

DOCENT DATES

9:15 AM Social Hour
10 AM Meeting/lecture
(non-meetings are in blue)

April 2

Amada Cruz and SBMA Chair of the Board of Trustees, Michael Linn, will address the Council, followed by Teda as Nominations Chair calling for a vote on the Docent Board. Then VP Cindy Anderson will open the prepared agenda of "Putting the Pieces Together", Docent Touring Dialogue

April 27-May 2.

Docent Spring Trip: Chicago

May 5th

Book Club 10:30 AM

May 7

May 30 4-6 PM

Graduation and Service
Recognition Ceremony

James Glisson "Vian Sora:
Outer Worlds"

May 21

Allyson Healey "Letter Forms"



Marsden Hartley, *New Mexico Recollection, No. 13, 1923*, oil on canvas, private collection. Marsden Hartley was one of the first American Modernist painters. His

abstracted mountains, clouds, cut logs and cactus flow into a powerful, sweeping landscape of visceral curves, personalizing the experience of being present here.

Submitted by Ricki

Dear Fellow Docents,

As most of you are aware, but Sustainers may not be, in the last issue of *La Muse* there was misuse of language in Ricki's article on artist Hank Willis Thomas. Other Docents alerted Lori Mohr, editor of *La Muse*, who then alerted Patsy as Head of the Education Department. The issue worked its way up to the Chair of the SBMA Board of Trustees. Last Friday, I had a constructive meeting with Amada Cruz, Eichholz Foundation Director of SBMA. Here is what came of that meeting.

In this era of social media, AI and cultural sensitivities, we are living in a new reality. As docents we are proud to be the face of the Museum, interacting directly with the public. However, as Museum representatives, we are now also at the forefront of heightened scrutiny. Anything we say or print in our role as docents may reflect badly on the Museum. As Director, Amada is focused on protecting the Museum from misrepresentation that could go viral online, as we have seen happen with other institutions.

To that end, in the interest of heightened security, *La Muse* will now be reviewed by Patsy Hicks Head of the Education Department and by the Director of Communications. To remind you, the SBMA Docent Council is not a 501(C)3 but operates under the umbrella of the Education Department of the Museum. So legally we are not autonomous.



Pattie Firestone
Docent Council
President

It is incumbent upon all of us as ambassadors of the Museum that we are sensitive to our use of language both during public tours and in our publications, as we have been trained to do. Going forward, we will use our best practices while writing for SBMA Docent publications and in emails when we are representing the Museum. At the same time, as in art we teach respect for use of diverse materials, techniques and styles, and so it is that we must also respect diverse tones and styles in personal communications.

Amada Cruz and SBMA Chair of the Board of Trustees Michael Linn will speak to us and take questions at our April 2nd the Docent Council Meeting. Please, give them the respect you would want.

Please note: Lori Mohr will be unable to attend due to her son and daughter-in-law leaving for Spain that day to start their new lives abroad. Ricki Morse, at 95, rarely attends meetings in person anymore. Both appreciate the outpouring of your support and are ready to move on. So please do not read anything into their absence on April 2nd.

I look forward to seeing you at Wednesday's meeting. Thank you for all your support,

Pattie

From our **Vice President**
Cindy Anderson



March Luncheons and Wine and Bites are a Success!

Thanks to our hosts for creating an enjoyable atmosphere in which to meet our Provisional docents and to spend time getting better acquainted with one another. In one get-to-know-you activity, we found out we have a talented and interesting bunch among us—a juggler, a National Champion Baton Twirler, a drill team member who marched in LBJ's inaugural parade, someone whose dream was to be a rock singer, and a person who spent some time in a Peruvian jail for women! I see a talent show in our future! Do you have other fun facts you discovered at your gatherings? Please email them to me at cjndrsn2@aol.com, and I'll share them with the Docent Council soon.



Cindy's appetizers & desserts



L: Debbie Auday, Darcie Burk, Soheyla Valleie, and Gretel Rothrock

I want to express a heartfelt thank you to our hosts:

Shirley Waxman
Pattie Firestone & Greg Farrington
Rachel Stengal & Teda Pilcher
Christine Holland
Mimi Baer & Bobbi Corbin
Laura DePaoli & Denise Klassen (rescheduled Wine & Bites for Thursday, April 10 from 4-6 pm)

(continued)



Larry Rehr, Merle Guadagnini, Thea Van Tonder, Debbie, Auday, Soheyra Valleie, Gretel Rothrock and Gail Stichler



Larry Rehr and Cindy Anderson



Merle, Thea and Gail

Coming up in April

Putting the Pieces Together – April 2nd Docent Council Meeting

We will be coming together during our meeting to hear several docents share how they are touring select pieces of the art currently on view this spring. Our goal is that you come away with new knowledge about a artwork you've toured before, or one that is newly exhibited. We will be sharing techniques and ideas for both adult and student tours from art in the following galleries: Contemporary, Asian, the Elliott Hundley exhibition, and the Ridley-Tree Gallery. I believe it will be a meaningful day.

Chicago Trip – April 27 - May 2

There are 18 people going to Chicago! I'm excited to share my hometown with so many friends who have never been there, or who haven't been back for a long time. I will be sharing photos of our adventures in the next *La Muse*. Thanks for your interest.

From our **Student Teams Co-chairs**
Nicola Ghersen and Ann Marie Dunaway



Happy Spring!

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our dedicated Student Teams Docents. You are the backbone of our program and our community outreach— your hard work and enthusiasm make a significant impact. This month we have 27 groups and are excited to welcome 675 students to our Museum, all thanks to your



commitment to fostering a love for learning and your ability to showcase our ever-evolving exhibitions. Your dedication truly reflects our shared values and the spirit of our docent community. We are grateful to have you as part of this exceptional team!

We will start easing into the new Art Learning Lab as construction finishes. You have all been incredibly flexible during this transition. A big thank you to Molly who orchestrated all the scheduling during this time.

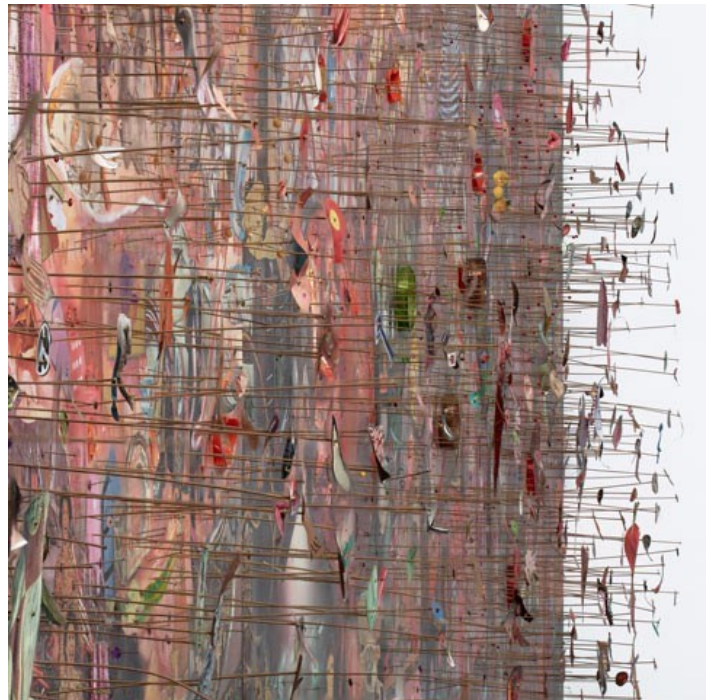
In response to teacher surveys, we found this really nice comment to share this with you all:

"We all enjoyed our time at the museum and I was impressed by the docents' ability to explain and engage the students in the large variety of art pieces they viewed. The docent, Ruben, was particularly kind and helpful with our students! For many of my students, this was their first time visiting the museum and some of them returned with their families this past weekend, thanks to the free passes they were given. Thank you so much for helping us introduce this amazing resource to our school community! The free family passes are a huge bonus!"

We are also thrilled to introduce the new exhibitions, *Math + Art* and *Proscenium: Elliott Hundley*. These pieces will provide rich opportunities for conversation and inspire young minds to explore new perspectives.

Wishing you all a wonderful month at the museum!

Nicola and Anne Marie



L: Fred Eversley, *Untitled*. 1975, cast polyester resin. SBMA. Math + Art; R: Elliott Hundley, *The Plague*, 2016, collage, pins, plastic, foam and linen on panel.

From our **Adult Teams Co-chairs**

Susan Lowe and Elizabeth Russell



Hello Fellow Docents,
Spring is here and perhaps this is reflected in our tour attendance. The March numbers are not complete yet but there appears to be an overall increase from the winter months. Per your recent notations in the Red Book, we are happy to see that docents are not only sweeping the galleries but also interacting with the front desk in their search for visitors who might be interested in their tours.



Going forward into April, this will be an interesting time for touring with the many gallery and exhibition changes, especially Ludington Court. We're guessing that this can be a mixed blessing for many docents, exciting but also a challenge. Don't forget to take the opportunity to observe other docent tours, especially the American European (Modern Life) team and the Elliot Hundley team. Not only will it be a treat to watch these folks in action, but you can also always pick up a pointer or two!

Happy Touring!

Susan and Elizabeth

From our **Evaluations Co-Chairs**

Christine Holland and Laura DePaoli



We are pleased to report that things are humming along on schedule. We will soon begin preparing for the final evaluations of the Provisional Class tours. Thank you to all of our evaluators and to the docents being evaluated for being participants in the process.

Christine Holland and Laura DePaoli



From our **Membership Chair**

Merle Guadagnini



Dear Fellow Docents,
Reporting of volunteer hours is moving along quite well for the month of February, with only a dozen in our council who have not yet reported. I am optimistic that they will do so before the end of March. Thank you to all for your positive attitude in accepting our new electronic submission method of reporting your public and private hours each month. As we look forward to the May Service Awards Ceremony, we are reminded of why reporting these hours is important, marking another step closer to acknowledging these service milestones.

Happy Reporting! *Merle*

From our Provisional Chair

Patty Santiago



In March, the provisional docents shadowed active Student Teams docents on tours during which they presented two works of art. Many thanks to those docents who welcomed their provisionals with role modeling and feedback. The provisional docents enjoyed their experiences and feel ready to put their student touring skills to use this summer. They are also working on what we call their "20 Minute Talk." This new format, about half the time of their final 45-minute *Highlights* tour, offers an additional opportunity for training as they present five art works, including transitions. The provisionals will work in pairs, presenting to each other in the next few weeks. As a class, their confidence is growing as we near the finish line.

Ralph Wilson will be returning to the class with a talk on "American Art" on Wednesday, April 16th. And Elizabeth Russell will be present to the class on "Contemporary Art" on Wednesday, April 30th.

As always, active docents are invited to attend these talks as well.

Patty

Docent Book Club News

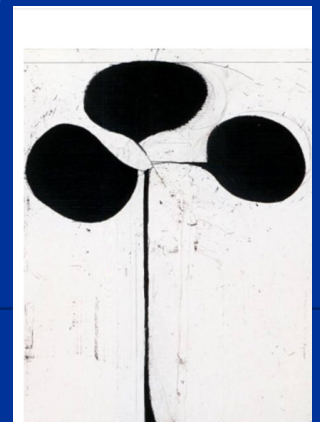
From Gail Stichler



The new date for the next book club is **Monday, May 5**, starting at 10:30am. The book is still *Riven Rock* by T. C. Boyle. The venue has not yet been determined with all the changes happening in and around the FRC. As we get closer, I will announce the location.

For your interest, yesterday I watched a lecture from Fine Arts Museum San Francisco, famsf.org, about artist Wayne Thiebaud. There is currently an exhibition of his work at the Legion of Art in SF until August 17. In the lecture, the very interesting curator explored how Thiebaud was influenced by the great artists of the world—his "confections" or landscapes often based on compositions by other artists. The curator's examples of how Thiebaud used the works of Morandi and Diebenkorn were particularly interesting to me. The lecture can be found on YouTube by searching for: "A Talk on Wayne Thiebaud" on 2/22/25. My guess is you will enjoy this lecture.

Richard Diebenkorn, (American 1922-1993) *Black Club*, 1981, etching, drypoint and aquatint. SBMA



From our **Nominations Chair**
Teda Pilcher



Dear Esteemed Colleagues

It is my great pleasure to present to you the 2025-2026 slate of nominees for the Docent Council Board. After extensive consideration, vetting and offering of positions, the Nominations Committee—President Pattie Firestone, Vice President Cindy Anderson and myself as Nominations Chair—have crafted what we believe to be a thoughtful, dedicated and dynamic slate. At our meeting on April 2nd, nominations from the floor will be considered, and if none are forthcoming, a vote on the slate presented below will be voted on by those Active Docents present at the meeting with a decision made by the majority.

Teda

Nominees for the 2025-2026 Service Year

President: Cindy Anderson (2020)

Student Teams: Debbie Auday (2024)
and Carol Forhnan (2024)

Vice President: Mary Ellen Alden (2020)

Research: Barbara Ross ((2020)

Secretary: Christine Holland (2005)

Evaluations: Mimi Baer (2023)
and Ralph Wilson (2011)

Treasurer: Mary Benedict (2023)

Nominations Chair: Pattie Firestone (2018)
(Role of past President)

Membership: Merle Guadagnini (2020)

Webmaster: Loree Gold (2000)

Adult Teams: Elizabeth Russell (2023)
and Sandy DeRousse (2024)



Debbie Auday 2024



Carol Forhnan 2024



Sandy DeRousse 2024

From our **Research Chair**

Barbara Ross



Congratulations to the members of the provisional class of 2025 as they have completed their research papers. What a wonderful contribution to our docent website! Please look for these papers for intriguing and informative writing to enhance your understanding of the artworks for your tours. Most pieces are currently on view. *Barbara*



Provisional Michelle King, *Le Port De St. Cloud* by Leonard Tsuguharu Foujita



Provisional Ann Kaplan, *Washington Square*, by Edward Hopper



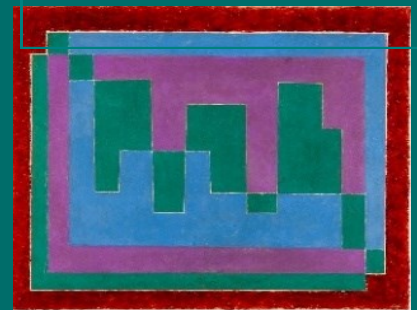
Provisional Nina Sandvik, *Abstraction #22*, by Oskar Fischinger



Provisional Michelle Madril, *Football Painting #2*, by Theophilus Brown



Prov Cyndi Withrow-Aliabadi *Roses, Zinnias, Pinks* by Victoria Fantin-Latour



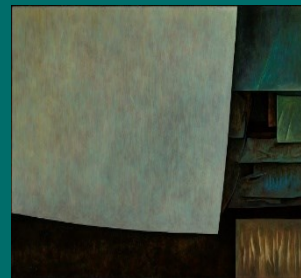
Provisional Natalie Ng, *Mirage (A)*, by Josef Albers



Provisional Gretchen Hewlett *Inner Voice* by August Rodin



Prov Tish O'Connor, *Scenic Views of Wakanoura and Itsukushima Shrines*, by Unknown



Prov Soheyla Valleie, *Le temp mange la vie*, by Gunther Gerzso



Prov Susie Thum, *Family Portrait* by Dorr Bothwell

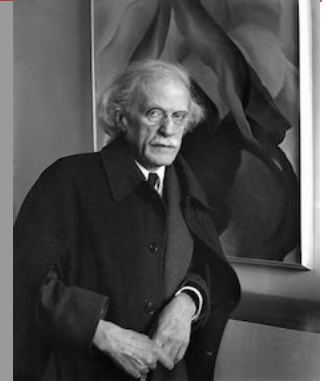
Thank you, Barbara and Provisional class for these valuable additions to our docent archives. LM

American Modernism: Imagined on Fifth Avenue, Actualized in New Mexico: Stieglitz, O'Keeffe, Hartley

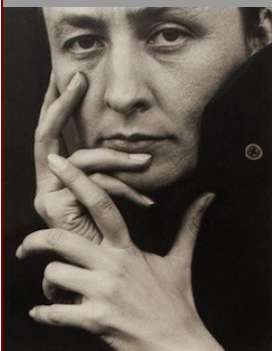
By Ricki Morse



Alfred Stieglitz (1844-1946) was the father of photography as an art form, founder in 1902 of the Photo-Secessionists, devoted to promoting the fine art of photography through his publication, *Camera Work*. He was the gallerist who first brought contemporary European art to his 291 *Fifth Avenue* gallery, hoping to provide the impetus for a new American Modernism. He often showed unknown American artists from Marsden Hartley in 1909 (which funded Hartley's first trip to Europe) to Georgia O'Keeffe in 1916. A colleague had shown Stieglitz charcoal drawings by O'Keeffe, which he immediately displayed in the gallery (her first show). The ensuing correspondence developed into a friendship with O'Keeffe who was teaching art in Texas. Their letters, some were 40 pages long, led to her move to New York. She became his muse, the subject of over 300 photographs. They married in 1924, an enduring relationship which continued throughout his life, though she later returned to live in New Mexico.



Imogen Cunningham, *Portrait of Alfred Stieglitz* 1934, MetMA.



Alfred Stieglitz, *Portrait of Georgia O'Keeffe*, 1949, MetMA.

Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986) was born in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, to a farming family, one of four children. She and one sister began painting early, developing a very competitive relationship which fueled their work. She attended Teacher's College, Columbia University in 1914-15, supporting her painting by teaching art while her landscapes gained a supple, visceral strength. After her first visit to New Mexico in 1929, her paintings of NYC skyscrapers were replaced by New Mexican landscapes. Her collection of bleached bones enhanced the bodily curves of the desert and added a new vocabulary to her evolving geometric abstraction. For twenty years she summered in New Mexico and in 1949 moved to her desert property and studio in Abiquiu, north of Santa Fe.



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Evening Star #6*, 1917, watercolor, MoMA.



Left: *A Celebration*, Georgia O'Keeffe, 1924, oil on canvas, Seattle Art Museum; middle: Georgia O'Keeffe, *Pedernal From the Ranch #1*, 1956, Minneapolis Museum; right: Georgia O'Keeffe, *Black Mesa Landscape, New Mexico, Out of Marie's II*, 1930, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum.

Marsden Hartley's loneliness and intensity are captured in Alfred Stieglitz's portrait of him. Born Edmund Hartley in 1877 to English immigrant parents, the youngest of nine



Alfred Stieglitz, *Marsden Hartley Portrait*, photograph, 1916, MetMA.

children, his mother died when he was eight years old and he was sent to live with an older sister in Auburn, Maine. He writes, "I was to know complete isolation from that moment forward." His father remarried and most of the family moved to Ohio, leaving him alone at 15 where he found work in a shoe factory, and adopted his stepmother's maiden name, Marsden, as his own, hoping to find a place in the new family.

He found solace in nature and in the writings of American transcendentalists, particularly Ralph Waldo Emerson. In 1893 he joined the family in Ohio and began studies at Cleveland School of Art where one of



Marsden Hartley, *Storm Clouds, Maine*, 1907, oil on canvas, Walker Art Center

the trustees recognized his talent and gave him a five-year stipend to study with the artist William Merritt Chase in New York at The National Academy of Design.

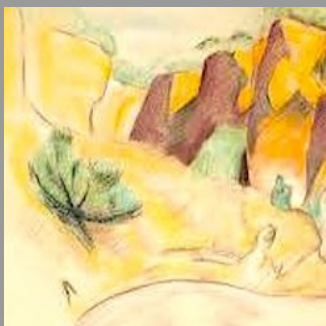
He met Alfred Stieglitz in 291 Gallery in 1909. Following their first meeting Stieglitz immediately offered Hartley an exhibition at Gallery 291, where the most avant-garde European and American artists made their American debuts. The show consisted of thirty-three landscapes of Maine.

Stieglitz became the mentor and supporter Hartley had never had, a role native to Stieglitz who, as the center of the Stieglitz Circle, inspired, exhibited, and tutored a generation of American artists. Throughout Hartley's travels in Europe and his return home, he shipped each completed canvas to Stieglitz. It was Stieglitz who encouraged Hartley's move to New Mexico, and it was this experience which completed the artist's realization of his role in American Modernism.



Marsden Hartley, *Maine Landscape, Autumn #13*, 1909, oil on board, Crystal Bridges Museum of Art

We are incredibly fortunate to have a late Marsden Hartley in our collection, a gift from Mrs. Sterling Morton, collector, Museum trustee, benefactress extraordinaire. Spending time before this remarkable painting and soaking it in provides a complete experience of American Modernism. The artist celebrates the power of the mountain and his own experience of that presence by abstracting the planes of the slopes into separate, fresh realities,



Marsden Hartley, *The Little Arroyo, Taos*, 1918, pastel on board, private collection.

allowing the mountain to assume a personal existence for the viewer. The sweeping visceral curves give the mountain a kinship with the human body and reflect the interconnectedness of our universe, a calming, expanding, personal experience of wholeness. We feel the mountain, sharing the artist's intimate involvement with the developing image as it emerged from his brush. In that moment we join every viewer who has stood before the painting and experienced those feelings.



Marsden Hartley, *Alpspizze-Mittenwald Road*, 1933-34, oil on paperboard, SBMA



The Last Page



Members of the Docent Class of 2020 gathered for a 5-year reunion. From left: Susan Lowe, Anne Marie Dunaway, Kathe Hines, Mary Ellen Alden, Ralph Wilson, their teacher, Merle Guadagnini, Barbara Ross, and Tommie Rae Barnett. Missing: Cindy Anderson and Kim-Carr Howard

Luke 9/15/2013 — 3/13/2025



Lori Mohr, Editor 2009—
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