



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year brought profound changes both within the fields the Foundation has long supported and within the Foundation itself. In the broader fields Kress serves, secondary and higher education institutions reduced, and, in some cases, eliminated classes and departments due to financial and administrative pressures, along with subject matter popularity pressures. Art museums faced new and renewed challenges of funding and audience development, as well as emerging uncertainties about societal support for the humanities. At the Foundation, the longtime President, Max Marmor, retired in December 2023, and Deputy Director, Lisa W. Schermerhorn, led the Foundation's programs and operations as Interim President across the period of transition. In April 2024, the Board named the Foundation's next President, Julia M. Alexander, who will begin her tenure in October 2024 (Fiscal Year 2025). Through all of these shifts and changes, the Foundation's Board and staff remained committed to stewarding the legacy of its founder, Samuel H. Kress, supporting access to, along with scholarship about and conservation of, pre-modern European art works.

In addition to continuing to fund fellowships for emerging and established professionals in art history, art conservation and art museum practice, the Foundation supported a range of projects aimed at seeding interest in the field of art history and its allied professions, while also cultivating critical scholarship and teaching and learning skills. Two inspiring examples are of particular note. First, a grant to the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art for *Teaching with Primary Sources*, which offered a committed group of art history faculty from a wide range of under-resourced colleges and universities the time and support to work with digitized art history archives. This remote, yearlong program advances the use of primary source material, reinvigorating participants' own teaching skills and scholarship, while also offering undergraduate students essential skills in provenance research and critical thinking. The experience also provides exposure to professional opportunities within archives, museums and the art market.

Second, with an award to Smarthistory, a widely used and freely accessible online art history “textbook,” the Foundation is supporting not only the creators of the scholarly content available on the platform, but also a broad range of faculty, scholars, students and life-long learners who access the content every day from all corners of the globe.

The Board and staff of the Foundation express their deep gratitude to Max Marmor for his sixteen years of service to the Foundation as its President. And they look forward to welcoming the Foundation’s new President in the fall, along with the energy and vision she promises to bring with her at a critical moment for the field.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. W. Schermerhorn'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'L' and 'W'.

L. W. Schermerhorn
Interim President
Spring 2024