

## A LETTER FROM IASA'S PRESIDENT

*Toby Seay, Drexel University, USA*

I am happy to report that the 2017 IASA conference at the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, Germany was a great success. The conference theme 'Integration and Innovation: Bringing Workflows and Formats Together in the Digital Era' lived up to its name by providing valuable discourse concerning the ongoing developments within sound and audiovisual collections. This conference also marked the transition of the Executive Board as 2017 was an election year, and it is my pleasure to write my first presidential message in the IASA Journal. Joining me, as the other new member on the Executive Board, is Zane Grosa, who has taken the role of vice president of conferences.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bruce Gordon for his tireless work as vice president of conferences as he leaves the Executive Board. With his coordination and programming, IASA hosted six highly successful conferences in Delhi, Vilnius, Cape Town, Paris, Washington, and Berlin. We owe Bruce a great deal of gratitude for his hard work and we look forward to his continued involvement in IASA.

I personally want to thank Ilse Assmann for guiding IASA for the last three years as president. I am extremely grateful that she stays on the Executive Board as past president, as her guidance and mentoring will be valuable to the success and continuity of the organization. Under her leadership, IASA remains financially strong, authoritatively empowered, and forward thinking.

I am also grateful for continuing Executive Board members, who stepped up for another term to lead this organization: Judith Gray, Lynn Johnson, Bertram Lyons, Pio Pellizzari, Richard Ranft, and Tommy Sjöberg. Their capable service and commitment to the organization ensures a healthy organization.

I would like to talk about three highlighted initiatives that are vital to IASA.

The Ambassador Programme was launched at the Berlin conference, which will serve to "increase awareness of IASA and its work, to promote membership, to mentor new and prospective members, and to help build IASA's profile (<https://www.iasa-web.org/ambassador-programme>)."

We start the program with five Ambassadors:

Filip Šír, Czech Republic (Ambassador Programme Coordinator)  
Gisa Jähnichen, China, Malaysia  
Judith Opoku-Boateng, Ghana, West Africa  
Perla Olivia Rodríguez Reséndiz, Mexico and Latin America  
Maria del Carmen Ordoño Vidaña, Mexico

We look forward to their leadership in propelling this program across the globe.

Initiated at the Washington Conference and spearheaded by Will Prentice, the Training Taskforce was a yearlong investigation into ways IASA could identify audiovisual training needs and to create recommendations for addressing those needs. Now posted in the Training & Education Committee Forum for members to read (<https://www.iasa-web.org/forums/sections-committees-branches/training-and-educational-committee-forum>), the final report serves as a framework for future training efforts, which are identified as a priority both in the field of audiovisual preservation and within IASA's membership.

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The Diversity Task Force, led by Judith Opoku-Boateng, met in Berlin to explore the notion of diversity within IASA and how it affects the organization. The discussion that was initiated in this meeting continued throughout the conference, as the topic engaged our delegates who demonstrated the value of our collective voices through the quality of the conference programme.

I firmly believe that these three initiatives are interrelated and provide the catalyst for IASA's growth as an organization. We will be using the Ambassador Programme and training opportunities in a coordinated fashion to insure an open and diverse IASA. We preserve sound and audiovisual materials so that all stories can be told.

As we work towards that end, I invite you to join us in Accra, Ghana for the 49<sup>th</sup> IASA Conference, 1–4 October, 2018. The Institute of African Studies (IAS) at the University of Ghana will host what is sure to be a powerful and memorable conference.

*Toby Seay  
IASA President  
January 2018*