

# La Muse

**June 7, 4-6 P.M.**

**Auditorium**

Service Recognition and  
Provisional Graduation

**June 15, 10:30 AM**

Book Club, FRC

**June 26 10 AM**

James Glisson gallery talk on  
'Legacy Gifts' exhibit.  
McCormick Gallery



**Image: Gisela COLÓN**

(b.1966), a Canadian-born,  
Puerto Rico-raised artist, pio-  
neered the laminating and lay-

21<sup>st</sup>c optical materials, sculpting with light, without the use of paint. "Colon's sculptures act as reflective and refractive prisms, presenting a fluid and mutable color spectrum." From small, framed glowing amulets (*Skewed Square*, 2022, SBMA) to monoliths erected in natural settings, she explores her inner experience of containing bullets and mountains, power and eternity. In 2016 she began using aerospace carbon fiber and UV green urethane to create her *Monoliths*, mas-

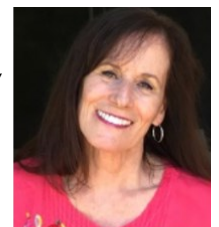
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Dear Docents, Sustainers and New Actives,

What a wonderful and productive year it's been, driven by your enthusiasm, energy, and collegiality. Our Adult and Students Teams have kept pace with a very busy schedule, touring visitors and engaging students in an ever-changing rotation of exhibitions and works on view. Thanks to Patty, Cindy and Barbara, we have a class of New Active Docents joining our ranks, and along with them, the gift of newly-vetted research papers Barbara has added to our docent archives. The Evaluations Team has had their work cut out for them, not only with docents scheduled for their regular reviews, but with the provisional class as well! Vice President Pattie Firestone has done a terrific job organizing museum outings, the fabulous D.C. trip, the spring Meet-and-Greet, and as my steadfast partner in problem-solving. We are all in good hands next year with Pattie at the helm.

Gail Stichler's commitment to the Book Club continues this summer with the camaraderie of sharing good literature. Thank you to Lori Mohr as team leader of CSP, and for her amazing work as editor of *La Muse*, keeping us all connected. It's hard to imagine the council without *La Muse*, or the scholarly articles Ricki gives us with every issue. My thanks to Mike Ramey for his continued dedication, posting updates on docent business and exhibitions on our website, an invaluable resource.

I am proud to join the long list of presidents who have served before me, for their vision and stewardship of this incredible organization. We have a lot to rejoice about at the June 7th ceremony—Amada Cruz will be giving the welcoming remarks. Let's celebrate!



Teda Pilcher  
Docent Council  
President

Teda

From our **Student Teams Co-chairs**  
Nicola Ghersen and Andrew Baker



Student teams have had a full schedule of tours this year, numbering about **4,200 students** from the SB Unified School District, plus teachers and chaperones. It has been satisfying to watch the process unfold through two different **Artful Making** projects, see how **Artful Thinking** engaged students' imaginations, and discover new themes on **Friday Focus** tours. We appreciate the commitment and enthusiasm of our

team leaders: Jeff Vitucci, Kim Carr-Howard, Anne-Marie Dunaway, Tommie Rae Barnett, Loree Gold, and Mary Ellen Alden. We also thank Molly Kemper as the Manager of School Programs for her positive communication and efforts on our behalf.

We especially want to express our gratitude to all the student touring docents for the first-class teamwork, dynamism, and can-do attitude they've shown this year. Many enjoyed mentoring Provisionals as they presented works for hands-on practice. We look forward to welcoming them to our student teams in the fall as New Active Docents.

We know from interacting with students in the galleries, and from talking about our work in the community, that the experience we provide students is well respected and fills a vital role in educating tomorrow's creative thinkers and museum visitors. Thank you to everyone for a wondering student touring year!

*Nicola and Andrew*

From our **Community Speakers Team Leader**

Lori Mohr



Belle Michael gave two fascinating talks, an hour each, back-to-back, for VISTAS Lifelong Learning Institute, a public venue, using her Art-Body-Context format. And Doug did a reprise of his talk by request from the venue as well as a very well received presentation for 60 at Casa Dorinda.

VENUE	PRESENTATION	ATTENDANCE
Alexander Gardens (reprise by request)	<i>CA Impressionism: 1910-1940</i> (Doug)	12
Casa Dorinda	<i>California Impressionism: 1910-1940</i> (Doug)	60
VISTAS Lifelong Learning:	Women Artists in the SBMA Collection (Belle)	35
Average attendance		35.6 attendees

**CSP**

From our **Adult Teams Co-chairs**

Denise Klassen & Susan Lowe



Denise Klassen

May was a much quieter month in general for Adult Teams. There were fewer Special Requests, and the touring teams seem to have settled into a nice rhythm. A thank you yet again must go out to those flexible and accommodating docents who are always willing to sub and help their fellow docents – much appreciated.



Susan Lowe

For those of you who missed our short presentation at the last meeting before handing in our Preference Sheets, here are a couple of reminders: Remember to always **check with the front desk** before starting your tour so that they know that you are there. And sign the **Red Book** after your tours. Please always double check the **monthly calendar** provided by Patty Santiago to confirm your tour dates.

If you haven't already, please turn in your Preference Sheets so that we can start the process of putting together next year's teams.

As far as the Summer goes, the tour dates for the *Highlights* Team (go New Actives!) and the Ridley Tree Legacy Team have all been firmed up and assigned.

Looks like we will have a busy summer!

*Susan and Denise*

From our **Membership Chair**

Mary Ellen Alden



**All Active Docent Council Members are required to complete and report at least 8 public hours/tours per year. A number of you have not yet reported or recorded your touring hours. If you've one of them, please email your total hours for (1) Public hours/Tours and (2) Research/Other for the year (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024) to me at [mea.mnlaw@gmail.com](mailto:mea.mnlaw@gmail.com) by June 1. These cumulative hours are how we earn service recognition pins for designated milestones of service.**

**In addition to documenting your compliance with the 8 tour/year requirement, the Director's office has asked us to provide total volunteer hours for grant requests.**

*Mary Ellen*

<https://www.openculture.com/2024/04/watch-iconic-artists-at-work-rare-videos-of-picasso-matisse-kandinsky-renoir-monet-pollock-more.html>

## From our Evaluations Co-Chairs

Christine Holland and Irene Stone



As we bring the 2023-2024 touring year to a close, we applaud our evaluators for the whopping **80 total evaluations** completed for adult, student, and provisional tours. This process requires great effort in coordinating schedules, and cooperation in assigning among both docents being evaluated and those conducting the evaluations. We have seen that our peer-review process keeps our tours fresh, accurate, relevant and engaging. These evaluations also offer a safe, supportive environment for giving and receiving feedback in constructive



conversations, an invaluable way to learn and improve. We sincerely thank our evaluators for this undertaking, continuing to keep the quality of our docent tours a source of pride for our Museum.

*Christine and Irene*

## Docent Book Club News

*From Gail Stichler*

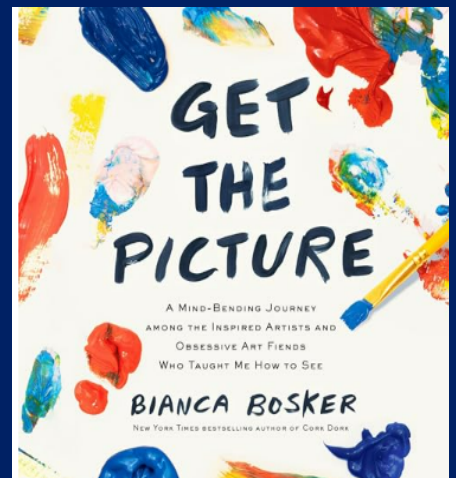


Our Summer SBMA book club selection is “Get the Picture” by Bianca Bosker. Several docents have recommended this book which has great reviews including this one:

“A hilarious exposé about the art industry . . . The most scintillating aspect of the book is Bosker herself — the narrator, the why-person, the self-acknowledged philistine and, most importantly, the reader’s friend. Instead of lecturing from an authoritative vantage point, Bosker lets readers witness at eye level her growing clarity of art’s function. She’s also witty, self-deprecating and isn’t afraid to call out snobbery.”

— ScienceNews

Our meeting will be Monday, June 15, at 10:30am in the FRC. Please contact me if you have any questions at ([gmstichler@aol.com](mailto:gmstichler@aol.com)).



Get the Picture: A Mind-Bending Journey Among the Inspired Artists and Obsessive Art Fiends Who Taught Me How to See

## From our Provisional Chair

*Patty Santiago*



Dear Docents,

The galleries were an exciting place to be on May 21 and 22 as the provisional docents gave their 45-minute *Highlights* tours for their final evaluations as docents-in-training. Many thanks go to the hardworking team of evaluators: Ann Hammond, Shirley Waxman, Marcos Christodoulou, Irene Stone, Teda Pilcher, Gail Stichler, Ralph Wilson, Pattie Firestone, Mary Ellen Alden, Susan Lowe and Laura DePaoli. A special thanks to Irene for completing six evaluations!

At the risk of repetition, I cannot express my gratitude enough to Cindy Anderson and Barbara Ross for their assistance in co-teaching the class. With evaluations completed, Cindy hosted a gathering at her home on Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the success of our New Active Docents in completing the program and passing the final evaluation. The formal celebration will be on Friday June 7, in the auditorium from 4 to 6 PM at the Docent Service Recognition and Graduation Ceremony. Please RSVP, if you have not already done so. The New Actives will begin touring students on June 18<sup>th</sup>. The summer student calendar is very full with not only students from the RTEC camp, but also, Girls Inc, A-Okay, Cliff Drive Daycare and the Turner Foundation. The New Active Docents will also be responsible for touring adults with their *Highlights* tours on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

As is true at the completion of every class, the process of guiding provisional docents through the demands of the program, from the first day to the last, is a group effort. One way or another, either directly or behind the scenes, each one of you has been part of the support system. This is what makes being an SBMA Docent so special.

*Patty*



**Front row:** Sandra, Linda, Emily, Sheryl, Patty, Bobbi, Debbie, Darci, Cindy, Allou.

**Back row:** Kendra, Lynda, Johanna, Thea, Sue, Barbara, Sandy, Paula.

From our **Research Chair**  
Barbara Ross



In their research papers, most docents include one or more quotes from the artist. These words offer a primary source from which we can get a better sense of the artist's intentions and context, not only of their lives, but of the social and cultural milieu at the time the art was created. Here is a sample of quotes.

*I hope you have enjoyed this year as much as I have. I wish you all a wonderful summer. Barbara*

*"Truly all is remarkable and a wellspring of amazement and wonder. Man is so fortunate to dwell in this American Garden of Eden." — Albert Bierstadt, from Denise Kightlinger, 2004*

*"I admired Manet, Courbet and Degas. I hated conventional art." — Mary Cassatt, from Linda Gorin, 2024*

*"All paintings start out of a mood, out of a relationship with things or people, out of a complete visual impression." — Richard Diebenkorn, from Faith Henkin, 1996*

*"At sixty a man has passed most of the reefs and whirlpools. Excepting only death, he has no enemies left to meet... That man has awakened to a new youth... Ergo, he is young." — George Luks, prepared by Kathryn Zupsic, 1997*

*"I knew the wild riders and the vacant land were about to vanish forever... and the more I considered the subject, the bigger the forever loomed. Without knowing how to do it, I began to record some facts around me, and the more I looked the more the panorama unfolded." — Frederic Remington, Terri Pagels, 2004*

*"I want to paint stunning pictures that you can sell for very high prices" — Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Prepared by Martin J. Molof, 2007*

*"For me, a landscape does not exist in its own right since its appearance changes at every moment; but the surrounding atmosphere brings it to life – the light and the air which vary continually. For me, it is only the surrounding atmosphere which gives subjects their true value." - Claude Monet  
Prepared by Adele C Nachman, 1987*

*"Once you 'got' pop, you could never see a sign the same way again. And once you thought pop, you could never see America the same way again." - Andy Warhol, prepared by Laezer Schlomkowitz, 2023*

*"Part of my studio practice involves spending over two hours a day finding new music so that when I'm in the studio I have something to play, something new to work off of. So yes, it's crucial to my work." — Awol Erizku, prepared by Sheryl Denbo, 2024*

# "Yayoi Kusama: 1945 – Today", Serralves Museum, Porto, Portugal

*Photos Submitted by Denise Klassen*



The Serralves Museum in Porto is hosting the exhibition "Yayoi Kusama: 1945 – Today", where you can learn about the life and work of this avant-garde artist who has become an icon of the 21st century. <https://www.visitportugal.com/en/node/483759>

*In The Making*—The Universe Reimagined and Rethought:  
Gisela Colon and York Chang  
By Ricki Morse



Our latest acquisitions dominate this exhibition, opening July 25<sup>th</sup>, running the gamut from cognitive argument to unique materials, from beautiful to grotesque, each object demanding our focused presence. The reward is an expansion of our ability to not only to look but to see, enhancing our growth into richer experiencing. Like

artists and their art, we viewers are “in the making.”

**Gisela Colon**

Gisela Colon’s powerful monoliths and small glowing pods capture our gaze, their colors produced by light, not paint. She says the bullets and mountains of her monoliths come from within her, reflecting her “*vevencias*,” the internalized experience of the universe and her early life.

Born in Vancouver, Canada, in 1966, the family moved in 1967 to Puerto Rico, where her father, a chemist, monitored air quality for the government. The scientific curiosity



Gisela Colon, *La Finca (The Farm)*, 1977, oil impasto on board, painted with her mother when she was 11.

which nurtured her discovery of unique artistic materials was inherent in her family—her grandfather a cartographer, and both grandmothers were scientists, a pharmacist and medical researcher. Her mother, an artist, began Gisela’s painting lessons with oil impasto on board when she was 4, often working with her, imparting the magic realism inherent in Latin American art, enhanced by her Puerto Rican grandmother who practiced *santeria* and was clairvoyant.

When she was twelve she lost her mother and the following year Hurricane David hit the island, not only causing wide destruction but ending her father’s job and leaving the family destitute. The ensuing years of hunger, poverty, and violence became the internal bullets which

grew into the glowing monoliths of her mature work. The capacity to transform, to reimagine, through invented materials and her identification with the universe, supported by a Truman Congressional grant in 1986, continued to generate her art and the development of her style, *organic minimalism*. The next year she received a magna cum laude B.A. from the Univ. of Puerto Rico, followed in 1990 by a J.D. from Southwestern Univ. School of Law in Los Angeles. Clearly, Gisela’s desire to make a difference in the world extends beyond art into society.



Gisela Colon, photograph at SCAD Museum, Georgia, 2022.





Gisela Colon, *Sueño del Yunque*, 2005, oil on wood. This dream of light fragmented through the leaves of the Yuque rain forest in Puerto Rico moves toward the glittering light she later achieved with optical materials.

In 2012, having moved to Los Angeles, she made friends with several light and space artists of the 1960s. Increasingly drawn to sculpture yet unable to find a new material, she employed a process of laminating and layering 21<sup>st</sup> century optical materials and achieved a “fluid color spectrum,” as Donald Judd called it. Gisela wrote, “I wanted the colors to fuse with the light and form multiple hues that were . . . constantly in flux.”

As her sculptural vision expanded, the need for stronger, more structural materials grew along with her commitment to working with light. In 2016



Gisela Colon, *Morph Glo-Pod (Iridescent Blue)*, 2015, blow molded acrylic.

she discovered the use of aerospace carbon fiber and ultraviolet green urethanes to create large forms echoing ancient monoliths, Stonehenge, ceremonial offering altars—projecting a universal coming together of elements, light, color, power, resilience. The bullets and mountains she internalized as a child are now transformed into single,



Gisela Colon, *The Future Is Now*, 2020, UV green urethane, Desert X Alula, Saudi Arabia

soaring, pulsating entities projecting universality and eternity. Her monoliths and pods have risen from Los Angeles to London, Saudi Arabia to Egypt, and most recently in a forest in the Netherlands.

### York Chang

I hope you tightened your seat belt because York Chang comes from a cognitive world, entered through the ambivalent questioning of ideas which may be true or manipulated to serve undisclosed purposes, presented in distorted images. Born in St. Louis, in 1973 to a family emigrated from Taiwan, he trained as an artist as well as a lawyer, and has served the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Commission as president and is leading the development of new urban design guidelines and a commission process for public art and architecture in LA.



York Chang in his L.A. studio, 2020

His 2019 solo exhibition, *The Signal and the Noise*, Vincent Price Art Museum in East Los Angeles, presented images which expose distorted views of known objects. As you observe the image (next page) imagine the range of labels you could apply, from chaos to frivolity. Chang asks us to be



York Chang, *Forensic IV*, 2019, collaged photographs

aware of manipulation in the media, “employing mixed media strategies as interventions into information systems, appropriating newspapers, graphic displays, found images and sculpture to create an immersive environment.” He questions how we find our bearings, the truth, in reportage.

The sculpture *Freefall* (2019) is a collapsed balcony, ripped from its architectural context proposing a state of perpetual falling. The work references “the loss of one’s bearing.” The viewer is left to sort through the blurred photographs littering the floor, as scattered as our own understanding of the incident, or did it happen at all, is it just posed? Chang proposes that much of what is presented to us in newspapers, and television is just this problem-



York Chang, *Freefall*, 2019, photographed in Vincent Price Museum.



atic and unsubstantiated. *Stacked*, a collage of overlaid ink jet prints, paint, and film printed on paper, blurs the

depth field, rendering the varying levels as equally viable, robbing us of the ability to trace the history of the event. Like dramatized reportage, we are swept into a happening without explanation, catching our attention in the moment. ■

York Chang, *Stacked*, 2023, inkjet, flashe paint, film gel, grommets on Japanese Kozo paper, SBMA

**Note: This work is no longer in the show.**

## THE LAST PAGE



As many of you know, my beautiful, gifted, lovely husband, John Hillis Sanders unexpectedly passed away February 13. I send my love and gratitude to you all who have reached out to console me by call or letter or in your thoughts and prayers.

John had an encyclopedic mind in many things and in art more than all. I learned so much from him. After an enlightening tour of American Art with Christine Holland, John encouraged me to become a docent. I felt privileged to be accepted into the program and during my provisional training stepped away one week to marry John at the de Young Museum in SF.

John's last lesson for me is that time on this planet is finite. Do what you want in life and do it now. One of my pet projects to bring forward is to record artists in their own voices regarding the purpose of their work and to make that available to all without cost. Many of these artists are aging, making it critical to collect these interviews now. I want them to have the last word.

So with necessity and a heavy heart, I am going sustaining at this time. I cannot leave you altogether. You are my family and I love you.

Pma Tregenza, SBMA Docent



Madonnari, or street painters, at Mission Plaza, using pastels on pavement to create 150 large-scale images. The annual, three-day festival is held on the Memorial Day Weekend at the Old Mission Santa Barbara. Photos by Miki Klocke



Lori Mohr, Editor , 2009—

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