

Diverse Perspectives

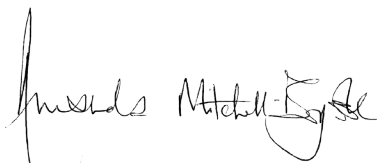
In the last issue of *Expedition* I was, with my co-interim directors Melissa Smith and Steve Tinney, on the other side of this page. I couldn't be more delighted that our new Williams Director Christopher Woods will take that spot going forward.

Chris's commitment to bringing new, contemporary voices to speak to the collections and research resonates. As one example, a pop-up exhibition of the stop-motion video *The Ballad of Special Ops Cody* by Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz—created among the Mesopotamian votive statues in the Oriental Institute—was on view in our Sphinx Gallery for several months following a program with the artist in February 2020.

As Associate Director for Interpretive Programs Kevin Schott notes in *Learning Lessons* on page 58, amid the changes of 2020, most museums—including ours—intensified their work on decolonization. One important aspect of this work is actively inviting commentaries from more marginalized voices, particularly from communities who made the objects in our care or who inhabit the landscapes they come from today.

Diverse commentary is welcome not only in our galleries but also in our publications, including this magazine. In this issue, we learn about Native American humor from Dakota Sioux Raquel Quinones. In an interview with Associate Curator and Sabloff Keeper of the American Section Lucy Fowler Williams, Fernando Madrid reflects on his Maya heritage and Tikal. And Gabriel Vanlandingham-Dunn, our School Visit Coordinator as well as a professional writer and music historian, shares his personal connection with the instrument in the Africa Galleries labeled as a mbila (xylophone) but more commonly referred to as a balafon. The vibraphone—a hybrid of the balafon and piano—is closely associated with Jazz or Black American Music.

Expedition magazine has always been a space for different voices, including the voices of our Museum members. We hope you will find joy and inspiration as we continue diversifying perspectives in future issues. We'd love to hear from you as we go along.



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