

# La Muse

## DOCENT DATES

### December 7 Meeting

Eik Khang on *Kubin: From Symbolism to Surrealism*

### December 12 4-7 Docent Holiday Party

January 4, 2023

January 18

February 1

February 15

March 1

March 15

April 5

May 3

May 17

Graduation TBD



Alison Saar (America, 1956—), *Terra Firma*, 1991, wood, tin, tar, found objects, 18in x 74 in x 22 in., SBMA. Alison, primarily a sculptor, also identified with her African heritage represented in our collection by *Terra Firma*, the arresting figure demanding our attention as a presence that must be circumnavigated in the gallery. See more about the Saar family, page 7.

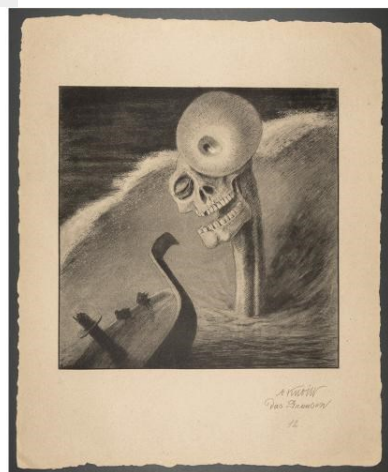
Greetings,

As the days get shorter and darker, there is room for contemplation. I've certainly contemplated as I sit by a warm fire, with my knees drawn up, sipping my evening cup of tea.

I'd like to thank Susan Tai for her lecture at our most recent Docent Council meeting, a presentation on the new Asian Gallery. What a great and glorious lecture. We all enjoyed our new directories, too. At our December 7th meeting, Curator Eik Khang will be speaking on our upcoming exhibition: *Kubin: From Symbolism to Surrealism*, which will be helpful for our tours, so you won't want to miss it.

Also, I am most appreciative of the active docents for the exceptional tours they give, particularly since they lead such active and busy lives. And I couldn't operate as President without the help of my Board of Directors and Teda Pilcher, my Vice-president. So I thank all of you. ■

Karen



Alfred Kubin, *The Horror*, 1903. Facsimile print. SBMA. From "The Iconography of Dread: Symbolism to Surrealism" SBMA Jan 29-May 21, 2023



Karen Howsam  
Docent Council  
President

From our **Vice President**

*Teda Pilcher*



Dear Docents and Provisionals,

The SBMA Docent Council Board including myself hope you had a memorable, and healthy Thanksgiving. We wish you a wonderful holiday season and hope to see you Monday, **December 12<sup>th</sup>, from 4-7pm** at Josie and Ed's lovely and fun home for the Docent Holiday Party. If you have not already done so, please RSVP your invitation or contact me at [tedapilcher@yahoo.com](mailto:tedapilcher@yahoo.com) so that I know who is coming.

We have a docent outing planned — a private pre-opening tour of the Chrisman California Islands Center and lunch in Carpinteria January 25<sup>th</sup>. The Chrisman Center, previously referred to as the Channel Islands Museum, is a little gem tucked away in Carpinteria and scheduled to open Spring 2023. The Santa Cruz Island Foundation is a non-profit public benefit corporation established in 1985 by the late Carey Stanton to collect, maintain, and catalog items of real and personal property or interests regarding Santa Cruz Island and the other California Channel Islands, unique island environments off our coast.



**Chrisman California Islands Center**

In addition to the natural history exhibits, the nonprofit museum boasts a treasure trove of California Plein-air artists. Among those on exhibit are Richard Diebenkorn, Cary Stanton, Oscar Borg, Patricia Chidlaw, David Tallman, Meredith Brooks Abbott, Ray Strong, and Lockwood de Forest.

We will carpool to Carpinteria and have lunch after our tour. As a local in Carpinteria, I can show you a few of our little gems if you like. Please RSVP to me or sign the sheet at our next Docent Council Meeting, December 7<sup>th</sup>. There is no fee for this tour as the museum/center has generously offered to tour us free of charge.

As we wind down 2022, we have much to look forward to in the months to come. ■

*Teda*

**Monday December 12 4:00—7:00 PM**

1501 Sinaloa Drive, Montecito, 93108

Please bring a sweet or savory dish for all to enjoy. A-H Sweet; I-W Savory (Please bring ready to serve!) RSVP to [tedapilcher@yahoo.com](mailto:tedapilcher@yahoo.com).

We hope to see you there!

From our **Student Teams Co-chairs**  
Nicola Gershen and Irene Stone



Nicola Gershen

November tours brought students from grades three through junior high, high school, and college to explore a varied selection of our wonderful current exhibitions. Our touring team worked with great enthusiasm as they offered their expertise not only to the 190 students on scheduled tours, but also helped with additional tours. The 3rd and 4th Tuesday team volunteered en masse to tour on the 5th Tuesday with additional docents volunteering to help with an especially large group, in addition to other Special Request tours.



Irene Stone

Our updated December calendar shows a full slate of tours, so the energy and enthusiasm of our excellent teams will be needed to finish out 2022. Thank you, all student team members, for your dedication to our SBMA mission of teaching visual literacy to the students of Santa Barbara. By engaging these young people with art, you are helping them connect in ways that will hopefully make them museum goers for life.

Happy holidays to all docents and best wishes for a healthy and happy new year. ■

*Nicola and Irene*

From our **Adult Teams Co-chairs**  
Denise Klassen and Susan Lowe



Denise Klassen

Thank you to everyone for all their work in the fall. The tour dates have gone out to the Winter Team leaders, so watch your inboxes for those soon. **We will be returning to one tour a day, at 1 PM, even on weekends.**

As usual please remember to sign the Red Book for all regular and special request tours. These numbers help us to know what is going on—numbers of visitors, times we need tours, and recording our volunteer hours donated to the museum.



Susan Lowe

We hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and wishing you a wonderful Holiday season. ■

*Denise & Susan*

From our **Webmaster**  
Gretel Rothrock



Dear Docents,  
Remember, our docent website is always a resource for you, with research papers to help construct your tours, permanent collection information, Board news, and access to past lectures via video for those who missed a particular meeting. If you have questions, email me at [gretelrothrock@gmail.com](mailto:gretelrothrock@gmail.com) Happy Holidays! Gretel

## From our **Evaluations Co-chairs**

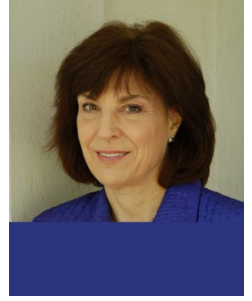
*Christine Holland and Shirley Waxman*



**Shirley Waxman**

Dear Docents,

Now that touring is well under way, so is our Evaluation Review. This is a peer review process, one that earned high regard from the National Biennial Docent Symposium a few years ago. The evaluation offers each docent an opportunity for feedback, constructive criticism pointing out strengths as well as those areas to work on. This feedback is what keeps our tours at their highest level, and why we enjoy a good reputation in the community.



**Christine Holland**

Here are a few key points for an effective tour:

1. **Demeanor** starts with your sweep. Be warm, welcoming and enthusiastic. While you wait for the group to convene, interact with visitors as a way to include each one from the start. This helps keep them with you.
2. **Opening comments** should include your theme, the focus of your tour, and how your individual works will elaborate on that theme. Strong transitions will reinforce your point and provide overall cohesion.
3. **Acoustics** can make or break a tour. Be sure visitors can hear you clearly. This means being aware of other groups nearby, as well as size of the gallery, ceiling height, and compact space.
4. **Stand** next to, not in front of, the art. We all struggle with this. Resist the tendency to lean sideways when pointing out details, which cuts off the visitor's line of sight. Visitors are there to see the art, and should see both your face and the piece, not the back of your head. Even if it's a small group, resist the urge to stand among them. As docents, we are guides, and they look to us as such.
5. **Keep your group together.** Wait a moment for people to gather at each piece, but don't hold off for stragglers. After each piece, before moving on, make eye contact during your transition to keep the group together, and do not begin moving until your transition is complete.
6. **Focus** on the group as a whole, making eye contact to discourage visitors from breaking into separate conversations. Longer individual conversations can take place after the tour concludes.
7. **Be open** to questions and comments. Visitors feel more invested in a tour when they are welcome to participate with comments. Answer each by addressing the whole group.
8. **Content** of your tour should first focus on the art, the visual in front of them. Basic information such as title, artist, and date so they're not reading the label while you talk. Start with a visual analysis of the work—subject, composition, color, texture—the elements of art. Then you can include historical context, artist background. Make it interesting! Try to avoid “info dump” by overloading visitors with excessive detail. It becomes background noise.

If you would like further guidance, refer to the Docent Website under “Touring” and “Evaluation Forms and Tips.” And please do not hesitate to contact Evaluations Chairs Shirley Waxman or Christine Holland if you have any questions. Happy touring! ■

*Christine and Shirley*

## From our **Provisional Instructor**

*Patty Santiago*



The provisional docent class of 2023 will reach a major milestone on Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> when they will be evaluated on their Three-minute talks. The class has been working diligently with the help of their mentors. I think every one of us can remember this milestone talk. It really is an exciting first step on the road to becoming a docent.

Several acknowledgements and thanks are in order to fellow docents who have been instrumental in assisting with the training of this new class of 21 provisionals. Cindy Anderson and Barbara Ross have been a huge help in teaching class, their backgrounds in education immeasurable in designing rich content. The evaluation team of Christine Holland, Laura DePaoli, Shirley Waxman, Gretchen Simpson, Kathryn Padgett and Gail Stichler deserves a special thanks for their help with evaluation of the Three Minute Talks. In addition, other docents have assisted with presentations and tours. Lori Mohr gave her outstanding Community Speaker's presentation, *Van Gogh: Beyond the Myth* to the class on November 30<sup>th</sup>, with a focus on the elements of art. Looking forward, Loree Gold and Andrew Baker will give their tours of Photo + Form in the coming weeks. This truly is a team effort!

And of course a crucial component of the training process is mentorship. Our 21 docent mentors are giving generously of their time to act as guides, advisors and role models, each one sharing the benefit of well-honed touring skills with the class. Their dedication to individual support helps ensure that our council will remain strong with new docents joining our ranks so that we can continue to educate students of the Santa Barbara School District in visual literacy, and offering quality tours to the public in the years to come. I thank each of you.

On December 12<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Party , we will honor our council tradition of introducing the provisional class during that festive social occasion. If you need a refresher before the party, go back to the October *La Muse* and review their pictures and bios in that issue, which is also available on the Docent website. Let's use this annual Holiday Party as an opportunity to properly welcome these future docents! ■

*Patty*

### A Fun Find from Christine Holland

[Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library: Recipe card file from the Collection: O'Keeffe, Georgia, 1887-1986, circa 1950s-1970s. Published by Yale University.](https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/32304749?te=1&nl=cooking&emc=edit_ck_20221111)

[https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/32304749?te=1&nl=cooking&emc=edit\\_ck\\_20221111](https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/32304749?te=1&nl=cooking&emc=edit_ck_20221111)

From our **Membership Chair**  
Pattie Firestone



**Our Docent Council service year (June 2022 through May 2023) is half over.** If I have not heard from you, please add up all your research hours from last June through the end of November, separately compute your public touring hours, then email me your numbers. **Research Hours Include:** preparing for tours, practicing tours, shadowing tours, docent lectures and meetings, attending art workshops and classes, reading about art, visiting other museums, watching films about art or creating your own art. **Suggestion:** Keep a paper by your computer or calendar to mark off your hours by the month. Then email me your totals monthly or several months at a time. ■

Thanks, Pattie [Pattie.Firestone@gmail.com](mailto:Pattie.Firestone@gmail.com)

From our **Community Speakers Chair**  
Lori Mohr



Lori Windsor Mohr  
CSP Team Leader

Dear Docents,  
Joan Dewhirst and I kept busy in November representing SBMA with topics for fall and winter 2022 that include works from our permanent collection. The Van Gogh talks were borne of lingering interest from audiences following our wildly successful exhibition last spring. If anyone is interested in learning more about our CSP program, or being a guest presenter to try it out, or attending a presentation to find out more, you can email me at [communityspeakerssb@gmail.com](mailto:communityspeakerssb@gmail.com).

Lori

VENUE	PRESENTATION	ATTENDANCE
The Californian	Matisse Part 1 (Joan)	19
Maravilla Assisted Living	Matisse Part 1 (Joan)	19
VISTAS Lifelong Learning Institute	Van Gogh's Masterpieces (Lori)	75
	+ Post Impressionism: Cezanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Van Gogh	
Little Town Club	Van Gogh's Masterpieces (Lori)	40
University Club	Van Gogh's Masterpieces (Lori)	43
Provisional Class	Van Gogh: Beyond the Myth	22
<b>November Average Attendance: 36.3</b>		

## *For Opacity*

From Ricki



**Top left:** Alison (b 1956), Betye (b.1927), and Lezley Saar (b.1953), all California artists, made art together—from their own clothing to scrounged assemblage works. Betye was a central figure in the 1970's Black Women's Movement. A skilled print maker and teacher, she shared newly acquired skills with her daughters. Alison Saar (*America, 1956—*), *Terra Firma, 1991*, is on page 1.



**Top right:** Betye Saar's *Memories of Kemi, 1974, SBMA*, an assemblage box, presented open, offers a carefully decorated memorial to an African who vanished in the slave trade. At ninety-six, Betye still produces African influenced works from her home in Laurel Canyon.

**Middle Left:** Lezley Saar, *My Guests Eating Other Guests, 2006*, ink and photo collage on board, SBMA. Lezley's newly acquired work captures the spirit and meaningful misdirection of Curator James Glisson's new exhibition *For Opacity*. He selected works that come from an oblique angle toward meaning. In each selection, meaning arises obliquely from seemingly unrelated sources. Lezley presents her "guests" as decorative amoebas, perhaps on a microscope's slide, devouring one another. What similarities exist between the two scenes? Is this a competition for survival or superiority? Is it a natural process of selection? The opacity

opens a multitude of possibilities and celebrates the resulting complexity. ■

# Two Artists Share Their Explorations of Self

By Ricki Morse



Contemporary Curator James Glisson has swung open the doors not just to a new exhibition, but to an experiential way of viewing art. *For Opacity* asks that we open our eyes and minds to what is not explicit, to what is implied, denied, or in the process of opening. The gift of opacity is exactly how inexplicit it is—there's no

right way to see, only the invitation to engage, to follow what comes. Two artists in this exhibition, Frohawk Two-Feathers and Edie Fake invite us into their personal life-searches for identity, Frohawk Two Feathers for his



Umar Rashid in his Los Angeles studio 2022.



Cover of Frohawk Two Feathers 2011 *The Edge of the Earth Isn't Far From Here*. Downloadable on Issu digital publishing platform.

racial identity and Edie Fake for his gender identity, each employing the range of art-making, from comic books to sculpture to abstract painting, involving us in their discoveries.

Frohawk Two Feathers was born in Chicago as Umar Rashid in 1976, studied cinema and photography at Southern Illinois University, and moved to Los Angeles. A skilled story teller, he focuses on the untold stories of people

of color, reimagining the colonization of the world by the Frenghish armies in an enchanting

paperback. His studio is packed with history books, tea-stained

(antiqued) sketches of reimagined historical figures, faces often tattooed with their secrets. "History is written by the victors," he says. His goal is not to rewrite but to discover his identity within it and to reveal the lives of the people of color within it. Our "Maria and her Servant" illustrates one of those lost moments, now reimagined. She looks away but he gazes directly at us,



Umar Rashid, "Tabac Et Banane" Maria (Now) Empress of Frenghland (After the Death of Francis IV) and her Servant Gannival in the Courtyard of the Royal Palace at Calais, 1870, 2008, Ink, acrylic and tea on paper, SBMA.





Umar Rashid *The Battle of Malibu, Part I, Sea Battle, Little red corvette*, 2020, acrylic, spray paint on canvas. Hammer Museum.

confirming his role in history.

According to many in the contemporary art world, Los Angeles is its center, and when your work is selected for the annual *Made In LA* exhibition by the Hammer Museum, you have arrived! The 2020 *Made in LA* show included three large “historical” works by Frohawk Two Feathers, presenting a fictional “Battle of Malibu” and rewriting the role of the native Indian tribes of Southern California—the Chumash and the Tongva. Consistent with his reimaginings of global colonialism, he invests the scenes with highly individualized characters, insisting upon the relevance of each person’s life to his own search for identity, rewriting the histories of the

conquerors into the experiences of the participants. His more recent work begins to make fun of itself and include us in the joke. Rashid even furnishes his own signage.

*Right: Umar Rashid, “ISS is Mission Control. Or, We won? If our rulers live in the sky, surely if we follow the forms, we will be able to shapeshift and fly to the heavens and destroy them. Surely. Black and White Jesus in the green Lincoln Continental are intrigued.” 2021, acrylic, mica flake, and spray paint on canvas, private collection.*

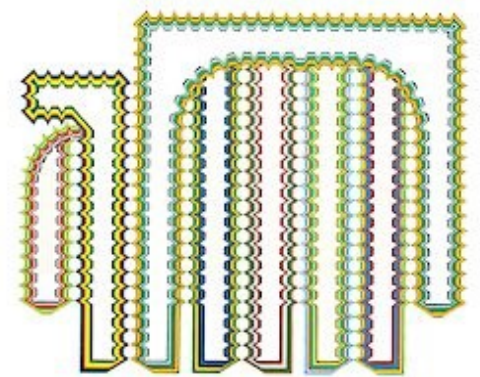


**Eddie Fake** was born in Chicago in 1980, received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, traveled west because he says his

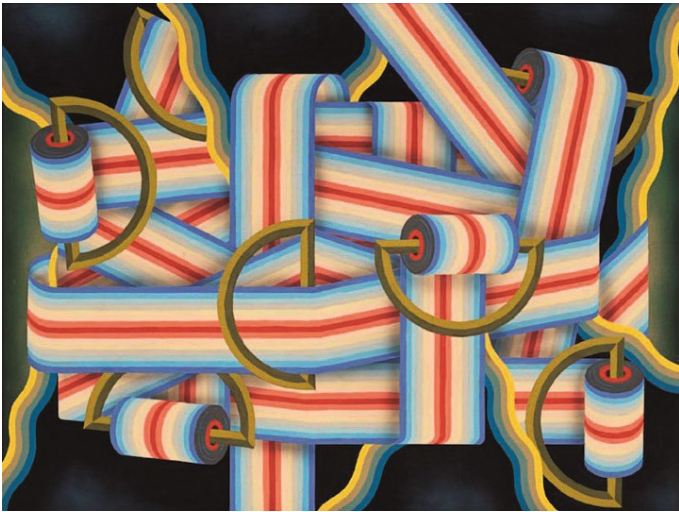


Eddie Fake photograph by Annie Leibovitz

dog was too cold in Chicago, and ultimately settled in the Joshua Tree desert east of LA, where he finds the solitude to pursue his art and his on-going exploration and exposition of himself. Though he is committed to transparency in sharing his experience of being a gay, trans man, his art takes one step away. He envisions his body as a building, a structure meticulously and beautifully designed. Our Fake painting, entitled “Union Station,” is vibrant with energy and subtle balances and offsets, a structure through which hundreds of thousands of people move each day. The appropriateness of this comparison becomes apparent when we open his comic-zine series, “Gaylord Phoenix.” The comic hero is



Eddie Fake, *Union Station*, 2016, gouache and ink on paper, SBMA.



Edie Fake, *The Bindery*, 2008, gouache and ink on paper.

a lonely, nozzle-nosed, two-dimensional drawing searching for connection. The series won the Ignatz Award for outstanding Graphic Novel in 2007 and has become a perennial classic LGBT graphic novel.

In moments, naïve (he keeps his original feminine name), in others, worldly, we are confronted by a vibrant transparency. He remembers going into a computer store after his chest surgery and being addressed as “bro,” and at a music festival being called “dude.” It felt exciting yet inaccurate. He wondered about being a feminist, trans, gay man because he was raised as a girl and still knows that part of himself. He felt repelled by the implied misogyny of “bro.”

Committed to being all of himself—the girl, the boy, the gay man—he records the progression of his transformation from the chest surgery in *The Bindery*, to the memories of each procedure in *The Retention Pond*.

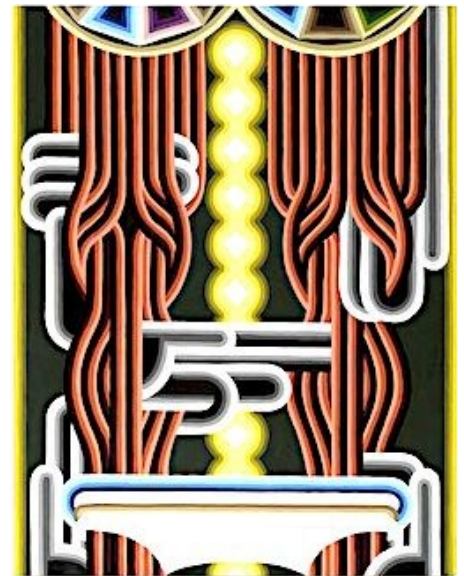


*Pond*.

A recent painting, *Muscle Memory*, binds the parts into a whole, folding in on itself, yet holding each part separate, maintaining the integrity of each within the whole.

Left: Edie Fake, *The Retention Pond*, 2015, ink, acrylic, enamel and gouache on hand-dyed paper.

Right: Edie Fake, *Muscle Memory*, 2019, oil on canvas. Private collection.



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*For Opacity*  
On view September 25, 2022 - January 15, 2023

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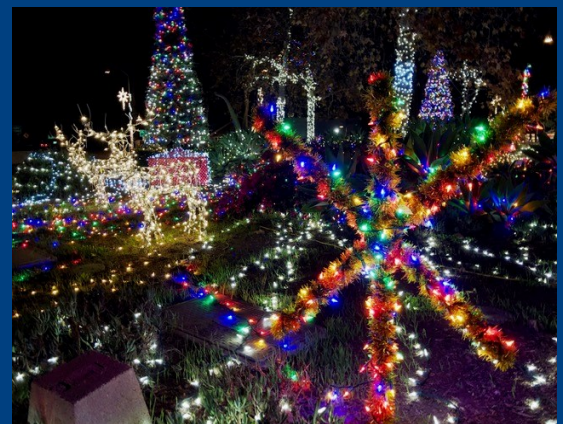


In the October issue, the Hew Locke exhibition in Ricki’s article was cited as being at the Tate Modern. The exhibition was at the Tate Britain, correctly cited in her original article. I regret the error. LM

SB Mission, December 14, 2022. Photo by Lori Mohr

## The Last Page

In need of early holiday cheer, I asked Doug McElwain to take a few photos of the lights around town. Most buildings, including the Mission, aren't lit until the 2nd, but Doug tracked down dazzling color in the roundabout at the intersection of 101 and Milpas. Thanks, Doug. *LM*



Lori Mohr, Editor , 2009—  
[Loriwindsormohr@gmail.com](mailto:Loriwindsormohr@gmail.com)

