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Letter from the Chair

Jessica Cline, Supervising Librarian, Picture Collection, New York
Public Library

The second half of 2025 was bustling with activity. We hosted an Early-Career Professional Panel and a Chapter Symposium, which allowed us to hear directly from our members and highlight the activities of member libraries. We also enjoyed visits to exhibitions at the Cooper Union Library and NYU Bobst Library, a tour of the Grolier Club Library, and studio tours at Small Editions, Purgatory Pie Press, and Diagonal Press. We finished the year with a fantastic Holiday Party generously hosted by the Cooper Union Library. And, importantly, our Bylaws Committee has dedicated a great deal of time to update and clarify our Chapter Bylaws. It has truly been an amazing year for the New York Chapter of ARLIS NA, and it has been a pleasure to share it with all of you!

As we look ahead to 2026, we are preparing to welcome six new members to the Executive Board. They will be joining the returning members: Sherri Machlin, Angela Tillapaugh, Bridget O'Keefe, Alex Austin, and me. I want to take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the 2025 Executive Board for their unwavering support, innovative ideas, and valuable contributions to the Chapter. A special thank you to our outgoing members: Emily Walz, Peter Victor-Gasper, Joey Vincennie, Miguel Rosales, Hannah Fountain-Pileggi, and Rachel Garbade. I am truly humbled by your willingness to volunteer in support of this community and continually encouraged by your dedication and enthusiasm.

Sincerely yours,
Jessica Cline

Member Updates

Compiled by A.M. LaVey, Senior Librarian, New York Public Library

Ann Bell joined the New York Public Library as a Managing Librarian and the Head of Adult Programs & Outreach at Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library. Bell published "Fashion in Print: Three Historic Plates from Library Collections," *Fashion, Textile and Costume Librarians* (August 2025).

<https://arlisftc.wordpress.com/2025/08/27/french-fashion-plates/>

Claire Charvet curated the exhibition *Centering the Body: Collaborative Histories of Dance and Fashion* at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Zulay Chang and Miguel Rosales co-chaired "Catalysts for Creation: Celebrating Our Collective Community" at the New York Public Research Libraries Conference in November.

Jessica Cline co-presented "Collections in Classrooms: Teaching with Historic Postcards" at the New York Public Research Libraries Conference in November.

Katie Iwagami published "Embracing Softness/Choosing Empathy: Saya Woolfalk's Empathic Universe," *Fashion, Textile and Costume Librarians* (June 2025).

<https://arlisftc.wordpress.com/2025/06/05/embracing-softness-choosing-empathy-saya-woolfalks-empathic-universe/>

Tammi Lawson and Miguel Rosales co-presented "Custodians of Creation: Stewarding Artworks in a Research Library Context" at the New York Public Research Libraries Conference in November.

A.M. LaVey published "The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts: A Chronological Checklist of Slavic and East European Exhibitions," *Slavic & East European Information Resources* 26, no. 3-4 (2025).
doi:10.1080/15228886.2025.2576860.

LaVey published "Mail Art as Network, Artifact and Postal History in Practice." *Philatelic Literature Review* 74, no. 2 (2025): 30-38.

LaVey chaired "Exhibitions as Collective Knowledge: Documenting New York Public Library's Exhibitions Histories," and presented "Documenting the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts Exhibition Histories: Archival Labor, Public Scholarship and the Future of Institutional Memory," at the New York Public Research Libraries Conference in November.

LaVey chaired "Preserving the Impermanent: Ephemera in Library and Archival Collections," and presented "Ephemeral Archives: Dance Programs as Primary Source Documents in Dance Research," at the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies Fifty-Seventh Annual Convention, in Washington, D.C. in November.

Bridget O'Keefe published "Exhibition Review of Diane Arbus: Constellation at The Armory, New York, NY, June 5th to August 17, 2025," *Photography Librarians SIG Blog* (September 2025)

<https://photolibrarians.arlisna.hcommons.org/2025/09/04/exhibition-review-of-diane-arbus-constellation-at-the-armory-new-york-ny/>. 🌀

Tour of *A Comedy for Mortals: Artists Books of Tammy Nguyen* at the Cooper Union Library



Snapshots from the tour of *A Comedy for Mortals: Artists Books of Tammy Nguyen* on August 5, 2025. Images courtesy of Corina Reynolds.

Visit to Small Editions' Studio

Whitney Lorenze Willis, Dual Degree Master's Candidate in Museum Studies and Library and Information Science at New York University in consortium with Long Island University

On the afternoon of August 14th, ARLIS/NA New York Chapter members were treated to a tour of the Small Editions' Studio, an independent design studio and artist book publisher housed in a quiet building near the Navy Yard in Brooklyn. Enthusiastically led by Head of Production Hannah Yukiko Pierce, the visit provided an exclusive look at the studio's archived projects, research collections, and upcoming publications, while at once revealing the massive amount of care and labor that goes into each endeavor. It was a privilege to explore.

In addition to providing workshops on independent bookmaking, publishing, and print production, Small Editions takes on both commercial and creative projects, and the studio's primary goal is to support artists in bringing their creative visions to life. Pierce described the company's ethos as "pursuing the book as art to the fullest degree," and this was immediately evinced by the singular nature of each project she chose to share with the group. The studio itself is designed to support the precise and labor-intensive work that is necessary to create these genre-bending objects, which might be described as part book, part sculpture. The large press, various and

bare work tables take up the majority of the small space, while tools and rolls of colorful paper hang from pegs on the wall and reference materials line the shelves, all within arm's reach. A large desktop computer is a bit more hidden towards the back, indicating that this is a primarily analog production space; a fact which appealed greatly to all of the ARLIS members present.

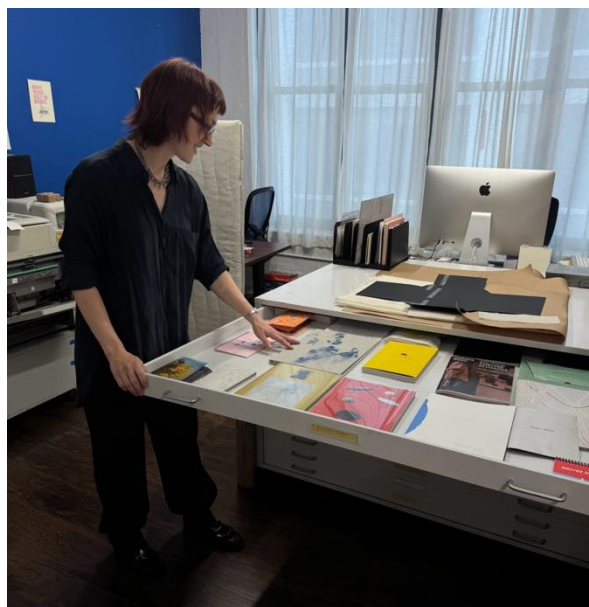
The artists who are invited to work with Small Editions don't primarily work in book structures. They typically work in other media, and the ontological distance between the average book and the art objects that Pierce presented to us illuminated this fact well. That being said, the studio's publications are not completely untethered from more familiar literary materials—each book by Small Editions is, in fact, a book. Pierce describes the process of creating these objects as “thinking in book,” and however unlike the typical novel, exhibition catalog, or facsimile each project is, its relationship to the classic codex remains clear.

As she introduced us to the collection of books that she planned to show us that day, Pierce described how the studio tries to play with each artist's idea in two different forms. For each project, there is a “high-end” version—of which very few copies are produced—and “democratic multiples”—cheaper, more highly reproduced versions that enable more people to own and engage with the artist's work. One of the most striking objects of the more luxurious variety is Gi (Ginny) Huo's *all i wanted was to get into heaven*, described on the Small Editions website as “a multi-sensorial book object that examines the complexities of a spiritual journey and its exodus.”¹ It includes a stop-motion flip book, a rechargeable mp3 player, and a collection of Bible verses, all screw-bound and housed in a pearlescent blue acrylic box. We learned it was named one of the Best Art Books of 2021 by the Brooklyn Rail, and it was easy to see why.

Right beside *all i wanted was to get into heaven* laid a humbler object; it looked like a small notebook, spiral-bound with neon orange plastic and bearing a bluish, watery-patterned cover. This one is titled *Here's to Believing*, and it is described on the website as “[a 2 color] risograph printed zine that draws from [Huo's] book object *all i wanted was to get into heaven*.” Here is one of the aforementioned democratic multiples, from an edition of 200. In comparison, there are only 12 copies and 2 APs of *all i wanted*, which was the interdisciplinary artist's first book and retails on the Small Editions website for a four-figure price. The zine goes for just \$12.80.

There were many other titles laid out for us, some complete and some in-progress, which one would otherwise have few opportunities to get a close look at. Most of them are available for purchase directly on the Small Editions website, where you can also discover various opportunities to engage with the studio. Previous workshops have covered subjects such as foil stamping, paper and ink, and creating an artist's book from concept to dummy. The studio regularly attends art book fairs, hosts an open studio, and organizes other community events. To learn more, visit <https://smalleditions.nyc/>. 🐾

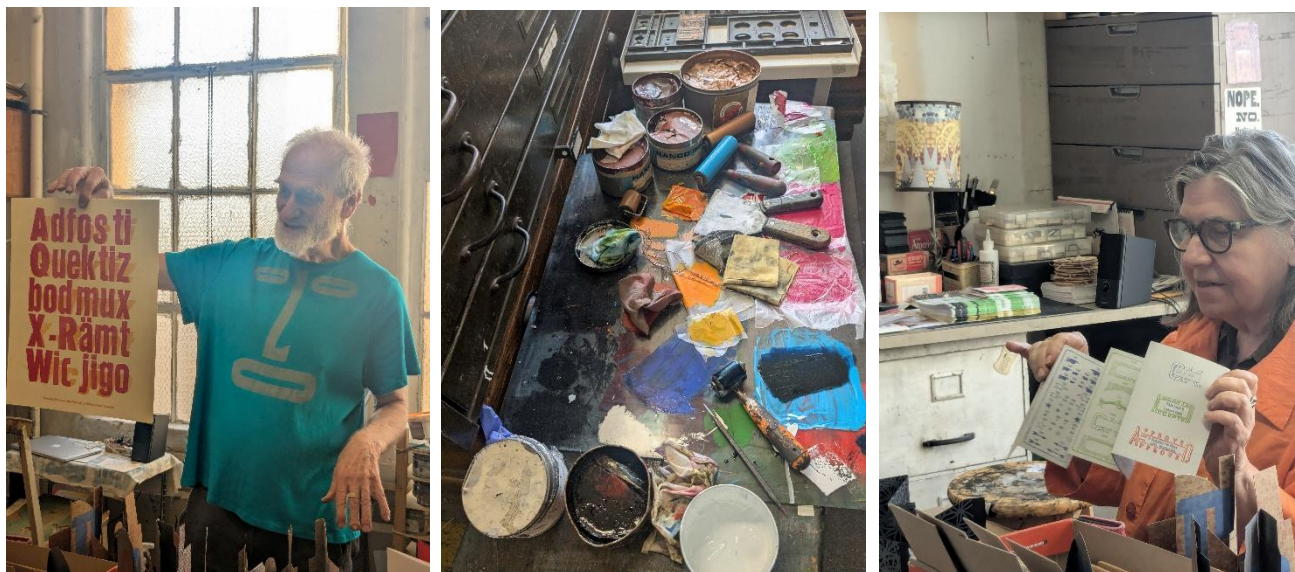
1. “all i wanted was to get into heaven,” Small Editions, accessed September 4, 2025, <https://smalleditions.nyc/all-i-wanted-was-to-get-into-heaven#:~:text=Combining%20archived%20family%20images%2C%20Mormon,traumatic%20legacies%20of%20religious%20systems.>



Hannah Yukiko Pierce leading a tour of Small Editions' Studio. Image courtesy of Whitney Lorenze Willis.

Visit to Purgatory Pie Press

Sherri Machlin, Adjunct Reference Librarian, Zabar Art Library, Hunter College Libraries



Snapshots of Purgatory Pie Press founders Dikko Faust and Esther K. Smith. Images courtesy of Sherri Machlin.

On October 24th, 2025, members of the New York Chapter gathered at Purgatory Pie Press and met with its founders Esther K. Smith and Dikko Faust, whose studio is located in Brooklyn Army Terminal.

Purgatory Pie Press (PPP) was founded in 1977 by Faust, and is one of the longest-running artist presses in the United States. After moving to New York City in 1978 to become the letterpress printer at the Center for Book Arts, Faust merged PPP with Smith's EK Smith Museum of Found Art in 1980, the year they married and created their first print collaboration—their wedding invitation.

Since then, they have worked as a collaborative duo producing limited editions, artists' books, and series-based projects, developing ideas through an iterative process of hand setting type, proofing, cutting, arranging, printing on their Vandercook 4, and hand-stitching the final books, often with the help of assistants.

Over four decades, they have collaborated with more than one hundred artists and numerous writers. They began with monthly limited-edition postcards mailed to subscribers for ten years. Then, they expanded into series such as Artist Tracts, Artist Coasters, and PurgaToys. They also created individual books with artists including Susan Happersett and long-running collaborators Bob and Roberta Smith.

PPP's work is now held in major institutions including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cooper Hewitt, Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Brooklyn Museum, Walker Art Center, Tate Modern, Getty, and Smithsonian. Smith's books include the bestselling *How to Make Books* (for which Faust hand set the display type), *Magic Books & Paper Toys*, *The Paper Bride*, and *Making Books with Kids*. Today, Smith and Faust continue to travel as visiting artists and teachers at museums, art centers, and universities, carrying forward a press named on the day Faust accidentally "pied" a case of metal type, an origin that echoes the meticulous, hands-on devotion that has defined PPP ever since. ♪

Early-Career Professional Panel Takeaways

On October 28th, the New York Chapter gathered virtually to hear early-career members discuss the steps they took, and continue to take, to grow their careers. Below, a sample of the panelists share a bit about their paths and give advice to other students and folks starting their library careers.

Olivia Buck, Digital Media Librarian, The Julliard School

After earning two degrees in literature, I moved to New York in January 2021, with the hope of working in higher education. I realized early that my dream jobs—i.e., working in cultural heritage institutions—required an MLIS and/or a certificate in archives. I chose to return to graduate school and began at the Pratt Institute's School of Information in January 2023. While a student at Pratt, I worked at a total of six libraries and archives, including The Museum of Modern Art, The Drawing Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Watson Library, and The Morgan Library & Museum. These positions helped me realize a passion for cataloging, digital archiving, and metadata work, which primed me for my current role as the Digital Media Librarian at The Juilliard School. So much of what helped me stand out in the market hinged on the skills and knowledge I gained in those extra-curricular roles, in addition to the circle of mentors and peers I connected with along the way. To students reading this: many learning experiences are designed specifically for graduate students and may not be available to you post-graduation. Soak in as much as you can and keep your eyes peeled for opportunities!

Mina Marciano, Storage and Retrieval Lead, Frick Art Research Library

As the Storage and Retrieval Lead Librarian at the Frick Art Research Library (FARL), I am responsible for overseeing the circulation of material both on and offsite and ensuring support for the services provided by the FARL and Frick Collection as a whole. I earned my MLIS from the University of Washington and my BA in art history from Fordham University. Prior to joining the Frick, I worked on the Reference team at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, as well as other academic, museum, and special collections libraries.

One piece of advice I have for those starting their career is to be open to jobs that fall outside of what you think you might want to do. Experience is important, and a lot of this field is learning on the job. You'll find that many skills are applicable to different roles. Stay open to work you may not have initially considered, and you might find something you really enjoy!

Nicole Rosengurt, Collections Manager & Librarian, Center for Book Arts

I studied art history in college, where I also worked in the library. I wanted to combine my desire to create access to information with my love of art—so I went to library school! Since then, I've helped digitize archives at Franklin Furnace, was the Assistant Librarian at the Whitney Museum of American Art, and am cataloging rare books at the Watson Library at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I'm now also the librarian at Center for Book Arts, where I manage the collection, facilitate research appointments, give presentations about our holdings, and, of course, do lots of cataloging.

My advice to students and early-career professionals is to seek out a variety of internships—it's the best way to figure out what really interests you. Hands-on experiences help you develop your skillset. Take classes that

genuinely interest you, not just the ones that seem “useful.” Try new things! Join professional organizations, like ARLIS, to meet people and learn about different career paths. Don’t be afraid to ask someone in the field you admire for a coffee chat and pick their brain. When you meet people, do your research and show specific enthusiasm—ask them about their work, their path, and what’s exciting them right now. Librarians want to help!

Morgan Vō, Critical & Inclusive Pedagogy Librarian, Pratt Institute Libraries

I work at Pratt Institute Libraries as a Critical & Inclusive Pedagogy Librarian, a tenure-track faculty position geared towards supporting critical practice and teaching within our libraries. I joined the Libraries in Fall 2024 after having worked there as a graduate assistant during my time in Pratt’s MSLIS program. Libraries are complex spaces with many specialized corners; in my assistantship, I was fortunate to work on many projects in different areas, which helped to clarify the ambitions I wanted to bring to my practice as a librarian.

My responsibilities include class instruction, collection development, research assistance, and liaising with various departments. My particular interests in pedagogy are shaped by my life as a poet, which entails maintaining a balance between the accentuation of my idiosyncrasies and grounding myself in traditions, communities, and scholarship. In my teaching, I work towards the potential of bridging students’ particular sparks of interest to fruitful forms of research. Before being a librarian, I worked as a web developer for a corporate news-media publication. The most positive change for me has been having the opportunity to consider the why of what I am doing, and getting to collaborate with others to bring our best intentions to bear for our community. 🌀

Member Reports from the Chapter Symposium

On November 14th, the New York Chapter convened virtually for the Fall Business Meeting and Chapter Symposium, during which members presented lightning talks about the work they are doing at their institutions. Below is a sample of the work shared.

"Hungarian Collection Expansion in Watson Library"

Jared Ash, Florence and Herbert Irving Librarian for Collections, The Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Thomas J. Watson Library at The Metropolitan Museum of Art has added to its holdings a collection of more than 2,800 volumes on Hungarian art, published between 1748 and the present. Received as a gift from the Salgo Trust for Education, the collection includes rare publications and reference material to support research on early twentieth century modernism in Hungary (Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Cubism, Expressionism, Constructivism and Surrealism), the Hungarian neo-avantgarde of the 1960s and 1970s, and later twentieth century unofficial and contemporary art movements and practices including stamp art, mail art, installation art and performance art.

The Salgo Trust for Education is a not-for-profit foundation established in 1991 by Nicolas Salgo, a successful businessman who was born in Hungary in 1914 and became a U.S. citizen in 1953. Salgo served as the U.S. Ambassador to Hungary from 1983-1986, during which time he began collecting Hungarian art and Hungarian

antiquities, including silver, old maps, old coins, and folk art. The Salgo Trust is dedicated “to preserving and placing the collections of its founder through research, exhibitions and donations.”

The donation to Watson draws primarily from the Trust’s reference and rare book libraries, which were expanded over several decades by Dr. Oliver A. Botar, Curator of Hungarian Art at the Trust. This gift, combined with Watson’s existing holdings, makes Watson an unparalleled resource for researching Hungarian art outside of Hungary, and advances Watson’s commitment to supporting and encouraging new scholarship and expanded global narratives.

Thanks to the dedication and professionalism of Watson’s Technical Services unit, the entire gift has been cataloged and records are now available for browsing in Watsonline. (We are especially indebted to Tamara Fultz and William Blueher for most of the original cataloging—a feat that is even more impressive since neither one knew Hungarian!). Additionally, a collection of images of rare, decorated publishers’ bindings and modernist cover designs from the gift may be browsed in the library’s Digital Collections.

If these online surrogates pique your interest, may the next several months allow ample time for you to compile lists of hordes of Hungarian books that you plan to consult in person, once Watson Library reopens to visiting researchers after our renovation!



A selection of rare Hungarian books published in the 1910s-1920s, featuring cover designs and illustrations by László Moholy-Nagy, Sándor Bortnyik, Lajos Tihanyi, Heinrich Lefler and Joseph Urban. Gifts of the Salgo Trust for Education to the Thomas J. Watson Library. Image courtesy of Jared Ash.

"Specificity in Special Collections: Contributing New Terms to Controlled Vocabularies at The Morgan Library & Museum"

Kait Astrella, Shelby White & Leon Levy Fellow in Manuscript Cataloging, The Morgan Library & Museum

During my presentation, I shared three new entries I submitted to the Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT) on behalf of the Morgan Library & Museum: book curses, cross-writing, and playscripts (currently under review).

I became interested in standardizing “book curses” during a discussion on a cataloging listserv and decided to see how many The Morgan might have in its collection. I talked about this search process more in-depth in a [blog post](#) for The Morgan, which includes some new images of possible curses that have so far not been deciphered. The pursuit of this term served to unify disparate objects in our collection that could not otherwise be considered together. As noted in her [paper](#) on Edwardian Book Curses, Lauren Alex O’Hagan points out that “limited studies have been carried out on book inscriptions” and that “[m]ore specifically, accounts of book curses and admonitions have only been humorous in nature.” We hope the existence of this term in our collection serves as an invitation for researchers in this area of scholarship.

The second submission, “cross-writing,” grew out of a high-profile collection, Jane Austen’s letters, which were part of a recent exhibition, *A Lively Mind: Jane Austen at 250* for which there are also [digital facsimiles](#). One of the most visually arresting aspects of these letters is Austen’s habit of cross-writing, or writing at overlapping right angles, especially when writing to her sister—not because the paper itself was expensive but because postage by weight was. While I was updating these records in preparation for the facsimiles’ publication, I saw a pattern of recording this practice in a MARC 500 field under a variety of terms. Standardizing this term means that it will be possible to unite letters with this notable feature.

Lastly, I submitted the term “playscripts” with the help of my colleague Sandra Carpenter, who had done most of the preliminary legwork but had been holding back from submitting when the process was more complicated for one-off terms. Because I was submitting fewer than ten terms, I submitted each term separately by email to Getty Vocabulary Program Editor Antonio Beecroft. The Morgan has many playscripts that need to be distinguished from published plays and are entirely different than radio or television scripts. This is our proposed scope note for playscripts: Written forms of stories prepared for stage productions, including description of characters, details of scenes and settings, dialogue, and stage directions.

These updates to our catalog are workaday, granular changes and part of our continued efforts to make the relationships in our collections stand out to anyone in search of them. So far, I have already heard from colleagues eager to establish the term as a Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) or who plan to use these terms in their own cataloging endeavors. As a newly minted librarian and cataloger, I look forward to hearing from other colleagues using or adapting these terms.

"Leveling Up: Launching a Circulating Game Collection at an Academic Library"

Elizabeth Berg, Associate Director for Access Services, Pratt Institute

Chris Jacobs, Evening & Weekend Library Manager, Pratt Institute

Our presentation outlined the creation of the Pratt Institute Libraries’ Game Collection, which consists of video, board, and card games; tabletop roleplaying books; and gaming consoles. We discussed drafting the proposal, processing acquisitions, developing our collection policy, and assessing these materials, and promoting the collection via outreach.



The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom playing on a Nintendo Switch Lite in the Pratt Institute Libraries stacks. Image courtesy of Elizabeth Berg.

Starting a game collection had been a pipe dream of a group of library faculty and staff, until Pratt's School of Design started offering a BFA in Game Arts in Fall 2021. With the establishment of this new academic program, we had the perfect opportunity to make the new collection a reality. A proposal was developed and approved in Spring 2023, with an initial budget allocation of \$6,000 to start the collection.

Several policy decisions were made during the initial round of purchasing and processing. We decided to only buy physical copies of video games, which could be lent under the first-sale doctrine, which protects the loaning of books and other physical media in public and academic libraries. We have not yet found a viable way of acquiring and sharing digital-only games that adheres to our lending policies. Along with the video games, we purchased a number of consoles, including a PlayStation 5, an Xbox Series X, and several Nintendo Switches and Switch Lites. In order to represent the history of video game development, we purchased officially-licensed emulator consoles for the NES, SNES and SEGA Genesis, which come preloaded with collections of games from those eras.

When processing board games, our primary concern was how to keep track of game components. Our Equipment Loan Office (ELO), which would be handling these materials, performed research into best practices by reaching out to institutions with circulating game collections, such as the Brooklyn Public Library. Several methods were suggested, including full inventories of game pieces anytime something was returned or even weighing bags of components; however, these were discarded as unfeasible, and we decided to rely on patrons informing us of anything missing from a given game. The ELO scanned all game manuals, saving them to Google Drive. Laminated component lists are included in each game, which include QR codes to these PDF guides.

Currently, the games are housed with the Libraries' equipment and DVDs, which are closed collections. We have worked to recreate the browsing experience on our Game Collection LibGuide (libguides.pratt.edu/game-collection). On the LibGuide, games are organized in galleries according to genre and attribute tags, such as number of players, play time, and complexity. These tags were adapted from Mobygames (mobygames.com) for video games and from Board Game Geek (boardgamegeek.com) for analog games.

In order to get the word out about the new collection, the Libraries have hosted several game nights and game-centered events. The Game Collection has proven to be a great way to get people into the Library and to our events. It has also given us more opportunities to collaborate with other offices on campus; for example, we cosponsored an International Game Night for International Education Week and regularly supply games for department and student club game nights. We have also built a strong relationship with the student-run Gaming Club, which now holds its weekly meetings in the Library, to be adjacent to the collections.

As of November 2025, we have almost 200 games available to borrow, with another 70 in the processing pipeline, as well as 25 equipment kits of consoles or controllers. The new Nintendo Switch 2 is currently in processing. In our first year, we had 485 loans. In the second year, we had 748 loans, which is about twice the number of circulations as Course Reserves.

Moving forward, we will continue to develop the collections and their corresponding programming, establish a closer relationship with the Game Arts program, and reorganize the collections to make the games physically browsable. The creation of the collection has been a satisfying opportunity to analyze our assessment and acquisition processes, to rethink how we engage our patrons, and to join a growing network of libraries that are incorporating these important materials into their collections.

"Building The Retro Game Lounge at SVA Library West"
David Pemberton, Instruction/Periodicals Librarian,
School of Visual Arts Libraries

In 2006, at the request of what was then the Computer Art Department (now 3D Animation & Visual Effects), the SVA Libraries started collecting Xbox 360 games. A popular addition to our holdings, we began diversifying the collection over the next year by adding Nintendo Wii and PlayStation 3 games. However, we did not collect consoles. Through patron requests and targeted collection development, we consistently spent out the modest budget line. We now have 750 games across 13 different platforms. As console generations stacked up, an ever-increasing percentage of our collection became effectively dormant.

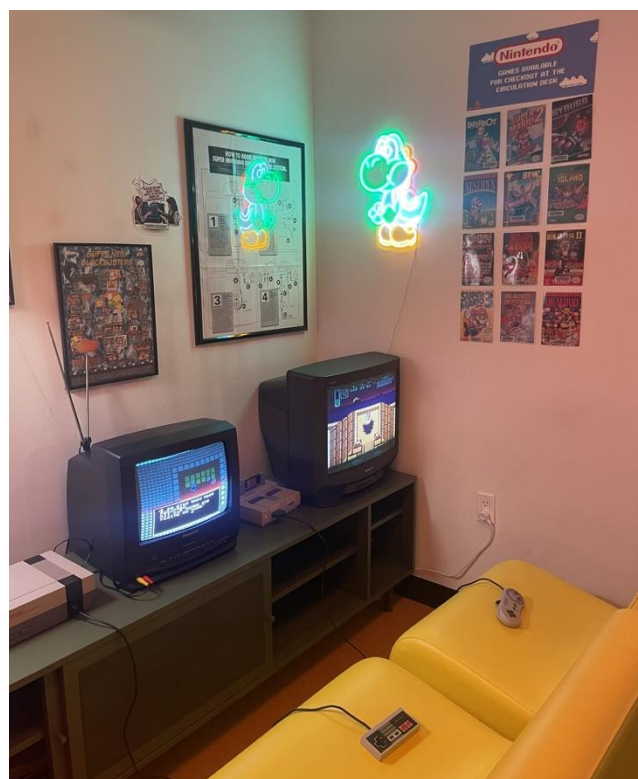
In 2016, SVA opened Library West, a branch location in Chelsea, for which I serve as manager. The space includes a small traditional library section that houses, in addition to our other resources, our video games, tabletop games, and a ten-seat computer lab. Of the 1,400 books at Library West, many are focused on concept art for video games

and animation. The majority of Library West consists of a lounge combining comfortable and cafe-style seating for 65 people, a large screen with two projectors, two conference rooms, a background music system, and a third conference-style room that serves as the SVA Library West Game Room. The lounge, the conference rooms, and the Game Room are always open, the latter accessible by SVA ID card-strike, providing security and user accountability. It was at this time that we acquired our first consoles: two PS4's and two Xbox Ones in the Game Room, and two Nintendo Wii's to loan.

The original Game Room (which we casually now call the Modern Game Room) is a success and continues to be popular, however, it is small and lacks malleability. It fits four people snugly and was built out by the school's AV department. All components are routed through professional AV equipment, and switching is accomplished with wall-mounted control panels. While this is sleek, it takes away the possibility of easily adding components and making changes. I was eager to revitalize our legacy game collections, collecting both the newest releases and their historical antecedents. With retro-gaming popularity on the rise, and gaming and gaming history increasingly considered a legitimate academic arena touching illustration, animation, narrative arts; graphic, interaction, and computer design, as well as the unique cultural study touchstones that rest on gaming culture, I was emboldened to seek a second space.

In December 2023, we received a donation from NYPL: an original Nintendo, Super Nintendo, twenty games with original packaging, instruction booklets, maps, assorted ephemera, controllers, zappers, and a collection of Nintendo Power Magazines. We now had an anchor for the collection, forty years of gaming history, and a vision I could more easily communicate.

We annexed an adjacent office behind our service desk that is two and a half times the size of the original Game Room, with room for six to eight people, four gaming stations in two sectors, and storage. For authenticity, as well



The SVA Library West Retro Game Room. Image courtesy of David Pemberton.

as aspect ratio and frame rate compatibility, two of the stations have Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) TVs. These support four consoles ranging from 1985 to 1999. Two modern TVs are mounted on the opposite wall, and these support seven consoles ranging from 2001 to 2013. Wiring, switching, and concealing a thicket of cords was the primary concern at this station. With mounted HDMI switchers, ties, gaffer tape, and intentionality, I was able to create a clean-looking, self-service, and flexible setup that can be supported by the library. For technical issues, we created a ticketing system with Google Sheets for which I am the primary technician, but continue to train other staff.

I was very fortunate to find unused furniture on campus that perfectly suited my needs, including a media console with multiple cubbies for all the consoles and room for growth, and a media cabinet which holds hundreds of games and helps organize the plethora of controllers. We chose warm colors and soft lighting to contrast the cool colors in the rest of Library West. Instead of purchasing new security cases for the oldest games, we displayed laminated copies of the cover art on the wall—decor that serves as a collection guide. We also framed some of the vintage posters from the NYPL donation. We spent roughly \$10,000, about \$8,500 on seating and \$1,500 on technology. This number could easily have been doubled if not for the various donations, repurposings, and the revitalization of twenty years of collection development. The Retro Game Lounge is also accessible via school ID card strike. For the month of October 2025, we recorded 786 entries, with each entry often representing two to five students. When we replaced the original consoles in the Modern Game Room with the latest generation, the older ones were moved to the Retro Game Lounge, and even provided us with a pair of backups. I have also sourced donations of backup consoles from my community, which we can install should the need arise. We continue to solicit donations of games and consoles. What do you have sitting around that could be given a second life?

"Watson Library Renewed: Enhancing Access, Space, and Experience"

**Jessica Ranne-Cardona, Associate Museum Librarian, Reader Services, Thomas J. Watson Library,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art**

The Thomas J. Watson Library is working with The Met's Capital Project Team and the [Young & Ayata](#) design firm to renovate our Study Room, Circulation and Research Assistance Desk, and the locker area near our main entrance.

This renovation has been years in the making and our team is so excited that it is finally happening. The purpose of this renovation is to refresh our public spaces, resulting in an even more welcoming and inviting library for Met staff and visiting researchers. The renovation will also make the space more efficient for library staff and their day-to-day operations. The following is a brief breakdown of the areas that are under renovation.

The Nolen Study Room

The goal of this space is to welcome and engage Met staff and visiting researchers. What was once known as the Periodicals Room, and then the Watson Study Room, will reopen as the Nolen Study Room. This space will be home to approximately 5,000 books reflecting the scope of The Met's collection. These materials are important not only because they support research of The Met's collection, but also because it is the only circulating collection in the museum. Many Met volunteers depend on Watson Library for their research, and in addition to attending library classes, they value the privilege of taking Study Room books home with them. This space will be flexible and multipurpose, with the goal of hosting classes, presentations, seminars, workshops, and programs.



A rendering of the new Nolen Study Room at the Thomas J. Watson Library at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Image courtesy of Young & Ayata.


The Circulation and Research Assistance Desk

Our previous public service desk was the result of years of piecemeal alterations: cabinet doors were added, drawers were removed, and further modifications were made to support the efficient workflows of our busy Circulation Team.

With this renovation, we had the opportunity to redesign this desk around the needs of library staff and our researchers, with solicited input from the Circulation Team. The new design will have more space for booktrucks and staff workspaces. Each drawer, shelf, and cabinet's function has been discussed in detail. The new desk will also include an ADA compliant counter for our visitors.

Main Entrance Locker Area

When you enter the main entrance of the library, our locker area is directly on your right. This area is one of our busiest spots in the library, as our researchers stop here each time they enter and exit to store their belongings. We also welcome endless curious museum visitors who stop by to see our popular library exhibitions, ask questions about the museum, or learn for the first time that the museum has a library. In the new space, there will be a look-in glass installed here so that you can see into the Nolen Study Room. We will also have a greater quantity of brand-new lockers, in two different sizes.

During this closure, our services to Met staff remain uninterrupted. Though we are closed to visiting researchers, we are providing research assistance virtually and temporary scanning services. We hope to welcome back our visiting researchers in Spring 2026 to an improved space that is even more comfortable and accommodating than before. To read more about this renovation, you can view the press release here: <https://www.metmuseum.org/press-releases/watson-nolen-room-renovation>. 

Visit to Diagonal Press Studio

Rose Spaziani, Graduate Student, Information and Library Science, University at Buffalo

Mathematics, nature, and unusual book-binding techniques are just a few of the inspirations of the visual artist Tauba Auerbach, who opened their studio to members of the New York Chapter of ARLIS/NA on November 18th for a private tour. Auerbach's creative process comes to fruition at Diagonal Press Studio on Manhattan's Lower East Side, where the artist paints, sculpts, weaves, and makes artists' books. During the tour, Auerbach discussed evolving as an artist, invited participants to page through Diagonal Press publications, and answered questions about collaborating with art libraries and archives.

Among the items displayed were Auerbach's 2016 publications *A Primer of Higher Space* and *Projective Ornament*, books originally penned by Claude Bragdon in 1913 and 1915, respectively. They described discovering Bragdon's ideas of nature, architecture, and four-dimensional space years earlier. A fascination with Bragdon led Auerbach to create updated editions of his books after realizing they were in the public domain. The goal was to introduce a new audience to Bragdon's ideas while staying true to the original content of his books. *A Primer of Higher Space* and *Projective Ornament* keep Bragdon's original text and inner page images while updating the book's introduction, as well as the inner and outer flaps of the book jacket.

Not all items displayed in Auerbach's studio look like books in the traditional sense. Another creation admired by tour participants was *Z Helix*, a book that opens like a piece of origami. The book itself is made of indigo print on 4 mm transparency film bound with 16 mm spiral coils enclosed in E-PLUS Heritage corrugated board cut into a box that folds with meticulous precision. Auerbach's inspiration for this book comes from techniques for coil bindings and the colors of their sculpture *Square Helix (Z)*, which was shown in the 2014 exhibition, "The New Ambidextrous Universe," at ICA London in England.

Math frequently meets nature and science in their art, as exemplified by *Z Helix*, which refers to a left-handed helix, or a biological structure like helical Z DNA. Another example is Auerbach's *Heat Current 11*, a colorful accordion-fold book with prints that portray the shapes of water currents of different temperatures. Furthermore, *Peanopoeim I* is a tribute to a type of fractal—the space-filling curve developed by the Italian mathematician Giuseppe Peano. In fact, Auerbach captivated the tour by discussing their travels to Turin, Italy, to research Peano and even visit his former house, occupied by a new family.

Research is central to Auerbach's work. The artist is always on the hunt for unusual bookbinding techniques and rare books with interesting visuals. In response to questions by tour participants, Auerbach noted the value of gaining insights from art librarians and archivists, who can provide information on the aforementioned topics. In fact, Auerbach would like to see more creations from Diagonal Press Studio held by libraries.

In addition to books, Auerbach makes posters, flags, calendars, map projections, pins, and manipulatives like *Noloid* and *Unfolded Tesseract*. The latter were some of the most pleasing objects handled by the writer of this article, and again, their inspiration comes from math. The tesseract, for instance, is a four-dimensional cube made of 3D-printed nylon.

If you are an art librarian or archivist interested in collaborating with Auerbach, email diagonal@taubaaauerbach.com. According to the Diagonal Press Studio website, a discount is extended to libraries that want to acquire Auerbach's publications. For more information, visit <https://diagonalpress.com>. ☞

From the Outsider Art Looking In: My American Folk Art Museum Internship

Linda L. Smith, Graduate Student/Student Worker, New York University

My most recent internship in the archives of the American Folk Art Museum allowed me to inspect imagery of an outdoor art environment that no longer exists. This experience also showed me folk art from an archival perspective. My experience with this collection challenged the usual connotations of the terms *outsider artist* and *amateur*, as I observed and helped preserve works worthy of preservation and attention.

For just over two months in Fall 2025, I worked on the Frank Wright collection. Wright moved to New Paltz, New York in 1959, immersing himself in the local arts scene and attending SUNY New Paltz. He was a sculptor, painter, and photographer. Sometime in the 1960s, Wright began dabbling in filmmaking. Wright heard of Clarence Schmidt's *Miracle on the Mountain* and immediately had an idea for a documentary film about Schmidt and his entire outdoor art environment.

Schmidt was born in 1897 in Queens. His father worked as a mason and builder, and Schmidt not only did the same work, but also dropped out of high school to continue in this field. Upon a cousin's death in the 1920s, Schmidt inherited five acres of land at the base of Ohayo Mountain in Woodstock, New York. He and wife Grace summered there for two decades before Schmidt convinced the family to move permanently to the mountain's base. For the next thirty years, Schmidt built unusual houses out of railroad ties, doors, and mirrors, typically covering the structures with tar as a binder; sometimes, broken pieces of glass would then be glued onto that tar. The largest house, *The House of Mirrors*, ended up being seven stories tall. He also accumulated decorations of all sizes—sometimes as donations from visitors—and inserted them into the outdoor environment, sometimes as is and sometimes warping, painting, tarring, covering, and attaching the item in some way. The tar he frequently used proved to be detrimental to his art; two fires ravaged the property in the 1970s, the second leaving Schmidt badly burned and forced to move to a nursing home. He died on November 9, 1978.



Linda L. Smith preparing to inspect film. Image courtesy of Linda L. Smith.

Wright captured several reels of photographic film and separate reels of magnetic soundtrack, which is another strip of brown film that holds the sound information via magnetic particles. In total, the collection is composed of forty-nine reels of film with image and six reels of soundtrack; while there are existing digital transfers of some of this material to VHS, audio cassette, and USB drive, I was not able to inspect those during my internship.

There were several recurring issues with the collection: poorly done splices (or securing film together after a cut or tear), excess adhesive from non-archival tape used previously, and roughness and tears along the edges and into the perforations or sprockets of the film. Every splice I encountered

had to be redone, save a couple that were done with cement and a hot splicer on only one reel. While a challenge, it ultimately helped ease my mind and that of the archives to know that the films were ready to go through a scanner, should the films be digitized.

Despite these challenges, Wright captured stunning footage. It's clear that he played with composition and lighting within each image; incorporated various camera movements like pans (from side to side and up and down) and zoom outs; and took care to capture both Schmidt and various parts of the *Miracle on the Mountain*. While he hoped to make a long documentary, the longest individual piece of footage appears to be under fifteen minutes. Wright donated his collection to the museum in the hopes that one day it would be available to other filmmakers, who might take his work and extend it into the long feature film he envisioned.

Schmidt was an eccentric artist who faced hardship throughout his life, but left a legacy that lasts even when his structures do not. Wright did not succeed with this film in the way he envisioned, but he left behind captivating imagery that certainly inspired me as an archivist and may inspire future generations of filmmakers. Of his own art, Schmidt wrote that, "I would rather choose to light a candle of hope than curse the darkness and that my humble advent upon this earth has not been in vain, but in its stead a moral benefit to mankind and posterity." The only gallery exhibition of Schmidt's pieces that I encountered in my research was entitled *Let's Call It Hope*. While the collection isn't accessible yet, I hope that the public is able to witness and draw inspiration from these messages of hope and artistic legacy left by both Schmidt and Wright in this unique contribution of folk art. ✨

Tour of the Grolier Club and Holiday Party



On November 19th, Jamie Cumby, Librarian of the Grolier Club, gave members a tour of the Club's library. Images courtesy of Bridget O'Keefe.



On December 5th, members gathered at the Cooper Union Library for the Holiday Party! Images courtesy of Rachel Garbade.

Note from the News Editor

Rachel Garbade, Assistant Archivist, The Museum of Modern Art

Thank you for reaching the end of the second issue of 2025! I write with bittersweet news that this will be my last issue as News Editor of the New York Chapter. It has been an incredible three years serving in this role. Through this work, I have met countless folks in the profession, many of whom I now consider dear friends. This issue will mark a total of ninety-two pages of collaborations between myself and sixty-one members, who, graciously, have volunteered their time summarizing events, reporting on projects at their institutions, sharing reflections on internships, interviewing their colleagues, reviewing publications, and—of course—toasting to our many accomplishments at happy hours and holiday parties. And, I would be remiss not to mention the assistance of both Linda L. Smith and Siwen Wang who helped edit this issue. Thank you both for your efforts!

As we close out the year, I'd like to thank the Holiday Party Planning Committee for an excellent celebration at the Cooper Union Library on December 5th—those two hours really flew by! Thank you Bridget O'Keefe, Ann Bell, Calista Donohue, Sagal Hassan, Sherri Machlin, Miguel Rosales, and Peter Victor-Gasper. Additionally, I'd like to welcome the newest members of the Board: Ann Bell (Vice Chair/Chair Elect), Bridget O'Keefe (returning as Programming Coordinator), Nicole Rosengurt (Early Career/Student Liaison), Olivia Buck (Web Editor), Sal Tuszynski (Treasurer), Samantha Rowe (Membership Coordinator), and Whitney Lorenze Willis (News Editor). I know the Chapter will be in good hands, not only because each of these new members has contributed to our newsletters (I'm biased!), but also because they are all exemplary colleagues in New York's art libraries!

Wishing you all a happy and healthy new year! Please feel free to keep in touch: rachel.garbade@gmail.com. 🐦

The New York Chapter of the Art Libraries Society of North America, an organization that fosters excellence in art librarianship and the visual arts, meets several times a year either virtually or in-person for professional development opportunities, networking, or tours of the various relevant institutions in the New York City metropolitan area.

Chapter programs are great opportunities to meet fellow art library and visual art information colleagues from the area. Members typically include but are not limited to art librarians and visual resource curators, both active and retired, from academic, museum, public, and other special libraries, as well as specialized book dealers and graduate students in library and information science from the New York City area.

To learn more, become a member, or donate to the New York Chapter, please visit our website at arlisny.org, reach out to us at info@arlisny.org, or follow us on Instagram.



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