
A LETTER FROM IASA'S PRESIDENT

Tre Berney, Cornell University Library, USA

Welcome to the 51st IASA Journal. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented significant challenges to all of us over the last year. This public health crisis has brought with it loss, isolation, and much uncertainty; yet our mission to care for, provide access to, and ensure the long-term preservation of the world's audiovisual cultural heritage remains. The COVID era has further exacerbated existing inequities and strained resources that support this work in many areas of the world. While the last year has brought great loss and tragedy, we must also acknowledge some silver linings.

The era of virtual conferences represents an opportunity to broaden our communities' reach and impact. Also, in a virtual setting, the carbon footprint of an international conference is much reduced. For organizations like IASA and our sibling organizations in the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA), the future will bring new challenges on how best to come together to share knowledge and resources. We must evolve in ways that increase access, lower negative impact on the environment, and retain the human connections that bind us as professionals and as people with common cause.

The 2021 IASA annual conference will be held virtually due to current circumstances, with the hopes that we can return to an in-person conference in 2022. IASA wants our current inability to meet physically to be an opportunity to broaden our links with sound and audiovisual archives around the world. Our virtual conference will be programmed according to three different time zones: the Americas, Europe / Africa, and Australasia. This allows anyone in the world to participate at suitable times, while creating a virtual bridge between nations across all continents. The conference programs in each zone will be coordinated by the following institutions:

- Radio y Televisión Nacional de Colombia (for America)
- Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision (for Europe and Africa)
- Universiti Putra Malaysia (for Asia and Australasia)

A new Executive Board was elected in 2020 and ratified at the IASA General Assembly. I would like to thank the outgoing Board members for their significant leadership and contributions to our organization, some of whom had served more than one term. The new Board is composed of people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives and experience and I'm honored to work with them. Please read more about them at <https://www.iasa-web.org/executive-board>.

- Vice-president (Membership): Margarida Ullate i Estanyol, Director of the Sound & Audiovisual Unit, Biblioteca de Catalunya
- Vice-president (Conferences): Perla Olivia Rodríguez Reséndiz, Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas y de la Información, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- Vice-president (Communications): Judith Opoku-Boateng, J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives, Institute of African Studies
- Secretary-General: Elisabeth Steinhäuser, Multimediales Archiv/Audioarchiv, Österreichischer Rundfunk Orf/Austrian Broadcasting Corporation
- Treasurer: Yuri Shimoda, UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive
- Editor: Jennifer Vaughn, Archive Unit, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
- Web Manager: Richard Ranft, London, England and Riga, Latvia

Over the last year IASA has continued to evolve to meet the needs of our user communities. There are several exciting initiatives and projects that have continued despite the need to socially distance and collaborate virtually. The IASA Training and Education Committee, along with former and current Executive Board members, collaborated with the UNESCO International Center for Documentary Heritage in Cheongju, South Korea to support member institutions' capacity building for preserving audiovisual heritage. The result is a video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMNP7yq0YvU&t=2s>) which is freely available for all to use in support of this mission. The Training and Education Committee also held its inaugural IASA Preservation Training Programme at the Biblioteca de Catalunya in June 2021 with sponsorship from NOA. This new programme aims to develop skills to build a strong AV Archive and Preservation skills base throughout the world.

The creation of two new committees at the joint conference with FIAT/IFTA in 2020 will allow for more effort in the areas of outreach and engagement. The Ambassadors Program (<https://www.iasa-web.org/ambassador-committee>) was converted into a committee with the goal of empowering local and regional IASA members to make connections to resources and documentation that IASA produces and encourage collaboration. A newly established Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (<https://www.iasa-web.org/diversity-equity-inclusion-committee>) will work directly with the Board and fellow committees to promote and foster DEI policies, practices, and programming. The IASA community is grateful for those involved in bringing these goals into fruition.

As we look to the future, may we keep in mind our mission to serve as a medium for international co-operation between archives that preserve recorded sound and audiovisual documents. There is much to do and collaboration is key. I look forward to working in my new role with the Executive Board and the broader IASA community. Please engage with the IASA community by posting on the listserv or our social media channels, and by seeking answers to the questions you have and offering your knowledge and experience to others. If we take anything away from the last year, it is the realization that our best resource is each other.

With the kindest regards,

Tre Berney
IASA President
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