

## Docent Dates

Council Meetings start at 10 AM, Coffee at 9:15

**April 6** Jenni Sorkin, from UCSB, on the *75th Anniversary Exhibition* with an emphasis on the Contemporary work, her area of specialization.

**April 11**  
Book Group, 10 A.M.

**April 20**  
Meeting or Bus Trip

**April 24-29**  
New York City Trip

**May 4** [TBA]  
Election of 2016-17 Board

**May 18** [TBA]

**[Sometime in May]**  
Provisional Recruitment Tea Date & time TBA

**June 3**  
Graduation and Service Recognition Awards



*Landscape at Osny (Paysage à Osny)*, 1894 Camille Pissarro (French, Charlotte Amalie, Saint Thomas 1830–1903 Paris) Etching and drypoint on laid paper; first state of two. INTERNAL USE ONLY


Dear Docents,

It was **special** indeed, the delightful tribute to India. Even without our joining Aruniin on stage, we were immersed in the *feel* of India for a few hours. Kudos to Michi Ho and the entire *Puja and Piety* team for creating the festive atmosphere, inside and outside the auditorium. The refreshments table was so beautifully decorated—sprinkled with red petals and laden with delicious savories from Indian.

The mostly black “docent dress code” was replaced by a color wheel of hues, saris glittering in gold and silver embroidered trim. Some of us sported a jeweled bindi—a public sign that we’re married—though I suggest we use bindis for our docent “angels” as a public sign of thanks.

I know we all enjoyed the enthralling dance after Professor Banerji’s interesting lecture. Aruniin’s performance—celebrating her favorite deity, the Goddess Mata Durga—was full of traditional meaning, I’m sure, the layers of complexity beyond most of us at this point in our growing knowledge. We eagerly await *Puja and Piety*, opening Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.

This year of transition is nearly behind us...boot camp for exciting things to come.

Joan 



Joan Dewhirst,  
President

## From Our Vice President



Gail Stichler

It's only a few weeks until our docent trip to NYC. We had our second planning meeting March 14th. Everyone is enthusiastic and well-prepared for exploring art and attractions in the Big Apple. Hotels are booked. Reservations have been made for our group dinners. Tickets for Broadway have been purchased. The four-day itinerary has been fleshed out.

I need checks for any group meals., payable to the SBMA Docent Council. Be sure to bring them to the April 6 meeting, or mail them to me before we leave.

How terrific that so many of us are able to go together, visiting one of the great cities of the world. We have very exciting days and nights ahead. Thank you to everyone who is helping to shape this into what I'm sure will be a great experience. Gail 🍷



## From our Adult Teams



Christine Holland

Even with gallery closures, visitors are eager to visit the Museum and go on our tours. February numbers were solid — 360 visitors on 54 tours, an average of 6.6 visitors per tour. We gave three Special Request tours, and two Community Speaker presentations.

The Adult Tour schedule through spring and summer, including names of team leaders and Docents joining extended exhibitions, is nearly ready to send. Our council pulling together to cover gaps in touring has been a huge help pounding out the schedule. Teda and I thank you for again working as a flexible team. .



Teda Pilcher

Christine Holland, Co-chair with Teda Pilcher 🍷

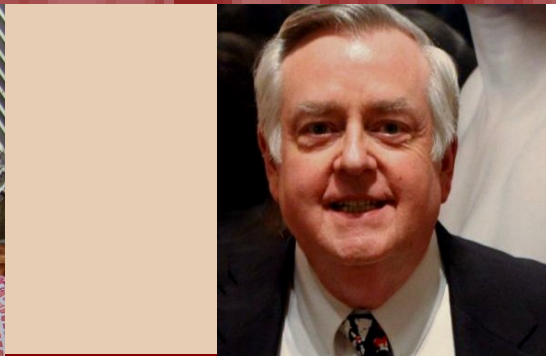
From our Student Teams



Karen Brill, Student Teams Chair

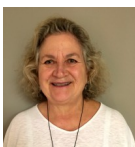


From Our Provisional Chairs



Another milestone has been reached as each remaining member of the Provisional Class—Erika, David, Joanne, and Patty—successfully completed the 8-minute presentation, two objects with transitions. They have been working on themes as well as transitions. Following spring break they will be developing a new object each week, the ten to twelve pieces building their *Highlights* tours.

Here are the works incorporated into the 8-Minute Talks.

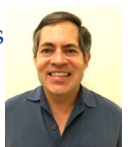


**Joanne Singer** – Morisot’s *Young Girl with a Dog* and Diebenkorn’s *Woman and Checkerboard*



**Patty Santiago** – Pissarro’s *Paysage à Osny, vue de la Ferme* and Price’s *Isaak*;

**David Reichert** – The Chinese bronze vessels and Delacroix’s *Last Words of Marcus Aurelius*



**Erika Budig** – Bonnard’s *Nude against the Light* and Maillol’s *Bather Putting Up Her Hair*.



Mary Ellen Hoffman, Ralph Wilson, and Wendi Hunter  
Co-Provisional Chairs 🍷

From our **Community Speakers Program**

*Shirley Waxman*



Team Leaders Kathryn Padgett and Shirley Waxman

The Community Speakers Program is ready for spring!

We will be giving talks at several libraries (both in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties). If you would like to support the program while being entertained and charmed at the same time, come hear Mary Eckhart's fantastic talk. You will not be disappointed!

"Here's Looking at you Kid: Our Timeless Passion for Portraits"  
at the **Goleta Library on Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2 pm.**

Kathryn has been busy creating an exciting and enticing talk on the "75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration" exhibition (See preview below). She is already booked in several venues!

### **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration: Highlights of the Permanent Collection**

In celebration of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art's 75th Anniversary in 2016, this lecture highlights the most celebrated works in the permanent collection. It also includes a selection several of the most exciting gifts and acquisitions in genres such as modern and contemporary art, photography, and the arts of Asia.

Imagery includes SBMA's beloved *Villas at Bordighera* by Claude Monet, along with works from the long-term loan Armand Hammer Foundation and the collection of Michael Armand Hammer. Also included are the haunting work from the Yuan dynasty, *Seated Louhan*, whose parted lips give the compelling illusion of speech, and an important, early painting by the famed Bay Area Figuration artists Richard Diebenkorn.



*Woman with Checkerboard, 1956*  
Richard Diebenkorn,



*Seated Louhan*

We are always interested in new ideas, comments, and questions from our fellow docents!

Contact us at: [shirleywaxman@gmail.com](mailto:shirleywaxman@gmail.com) or [kpadgett@cox.net](mailto:kpadgett@cox.net)

From our **Nominations Chair**  
Molora Vadnais



Dear Docents,

Members of the Nominations Committee—Rachael Krieps, Joan Dewhirst, Gail Stichler and I—are pleased to announce the board slate for service year 2015-16.

The list of nominees will be presented at the April 6 meeting.

If there are no nominations from the floor, a vote will be taken.

Thanks to all current board members who agreed to stay on another year.

Molora 🍷

President	Gail Stichler
VP	Ralph Wilson
Secretary	Mary Winder
Treasurer	Denise Klassen
Members	Michi Ho
Adult Teams	Christine Holland
Students	Karen Brill
Provisionals	Wendi Hunter
	Francis Hallinan
Research	Barbara Boyd
Evaluations	Laura DePaoli
Nominations	Joan Dewhirst
Webmaster	Loree Gold

## Fiberarts Exhibition

Isabel Downs is a featured artist in the Fibervision show at the Camarillo Arts Pavillion.

Congratulations, Isabel! 🍷

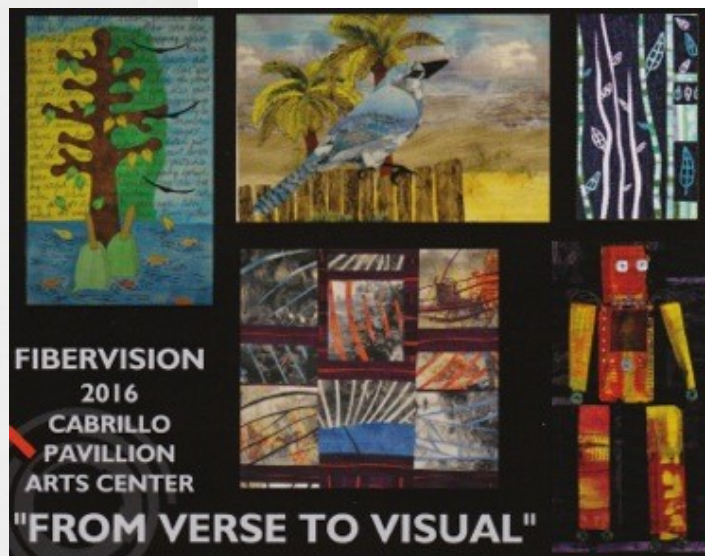
**FIBERVISION**  
**"From Verse to Visual"**  
A collaboration with  
local poets  
March 30-May 22

Cabrillo Pavilion Art Center  
1118 E Cabrillo Blvd.  
Santa Barbara, CA

Opening Reception  
April 13, 2016, 5:30-7:30  
with readings of the poetry that  
inspired our work starting at 6:00

Join us for an  
artist-led tour of the show  
Saturday April 23 at 10:00 or  
Saturday, May 21 at 10:00

To check on gallery hours please call the  
Center at 805-897-1982



From our **Membership Chair**

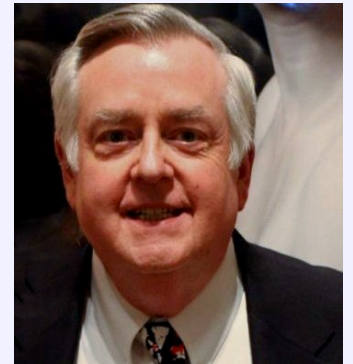


Congratulations to those Docents who will be honored for their dedicated service Friday, June 3rd at the Graduation and Recognition ceremony. If you are not on this list and should be, please let me know.

*Mei Chi Ho*  
Membership Chair



Mary Ellen Hoffman



Ralph Wilson

**5 Years (2011)**



Julie Allen



Susan Northrop



Karen Brill



Jean McKibben Smith

**10 Years (2001)**



Gretchen Simpson



Paul Guido

**10 Years (2006)**



Niki Bruckner

**20 Years (1996)**

# THOUGHTS ON CUBA

*Paul Guido*

When I think back about my trip to Cuba with the Art Museum a few years ago, what stands out most were the contradictions of a society that is both emerging in the current world with one that was halted in 1959. Once you get over the novelty of the 1960's cars and the architecture and the music and the friendliness of the people, one realizes that this is a country where great oppression still exists.

As there are two economies and two kinds of money, one for the tourists and one for the locals, inequalities exist. Waiters who are tipped by the tourists in the hotels with tourist money earn a great deal more than physicians who exist on the local currency. People are paid a stipend and therefore do not have to work, and there is often little reason to get educated. There is little to buy, and little to spend. Until recently, people could not sell their homes, but could only trade for something bigger or smaller.

Inside our modern hotel, our cell phones worked well, and you could watch CNN or HBO on the televisions, but when you walked out the door of the hotels, the phones died, and the only news that could be had were from local papers that were run by the government. Our guide said that all mail was observed before



ISA Government art school in Cuba (Public domain use)

it reached the locals from the outside, and that magazines were usually stolen before they reached your mailbox.

Our guide seemed very open to discussing Cuban life, but when we were driving around the city I asked him where Fidel Castro lived. He looked at me and smiled and said that no one really knew where he lived. Later as our bus was coming in from an

excursion outside the city, the guide pointed to a forested area about a mile away from the highway and said to me, "if I were a president of a country like this, I would live over there."

It was clear he was not free to discuss the government at all. He mentioned that he told young people in his country to learn English and about computers because in a few years "the tall blond people from the north are going to be coming here, and you are going to need both."

As much of the cities buildings are in great need of repair, we were told that at least 5 buildings a day fall down in Havana. From a distance the waterfront looks like a beautiful European city, but when you get closer you could see that many were abandoned and most are on the verge of collapse. There were almost no building materials to be had, and little money to buy the ones that existed.

The few museums we visited were nicely maintained and we visited many galleries in private homes that had surprisingly modern contemporary art. One gallery owner said that many collectors from other countries



flew in on private jets to shop in the galleries.

One day we went to the national art school called ISA or the Instituto Superior de Arte. This is the free art school established by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro on the site of a sprawling country club and golf course in 1961 shortly after the revolution. The architects were given two months to design the buildings, and they were built quickly out of bricks and mortar. There was little rebar at the time, so the buildings were built in a unique domed style. The buildings were connected with covered walkways that snaked around courtyards and covered areas.

Originally there were 5 separate buildings for ballet, modern dance, visual arts, music and theater, but now the whole complex was devoted to art. We were free to roam the school and we wandered for a couple of hours in and out of the domed buildings where students had studios and were working on all types of paintings and sculpture.



ISA Government art school in Cuba



ISA Government art school in Cuba

Most of the art was quite good, and a few of the students who could speak English talked to us about their work. The buildings were dark and cool, but provided good space for the students to work and share ideas. They told us that they submitted their work to the school after high school, and were chosen to come here for a free art education and housing provided by government. Later we visited a building in downtown Havana that housed the national dance troupe, which was also supported by the government. It was interesting and confusing to experience a place where the government was both extremely oppressive and valued things like art, music and dance.

One of the most interesting interactions I had was with an artist was in a private gallery on a quiet city street. With so much poverty and stress in the culture around us, it was curious to be in a well lit, modern gallery where a couple of young artists were showing their work. One young man who was very well dressed in stylish new jeans and a polo shirt who spoke English very well, was showing me his photography on the walls. Later he was eager to show me his other work on his new I pad. His work was odd photographs of table settings like he had seen in his grandmother's house growing up in the country. Mostly it was fake flowers on lace tablecloths with flowered wallpaper in the background. These scenes were in all different styles and colors. I grew tired of looking at his art and began asking him about his life. He said that he was 29, had attended the state art school, and that artists, athletes and military people were granted special status in the country by the government. He had an international passport, traveled regularly to Miami and Europe to sell his art, and maintained a bank account in the US. It was more than a little confusing to process this young man's privilege in a world of so much deprivation. The contrast of a government that ruled with an iron fist, that didn't give its citizens enough money or supplies to maintain their falling houses, with one that allowed artists to fly around the world to sell their art privately was more than surprising. Again, the contrasts of the culture were very great and often confusing.



As the current climate of the world is changing, it looks as if our guide was correct, that the tall blond people from the north are about to move into the country with their English and computers. The country is going to change drastically. Coming from our culture that values basic freedoms and often undervalues the arts for things like sports and the military, the contrast with the Cuban values was both interesting and deeply troubling. It was a good trip.

## THE LAST [half] PAGE

An unexpected thank you is the best kind.

When that thank you comes written in a card, a candid of you touring the galleries along with it, well, that's a gift.

Karen Kawaguchi, SBMA fundraising guru, did just that, thanking docents for their support in touring special visitors—new members of the Museum.



Lori Mohr, Editor  
[Mohrojai@aol.com](mailto:Mohrojai@aol.com)

