**PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 27, 2025

## ARLIS/NA HONORS ROGER LAWSON WITH THE 2024 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

WESTFORD, Massachusetts – Roger Lawson has been chosen as the winner of the Distinguished Service Award for 2024. The winner's name was presented at a live ceremony following the Membership Meeting at the (virtual) annual conference on May 13, 2025 which included the DSA Subcommittee Chair, Rebecca Friedman; John Hagood, Head of Library Reader Services, National Gallery in Washington, DC via video; Rachel McPherson, Digital Projects Librarian at the National Gallery, with slides of the National Gallery of Art Library through the years; and then Roger himself.

Over 44 years, Roger's contributions have been numerous and notable, even within limitations set by a government-funded institution that can discourage the visibility of such work. Roger has demonstrated exemplary and memorable collaboration and leadership. He served at the Library of the National Gallery from 1979 until his retirement in 2024, first as a library technician, then as cataloguing librarian, then as Head of Cataloging, Administrative Librarian, and, finally, Executive Librarian.

Roger has been involved in major initiatives, many of which have been on an international scale, including the transition from RLG to OCLC, Art & Architecture Thesaurus, Art NACO, the Art Discovery Catalogue, the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF), the Cicognara Digital Library, and CARTA. He served in many roles at the National Gallery of Art Library, one of the world's most significant art institutions.

Roger has been active in ARLIS/NA for his entire career and has filled nearly every possible role: leader of the Museum TOL (Type of Library) group, active in several Round Tables (later Special Interest Groups), serving as an officer in his local Mid-Atlantic Chapter, and he has served on or chaired nearly every ARLIS/NA committee, like Nominating, Publications and Public Policy. He served as President in 1997/98 and was Program Co-Chair for the 2014 annual conference in Washington, DC. His last officer position was as the Society's inaugural

Editorial Director, which brought "greater visibility for the Society and greater respect for our scholarship and professionalism," according to one letter writer.

Roger was involved in *Art Documentation*'s transition to a peer-reviewed journal, and he encouraged other less traditional types of publications, like the *Notable Graphic Novels Review* and the *Digital Art History Directory*. He has spearheaded ARLIS/NA video transcription work, helped develop standards in that regard, and currently serves as the *Art Documentation* copy editor.

He has mentored and supported many librarians and students. His efforts at inclusiveness and social justice work have included recruiting and supporting undergraduate fellows from Howard University at his institution, for example, and he has helped establish a standard for a welcoming and collegial workplace culture to which others can aspire.

The nomination was submitted by Rachel McPherson and John Hagood. Members of the 2024 ARLIS/NA Distinguished Service Award Subcommittee were: Rebecca Friedman (Chair), Laura Graveline, Courtney Hunt, and Gwen Mayhew.

**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 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 every level.

Contact:
Larry Eames
Media Editor
719.255.3929
media.relations@arlisna.org

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