

Ellen Sebring  
Short Bio, July 2020

Ellen Sebring, PhD, is an artist, designer, and new media researcher. She has been the Creative Director of the MIT Visualizing Cultures project since its founding in 2002. The project has published more than 50 units by 28 authors. She was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) at MIT, and Post-Doctoral Associate at Duke University.

Sebring's first book— *Centerbook: The Center for Advanced Visual Studies and the Evolution of Art-Science-Technology at MIT*—came out in fall of 2019, co-authored with Elizabeth Goldring. Sebring also designed the book, compiling a database of some 30,000 images. This first major history of CAVS is published by SA+P Press and ZKM Karlsruhe and distributed by MIT Press.

Her essays on image-driven scholarship and history include *Civilization & Barbarism: Cartoon Commentary & the "White Man's Burden" (1898–1902)*, published by MIT Visualizing Cultures, and reprinted in several academic journals. In her research on visual narrative in global digital archives, Sebring designed a software model and virtual reality project, "March 1900," that explore new approaches for enhanced looking especially related to digitized primary sources from the visual record. Her dissertation, *Visual Narrative*, looked at history as seen through the digitized visual record with a case study on the Boxer Uprising in China, 1900.

Sebring was project lead for a series of online courses created in collaboration with the eminent historian, John W. Dower, beginning in 2014 with the award-winning course, *Visualizing Japan (1850s–1930s): Westernization, Protest, Modernity*. Known as VJx, the course was a first-time collaboration between MITx and HarvardX, and to date more 32,000 students have enrolled. In 2018, Sebring developed and co-taught *Visualizing Imperialism and the Philippines* (VPx), and in 2020, *Visualizing the Birth of Modern Tokyo* (VTx).

Sebring designed exhibitions based on MIT Visualizing Cultures content that toured the US and Japan, and Shanghai, China.

From 1995-2002, she was President of Botticelli Interactive, Inc., producing early interactive film and museum designs for nonlinear storytelling.

Sebring's video art work explores deconstructed narrative through image-sound composition. She is part of a global virtual performance scheduled for fall 2020 as part of a festival by HfG Offenbach in Germany.

Sebring earned the SMVisS degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the PhD at the Centre for Advanced Inquiry in the Integrative Arts (CAiiA), directed by Roy Ascott, at Plymouth University in the UK. She is a classical musician and composer.