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ARLIS/NA HONORS ELIZABETH O'KEEFE WITH 2016 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

OAK CREEK, WI (February 12, 2017) The Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) is pleased to announce Elizabeth (Liz) O'Keefe as the recipient of the 2016 Distinguished Service Award. She is the 26th person to receive the Society's highest honor. It was awarded in recognition of her leadership in the development of national and international metadata standards, as well as her exemplary service to the Morgan Library & Museum, New York, including the design and implementation of the Morgan's CORSAIR – a retrieval system widely recognized as a significant model for integrated access to art works, archival materials, books, and visual resources in a single system.



Much of her work with the development of metadata standards was accomplished through her long service on ARLIS/NA's Cataloging Advisory Committee (CAC) in many roles, including member, Chair, liaison to ALA's Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA), and liaison to the Machine-Readable Bibliographic Information Committee (MARBI). Her advocacy in these and other forums helped persuade key players in the development of Resource Description and Access (RDA) that the new cataloging standard must be flexible enough to support the description of non-traditional library resources, including art and cultural works.

Liz also made substantive contributions to other specialist standards, such as the Visual Resources Association's Cataloging Cultural Objects, and the standards for the description of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, modern manuscripts, and graphics developed by the Rare Books & Manuscripts Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries. To all these endeavors she brought exceptional enthusiasm, unparalleled breadth and depth of knowledge, and formidable communication skills, leavened with a sly wit that could defuse the most contentious debate.

During her early years at The Morgan, she focused on data standards for the description of traditional library materials. In the mid-1990s, she began to explore the feasibility of fitting museum object information into the framework of traditional library description. Her research and recommendations persuaded the Morgan to appoint her Director of Collection Information Systems and to charge her with implementing a library system that would bring the institution's diverse collections of rare books, manuscripts, and art and cultural works together within a single unified catalog. The result, CORSAIR, proved to be a watershed demonstration of the successful integration of museum and bibliographic information. Its implementation nonetheless highlighted how much remained to be done to make mainstream cataloging standards hospitable to information about unique art and cultural works. The experience motivated Liz to embark on two decades of tireless and effective advocacy on behalf of art and object cataloging.

Liz's signal contributions to art cataloging have also benefited the Society she has so often and so eloquently represented. Moving among different cataloging communities as a spokesperson and an ambassador for ARLIS/NA, she has increased its visibility and credibility in the larger library world, broadened its sphere of influence and impact, and promoted consultation and collaboration between ARLIS/NA and other organizations concerned with the documentation and management of cultural resources. For her contributions to the field at large and to ARLIS/NA in particular, Elizabeth O'Keefe has been awarded the 2016 Distinguished Service Award.

About the Art Libraries Society of North America

Founded in 1972, the Art Libraries Society of North America is a dynamic, international organization of more than 1,000 individuals devoted to fostering excellence in art and design librarianship and image management in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The membership includes architecture and art librarians, visual resources professionals, artists, curators, educators, publishers, students, and others interested in visual arts information. To serve this diverse constituency, the Society provides a wide range of programs and services within an organizational structure that encourages participation at all levels.

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