

Docent Dates

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

February 3

Philip Yenawine, *Visual Thinking Strategies*

February 6

Bus Trip: Long Beach Art Museum

February 17

Susan Tai, *Puja & Piety*

February 22

Westmont-Ridley Tree Museum (see p. 2)

March 2

UCSB Prof David White
Puja & Piety

March 16 [TBA]

April 6

Meeting or Bus Trip

April 11

Book Group, 10 A.M.

April 20

Meeting or Bus Trip

April 24-29

New York City Trip

May 4 [TBA]

May 18 [TBA]

June 3

Graduation/Awards



The Gods Appeal to the Great Devi for Help (detail), Himachal Pradesh, Folio from a *Devil Mahatmya* series. Color on gold paper. (From *Puja & Piety*, SBMA INTERNAL USE ONLY)

Dear Docents,

I hope you are experiencing a huge sense of pride as we stand poised to celebrate our Museum as a cultural touchstone in the community. The highly anticipated 75th Anniversary exhibition will reveal its wonders when the doors of the Ridley-Tree Gallery open on Sunday, February 7th. Armed with a visual preview of the floor plan presented by Susan Tai and Julie Joyce at our January Council meeting—its cleverly-designed set-up of selected Asian treasures and Modern/Contemporary objects, as well as photographic prints—we will be ready to hit our stride with visitors.

Many of our favorites from the permanent collection will be on display, along with new acquisitions and gifts, all of which will add extra spring to our steps. This may be true for visitors as well, members eager to revisit works they've come to know over the years that inspired awe at the mysterious and magical wonder of art.

"Wonder" is the key word. Touring has changed over time as we've moved away from the lecture style to an interactive approach. So this is perfect timing for our February 3rd speaker. "Permission to Wonder" is the first chapter of *Visual Thinking Strategies*, written by Philip Yenawine, cofounder of Visual Understanding in Education. You won't want to miss this rare opportunity to hear about the power of VTS from the originator himself.

The new exhibition opening April 16th, *Puja and Piety: Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist Art from the Indian Subcontinent*, is gaining momentum.



Joan Dewhirst,
President

Special Exhibition leaders Michi Ho and Sneh Singh have arranged several meetings with their team, and Curator Susan Tai has loaned important books for Research. Please note these are on RESERVE For use *only* in the Docent office (you'll find them on a separate trolley).

At our February 17th Meeting, Susan Tai will be speaking on *Puja & Piety*. On March 2nd, UCSB Professor of Comparative Religions David White will provide more background on the *Puja* show. Note: he must begin at 10:15 to get back to the University for his noon lecture. Enjoy coffee and goodies first, but talk fast, and convene in the auditorium PROMPTLY at 10:00!

The 75th Anniversary celebration will dominate 2016, a bright counterpoint to the renovation work and limited galleries. While we acknowledge the disruption to visitors, we can then turn our glass-half-full attention to the caliber of our permanent collection, art from early supporters with vision for the cultural landmark Santa Barbara deserved. It was their forward thinking that transformed an old Post Office into a cultural marvel with works that could ignite passion for art in people of all ages.

Let's keep that pride, that forward thinking in sight as we, the Docent Council, give our wholehearted support with a gift in any amount to reiterate our enthusiasm for this project.

Joan 🍷

From Our Vice President



Gail Stichler

The first of our two February activities is the bus trip **Saturday, Feb 6th** to Long Beach (cost is \$55), departing SB at 8:00 am with a planned return by 6:30.

To recap: we'll start at the Long Beach Museum of Art. Then it's off to the CSU Long Beach Sculpture Garden and Museum to meet with Terry Braunstein and Lori LaMont, artists featured in the exhibitions, as well as meet with the Director of Education to discuss Barbara Strasen's work. After lunch at Claire's our itinerary takes us to CSULB, where we will be met by docents for a tour of the

Sculpture Garden. Pma Tregenza and Artist John Hillis Sanders have done a great job planning this art-filled day.

Our second February activity, which is free, is at the Westmont-Ridley Tree Museum on **Monday the 22nd at 2:00** for a tour of *Barbizon, Realism, and Impressionism in France*, showcasing



[from the website] Berthe Morisot, (*Little Girl Hanging a Cage in a Tree*) 1890. Oil on canvas. Lady Leslie Ridley-Tree Collection



John Hillis Sanders, "49"

twenty-eight 19th century French works from the private collection of Lady Leslie Ridley-Tree. Featured artists include Mary Cassatt, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Gustave Courbet, Henri Matisse, Jean-François Millet, Berthe Morisot, Alfred Sisley. Parking passes are limited, so we need to sign up ahead of time and carpool. Check out the website for more information about lectures and activities associated with this exhibition:

<http://www.westmontmuseum.org/>

Our trip to NYC –April 24 to 29—is coming along. With hotel reservations made, next up is our meeting **Monday, February 1, at 10:00 am** in Luria to fine-tune activities and logistics, as noted in emails from me. We'll review your surveys, favorite destinations we might add to our museum-a-day headliners, The Metropolitan, MoMA, The Whitney, and The Frick.

That should whet your appetite.

Gail 🍷

From our Student Teams



They say when the going gets tough, the tough get going, and that's exactly what our creative Education Dept team did! At a time when touring space is at a premium, with increased class size and fewer docents, Patsy, Rachael, and Kelly crafted a rotation easing gallery congestion.

Each class is split into two groups. One goes to the FRC where Kelly or Jason Summers, our new teaching artist, leads a take home activity that ties in with the Halley Exhibition. The other group is again divided into three and joined by a docent to enjoy the galleries. Each docent follows a rotation schedule so that no group is in the same space with another. Brilliant!

This mathematical dance has added a new level of fun and energy. Instead of competing for gallery space, there's a stronger sense of camaraderie in getting the job done.

In January we had 11 tours for a total of 277 students.

Karen 🍷

Karen Brill, Student Teams Chair

From our Adult Teams



Cha-Cha-Cha Changes. Adult Touring Teams are adjusting to the extension of two Special Exhibitions and have rallied with well-honed flexibility, adding tour dates to their calendars.

Docents from the *Techniques* and *Portraits* Teams have stepped up and added extra tour dates once their own commitments end. This will greatly ease the pressure. It's all about that "can-do" attitude and working together. Everyone's flexibility makes life easier in pounding out a calendar that meets most,

Christine Holland

if not all our needs in preparing schedules for April through

summer. In the meantime, we're all looking forward to the 75th Anniversary show, and are setting up new tours for that.

In December we had 41 tours for 318 guests, averaging 8 per tour. Visitor numbers were low early in the month but increased just before and after Christmas. There were 7 tours with no visitors, and no Community Speaker Presentations were given in December.

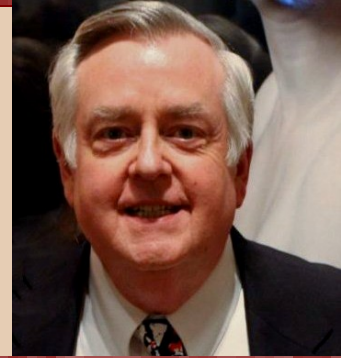


Teda Pilcher

Christine 🍷

Christine Holland, Co-chair with Teda Pilcher

From Our Provisional Chairs



Class members have submitted their research papers (see Joanne Sanger's in this issue). Our Research Chair Barbara Boyd is guiding them through the revision process prior to submitting the work for review by curatorial staff. We are hoping to have new research enthusiasts for the Council.

The term beginning in January is devoted to a survey of art history, facilitated by experts from our docent family. The first lecture was a comprehensive, illustrated walk through the ancient arts of the Mediterranean area, expertly led by Molora Vadnais. There were several tired hands from taking copious notes during her presentation! To supplement selected readings, additional lectures are planned over the next several weeks. Provisionals are also presenting to the class one-page papers on various topics of art history and artistic style.

Regrettably another member of the class has withdrawn for personal reasons, leaving a cadre of five excellent candidates, each of whom will be a valuable and exciting addition to the Council.

Ralph 🍷

Mary Ellen Hoffman, Ralph Wilson, and Wendi Hunter

Co-Provisional Chairs

From Our Nominations Chair



Dear Docents,

It is that time of the year when we look ahead at forming the next board. If you have an interest in serving or just want to learn more about board service, please contact a members of the Nominations Committee: Gail Stichler, Joan Dewhirst, Rachael Kriepe, or me by February 15. gmstichler@aol.com dewhirst@aol.com rkriepe@sbma.net moloravadnais@gmail.com

The board slate will be announced in the March *La Muse* and again at the March 2 meeting. Presentation of the slate, nominations from the floor, and voting will occur at the first council meeting in April.

Thank You, *Molora* 🍷

From Our Nominations Chair



Barbara Boyd

Call for research!

The galleries are teeming with activity in preparation for our very special 75th Anniversary Exhibition! We're in need of research on several pieces for touring these next months. You can find images on the Checklist or get in touch with me.

Please consider supporting fellow docents by writing a paper.

Barbara

Henri Marius-Camille Bouvet

(French, 1859-1945)

Self-Portrait in the Studio, ca. 1900

Oil on canvas

63 3/4 × 38 1/4 in.

William DOLE

Tower of Babel, 1962

watercolor and collage on board

Overall: 35 × 23 in. (88.9 × 58.4 cm)

Ala's Story

Artist: William DOLE

1971

collage

image: 13 3/4 × 12 1/8 in.9

Apple Tree

Artist: Mike KELLEY

1982-83

acrylic on paper

Overall: 41 1/2 × 50 in. (105.4 × 127 cm)

Big Ideals

Artist: Richard JACKSON

1984/1987

oil and pencil on mylar

sheet (sight): 35 5/8 × 51 1/8 in.

Zun-shaped Vase

Artist: UNKNOWN

17th Century

porcelain painted with underglaze cobalt blue

object: 17 1/2 × 9 in. (diam.) (44.5 × 22.9 cm)

Horse with Lady Rider

Chinese, Central Plains

early Tang dynasty (618-906), 7th century

Earthenware with light glaze and pigments

131/2 × 93/8 × 35/8 in.

Vase with Flying Cranes over Islands of Peach Trees

Artist: UNKNOWN

1735-1795

Jingdechen

Porcelain painted with overglaze polychrome enamels;

flying cranes amid clouds over peach trees

object: 21 1/2 × 14 1/2 in. (diam.) (54.6 × 36.8 cm)

Garuda, the Man-Bird as a Guardian King

Indonesian, Central Java

9th-10th century

Andesite (volcanic rock)

31 × 161/2 × 181/2 in.

Vajrabhairava Embracing Consort

East Tibetan, late 17th century

Gilded and painted bronze

Musician with Female Companion

Central India,

circa 12th century

Sandstone

Miniature Pagoda

Japanese, Nara period, circa 764-770

Wood with traces of gesso and originally colored, printed paper prayer

Community Speakers Program



Team Leaders Kathryn Padgett and Shirley Waxman

The Community Speakers Program (CSP) had a very successful start in 2015. We gave 29 PowerPoint presentations to a diverse audience, including the Santa Barbara Yacht Club, the County Libraries, Abstract Art Collective, and Casa Dorinda just to name a few.

The exciting news is that the program continues to grow in 2016! We have added more themes to our list of thought-provoking topics by wonderful, qualified docents whose presentations have inspired lively discussion. The growing list of talks will include our special exhibitions: *SBMA 75th Anniversary Celebration* and *Puja and Piety*, along with new subjects highlighting the Museum's permanent collection.

We are always interested in adding new venues and groups. As part of the SBMA Docent Program, the Community Speakers Program 'takes the show on the road,' increasing awareness of the Museum by offering art education in the form of dynamic talks. Many groups schedule follow-up docent tours, which is our end goal—bringing people to the Museum where they can experience the art in person.

We thought it would be fun to highlight a CSP talk each month in *La Muse*. Here is an enticement from Mary Eckhart's topic on portraiture: **Here's Looking At You Kid: Our Timeless Passion For Portraits.**

From time immemorial one of mankind's most fascinating pastimes has been looking at itself and depicting the results. From 40,000-year-old Indonesian hand stencils, to Nefertiti's magnificent but impossible bust (could Egypt have been the birthplace of Barbie?), to Easter Island moai, to Abraham Lincoln's *Penny Portrait*, to the mesmerizing *Afghan Girl with Green Eyes*, to *Glamour Girls and Guys*, to Nadar's revolving photographic feat, to the brilliantly simple but incisive caricatures of Al Hirschfeld, to Solvang's *Jack the American Bulldog*, we see how portraits have been used to record posterity, power, personality, and parody.

Who said "selfies" were a modern invention?

Rich, engrossing, revealing – portraiture captures our attention as no other artistic genre can.



If you have a group that might be interested in a presentation let us know, or if you would like to join the CSP team, contact one of us. kpadgett@cox.net or shirleywaxman@gmail.com



Shirley 



Poets' Respond to Santa Barbara Printmakers' Exhibition

January 7, 2016 at Channing Peake Gallery, Santa Barbara

The poets were inspired by artists' prints using a variety of techniques, such as woodblock printing, photopolymer etching, viscosity monoprints and chine-collé. Poet Linda Saccoccio writes about Rosemarie Gephart's "Bolero."



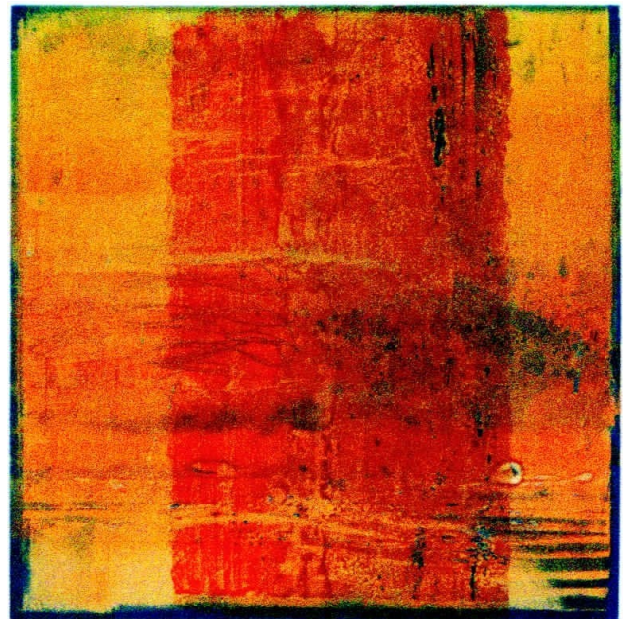
Oxidized

Rusted divinity falls
splashing through orange atmosphere
Center bleeding watermarked
Story on a page of contemplative order
Stills a roaming mystic
Graffiti on walls, on spirit
Scrawls tense, circles flattened into ellipses, repeat
over and over
Pressing into skin
graphite leaded lines like lifelines
scratched through luminous night
crossed through states of being

Here now the eternal
Over a street all must cross
At risk are the living
a dove with wings raised
trapped in a shaded rectangle
aching frozen beauty
dwells, where chemistry,
where biology, revels and rules

Afoot this space, a crossing-walk
A wall, a shaft
born of design; multi-dimensional wisdom
inked, pressed, tinged dark teal edges
pierce through ground upon ground
Acid eyes stare back, bubbles
Horizontal creases cross
Vertical holding, munificent monks
glow on the field
Aged time worn wall
ribbons, stroked downward, earthward
Deeper, rustier

Bark translucent as skin
Lashes of luster
Seeds wiggle and spawn
Uneven truth abides
Proof, theorem, equation
Stained staged page
Open alluring speaking
Beliefs abandoned
Uncertainty trusted
Afloat, a flight, a dream



Linda Saccoccio is an exhibiting artist and poet from the East coast. Her book, *Transitions and Translations*, showcases a series of paintings and the poems they evoked.

KITSH CULTURE & DAYGLO

By Josie Martin



And I have to "do" the first tour of 2016. In the parking garage I wonder what will I say? Three galleries in search of a theme? No.

Suddenly, it comes: "KITSH CULTURE & DAYGLO".

O muse, to thee I pray for guidance, just thirty minutes' worth, I beseech her as I sweep.

Well dear docents, kitsch culture & dayglo drew them in! And since Ferrer Cayetano himself refers to his fascination with Casino Kitsch, I don't feel it's an affront to use the terms. Seven people gather looking faintly amused. I explain we are celebrating the Museum's 75th birthday, that many works are temporarily down but will soon be up again as preparations are being made for the big celebratory show. Then, as I launch into my spiel about the Las Vegas carpet mosaic lying on the floor where the Antiquities used to stand in Ludington Court, two more visitors join, coming in from the rain. I talk about the concept that the spectacle of Las Vegas casinos is not entirely different from the spectacle of such antiquities as Roman circuses, nor for that matter, from current museums which must attract, entertain, and enchant, though with purportedly more 'refinement'. We look at the mounted fragments, an older man in a puffy green vest proudly reads the barely visible Greek letters from the entablature. One of the visitors tells his wife, "guy must have been in a fraternity."

The rain stops just long enough to take my 9 visitors out to the Siqueiros mural (culture) which is usually how I start and segues nicely to *Looking In and Looking Out*. I do about 7 of the photos. I vary them each time, but always start with Las Palma's "Lotteria" to show Karen Sinsheimer's themes underlying her last show. This time I include the heart-shattering and ethereal clothing pieces captured in watery glass frames, "Drifting Away" by Erika Diettes. I tell them that I actually remember when the "Disparitos" were being murdered and floated down the river in Columbia and Argentina during some of their most brutal regimes. It touches me as deeply as the incredible face of the man in the "Life Isn't Beautiful" portrait. Even today, some 35+ years later, the wives, mothers and grandmothers of the Disparitos still gather in silence to mourn and to remember the loss of their loved ones at public plazas, I tell my group. A woman nods affirmatively; later I learn that she has seen a documentary about these brave silent women.

Then, on a lighter note, literally, I ask everyone to take out their sun-glasses for our entry into the high-wattage day-glo of Peter Hayley's *Geometry of the Absurd*. They really do experience the room as sheer sensation setting off the vibes of their eyes. I ask how it makes them feel? No reply. When I mention the artist's intention to indicate cells and conduits, the youngest man in my group immediately responds, "fluorescent circuitry". A brief exchange about his work in Silicon Valley and the post-modern brain ensues. Then I show them a print of a Mark Rothko, the bands and stacks of color that caused such sensation and inevitably have influenced many of today's artists.

Since none of the visitors is from Santa Barbara, I skip Herbert Bayer's "Triangulation" because they won't be able to relate it to the Chumash Rainbow Arch in the park across from the beach; usually I like to include it in my Highlights tours. This, however gives me more time to conclude with Martin Kessels' "Charms", though I refer to the installation as "Little Boy" which was the code name for the atom bomb when the Los Alamos scientists were working on it back in the forties. The exchange really happens then—after I explain that Kessels is less interested in aesthetics, life-like representation, i.e. traditional art than in generating conversation.

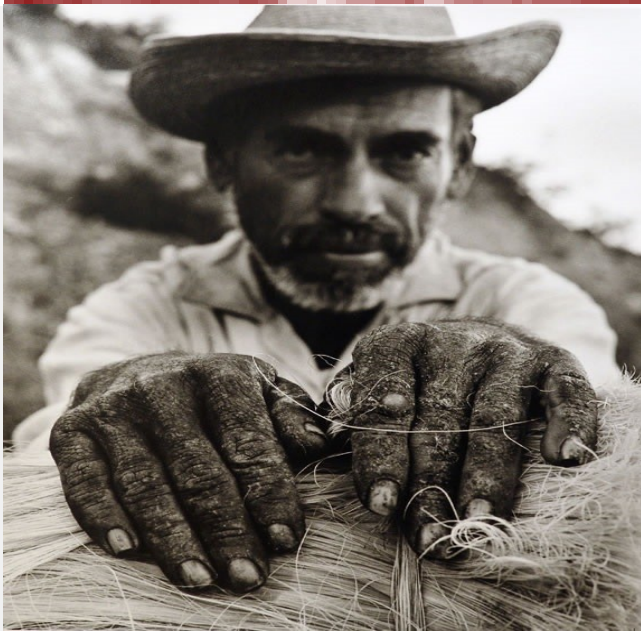
The young couple from Ireland are especially interested when I tell about the drop-drills that American teachers and their students used to practice regularly during the fifties while terror was being held in the balance, just as the charms, the dog, the white house, the atomic potato-clouds dangling from the ceiling evoke a sort of dangerous suspension. I'm well over my thirty minutes as the conversation continues.

Finally, I thank them, they thank me, we part. I silently thank the muse as I walk downstairs, sign the red notebook, get my umbrella and thank the weatherman for this fine rainy day at the Museum. 🍂

Research Paper

Produced for the SBMA Docent Council by Joanne Singer, February, 2016.

Submitted by Research Chair Barbara Boyd (reformatted for La Muse)



Moya, Rodrigo, Mexico, 1934. *Life Isn't Beautiful*, Ixtlera region of northern Mexico; (*La vida no es belia*, Region ixtlera del norte de Mexico) 1965; Printed 2010; Gelatin Silver Print; image: 18 ½ x 15 in.

"...I see that it is the country folk who are the first in line, like these men Of the deserts of Coahuila,, with whom I lived for three days, enough time to change my perception of the world and of human society." ("Rodrigo Moya:Photography and Conscience", 2015).

Rodrigo Moya has a deep sensitivity to his subjects, particularly to the simple, poor people in Mexico City and rural Mexico. "...he documents a painful poverty to which he is not indifferent. At the same time, a tender quality appears throughout his work: the dignity of the human being, the essence that makes us truly alike, one another." (Arnal, p. 11).

Though others may differ, Moya does not think of his photographs as art, or a medium in which he is separated from his subjects. He uses sensitivity and connection to his subjects to create a communication between photographer and subject, and later, between subject and viewer. In spite of the ixtle gatherer's poverty, we cannot dismiss him or distance ourselves while in the presence of this photograph. The unasked question Moya poses is, "Why is this man living this hard life, while others are not?"

"Life Isn't Beautiful" is a gelatin silver print taken in 1965 for a journal article entitled *Ixtleros*. It portrays an impoverished worker who ekes out a living harvesting ixtle, a hard plant fiber obtained from a variety of Mexican plants, mainly agave and yucca, used in manufacturing brushes, cords and ropes. There's no mistaking from Moya's composition and powerful perspective that the worker's hands are the focus. Moya utilizes foreshortening to add heft and size, drawing in the viewer's gaze. The hands are compelling, making it nearly impossible to avoid looking at them. The rough calluses, deep lines, swollen fingers with their inherent strength, along with encrusted dirt and grime in the fingernails are a testament to the many years of hard labor the man has endured to survive in this desolate, desert country. Placement of the hands on top of the fine agave fibers further emphasizes the thickness and roughness of the fingers. The juxtaposition is ironic, the individual fibers seeming delicate in comparison. The desert background, fuzzy and out of focus, also has an austere beauty, belying its inhospitable nature.

Moya only includes the shoulders and head of this ixtle gatherer, informing the viewer that the hands and face are his main interest. The man's face is handsome, dignified, his simple worker's hat and carefully trimmed beard deeply compelling. While his hands tell the narrative of a brutally harsh life, the inequity of Mexican society, we also see in the eyes intelligence, dignity in his expression.

The gelatin silver process employed here, used with black-and-white films and printing papers, involves suspension of silver salts in gelatin that is coated onto a support such as glass, flexible plastic or film, baryta paper, or resin coated paper. These light-sensitive materials are stable under normal keeping conditions and are able to be exposed and processed years after their manufacture, providing a photographic process for journalism before the introduction of digital photography.

Born in Columbia to a Columbian mother and Mexican father, Moya moved to Mexico with his parents and sister as a small boy. His mother was an amateur photographer, giving him an early inclination toward photography and the medium itself, the image printed on light sensitive paper. Moya's father worked as a set designer for theater, giving Moya easy access to an extensive collection of art books where he learned about composition.

Moya later apprenticed with the Columbian photojournalist Guillermo Angulo at *Impacto* magazine, while also learning from the Portuguese art critic Antonio Rodriguez and the Peruvian Joel Marroquin. When Angulo left to study cinema in Italy, Moya took over his position at *Impacto*. After working there four years, he became a free lance photojournalist.

Throughout his life, Moya was concerned with social justice for the poor in Mexico, Latin America, and the world. He studied American authors and photojournalists who shared and informed his passion for documenting social inequities. When interviewed, Moya spoke of his photos as a way to document, provide testimony for those without a voice. He was invited to come into the jungles of Venezuela to photograph a guerrilla movement led by Che Guevara. In 1964 he traveled to Cuba, where he took the iconic photograph of Che Guevara smoking a cigar. He was the only Latin American photographer to cover the invasion of the Dominican Republic by the United States.

Eventually Moya stored his photographs and moved on to a career in writing, winning multiple awards for his short stories. However, he is best known for his photographs taken during 1955-1968, including "Life Isn't Beautiful". After suffering a long illness, at age 70 the artist moved from Mexico City to Cuernavaca with his wife, a graphic designer. With her help, and that of photography experts, Moya returned to the archives, the work of his earlier life. He had over 40,000 photographs and negatives in storage. Only in very recent years has his work been promoted.

Moya was not interested in fame. He refused honors, prizes, and awards, preferring books about his work rather than exhibitions of it. Nevertheless, he received the 2007 Medal of Photographic Merit from Mexico's National System of Photographic Archives and the 2014 Presea Cervantina from the Festival Internacional Cervantino. 🍷

This link will take you to the research paper and full bibliography posted on our Docent website

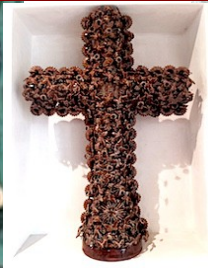
<http://docentssbma.org/maya-life-isnt-beautiful-ixtlera-region-of-northern-mexico-la-vida-no-es-belia-region-ixtlera-del-norte-de-Mexico/>

THE LAST PAGE

Submitted by Ricki Morse



Fred Brander's Museum of Folkloric Art of Mexico, opening this Spring in Los Olivos at the Brander Winery, drew Steve Hiatt and Ricki Morse to share Fred's fantastic eye, his rare finds, and his hilltop gallery with views over the vineyards.



Lori Mohr, Editor
Mohrojai@aol.com

