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Title:

Surveying the Survey: Archival Processing, Buildings Archaeology, and Online Outreach

Abstract:

Robert Lawrence Van Nice (1910-1994) conducted an architectural survey of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey from 1937-1985. His extraordinarily detailed architectural drawings were published in two installments by Dumbarton Oaks in an elephant portfolio, *Saint Sophia in Istanbul* (1965 and 1986). Still unpublished is the comprehensive archive of material related to Hagia Sophia that Van Nice amassed over decades of fieldwork. The Van Nice archive in the Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (ICFA) at Dumbarton Oaks represents a monumental work of buildings archaeology. The 70+ boxes include: Van Nice's fieldwork notes and measurements; fieldwork drawings by Van Nice and his assistants; rubbings of graffiti, brick stamps, and mason's marks; photographs, negatives, and slides; preparatory drawings for the publication plates; and correspondence and administrative records. This paper describes how ICFA staff embarked on a project to process the Van Nice archive and make it more widely available. Given its size and scope, ICFA staff approached the project in stages, uncovering information layer by layer. With assistance from Van Nice's family and former fieldwork assistants, ICFA was able to build a comprehensive understanding of Van Nice and his working methods in the field, thereby establishing a context for his life's work. At the same time, by recording the research and archival process through a processing blog, ICFA was also able to cultivate an audience of potential users for the collection and increase awareness of Van Nice's contributions to the field.

Bio:

Shalimar Fojas White is the Manager of the Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (ICFA) at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, D.C. (<http://www.doaks.org/>). Previously, she spent six years at ARTstor, serving both as a Public Services Librarian and a Collection Development Manager for the ARTstor Digital Library. Prior to joining ARTstor, Fojas White held various positions in New York art galleries and an international auction house. While at these institutions, she was responsible for an in-house photographic archive and a private art research library. Fojas White earned an M.S. in Library and Information Science at Pratt Institute. She also holds an M.A. in the History of Art from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University and a B.A. in History from Harvard University.