

## Docent Dates

### April 3

Bus Trip  
8:15

### April 8

Book Group  
Irene's Home

### April 17

Efrem Ostrow  
Endowed Lecture:  
Laurie Monahan,  
*Impressionists and  
the Dreyfus Affair*;  
Mike Ramey,  
New Active  
Docent, Research  
Presentation

### May 7

3:30 Information  
event for prospec-  
tive provisional  
class.

### June 7

Graduation and  
Recognition  
ceremony

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**Portrait of  
Mademoiselle  
Martha  
Hoskier, 1869**  
Oil on canvas

**Adolphe-  
William  
Bouguereau**  
French,  
1825-1905

Gift of Joanne and  
Andrall Pearson  
2011.12

Spring is in the air and it is time to look forward to renewal and growth. The Docent Council has many things happening and many in the planning process. The new website is up and running and will be updated and refined as we go; the provisional class will become New Active Docents in June; family tours will be added to our schedule this summer; the very successful Ten Talks will be ongoing; Senior Outreach will continue meeting community needs; a new provisional class will be recruited; and in June, the new board will begin laying groundwork for the upcoming year.

The provisional class is comprised of dedicated, talented individuals who will be vibrant additions to the Docent Council this summer. They have successfully completed their Three and Eight Minute Talks, as well as their student tours. In April, they will complete research papers and begin the planning process for their 45 minute presentations



Kathryn Padgett

scheduled for May 23<sup>rd</sup>. I encourage you to offer your assistance to our nine provisionals in passing this major milestone.

Thank you to the hosts and hostesses of our provisional luncheons for opening their homes to all of us as a way of meeting individual provisionals in a small group setting. Those who have attended these luncheons have enjoyed the camaraderie and good food, while welcoming the newcomers to our Council.

The overall health and vibrancy of the Docent Council depends on our ability to infuse new talent each year. With that in mind, the Provisional Recruitment Tea is scheduled for 3:30 on Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. You are most frequently our best recruiters for new class members, so please let your friends, acquaintances, and tour attendees know about this informative event.

We look forward to welcoming another capable class next year!

There will be no meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup> so we can enjoy the bus trip to Los Angeles. Vikki has organized a full day experiencing the arts. For those of you who've not yet seen the tapestries in the Cathedral of our Lady of the Angels, this is your chance. The Ojai artist who created them, John Nava, was a guest lecturer for our council a few years ago. His journey in this artistic endeavor offers added insight.

This year has sped by; there are only three Docent Council meetings before the June 7<sup>th</sup> Graduation! Please make plans to attend this festive and celebratory occasion.

Happy Spring!

*Kathryn*



## Message from Vice President Vikki Duncan



Dear Docents,

*The Girl with a Pearl Earring* did not disappoint. Relating what several San Francisco travelers told me, and looking back at our March trip, I recall the luminous face and the openness of the expression of the young woman with that storied pearl. She stays with you. In addition to viewing this choice Vermeer work and others by Rembrandt and his 17<sup>th</sup> Century contemporaries, all of us on the trip visited museums, new destinations, and favorite San Francisco spots, reconnecting with docent friends.

Now, we have two art outings ahead of us. Our April 3 bus trip to Los Angeles begins with a private tour of Pre-Columbian, Latin American and Mexican-American art at the Vincent Price Art Museum at East Los Angeles College. The Siqueiros mural on Olvera Street, lunch, and an art and architecture tour of The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels complete the day. Space is available for docents and guests. See our website home page: <http://docentssbma.org/wordpress/> for the itinerary and details, and email me <vikki.duncan@verizon.net to sign up and to ask any questions.

On Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, at 10 AM, the sheaves of a Baroque garden and more will be pulled from the prints archive of the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum for us by Linda Miller, Curator of the John

and Peggy Maximus Gallery. This will be a close-up viewing of early 17th Century interest in science illustrated with the fluidity of a master draughtman's hand in a royal commission by the Prince Bishop of Eichstätt. Space is limited due to the size of the archive. Contact Paul Guido [guipa@aol.com](mailto:guipa@aol.com) to confirm participation.

Also remember our important annual events later this spring. The Adele Nachman Memorial Lecture (endowed by Efrem Ostrow), and Singh Memorial Lecture (endowed by Sneh Singh in memory of her husband) will be delivered at the Docent Council Meetings in May. There will be further announcements for both these lectures. I encourage you to plan to be present for these talks so generously benefiting us. The Provisional Recruitment Event is scheduled on May 7th at 3:30 PM in the Mary Craig Auditorium. The public program introduces friends and community members to the Docent Council. Please continue your valuable recruiting and plan to attend the reception at 4:30 PM to talk with prospective docents about the joy of being part of our engaged community. Then, at the Graduation and Service Awards ceremony on June 7th, at 5:30 in the Mary Craig Auditorium, we will recognize our 2013 Provisionals becoming New Active Docents, and celebrate the 5, 10, 15, and more year anniversaries of docents' service and special contributions to the Council and the Museum.

A generous, unfolding spring to all.

Vikki

## Student Touring



Ann Robinson  
Student Teams Chair

An appeal by an elementary school requesting a focus on California landscapes brought out the best in docent council. When Rachael contacted the California Plein Air team members and described the teacher's request, it was quickly decided that members of the team would be present during the student tour.

Stations were arranged and the teachers and students received an in depth look at California landscapes. What a terrific idea and one that I hope we can build on; using the expertise that is developed in focus teams can enhance our student tours.

Thanks to Paul Guido, Doug Mc Elwain and Nyna Mahan for presenting the students with a deeper understanding of California artists and the natural beauty of this state.



Colin Campbell Cooper, *California State Building, San Diego Exposition, 1916*, Oil on Canvas, SBMA. Gift of the family of the artist.

By Molora Vadnais and Laura DePaoli, Co-chairs, Adult Teams



Molora Vadnais

February was an average month for Adult Teams. We had two special request tours. Docents toured 80 new museum members on the American, European, Asian, and California Plein Air exhibits and toured 8 people on Danny Lyon and Myth and Materiality. Seven tours had no visitors. Unfortunately, again this month, a docent forgot a tour. Please be sure to check your calendars frequently.



Laura DePaoli

Please call or email the adult teams coordinators or your

team leader if you have any questions about when you are supposed to tour. Please find a back up team member to be your reminder buddy if you think you may forget a tour due to your travel schedule or other personal issues. We must reduce the number of missed tours. The docent council board is working on setting up an email reminder system but ultimately, it is each docent's responsibility to be on time, be prepared, and be there. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

The 5:10 experiment for Ten Talks is complete and the overwhelming evidence is that the 6:10 and 7:10 format produces the most visitors. Sometimes the 7:10 tour is swamped with visitors and sometimes the museum is completely empty by 7:00 p.m. So far, we have found no reason for this phenomenon. Ten Talk veteran Linda Adams has graciously agreed to become Ten Talk team leader from May through September. She will be calling for volunteers at the next docent council meeting. Meanwhile, if you are interested in being on the team, you can contact Linda to get your name on the list right now. Even if all the current team members continue touring, we will still need to enlarge the team so please consider signing up for this wonderful opportunity. After all, it is only a two night commitment.

Tour	Weekday Visitors	Saturday Visitors	Sunday Visitors
<b>Highlights</b>	3.18	5	N/A
<b>American</b>	3.66	15	12
<b>Asian</b>	4	N/A	12
<b>European</b>	5	10	12
<b>Plein Air</b>	8.4	4	13.75
<b>Danny Lyon</b>	6	N/A	5
<b>Myth and Materiality</b>	24	12	15
<b>Ten talks</b>	5:10PM 8 6:10PM 10.25	N/A	19.75

By Molora Vadnais

The lararium's slow renovation is almost complete. The most exciting change is the replacement of the old paper domus with a beautiful new wooden model built by Claus Stapelmann and painted by the museum's own Susan Griffin. This little house is a true labor of love.

In addition, the Rozca bronzes have been culled to remove pieces that were of suspect authenticity and pieces that were too fragile for handling. Andrea Gallo is making an identification and explanation card for each piece geared to middle school aged children (and the distracted docent who just can't remember the purpose of a herm).

Various docents have added 8 x 10" laminated photographs of real lararia, lares, Roman toilets, and bullas. And, finally, all the materials needed to make a daily offering with students are together in their own place. In September, members of student touring teams will have the opportunity to be trained in the lararium. The goal is to have at least one member of each student touring team comfortable in presenting the lararium.

Many thanks to everyone who has participated in both small ways and large to this endeavor. The lararium is now permanently kept by the old stairs up to the Asian gallery. Please take a few minutes to turn it around and take a look inside.

*Molora*



## THE SBMA BOOK GROUP

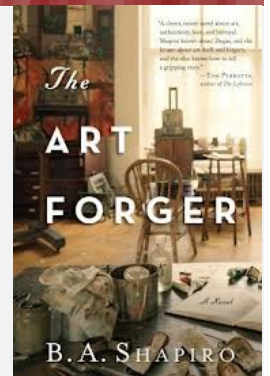


Sue Billig

The Book Group will have it's last meeting for 2012-1013 on Monday, April 2 at 1:30, discussing "The Art Forger" by Barbara (B A) Shapiro.

Artist Claire Roth must paint a copy of Degas' "After the Bath", one of the paintings stolen from Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Claire's friend works at the Gardner giving her, and us, an insider's view of how the quirky museum works. In the latest news, the FBI has just announced they know who stole the 13 paintings 23 years ago.

Don't we hope the paintings will be returned in time for us to see them on our trip to Boston?



Monday, April 8, 1:30

Irene Stone's House 2035 Las Tunas Road Please RSVP to Irene 962-7496

[Famstone5@gmail.com](mailto:Famstone5@gmail.com)



Irene Stone  
Nominations Chair

As announced at the March 20 Docent Council meeting, the Nominations Committee has proposed the following slate of officers for the 2013-2014 Docent Council Board:

(The election of the officers will be made by majority vote at the **May 1** Docent Council meeting).

President - Vikki Duncan

Vice President - Molora Vadnais

Secretary - Joan Dewhirst

Treasurer - Ralph Wilson

Membership - Gail Stichler

Adult Teams - Christine Holland and Mary Eckhart

Student Teams - Ann Robinson and Sylvia Mabee

Provisional Chairs - Kathryn Padgett and Mary Ellen Hoffman

Research Chair - Barbara Boyd

Evaluations - Paul Guido

Past President and Nominations Chair - Kathryn Padgett

Webmaster - Mike Ramey

La Muse Editor - Lori Mohr.

We thank all who considered serving on the Docent Council Board. We know that our many dedicated volunteers - in so many different capacities - are vital to an effective Docent Council.

Irene

By Josie Martin



August 2004, San Miguel de Allende. We are staying at a modest casita in the heart of this enchanting 16<sup>th</sup> Century town where every old rusty gate and doorway opens to a surprise. Whether to a tiny tropical garden, or a splendidly landscaped motor court of a five star hotel, or a swimming pool overlooking the patchwork of colonial rooftops of this UN Heritage site.

Our casitas' principal charm is the view of the spires of La Parochia, the 18<sup>th</sup> Century church with its churrigueresque façade that is the hallmark of the San Miguel skyline. That and the silent Magdalena who comes in daily with a big bunch of wild flowers that she quietly places in a black Oaxacan pot on the rustic coffee table in the "salon." From the very first, Magdalena, looking too much like the weeping woman in the SBMA's Siqueiros, made it clear she was there to serve, not to schmooze. Dutifully she changes the sheets every other day and washes them by hand at the cold water stone basin downstairs. I implore her "no es necessitas, Senora...una vez la semana sufficientemente."

It's to no avail. The fragrant sun-dried sheets reappear on our hard and rigid mattress that same night. Ed teases, "I'll expect the same when we get back home."

It's our first visit, I am in a state of thrilled immersion. I only speak "playground Spanish" from my many years working in the Los Angeles Unified School District where more than 85% of all students' first language was Espanol, but somehow I can understand most of what I hear in the wonderful restaurants and cafes. And if I misunderstand, it doesn't matter because whatever dish they bring, it is beautifully prepared and delicioso. Ed is a good sport about it all. He's more concerned that in my state of delirious wanderings I'll trip on the steep cobblestoned streets than whether we end up with horchata instead of the cerveza he had ordered.

We walk, we shop, we ogle, we take the Sunday Tour to the fabulous homes, Casa Midy, the Tung house, one designed by Sebastian Zavala, and at least two more whose names I've forgotten. It costs about twenty dollars per person and goes entirely to fund the wonderful children's bi-lingual library, the best in all of Central America we are told, which only adds to my thrill.

We take a day-trip to Guanajuatos where we visit Diego Rivera's childhood home and the spectacular Teatro Juarez crowned with bronze figures of the muses. But it is the Art Nouveau smoking lounge and lobby that capture my cigar-smoking husband's attention. "Let's add one of those to our own Villa Anteros," he quips. Certainly it rivals the gravel alley below our house to which I banish him when he lights up his afternoon cheroot.

We pack in every possibility during our two-week stay, including visiting a store-front synagogue that my friend, the artist Erika Kahn, recommended. I stay for the Saturday morning service where the first Bat Mitzvah in several decades is conducted. There is something very



emotional about hearing the ancient tropes and benedictions chanted by a 13 year old girl in Spanish/ Hebrew.

Ed in the meantime has gone off on his own. I locate him in an artisan shop where he has just purchased a stunning Katrina Doll. She's about 36" tall, intricately decorated until - until I look up at her face. "Holy Mother! She spooks me out! she can't come to live in our house!"

"I'll put her in my office" he replies tersely and with that *don't mess with me* look. The clerk adopts an Archaic-Mayan smile, and unbeknown to me, speaks English, probably understood every outraged word. He turns away as I quietly sneak out of the shop, semi-mortified. I hope it's not the first Gringo disagreement he has ever witnessed. Ed finishes the negotiations.

"How will you get Katrina home? She must weigh 30 pounds, too fragile with those skeletal fingers and that crenelated crown..." I ask when he comes out. "Calm down, it'll be shipped..." the protest would have continued but we come to Galleria Cline Barrera around the corner on Zacateros Street.

A fine Tamayo print and some contemporary works sit in the large window. I go in. The rest of the art is o.k. but the kind that would look better in hotel lobbies than our house. The friendly owner is an American expat who has lived here for half of his life. I'm discouraged because this is our second to last day in San Miguel. I'd so hoped to find something special to hang in our entry hall. Ed wanders toward the back.

Suddenly I notice a terrific framed drawing, perhaps 12x 15. Could it be a Picasso with its horned creatures spewing fumes and sporting cubic tails? It's partly an ink wash of blacks, greys and taupe, the central figure has an oval red mouth with sharp jagged teeth, but its eyes are mischievous against the white face spotted with globs of green. Is it a cheerful relative to the Katrina doll or to one of Picasso's raging bulls? Maybe closer to Santaria figures, but with a kind of tongue in teeth goofiness.

Ed comes over. "I saw it earlier too, but it's not a Picasso... I can't make out the signature." He wonders how much it would go for. Mr. Cline or Mr. Barrera is alert now, noticing our interest.

"That's Wilfredo Lam, we've had it for long time. I picked it up when I was in Cuba back in the 70's,"

I can't hide my enthusiasm. "A real Wilfredo Lam drawing?" Ed glares at me. I know, I know. You're not supposed to look too eager. "Sorry," I mouth silently, but then, we probably couldn't afford it anyway. After all, Wilfredo Lam's "Casting of the Spells" that mysterious large painting on burlap back home at the SBMA was a gift of Wright Ludington. No way are we in that league of acquisitions, I tell myself trying not to feel disappointed.

"It's a litho, #6 out of a 100," says the owner.

I can't help myself. I blurt out, "We have, I mean my museum has a Wilfredo Lam and I don't exactly like IT, but.... this is rather intriguing... This one, how..." Now Ed gives me two full blast stink eyes.

"You can have it for, oh let's see. How about \$150.00 U.S. dollars?"

Ed takes out his American Express checks on the spot. "It needs a new home, looks like you would treat it well," says Mr. Cline or Mr. Barrera. I gush about our "Casting of the Spell" at the SBMA and its companion at SFOMA, in San Francisco. We can barely believe we'll soon be owners of such a cool important work.

For a terrible moment I'm afraid that I've misheard, as I often do...that he actually said fifteen hundred. But Ed, ever intrepid, calmly tears off three American Express checks, fifty dollars each, from the pack. A quick wrap-up in brown butcher paper, fond handshakes, and out we go with Wilfredo Lam tucked under Ed's long arm.

I move to his other side, grab his hand and squeeze it. We head for the fanciest hotel in town to drink to such good fortune.

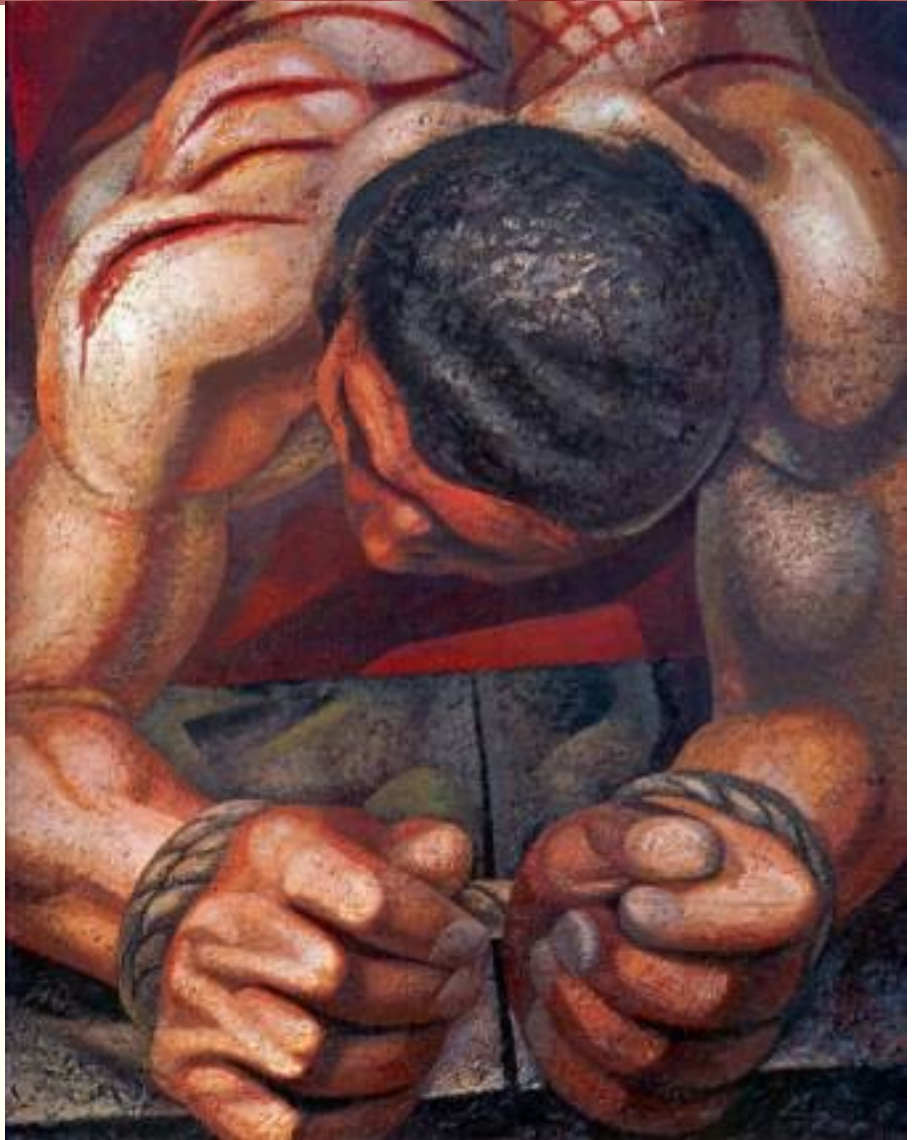


Excerpted with permission from  
Lucie-Smith, Edward, Latin American Art of the 20th Century.  
New York: Thames & Hudson World of Art; 1993.

Although these three muralists were similar in their motivations, Siqueiros seemed most content when he was involved in the political strife of the Revolutionary wars, the burst of technological advancement, and the blossoming (or decline) of Mexican Muralism. He wanted to return to and salvage “indigenous” roots of Mexican Americans. At the same time, he idealized the prospect of technology in an ever-changing modern world. (Lucie-Smith, pgs 62-63).

Siqueiros has this fascinating ability to reach out to the viewer, seemingly literally. His artwork seems to jump out at us, thrusting its emotion, its liberation, and its opinion on us. By looking at his paintings you can easily feel as though the painter is secretly summoning you to come closer, until eventually you are almost part of the painting. His artwork makes you feel involved, as if you, the viewer, were there in 1930, rioting in the streets of Mexico City.

Siqueiros painted the bulk of his work in his last thirty years and more specifically during his years in prison. He was imprisoned for actively protesting government policies and/or supporting initiatives unpopular to the government of the time. Mind you, we are talking about the 1920's and 1930's, a time when wars were casually waged and conservative ideologies still emerged as practiced realities. During the mid-1920's, Siqueiros was deeply absorbed in his political activism in the trade-union organizing groups. (Lucie-Smith, pg 63). He eventually became Secretary of the Communist Party of Mexico and as President of the National Federation of Mine Workers.



*For a related article, see Ricki's piece on Latin American art in the February 2013 issue of La Muse.*

*Excerpted from the LA Times 10/02/2012, with permission from Mr. Knight*

*“We should all applaud the rescue of David Alfaro Siqueiros' Los Angeles mural, an emblem of social justice that was painted over soon after its 1932 completion.”*

~ J. Whalen, Director, GCI

Christopher Knight, Los Angeles Times Art Critic

"América Tropical," the historic David Alfaro Siqueiros mural located on a building on Olvera Street, was unveiled today on its 80th birthday after years of conservation efforts by the Getty and the City. Whalen is referring to the controversial art work's tumultuous past. "Tropical" was painted in 1932 on the exterior wall of the Italian Hall, and features a Mexican Indian tied to a double cross with an American eagle descending on top of him and revolutionary soldiers closing in on his sides. The mural was quickly whitewashed over because of its politically charged imagery.

"It's not going away this time," said Whalen, Director of the [Getty Conservation Institute \(GCI\)](#).

In fact, the mural is now accompanied by a rooftop viewing platform and the [América Tropical Interpretive Center](#) dedicated to Siqueiros' life and body of work. The conservation process was complicated and expensive; years in-the-making and relying on experts from all fields including architecture, chemistry and engineers, said Whalen.

Susan MacDonald, the Getty's project director who oversaw the process, said they chose conservation instead of restoration, because restoration would mean bringing the piece back to its former state—accomplished by painting over Siqueiros' original work. As it is now: “Everything on there is the hand of Siqueiros, the hand of the artist,” said MacDonald.

The original mural has eroded overtime and there are no color photographs of what it looked like when it was first created, she added, which would make color-matching nearly impossible. The conservation process included cleaning the art work and getting rid of built-up grime and dirt, she said, in addition to filling in holes to ensure that the plaster was securely attached to the wall behind it. The project also include "dotting in" paint along certain lines and figures in the mural that had faded over the years.

In addition to its artistic value, Councilman José Huizar said he hopes the mural will inspire people to learn more about Mexican artists and the life of Siqueiros in Los Angeles. "It's about history, it's about censorship, it's about art..." he said.

Huizar credits Siqueiros with jump-starting the mural movement in L.A. and for inspiring people to paint their cultural and political beliefs on walls.

"Today we pay a debt," said Mayor Villaraigosa, fulfilling our responsibility to defend Siqueiros' work on his behalf since he wasn't able to defend it himself. The artist's visa ran out shortly after he painted the mural, and he was forced to leave the U.S.

By conserving and showcasing Siqueiros' mural, the city is confronting the "uncomfortable truths" of its history and finding "inspiration in the humanity of 'América Tropical.'"



## THE LAST PAGE



Provisional Luncheon at Christine Holland's. *Left to right:* Suzanne Von Drehle, Christine, Provisional Denise Klassen, Helene Strobel, Ralph Wilson, Linda Adams, Guy Strickland, Julie Allen.

*Submitted by Helene Strobel*

Comments?

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*Lori Mohr, Editor*

