

Docent Dates

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

April 4
NO MEETING
Cancelled for Bus Trip

April 18
Geoff Dyer

April 22-27
New York Trip

May 2
Joan Tanner and Julie Joyce on contemporary drawing

May 16
Kathy Rae Huffman :
A History of Video in Art
In conjunction with Nam June Paik's "TV Clock"

June 1
Graduation and Service Recognition Ceremony
(Time to be confirmed)

June 6
Only if needed for summer exhibition



Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Japanese, 1798-1861. *Rōnin Tominomori Suke-emon Masakata at Mononao's mansion under an alarm bell during the night attack*, from the series, *Portraits of Loyal and Righteous Samurai*, first issued 1853 Color woodblock print. SBMA Works on Paper, March 25-June 10, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

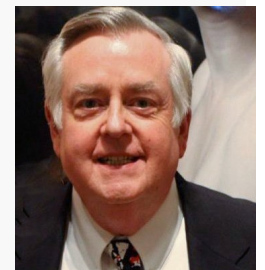
Elsewhere in this issue of *La Muse* you will find the nominees for next year's Docent Council Board. Under President Mary Ellen you will find several continuing members of the current board as well as docents who have never or have not held a position for several years. Once again the list demonstrates the immense talent

to be found in our diverse and highly qualified Council membership. Please thank these docents for their willingness to serve on the Board and to assume the responsibilities of leadership throughout the next year. I know you will give them your full cooperation and support as you have to this year's board. Election of the board will occur at our April 18th meeting.

April 18th will be the only Docent Council meeting in the month. The April 4th meeting is cancelled because of the Norton Simon Museum bus trip and Geoff Dyer's schedule, which enabled him to speak with the Council only on the April 18th date.

Speakers in May will include Joan Tanner and Julie Joyce talking about the contemporary drawing exhibition in the summer and Kathy Rae Huffman presenting a history of video in art in conjunction with the installation of Nam June Paik's "TV Clock".

Although the current Docent year is drawing to a close, there is no lack of excitement and challenge throughout the next couple of months. *Ralph*



Ralph Wilson,
President

From our **Vice President**
Exhibition Photos by Sara Bangser



Mary Ellen Hoffman

Greetings All!

Hard to believe this is my last official trip report as VP! When I first started scouting activities for the council last June, it seemed a daunting task. But then things began to fall into place and our most recent trip on March 26 to the Norton Simon to see "Taking Shape, Degas as Sculptor" may have been the best one yet. For starters, we encountered almost no traffic, arriving in Pasadena



Photo by Bob Downs

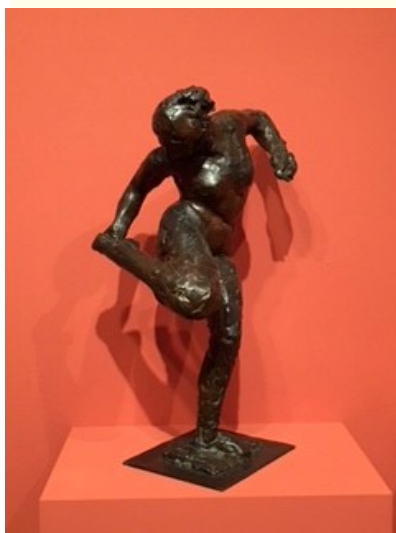
40 minutes early, an auspicious beginning for the 19 of us on the bus (and the 2 who met us there).

The show of the first small bronzes—cast from clay models found in Degas' studio after his death—was like opening a secret sealed box with drawings the artist never intended to be displayed, but fascinating for future generations.

The Norton Simon holds all the original bronze castings; the original clay models are now at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. The show was very well curated, from the rosy-hued wall paint to

the interspersing of Dega's paintings—and of course, the *Little Ballerina*. Everything in the show was from the Norton Simon permanent collection (except one painting they "share" with the Getty).

The two "educators" (all docents have either a masters or doctorate) for our split group were both terrific. In 90 minutes, they took us through the show, then on to see permanent collection highlights as well. It was a gorgeous day so most of us ate at the outdoor café, then meandered the grounds enjoying several Rodin sculptures and checking out the gift shop before we headed back to Santa Barbara at 3:00.



The return trip was equally pleasant with everyone relaxing over wine, cheese, nuts and chocolate, a fitting end to a fun day well-spent.

The show goes through April 9 so get there if you can!

I look forward to what our next VP will plan for us and hope he/she has as much fun as I did planning our trips!

Mary Ellen



From our Student Teams Chair



Karen Brill

Recently several young visitors were disappointed to learn that they wouldn't get to see the *Samurai Warrior*. A quick thinking docent hustled them over to the Tibetan Yaman-taka, our 32-armed *Terminator of Death*. If that wasn't enough to satisfy their youthful lust for drama, they also learned the name means "Sublimely Frightful." This bronze sculpture also features nine heads—the main head is that of a buffalo—and 16 legs in a combative pose. The anger of this wrathful god is directed towards death, and in this detailed work we can find many skulls. There are plenty of diagonals to indicate the energy and action of this figure.



From the 75th Anniversary catalogue

I encourage you to share your student touring stories here in *La Muse*, the perfect forum to learn from each other! Email or catch me at a meeting or in the galleries if you have an anecdote or particularly successful piece that your students have enjoyed.

Karen

From our Adult Teams Chair



Irene Stone

As of now we are maintaining a fairly stable touring calendar. The two special exhibitions are drawing visitors, but many seem to be first timers who are just learning about our museum. February statistics show 36 regularly scheduled tours with a total of 184 visitors, an average of 5.1 per tour. We had five tours with zero visitors—two *Highlights*, two *Brought to Light*, and one *Color*. There seems to be no pattern to help us determine why some scheduled tours have no visitors.

Guards at the lower level entrance have asked me where they should tell visitors to meet for tours, and it seemed best to say **near the elevator on the main floor**. We have many new guards (along with the first-time visitors) so we want our museum staff to feel comfortable as they learn the routines, and our visitors not to feel confused. Visitor Services realizes that with few galleries open, docents can easily explain where tours start when they sweep, but it is helpful to have consistency.

May I also remind you to please fill out the Red Book after giving your tours. Comments about the tour itself, where people are from, etc., are most appreciated as well. These data help us better understand and serve our visitors.

Last but hardly least, a heartfelt thank you to those of you who have volunteered to fill in for tours where we are shorthanded. As a reminder, the Docent Board has agreed that any tour can be substituted under the general *Highlights* title as we fill gaps in our schedule of coverage. So bring your tour and feel free to fill in on any team; your *Highlights* will be fine. I am glad to explain this in more detail.

I'm sure you join me in welcoming Spring! *Irene*

From our **Nominations Chair**



Gail Stichler

Dear Docents,

The members of the Nominations Committee—Rachael Kriepps, Ralph Wilson, Mary Ellen Hoffman and I—are pleased to announce the board slate for the 2018-2019 service year. These nominees will be presented at the April 18th docent meeting. At that time, the election of officers and chairpersons will be made by a majority vote of Active Docents present at the meeting. Many thanks go to this group of docents who have volunteered to serve on the board next year.

President:	Mary Ellen Hoffman
Vice President:	Mary Joyce Winder
Secretary	David Reichert
Treasurer	Patty Santiago
Membership	Helene Strobel
Adult Teams	Irene Stone
Student Teams	Karen Brill
Provisional Co-Chairs	Vikki Duncan & Erika Budig
Research	Barbara Boyd
Evaluations	Joan Dewhirst
Webmaster	Loree Gold
Past Pres/Nominations	Ralph Wilson

From our Research Chair



Barbara Boyd

Here is an excerpt from Provisional Sara Bangser's Research paper on a work from a modern school of public artists. You can soon read the paper in its entirety on our website so you can use it on your tours. *Barbara*

Jenny Holzer, American
1950-

The Living Series: There is a period when it is clear...
1989. Bethel white granite bench, 17 x 36 x 18 in



This gleaming 2-seat bench is fabricated from speckled grey and white Vermont granite, highly polished, and refreshingly cool to the touch with strong straight recessed legs. The smooth marble glows and is an invitation to the viewer to sit, rest, and think. Sandblasted onto the top are the words:

THERE IS A PERIOD WHEN IT IS CLEAR
THAT YOU HAVE GONE WRONG
BUT YOU CONTINUE
SOMETIMES THERE IS A LUXURIOUS AMOUNT OF TIME
BEFORE ANYTHING BAD HAPPENS

Just as the act of sitting on a bench invites contemplation, this phrase starts the viewer on a journey of reflection on their past occurrences, perhaps a life event, perhaps a catastrophe, or a misguided act. Holzer suggests that moving forward is the strongest personal action, and then posits: SOMETIMES THERE IS A LUXURIOUS AMOUNT OF TIME BEFORE ANYTHING BAD HAPPENS. Thus, by letting go of the pressures of time one can achieve calmness and inner serenity.

Jenny Holzer chose thought-provoking truth-seeking messaging, and her break-out large scale public art projects encourage the dialog of self-awareness, personal identity, and a voice for change. For Holzer, the text-based image, reminiscent of graffiti, is the art, unlike artwork that also incorporates text messages.

Prepared for the Santa Barbara Museum of Art Docent Council by Sara Bangser, January 2018

Jasper Johns: Review of *Retrospective at the Broad*

By Deborah Solomon

New York Times Feb 7, 2018



Johns in studio, A. White, NYT

The Broad show, which remains on view through May 13 and covers six decades, offers a relatively intimate glimpse at his work. You come to see the American flags but....



Untitled," 2016

To read the review click below

<https://www.thebroad.org/art/special-exhibitions/jasper-johns-something-resembling-truth>

From our **Community Speakers Program**



Team Leaders Kathryn
Padgett & Shirley Waxman

Dear Docents,

Despite several evacuations during March, docents in the Community Speakers Program were able to complete six presentations for a total of 110 individuals.

We presented at Wood Glen Hall, Maravilla, the Montecito Friendship Center, Alexander Gardens, the Central Library, and the Californian.

Our public lecture in April is scheduled for

April 15th at the Central Library at 3:00pm. Mary Eckhart will present her very engaging presentation titled, *The Artful Reader: Art Plus Books! Magic!*

Also, take note of the slate of terrific lectures coming in Art Talks.

Kathryn & Shirley communityspeakerssbma@gmail.com

ART TALKS

- April 5 ***Jean-Léon Gérôme and the Crisis of History Paintings in the 1850s – Part II***
Gülru Çakmak, Associate Professor of 19th-century European Art,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- April 26 ***György Képes in the Cold War, Part I: Camouflage and Pattern***
John Blakinger, postdoctoral fellow, USC Society of Fellows
- May 3 ***György Képes in the Cold War, Part II: Collaborations and Environments***
John Blakinger, postdoctoral fellow, USC Society of Fellows
- May 24 ***The Contemporary Art World and Accumulation***
Charles Stuckey, Independent Scholar

Thursdays, 10:00am – 11:30am

Mary Craig Auditorium, Santa Barbara Museum of Art

\$60 Museum members; \$75 non-members

**To subscribe, please visit the Visitor Services Desks in person,
by phone (805) 884-6423, or online at sbma.net/tickets
(Single tickets available the morning of the lecture: \$15)**

TAKE NOTE NEW EMAIL Jeff.Vitucci@gmail.com

Sky Art – Santa Barbara and Beyond

By Doug McElwain



Have you heard the term Sky Art? I hadn't until recently. I'm not sure if it's a marketing term or a new art term but it is metaphorically descriptive.

Sky Art sculptures are large pieces of art set in unusual public places by artists known and unknown, either individuals or groups. There are a couple of examples here in Santa Barbara. The first

that comes to mind is located a mile or so east of Hendry's Beach.

Someone attached about two dozen abstract metal butterflies to two fallen trees. The bright blue colors are now fading as the salt air rusts the metal butterflies. But I felt a thrill when I discovered these sculptures completely unexpectedly.



UCSB Lagoon Island Labyrinth



Serendipity at its best! I wanted to find out if any more existed along the beach, so I walked from Leadbetter Beach to More Mesa. Unfortunately not another example was to be found.

Then a fellow docent told me about the Maze at the end of Labyrinth Trail on Lagoon Island at UCSB. It's about a half mile from the nearest public parking lot. But it's a very tranquil walk in a peaceful setting overlooking the ocean. I experienced a Zen-like feeling en route.

And then there is the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park sixty miles south of Palm Springs. The park is best known for its spring wildflower displays typically in late February—early March, but the park also has some of the most diverse and memorable Sky Art I have found. Roberto Breceda has created one hundred and thirty sculptures and placed them around the desert outside of Borrego Springs. Getting to the art requires some driving on dirt roads.

Breceda was born in Durango, Mexico and has resided in California for over twenty-five years. His sculptures are inspired by fossils and the history of the area. Some are inspired by whim and



fantasy. The most spectacular sculpture is the Serpent undulating through the desert with the head of a Chinese dragon, the body of a sea serpent and the tail of a rattlesnake. There are also dinosaurs; a standoff between a giant scorpion and a grasshopper; extinct horses; saber tooth tigers; Wind God Birds and more.

If you go looking for Sky Art, happy hunting!



Abstract expressionist Gerd Koch reflects on his life and career in Ventura County

VC Reporter Feb 21, 2018 by Nancy Lackey Shaffer

Submitted by Ann Hammond

Note: SMBA has just hung "High Spring #3" 1962



Gerd Koch at his studio in Ojai, circa 1959 *Courtesy of Focus on the Masters Archive, Gerd Koch Papers.*

Gerd Koch is back in Ojai.

After his longtime partner, expressionist artist Carole Milton, lost the Ventura home the couple shared to the Thomas Fire, he, Milton and the couple's cats and dog have relocated to a

charming abode not far from downtown.

"We lost *everything*," the artist says, with emphasis but not bitterness. He speaks with excitement about the new things happening in 2018: his travel lectures at Studio Channel Islands, and the art center's upcoming 20th anniversary celebrations.

Now, just a few weeks after celebrating his 89th birthday ("We had a grand time!"), there's a sense of coming full circle: Ojai was the first place Koch landed when he arrived in Ventura County in the 1950s.

Koch was born in 1929 in Detroit. His father worked for an industrial firm, and one of his first jobs was as a bicycle errand and messenger boy. His parents were German and went to Europe a few times to visit relatives — providing Koch with both an excellent German accent and a love for travel that has never left him. A friend's mother was interested in getting her son into an art institute, which Koch says started him on a creative path.

"I was a terrible artist!" he insists. "But it was a start. I began to understand what it was all about. I never thought I'd be a teacher."

His life's work, of course, tells a different story. The abstract expressionist is as much a part of Ventura County's cultural fabric as the ocean and the chaparral-studded hillsides. As an artist, teacher (at Ventura



College, where he taught for nearly 30 years), mentor, traveler, collector and community activist, his impact on the local art scene can't be overstated.

"He is a true champion of the arts, never wavering from his commitment to bringing the best artists to the fore in Ventura County," says Peter Tyas, executive director of Studio Channel Islands. Koch was, of course, one of the founders of that institution 20 years ago. "Gerd has shaped the arts in the county for over six decades, striving for excellence and working with the most exciting artists and demanding the best



"High Spring #3" 1962, Oil on canvas. 99 x 80 in SBMA. Gift of Katherine Hughes



*"Spring to Summer," part of the Russian River Series.
Courtesy of Focus on the Masters Archive, Gerd Koch Papers.*

from everyone he works with." Koch first came to California after graduating from Wayne State University in 1951, when he attended a summer workshop at UCLA. He visited Santa Barbara with friends and quickly fell in love with the sunny climate and local art community. He ended up enrolling in an MFA program at UCSB, and taught UCSB extension classes. Those extension classes eventually led to teaching positions at both Santa Barbara Community College and UCSB.

But Ojai was the first place in California he would call home.

"I lived in Ojai in 1952," he recalls, noting that he originally arrived to start an artists' commune. Ojai was already a crea-

ative crucible, where Hollywood celebrities came to get away from the city and artists such as Beatrice Wood and Otto and Vivika Heino found that the valley's peace, solitude and beauty stimulated the muse. Koch and other artists leased a large plot of land from Iris Tree, a wealthy socialite, poet, actress and model who had been painted by Modigliani, photographed by Man Ray and sculpted by Jacob Epstein.

Koch was also involved in the L.A. art scene. He showed at the Ferus Art Gallery, which was opened in 1957 by Walter Hopps and Ed Kienholz and hosted the likes of Ed Moses, Robert Irwin, Ed Ruscha and Andy Warhol — and helped distinguish the West Coast as a formidable, vibrant art hub. A friendship with modern dancer Kate Hughes Kinzler led to some interesting collaborations where art, music and dance came together in a creative spectacle. Wherever avante garde art and culture flourished, Koch seemed to be a part of it.

One watershed moment was winning the First Purchase Award during the 1959 L.A. County Museum of Art's L.A. and Vicinity Annual Exhibition. "It was considered a major exhibition," Koch recalls. "It was really a spectacular thing to happen. I got a *lot* of attention — it put me on the map." With his reputation building, Koch joined the faculty of Ventura College in 1960, where a rich and diverse art department (under the direction of William McEnroe) was already taking shape. Koch's contemporaries included Jack Baker, William Winterbourne, Carlisle Cooper and (later) Hiroko Yoshimoto — names synonymous with art and culture in Ventura County.

Koch is an exceptional artist, whose abstract landscapes (many of the chaparral hillsides), topographic explorations and myth-inspired renderings are filled with motion and texture, and almost imperceptible patterns determining the composition. He has referred to his work in the past as "visual music." The tune is intoxicating, the jumble of color and flowing brush strokes drawing the viewer in, hypnotic and a bit adventurous.

It's not always clear where a Koch painting will take you, but you're definitely going somewhere. Just as valuable, however, are the contributions he has made as a teacher. For nearly 40 years Koch has taught, mentored and guided art students, helping put them on the path to realizing their full potential. Donna Granata, founder of Focus on the Masters, studied under Koch at Ventura College, and through him gained a deep and abiding love for and understanding of the creative process. Koch was one of the first artists documented by FOTM.

Artists both locally renowned and internationally accomplished have benefited from Koch's tutelage: John Nava, Suzanne Caporael, Roxie Ray, Elain Thompson, Pat Richards Dodds . . . just to name a few.

Another lasting contribution that Koch has made locally is with Studio Channel Islands (SCI). The art

institution, which was originally founded on the campus of California State University, Channel Islands, and later moved to its current location in Old Town Camarillo, owes much to Koch. Along with co-founders Pat Richards Dodds, J. Handel Evans and Maggie Kildee, Koch helped nudge the fledgling organization along, bringing in fantastic artists for impressive exhibitions that brought it prestige and renown.

“Gerd Koch has been a fixture within SCI at every step of its development,” says Tyas. “He has mentored many of the artists in residence as well as playing an invaluable role in bringing about some of our most ambitious projects.”

“I’m a guy who likes to stick my neck out,”

Koch explains. “That’s why Pat Richards Dodds called me. I curated around 15 shows to put the university on the map. I had a reputation and I knew a lot of well-known artists.”

Now in its 20th year, Koch has been involved with SCI’s anniversary celebrations.

“Gerd has been helping us to reach out to his students and peers,” Tyas says, noting that Koch helped identify some 30 individuals “who went on to greatness.” Many of these people will be featured in exhibitions this year.

In addition, Koch has been offering travel lectures at SCI. The first one was in January and gave Koch a chance to share his vast knowledge of the places he’s visited, as well as tips for getting the most out of the trip. A lifelong globetrotter, Koch has run numerous tours abroad, discussing everything from art and architecture to history, cuisine and culture.

Despite losing everything (the only painting they saved was one of Milton’s), Koch is facing the future with optimism. “We’re in a sweet little home that’s very contemporary,” Koch says of his new digs. “It’s a nice, interesting place. It’s fun to be back in Ojai, because I have such fond memories of it.”

Ojai has embraced its newest residents wholeheartedly. Ojai Studio Artists have made both Koch and Milton honorary members, and friends and family drop by frequently. Granata recently gave them some paint and other art supplies to replace those lost in the fire. Even Koch’s neighbor is a fan, having taken an art class from him at Ventura College some years ago.

“There’s still a lot up in the air,” Koch admits. “We haven’t decided if we’ll buy another home.” The land where the former home was “is a very valuable lot — everybody wants to buy it.”

While he decides the next chapter, his travel lectures and SCI’s anniversary celebrations are keeping him busy . . . and connected to the art community that he loves so deeply and has spent a lifetime sharing with others.

“I want to get people to understand more about art, collect and get to do new things,” Koch says.

Looking back on the years he has spent in Ventura County, the friends he’s made, the students he’s taught, the art and travel and people that have filled his life, Koch is both humble and a bit bemused by it all. “It’s an interesting, small world, really,” says the artist with a smile.



“Spring Near Russian River,” 2000. (Lost in the Thomas Fire.) Gerd Koch Retrospective. Photo courtesy of Focus on the Masters Archive, Gerd Koch Papers.



Museum Collectors Council

Submitted by Shirley Waxman



This event for MCC members has been extended to the docents. I think it is going to be interesting to talk with these young emerging artists, many of whom have already been in museums and galleries. Amazing young talent!

UCSB MFA Graduate Students: Visit and Studio Tour

**Friday, April 6, 2018 5 – 7 pm UCSB
\$25 per person**

(left to right) Jennifer Lugris, Jimmy Miracle, Richard Huerta, Toni Scott, Lucy Holtsnider, Adam Jahnke

In the tradition of John Nava, Mary Heebner, Richard Serra, and Marc di Suevero, 15 artists — diverse in all dimensions of the word — are exploring and defining their creative practice as MFA candidates at UCSB. Visit with each in their individual studios, and listen to them as a group discuss what it's like coming of age as artists in these times, and how being part of a creative community (housed in a soccer stadium) has influenced their perspectives, processes, and work. In addition to a large measure of new ideas and visual treats, along with a shot of creative energy, enjoy a sandwich buffet, beverages, and time to re-connect and enjoy the company of fellow MCC members. The event location, UCSB Harter Soccer Stadium, is in an easy-to-reach campus location with adjacent, pre-paid, hassle-free, attended parking.



*Cleaning Man,
Norton Simon Museum
Photo by LM*

Lori Mohr, Editor
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