

Docent Dates

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

March 2

UCSB Prof David White
Puja & Piety

March 16

Professor Dabashish on
"Seeing, (Divine) Power,
and Devotion"; Docent
Pma Tregenza presents
her research paper;
Michi and Snegh offer
a Special India Day

April 6

Meeting or Bus Trip

April 18

Student Touring
Workshop, 1:30-2:30
Luria Activities Center

April 20

Meeting or Bus Trip

April 24-29

New York City Trip

May 4 [TBA]

May 18 [TBA]

June 3

Graduation/Awards



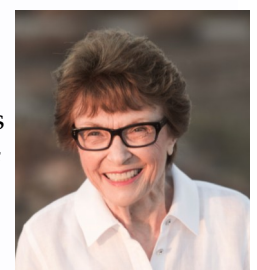
Seated Luohan (detail), Chinese, Yuan dynasty (1279 - 1368), Wood, gesso, and polychrome, 45 x 33 1/2 x 28", SBMA INTERNAL USE ONLY

Dear Docents,

March 20th...an auspicious date on the calendar: the first day of spring. Here in our paradise by the sea, spring is delivering a Santa Barbara-style snow storm—white blossoms everywhere from pear trees bursting into bloom. This special season brings the spirit of renewal and bundles of fresh energy, the right stuff at the right time, in sync with the rebirth going on in our Museum.

Ridley-Tree Gallery transports us back to the 1800s with the 75th Anniversary exhibit. At the hand of Chief Curator Eik Kahg, paintings are hung salon-style, like the prestigious Academy des Beaux-Arts of nineteenth century Paris. Rather than the usual linear look, artworks are set in groupings spaced up the wall and outward.

This arrangement gives visitors a different viewing perspective, as well as highlighting the strength of our permanent collection.



Joan Dewhirst,
President

Spring energy is also evident in docent research and prep for the mid-April arrival of *Puja and Piety*. I think we all appreciated the lecture at our last Council Meeting where Curator Susan Tai presented an overview contextualizing the complex layers of Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist religious beliefs and practices. Building on that presentation is our March 16th speaker, Debashish Banerji, Professor of Philosophy and Dean of Academic Affairs at the University of Philosophical Research, Los Angeles, adjunct faculty at Pasadena City College and research fellow in Asian Philosophies and Cultures at the California Institute of Integral Studies, SF. You won't want to miss this lecture about philosophical differences among these native religions.

Also on the May 16th agenda, Pma Tregenza will present her research paper on *Torso of the Pensive Woman*, 1918, a painted plaster sculpture by Wilhelm Lehmbruck.

Following the lecture, we will be treated to a fascinating dance presentation organized by Michi Ho and Sneh Singh (see Michi's announcement on page 7 for details). Bring a sari or square scarf and join in!

Reminder: Don't forget to savor the refreshments quickly for our March 2nd meeting so we can be in the Auditorium at 10:00 on the dot for David White's 10:15 presentation.

Joan 🚩

From Our Vice President



Gail Stichler

Twenty of us had a wonderful visit to the Westmont-Ridley Tree Museum where we were given tours of *Barbizon, Realism, and Impressionism in France* featuring works from the private collection of Lady Leslie Ridley-Tree. We were impressed with the art, and excited being able to see it! The show ends March 19, so I hope you make time to see it. For more info go to: <http://www.westmontmuseum.org/>

New York City, April 24-29

March 10 is the deadline for making group hotel reservations. Details—confirmed date and times—will be sent to all travelers. Docents are sending group emails with possible activities and information about Art Happenings in NYC. Many have made reservations for Broadway plays; a summary of shows and who is interested has been emailed to the group.

If you haven't completed the survey with your suggestions for things to see and do, there's still time. Our next trip meeting will be mid-March. This is going to be a great trip!

Gail 🚩



Thumbpress images online

From our Student Teams



In February, we had 15 tours for a total of 416 students.

Docents and their students are thrilled touring the *75th Anniversary* exhibition. Since it offers so much to see, art activities have been suspended until both the *Halley* and *Ferrer* exhibitions are down. Then from March 15–April 18, art activities inspired by the anniversary exhibition will be center stage.

Student tours will resume their normal length once *Puja* and *Piety* opens in April. The richness and complexity of this show inspired the *Puja & Piety* team to offer a workshop for touring students. Mark your calendar for Monday, April 18th from 1:30-2:30 in Luria.

The Education Dept has hired educator Joni Chancer (some of you will remember her) to develop classroom presentations focusing on VTS over a two-year period. Since VTS is about discovery a lesson in looking may be more useful than previewing the art. These revised presentations will be a great support for all of us.



Karen 🍷

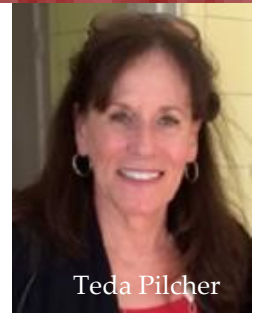
Karen Brill, Student Teams Chair

From our Adult Teams



I continue to be wowed by your generosity as fellow docents. We have had major changes in touring assignments. Like actors backstage before a performance, tension rises as curtain time draws near. Docent teams have felt a lot of pressure, scrambling to meet the Museum's changing needs.

To ease the situation, I sent out several SOS calls for coverage. The response from you has been wonderful!



Teda Pilcher

Here is a snapshot of the last several months:

- A new team has been formed for the *75th Anniversary Exhibition* and will tour from April 1st forward;
- The *Sculpture* team lost two members and gained one; the *Techniques* and *European* teams each lost one;
- Exhibit dates were added to the *Halley*, *Ferrer* and *Latin American* shows, each team's members generously adding additional tours, as well as some docents from *Portraits* and *Techniques* agreeing to take dates after their current commitments. The squeeze has been felt on both weekday and weekend *Highlights* teams as well. In response to my call for help, we have added new members to both of those.

Meanwhile, in January, Docents gave 57 tours for 375 visitors. Those numbers were in the normal range, despite cancellation of 6 tours (gallery closures), and 4 tours with no visitors.

Docents have continued with aplomb during scene changes behind the curtain, a testament to our new level of grace in coping with the challenge.

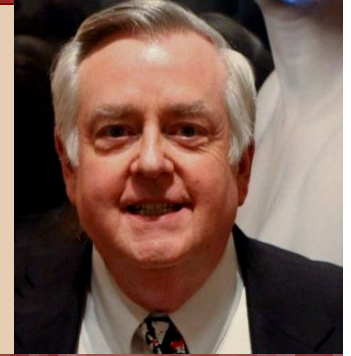
You make me proud to be part of this Council. I applaud you. Bravo!

Christine 🍷

Christine Holland, Co-chair with Teda Pilcher

From Our Provisional Chairs

Mary Ellen Hoffman, Wendi Hunter, Ralph Wilson



The Provisional class has been very busy this past month preparing one-page papers to present to the class as well as completing their research papers. Last month you read Joanne Singer's research on Rodrigo Moya's "Life Isn't Beautiful (*La vida no es bella*)", and now you have the opportunity on the docent website to read the papers submitted by the rest of the class:

Erika Budig: Pierre Bonnard's "Nude against the Light"

Anne Miller: Kenneth Price's "Izaak"

David Reichert: Colin Campbell Cooper's "California State Building, San Diego Exposition"

Patty Santiago: Ray Strong's "Requiem for Maynard Dixon"

Thanks go to Barbara Boyd for reviewing these papers and Loree Gold for posting them on the website.

The class took a field trip to see Lady Ridley-Tree's wonderful collection at Westmont College, thanks to planning by Wendi Hunter. We also enjoyed a Mexican themed lunch complete with mariachi performers at the college's amazing cafeteria.

Mentor's take note: This week we begin work on the Eight-minute Talk. You might want to check in with your provisional to offer help and support.

Ralph 🍷

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

From Our Nominations Chair



Dear Docents,

The board slate will be announced in the April *La Muse*.

Thank You, Molora 🍷

From the Docent Book Group



Dear Readers,
We're taking a pause until May when we'll be back with suggestions for summer reading. Let me know if you have a title to recommend.
Happy reading!

Laura 🍷

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From Our Nominations Chair



Barbara Boyd

Congratulations to the Provisional Class! Five research papers are now posted on our website for use by all docents.

This always feels like a rite of passage. The class may think of the research paper as another assignment, but these papers are a gift to the Council. Each one helps build our docent database of artworks, the first step in constructing our tours. The addition of five more works is appreciated by all of us.

Thanks go to Loree Gold who got them posted quickly, to Rachael for her help as always, and to the Instructors for their work getting the class to this milestone.

I submitted Provisional Anne Miller's paper for this issue of *La Muse* because the piece is currently on view. The paper will be vetted by curatorial staff, but in the meantime it is on our website. (*The version below has been edited and formatted for La Muse by Editor Lori Mohr*)

Barbara

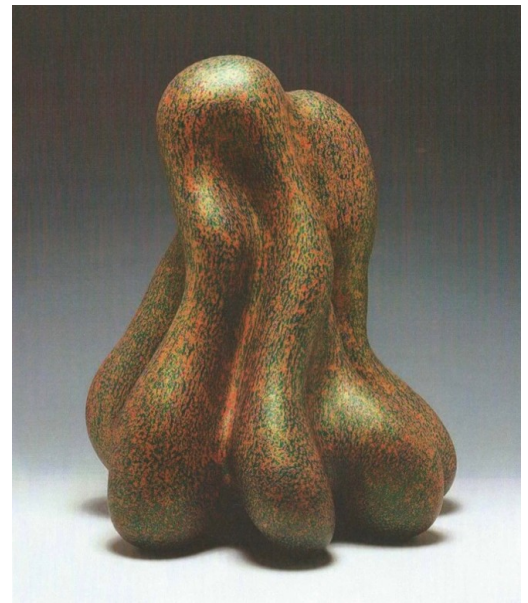
"His work has a sense of clarity and an unselfconscious sense of humor. It speaks volumes; it speaks of pleasure and love, and speaks of beauty without bravado." Frank O. Gehry

Izaak is a lava-like abstract sculpture with a speckled metallic finish. The piece showcases the use of form, shape and color that the artist mastered so brilliantly.

Ken Price's *Izaak* reflects the control, patience and obsession used in his work. With each new series, Price introduced unique ways of applying paint in which he showcased color, becoming known for this technique. He applied scores of thin layers of bright acrylic paint, which he sanded down in patches, revealing multiple hues. His surfaces suggest rough-hewn stones, meteors from a Technicolor universe, tiny pore like starbursts of contrasting colors and startling skin-like effects.

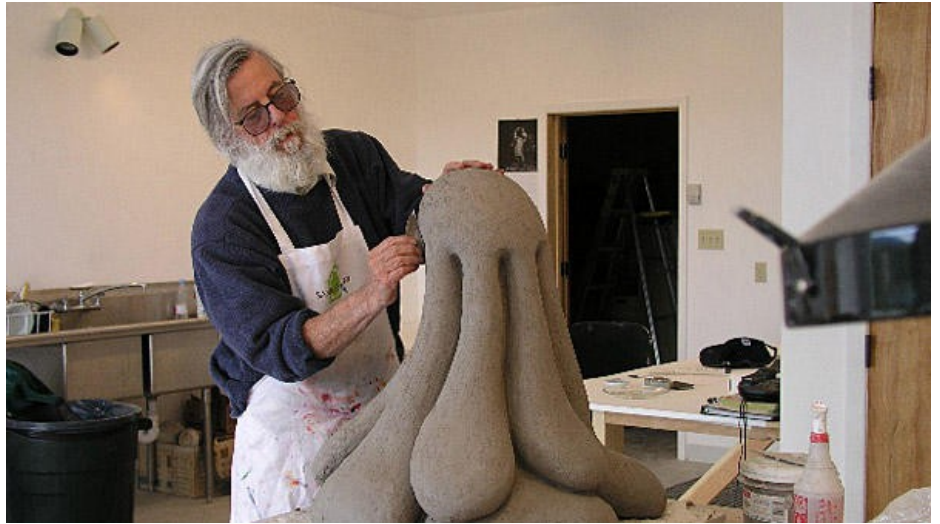
Price's use of bright color on clay forms was a distinctive feature of his work. Often he would usher in these vibrant colors with automobile lacquer and enamel. Other times he achieved the look through the use of acrylic paint rather than fired glazes, a method contrary to ceramic purists, but which typified the artist's refusal to conform to the norm in ceramic arts. And his determination to create unique works. He was a man of few, but well chosen words, who articulated clearly his thoughts on the medium as high art.

While Ken Price was reluctant to discuss his process, he was generous in allowing observers to watch him work. He would draw out the proposed sculpture and then consider the size he intended to produce. For larger pieces, he would employ scale models made of cardboard, or even use a computer to cut a foam prototype. After shaping and firing the clay, he would begin the process of applying as many as 70 to 100 layers of 14 acrylic colors, coat upon coat of metallic, vibrant and iridescent hues. Layers of colors went in reverse order; he applied black first. Each color was painted in five coats before the next color was added.



Ken Price, American, 1935-2012
Izaak, 2002, Acrylic paint on fired ceramic
19 X15 ½ X 14in.

The artist finished each piece using painterly techniques as he patiently and gently removed layers by carefully sanding, rubbing, and polishing the piece, a laborious process exposing the underlying colors. For mottled effects, as demonstrated in *Izaak*, Price would create dots of paint with a Q Tip to heighten the stippled effect. This technique created a surface charged with color, a seamless blend of tint and form, with one taking precedence over the other.



Art critic Jerry Salz once remarked, “Price’s feel for density makes his objects emit compact force fields of binding energy”.

Ken Price was part of the talented generation of artists who emerged across the U.S. in the late 1950s and ‘60s with their own innovations in Abstract Expressionism. With a career spanning over 50 years, Ken Price’s forms were biomorphic, geometric, geological and architectural. They expressed synthetic color, unusual and calibrated erotic innuendo.

The fused figures of the Romanian 20th century sculptor, Constantin Brancusi, influenced Price and seem to haunt *Izaak*. The LA Times described *Izaak* as a “lava landscape (that) meets Brancusi”. Ken Price once said “I remember Brancusi said, *Art should be a well planned crime*. Which is to say that you don’t discuss it before, and you don’t talk much about it afterwards either.”

Ken Price attended the University of Southern California, Los Angeles County Institute of Art, (now Otis College), and the New York State College of Ceramics. Studying directly with Peter Voulkos at the L.A. Institute of Art, he was greatly influenced by Peter’s massive yet organic shapes and forms. Price showed regularly with the artists Billy Al Bengston, Craig Kauffman, Ed Moses, Ed Ruscha and other well respected Los Angeles abstract and contemporary artists.

Ken Price has frequently been called a surrealist and expressionist. His sculptures – from the 1960s to his death in 2012 – have been described as eggs, cups, moon rocks, blobs and slumps. His vivid and artistic imagination stemmed from his upbringing, growing up in West Hollywood with a family of inventors. His grandfather invented headlights and his father helped develop popsicle sticks for the Good Humor Company. In this innovation-rich environment Price’s creativity in ceramic work bloomed.

In 1968, the artists married Happy Ward. Two years later the couple moved to Taos, New Mexico, and in 1983 they relocated to the Massachusetts coast where they remained for seven years until Price returned to Los Angeles and joined the faculty at USC. After a decade of teaching, Price returned with his family to Taos. He lived and worked in both New Mexico and California until his death from cancer in 2012.

Prepared for the Santa Barbara Museum of Art Docent Council by Anne Miller, February 2016.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see website for full bibliography)

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Pagel, David. Art Reviews – Los Angeles Times, June 28, 2002.

Knight, Christopher. “Kenneth Price Dies at 77; Artist Transformed Traditional Ceramics”, L.A. Times, Feb 2012.



Community Speakers Program



Team Leaders Kathryn Padgett
and Shirley Waxman

The Community Speakers Program was off to a great start in its first year. In 2015 CSP gave presentations to 695 members of our community. We begin 2016 adding two additional members to the team: Mary Eckhart and Mary Winder. Last month *La Muse* previewed Mary Eckhart's talk on Portraits. This month we are highlighting Mary Winder's exciting presentation on *Ancient Mystery Cults of Greece and Rome*.

Ancient Mystery Cults of Greece and Rome

This presentation will cover Ancient Mystery Cults—one of the most intriguing but least understood aspects of Greek and Roman Religion.

In the nocturnal Mysteries at Eleusis, participants dramatically reenacted the story of Demeter's loss and recovery of her daughter Persephone; in the Bacchic cult, bands of women ran wild in the Greek countryside to honor Dionysus; and in the mysteries of Mithras, men came to understand the nature of the universe and their place within it through frightening initiation ceremonies and astrological teachings.

These cults were an important part of life in the ancient Mediterranean world, but their actual practices were shrouded in secrecy, and many of their features have remained unclear until recently. Mystery cults flourished in the ancient world for roughly a thousand years, from the sixth century B.C.E. to late antiquity.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art owns an impressive collection of Greco-Roman sculpture and artifacts, this presentation will illustrate one of the many facets of why this art was so very important to the Ancient Greeks and Romans. 🚩

Mithras Sacrificing A Bull, 2nd c. CE, Roman



We are always interested in new ideas, comments, and questions from our fellow docents!
Contact us at: shirleywaxman@gmail.com or kpadgett@cox.net

Puja & Piety Team Announcement



Puja & Piety team extends its invitation to the entire docent friends for a special India Day during the council meeting on March 16—India's savory treats during morning refreshment and a short dance performance after the lecture.

The dance is inspired by exhibition paintings.

Please bring your own sari, or a big square scarf and participate in the fun dance moves!! 🇮🇳



Dalkhai



Kummi Folk Dance

Docent Road Trip to Long Beach

By Ann Hammond (photos by Pma)



It was a good omen that Saturday, February 6, started with sunshine. We had perfect weather for the bus trip to the Long Beach Museum of Art. Pma and John did a wonderful job of organization between sites, including lunch.

On arrival at the LBMA we were delighted by a greeting of coffee and goodies. Then came the real treat—three talented female artists, each one's talent very different, and each artist

present. As they say, art is in the eye of the beholder. My favourite artist was watercolourist Lori Lamont with her huge bright paintings, not at all what one thinks of for watercolours. Also in the trio were Barbara Strasen and Terry Braunstein, both collage artists with distinctly different styles. The work from all three artists was wonderful, extremely interesting.



Here to greet us with tea, lemonade and snacks at the University Art Museum

Lunch was at the Museum, on the patio at Claire's where we enjoyed sunshine, good food, company, and a view of the Queen Mary. Next we traveled to CSU Long Beach for a tour of the sculpture garden, led by great docents. The art was intriguing, and it's always fun going on another docent's tour, just observing and enjoying a style that may or may not be like your own. Everyone was very hospitable, ending the art-filled day with lemonade and more goodies.

Tired and satisfied, we paused for Pma to take a group shot, then boarded the bus home. A great day!



Lori LaMont (artist in residence) tours her solo show "Under the Influence". 21 ft. long water-color "Camp Life in the Woods".



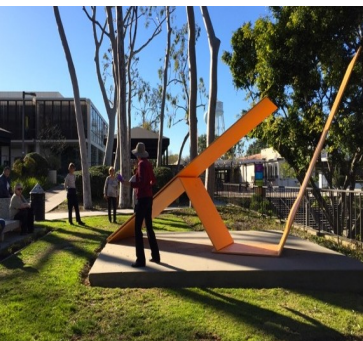
Right: Collage artist Terry Braunstein tours her solo show "Who Is She?"



Andre Bloc (French) "Carlson/Bloc Tower" concrete, paint. 65ft. tall bell tower



Left: Inside entrance of LBMA



Right: Robert Murray (Canadian) "Duet", (Homage to David Smith, steel, epoxy, paint)



CSULB Sculpture Park (from a 1965 symposium). J.J. Beljon (Dutch). "Homage to Simon Rodia" cast concrete and paint



Right: Robert Irwin, (US) "Window Wall", 1975, plaster, concrete, steel



Piotr Kowalski (Polish) "Now" stainless steel. Made with explosive charges taped to steel, detonated under water. Created 3 - 25ft. pieces placed like petals of a tulip

"Carpet? What Carpet?"

Submitted by Ann Hammond



"What carpet? I didn't see it!"

One day during my sweep, I approached a woman and asked whether she would like to see the *Ferrer* exhibit. She said yes, she would. When I told her we would meet in Ludington Court, where the carpet was, she answered with this quote.



Her remark is not unlike many comments I heard from visitors while touring both of our wonderful contemporary exhibitions, *Ferrer* and *Halley*. The other comments I heard came at the end of every single tour, about how much

visitors appreciated docents being available to help them view this art, often saying they would have walked right past, thinking they were all the same and difficult to understand. I am sure my team members would have the same report about visitor comments, as would most docents.

Walking to Ludington to begin my tour that day, the woman's carpet reaction fresh in my mind, I couldn't help smiling and thinking about Marty Molof. Marty was part of my Fab 5 class in 2006, so I knew early on that he favoured contemporary art. Those of you who knew Marty will remember how eager he was to share that passion with visitors.

More than anyone, Marty, in that lovely boyish way he had, could help visitors look at contemporary art instead of trying to understand it, respond instead of think.

Certainly he would have loved these exhibitions. For me they have been a good reminder.

"Carpet? I didn't see any carpet." Our job as docents is to make sure visitors see the art. It sounds obvious, yet makes you realize how much is missed when we look but don't see. 🚩



The Last 1/2 Page



Tracey in a yurt bar, Innsbruck



Wendi at the beach



Mary Ellen in Love

The Last Page



Vikki Duncan giving an ELL tour.

Lori Mohr, Editor
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