

RE: Captain Adrian Jacobsen Society AS

March 5, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very pleased to offer this letter of support for Dr. Sigbjørn Rønbeck's important efforts to start the Captain Adrian Jacobsen Society. I first met Dr. Rønbeck in 2016 during a conference on Jacobsen in his birthplace of Tromsø, and have found our subsequent dialogues and exchanges enriching. I have spent years researching Jacobsen's museum collections from the Northwest Coast of North America, especially those in the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, and share Dr. Rønbeck's sense that Jacobsen has not received the historical attention or appreciation he deserves, especially in his home country of Norway.

As an anthropologist who works closely with First Nations on the Northwest Coast, especially the Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl), I can personally attest to the historical importance of Jacobsen's work. Because of their geographical location along the Inside Passage between Vancouver Island and mainland British Columbia, the Kwakwaka'wakw sustained less contact with Europeans in the early years of maritime exploration during the late 18th and early 19th century. As a byproduct, there are fewer early collections of material culture from them than there are for some of their northern and southern neighbors. Jacobsen was the first person to assemble a large Kwakwaka'wakw collection on his voyage of 1881-1883, which is now housed in the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin (although Jacobsen's associated collection records and diaries are in Hamburg). This is a hugely significant collection due to its age, its cultural scope, and the fact that it was assembled before Franz Boas began his influential ethnographic work with the Kwakwaka'wakw. In fact, Boas himself was first inspired to conduct fieldwork in British Columbia after examining the Jacobsen collection in Berlin in 1885. Although Jacobsen was not a trained ethnologist, his collections, essays, and travelogue books provide a valuable glimpse into First Nations life and culture at the close of the 19th century.

I strongly support Dr. Rønbeck's efforts to establish and develop the Captain Adrian Jacobsen Society, and I hope that he may secure the necessary funds to do so.

Sincerely,



Dr. Aaron Glass
Associate Professor
Anthropology, Museum Studies, and Indigenous Arts