

## Preface

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In the first issue of 2016, we are very pleased to present this Festschrift in honor of Professor Robert N. St. Clair of the University of Louisville. Professor St. Clair is one of the founding fathers of the International Association for Intercultural Communication Studies (IAICS), going all the way back to the 1980s. The first international conference of the Association was held in 1985 in Seoul, Korea, while the first issue of *Intercultural Communication Studies (ICS)* was published in 1991. Throughout the years, Professor St. Clair's contribution to IAICS has been enormous. He has served the Association in all possible capacities, as past Executive Director, conference convener, Editor, and most recently, its President (2013-2015). We can truly say that without his unceasing efforts, the Association would not have become the flourishing global entity that it is today.

On a personal note, I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to Professor St. Clair and to the Association that he epitomizes. In 1991, I attended the third conference of the Association, held in Tainan, Taiwan, where I first met Professor St. Clair as well as Professor L. Brooks Hill, Professor Bates L. Hoffer, Professor Nobuyuki Honna, Professor Jia Yuxin and the late Professor John H. Koo, all founding fathers of the Association from its very beginnings. The creative, friendly, and truly intercultural and interdisciplinary spirit of the conference made a deep impression on me. The insights I gained into Chinese and Asian cultures, and the lasting friendships I formed, have shaped my life from that point onwards. Without Professor St. Clair's vision and guiding light, I would not be who I am today, and my life would have taken a different path.

This special Festschrift issue is edited by Professor Robert W. Vaagan of Oslo and Akerhus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway. In his extensive introductory article, Professor Vaagan gives a complete account of Professor St. Clair's biography and his enormous contribution to intercultural communication, as the author of 13 books, 30+ edited books and 137+ articles between 1967 and 2015. A select bibliography of Professor St. Clair's works is included at the end of the Festschrift. Professor St. Clair's interests span many disciplines and topic areas, ranging from the study of indigenous languages (e.g., Hawaiian and Polynesian; Yupik and Eskimo-Aleut; Yakima and Sahaptian; Salish), to Latin American and Latino studies, to the interdisciplinary applications of the theory of cognitive metaphor, to innovative perspectives on epistemology and the sociology of knowledge. His most recent book is *The grammar of visual space: Visual syntax and cultural icons* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2013). In many areas, Professor St. Clair's seminal thought has been an inspiration to generations of scholars in the field of intercultural communication studies. The Festschrift contains 16 articles by 24 of the Association's long-standing members, who share special bonds of gratitude, friendship and scholarship with Professor St. Clair. Together, we are reminded that as a community of shared scholarly endeavor, we are united as an international family. This tribute to Professor St. Clair is our collective labor of love. We love you, Professor St. Clair, and we wish you a happy and active retirement!