

PRESS RELEASE

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April 9, 2022

ARLIS/NA Honors Louis Adrean with the 2021 Distinguished Service Award

WESTFORD, Massachusetts – The Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) is pleased to announce Louis (Lou) Adrean as the recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Service Award. He is the 31st person to receive the Society’s highest honor. The Distinguished Service Award recognizes an individual whose exemplary service in art librarianship, visual resources curatorship, or a related field has made an outstanding national or international contribution to art information.



The award was presented to Lou at the Society’s 50th anniversary conference and convocation ceremony in Chicago, on Thursday, April 7 from 4:15 – 6:00 PM CDT, by Beth Owens and Rachel McPherson.

Lou’s deep and far-reaching contributions to the Society and to the field of art librarianship perfectly embody the accomplishments most valued by the Society. One nominator said, “Lou Adrean has been the definition of art librarianship. His exhaustive knowledge of both the library and museum collections combined with his years of experience as a researcher, scholar, and mentor in the field of art information have indelibly merged the mental image of art information professional with Louis in the minds of researchers in Cleveland for over thirty years.”

Active in ARLIS/NA and the Ohio Valley Chapter since 1986, Lou has held many leadership positions: he served on the Executive Board, several committees and has led workshops or given presentations at six annual conferences. For the Ohio Valley chapter, he has served as chair multiple times and encouraged young professionals to join both organizations where he has served as a mentor to many.

Lou’s list of accomplishments includes teaching and mentoring students through the Cleveland Museum of Art-Case Western Reserve University Joint Program in Art History and Museum Studies. In recognition of his expertise in art provenance research, Lou was named adjunct



faculty at Case Western Reserve University.

Lou recently retired with over 30 years of service while rising through the ranks of the Ingalls Library at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Beginning as a serials librarian, he took the lead in the transition from card catalogs to one of the first automated library systems. In his last role as the Head of Research and Programs, Lou was instrumental in opening the library to the public. Throughout his career, he was a mentor to his colleagues and students. His teaching skills were legendary. The mentoring continues into retirement.

For his contribution to art librarianship and to ARLIS/NA in particular, the Society is pleased to honor Lou Adrean with the 2021 Distinguished Service Award.

The nomination was submitted by Beth Owens and Rachel McPherson. Members of the 2021 ARLIS/NA Distinguished Service Award Sub-Committee were: Andi Back, Jillian Ewalt, Rebecca Friedman, Elisa Hansen, and Katie Keller.

About the Art Libraries Society of North America

Founded in 1972, the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) is a dynamic, international organization of close to 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 other 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 every level.

Contact:

Larry Eames

Media Editor

719.255.3929

media.relations@arlisna.org

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