

La Muse

Docent Dates

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*Docent Council
Meets Wed 9/19*

*Book Club Meets
Monday 9/24*

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*All images
selected
by the editor.*



*Brian Bress, Still from **Creative Ideas for Every Season***

Dear docents,

There are many things I appreciate about our docent program, not the least of which is summer break. That doesn't mean docents aren't touring — we have our newest members hard at work — as well as those on special exhibition teams. And then there are docents we don't see, those working behind the scenes in preparation for our upcoming service year. But because touring the Santa Barbara school district is our most important contribution to the museum, it's nice having the added benefit of that agrarian-based break. As we look toward September, I always get that wonderful feeling of anticipation surrounding the new docent year. And, as you will see in the following pages, it may be summer break, but docents are never far from a museum.

In this issue, we have updates on touring from five of our new docents. Also, Loree Gold has an inspiring note from one particularly gratifying tour. Amanda McIntyre shares her experience at the University of Oxford, and Cynthia Schoustra offers a recap of the Cleopatra exhibition at the California Science Center.

As you are all very sadly aware, this summer has brought the loss of our beloved Laura Creasy. Her husband, Jon Lipsitz, has been kind enough to share two beautiful photos and a message in her memory.



*Lori Mohr,
Editor*



Summer Love on a Terrific Tuesday

By Loree Gold



I arrived at the museum for my Tuesday tour and *swept* in from the back door, hoping to find a few eager observers for Vantage Points: *Behind the Wheel*.

As I approached visitors with a smile on my face to inform them of the big event, a free noon tour, I did my best to entice them to join me, as opposed to begging them to follow. We have all had the slow days or the no-show days and I was truly hoping for at least a small group.

One by one, I found a few interested visitors, a few waiting just for the tour, and a power couple – a docent and her husband. During the introduction I always ask where our visitors have come from and how did they hear about the tour. The lovely Ann Robinson had brought her husband Carl, and the banners outside, as well as the brochure, had helped the front desk

inform out-of-towners.

And then, to my delight, the answer I was least expecting: A single woman tells us she is a member of the museum and especially enjoys joining the docent-led tours whenever she can. “All of them are interesting, no two are ever alike, and I always learn something different”. She continued to tell us that she even enjoyed touring the same exhibition or themes multiple times because each docent offers such a different variety of images, information and point of view. Her remarks immediately energized everyone with anticipation, and she continued to be enthusiastic throughout my tour, adding comments and life to our small group of seven.

Of course, I have to agree with her comments, for they are all the reasons that I have enjoyed being part of the SBMA Docent Council. This is my twelfth summer touring and its visitors like these that keep me coming back. However, it’s the Docent Council and our museum that keeps me informed, enriched, and enlightened.

With respect and regards to all,
Loree Gold



This work was installed on June 26, 2012, after a journey by truck from Riverside, through Long Beach, to Wilshire Blvd and LACMA.

From LACMA web site: "Levitated Mass by artist Michael Heizer is composed of a 456-foot-long slot constructed on LACMA's campus, over which is placed a 340-ton granite megalith. The slot gradually descends to fifteen feet in depth, running underneath the boulder. As with other works by the artist, such as *Double Negative* (1969), the monumental negative form is key to the experience of the artwork."

Submitted by Ricki Morse

2012-2013 SBMA BOOK CLUB



Sue Billig

Two New Books: "Van Gogh: a Life"

by Steven Naifeh and Gregory W. Smith

"Sacre Bleu" by Christopher Moore

We still have time to read the new Van Gogh bio before the next SBMA Book Club meeting. If the 868 pages are too daunting, Christopher Moore has written a new light-hearted story with a comical theory of where artists get their inspiration.

"Van Gogh; a Life" by Steven Naifeh and Gregory W. Smith have written a detailed, compelling, and ultimately heartbreaking portrait of Vincent Van Gogh's genius.

The authors had new access to a wealth of previously untapped materials, including Vincent's illustrated letters of unpublished family correspondences. The theme of loneliness and misunderstanding runs through all of his life without support from family or friend.

Most biographies concentrate on his last 4 years. These authors propose new interpretations of Vincent's life and his inspiration, and covering his days before he moved to Arles. With a new tone of negativism, some blanks in his life are filled in, but the

book presents many more questions.

Art saint, sensitive victim or manipulating moocher?

The authors propose a revised scenario of his death. Did he commit suicide? Or was he shot by a local bully? Can we know the facts?

Christopher Moore's book, "Sacre Bleu" also questions how Van Gogh could have shot himself, then walked a mile to Dr Gachet's house. The book is a mystery, a love story, and an investigation into the role the pigment Ultramarine Blue plays in the Impressionist's lives and work. Moore proposes a wild theory to explain the source of creativity for artists from the beginning of civilized man.

Henri Toulouse-Lautrec and a fictional baker, who desires to paint great art, act as innocent sleuths. Moore creates vaudeville-like dialogue to personalize each of the artists like Pissarro, Manet, Renoir, Whistler, and Gauguin.

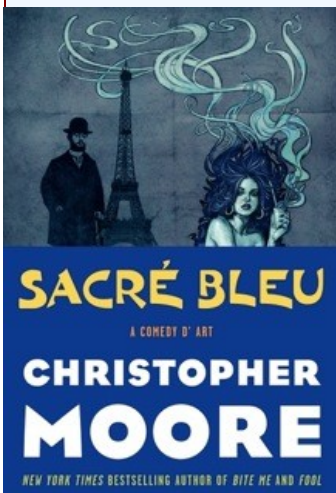
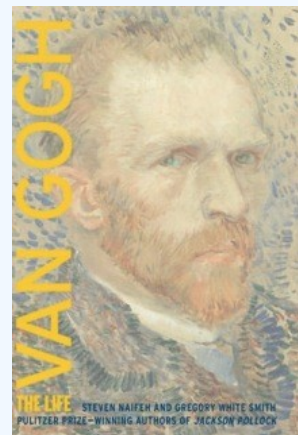
When Moore selects a subject to lampoon (Shakespeare, Santa Claus) he thoroughly researches his subjects. With our knowledge of artist biographies, we may recognize truths or be fooled by the biography he creates.

All Docents are welcome to the SBMA BOOK CLUB.

Next Meeting **Monday Sept 24 1:30**

Susan Billig's house 1693 Franceschi Rd

RSVP to 956-9505 suebillig@gmail.com



Letter from Oxford

By Amanda McIntyre, reporting from London



Prior to arriving in Oxford for my three weeks study course at Merton College at the University of Oxford, I spent 4 full days in London visiting 8 museums and exhibitions. The Olympic crowds had begun to amass and tube transportation was often very crowded, but each day was special despite the occasional drizzle. The best part is that almost all museums are FREE...but there is an 8 – 13 pound charge for the special exhibitions (calculated at 1.60 USD to the pound; remember most of these shows are organized with the Olympics in mind.



Merton College



BALLGOWNS: BRITISH GLAMOUR SINCE 1950

The Victoria & Albert Museum -newly scrubbed and refurbished - mounted a delicious display of " Ballgowns: British Glamour Since 1950" and a huge exhibit of "British Design 1948-2012"(took 2 hours to tour). One of the fun parts was the whirly-top chairs in the courtyard-sitting and rolling about in one made one feel like a child again.

The Saatchi Gallery – just off Kings Road – is very all-white modern inside an old barracks-a fine example of not disturbing old architecture but providing contemporary space for cutting edge art. Google has sponsored a competition worldwide for photography – 10 artists were selected and each showed about 8 - 10 images. There were also a few rooms of Mr. Saatchi's own collection of 21st century art, including an entire room with a receptacle filled with oil.

At the National Gallery the special exhibit was "Metamorphosis: Titian 2012, which brings together a group of specially commissioned works responding to three of Titian's paintings – *Diana and Actaeon* , *The Death of Actaeon* and the recently acquired *Diana and Callisto* – which depict stories from Ovid's epic poem 'Metamorphoses'. The three paintings, which really are the heart of the exhibition, are together for the first time since the 18th century. Contemporary artists Chris Ofili, Conrad Shawcross and Mark Wallinger have created new work for the exhibition, which includes set designs and costumes for three new ballets at The Royal Opera House, and shows how they have responded to Titian's masterpieces. The show is apparently a unique collaboration between the Royal ballet and The Museum.



Saatchi Gallery



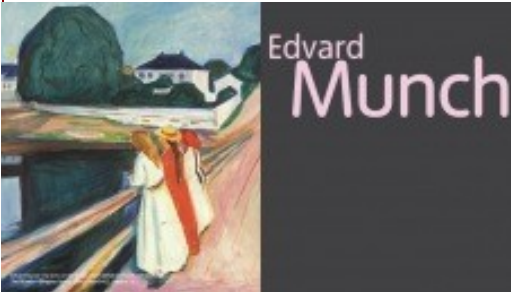
National gallery



My personal favorite was the Queens Gallery on the side of the Palace. The crown owns Leonardo da Vinci's notebook - it has been separated into single pages, reproduced and displayed superbly — hung on the green brocade walls or in glass double-sided cases. His exploration of man's anatomy was so innovative for his time.



On the last day, it's off to the Tate Modern across Millenium



Bridge and into the turbine hall. It was empty of any HUGE installation (because they are about to open three tanks for performance spaces). Up the escalator to Edvard Munch's Modern Eye —99% from the Munch Museum in Oslo. There were self-portraits and photographs, his life in oil, sketches and photos, illustrating his sexual confusion and aloneness in life — all rather dismal, sad and off-putting.

The Summer Show at the Royal Academy was much more cheerful - 1200 works of art —oil, prints and a few sculptures selected from over 15,000 entries hung salon style, bright palettes and innovative designs, many red dots on some print pieces making many the artist happy. The winner from among all of these Royal Academy members, up- and- coming new and mid-career artists was Anselm Kiefer ! He is already well-known enough — his piece was echoing Middle East conflicts with a gun mounted on the canvas.

Lastly, we visited the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. After a two year remodel 100,000 feet of additional gallery space has been added, a smashing roof-top restaurant and fine gift shop . Spied a Vermeer (on loan), a favorite Frans Hals and some work by Jenny Saville reinterpreting of mother and child after works by Leonardo and Raphael. The main exhibit was "Capture of the Westmoreland." A ship with 50 crates of many "Grand Tour" participants' collections to adorn their estates was captured by the French, sold to the Spanish and little was recovered or returned. It's interestingly displayed on packing crates with the explanations on shipping labels. Among the shipments were supplies of olive oil, anchovies and parmesan cheese - very in vogue and desired by the British.



We left London —slightly sore feet but minds and memory filled with splendid images to remember. Next time I'll get to the British Museum to view the Elgin marbles and hopefully the Wallace Collection. Impossible to view everything so I always leave some venue to explore next time.



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Linda Adams

One gentleman from NYC said, "Flawless transitions." Another visitor, a lady, commented, "I will always look more closely at Chinese screens; I never really paid attention before."



Barbara Boyd

What fun I had at the museum today. It was truly an example that art transcends borders and languages. We had a group of Chinese-speaking students and not enough translators, so I elected to tour without one.



Francis Hallinan

MY tours so far have been small, 1-3 people only. I have really enjoyed that as the tour becomes a bit more like a discussion than a lecture. Everyone has been complimentary about the museum. ArtVenture Camp students have been great! Very verbal and articulate.

I asked them what they wanted to see and some said immediately "Chinese!", and others wanted to see European, Ancient Greece and Rome and American also. So we went everywhere. I used few and simple words but would say French or German or Roman etc. and describe a bit who or what it was. They seemed to love the Chinese silk robe and immediately pointed to it and said that the Emperor would wear it.

They took pictures (no flash, of course) of everything as if their lives depended on it, as if they were saving it up for a time when they could consider it at their leisure, on a big screen, and probably in Chinese!

They were very enthusiastic and participated a great deal. The most amazing moment came when we approached the painting *Mirror Lake: Yosemite Valley*. One of the girls pointed to it and said, "It's China!" She was quite excited about it. Turns out that there is a place that looks just like that about two hours drive from her city in the northeast of China. Just goes to show how small our world really is.

The students were a delight.



Mike Ramey

I was surprised to find myself receiving occasional compliments from the guards after my tours. It struck me as very thoughtful of them to have noticed there was a new docent in the house. After all, I was so focused on what I was doing that I hadn't paid any attention to them. But it all took on more meaning one day when one of the guards casually mentioned that he held a degree in Art History.



Joan Dewhurst

I have given 2 tours so far and have been so LUCKY! I had one couple on the first tour and they were so interested that we spent over an hour together. They were especially curious about the Chinese Robe, as they had just returned from China. (Thanks to Queenie, I was prepared with details). The 2nd tour was one young woman, a visitor to SB. This gal was just terrific! She had come specifically for the Highlights Tour. I was delighted because the museum was quiet. My visitor was an intent listener and had excellent questions, too. At the end of my tour, she wanted more (!) so we looked at several of the Brian Bress pieces. This was completely extemporaneous; I was so glad I had been on the walk-through. Time just zoomed by....about 75 minutes. She had a great time and I did, too. I'm looking forward to my next Highlights.....though I probably won't always be this lucky getting such enthusiastic visitors!

Cleopatra Exhibit at California Science Center

By Cynthia Schoustra



If you are in the L.A. area sometime soon you might consider visiting the exhibit on Cleopatra at the California Science Center (across from USC). Even if you are quite familiar with the reign of Cleopatra this exhibit reveals what has been recently discovered through the work of Franck Goddio. A former financial advisor, Goddio has pursued his true passion of underwater archaeology with experts in various fields.

Working with the Egyptian government, his team has discovered ancient Alexandria and two cities submerged underwater at the mouth of the Nile. It appears that people fled Alexandria in a hurry possibly due to a natural disaster. Many

valuable artifacts have been recovered in their entirety. The exhibit begins with a short film about the discovery; viewers then

continue on a journey which combines interesting facts about Cleopatra's life with relics that she possibly used.

If this is an area of interest, you'll definitely want to see this. The exhibit takes about an hour and a half to complete; in addition they have an Imax movie on Egypt that focuses primarily on the discovery of King Tut.

Interesting facts: 1) Cleopatra was the last of the Ptolemaic rulers (established by Alexander the Great) and was the only one who spoke Egyptian; 2) The Egyptian calendar consisted of 365 days denoted by 36 squares — each ten day period was called a decade; 3) In order to gain the trust of Egyptians, the Egyptian god Osiris was combined with the Greek god Apis, which resulted in Sarapis. Deities took human form but with animal heads.

The offering table and other religious artifacts possibly used by Cleopatra are on display. The world's first astrological chart is shown as well as bronze coins and items of jewelry. The quantity and condition of the antiquities found in this undertaking captured everyone.





Hello. I am sorry that I can not reach out to each of you individually. It is with great sadness that I let you know that my loving wife Laura passed away. Thank you for the love and friendship you have shown Laura over the years and for the support you have provided her during the last 18 months as she struggled with cancer.

Please celebrate Laura's life by reading below a very brief description of her life and a photo of Laura taken at our wedding ceremony in Zanzibar in 2006.

Thank you, -jonathan

Laura Joyce Creasey
1971 – 2012



Laura Creasey passed away quietly on July 7th, 2012 after a brave struggle against cancer. Laura was born in Newton, Massachusetts in 1971. Although her life was short, she did more and saw more in her 41 years than most people do in twice that time.

She had a great love for travelling, art, learning, and wine. On many adventures around the world, Laura explored new cultures, saw beautiful sites, and made fascinating friends. Laura was a docent at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art where she shared the joy of art with area school children. Laura will be remembered for her elegance, quick wit, beauty, curiosity, compassion, and exuberance for life. She will be terribly missed by her parents Dan and Carolyn Creasey, her two cats Sam and Max, and of course by her loving husband and best friend Jonathan Lipsitz. Laura now embarks on her final adventure!



Deborah Borrowdale-Cox and Genevive. Deborah was the SBMA Director of Education from the late 1980s to the late 1990s.

Dear Docents,
 A huge "Hello" from Deborah Borrowdale-Cox, who is touring Southern California colleges with her daughter Genevive, currently a high school senior in Kentucky where Peter has his internal medicine practice and Deborah is Director of Education at the University of Kentucky Museum of Art. We remember Genevive as the baby who put Deborah on 5 months of bed rest prior to her arrival. She is now a gorgeous, talented young woman, a singer, an equestrian — obviously wonderfully worth the downtime. During her visit here, Deborah visited the Museum and said she felt our permanent collection "welcomed her home." She loved the *Portrayal, Betrayal* show and wants to bring it to University of Kentucky.

Warmest,
 Ricki



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Comments? Suggestions?
Mohrojai@aol.com

Lori Mohr, Editor

