focusing on creating a platform for research that is continually expanding, the Museum is particularly concerned with providing access to archival traces of art practices that might resist traditional museological modes of documentation, such as dance or performance. An artist's engagement with the Museum occurs in multiple stages, from conception, to rehearsal, to performance or live event, and the Museum continues to debate the complex question of how to provide access to documentation and archival material that sheds light on the intricacies of each step.

documentation that is generated during the production of performances and other live events. Museums often work very closely with artists during the conception phase leading up to the execution of a work, but this engagement can sometimes appear to end rather abruptly after the event has taken place or the exhibition has ended. However, the afterlife of a work of art in an archive or collection also provides fruitful sites of experimentation. The relationship of performance art to its documentation through archival traces challenges traditional museological boundaries between artwork and documentation, as well as the differentiation between collection and archive. With performance and time-based art, the boundaries between the work—be it object or idea—and its documentation are not so easily fixed.

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Performance (Continued from page 6)

Archival material reflects both the personal and empirical through information, content, and meaning. With the ubiquity of digital materials, an increasing number of institutional archivists today are working to describe current or “active” materials in addition to describing material from the past. This demarcates a distinct shift away from a solely “custodial” model for working with archives that can be tricky to navigate.

My work as Digital Archivist has required consultation with artists, curators, and many others in order to account for the multiple narratives that encompass both works of art and curated projects. In some instances, I have worked directly with an artist or curator to select what images will appear in the record of an event. Once records are placed on the Digital Archive, they can continue to develop and change with the addition of materials and links to related projects, events, exhibitions, or publications that may take place in the future. This process illustrates how contemporary archives—so often criticized as static sites that value monumentalization above all else—are instead generative spaces that can accommodate new forms over time.

Overall, the Digital Archive is less focused on reproduction and re-performance, in part because, as a non-collecting institution, the Museum often does not own the necessary copyrights. Though the institution does not currently seek to own, re-perform, or reproduce works of art, work can nonetheless continue to be supported in social and material ways, to maintain the life and meaning of time-based projects and artworks into the future.



Alva Rogers, “Black to the Future: Alva Rogers in Performance,” 1989. Performance: New Museum, New York

Notes:

1. *Choices: Making an Art of Everyday Life* (New York: The New Museum, 1986), 12.
2. Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 91.

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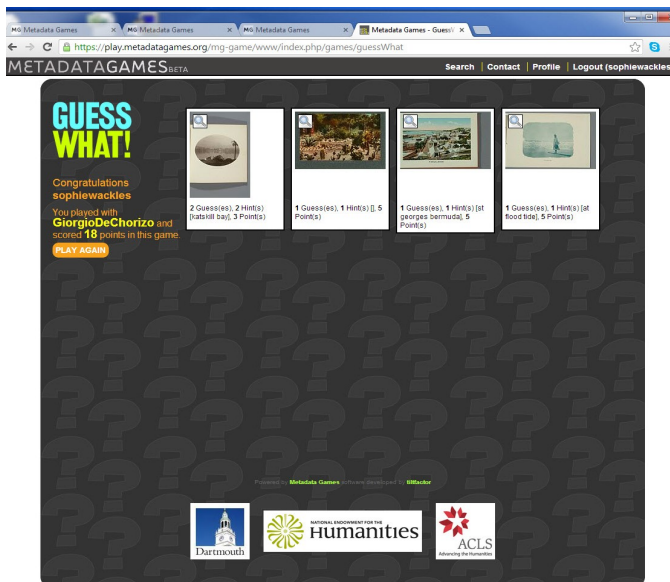
*Museum Archivist* is issued two times each year by the Museum Archives Section of the Society of American Archivists. Articles, news and comments from the museum archives community are welcome. Submission deadlines for the winter and summer issues are the second Fridays in December and June or as announced on the listserv. All submissions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor, Madeleine Thompson, at: [mthompson@wcs.org](mailto:mthompson@wcs.org)

# News & Notes

## The Gamification of the Clark's David A. Hanson Collection

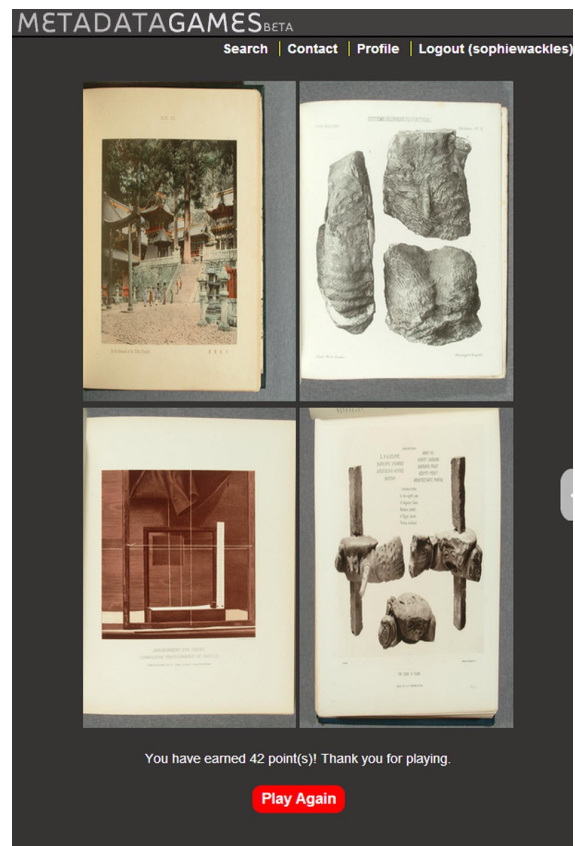
This spring, the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute contributed 4,000 new images from its David A. Hanson Collection to Dartmouth College Tiltfactor Lab's [Metadata Games](#) platform. Metadata Games is a digital gaming platform for gathering useful descriptive data on photo, audio, and moving image artifacts. Through Metadata Games, players contribute valuable information to collections and further enable archivists, librarians, data scientists, and the public to gather and analyze information for archives in powerful and innovative ways. The Clark joins a growing list of Metadata Games content partners, which currently includes the Boston Public Library, the British Library, Open Parks Network, and Dartmouth College, among others.

The Hanson Collection of the History of Photomechanical Reproduction documents the history of photomechanical printing from its development in 1826 through the perfection of three-color printing at the beginning of the twentieth century. All major intaglio, planotype, and relief printing methods are represented. The collection includes examples of virtually all categories of photographically illustrated books and ephemera. Pioneering firms and individual innovators are represented



GiorgioDeChorizo (aka Dan Lipcan, Digital Initiatives & Metadata Librarian at the Metropolitan Museum of Art) plays a mean game of Guess What! with Sophiewackles (aka Penny Baker, Collections Management Librarian at the Clark). David A. Hanson images in play were halftone illustrations from Bermuda Islands souvenir (David A. Hanson Collection. D.A.H.Cat., 1898:4), artotype illustrations from photographs in Lake George, view of Kattskill Bay (D.A.H.Cat., 1883:14), and half-tone vignette titled Flood tide from the Marine Villa, Cape May, New Jersey souvenir (D.A.H.Cat., 1893:7).

in equal numbers. While the subject matter is particularly rich in American material, numerous European examples—including Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard's monumental survey of photography and photomechanical illustration, [La photographie, ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations](#) (1870) and the photolithographs of Gustave Adolphe Simoneau and Edwin Toovey in [Spa et ses environs](#) (1863)—round out the collection.



Points Earned. Hanson Collection images featured in a single-player round of Zen Tag include heliogravures and photolithographs in *La Seine. I. Le bassin parisien aux âges antéhistoriques* (D.A.H.Cat., CAIHanson:47), photolithographic plates from photographs of the apparatus and photographing of skulls and testing the cranial capacity of them in *On composite photography as applied to craniology* (D.A.H.Cat., 1886:21), and hand-colored collotypes in the souvenir *Sights and scenes in fair Japan* (D.A.H.Cat., 1914:2).

To celebrate the Clark's partnership with Tiltfactor, the Library held a one-day only, no-holds-barred [Facebook Crowdsourcing Event](#) on February 26. Featured for play were images to appeal to many interests: indigenous peoples; disasters both man-made and natural; photographic travel souvenirs;

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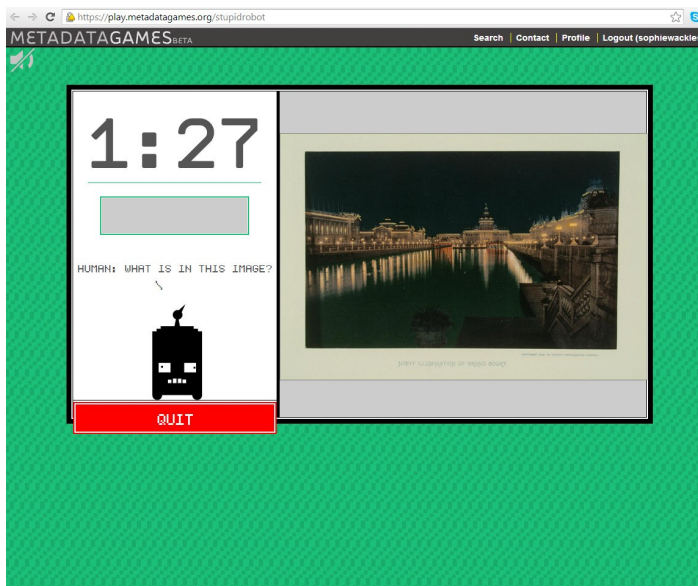


Clark Art (Continued from page 8)

expeditions to the polar regions; as well as images of botanical, medical and geological specimens. The event attracted 255 gamers from 10 countries who played Tiltfactor's single-player [ZenTag](#) and two-player [Guess What!](#). When the dust settled, Tiltfactor reported that the Hanson Collection had garnered over 2,900 unique tags for 2,200 images, with an average of three tags an image.

"The Clark Library's collection of photomechanical photography represents a unique and exciting addition to the Metadata Games platform," says Sukie Punjasthitkul, project manager and designer at Tiltfactor. "We hope that by increasing the public's access to the Hanson collection, we will enable a vast array of players to explore the history of photography and to contribute new knowledge that increases the collection's accessibility and searchability."

Users can now tag the Hanson images and other collections by playing Tiltfactor's newest game, Stupid Robot, a quick and easy arcade game where players score points by teaching the adorable robot words about the image they are presented with.



"Human: What is in this image?" Tiltfactor's new two-minute arcade game Stupid Robot challenges the gamer to tag the complex image titled "Night illumination of Grand Court" from the AAC color photographs of the Trans-Mississippi and international exposition, held at Omaha, Nebraska, June 1st to November 1st, 1898 / published by F. A. Rinehart, official photographer (David A. Hanson Collection. D.A.H.Cat., 1898:4).

Play Stupid Robot: <http://play.metadatagames.org/stupidrobot>

### About the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute Library

Established in 1962, the [Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute Library](#) has become one of the major art reference and research libraries in the United States, known for its focus on post-medieval European and American art. Founded on the libraries of the former firm of Duveen Brothers (New York) and of the late Dutch art historian W. R. Juynboll, the Clark also holds important collections of books on the decorative arts, the Robert Sterling Clark and the Julius S. Held collections of rare books, and a collection of twentieth-century artists' books.

### About Metadata Games

The [Metadata Games](#) platform includes a suite of games that cater to a variety of player interests and are available on web browser, iOS, and Android devices. Metadata Games is free and open source software (FOSS) developed by Tiltfactor at Dartmouth College, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). Institutions interested in becoming a Metadata Games content partner are encouraged to contact Tiltfactor.

More information on the project can be found on the official [Metadata Games website](#).

### About Tiltfactor

[Tiltfactor Laboratory](#) is a design studio at Dartmouth College dedicated to understanding how games can be used to generate new knowledge. Tiltfactor designs, studies, and launches games, across a variety of platforms, that use core psychological principles and strategies to promote learning and impact players' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Founded and led by Dr. Mary Flanagan, Tiltfactor uses its unique design methodology, Critical Play, to incorporate fundamental human values and psychological principles to promote pro-social values such as cooperation, perspective taking, empathy, and civic engagement.

## News from The Museum of Modern Art Archives

In March 2014, The Museum of Modern Art Archives opened the International Council and International Program Records, following an intensive, one-year project generously supported by MoMA's International Council. This included physical processing and preservation of more than 10,000 folders of important exhibition records and other documentation from the Council's and Program's first five decades of activity, dating from 1952 to 2005. The International Council and International Program Records is the largest collection in the Museum Archives after MoMA's own exhibition files, a testament to the importance of the activities of the Council and the Program to the Museum as a whole, as well as the significance of these records to curators, scholars, students, and other researchers.

Among these records are newly available materials on many of the most significant exhibitions created and circulated by the Program, including *The Family of Man*, *The New American Painting*, and *Built in the U.S.A: Postwar Architecture*; solo exhibitions of artists such as Jackson Pollock, Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, David Smith, and Alexander Calder; representation at the Venice and São Paulo biennials and other expositions; and the *Art in Embassies* program that showcased American art in diplomatic settings.

None of the Program's exhibitions and activities would have been possible without the support and guidance of the International Council, and this collection contains the first publicly available Council records documenting sixty years of their leadership and support.

This spring also saw the commencement of a two-and-a-half-year project to fully process MoMA's curatorial and registrarial exhibition files, generously supported by a grant from the Leon Levy Foundation. While a portion of the more than 15,000 exhibition files have been open to the public previously, none of the collection has been adequately described and preserved, and much remained to be vetted for confidentiality. Working in phases so that only a portion of the files are closed to the public at any time, project staff are fully describing and rehousing the files. The finished finding aid to the collection will include links to newly scanned exhibition checklists and previously scanned press releases. Additionally, project staff are creating a complete index of artists that have appeared in MoMA exhibitions, a tool expected to be of great use to researchers.



The results of the first phase of the project, covering exhibitions from 1929 through 1963, will open to the public this fall.

To view the International Council and International Program Records finding aids and for further information about the MoMA Archives please visit: <http://www.moma.org/learn/resources/archives/index>

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## The Museum of Modern Art Names Michelle Elligott Chief of Archives

Senior Museum Archivist Michelle Elligott has been named Chief of Archives for The Museum of Modern Art, effective July 1. In this newly established position, Ms. Elligott will lead the institution's program of acquiring, preserving, and making accessible archival and primary source collections related to twentieth- and twenty-first-century art. Her chief responsibilities include enhancing the use of archives for research and in Museum exhibitions, leading an initiative for the creation of an electronic archive, and promoting online access to digitized items from the archives. Ms. Elligott joined MoMA as a Mellon Fellow in 1995 and subsequently became Assistant Archivist in 1996; Interim Manager, Museum Archives Associate Archivist in 1998; and Rona Roob Senior Museum Archivist in 1999. As Chief of Archives, she will report to Peter Reed, Senior Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs.

Formally established in 1989 under the leadership of Rona Roob, the [MoMA Archives](#) contain more than six million items (over 6,000 linear feet) of extensive historical documentation concerning the Museum's art historical and cultural role in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, along with primary source material concerning many aspects of modern and contemporary art, including private archives and papers of artists, galleries, dealers, art historians, critics, and others. The holdings also include an extensive [Photographic Archive](#) and nearly 100 oral histories created by the [Archives Oral History Program](#).



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## 19th-Century Photography Exhibit at the Currier Museum of Art Reference Library & Archives

It has been months in the making, but we're thrilled to announce that the next exhibit in our new gallery space is open! The Currier Museum of Art Reference Library and Archives launched its formal exhibition program with a collaborative project this past spring with Boston-based artist [Andrew Witkin](#). We had a great time working with Andrew and now have two beautiful new display cases to show for it.

The second exhibition, [A Naval Officer's Albums: Travel Photography in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century](#), is now on view through September 15, 2014. The exhibit presents the albums of Navy Rear Admiral Joseph Murdock (1851-1931), a resident of Manchester, NH. Admiral Murdock loaned several art objects to the Museum, but it wasn't until several years after his death that his heirs donated his travel photography albums, along with several Japanese ceramics and textiles, to the Museum in 1951. Of the eleven albums seven are on view.



Nearly half of the photographs in the albums represent Japanese people and landscapes both *en plein air* and in staged studio settings, and many were taken by established photographers working in the region, including Kusakabe Kimbei (1841-1934) a student of Felice Beato (1825-1904). Images from Scotland, Venice, and Egypt are also on view. One image entitled "Ascent of the Great Pyramid" is believed to be the work of famed French photographer Félix Bonfils.

Commercial photographs which were offered for sale to travelers and tourists dominate the albums, with personal snapshots speckled throughout. Assorted ephemera found tucked between the pages, including personal snapshots, postcards, correspondence, and pressed flowers accompany the albums. Many of the photographs are excellent examples of the hand-coloring process popular during the period.

[Learn more](#) about the Currier Museum of Art Library and Archives.



## News from The Phillips Library

The Phillips Library at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA, is currently processing the papers of the Pingree family of Essex County.

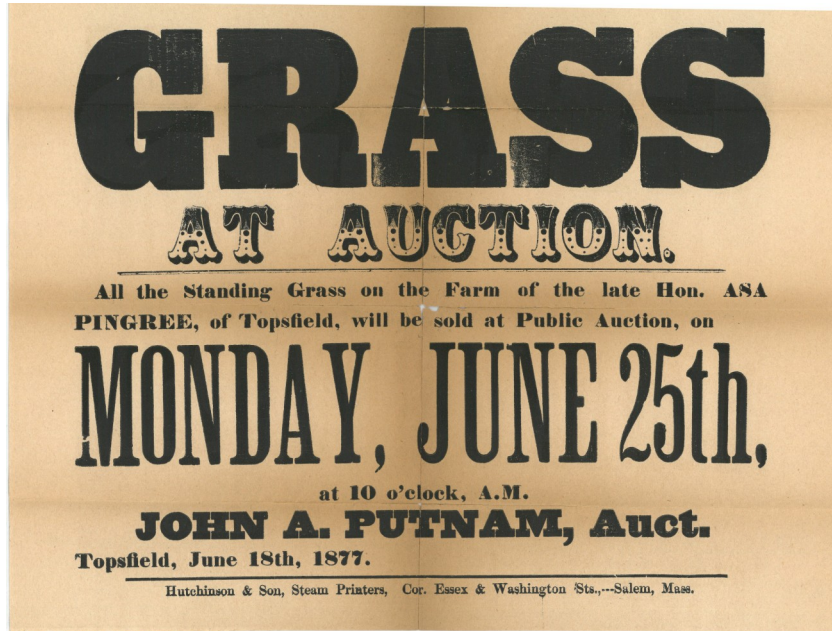
Donated by the heirs to the family, the collection has been part of our backlog for many years. Now we are excited to be able to share this wonderful material with the world.

David Pingree (1795-1863) was a noteworthy member of the Essex County shipping industry, participating in trade with China, the East Indies, Africa, South America, and the Caribbean for over three decades. Pingree also invested heavily in land. In particular, he bought large tracts of land in Maine, making him a principal player in the nineteenth-century lumber industry. He and his cohorts were responsible for many of the roads and dams built in northern Maine.

The Pingree Family collection includes papers of David's father, siblings, children, and grand and great-grandchildren, as well as a small collection of papers from his cousins and nephews. There are also records from the various corporations

founded and largely controlled by the family. The collection spans over 420 linear feet of volumes and document boxes, dating from 1794 to the second half of the twentieth century.

David Pingree's contributions have been noted in books about Massachusetts and Maine history, but his true significance to New England and the shipping and lumber industries has yet to be fully explored. Researchers will soon be able to take advantage of the richness and depth of this collection of personal and business records.



*Grass Auction broadside, 1877, MSS 902, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum.*

While it will be some time before the entire collection is processed, the finding aid for Asa Pingree (1770-1834) Papers, 1794-1853, MSS 900 and Asa Pingree (1807-1869) Papers, 1820-1931, MSS 902 are currently accessible via our online catalog, [Philcat](#) and the [Phillips Library Digital Collections](#) page.

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact Jennifer Hornsby, Assistant Manuscript Processor, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum at 978-542-1801 or [jennifer\\_hornsby@pem.org](mailto:jennifer_hornsby@pem.org).



# News from the American Museum of Natural History

## *Exploring Science at the AMNH Archives*

Beginning in early 2010, the American Museum of Natural History Research Library embarked on a systematic effort to catalog and make known the holdings of archival collections all across the Museum's administrative unit of Science, which includes the Research Library as well as the ten Scientific Curatorial Departments. We have been calling this the AMNH Archive Project.

The project, to date, has had two phases. The first, a risk assessment for the largely undocumented archival collections and libraries held in the Scientific Departments, was supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). But before any risk could be evaluated and documented by our partners in AMNH Natural Science Conservation, the project archivist—based in the Library—had to survey and identify the collections, working with teams of graduate students in Library and Information Science. Fortunately, funding from the Council on Library and Information Resources coincided with the IMLS grant and allowed a full-time project archivist to use a similar process in the archives in the Library, to review, update and map previous surveys of the Manuscript Collections, Department Records, Photographic Print Collections, and Photographic Slide Collections to MARC and place them in the AMNH online catalog and in OCLC. In just over 20 months, the project staff, supported by scores of graduate interns and volunteers, created 3,275 records for collections pertaining to the Museum's historical scientific work. A major result of this effort is that we can now estimate the extent of the AMNH Scientific Archives at 25,000 linear feet of manuscripts, department records, still and motion picture film and negatives, photographic prints, and a wide variety of other—often unexpected—objects.

In 2012, CLIR generously supported a larger endeavor, a three-year project to outline the design and construction of a cyber-infrastructure to manage records and, in time, digital images of archival collections. This will lead to the long-term goal: the creation of links between archival and scientific collections (at last estimate, the Museum has 35.6 million scientific specimens and objects). By linking well-formed records for the names of Museum Expeditions—where a large number of the AMNH scientific specimens originated—with the names of the people who travelled and collected on those expeditions, we hope to relate collections, both archival and scientific. Currently many

collections are minimally described, often simply with the name of the collecting scientist. But links back to the full Expedition records will relate collections that were made in the same place on the same day, but are now stored separately in discipline-specific scientific departments across the vast four-city-block AMNH campus.

For example, the relationships may allow field notes made by a herpetologist to assist an ornithologist in identifying the environmental conditions of the collecting event. To do this, we are creating name authorities—now more often called entity records—constructed using the EAC-CPF data standard. Using

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

## Hidden Collections

STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVE

*Highlights from the CLIR Hidden Collections project*


ABOUT PROJECT TEAM PROCESS RESOURCES NEWS

◉ In the shadow of men: a look at the life of Mary L. Jobe Akaley ◉ The Complete Kinsey ◉

### EAC-CPF at the AMNH, Part 2

MAY 16, 2014 · LEAVE A COMMENT · BY IRIS LEE [edit]

Last month I described how we grew our Excel worksheet to support gathering descriptions for AMNH expeditions and personnel in data fields mapped to EAC-CPF. Today I will explain how this basic worksheet developed, and how it became an invaluable tool for creating EAC-CPF XML as well.



Roy Chapman Andrews telling Merin, camel leader, how to get caravan down to camp at Shabarakh Uu from top of Flaming Cliffs, Mongolia, 1925 (AMNH Digital Special Collections)

I know... nothing that can be done in a spread sheet is as cool as riding to camp on the back of a camel, but allow me to tell you how we got our records from XLS to XML.

See [the project blog](#) for more details, updates and process documentation, and many of the finding aids that are being produced.

vertical files for expeditions and personal names as the basis for gathering the names, Project Archivist Becca Morgan and Metadata Analyst Iris Lee have to date created 3,068 minimal

*(Continued on page 14)*

*AMNH Archives continued from page 12*

level and 73 fully developed entity records in EAC. These augment the 3,275 minimal level EAD records generated by the phase one inventories and the 52 fully developed finding aids created during the project so far. The work was accomplished with the assistance of scores of graduate interns. We are also fortunate to have Nick Krabbenhoft, who worked on the project for his practicum at the University of Michigan and continues to work as a volunteer on the project's many technical challenges.

This summer, the team is conducting a functional analysis to test and evaluate archival content management systems using the functional requirements that the team developed for the project. ArchivesSpace, ICA-Atom, and CollectiveAccess along with KeEMu, the Museum's collection management system, will be compared to determine how the AMNH may best manage these files.

On Wednesday August 13<sup>th</sup>, Iris and Nick will be presenting a lightning session for Metadata and Digital Objects Roundtable at the SAA Annual Conference. Their presentation will be posted to the blog.

## *Digital Special Collections Officially Launched in April*

The Research Library at the American Museum of Natural History is pleased to announce the launch of its online image database, [Digital Special Collections](#). Crafted using Omeka, an open-source software system, the site began with over 7,000 images, with more added each week. It is a long-term endeavor to create comprehensive access to items that show the Museum's rich and varied visual collections featuring historic photographs, rare book illustrations, drawings, notes, letters, art, and Museum memorabilia. The historic photographic collection numbers close to one million items, including an extensive lantern slide collection and negative formats ranging from 11 x 14 inch glass plates to 35 mm negatives and slides in both color and black and white. There are also extensive photographic print collections. The earliest negatives dating from 1880 were taken using the wet plate collodion process on large format glass negatives.

Scientific work in the field and in the lab informs the Museum's educational programs and activities as well as the creation of its exhibitions, including its world famous dioramas. The images in Digital Special Collections document all of this, from scientific collecting across the globe to school groups being instructed in the Museum's exhibit halls.

Noteworthy collections showcased include lantern slides created at the turn of the twentieth century to illustrate natural history in places as diverse as Greenland, Mongolia, and Africa; the Julian Dimock Collection, which documents moments in the daily lives of African Americans in South Carolina, new immigrants at Ellis Island, and the Seminole Indians of Florida at



*Ray De Lucia and Matt Kalmenoff working on Killer Whale Group, Milstein Hall of Ocean Life, 1967 [AMNH Image No. 332578]*

the turn of the last century; and the Lumholtz Collection, which documents four expeditions led by ethnographer Carl S. Lumholtz to northwestern Mexico between 1890 and 1898 and includes portraits of indigenous peoples of Mexico. Also currently being added are photographs from the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, which document the people and cultures of the Pacific Northwest Coast of North America and the Eastern Coast of Siberia from 1897 through 1902.

Rare book plates from *Natural Histories: Extraordinary Rare Book Selections from the American Museum of Natural History Library*, a book edited by Library Director Tom Baione, published in 2012, are gathered in a collection, featuring illustrations from the work of pioneers in natural science from as early as the sixteenth century. Images will be added online as new volumes are added to the series.

*(Continued on page 15)*

AMNH Archives (Continued from page 14)

The project would not be possible without interns and volunteers for scanning, guided by the Library Digital Lab Manager Anna Rybakov, and metadata management and image cataloging directed by the Library's Visual Resources Librarian Stacy Schiff, through relationships with New York area graduate programs in library and information science. Collections are selected by the Museum Archivist and Head of Special Collections Barbara Mathé, with special consideration for the needs of researchers, scholars, and cultural communities.

The site, managed by Library Digital Projects Manager Jen Cwiok, provides technical information on scanning and metadata specifications and standards used, as well as the cataloging style guide and documentation manual composed for training and recording the evolution of the database.

The Digital Special Collections project would not have been possible without initial support from the New York Metropolitan Library Council in the form of a 2005 digitization grant.

We welcome feedback about the site and its collections, which you can visit at <http://images.library.amnh.org/digital/>



Jochelson, Waldemar, "Yakut family at entrance to summer house, Russia, 1902." [AMNH Image No. 1768]



*Portunus reticulatus* from Herbst's *Versuch einer Naturgeschichte der Krabben und Krebse...* Zurich: 1782 [AMNH Image No. b11448969\_5]

## AMNH to host National Digital Stewardship Resident beginning September

As one of five institutions in New York chosen to host an NDSR resident, the American Museum of Natural History has selected Victoria Steeves, Master of Library and Information Science, Simmons College, to be the NDSR resident starting in September.

Working closely with mentors Barbara Mathé, Museum Archivist and Head of Library Special Collections, and Scott Schaefer, Curator of Ichthyology and Associate Dean of Science for Collections, Vicky will interview scientific staff to identify research datasets and digital assets across the Museum's science departments. This nine-month project will develop appraisal criteria, identify preservation challenges, forecast storage needs, and develop acquisition workflows resulting in a baseline that identifies further work needed to create a digital stewardship plan for these scientifically important digital assets so they may be managed and preserved.

### About NDSR

The National Digital Stewardship Residency is a groundbreaking new program created by the Library of Congress in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The mission of the National Digital Stewardship Residency (NDSR) is to build a dedicated community of professionals who will advance our nation's capabilities in managing, preserving, and making accessible the digital record of human achievement. This will enable current and future generations to fully realize the potential of digital resources now and for years to come.

# Newly Available Collections at The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives

The Museum Archives recently opened for research two collections of historical records that illuminate topics in museum studies, art history, New York City history, and other fields. Processing of these collections was funded by a generous grant from the Leon Levy Foundation. Finding aids are now available online for:

*George Trescher records related to the Metropolitan Museum of Art Centennial*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art celebrated the centennial of its 1870 founding with exhibitions, symposia, concerts, lectures, the reopening of refurbished galleries, special tours, social events, and other programming for eighteen months from October 1969 through the spring of 1971. George Trescher served as Secretary of The Metropolitan Museum of Art's 100th Anniversary Committee of the Board of Trustees. In this capacity he coordinated planning and implementation of a wide variety of Museum programs and activities. The records contain information on Centennial exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum as well as exhibitions that traveled to other institutions. They also contain information on film and television projects, publications and clippings, and documentation of tours of the Museum for members of other museums and cultural or-

ganizations across the United States. Also included are the scores of original Centennial fanfares commissioned to accompany exhibitions, photographic documentation of events, and fundraising records.

Finding aid: [http://libmma.org/digital\\_files/archives/Trescher\\_Centennial\\_records\\_b18234550.pdf](http://libmma.org/digital_files/archives/Trescher_Centennial_records_b18234550.pdf)

*Joseph V. Noble records*

Records of Metropolitan Museum of Art Operating Administrator (1956-1967) and Vice-Director of Administration (1967-1970) Joseph V. Noble. Noble oversaw curatorial and administrative functions including human resources, construction, acquisitions and visitor services. The records provide unique insights on senior-level management decisions and Museum operations during a period of dramatic change in the Museum's administrative organization.

Finding aid: [http://libmma.org/digital\\_files/archives/Joseph\\_V\\_Noble\\_records\\_b18221749.pdf](http://libmma.org/digital_files/archives/Joseph_V_Noble_records_b18221749.pdf)

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## Stay Connected

The Museum Archives Section has an official SAA email list as well as a Museum Archives listserv. The listserv relays news items related to the profession and serves as a forum for members to assist one another with issues encountered in archives.

### Official SAA Museum Archives Email List

All new and renewing section members are automatically subscribed—albeit in NOMAIL mode—to an official [SAA Museum Archives Email List](#). Information on official email lists can be found on the [SAA website](#). The [archives of this list](#) are available for members.

### Museum Archives Listserv (SAAMUS-L)

While emails do circulate on SAA Museum Archives email list, section discussion also takes place on the SAAMUS-L listserv.

To join the Museum Archives listserv send an email to [LISTSERV@SI-LISTSERV.SI.EDU](mailto:LISTSERV@SI-LISTSERV.SI.EDU) with the following commands in the body of the email: subscribe SAAMUS-L firstname lastname. Replace "firstname lastname" with your own name; for example: subscribe SAAMUS-L John Smith.

To post to the list, send email to [SAAMUS-L@SI-LISTSERV.SI.EDU](mailto:SAAMUS-L@SI-LISTSERV.SI.EDU).

The Museum Archives listserv, SAAMUS-L, is hosted by the Smithsonian Institution. If you have any questions about the Museum Archives listserv, please contact [Marisa Bourgoin](#).