

2001 Distinguished Service Award Tribute to Linda McRae

Distinguished Service Award
presented to Linda McRae

In recognition of her many contributions to the field of visual resources through demonstrated leadership, research, and publication, as well as her long term service to professional organizations, institutions and the artistic community.

Presented this 28th day of February, 2001.
by Ann Whiteside, VRA President and Christina Updike,
VRA Distinguished Service Award Committee Chair

The Visual Resources Association annually honors an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of visual resources. Nominees must have achieved a level of distinction in the field either through leadership, research, or the development and management of a particular visual resources project. Consideration is also given to those who have shown outstanding innovation, participation or service to the profession.

It is with great pleasure that I announce tonight that the VRA has chosen Linda McRae to receive the 2001 Distinguished Service Award. This is the highest honor that the VRA bestows on a visual resources professional. Please come forward Linda.

Linda has contributed to the Visual Resources profession through demonstrated leadership in numerous professional organizations, research into key areas for the discipline, service on both professional and University committees, extensive pertinent publications, and creative work in ceramics. Her professional work more than fulfills the criteria for this award.

Linda's educational background includes two masters' degrees, one in Arts and one in Library and Information Science, both from the University of South Florida. Her current position is Head of the College of Fine Arts Visual Resources Library at the University of South Florida. While participating locally on twenty University, College, and departmental committees, she has also been active in a number of professional groups: the Visual Resources Association (VRA), the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA), the Florida Craftsman Association, the Southeastern College Art Conference (SECAC) and the College Art Association (CAA).

Linda's contributions to the Visual Resources profession are in three significant areas: publications, cataloging and data standards, and professional status issues. She has chaired the publications committee of ARLIS/NA, served on the VRA publications committee, and served on the VRA Bulletin editorial board for a decade, editing a column on cataloging

visual resources as well as contributing individual articles. Her publication credits are extensive, including: the co-editorship of a special issue of the VRA Bulletin on the VRA Core Categories, and the co-authorship of two books: *African Ethnonyms: Index to Art Producing Peoples of Africa* (for which she received ARLIS' H. W. Wilson Research Award), and the *ArtMARC Sourcebook: Cataloging Art, Architecture, and Their Visual Images*, which has been positively reviewed by peers in the fields of both book and image cataloging. In addition, her articles have appeared in the *VRA Bulletin*, *Visual Resources*, *Art Library Journal*, *Ceramics Monthly*, and *Art Documentation*.

Her dedication to cataloging and data standards issues has paved the way for VRA leadership in the dialogue among the art information communities. Linda encouraged the exploration by the profession of the use of MARC records for visual resources, for which she served on an early VRA committee. She also represented visual resources interests on the CAA/Getty Art Information Institute task force on standards for describing works of art. She has served on cataloging committees for both VRA and ARLIS/NA, and was instrumental in launching the influential VRA Data Standards Committee, serving as the committee's first chair and participating actively thereafter in work and discussions leading to the publication of the VRA Core Categories, version 3. She has presented the results of her research on cataloging and indexing issues on numerous panels at various conferences.

Another area of leadership for Linda has been professional status issues, for which she has done original research in Florida and the South, investigating employment classification for Visual Resources Curators. She has served on both VRA and ARLIS/NA committees dealing with this issue, contributing the chapter "Accreditation and Accrediting Agencies" along with Rebecca Hoort, to the jointly published *Guidelines for the Visual Resources Profession*. Linda has served on the ARLIS/NA salary study committee, and contributed papers on the topic at the conferences of VRA, ARLIS/NA, and SECAC.

Linda has been the recipient of several grants and awards, including: travel and research from the University of South Florida, the Rosen Foundation, a VRA Luraine Tansey Travel Award, a VRA Nancy DeLaurier Writing Award, the ARLIS/NA H. W. Wilson Research Award, and the ARLIS/NA G. K. Hall Conference Award. She also received the Outstanding Staff Award from the University of South Florida in 1992 and an earlier award from the National Endowment for the Arts for visual documentation of art from Graphicstudio.

Linda's passion for the arts goes beyond the visual resources profession. She is a practicing artist who has exhibited nationally and in the United Kingdom. Her work was recently featured in the book, *Ceramics and Print*, published in London by A&C Black, and has appeared in *Art Papers*, *Ceramics Monthly*, and *American Crafts Magazine*.

The Distinguished Service Award committee received a nomination packet for Linda that not only included a glowing nomination letter along with her impressive resume, but also ten letters of recommendation from other visual resources professionals. These letters of support are inspirational and demonstrate the accomplishments that Linda as a truly hard-

working, dedicated and talented visual resource professional has achieved for the benefit of the entire profession. Let me read a few quotes from these letters.

“Linda McRae’s contributions to the fields of art librarianship and visual resources curatorship easily qualify her for a distinguished service award in almost any field. Her contributions have made it easier for other professionals to carry out their work more efficiently and enabled users to find the materials necessary to their scholarship more easily.”

“Linda’s ability to anticipate, conceptualize, and communicate the impact of evolving technology was pioneering. To then combine this capacity with a willingness to engage and carefully listen to input from colleagues continues to be a distinguishing characteristic of Linda’s career. “

“It is no exaggeration to say that Linda McRae has been instrumental in the professionalization of visual resources. I am especially impressed by Linda's follow-through, her commitment to pursue the idea of standards for VR collections to its logical conclusion: from conception to consensus building, to endorsement and implementation by the profession.”

“I have incredible respect for the place that the ArtMARC Sourcebook is taking in informing the discussion of the cataloging of visual resources. It is not only a guide to using MARC but also a foundation for further development of shared cataloging standards for the visual resources community. While all of this is important, it is Linda’s readiness to be a helpful colleague that I value so very highly.”

And a few more:

“In everything she has done and contributed, Linda has maintained the highest degree of competence and integrity. Her work is trusted, and her insight valued by all her colleagues.”

“Linda's long list of publications are evidence of her willingness to seek out tough corners of VR practice and sweat the details.”

“Linda's contributions to the visual resources profession are incomparable. She has long served and continues to function as the role model and leader par excellence for all of us who are currently active in this field. She accomplishes this in such quiet unassuming ways while going about her business that one is often unaware of all that she is doing or how important it is until a seminal publication is published or an important committee completes a significant, challenging task. Needless to say, her professional work is truly of the highest quality. “

“I feel that, while she has contributed tremendously in several areas to the profession, her role as inspiration and mentor to individuals should not be ignored. She is an exceptional mentor, giving of her time and knowledge, and caring very much that everyone who wants

to can contribute to the profession.”

Linda you are a credit to our profession and you richly deserve acknowledgement for your labor and achievements. It is your contributions and leadership in the field of visual resources curatorship that is being recognized tonight, as President Anne Whiteside presents the 2001 VRA Distinguished Service Award to you.

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