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2025 VRA Awards Recipients & Recognition: Presented at the 43rd Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon

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Abstract

The Visual Resources Association (VRA) presented two awards to twenty-one deserving individuals at the 43rd annual conference in Portland, Oregon on October 9th, 2025.

The 2025 recipient of the VRA Distinguished Service Award (DSA) is Johanna Bauman, Associate Director for Collections Management, Pratt Institute Libraries.

Twenty applicants were selected as recipients of the 2025 vrcHost Membership Awards, including Jung Soo Bae, Filippia Cheilitsi, Daniel Cichowlas, Claire Cirocco, Jori Dale, Aurora Daniel, Christine Gindhart, Abdelmoniem Mohammed Gomaa, Lacey Prpić Hedtke, Noah Krasman, Andrea Linsmeier, Caroline Moore, Sruthi Nanam, Olivera Nastic, Wen Nie Ng, Erin Robinson, Ruth Thomas, Saija Wilson, and two anonymous awardees.

Keywords

Awardees, Awards Committee, Distinguished Service Award, Membership Award, Visual Resources Association (VRA)

Author Bios

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Distinguished Service Award

Each year, VRA honors an individual who has made an outstanding career contribution to the field of visual resources and image management. Recipients of the Distinguished Service Award (DSA) have achieved a level of distinction in the field either through leadership, research, service to the profession, outstanding innovation, participation, or project management.⁴

Johanna Bauman

The 2025 DSA was proudly presented to Johanna Bauman, Associate Director for Collections Management, Pratt Institute Libraries. Bauman truly deserves the DSA for her strategic vision, exemplary mentorship, and dissemination of metadata best practices in the field of visual resources.⁵

In nominators Barb Elam and Lisa Gavell's speech at the 2025 VRA Conference, Elam noted Bauman's deep experience with both VRA and the wider field of visual resources work: "Johanna has been a member of the national VRA for 23 years and a member of ARLIS for nearly as long. She has presented papers at these organizations' annual conferences as well as many others...Johanna has also published in the *VRA Bulletin* and newsletter and has taught graduate level courses in Visual Resources Management and Metadata for Description and Access at Pratt Institute."⁶

Many nominators took time to mention Bauman's metadata expertise, timeliness, and mentorship. Sheryl Frisch wrote, "Johanna's leadership and oversight came at a critical time when VRA's cataloging standards were expanding in scope in order to respond to the changes in technology and

¹ Visual Resources Association. Awards + Recognition Lunch. <https://vra2025.sched.com/event/27Jhq/awards-+-recognition-lunch>

² Visual Resources Association. "Announcing the Recipient of the 2025 VRA Distinguished Service Award!" <https://www.vraweb.org/news/2025-vra-dsa-recipient>

³ Visual Resources Association. "Announcing the Recipients of the 2025 vrcHost Membership Awards." <https://www.vraweb.org/news/2025-vrchost-award-recipients>

⁴ Visual Resources Association. "Awards, Distinguished Service Award." <https://www.vraweb.org/awards>

⁵ Visual Resources Association. "Announcing the Recipient of the 2025 VRA Distinguished Service Award!" <https://www.vraweb.org/news/2025-vra-dsa-recipient>

⁶ Barb Elam and Lisa Gavell. 2025. "VRA 2025 DSA Nomination Speech." https://www.vraweb.org/s/NOM_DSA_speech2025.pdf

the needs of the profession.”⁷ Similarly, Maureen Burns noted her “significant impact... throughout her impressive 30-year career as an information professional.”⁸ Greg Reser echoed this sentiment, writing that “[c]ollaborating with Johanna was one of the most rewarding parts of my professional career.”⁹ This is only a small sampling of the many letters of support gathered from visual resources professionals.

To sum up with words from Matthew Garklavs, “Throughout her more than two decades of work in visual resources, Johanna has demonstrated exemplary leadership, dedication, and service. Her career reflects not only technical and intellectual excellence, but also a deep commitment to collaboration and mentorship.”¹⁰

vrcHost Membership Awards

For a third year, the [Membership Awards](#) were generously sponsored by [vrcHost](#), a company that offers comprehensive solutions for the Madison Digital Image Database (MDID) – installation, integration, hosting, customization, and software development – while also serving as the exclusive agent for the [Archivision](#) Research Library, which provides professional architecture and art photography with rich metadata for educational purposes. These Awards provide a year of individual VRA membership, including regional chapter membership. The goal of these awards is to engage new members in the organization and to help existing members who might need financial assistance retain their VRA membership.

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Conclusion

VRA’s Awards program is administered by the Awards Committee, which in 2025 included Ann McShane, April Martin, Barb Elam, Beth Haas, Jori Dale, Linda Callahan, Sarah Beck, Summer Shetenhelm, and Wen Nie Ng. This group designed the application process, solicited nominations, helped members in preparing their nomination materials, reviewed awards dossiers and applications, made formal recommendations to the Board, assembled the physical and monetary portions of each award, and presented those awards at the Annual Conference.¹² The collaborative spirit of the Awards Committee makes the process work. If you’re interested in any aspect of VRA Awards, we invite your collaboration.

Finally, congratulations to the inspiring 2025 VRA Awards recipients and sincere thanks to the generous sponsors and nominators.

⁷ Sheryl Frisch to VRA Awards Committee, in DSA Nomination Dossier, 2025.

⁸ Maureen Burns to VRA Awards Committee, in DSA Nomination Dossier, 2025.

⁹ Greg Reser to VRA Awards Committee, in DSA Nomination Dossier, 2025.

¹⁰ Matthew Garklavs to VRA Awards Committee, in DSA Nomination Dossier, 2025.

¹¹ Visual Resources Association. “Announcing the Recipients of the 2025 vrcHost Membership Awards.” <https://www.vraweb.org/news/2025-vrchost-award-recipients>

¹² Visual Resources Association. “Awards, How do awards work?” <https://www.vraweb.org/awards>