

# SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART

## Docent Council Board Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024

Family Resource Center 9:30 a.m.

**Board Members Present:** Teda Pilcher, President; Pattie Firestone, Vice-President; Cindy Anderson, Secretary; Mary Ellen Alden, Membership; Nicola Ghersen, Student Team Co-Chair; Christine Holland, Evaluations Co-Chair; Shirley Waxman, Nominations Chair; Gretel Rothrock, Webmaster; Patty Santiago, Coordinator of Docent Programs

**In Attendance:** Patsy Hicks, Director of Education

**Not In Attendance:** Tommie Rae Barnett, Treasurer; Andrew Baker, Student Team Co-Chair; Denise Klassen, Adult Team Co-Chair; Barbara Ross, Research; Irene Stone, Evaluations Co-Chair.

1. **Call to order:** President Teda Pilcher called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**  
**Action Item:** A motion to approve the Board minutes of the February 12, 2024 meeting was made Shirley and seconded by Mary Ellen. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### 3. **Board Reports:**

#### **President's Report –Teda Pilcher**

- Teda reminded the Board to have their reports turned in by the Friday prior to Board meetings so members would have a chance to review them before the meeting. She suggested submitting them to everyone on the Board.

#### **Vice-President's Report – Pattie Firestone**

- **Meet & Greet - Provisionals and All Active Docents**

Pattie extended her appreciation for Susan Lowe and Irene Stone for all the work they did in getting the Meet & Greets organized and balanced. She reiterated that next year she would suggest having a separate committee of one or two people to put the event together.

-The following Hosts were thanked for their hospitality in hosting the event.

- \*Mimi Baer/Judy Dewey (8 people) Thursday, February 15 (lunch)
- \*Christine Holland/Merle Guadagnini (8-10)Monday, February 26 (lunch)
- \*Wendi Hunter/Cindy Anderson (8) Monday, March 4 (lunch)
- \*Irene Stone/Loree Gold (8) Monday, March 11 (lunch)
- \*Mike Sandler/Teda Pilcher Saturday, March 23 (1 pm in Thousand Oaks)
- \*Shirley Waxman/Elizabeth Russell (8-10) Monday, March 25 (4:30-6:30)
- \*Laura DePaoli/Denise Klassen (10) Wednesday, March 27 (4:30 pm)

- There was a lot of discussion about whether or not to put something in the budget to help defray the cost for the hosts of the Meet & Greet going forward. This was brought to the fore because of a request from Wendi Hunter for a reimbursement/stipend for hosting the luncheon. Everyone felt that hosting the event was done in the spirit of honoring the Provisionals and that this should be looked at as giving a gift to the Docent Council of their home, their time, and the refreshments – whatever they may be. It was pointed out that these Meet & Greets can be as simple or as elaborate as the hosts would like them to be, and they have the freedom to decide whether they want to do something as simple as having an afternoon tea, to hosting a luncheon or cocktail party. The decision of what kind of party they decide to host should depend on their budget, time, and space in their home. The main focus on the Meet & Greets should be getting to know each other and welcoming the Provisionals into our community – in whatever way the host would like to execute the event. A motion was made by Shirley and seconded by Mary Ellen. The motion read as follows: Wendi's request for reimbursement was denied, and that going forward, the Council will set a policy that the Meet & Greets are a gift to the Docent Council and it's up to the host to decide on the format and what to serve.

- April 14 – 19 – Washington, DC

Pattie will meet with the 13 people who have signed up for the trip after the Docent Council Meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>. 9 out of the 10 rooms have been taken at the Cosmos Club. Activities are planned for Monday, April 14 through Thursday, April 18, including an opening dinner Sunday night (4/14) and a closing dinner Thursday night (4/18). Excitement awaits as there is much art to see in DC!

- Pattie noticed that many docents on the Student Touring teams are finishing at different times and then leaving one they are done. She suggested that the docents stay to debrief with each other to take a moment to share with each other a collaboration of ideas as to what went well, which pieces they showed, and any tips or suggestions they might like to share with each other.

### **Secretary's Report - Cindy Anderson**

- A bouquet of flowers and a card was sent to Pma Tregenza on the occasion of the passing of her husband.

### **Nominations Chair: Shirley Waxman**

- Below are the nominees for Docent year 2024-2025:

President: Pattie Firestone (2018)

Vice President: Cindy Anderson (2020)

Secretary: Ursula Ginder (2022)

Treasurer: Mary Benedict (2023)

Membership: Merle Guadagnini (2020)

Adult Teams: Susan Lowe (2020) and Elizabeth Russell (2023)

Student Teams: Nicola Ghersen (2013) and Anne-Marie Dunaway (2020)

Research: Barbara Ross (2020)

Evaluations: Christine Holland (2005) and Laura DePaoli (2000)

Webmaster: Loree Gold (2000)

Nominations Chair: Teda Pilcher (2012)

Provisional Chair: Patty Santiago

The slate of officers will be posted in the April *La Muse* and presented at the April 3 Docent Council Meeting. If there are no additional nominations from the floor, the election of officers and chairpersons will be by a majority vote of the Active Docents present at this meeting as per the Docent By-Laws.

Current officers going off the Board in June 2024 are:

Shirley Waxman

Tommie Rae Barnett

Denise Klassen

Gretal Rothrock

Andrew Baker

Mary Ellen Alden

Irene Stone

### **Department of Education: Patsy Hicks**

- Patsy lauded James for the fabulous job he's been doing on the shows he's curated. James will be having a conversation with Yassi Mazandi entitled, "Born-Porcelain or Flowers" a public program in conjunction with the exhibition *Made by Hand/Born Digital*. The conversation is part of the Lecture Series and will occur Thursday, April 25 at 5:30 p.m. A workshop for teachers will also be affiliated Yassi's work.
- Patsy let us know that there is now a Family Guide in Spanish and English for the Janna Ireland exhibit.
- Docents are encouraged to give Patsy some ideas as to where they think signage in Spanish should be added to be helpful to our visitors. They are trying to have some things translated, but the cost of vinyl is a bit prohibitive. The translation of labels is still on the horizon.
- The idea of compiling the articles Ricki Morse has written on contemporary art was floated around as an idea. Perhaps adding them to the Docent Website for Docents to reference since most of these contemporary pieces do not have research papers written about them. We also talked about coming up with a special honor for Ricki, who will be 94 this year. Perhaps Barbara could look into putting her work together as a special memory of the contributions she's made to research for the museum.
- Visitors from the Nurses' Association and patients at the Cancer Center have had meaningful visits that have offered deep support as they view art in the galleries as "A Rx of art" – receiving an injection of art to help their spirits. Grief sharing groups have also visited the galleries to help their healing as well. The Docent Book Club is reading "Your Brain on Art" – a book that reveals that art hits some of the same parts of the brain that aides in a person's healing.

### **Treasurer's Report – (Tommie Rae Barnett absent)**

- Our current savings account has \$10,399.21. The checking account balance is \$6,784.36. We discussed the importance of monetizing the wine and flowers donated for the Christmas Party this year for budgeting purposes going forward, so that we have an idea of how much we might need in the future for those items.

### **Membership Report: Mary Ellen Alden**

- There were no roster changes to report.
- Docents still need reminders to report tour and research hours; many have still not reported.
- Mary Ellen intends to begin working with Merle and Pattie to prepare her for her new duties.
  - The membership chair uses Excel Spreadsheets frequently, so it may be a good idea to focus, in future years, on candidates with some familiarity with Excel.
  - Mary Ellen will update the Job Description before year-end to focus on duties and to highlight the need for Excel familiarity/facility.

### **Adult Teams: Susan Lowe**

- The Janna Ireland exhibition came on board mid-February and had a healthy visitor attendance. There was only one zero attendance for a Highlights Tour and Ten Talks had a banner month.
- The Spring quarter calendars have been sent out to the team leaders for scheduling.
- Adult Teams are in the process of putting together a Summer (into Fall) touring team for the “Legacy of Giving, The Lady Leslie Ridley Tree Bequest Exhibition”. This should be a very popular exhibition and will most likely have many special requests, so we are hoping for a robust team.
- Susan thought having a roster of when people graduated would be helpful to determine seniority as they put special teams together this summer.
- Susan mentioned that with special request tours, it might be better if the groups were told what tours we offer instead of trying to put together hybrid tours in order to fulfill the demand.
- The February statistics are shown below:

	<u>Highlights</u>	<u>A/E</u>	<u>Janna Ireland</u>	<u>Ten Talks</u>	<u>CommSpeaker</u>
<b><u>February</u></b>					
# Tours Scheduled	14	15	4	2	2
# Tours Reported	14	15	4	2	2
# Attendees	74	121	38	27	58
Zero Attendance	1	0	0	0	0
Special Requests	1	1	0	0	0
Average Attendance	5	7.6	9.5	13.5	29

\*NOTE: 3 Highlights Tours and 2 American European Tours were cancelled due to severe weather and special museum events.

### **Student Teams: Nicola Ghersen**

- Student Teams toured 562 students in February. The new Artful Making project, based on Impressionism, has proved to be very popular with students. Docents continue to receive positive feedback from teachers about their engaging tours. It has come to their attention that the By-Laws do not include a stipulation that new docents must complete four years of student touring. We are wondering if now is an opportunity to review this

expectation. The last few provisional classes have been quite large, so perhaps the number of years expected for student touring can be lowered.

- A discussion followed and By-Law 3.3 was referenced about student touring responsibilities. It states:

### 3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ACTIVES

- Active Docents in the first four years of service following the year of training are responsible each service year to be a member of a student touring team.
  - In the first year of service, in addition to student touring, an Active Docent shall be a member of an adult team for tours in the summer quarter following the training year.
  - Any Active Docent may be assigned to an adult team to meet touring team needs.
- It is still the responsibility of each student team member to be available on the 2 days a month they have signed up for. The student team leaders should be rotating the assignments so that everyone has a chance to tour. The clarification about the concern about getting eight tours in a year was also discussed. The eight tours necessary to remain an Active Docent is a combination of both Student and Adult tours for the year.
- Patty will once again go over this responsibility with the current Provisional Class.
- Nicola also brought to the Board's attention that there have been some concerns with some docents that have an issue with the student evaluation process. Some docents are still uncomfortable with this process and are questioning why it is necessary. Our Council has always taken pride in the quality of our tours and the evaluation process is a way for us to keep the high standard in place. The evaluations, however, are meant to offer feedback, coaching and suggestions to the docents to give them some ideas as to how they might improve their tours. The goal of the evaluation process is not designed to remove docents from a team, but a way to offer them support and encouragement.

#### **Research: Barbara Ross**

- The research papers are ready to be published and Mike Ramey has agreed to add them to the docent website.
- In debriefing at the completion of the assignment, Barbara asked the provisional students to respond to one of these prompts in 1-2 sentences:
  - How would you sum up your experience in writing the research paper?
  - What was the highlight of writing your paper?
  - What was hard about the assignment?
  - What advice would you give to someone who is considering a research paper?
  - Give your own particular perspective on the assignment.
    - These are some of their impressions and reflections:
      - “Writing a research paper gave me a deeper understanding of the artwork and a greater confidence in my ability to talk about the piece.” - Debbie Auday
      - “I found the challenge of writing a research paper rather daunting at first. However, once I got into the process of researching and writing, and had a finished product, it gave me a feeling of accomplishment, and downright joy!!! – Sandy DeRousse
      - “Tips from others in the class have been terrific. There's so much knowledge among my classmates. I hope we can go on sharing and learning from each other.” – Bobbi Corbin

“For me, the challenge and fun in writing a research paper about a young artist, Awol Erizku, was that the limited written information led me to non-traditional sources such as interviews and YouTube videos. It helped to focus me on the voice of the artist rather than the voice of the critic and/or the academic.” – Sheryl Denbo

### **Evaluations: Christine Holland**

- Christine and Irene were pleased to report that the evaluations process is going well. For the two new teams, *Janna Ireland* and *Winter Europe and America*, the team leaders have set up evaluations to be performed by the tour team members. We have already received some written evaluations for these teams.
- There are 32 Student Tour evaluations to be completed, and we are pleased to report that almost all have now been accomplished and written evaluation forms received. There have been some delays concerning student tours, mostly due to changes made by schools in their schedules, but we are dealing with these situations and hope to complete the final few evaluations this month.
- Most of the Provisionals completed their 8-minute talks on February 21<sup>st</sup>, and Irene and Christine evaluated the final two on March 6<sup>th</sup>. There were good results for all. The evaluators used a shortened Evaluation Form for these 8-minute talks which worked out well. A big thank you to the volunteer docent evaluators, and to Patty Santiago for all her work in planning and coordinating the evaluations. One suggestion is to have a little more time scheduled in order to talk to the Provisional after their talk.
- The next major task will be to set up evaluations for the Provisionals’ final 45-minute tours.
- Irene and Christine have continually reminded Provisionals and Docents that peer review is the cornerstone of our evaluations program, and that we support each other in a non-competitive manner as we strive to present the best gallery experience we can for our visitors. We take pride in helping each other achieve our goals.

### **Webmaster: Gretel Rothrock**

- No report
- Loree Gold is helping Gretel put dates and any changes on the website.

### **Provisional Class: Patty Santiago**

- The 8-minute tour evaluations have been completed.
- Shirley Waxman will come in to tour Asian art for the Provisional Class on March 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Lori Mohr will be coming in to give a talk on Impressionism and Post-Impressionism in April, and Ralph Wilson will also be coming in to talk about American Art in our collection.
- The Provisionals will be signing up to help with Student Touring in April. The Provisionals will work with one of the docents on the team and talk about 2-3 pieces on the tour to get some practical experience with student touring before having to tour students this summer. Patty and Nicola will talk about the best way to organize the tours and communicate with Student Team Leaders about the scheduling.

### **4. Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Shirley and seconded by Susan. Teda adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

The next Board Meeting will be held Monday, April 8 at 9:30 a.m. in the Family Resource Center (FRC).

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Anderson  
Secretary, SBMA Docent Council Board