Art in Context: Identity, Ethics, and Insight
Friday, November 19, 2021
Speaker Bios

Steve Baskauf (he/him/his)
Steve Baskauf is a Data Science and Data Curation Specialist at the Jean and Alexander Heard Libraries of Vanderbilt University. He received a Ph.D. in Biology from Vanderbilt and is a long-term educator, having taught science, math, and computing for over 30 years at levels ranging from middle school to university. He is an active participant in Biodiversity Information Standards, where his work is focused on developing multimedia standards and ways to express standards metadata as Linked Data. His interest in discovering practical ways to use Linked Data has sparked his interest in Wikidata. Most recently, he has been exploring ways to use Wikidata to expose and manage cultural heritage metadata through projects at Vanderbilt involving the Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery and the Divinity Library's Art in the Christian Tradition image collection.

Tanya Calvin (he/they)
Tanya Calvin is the Community Engagement Archivist for the Black Metropolis Research Consortium. Tanya is responsible for closing the gap between archives and the communities they serve by creating free resources about legacy management for Black Chicagoans. Tanya was a Black Studies and Latinx & Latin American Studies double major at Amherst College, where they also worked as an assistant in the Robert Frost Library Archives and Special Collections. They look forward to pursuing their Master's in Library and Information Science while staying based in Chicago. Tanya is also a poet and they self-publish research-based zines that cover topics like mental illness, relations between Black and Mexican cultures, and Black resistance to racial oppression.

Zakiya Collier (she/they)
Zakiya Collier is a Brooklyn-based Black queer archivist and memory worker. Her work with African-diaspora and community-based collections includes leading the *#SchomburgSyllabus* project as the Digital Archivist at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, designing, co-leading, and securing grant funding for the *Linking Lost Jazz Shrines* project at Weeksville Heritage Center, and consulting on the organization and preservation of Marilyn Nance's FESTAC '77 collection. Both in her research and in her work, Zakiya explores the archival labor, methods, structures, and poetics necessary to preserve and access both the material and immaterial artifacts of quotidian Black life. She holds an MA in Media, Culture, and Communication from New York University, an MLIS from Long Island University, and a BA in Anthropology from the University of South Carolina. Zakiya is an affiliate of the Center for Critical Race and Digital Studies (CR+DS) at New York University, an Interim Board Member of the Archival Education and Research Initiative (AERI), and a guest editor of a forthcoming special issue of The Black Scholar on Black Archival Practice.

Alex Kapitan (no pronouns)

Alex Kapitan is a trainer, speaker, consultant, editor, and activist who left the world of nonfiction book publishing to start Radical Copyeditor, an anti-oppressive language project. Alex works with clients as varied as publishing companies, academic journals, activist organizations, and museums, helping people align their words with their values with regards to race, class, dis/ability, sexuality, gender, religion, and more, rooted in the idea that because words describe and create reality, we have a responsibility to describe and create the best possible reality we can imagine.

Alex Kron (she/her/hers)

Alex Kron currently serves as the Digital Operations and Collections Information Analyst or more warmly referred to as the Task Master for the Balboa Park Online Collaborative (BPOC). In her work with BPOC, she wears many hats but focuses on coordinating and managing projects with clients, research and evaluation of cultural technology solutions, museum programming, operations, audience engagement, and digital strategies along with conducting field studies to better understand successful practices in the sector. Most recently she began facilitating and hosting a webinar series dedicated to collections data and collections management system challenges and opportunities. She has over a decade of experience in information and project management inside and outside the arts and culture field, a BA in Art History from California State University, Fullerton, and MA in Museum Studies and Digital Curation from Johns Hopkins University.

Bree Midavaine (she/her/hers)

Bree Midavaine is the Taxonomist for the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and participates in a variety of projects and committees, including as a core member of the Art Information Commons Initiative and co-chair of the Metadata and Governance Group. Bree has spent her career focusing on vocabulary, taxonomy, metadata, and holistic cataloging practices to increase and improve access to information and resources. In addition to her work at the museum, Bree teaches a foundational MLIS graduate course, Knowledge Organization, at her alma mater, Pratt Institute in New York City. She holds Master's degrees in Library Science with specializations in metadata, archives, and art libraries and in Art History where she focused on artist Hilma af Klint. She brought to PMA her previous experiences at NBC News where she worked on news related taxonomies for a collaborative journalism platform and search application, collaborated with CNBC on financial taxonomies, and as their AI/Machine Learning analyst. She has also worked for multiple NYC cultural heritage and academic institutions, including the Brooklyn Academy of Music as a digital archivist. She is a collector of art and comics, a Star Wars geek, and her to-read pile outgrows her read pile exponentially every year.

Sarah Osborne Bender (she/her/hers)

Sarah Osborne Bender is the Head of Library Technical Services at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. Her professional interests include accessible, linked, and ethical metadata generated by and managed in libraries and museums. For the last twenty years, she has worked as a librarian in large and small museums and especially enjoys sharing special collections with the public. She is a member of the Getty Vocabularies Steering Committee, the ARLIS/NA Cataloging Advisory Committee, and the Wikimedia movement.

Gala Porras-Kim (she/her/hers)

Gala Porras-Kim (1984, Bogotá), received an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts and an MA in Latin American Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her work has been exhibited at the Sao Paulo Biennale (2020), Whitney Biennial (2019), Ural Industrial Biennial (2019), Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2017), the Seoul City Museum of Art (2017), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2017); FRAC Pays de la Loire, France (2016); 44th Salon Nacional de Artistas, Pereira Museum, Colombia (2016); the Los Angeles Public Art Biennial (2016); the Made in LA biennial, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016). She has received awards including Art Matters (2019), Artadia (2017), Joan Mitchell Foundation (2016), Creative Capital (2015), and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation (2015). She will have upcoming solo exhibitions in 2021 at Kadist NY, Contemporary Museum of Art St. Louis, CC Foundation Shanghai, Gasworks London and will participate in the Gwangju Biennale. She was a recent David and Roberta Logie Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and current artist in residence at The Getty.

Dr. Synatra Smith (she/her/hers)

Dr. Synatra Smith is a cultural anthropologist with a specialization in African American identity and community. She has conducted research on Black townships in Prince George's County, Maryland, residential segregation in Hyattsville, Maryland, and heritage tourism in the Senegambian region of West Africa. Dr. Smith is currently the CLIR/DLF Postdoctoral Fellow in Data Curation for African American Studies at the Philadelphia Museum of Art Library and Archives and Temple University Libraries Loretta C. Duckworth Scholars Studio where she is researching Black artists in the collections of these institutions and other Philadelphia-area collections to generate data visualizations and 3D interactives.