



NCSA 2017 President's Award
Maura Coughlin, Associate Professor of Visual Studies
Department of Literary and Cultural Studies, Bryant University

Today's recipient of the NCSA President's Award has been a member of our community as a conference presenter, attendee, organizer and officer. Her devotion to her area of interest inspires those fortunate enough to hear her papers to spend a little more time looking closely at elements of works and thinking more carefully about the pieces of the whole. For she is a dynamic presenter and one devoted to details, and she thus illuminates and delights our eyes with her analysis. Passionate about her scholarship, her students, and about contributing to our Association, I am delighted to recognize the contributions of Maura Coughlin, Associate Professor of Visual Studies at Bryant University.

Heralding from New England and earning undergraduate degrees in both English and Art History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst before her M.A. in Art History from Tufts, she completed her Art History Ph.D. at New York University. She then worked at both Boston University and Brown before settling into Bryant University, where she was awarded tenure. Her scholarship began in her study of the French peasant painter, while her more recent publications reveal a developing focus upon and interest in maritime elements in art. She has articles discussing realism and materiality in a 1900 French photograph as well as an article discussing ecology and visual culture on the French Atlantic Shore appearing in *Sea Currents: Art, Science and the Commodification of the Ocean World in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Other recent articles have appeared in a special issue of *Landscapes: the Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language* and another collection wherein she addresses "Death at Sea: Symbolism and Charles's Cottet's Subjective Realism." She is similarly prolific in conference presentations, as a regular at NCSA, but also sharing her work at conferences from the U.K. to Idaho, from the College Art Association annual conference in New York to the Association of Art Historians conference in London. She also serves repeatedly as a session chair, often organizing panels in her effort to bridge the different scholarly communities in which she is engaged.

Maura is also a dedicated teacher. While she serves mostly business students, she is driven to inspire them to embrace the arts as she can make them engaging. She thus stretches her pedagogical range in an effort to serve their diverse interests and her own passion to better the world through her commitment to education within it. She mentors students carefully, standing up for their rights and needs at her institution and supporting their own scholarly development and emergence. Her dedication is clear in the many ways in which she has served NCSA for many years too, and I remember talking to her very early in the morning at Albuquerque airport a few years ago and asking her to think about hosting NCSA in the future. She did, in Boston in 2015, where she arranged one of the best keynote addresses many of us remember distinctly from years past. With the team, Maura grew our association in 2015 and extended our fellowship while, I think, pushing the bar of scholarship even higher.

But Maura's largest contribution to our group is hidden, as she is the operator of and maintains our website and Facebook and google groups and presence. Maura is tireless and speedy in responding to members' requests for their recent publications to be listed on the site, helping folks walk through the registration process for the conference, and in patiently assisting those of us who lose our passwords to get back into the site. She is interested in trying new strategies, such as Blog posts, to engage us, and posts matters of nineteenth-century interest on Facebook so frequently that our group continues to grow and intersect with other scholarly groups there. Maura has brought her technical savviness to bear to propel the Association onto social media platforms where so much electronic interaction now takes place. She connects us all—and that's an endless and largely thankless task from which we all benefit. Her speed and willingness to interact make her a pleasure to work with—and it is my pleasure to recognize her contributions to NCSA today with the President's Award.

Lucy Morrison
NCSA President
February 3rd, 2017