

La Muse

Council meetings start at 10 am, with coffee at 9:15.

October 5

Meeting; Charles Wylie, our new Curator of Photography

October 19

Dr. Kenneth Lapatin, Associate Curator from the Getty Museum.

November 2

Meeting

November 16

Bus trip

December 5

Holiday Party

December 21

Meeting cancelled



Cecil Beaton, British, 1904-1980, *Weins: St. Laurence Jewry Under Snow*, circa 1940. Gelatin silver print. From: *London's Honorable Scars*
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Dear Docents,

What a pleasure it was being at our first Council meeting two weeks ago. There was joy to be had, observing friends catching up with each other after the long summer break, excitement and anticipation in the air. Our lively morning coffee was followed up in the auditorium with a warm welcome from Larry Feinberg. In the context of our ongoing renovation, he talked about the history of our Museum, and made a special mention about the role and legacy of the Docent Council. As a gesture of appreciation for our contribution, he offered every docent a copy of the catalogue from our *75th Anniversary* show, a beautiful hard bound volume filled with images of our most beloved pieces.

Patsy continued the theme of change in her opening remarks with a quote from Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*: "Change is the only evidence of life." Our guest speaker, Enda Duffy, Chair of the English Department, UCSB, gave us a fabulous overview of modernism in England, setting our *British Art* exhibition, including Cecil Beaton's photographs, in historical and cultural context. I think we all enjoyed his lecture, whether on the touring team or not. It was a full and satisfying morning for our first one back.

We definitely had much 'evidence of life' in our galleries this summer. The chaos of construction did not stop our tours. Over 1000 children from Art Camp and special requests were given tours during June, July and August. Our adult tours were equally



Gail Stichler, President
Docent of the Year

impressive, and combining kids' tours, Adult tours, and attendees at our Community Speakers talks—the three main branches of our Docent Program—we reached nearly 3,000 souls in talking about and showing our art. That is impressive!

Thank you to all who gave your time and energy this summer. Special thanks go to our new Active Docents: Erica Budig, David Reichert, Patty Santiago and Joanne Singer, who did most of the *Highlights* Tours and Student tours these last 3 months. They were very busy indeed.

We have much to look forward to this Fall. Our next speakers for Docent Council meetings in October will be Charles Wylie, our new Curator of Photography and New Media, and Dr. Kenneth Lapatin, Associate Curator from the Getty Museum. "Art Talks" started September 29 and will continue through November 10. *Dia De Los Muertos* will be Sunday, October 23 from 1 to 4; this is always a favorite event. (Be sure to check out all the upcoming museum events, lectures, workshops, and performances at sbma.net.)

Our student tours start in October. Please remember that beginning October 1, Focus tours are at **2:00 o'clock instead of noon.**

We have so many opportunities to learn about, experience and share our love of art. Here's to an excellent 2016-17 year!

Gail

From our Vice President



Ralph Wilson

Reaction to the Great Refreshment Experiment has been all positive with some teams already planning theme days based on our current exhibitions.

The new plan spreads the refreshment production among all docents rather than counting on a small group of individuals to repeatedly bring food to our Council meetings. Beginning with the first meeting of the year, Focus teams (not Highlight teams) are assigned a meeting date on which they will be charged with providing refreshments.

The team leader is asked to ensure that 3 or 4 team members supply the savory, sweet, fruit and/or cheese, and dairy items. Christy Close, once again our Culinary Supervisor, will remind the team leader two weeks before the assigned date and again three days ahead.

Christy will provide tablecloths and a centerpiece for each meeting, and there are napkins and utensils available.

Ralph

Save the Dates:

November 16—Bus trip to MOCA and The Broad
Sign-ups will be available once arrangements are finalized.

December 5—Holiday party at the home of Andrea and Ron Gallo

From our Student Teams Chair



Karen Brill

This promises to be a great year for touring students. The Teacher Open House held on September 23 was well attended. For newer docents who don't know about it, Teacher Open House at the Museum is the time when teachers are given information and materials to help them incorporate ideas about our exhibitions into their curriculum. This is also when they sign up for Powerpoint presentations in their classrooms, and sign up for tours.

Our first classroom presentation is on October 7th, and the initial student tour is October 14. Please note that the change in times for adult tours creates a window of quiet in the galleries, which will pave the way for smoother student tours.

On that note, we are still hoping to grow the classroom presentation team. This docent visit prior to the students coming for their tours is our frontline approach with schools. We give the kids a preview, get them excited about seeing the art. For us it's an opportunity to learn more about them and their environment, both of which are helpful when they arrive at the Museum. The classroom presentation sets the stage for our giving students the best experience possible as we take them through the galleries.

These classroom visits are a lot of fun; please think about joining the team. If you would like to observe before deciding, we can arrange that.

I've been wanting to share an experience I had during my recent trip to Australia. I was at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney and followed a docent who was touring a group of junior high school students. She concluded her tour by saying, "*Go well, study hard, love art!*"

I was touched by that comment to her students, and inspired. With all the changes going on around us, it is love of art and the desire to share how it touches our lives that remains a constant. Let's keep our eyes on

From our Adult Teams Chair



Christine Holland

Over the summer, Docents did their usual wonderful work. For the months of June, July and August, we gave 184 Adult tours to about 1300 Museum visitors. In addition, the Community Speakers Program reached beyond the Museum with thought provoking presentations on an array of topics relating to our permanent collection.

Docents are a creative and dedicated group, and all your work is appreciated.

We have an interesting year ahead, with the new Special Exhibition to launch our service year. Visitors can be assured of enjoyable tours from that team, as well as from our *Focus* and *Highlights* teams, and those touring *Ten Talks*.

Keep in mind that as of October 1 we will be offering *Special Exhibit* and *Focus* tours at 2 o'clock instead of noon. Please make note of it.

I look forward to seeing you all in the galleries and at our lectures. We have a great year ahead!

Christine

From our Evaluations Chair



Greetings!

It's the start of a new docent year, and for most of us that means an evaluation is in our future. Our bylaws require an evaluation every time a docent joins a new touring team, and every two years thereafter.

I thought it might be helpful to provide a brief review of what our evaluators look for in an adult gallery talk and hope you find this useful.

Laura DePaoli

1. Friendly docents – warm, welcoming and open to questions and comments.
2. An object oriented talk – the discussion should focus on the artworks themselves. To encourage visitors to really look at the object details should be pointed out and discussed. Historical and background information should be related to the visual elements.
3. Introduction, conclusion and transitions tied to a theme. These simple and formal elements help give structure to the talk.
4. Accurate information.
5. Professional presentation – the docent should stand next to the art object, facing the audience so that they can see the artwork and the docent simultaneously. Transitions should be delivered before walking to the next piece.
6. Enticing transitions that make the audience want to move to the next piece.

Please call or email me with any questions, comments or suggestions. ldepaoli@verizon.net

805-455-7868

From our Community Speakers Program



Team Leaders Kathryn Padgett and Shirley Waxman

The CSP team is off to a nice start after a very busy summer. From June through September we gave 28 presentations to 636 people! There is only one public talk scheduled for October:

Montecito Library: Wednesday, October 26, 6 pm. Mary Eckhart:
"Artists of the Golden West: Higher than High, Wider than Wide, Deeper than Deep"

We hope you can join us at this new venue. We would love your feedback, support and company. As always, we welcome any suggestions for venues where we can take 'the museum on the road'. Send us the info and we will do the rest!

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Shirley or Kathryn.

communityspeakerssbma@gmail.com

Docents Visit "Women Sculptors" at Westmont

Ralph Wilson and Ann Hammond Report



The surprising depth of the permanent collection of the Westmont Ridley-Tree Museum of Art became apparent as ten Docents visited their "Women Sculptors" exhibition on September 12th. Sixteen sculptors were included, and if a sculpture was unavailable, a graphic work represented the artist.



We were treated to a guided tour by Dr. Judy Larson, Director of the museum, who introduced us to several previously unfamiliar artists. In addition to graphics by some familiar names such as Louise Nevelson and Louise Bourgeois, the show included sculptures by Jessica Stockholder, Asta Gröting, Jenchi Wu, Nancy Graves, and others. A challenging pairing of an Alison Saar sculpture next to one of her works on paper added interest.

The great impact of this show belied its relatively small scale. The impressive quality of the works and Judy's engaging and enlightening comments made the Docents' visit all the more memorable.



The fun part of Dr Larson's talk, for me, was that her two dogs were with us! I was a little late but was greeted by them both, one with a toy and a look of - play with me! They were very well behaved and from my point of view, a delightful addendum.

Asta Groting, b. 1961, had the floor, literally. Made with glass, plasticine and wood. Hard to verbally describe, but four bases of clear glass cones with broken jagged peaks to support a log like black liquorice-like spiral.... At least 10ft long



Lynn Aldrich shows three connected pieces, b. 1944

- Felt hearts stacked for colour, pale pink to very dark purple, maybe 3ft tall;
- Gothic shaped form filled with REAL aluminium crutches with pale wood arm supports, hung on the wall;
- a clingfilm wrapped package on top of a 3ft perspex (plexiglass this side of the Atlantic) base. Visually very pleasing....

My favourite little old French lady, Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010) had an etching 1999 of two feet/socks, just a black outline on luggage tags with toes superimposed on top of the 'socks'. Drypoint with ink and graphic additions.



Louise Bourgeois (b.1914), *Feet (Socks)*. 1999. Drypoint, with ink and pencil additions.

Lynn Aldrich (American, b. 1944), *Primary Virtues: Faith, Hope, & Love*, 1989, Mixed Media

A UNIQUE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN EXHIBIT AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

By Jerry Jensen



On a recent trip to the British Isles I had the opportunity in London to see a very special exhibit of antiquities on loan from Egypt, which was very different from the usual pieces associated with pyramids in that country. Most people recognize images of ancient pieces found in King Tut's tomb during the early 1920s, however this exhibit at the British Museum (until the end of November) is comprised mainly of major items discovered beneath waters of the Nile delta as it empties into the Mediterranean.

Over 1000 years ago the lost cities of Thonis and Canopus sank into the water, possibly the result of a major earthquake. These cities were thriving trading ports connecting Egypt and Greece.

They were perfectly preserved under many layers of sand and sediment and were not discovered until 1933 by sightings from the air. It was not until 1996 that Egypt had the technology to excavate archaeological remains in a submerged landscape.

Findings by divers ranged from monumental statues over 16 foot tall to everyday kitchen items and jewelry. It is estimated that the two cities may have covered nearly 40 square miles, most of which is still unexcavated. Divers have worked in only 2 hour shifts due to the difficulty and danger of working in murky waters.

Lighting in the Museum is low perhaps to replicate the poor underwater light wherein many objects were found.

In the main entry gallery stands Hapy (*left*, sometimes spelled Hapi), the river god of the Nile. He personifies the river's annual flood, which brings fertility and wealth to Egypt. This statue is made of red granite and stands nearly 16 feet tall, which must have been an impressive sight to traders visiting the now lost cities.

Elsewhere in the exhibition are two equally colossal statues of a pharaoh and his queen also done in red granite (*right*). He wears a double crown symbolizing the union of southern and northern Egypt and she wears a crown composed of a sun disc framed by cow horns, headgear common to royal women of the time.



Website images



Statue of Hapy, 4th or 3rd century BC, red granite

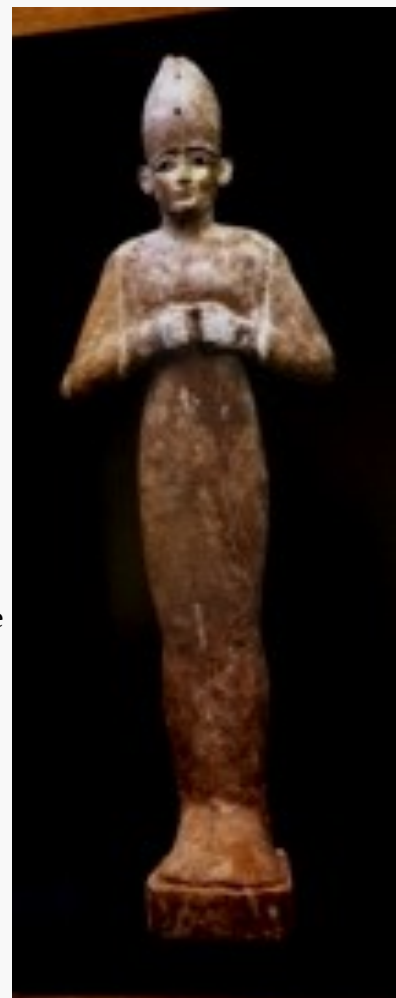


Colossal statues of a king and queen, possibly reign of Ptolemy II, (295- 246 BC) but re-carved later.

1. Limestone
2. Bronze
3. Alabaster
4. Terracotta
5. Black granite
6. Granodiorite
7. Black diorite
8. Gold gilding
9. Marble
10. Red granite
11. Basalt
12. Sycamore wood

The diversity of material used in carving the statuary found in the exhibit is notable and listed on the left. Such diversity is not found in statues carved today.

Perhaps the most surprising ancient carving displayed is done in sycamore wood, surprising because it is the most perishable of the materials listed. Wooden figures that have survived almost completely intact for over 2000 years are absolutely marvelous.



Statue of Osiris, 332-31 BC, (Ptolemaic Period, Sycamore

One such sycamore wood statue is that of Osiris, (*right*) Egyptian king of the underworld, god of regeneration and rebirth. He is one of the most important and popular gods, promising life after death. All rulers were believed to have descended from Osiris.

His image and name appear prominently in many royal tombs. The smooth and artistically carved Osiris shown here still has original bronze and glass eyes.

The fourth and last figure shown in this discussion is a relief carving of the Greek god Hermes, (*below*) believed to have been done in an Alexandria, Egypt workshop. The material is either granite or basalt. Hermes

is considered to be the equivalent of the Egyptian god Thoth, who conducted souls of the dead into the afterlife. It is an example of the commonality of many Greek and Egyptian gods resulting from the extensive commercial traffic between the two cultures. Citizens of both countries traveled to the other and so did their gods with differing names.

None of the pieces found in the lost cities were conceived as works of art. Motivation for their creation was primarily religious or to lionize rulers who were considered to be god descendants. However, the high level of enduring workmanship in the objects certainly qualifies them to be exhibited in present day art institutions such as the British Museum and shared with docents at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.



Hermes, divine guide of souls to the underworld, early 1st century BC, granite or basalt

The Assault of Modernism on Britain

By Ricki Morse



Our 20th c *British Modernism* exhibition wittily reveals the assault the British felt at the onslaught of Modernism, both sociologically and artistically. The show's opening image, George Frederic Watts' "The First Whisper of Love," (*right*), sets the stage, displaying a widely admired work that upholds the stan-



George Frederic Watts, British, 1817-1904, *The First Whisper of Love*, n.d., oil on canvas

dards of Victorian painting. The subject derives from classical mythology, speaking to the erudition of the artist. The image is demure and proper and yet sentimental and romantic. Watts himself saw imperialism as a progressive force in society, another aspect of Victoria's reign to celebrate. London was the financial center of the world. The sun never set on the British Empire. Upon the elevation of Victoria's eldest, Edward VII, to the throne upon her death in 1901, England entered the Edwardian era, a time of prosperity and empire expansion, admiring of aristocracy and accepting of class distinctions.

The quintessential Edwardian portrait by William Orpen, "Portrait of Henry W. de Forest," (*left*) depicts an



William Orpen, Irish, 1878-1931, *Portrait of Henry W. de Forest*, n.d., oil on canvas

American industrial titan from New York, developer of the Southern Pacific Railroad, sitting in London for the leading portrait painter of the time. His relaxation conveys his comfort with power and embodies an inherent elegance and grace. But the backstory is local and catapults us into the world of pop art with the typical urgency of Modernism. Henry de Forest vacationed in Santa Barbara with his family and while here his daughter, Alice, who gave us this painting upon her death, met a young man named Sedgwick attending The Cate School. Their daughter was Edie Sedgwick, a name that probably rings a bell. As a socialite and heiress, she was a member of Andy Warhol's New York Factory

as the It Girl.

But back to Victorian England.

Interestingly it was another American who introduced English artists to French Impressionism. James McNeil Whistler taught in London, drawing many students from the Slade School, University College London, a modern institution founded by philanthropist Felix Slade, which from the beginning included women. One student, Walter Sickert became McNeil's assistant, and began producing small "sight-sized"



Walter Richard Sickert, English, 1860-1942, *View of Dieppe*, ca 1899, oil on board

paintings, honoring black as the major color, and placing soft tones on a dark background, painting “wet on wet,” completing a painting in one session. These impressionistic, soft edged, low contrast works were Whistler’s response to French Impressionism. In 1883 he sent Sickert to Paris to deliver his painting, “Arrangement in Gray and Black,” dated 1871, as it had been purchased by the French government. Popularly known as “Whistler’s Mother,” and on view today at the Musée D’Orsay, it embodies many of the principles Whistler was teaching in London. During this same trip to Paris, Whistler arranged an appointment for Sickert with Edgar Degas, a meeting that changed Sickert’s understanding of painting. In the coming years Sickert referred to Degas as “my lighthouse.”

Walter Sickert became the most influential and well-known artist working in London, Dieppe and Venice before World War I. In our painting, “La Carolina Wearing a Scottish Shawl,” 1903-04, (*below*) we see the early lessons on color, soft tones and low contrast still at play along with another element often observed in British painting from this time into contemporary work, the “implied story.” We see a simple, domestic scene, washstand in the background, the central figure draped in a homey Scottish shawl. The model is a Venetian prostitute, one of two Sickert often painted, and the artist thus compounds the shock of judging a simple woman worthy of sitting for a portrait.

Modernism’s assault on the British class system is propelled by many such “simple people” portraits appearing in galleries throughout London.

But probably the most directed attack came from British Vorticism, a movement led by a friend of Sickert’s, Wyndham Lewis, who had also studied at the Slade School, and saw Vorticism as the ultimate weapon to vanquish the remaining sentimentality and romanticism from British art.

He was not only an artist, but also a skilled writer and founded a short-lived magazine called BLAST presenting the principles of Vorticism, the word coined by the British poet Ezra Pound (see image below). An out-



Walter Sickert, *La Carolina Wearing a Scottish Shawl*, 1903-04, oil on canvas



David Bomberg, *The Mud Bath*, 1914
Oil on canvas

growth of cubism, Vorticism rejects landscape and the figure in favor of line, color and dynamic configuration, seeing in the abstract an essence of the mechanized, scientific, modern, in which pure concept can be seen as more meaningful than recognizable image.

The Bloomsbury group of writers and Cambridge intellectuals, which circulated around Virginia Woolf, her sister Vanessa Bell and husband Clive Bell and John Maynard Keynes were a particular target of Lewis. He saw them as elitist, decadent, romantic, out of touch with the evolving contemporary world. In

the years between and following the two wars, many Englishmen turned for solace to the English countryside, holding it as a good in and of itself, much like the French hold their language. The Bloomsbury Group championed sexual freedom, the importance of the individual, which found an ally in surrealism, the psycho-



Graham Sutherland, English, 1903-1980, *Triple-Tiered Landscape*, 1944. Ink, wax, crayon, pencil with watercolor, ink wash, gouache on paper

analytic acceptance of the validity of feelings and dream material. These ideas opened new avenues for artistic material and provided grounding for a whole world, much of it highly personal, even sentimental. Viewing Graham Sutherland's "Three Tiered Landscape," 1944, (left) we are presented with a rethinking of surrealism, cubism and expressionism that brings it all together. The beloved English landscape is flattened, piled upon itself, glorified, and becomes a personal dream landscape, loved and cherished. The British love of their island again defied Modernism.

However, Wyndham Lewis found it imperative to define Vorticism as different from another movement, Italian Futurism. He early saw the inherent violence in the Italian movement, even though many of its tenets were similar to Vorticism, sourced in cubism, devoted to the line and the machine. But it focused on movement above all, intending to depict movement as Umberto Boccioni so masterfully achieved in his sculpture, "Unique Forms of

Continuity in Space" in 1913 (right). Ezra Pound defined Vorticism: its core is the vortex; it is the coming together in a common center, a newly discovered fulcrum of meaning, balance and groundedness. As Italian Futurism increasingly allied itself with fascism, it lost its influence, and with the horrors and losses of world wars, Vorticism also seemed less relevant.

We currently have an opportunity to view the evolution of Modernism in Britain, right up to the beginning of the 21st c. The Getty Center has assembled an exhibition of contemporary British painters, *London Calling*, who are beneficiaries of the explorations undertaken by the painters in our show. The Getty exhibition will be up until

November 13, 2016. Of the artists in the Getty show, we display one in ours, (left), Leon Kossoff, from 1972, "Dalton Junction with Ridley Road Street Market."



Leon Kossoff, *Dalton Junction with Ridley Road Street Market*, 1972

The vibrant world of rebuilt and flourishing London is displayed in a style that combines many of the lessons of Vorticism, the energetic lines pulling us into the center of an electric world, relying on the energy of the painting rather than the images of place or people to convey the experience. The lessons of French post-Impressionist art combine with abstract line and angle to reveal a contemporary thriving city, its energy expanding into the sky. Leon Kossoff continues to paint in his hometown of London today, providing us with the ultimate triumph of Modernism in his worldview. But as we examine the rest of the show, we find the British spirit of individualism expressed in the persistence of the human figure, in the work of Francis Bacon, Lucien Freud (Sigmund's grandson), Fred Auerbach, R. B. Kitaj (a transplanted American), and Michael Andrews. The figure dominates the exhibition, reminding us that the Brits remain true to their roots, to their celebration of the observed world. Though the impasto and vigorous courses of paint recall the French post-Impressionists, the subject matter reflects an expressively painted reality.

Maybe Brexit is not so surprising.



Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913

THE LAST PAGE



Image: [Catrina hecha con aserrin pintado by Guillerminargp](#)

Goal: To pass on Day of the Dead traditions to younger generations of Mexican-Americans, many of whom have been separated from their family's spiritual and geographic origins.

From: *The New Yorker*, October 3, 2016



Lori Mohr, Editor
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