

Beyond the Bazaar

Collectively preserving, archiving, and sharing the history and culture of the Los Angeles region

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Letter from the Chair, 2023

Since 2021 it has been my immense honor to serve as Chair of the L.A. as Subject Executive Committee. I had no idea how important it would be to be part of a community of people and organizations supporting one another through a global pandemic. Not only did L.A. as Subject members keep the spirit of making our history visible and accessible alive, but the capacity for innovation to share our stories grew. Similarly being able to come along with the L.A. as Subject membership as we gather in person more and more is a joy I will always treasure.

Hopefully, this message conveys how thankful I am to have held this position as I announce that I have stepped down as Executive Committee Chair as of our last Executive Committee meeting on January 9, 2024. After over 13 years as Museum Archivist at LACMA, I have accepted a new position as University Archivist and Records Manager with the University of Southern California Libraries. As per L.A. as Subject’s bylaws, the Chair position may not be held by an employee of USC. Since we are only a few membership meetings away from elections, I will be staying on as an at-large Executive Committee member to continue to assist the rest of the Committee as needed.

The Chairmanship will rotate among the rest of the Executive Committee until our regular June election. On that note I’d like to take this opportunity to encourage all L.A. as Subject members to run for an office on the Executive Committee, including for the position as Chair. Supporting this community and promoting the history of this great, strange, and utterly unique region, is a huge privilege for which I will always be grateful.

Jessica Gambling
L.A. as Subject Executive Committee Chair, 2021-2023

Archives Bazaar 2023 Recap

Over 500 visitors attended L.A. as Subject’s 18th Annual Los Angeles Archives Bazaar held at USC’s Doheny Library on October 28, 2023. Sixty-seven L.A. as Subject members participated as exhibitors and shared their collections and services with the local community. This year the focus of the bazaar was centered around food history and culture of Los Angeles. Food was the perfect theme to highlight stories about various local communities as the topic bridges nationalities, geographies, and generations. The bazaar featured seven public programming events that ran simultaneously throughout the day. The programming included interesting panels, talks, workshops, and discussions, which were heavily attended and excitedly commented on by visitors.

The programming this year included: Artist and archivist Suzanne Zoe Joskow presented her ongoing project The Community Cookbook Archive, comprised of over 400 cookbooks spanning three centuries and is continuously growing and evolving. Suzanne focused the discussion on the development of her food-based mapping project that highlights Los Angeles stories. She covered community cookbooks that date back to the city’s earliest years of book printing and connected it to sites across Los Angeles County. At the end of the presentation, Suzanne provided participants with a take-home recipe card from one of the cookbooks in the archive to try at home.



Archivist of the A. F. Gilmore Company, Brett Arena presented the culinary history and influence of the Original Farmers Market over a span of nine decades. The market opened in the summer of 1934 and began with a dozen farmers and six vendors selling produce and other items. The market now features more than 100 vendors and family-owned businesses specializing in areas such as produce, meats, seafood, artisan bread, and a multitude of prepared foods.

(continued on page 2)

Are you a member in good-standing?

An L.A. as Subject member in good standing is required to participate in at least **one** of the following activities per year:

- Attend a LAAS membership meeting
- Provide content to LAAS website
- Volunteer at events in which LAAS participates
- Serve on a committee
- Lead a tour or workshop
- Host an LAAS collaborative special event or project (visit <https://laassubject.org/members-area> to submit a proposal form)

In addition, members with directory listings must keep their contacts and directory information up to date.

One of the highly attended programs was the “L.A. Neighborhood Restaurants Grounded in Community and Tradition” panel, which featured Judy Hayashi, Paulina Lopez, and Chef Keith Corban. Judy Hayashi is the daughter of Yayoi Watanabe, the owner of the Otomisan, the only remaining Japanese Restaurant in Boyle Heights and the oldest Japanese-operating restaurant in Los Angeles County founded in 1956. Paulina Lopez is the co-owner of James Beard Award-winning Guelaguetza Restaurant and I Love Micheladas. Chef Keith Corbin is a two-time James Beard Award-nominated executive chef and co-owner of Alta Adams. Speaking to a standing-room only crowd, the panelists engaged in a conversation that was inspirational as they each discussed overcoming adversity and managing their restaurants while connecting to the rich history of Los Angeles. If you have not visited these restaurants before, they are highly recommended.



In the spirit of the spooky season, members of LAPNet presented “A Bibliographic Banquet: How to prevent your collections from becoming a food supply for creepy crawlies” in which participants learned about the types of materials that pests are attracted to, from wood and paper to tortillas and seaweed. They also learned how to identify signs of infestation and steps to prevent further damage to archival collections. Another interesting talk was presented by Charles Perry, President of the Culinary Historians of Southern California. His talk revolved around the history of Los Angeles Backyard Barbecue. Charles discussed the ancient Mexican method of cooking barbacoa to grilling steaks in the backyard which was made popular in the 1930s.

The last session of the day was, “Your Kitchen is a Battleground: Conversation with Harry Gamboa Jr”. The conversation was facilitated by Fanny Daubigny, writer and educator. The discussion revolved around ASCO, a Chicano-based art collective from East Los Angeles. The Chicano artists aimed at deconstructing the traditional hierarchies of what was then considered to be culturally acceptable. In 1974, ASCO staged the controversial performance *The First Supper* (after a riot), which was organized four years after the Chicano Moratorium, an Anti-Vietnam protest that ended in police brutality.

In addition to these food-themed public programming events the bazaar featured Basement Tapes throughout the day. Basement Tapes provided playback equipment for participants' audio recordings and shared these sounds with the audience. The bazaar closed the day with a reception catered by the Guelaguetza restaurant, which specializes in Oaxacan cuisine. During the reception Abraham Ferrer, Archives and Distribution Manager at Visual Communications was honored as the 2023 recipient of the Avery Clayton Spirit Award.

As we enter the new year, we look forward to planning next year's bazaar.

Azalea Camacho

LAAS Executive Committee Member & Archives Bazaar Planning Lead, 2021-2023

2023 Avery Clayton Spirit Award Recipient: Abraham Ferrar



This year's Avery Clayton Spirit Award winner has dedicated his career not only to preserving the vehicles of memory that already exist, but to sharing skills and educating communities to make their own voices heard into the future.

For around 40 years Abraham Ferrer has nurtured new generations of Asian Pacific American filmmakers and artists through his work at Visual Communications.

As the first non-profit organization in the United States dedicated to the honest and accurate portrayals of Asian Pacific American peoples, Visual Communications has centered and celebrated Asian Pacific media artists and filmmakers since its founding in the 1970's.

Since the early 1980s, Abe has supported this mission in a myriad of ways, including serving as co-director and programmer for the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival. He has been a mentor to emerging filmmakers through the Armed with a Camera Fellowship for emerging media artists. Through Visual Communication's Digital Histories project, he helped Asian Pacific seniors tell their own stories through medium of video.

But we probably know him best as the manager of Visual Communications' archives where he stewards their indispensable photographic and moving image holdings. This archive is one of the largest repositories of visual media on the Asian Pacific American experience and it continues to grow as Abe's work encourages underrepresented and misrepresented voices to be heard through film.

Abe, from your L.A. as Subject community, thank you for the work that you have done and continue to do. It was the Executive Committee's honor to present you with this year's Avery Clayton Spirit Award.

Jessica Gambling
L.A. as Subject Executive Committee Chair

Archives At Risk Committee Report

In 2023, the Archives at Risk Committee (AARC) completed the second round of our self-assessment program with three participating member archives. The Committee was founded with the goal to explore sustainable ways that professional archivists and librarians can act as a sounding board to smaller archives as they make their own informed decisions related to long-term sustainability. From this exploration, we created the self-assessment program to help LAAS archive members to plan and be ready for issues common to Los Angeles area archives. In 2024, we aim to clarify the public perception of the self-assessment's goals and promote the positive impacts of participating in the program through adding additional content to the website. We will also explore ways to retain a sense of community and continued support after the initial self-assessment period.

This past summer the Committee participated in work related to the California State Library, Library Services and Technology Act grant "Safeguarding L.A. Community Histories: An L.A. as Subject Workshop Series and Knowledge Sharing Initiative." The grant funded the hiring of a part-time Workshop Coordinator and funded 4 workshops, a series of discussion sessions, and the editing and creation of related educational materials. The workshop recordings and quick guides for each session will be available on the LA as Subject website soon.

We look forward to launching year 3 of the Self-Assessment Program in 2024! If you are interested in joining the next cohort please get in touch with us. In January, we will send out a call on the LAAS listserv for participation in our next self-assessment survey round. If you'd like to get in touch with us in the meantime, our contact information is on our page on the LAAS website.

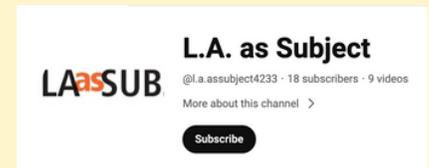
Mallory Furnier
Stella Castillo
Archives at Risk Committee

Watch our latest information session today on our YouTube Channel.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxV9EXZiLi0&t=8s>

For more resources and past sessions subscribe to our YouTube Channel.



<https://www.youtube.com/@l.a.assubject4233/videos>

Welcome New 2023 L.A. as Subject Archive Members

- Altadena Historical Society
- Center for Land Use Interpretation
- Drum Barracks Civil War Museum
- Forest Lawn Museum
- Greater Los Angeles Girl Scouts Heritage Committee
- Holocaust Museum LA
- Los Angeles Contemporary Archive
- Ralph J. Bunche center for African American Studies at UCLA
- Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions
- Museum of Riverside
- Ralph J. Bunche center for African American Studies at UCLA
- Southwestern Law School

2024 L.A. as Subject General Membership Meetings

February 13, 2024
April 9, 2024
June 11, 2024
August 13, 2024
October 15, 2024
December 10, 2024

For more information and to RSVP, visit laassubject.org/events

All meetings will be held virtually over Zoom.

LAasSUBJECT

LAAS Directory Portal features at a glance:

Each Directory profile page provides the option to create:

- Photo galleries
- News and events
- Online exhibits
- Groups with like institutions or collections

Also try the “[Find An Archive](#)” search for easier discoverability and browsability.



In July, the Executive Committee toured the archival facilities of new LAAS member, Forest Lawn Museum.

LAasSubject.org

Hidden Histories: Discovering Los Angeles' LGBTQ+ Collections

Over the last several months, I have had the privilege of working with ONE Archives and L.A. as Subject on Hidden Histories: Discovering Los Angeles' LGBTQ+ Collections, funded by a grant from the California State Library. Projected to go live on March 31, 2024, Hidden Histories will be an online resource for researchers and community members to discover LGBTQ+ archival material in and around L.A. In addition to making our community's diverse histories more accessible, this project encourages the creation of new connections within and across local institutions. To date, we are working with over 20 L.A. as Subject members who have uncovered more than 170 LGBTQ+ archival collections across their holdings.

Hidden Histories is hosted on Scalar, an open-source digital platform that fosters experimental and nonlinear website engagement, allowing users to access content in many exciting ways. Each participating institution has a profile page with summaries of its relevant collections and links to its finding aids. Through these pages, users can discover how LGBTQ+ histories correlate to each repository's unique collecting areas. There is also a Topical Guide that groups collections thematically by subject headings such as LGBTQ+ families and bisexual people. This allows users to search specific themes across all our participants' collections. The final component will be a digital exhibit highlighting material identified by our participating institutions as especially compelling and/or distinctive. Ultimately, we hope that Hidden Histories will not just make local LGBTQ+ archival material more accessible, but also lead to more reading room visits and research inquiries across Los Angeles institutions, resulting in a new era of LGBTQ+ scholarship.

Ani Bennett-Fradkin (she/her), ONE Archives

LAAS Members Visit The Claremont Colleges Library

In an effort to provide opportunities for LAAS members to meet in-person, outside of the regular General Membership meetings which are held virtually, the LAAS Executive Committee suggested tours of member organizations. Lisa Crane, a member of the Executive Committee and Head of Special Collections & Archives at The Claremont Colleges Library (TCCL), volunteered to host the first repository tour on July 14, 2023.

On the day of the tour, 22 LAAS members, guests, and TCCL staff were welcomed in the Founders Room of the Library and refreshments were served. After a brief introduction to Special Collections and Archives, attendees toured the Special Collections Reading Room with a highlight of items on the tables, staff work spaces, the Claremont Center for Engagement with Primary Sources (CCEPS) space, the Oxford room (which houses the largest collection of, by, and about Oxford University outside of Oxford University), and the Blaisdell Room which is our primary archival storage space. The tour was then capped off with a short walk down to Bridges Auditorium on the Pomona College campus and a view of the Myrlie Evers-Williams (POM '68) Collection which had been loosely sorted into thematic groups during Summer 2022 and remains unprocessed pending the hiring of two Processing Project Archivists who will process the collection in 2024.

We would like to thank the Society of California Archivists and their Member Initiated Events program for providing the funding for the refreshments for this event.

This was a fun morning and a great opportunity to meet and greet our fellow LAAS members in-person to network and socialize. We hope more LAAS members will volunteer to host in-person tours/events throughout 2024!

Lisa Crane
L.A. as Subject Executive Committee Member Secretary

