

Minutes of the
Docent Council Board Meeting
Santa Barbara Museum of Art
Date: April 13, 2016

Present: Joan Dewhirst, Gail Stichler, Vikki Duncan, Mei Chi Ho, Christine Holland, Teda Pilcher, Karen Brill, Ralph Wilson, Barbara Boyd, Loree Gold, Patsy Hicks, Rachael Kriepps

Absent: Paul Guido, Molora Vadnais

Call To Order: Joan called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.
Minutes of the Meeting of March 9th were approved.

Board Reports

President, Joan Dewhirst

Joan reported on the special recognition of Patsy Hicks as a "Woman of Inspiration" by the Girls, Inc. of Carpinteria at their annual spring luncheon. Teda Pilcher, Irene Stone, and Joan along with several Museum trustees and special friends joined the enthusiastic crowd listening intently as two poised young girls presented the program. They were outstanding examples of the wonderful work of this organization. It was a proud moment to witness our Director of Education being recognized.

Joan told the Board of a Collector's Council fund raising event for the Museum which included a presentation and tour of designer John Saladino's collection. Some docents were asked to serve as event docents in Mr. Saladino's home, and missed a Council Meeting to do so. Joan asked for views on the absence. Patsy noted that the docents toured at the Museum's request, but that the Board decides about absences. Ralph Wilson motioned to approve a one-time equivalent of meeting attendance for the docents who were present at the event. Gail Stichler seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ellen Lawson's discussion with Joan regarding absence from meetings during recovery from further surgery prompted discussion to determine an appropriate status. Ellen has met touring requirements for the year on the European Team, and the absences are injury related. Following Joan's review of the By-Laws, a motion was made, seconded, and passed: given that Ellen Lawson has fulfilled her touring requirements and in view of her exceptional and long service (43 years and twice President of the Docent Council), the Board has waived further meeting requirements for 2016.

Thirty docents have replied to attend the party at the home of Trustee Judy Little on April 20th. This event is a celebration for the 75th Anniversary of the Museum and an opportunity for docents to meet and be honored for our service by the Museum Trustees.

Puja and Piety has opened. Preparations were a marathon by Museum staff to have the show ready for the opening on Saturday, April 16th.

The [Provisional Graduation] and Service Awards event [Friday, June 3] is taking shape with presenters identified.

On Wednesday, June 8th, the Double Board meeting will be held in the Luria Activities Center. The Museum Café will serve breakfast goodies, which Joan is giving to the Board. Joan will invite all the new Board members to attend.

Discussion of a recruitment tea is tabled until after the upcoming Senior Staff meeting.

[See President's Report, attached.]

Vice President, Gail Stichler

Gail reported on the recent meeting of New York-goers in Luria, and noted additional planning contributions by Isabel Downs--meeting with the head Curator at the Frick, and by Loree Gold: a visit to the Judd Foundation and a studio visit with Peter Halley. As Gail completed her detailed report (attached) noting planned Museum visits (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, The Whitney, The Asia Society, the Frick) by day and group lunches, as well as open time and and theater going, the Board gave Gail a round of applause for her outstanding organization of this trip.

Gail presented a new topic following discussion with Jean Smith, who will be away from Santa Barbara for six months next year [service year 2017]. Jean would like to continue to tour. She has always volunteered to be on student touring teams and noted to Gail that she does not need service credit toward a pin. The description for Inactive Docent Status in our by-laws could be applied to Jean's situation. Jean also mentioned another docent who may be in the same situation. These are veteran docents would cannot be present for the full year due to personal reasons. The background, experience, and intention are there, but for them and others, the work world, sick leave, and bereavement interrupt. There also is a parallel in research. Board members shared related comments: as years of service increase, we will see a decrease in the docent population [Christine]; some docents love touring but cannot attend meetings [Molora]. Gail noted that we have lost people, and Patsy added that SF MoMA lost 50% of its docents and staff during the multi-year renovation. Patsy then suggested an Emeritus status, in which the docent would train for the tours they'd be doing. Denise commented on different levels of docent experience, noting the importance of a knowledge base for touring. Gail noted that evaluation would be needed. Joan called for a sub committee discussion and a recommendation at the May meeting. Gail Stichler, Denise Klassen, Michi Ho, Ralph Wilson, and Karen Brill will comprise the sub committee. Upon a Board decision, Joan will confirm to Michi to send letters saying the requests are approved.

[See Vice President's Report, attached.]

Secretary, Vikki Duncan

Vikki thanked Molora Vadnais for taking Minutes at the February Board Meeting, and the Board for the close reading and corrections to the March Minutes. Next she shared Corresponding Secretary Nicola Ghersen's Correspondence list for Winter 2016 and early Spring 2016 thank-you's by speaker date:

- January 20: Julie Joyce and Susan Tai (75th Anniversary Exhibition)
- February 3: Phillip Yenawine (Visual Thinking Strategies)
- February 17: Eik Kahn (75th Anniversary) and Susan Tai (Puja and Piety)
- March 2: David White (Puja and Piety)
- March 16: Professor Debashish Banerji (Puja and Piety)
- April 6th: Professor Jenni Sorkin (75th Anniversary Exhibition with emphasis on the Contemporary work).

Vikki also told as a recipient of the positive impact of the caring and support notes sent to docents by the Board.

[See Secretary's Report, attached]

Treasurer, Denise Klassen

The Docent account balances for April were as follows: the checking account beginning balance was \$5,729.289 on February 29th, and the ending balance was \$5,730.01 on March 31st, 2016. Interest earned was \$0.73. The savings beginning balance was \$10,784.00 on February 24th, and the ending balance was \$10,785.37 on March 24th, 2016 after interest of \$1.37. Denise noted that Ralph [incoming Vice President] will need to be added to the accounts this summer.

[See Treasurer's Report, attached]

Membership, Michi Ho

Docents reported only 16 public hours but 851.50 research hours in March. Docents do not always report hours month-by-month. Christine recommended sending a call to docents to submit their hours now.

At the upcoming service awards, Helene Strobel and Barbara Carrington will speak for Niki Bruckner who will receive a 10-year pin.

[See Membership Chair Report, attached.]

Adult Teams: Christine Holland and Teda Pilcher

In March, touring numbers varied widely. Twelve scheduled tours had no visitors [Highlights - 5, Portraits - 2, Europe - 1 (plus one cancellation due to docent illness), and Ten Talks -4]. There were no special request tours. Many tours had few visitors, but some had 16, 11, 14, and 20 visitors. There were two Community Speakers Program presentations to a total of 107 attendees.

Patsy noted that even with low numbers in the Museum, visitors do go on docent tours.

Teda shared her impression that attendance at Ten Talks is better at the new times and tours gather people as they move, and the times are good for docent convenience.

Christine said that docents are doing a great job keeping up morale, and Joan affirmed that touring rewards us and keeps us coming back.

[See Adult Team Chair Report, attached.]

Student Teams: Karen Brill

Karen reported that 20 docents have signed up for the Puja and Piety Student Touring Workshop on Monday, April 18th. Karen, Michi, and Laura DePaoli have organized it to present themes to use in touring. Loree will lead a de Soto discussion. The first student tours of Puja and Piety will take place next Tuesday, April 19th.

In March, presentations were made in 12 elementary classrooms to 288 students. Karen also noted that we have toured bigger groups. Denise said that on Tuesdays we are always looking for subs. Loree noted that on Tuesday, 4/12, docents were "slammed" with touring groups (seven of them at once), and cruise ship visitors joining student tours. The docents involved are fine with this and tell the visitors that they may join, but the discussion is with the students. Patsy noted that these may be entry level museum goers and this is a good introduction for them. Rachael had counted seven cruise ships this season, the most ever. She also got compliments from guests via Visitor Services saying that "those docents gave amazing student tours". Denise summarized the gallery atmosphere as cramped but positive.

There is public interest in Puja and Piety, with visitors asking when it will open. Patsy confirmed that admission will be charged when it opens [on April 17th] in keeping with the quality of the show. New family passes will be given to students.

[See Student Teams Report, attached.]

Provisional Chairs: Ralph Wilson [Mary Ellen Hoffman was conducting class.]

The Provisionals are preparing for their 8-Minute Talks. Mike Ramey has lectured on Techniques and next week Karen Brill will talk about Asian Art and Puja and Piety. Ralph said we now have four [Provisionals] who will make it and that each will be a real asset to the Council. A note was made to remember to notify mentors of mentee departures.

In response to questions about Power Point Team observation and any interest the class has shown in joining

presentation (Mary Winder's was excellent) could be made closer to the end of the year or could be repeated. The trainers will encourage the Provisionals to consider joining the team.

The 45 minute presentations will be given on Wednesday, May 25th, and at the final class the Provisionals will fill out their summer tour dates. The trainers will send these on to Christine [Adult Teams]. Christine noted that she'll have three weeks to contact other docents to fill in as needed.

Research: Barbara Boyd

Barbara had no formal report. There are no researchers at present, but some additional material is available. Patsy noted the bibliographies received from curators, suggesting that docents can delve into and write from these. Loree noted that Ricki is the Team Leader for the next Ridley Tree rotation. Ralph asked about pieces in the 75th Anniversary Installation without research papers on the website. Loree compares the checklist to the web and paper files to identify what we have and don't have.

Evaluations: Paul Guido

Paul Guido was absent and had no report. Joan noted that she likes the new evaluation form, which is easy for the person being evaluated, too.

Webmaster: Loree Gold

Loree has been working very hard on Puja and Piety, spending 36 hours in posting 16 objects (inc. 9 old papers, 3 Pichavai, aramaya, and miniatures). These are tagged. Mike Ramey is waiting for the walkthrough to complete tiling [the sequenced, thumbnail image-links to papers from the exhibition home page- vwd.]. A paper on Jainism will be posted, plus the Catalogue has been posted. There are 20 or so good papers, and also the student touring workshop sheets.

Patsy got permission from Brian Hogarth, former Head of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, to use everything he wrote for Teacher Packets. Patsy also noted that in the next few years while Asian is off-view, Education Department Interns might be available to type worthwhile materials from old files for web posting.

Nominations: Molora Vadnais

Molora was unable to attend. Joan reported that Molora had presented the nominated slate and held the election at the April 6th Meeting. Whereas election had been done in a two-step process previously, the election ran smoothly (there has been only 1 challenge to a slate in Council History), and one month was ample time between announcing the slate and the election. Joan thanked those who agreed to stay on the Board.

Education Department: Patsy Hicks and Rachael Krieps

Patsy referred to the Curator's Choice inaugural artist and writer discussion between Charles Long and Jonathan Lethem on April 7th, and to [an instructive and] motivating interaction using Long's sculpture in the FRC. Patsy introduced a not-too-involved visiting SBCC student to Sundae Sculpting School--like bubble gum under a table, and the student was engaged--just as Long wants the work to be engaging and interactive. The student told Patsy that he'd never have known it was here if she hadn't shown it to him.

The Educator Event on April 26th will have timed entry into the galleries. Some guests will be upstairs while some downstairs. Food and drink are restricted to the lower level areas. Patsy hopes docents will be able to come as it's important.

Docent Council Meeting Speaker Jenni Sorkin has curated a show ["Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947-2016" continuing through Sept. 4 at Hauser Wirth & Schimmel in Los Angeles; hauserwirthschimmel.com -vwd.]. focusing on insights of female artists. It has been highly written about. Nicola Gherson is interested in organizing a bus trip to the exhibition in June or July.

Upcoming Council Speakers by date are on May 4th - Santa Barbara artist Hank Pitcher, who also was close to and may speak about Charles Garabedian, who passed away earlier this year; and on May 18th - Charles Donelan, art writer and critic for The Independent, whose mother was a docent.

Exhibition walk-throughs for Special Exhibition teams are on Thursday (4/13) with Louis de Soto, and on Friday (4/14) at 3:30 p.m. with Steven Huyler on Hindu objects.

The Garden Club of Santa Barbara is celebrating its 100th Anniversary and will install arrangements with label copy about visual connections to works in the 75th Anniversary Installation.

Atelier--The Scent of Secret Gardens, on Saturday, May 14th, will be held in the Plaza.

The Community Celebration will follow on Sunday, May 15th, and will be free to the public. The FRC will open on 5/15 with the theme of Everyday Devotion, and will remain open the following week for students. The focus is on Puja as a living thing--on-going and not just ancient, and on making it accessible. There will be a household shrine, and a video with Sanjay's Super Team based on Sanjay Patel's book Hindu Deities for Children. There will be comic books and a reproduction Jain piece. Sameer Pandja also is involved. The FRC will be enriching in the summer, too, as a grounding place for touring the exhibition.

The British Modernism show (Peyton Skipwith, Guest Curator), will open on October 1st. There may be some loans in addition to drawing upon the permanent collection. Colleagues at UCSB will hold a concurrent symposium on Modernist letters.

Julie Joyce is putting together a show of Pop Prints, and may involve the Norton Simon.

There are plans with Caldecot Medal Winner David Wiesner for a joint project with the Literacy Program and the Public Library on book illustrators associated with Surrealism and German Expressionism.

Delphine Sims has curated a landscape-related show in honor of Karen Sinsheimer at the Wilding Museum. Delphine has a checklist for the next 75th Anniversary photography rotation in Ridley Tree, but it is not yet complete. Delphine will be leaving SBMA to attend graduate school at UC Berkeley, focusing her studies on Black Artists and African American visual culture.

SBMA has appointed a new Curator of Photography, Charles Riley, formerly of the Dallas Atkins Museum. His interests are in time-based, video, and new media works. He'll curate a show (video) concurrent with Julie Joyce's Pop show. He'll begin work in June, and in will give an early lecture to docents in Fall to share his vision. He knows both Eik and Julie, and is very collegial and multidisciplinary, e.g., putting painting and photography in conversation.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Preference Sheets will be released in May and will include these teams: Portraits, Techniques, Sculpture, the 75th Anniversary Installation- with a subset of Contemporary Modernism, and the British Modernism show with some 40 pieces in Davidson, a lot which we have not seen.

ADJOURNMENT: Joan adjourned the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

Note: Monthly Board Reports are filed behind the Minutes in the Docent Council Board Meeting Minutes Binder located in the Docent Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Vikki Duncan. Secretary