

Foreword

This digital publication records selected papers presented at the 2018 Midwest Art History Society Annual Conference hosted by the Indianapolis Museum at Newfields and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art in Indianapolis, April 5–7, 2018. In the wake of public outcry sparked by the removal of Confederate monuments after an outbreak of racial violence in Charleston, S.C., and Charlottesville, Va., organizers of the 45th annual conference chose to focus on the interpretation, role, and management of public memorials in some of the communities where they are found. Art historian Erika Doss, professor of American Studies at the University of Notre Dame and author of *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), was invited to deliver the keynote address. Doss subsequently chaired two sessions and a panel discussion on the issue. She chose speakers who addressed historical periods, cultures, and art beyond those raised by Confederate statues, and allowed for a broad examination of the historical and social contexts of the problem.

This venture marks the first time that MAHS will publish, at least in part, the proceedings of its conference, and the first time a MAHS publication will be achieved digitally. MAHS' Board of Directors felt that considering the importance of the national debate regarding the removal of public monuments the usual conference abstracts were seen to be an insufficient method of publication. Rather, it seemed more fitting to commit these insightful

papers to more readily available digital medium.

The time also seemed right for MAHS to initiate its first joint venture into e-publishing with one of its institutional members, The Snite Museum at the University of Notre Dame. One of the Society's purposes is "to publish appropriate journals, monographs, papers, bulletins and reports of a scholarly, critical or informative nature which the scope of the established journals may not permit." To date, MAHS has published four scholarly catalogues of drawings in the collections of Midwest museums using conventional publishers. This initial effort into digitally publishing a portion of the annual conference continues the fulfillment of that organizational goal.

The University of Notre Dame and its surrounding communities are no strangers to this debate making CurateND an apt outlet for this discussion. The *Columbus Murals* by nineteenth-century painter Luigi Gregori located in Notre Dame's Main Building have been the subject of protest by students, faculty and Native Americans. Similarly, a *Monument to Christopher Columbus* in nearby Mishawaka's Central Park was defaced in October 2017, when protesters sprayed it with red paint evocative of blood.

I would like to thank Charles Loving, director emeritus of the Snite Museum, for his support of this project, and Heidi Hornik, MAHS president, for her enthusiasm for and commitment to the organization's many activities.

Conference organizers Robert R. Coleman, professor emeritus at the University of Notre Dame and Judith W. Mann, curator of European art at the St. Louis Art Museum, also deserve recognition for their acuity in achieving a conference

with vision and resonance. In these volatile times, it is all the more imperative that those of us in cultural and educational institutions engage in the debates that shape our communities and policies.

Cheryl K. Snay