

La Muse

Docent Dates

Docent Meetings

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*

May 29

Graduation and
Service Recognition
Ceremony

SAVE THE DATE
NYC April 27-May 1



Jacqui Den Hartog, *Coming Down*, 2010, (detail). Sculpture, acrylic, on paper-based polymerized modeling medium, steel.. SBMA, from "In the Meanwhile..." Opens May 3, 2020. INTERNAL USE ONLY

Dearest Docents,

It seems appropriate to start off March with an old Irish blessing: "May the roof above us never fall in, and may we friends beneath it never fall out." The first half of this blessing is more apropos for the museum this year than we would all wish! Thank you all for your patience and perseverance during this past month of schedule changes and closed galleries. And if you get a chance, give Patsy and Michelle a hug for their patience and perseverance and their valiant efforts at keeping us all informed of the latest changes and challenges!

March begins preparation for the graduation and awards ceremony May 29. This year's celebration will not only welcome our graduating class but will also honor senior docents receiving service pins. I hope that all active and sustaining docents and guests will join us in celebrating.

March and April are also the months of provisional luncheons, a time-honored tradition of the docent council. Thanks to Wendi Hunter and Irene Stone for organizing the luncheons and to the docent hosts for opening their homes. Many of you should receive invitations in the next couple of weeks. Because of the limited space available, not every docent is invited to attend each year. Thank you for your understanding.

I look forward to seeing you at our March 4 council meeting in which James Glisson, new Curator of Contemporary Art, and on the 18th when our former curator Julie Joyce will speak on "In the Meanwhile..."

In the meanwhile... I hope you all enjoy the coming of spring and the new life it brings.

Sincerely,
Molora



Molora Vadnais,
Docent Council
President

From our Vice President



Patty Santiago

A beautiful late winter day greeted the group of docents who ventured down the Pacific Coast Highway to the Getty Villa on February 24th. The “Villa” is truly an outstanding museum and its collection of Antiquities was definitely a treat for all who went. The docents were given an extensive tour of the highlights of the museum, including the famous “Getty Bronze”. Some docents also took advantage of the architectural and garden tours. What an incredible setting to experience ancient art!

The last and final docent trip of this touring year will be once again to New York City. The dates are Monday, April 27-Friday, May 1st. Some of the highlights that we are looking forward to seeing are: “The Mexican Muralists” exhibition at the Whitney Museum, which also features works by Alfredo Ramos-Martinez; the recent renovation of MoMA; “Home Is a Foreign Place” at the Met Breuer; and the many special exhibitions at the Metropolitan. It will be springtime in New York City, when the tulips are in bloom throughout the city and the trees are showing off their new blossoms. It’s a great time to visit this always exciting city. If you need more information about the trip, please feel free to contact me.

Patty

Photos by Patty



From our Student Teams Co-chairs



Irene Stone

February brought another opportunity for our student teams to demonstrate their flexibility with changing conditions. The February calendar stabilized with 11 groups for 223 students. News that Ridley-Tree would be closed from February 18 to March 16 meant only the *New Media* exhibition and Wiley painting would be available for tours. Our teams rose to the occasion. We are continuing with the six groups scheduled during February/March., with all tours changing to Artful Making. Thus, tours will be 30 minutes with a 30-minute art activity added. In preparation, student-touring docents were invited to walk through the



Teda Pilcher

New Media exhibition with artist educator Tina Villadolid to brainstorm touring suggestions. Our thanks to Tina and all the Education Department for their positive and timely response to the gallery closures. We appreciate their concern for making this unexpected event work as well as possible for the student teams.

Teda and Irene

From our Adult Teams Co-chairs



Vikki Duncan

Dear Docents, Here are figures, facts, and thanks!
In January, docents gave 35 tours to 267 visitors with an attendance average of 6 per tour. The *New Media: Tatuso Miyajima* tours were especially popular with an average attendance of over 10 per tour.

In January the Community Speakers Program team gave 11 presentations to 179 attendees in locales as close as our Central Library, and in expanding venue outreach, the Hill Road Library in Ventura and Santa Paula Library.



Christine Holland

Throughout February, visitors and docents continued to enjoy their *Cosmos*, *Ramos Martinez*, and *Highlights* tours, as documented in Red Book comments. A special thanks to the Winter Highlights team, whose tours have been suspended with construction in Preston Morton, but are ready to tour Ridley Tree this month.

Thank you to all who stretched their regular assigned tours to join new Adult Teams for the *Small Format Paintings*, and *New Acquisitions* shows. (Updated rosters are posted on our Website). Both exhibits open on Sunday, March 22nd. Teams will have several days to see both shows before tours begin on April 4th.

We are standing together with our usual brand of special docent family support in this changeable season as spring brings gratitude and appreciation. Thank you, fabulous docents.

Vikki and Christine

From our Provisional Co-Chairs



Ralph Wilson

Dear Colleagues,

Over the past month the Provisional Class has continued looking at the history of art and learning from class lectures. Patty, with the help of several provisionals who had studied individual pieces, gave the class an in-depth tour of all of the Asian pieces currently on display. I used a PowerPoint to introduce the class to the legacy of Renaissance art, demonstrating how innovations of the 15th-16th century artists are continuing to be used, especially in works in our permanent collection.



Patty Santiago

Rachel Skokowski, our new Curatorial Research Assistant for European Art, gave us a fascinating and thorough look at French art in the 19th century, discussing not only the changing “-isms” of the century but also putting them in the historic and social context of the period.

We ended the month with a visit to the studio of local abstract artist Pamela Benham. Pamela is an engaging and informative artist, willing to discuss her art, her methods, and her creative processes. She helped us to be much more comfortable discussing nonrepresentational paintings and their emotional impact.

All of the provisionals have selected their pieces for the 8-minute presentation at the end of March. The Class of 2020 remains 20-strong, dedicated, and enthusiastic.

Ralph and Patty



Last week the class visited Pamela Benham's art studio. Photo by Kajsa Philippa Newhusen (provisional docent and Ph.D. candidate at UCSB in the film and media dept.)

Photo used with permission of the artist: art ©Pamela Benham

From our Nominations Chair



Mary Ellen Hoffman

Dear Docents,

According to our Docent Council By-Laws, March begins the cycle for nominating and electing officers for next year's board. The Nominating Committee, comprised of myself, Vice President Patty Santiago and acting President Molora Vadnais, in consultation with the Education Dept., has begun to assemble a slate of officers and chairpersons for the 2020-2021 Docent Council service year. Active docents are also invited to submit nominations to members of the Nominating Committee. Please e-mail your nominees to any member of the committee on or before the nominations deadline of Wednesday, March 18.

The list of nominees will appear in the April 2020 issue of La Muse and the new Board will be elected by vote of Active Docents present at the April 15 Council meeting.

Mary Ellen

From our Membership Chair



Pattie Firestone

REMINDER: You can email me your Public Hours and your Research Hours at Pattie.Firestone@gmail.com PUBLIC Hours are the number of Tours you lead. RESEARCH Hours include time you spend reading about art, going to museums, board work for the museum or teaching art. The SBMA Education Dept uses our volunteer hours in their grants. So please send me your hours by May 1st. THANKS! Pattie

pattie.firestone@gmail.com

From our Community Speakers Program Team Leaders



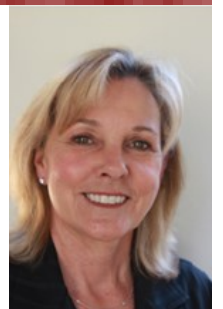
Kathryn Padgett

In February CSP team members gave 6 talks to 121 attendees.

Public talks for March:

Wednesday March 11, 6 PM Hill Road Library, Ventura
Pop Art and the American Dream
Speaker: Shirley Waxman

Thursday March 12, 6 PM Santa Paula Library
Beyond Impressionism: Cezanne, Gauguin, and Van Gogh
Speaker: Lori Mohr



Shirley Waxman

In The Meanwhile — Opening March 22

By Ricki Morse



The relationships between the Docents and SBMA's curators is complex and dynamic. We have expanded our understanding of art under their tutelage and their curatorial choices. We have seen many come and go and have benefited richly from the talents of each. We are currently welcoming a new modern/contemporary curator, James Glisson, and sadly bidding farewell to our much appreciated Julie Joyce.

Happily, we have the opportunity in her upcoming guest-curator exhibitions, *In The Meanwhile*, Preston Morton, opening March 22 and in Davidson Gallery on May 3, 2020, to view some of Julie's acquisitions during her tenure, an experience I always find reveals fresh aspects of a curator's vision. As about ninety percent of our permanent collection is donated, that final ten percent acquired by curators fills in gaps, includes up-coming artists and unfurls the predilections and passions of the curators. I have selected four of Julie's acquisitions for our attention, hoping you will find these artists challenging and worthy of sharing with our visitors during *In the Meanwhile* in Preston Morton.



Jacci Den Hartog (b. 1962) American, studio in Los Angeles

Our acrylic on paper, *Coming Down* (2010), just begins to suggest the power of Jacci Den Hartog's sculpture. The Rosamund Felson Gallery show in Santa Monica and the catalog displays the astonishing range of her vision and skill. In order to embody her freely gestural line, her painterly application of acrylic and the sweep of her personal landscape, she employs a paper-based polymerized modeling medium, supported by a hidden steel frame, unfurling floating wafts of shape and color across space, astonishing our senses.

She was born in Pella, Iowa, began art school in San Jose, Costa Rica, received her B.A. from Linfield College in Oregon and completed her MFA in Sculpture in 1986 at Claremont Graduate School in Claremont, California. She has been shown widely since 1991, beginning in Los Angeles and receiving a Guggenheim Fellowship in the field of Fine Arts in 2012. She is a professor at the Otis School of Art and Design in Westchester, Los Angeles.

She has studied traditional Chinese painting and feels an affinity to that intimate involvement with landscape. She says, "What interests me are those intangible, unstable and fleeting qualities, such as shifts in weather, the melting of snow on a warm spring day, the way a mountain looks through fog, how a form in space

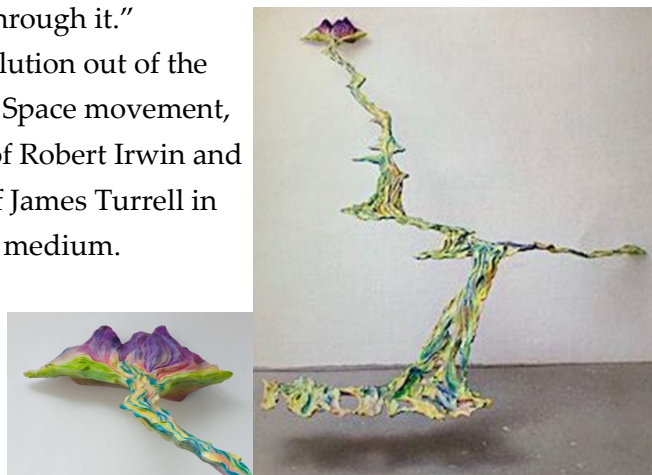
changes as you drive through it."

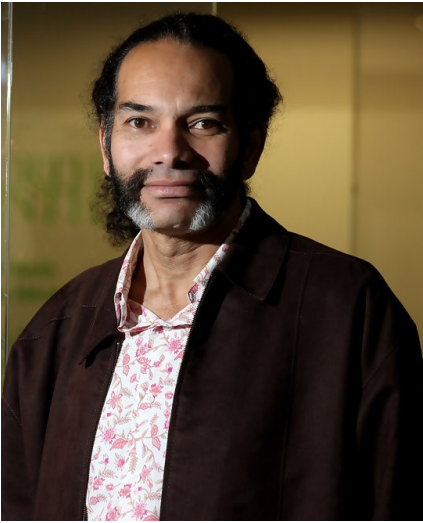
We also feel her evolution out of the Los Angeles Light and Space movement, the experiential work of Robert Irwin and the light immersions of James Turrell in which light itself is the medium.



Mexican Blanket, 2010. Acrylic on paper-based polymerized modeling medium, steel.

Right: *Coming Down*, 2010. Sculpture, acrylic, on paper-based polymerized modeling medium, steel.





Hew Locke (b. 1959) British sculptor and visual artist, studio in London

Hew Locke connects us to another world we have visited through Yinka Shonibari's 2009 reenactments of colonial power robed in African prints and currently the elegant swagger of Kehinde Wiley. To my mind, these artists share a particular feel, what one critic called an "insider's view." They speak from within the cultures they critique, amused and a little awed by the queen's display, free to play with the symbols of power

and wealth. Hew Locke drapes historical sculptures or casts of the queen in beads and gilded medals, not only satirizing but also sharing the public delight in the pomp and exuberance of power.

The son of a Guyanese sculptor father and British painter mother, and born in Edinburgh, Scotland, Hew Locke grew up in British Guyana but returned to England to attend art school, first Falmouth University and then The Royal Academy of Art. He has been hailed as the Pop Icon of England, has been collected by the Metropolitan and the Tate, yet retains a uniquely individualistic relationship to the power he derides. Like an indulgent patriot, he collects a wide range of memorabilia of the British royalty, paints their portraits and displays their dynastic rituals. In 2008, he collected the now worthless bearer bonds generated by British investment in Africa. The heavily engraved bonds had lost their value but celebrated their heritage and provided a background for his acrylic paint. It is a pair of these bonds that provides the background of our work, *Compagnie of Lubilash*



Souvenir, 2019, plaster casts and found trinkets



(2011), a defunct shipping company from the Democratic Republic of Congo. which Hew Locke has now rescued from obscurity by placing it on a museum wall, thus eulogizing the lost promise and elegance.

Compagnie du Lubilash, 2011, acrylic on paper share certificates.



Naotaka Hiro (b. 1972) Japanese painter, sculptor and performance artist, studio in Los Angeles

Like many other young artists in the 1990s, Naotaka Hiro was drawn to the Los Angeles art scene as a student. Born in Osaka, Japan, he studied art at Universitas Gadjah Mada

in Indonesia, completed his BA at UCLA 1997 and his MFA in 2000 at Cal Arts in Valencia. His highly individualized relationship to his work is complex and initially illusive. The two acrylic and graphite works on paper in our exhibition offer strongly organic



Untitled (Meet-up), 2018, acrylic and graphite on paper.

shapes which seem to be drawing together or coalescing and are subtitled "Idling" and "Meet-Up," 2018.

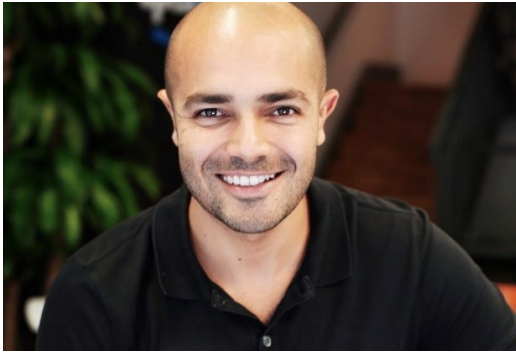
His physical involvement with his work goes beyond these titles. He cuts holes for his legs in the canvas, ropes himself to the surface and applies layers of paint with his body—a contemporary "happening." This fraught relationship, guided by ropes and thrashing movements, presents the artist trapped in his creation, or evolving with the work, viewed only by the flash of a hand or foot. *The Los Angeles Times* entitled their review of his 2017 exhibition at The Box Gallery, "The Human Cocoon: Naotaka Hiro's Primal Art, Made From Within." And it is this exploratory, questioning approach which draws us into his work. He intends to expose, not to define, aspects of the human body which are ultimately complex and unknowable, but can be experienced by interaction. From drawings to sculptures to body painted layers of color, Hiro involves us in his curiosity and, ultimately, wonder.



Untitled (Idling) 2018, acrylic and graphite on paper.

Exhibition *Box Gallery* in L.A. includes a pink tent-like structure, sculptures of the brain and a standing figure as well as the body-painted canvases — some made during the show.





Nathan Huff (b. 1981) American painter and installation artist, studio in Santa Barbara

Born in Colorado, Nathan Huff came to Los Angeles to attend art school, receiving his BA in 2003 at Azusa Pacific University and his MFA

from Cal State Long Beach in 2010. I first saw his work last summer in a Sullivan Goss show, “The Stories We Tell Ourselves.” One is immediately drawn to his facility as an illustrator, the delight he takes in rendering known objects slightly removed from their usually settings, a boat caught not in fishing lines but in the strands of a chandelier. The “stories we tell ourselves”



Lumina, 2018, mixed media on paper.



Pillow, 2018, multimedia assemblage.

describes our process as we view his work. These are internal dialogues, leaving all possibilities open, finding delight and surprise in the juxtapositions.

Happily we will be following Huff’s work up close as he is now a professor at Westmont College, often participating in shows with local artists in their Ridley-Tree Gallery.

There’s something naïve and engaging about beautifully illustrated known objects, boats, lights, animals. Childhood wonder is elicited and then enhanced by something slightly

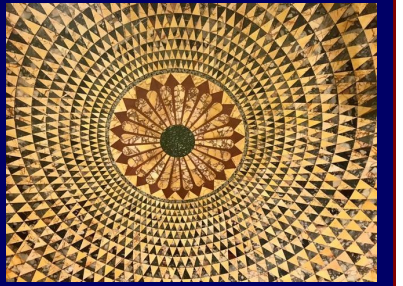
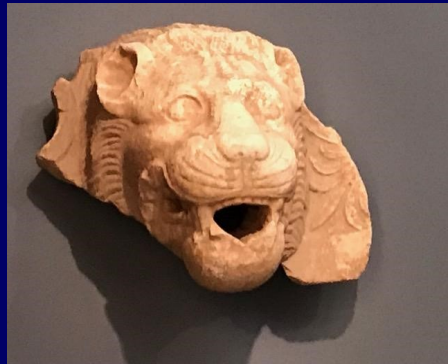
off kilter. An internal dialogue is initiated between the known and the suggested, the new. It is that newness which draws us into his work, that sense that we have been here before in some other place. The gouache on paper in our exhibition, *Skies and Schisms*, 2018, takes a further step from the actual, balancing a vortex on the end of an old tree’s branch—familiar yet elusive. The energy in the “hive” opposes the silence of the old tree—yet their unlikely connection pulls us into the drawing. And is that a boat under the hive, perhaps that same boat we have seen before? Shifting to an entirely different medium in *Pillows* (2018), Huff piles stuffed animal into a dreamscape cloud evoking bedtime stories, the soft surfaces offering sleepy memories. We look forward to accompanying Nathan Huff in his continuing explorations of our “stories.”



Skies and Schisms, 9, 2018, gouache on paper.

Getty Villa Antiquities

Photos courtesy of Pma, taken during the February Docent Trip



THE LAST PAGE

Hermes on the Move



Hermes arrives

A 2,500-year-old marble statue of the Greek messenger god Hermes arrives at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art via a skip loader driven by Zach Herrera. The statue

called the Landsdowne Hermes, is a gift to the museum from Wright S. Ludington and will be on view when the remodeled portion of the museum opens Jan. 31.

The caption reads: "A 2,500 year-old marble statue of the Greek messenger god Hermes arrives at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art via a skiploader driven by Zach Herrera. The statue, called the Landsdowne Hermes, is a gift to the museum from Wright S. Ludington and will be on view when the remodeled portion of the museum opens."

New-Press January 28, 1984. From Heather Brodhead (former SBMA Librarian) to Jill Finsten, (former Director of Special Projects) to Irene Stone (Docent council president in 2012 when Heather retrieved this from the museum archives).

Hermes undergoing recent conservation at the Getty Center.
Photo from Lori Mohr for one-time use in the March 2020 La Muse.



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