

La Muse

Docent Dates

Docent Meetings

February 5
cancelled

February 19
Mayumi Kodani,
Tatsuo Miyajima

February 24
Getty Villa Bus Trip

March 4
James Glisson, New
Curator, Contemp Art

March 18
Julie Joyce, on *In the
Meanwhile*

April 1
No meeting

April 15
Edgar Arceneaux,
artist *In the Meanwhile*

May 6
Bruce Robertson,
*Small Format American
Painting show*

May 20
Eik Kahng, *Van Gogh*

**Graduation and
Service Awards**
Date TBD

SAVE THE DATE
NYC April 27-May 1



Raffi Kalendarian, American, B. 1981. *Sascha (Poolside)* 2011. Oil on panel. 18 x 24 in. SBMA, from "In the Meanwhile...Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary Art, Par II. Opens May 3, 2020

February Felicitations to all,

We all see the telltale signs of these Winter days abound in the natural world surrounding us. These signs are evident in the bare limbs of the deciduous trees, the ghostly grapevines reminding us of the hidden leaves waiting for spring, and the hidden smiles of our guests coming forth when we first welcome them to the galleries.

Also, with February comes Valentines day. "Valentine's day is thought to have evolved from a spring holiday celebrated in the days of ancient Rome. The feast of Lupercalia was actually celebrated February 15 and honored the god Lupercus, who protected the people and their herds from wolves. On this day, dances were held for all the single young men and women. A man would draw his partner's name from a piece of papyrus placed in a bowl. The man not only danced with his partner but was also obligated to protect her throughout the New Year, which began in March. In many cases the partners became sweethearts and were soon married. When the tradition of these dances was later revived in the Middle Ages, a man would wear his sweetheart's name



Mary Joyce Winder
Docent Council
President

on his sleeve. Even today we refer to someone quick to show feeling as ‘wearing his heart on his sleeve.’ “ - Valentine’s Day Legends

We, in the Docent Council, have participated in many arranged teams and partnerships throughout the years. These team efforts have repeatedly brought forth the best we can offer to our visitors and to each other. As team members, we helped protect each other whenever any one of life’s hiccups would present itself. It is especially important to harken back to these memories of these partnerships, and bring to mind the invisible bonds that unite us. These binding memories are the connections that keep us together as a group. These relationships are the heart and soul of our organization that define us as a team. We carry each other in our hearts, and it is a beautiful gesture to wear our hearts on our sleeves.

During this dormant season of renovation of our galleries, please keep in mind that we can look forward to all the hidden unseen treasures that await when the galleries reopen. The only missing ingredient needed to add to these promised renovated galleries is the life-force of the Docent.

Enjoy.

MJ

From our Vice President



Patty Santiago

We have two trips planned for our Docent Council in the next few months, both exciting opportunities to view great art and expand our knowledge.

In anticipation of the newly renovated galleries reopening and the return of antiquities to our tours, I have scheduled a trip to the Getty Villa in Malibu to view their collection of Roman and Greek sculpture. Monday, February 24th, we will leave from the Santa Barbara Visitors’ Center on Garden and Cabrillo Streets at 8:00 a.m. and return around 4:30 p.m.

I have requested a curator-led tour, although that has not been confirmed as of yet.

I will take sign-ups and payment at the Docent Council Meeting Wednesday, February 19th. The cost is \$50. If you cannot attend the February 19th meeting, but wish to go on the trip, you can email me. Payment in the form of a check made out to the Santa Barbara Docent Council can either be mailed to me or given to me the day of the trip on the 24th.

More good news! Once again Docents will be traveling to New York City! The dates are Monday, April 27th through Friday, May 1st. The sign up sheet will be at the February 19th meeting. In addition, an informational meeting about the trip will be held in the auditorium that day, the 19th, immediately following the guest speaker. If you are interested, please plan to attend that meeting or email me your interest.

Patty

From our Student Teams Co-chairs



Irene Stone

In January we toured a total of 74 students, all enthusiastic and intrigued by the broader interpretations of art as seen in the *Observable Universe* and *New Media* exhibitions.

Given the need to prioritize our resources for our great provisional class, we will not be offering a training in student touring techniques to touring docents this year. But in lieu of a scheduled training, we can offer the opportunity to work with a senior docent individually, shadowing or being shadowed, that can offer demonstrations and ide-



Teda Pilcher

as for expansion of tour techniques. We have senior docents who are very willing to provide this one-on-one activity. Please contact Teda (tedapilcher@yahoo.com) and Irene (famstone5@gmail.com) if you would like more information.

Irene and Teda

From our Adult Teams Co-chairs



Vikki Duncan

A memorable year is ahead for all of us, with new exhibitions coming by late winter; our Provisional class graduating in June; Ludington Gallery being rehung by fall; and the great buzz surrounding *Through Vincent's Eyes: Van Gogh and His Sources*, opening October 11, 2020!

Touring the intriguing works in *Observable Universe*, *Ramos-Martinez*, and *Tatsuo Miyajima*—along with our permanent collection—our statistics for December were



Christine Holland

strong: we gave 39 tours to 250 visitors, for an average attendance of 6.5, with an additional 56 visitors toured through Special Requests.

The Community Speakers Program team gave 15 presentations in December to 88 attendees. CSP totals for 2019 came to 118 presentations given to 2,626 attendees.

We are confirming new teams for *Small-Format American Paintings* (March 22-October 2020), and *In the Meanwhile: Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary Art — Parts I & II* (March 22-August 30). Be sure to see the revised *Contemporary* checklists sent by Michelle West on 1/28. Provisional Docents, these new acquisitions will be part of your Highlights-touring future this summer! We encourage you to include a few pieces in your 45-Minute presentations to introduce the new contemporary art to our visitors.

We wish you happy touring days ahead.

Christine and Vikki

From our Provisional Co-Chairs



Ralph Wilson

Dear Colleagues,

During winter quarter the provisional class is reading about the history of art and taking advantage of expertise within the Docent Council. We sincerely thank the following docents who gave of their knowledge and time to talk with the class: Molora Vadnais presented her in-depth look at the antiquities collection of the museum; Shirley Waxman covered a large element of our Asian collection with her CSP presentation "The Art of Devotion: Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist Art from the SBMA Collection"; Gwen Baker spoke about Japanese woodblock prints, another significant area of our Asian Collection.



Patty Santiago

Once again we thank Patsy for another of her masterful presentations of VTS and thinking routines. The class is making use of Patsy's examples as they fulfill the assignment to tour a single piece during a student tour. We have special appreciation for the student touring team leaders and the team members who have graciously been allowing and encouraging the provisionals to experience student touring first hand.

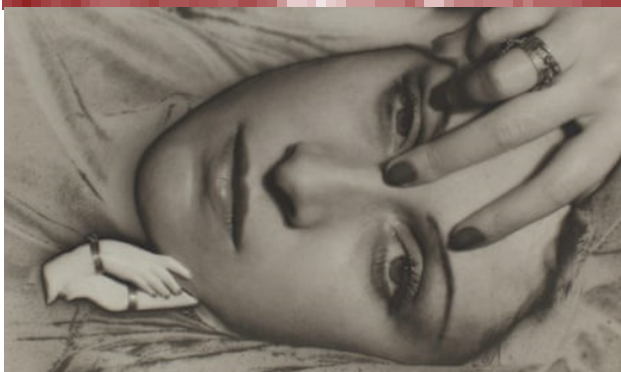
The research paper drafts have been submitted, and comments have been returned for consideration as the class now completes the final papers due March 4 (see list below). In mid-February the class will begin work on the 8-minute presentation.

Ralph and Patty

Alden, Mary Ellen	Kelley	Apple Tree
Anderson, Cindy	Allinson	Spring in the Abruzzi
Baker, Andrew	Agar	Swanage, Dorset
Balents, Gisela	Picasso	Portrait of Dora Maar
Barnett, Tommie Rae	Katei	Ten Friends (Flowers)
Carleton, Amelia	Francis	Untitled, 1978
Carr-Howard, Kim	Hunt	The Singers
Castañeda, Martha	Bayer	Triangulation with Hidden Square
Christodoulou, Marcos	Unknown Roman	Hermes
Coronado, Robert	Van Gogh	The Outskirts of Paris
Dunaway, Anne-Marie	Balog	Chimpanzee with Curtain
Glover, April	Shonibare	The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters
Guadagnini, Merle	Chase	Children at the Beach
Hines, Kathe Jan	Alvarez Bravo	Manos en Casa de Diaz
Jones, Pat	Sobel	Untitled, ca. 1946-1948
Linz, Daniel	Brockhurst	Adolescence
Lowe, Susan	Delacroix	Winter: Juno and Aeolus
Niehusen, Kajsa Philippa	Rattner	Homage to Dante, No. 1
Nocker, Sabine	Unknown Roman	Head of Aphrodite
Ross, Barbara	Delacroix	The Queen Tries to Console Hamlet

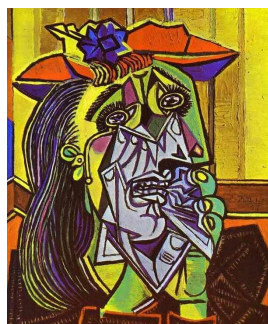
Dora Maar at the Tate Modern, London

Review by Sean O'Hagan, *The Guardian* November 19, 2019
Surrealism, erotica, photojournalism and acid: in this beautifully curated show, Dora Maar's creativity far outweighs her relationship with Picasso



Dora Maar: how Picasso's *Weeping Woman* had the last laugh

When Dora Maar died on 16 July 1997 at the age of 89, few people seemed to notice. It took the French newspaper *Le Monde* – in her home country – 10 days to publish anything. And when journalists did cotton on, they didn't seem to think Maar was the story. The *New York Times* called her “a muse of Picasso” and the “principal model for many of his so-called weeping women portraits in the late 30s and early 40s”. The *Independent*, while admitting that Maar had been an artist in her own right, suggested that she would nonetheless be “remembered as the most poignant of Pablo Picasso's mistresses”.



Forget that she'd also been a major surrealist photographer, one of the few women in that circle, and that she was still painting into her 80s. For critics, *she was Picasso's Weeping Woman* – the eternally spurned mistress and muse. Maar herself bitterly resented being regarded as a sort of art-world Miss Havisham, the subject of someone else's picture. “All [Picasso's] portraits of me are lies,” she once said. “Not one is Dora Maar.”

But in time, the *Weeping Woman* is having the last laugh. After a spell at the Pompidou in Paris, a major retrospective is heading to London's Tate Modern then Los Angeles. The largest exhibition of its kind yet staged, it features nearly 300 objects: photographs, photomontages, advertising mock-ups, self-portraits, watercolours, oil landscapes and still lifes. Few of these objects have been exhibited before, and certainly not on this scale. The sense is of a curtain being pulled back. Forget those Picasso portraits: here is how Dora Maar actually wanted to be seen.

In 1933, the French art critic Jacques Guenne described Dora Maar as “a brunette huntress of images”, his loaded language giving some idea of the stereotypical ways in which ambitious women photographers were viewed. Like her contemporaries, Lee Miller and Germaine Krull, Maar seems to have thrived on the challenge of being a gifted woman in a predominantly male medium, constantly shifting her approach as she absorbed, and utilised, the shifting currents of the art world in the 1930s.



Untitled, 1934, photomontage. Maar creates an uncanny image of a woman's hand in a shell; it's unclear if the hand is crawling out or pulling itself back inside, as though it is living in there, sheltered like a hermit crab. The shell rests on the sand with a rolling sky looming ominously in the background. The hand has long, tapered fingers and perfectly manicured nails, the shell with a ringed and repeated pattern. A bright but eerie light illuminates the hand and, in places, violently breaks through the clouds. Lauren Greenwald writes, “[*Untitled*] seems almost prescient, as the artist would eventually retreat into her own self-contained world.” That may or may not be the case, but it is clear that Maar was thoroughly versed in the power of Surrealist imagery, the hand a common motif, referring to fetishes, sado-masochistic pain and pleasure. From “*The Art Story*”

Born Henriette Markovitch in 1907, she changed her name in 1932, soon after shifting from painting to photography, and opened a studio in Paris with art director Pierre Kéfer. It was the beginning of a creative journey that would bring her into contact with some of the leading artistic figures of the time, from Brassai, with whom she shared a darkroom, to Man Ray and the surrealists, whose work would have such an impact on her own development, moving her from portraiture to experiments in collage and photomontage.

In 1935, she crossed paths with Picasso, with whom she would go on to have a turbulent relationship that she never quite recovered from. This fascinating show is a meticulously mapped-out reappraisal of Maar's long and restlessly inventive creative journey. As if to establish her as a "modern woman" of the time, a wall in the first room is given over to often striking portraits of her by the likes of Brassai, Beaton, Lee Miller and Irving Penn as well as a handful of more artful self-portraits. These images suggest a gilded life – which the rest of the show in many ways undercuts.

Among the early surprises are several erotic nudes, male and female, that were first published in the 30s in various *revues des charmes* (erotic magazines) with such titles as *Seduction* and *Secrets du Paris*. One of her subjects was Assia Granatoureff, a statuesque beauty who was also a model for Krull. Maar renders Assia's athletic form as a living sculpture, all curves and looming shadows. The most striking portrait is also the most sinister: an almost fetishistic portrait of Assia wearing a skin-coloured face mask and hanging by one arm from a

gymnastic ring. It hints at the subconscious territory of Maar's later photomontages, made in the mid-30s, which evoke dark dreamworlds influenced by the writings of her acquaintances, the poet Paul Eluard, the transgressive writer George Bataille and the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan.

Maar's shifts in style were often dramatic. The surrealist pictures are preceded by several series of street photographs made in Paris, Barcelona and London. They are dark in every way, their subject matter the urban poor, their style starkly monochrome. On a London street, an old woman sells lottery tickets beneath the steel pillars of a bank on Oxford Street. Another younger woman cradles an infant in a shawl, who faces a landscape of uncertainty. Behind her is a sign for an astrology booth. Another series moves from the photojournalistic to a kind of low-key observation of the ordinary: an image of a recently rain-drenched street beneath a wall dappled with shadows is bisected by the pavement edge that runs from bottom left to top right. A similar geometry of lines and shapes defines a street portrait made in Barcelona, in which a hunched figure in the left foreground stands facing away from her camera. These are ordinary, but oddly haunting, street photographs that seem as mysterious in their own quiet way as the sur-



After the Rain, 1933 In the early 1930s Maar traveled to various places in Europe working as a photojournalist, but she also began taking her own pictures. Tending toward street scenes and glimpses of the isolated nature of city life, these works are often melancholy, quietly piquant, and effortlessly framed. In *After the Rain* a mother and a child walk along a slick sidewalk next to a lofty wall, their backs to the camera. Maar frames the shot in a sharp diagonal - the sidewalk stretches into the back of the image and the figures are almost at its end. Shadows of slender, leafy trees are projected on the wall, and puddles of rainwater gleam. *After the Rain* is not just a straightforward image of either the city or of its denizens; rather, it is a comment on the beguiling and sometimes isolating nature of the person in the city. The severe diagonals, the figures fading into the distance, and the pervasiveness of the shadows create a sense of disquiet, of the strange but familiar juxtaposition between the harsh built environment and the fragile humans and trees living alongside.

realist experimentation.

Her experiments with large-format negatives, all eerily blue silhouettes, seem utterly contemporary, while her photos of street protests in Paris in February 1934 echo recent upheavals in the city. She also photographed many of the leading figures of the surrealist movement, including Eluard and the painter Leonor Fini, but the most startlingly surrealist image here is *Ubu* (1936), a closeup of what was later identified as an armadillo foetus, its title taken from Alfred Jarry's absurdist play, *Ubu Roi*. There is something alien, yet oddly human, here that disturbs still.

The show moves inexorably towards Maar's romantic entanglement with Picasso, who first spotted her in Les Deux Magots cafe in Paris, as she repeatedly stabbed a knife between her black-gloved fingers, occasionally drawing blood. Picasso is said to have kept the blood-splattered gloves. Their temperaments were ill-suited and, after a time, her independent streak seems to have provoked rages in him. As an artistic coupling though, it proved fruitful, particularly for him: an entire room is devoted to his renderings of her in pencil and paint, while another shows her photographs of the making of his famous painting *Guernica*. He became more politically engaged through her radicalism. His portraits move from relatively calm depictions of her to almost vengeful distortions of her features. In 1945, when he replaced her with Françoise Gilot, Maar fell into a deep depression, for which she underwent electroshock treatment and was, for a time, a patient of Lacan.

Her later paintings, hanging in one of the final rooms at Tate Modern, suggest a deep calmness, whether Morandi-like still lifes or small, deftly-rendered landscapes. In Ménerbes in the south of France, she lived the life of a recluse, devoutly practicing the Catholicism she had been raised in. Her paintings fascinate, though perhaps as much for what they suggest about her becalmed later life and all that went before.

In this context, the experimentation that marked her late return to photography comes as something of a shock. The abstractions here were produced by furiously scratching her negatives, overlaying them with paint or creatively defacing them with acid. As a final artistic statement, they are defiant. Restless to the end, Maar never lost the creative impulse to experiment and, though doing so, reinvent herself.



Père Ubu (1936) is one of the most iconic photographs of the Surrealist movement. It consists of a bizarre, disquieting figure that takes up the entire plane and appears to be an animal of sorts, consisting of a flat, angular head; two long, elephantine ears; curved limbs with tapered finger-like appendages, and glimpses of a scaly, rough torso. One heavily lidded eye is visible on the far left side of the head. The general consensus is that this is a photograph of an armadillo fetus (interestingly another shelled creature that would curl up for protection similar to the 'hand crab'), but Maar would never confirm this and therefore kept the mystery intact. From *The Art Story*

Dora Maar is at Tate Modern, London, through March 15. Thank you to Ann Hammond for her notes from seeing this exhibition last week.

FROM WENDI HUNTER: I found this article fascinating, about Monet painting from the Savoy.

<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127795046>

The Last Page

Docents in NYC 2017 & 2018



Photo by Doug McElwain



Photo by Doug



Photo by Doug



Photo by Doug



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