

DOCENT DATES

9:15 AM Social Hour
10 AM Meeting/lecture
(non-meetings are in blue)

May 5th

Book Club 10:30 AM

May 7

James Glisson "Vian Sora:
Outer Worlds"

May 21

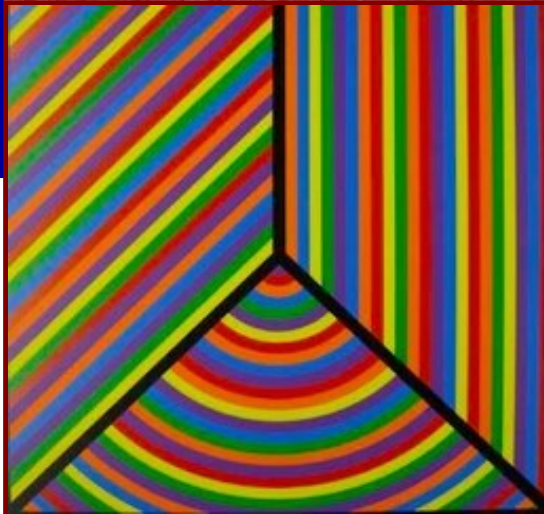
Allyson Healey "Letter Forms"

May 30 4-6 PM

Graduation and Service
Recognition Ceremony

September 17

Docent Council Meeting
(tentative schedule)



Sol Lewitt (1928-2007) Born in Hartford, Ct., he established a NYC studio and challenged the view of artists as sovereign creators. He said, "The idea becomes a machine that makes the art." *Bands of Equal Width in Color*, 2000, linocut, ed.31/75, SBMA. That simple instruction, repeated in a horizontal, a vertical and a curve, each uniquely but subtly different, requires and rewards close scrutiny.

Submitted by Ricki

Dear Fellow Docents,

Suddenly, this is my last message to the Docent Council as your President. You already know next year's leader, Cindy Anderson, who has done a great job as VP, culminating with the Chicago Trip in process as I write. But the year isn't finished yet. Last month the new Docent Council Board was voted in, setting the stage for our next service year, starting with a major new exhibition on Impressionism from the Dallas Museum of Art that will generate buzz throughout the community and bring scads of visitors for our Docent tours.

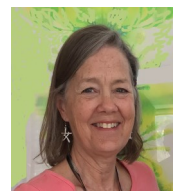
In the meantime, we have new exhibitions to tour, and at the end of May, we will celebrate those among us who have reached service milestones with their volunteer hours and welcome ten new docents into our ranks. Our gratitude goes to Patty Santiago for shepherding the provisionals through to graduation with the help of Barbara Ross in her dual role as Research Chair.

We are thrilled to grow our organization with new energy from a group of diverse voices, backgrounds and skill sets that enrich the museum experience for our visitors. Change is the keyword for docent life—exhibitions change, docents leave, new ones join, and without missing a beat, the enduring joy of learning that brought us here continues to drive our enthusiasm.

I am honored to have served as your President as part of such a talented, collegial group of men and women as we bring visual literacy to the students of Santa Barbara, and offer quality adult tours from our permanent collection and rotating special exhibitions.

Our successful year has been a group effort, and I thank you all.

Pattie



Pattie Firestone
Docent Council
President

From our **Vice President**
Cindy Anderson



Greetings from Chicago!

A group of 15 arrived by Sunday, April 27, and we've been enjoying the sights, delights, and tastes of Chicago ever since. The trip began with several of us experiencing a High Tea at The Drake Hotel, cheering on the Cubs at a night game at Wrigley Field (thanks to Charlie Firestone for the suite and tickets), and savoring the Welcome Dinner at Michael Jordan's Steakhouse – and that was just the first day!

MONDAY we visited The Art Institute of Chicago to see the largest collection of Impressionist works outside of Paris, including Monet's *Haystacks* and *Waterlilies*; Renoir's *Two Sisters*; Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*; as well as Grant Wood's *American Gothic*; Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*; Marc Chagall's *America Windows*; and the Thorne Miniature Rooms. A few of us also saw the special exhibit *Frida Kahlo's Month in Paris*.

TUESDAY we had a special guided tour of the Field Museum with its former President and CEO, John McCarter (thank you Mimi Baer for making the connection). Several of us spent the evening at Chicago's Second City comedy club – where many SNL comedians got their start (Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray, Mike Myers, Tina Fey, John Belushi, Amy Poehler, Martin Short, Chris Farley, Stephen Colbert, Steve Carell, Catherine O'Hara, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Alan Alda, and many more.)

WEDNESDAY the group traveled on the boat, *The First Lady* down the Chicago River for an Architectural docent tour of the building and history of Chicago.

THURSDAY some of us went on the Frank Lloyd Wright House and Studio Tour and saw a dozen homes he designed in his Oak Park neighborhood.

We are currently in our final day of the trip. More photos will be presented at the Docent Council meeting on Wednesday, May 7. Thanks to all of the docents and family members who were able to attend. It was an unforgettable trip, and I was happy to share the city I love with you all.

See you at the meeting!

Cindy





Monet - *Arrival of the Normandy Train, Gare Saint-Lazare*



Renoir's Two Sisters
(On the Terrace)



Monet's Stack of Wheat (Snow Effect, Overcast Day)



Marc Chagall's *America Windows*

Right: Marc Chagall's *America Windows* panel



Renoir - *Woman at the Piano*



Seurat's Sunday Afternoon at the Island of La Grande Jatte



Van Gogh's The Bedroom

From our **Student Teams Co-chairs**
Nicola Ghersen and Ann Marie Dunaway



Here we are at the final month of Student Touring for the 2024-25 school year. By the end of May, we will have hosted more than 200 groups, which has been absolutely amazing and could not have been done without the fantastic teamwork everyone has demonstrated.



PLEASE NOTE THAT AS OF NOW, docents will meet student groups on the Museum front steps and finish their tours there as

well. A member of the staff will guide our groups to and from the Art Learning Lab as needed. If you haven't already, be sure to check out this new space, now the home for Artful Making activities. It is beautifully presented, so organized and inviting. We're excited to have it under our SBMA roof.

Revisions to the Student Teams for 2025-2026 were presented to the docent board in April. However, with both our President Pattie Firestone and VP Cindy Anderson in Chicago on the Docent Spring Trip, the revisions will be reviewed and evaluated at the next board meeting. In the meantime, we have been working on exciting new ideas for next year and look forward to sharing them in the coming weeks.

If you are inclined, I highly recommend spending an hour listening to a National Docent Symposium webinar which took place on Tuesday, March 25th with Claire Bown, author and founder of the Thinking Museum. The webinar was recorded, just click on the link. <https://www.nationaldocents.org/resources/webinars> Check it out, you might find it interesting.

From the Symposium website:

Claire Bown shares practical strategies and techniques for structuring dynamic tours that encourage active participation, spark connections and ensure visitors remain engaged. She also has a podcast called The Art Engager and has written a book titled The Art Engager: Reimagining Guided Experiences in the Museums.

Happy Spring, Happy touring, and thank you for all you do,
Nicola and Anne Marie

Nicola and Anne Marie

From our **Adult Teams Co-chairs**
Susan Lowe and Elizabeth Russell



Hello Fellow Docents. Our Museum tour attendance numbers for April picked up a bit and as of April 26, we had only one with zero attendance. The Elliot Hundley tours have just started and appear to be doing well. I visited the Museum just after the 1:00 tour on Saturday the 26th. Visitors on the tour seemed very receptive in general to the changes in Ludington and to the Elliot Hundley exhibition in particular. They were smiling and chatting about the



artworks—the positive energy was literally palpable. It made me wish I was on the touring team! As this will be the last *La Muse* for the current docent calendar, we'd like to take this opportunity to send out a special thank you to all team leaders and team members for 2024/2025. This has been a challenging year to co-ordinate dates, especially when you factor in two special exhibitions that extend well into the following quarters. Our team leaders handled their responsibilities with grace and efficiency and team docents have been fabulous in their support of each other.

With Much Appreciation,
Susan and Elizabeth

From our **Evaluations Co-Chairs**
Christine Holland and Laura DePaoli



This year's evaluations are winding up and all evaluations for Student and Adult tours are proceeding well. On May 21 and 22, a team of evaluator docents looks forward to attending the 45-minute tours of our Provisional class. Many thanks to all of our adult tour and student tour evaluators for their careful and thoughtful comments and suggestions, and many thanks to all our fabulous docents for making this process work.



Christine Holland and Laura DePaoli

From our **Webmaster**
Loree Gold



Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the website this year. I am looking forward to continuing as webmaster next year and we will be looking for a team to help keep us strong. I appreciate the patience you all have had this year as I have taken this position over.

With honor,
Loree

From our **Membership Chair**
Merle Guadagnini



Dear Fellow Docents,

We are coming to the end of our docent year and I need all your hours for both research (tour prep and meeting attendance) and public/touring. Accruing volunteer hours is how we earn credit toward service milestones, just as the pin recipients listed below have. Please join us for the Docent Graduation and Service Recognition Ceremony on May 30th as we honor our fellow docents and welcome new ones. Thank you and grateful to all of you!

Merle

Docent Council Service Awards for May 30th 2025



35 Year Pin
Ricki Morse



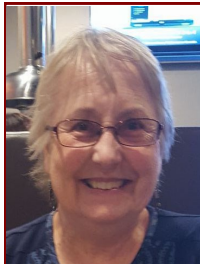
25 Year Pin
25 Year
Laura Depaoli



Loree Gold



20 Year Pin
Christine Holland



15 Year Pin
Gail Stichler

5 Year Pin

Mary Ellen Alden
Cindy Anderson
Andrew Baker ?
Tommie Rae Barnet
Anne-Marie Dunaway
Merle Gudagnini
Kathy Hines
Susan Lowe
Barbara Ross

From our Nominations Chair



Dear Colleagues,
Congratulations to our 2025-2026 SBMA Docent Council Board members. At the April 2nd Docent Council meeting they were enthusiastically and unanimously approved in a vote by those Active Docents in attendance, as per the bylaws. The expertise and leadership of these dedicated docents will bring invaluable contributions to our organization and assure our continued support of the Museum's mission to bring art to the community. *Teda*

Docent Council Board 2025-2026

President: Cindy Anderson '20
Vice President: Mary Ellen Alden '20
Secretary: Christine Holland '05
Treasurer: Mary Benedict '23
Membership: Merle Guadagnini '20
Adult Teams: Elizabeth Russell '23 & Sandy DeRousse '24
Student Teams: Debbie Auday '24 & Carol Forhan '24
Research Chair: Barbara Ross '20
Evaluations: Mimi Baer '23 & Ralph Wilson '11
Webmaster: Loree Gold '00
Nominations: Pattie Firestone '18

From our Community Speakers Team Leader



Our Community Speakers Team gave three talks in March and April, for a total of 174 attendees. (Darcie will be giving her next Sculpture presentation to Casa Dorinda in July, rescheduled by the venue). *Lori*

CSP

VENUE	PRESENTATION	ATTENDANCE
Maravilla Independent	<i>Delacroix to Dufy: The Art of Emotion</i> (Sarajum)	54
Alexander Gardens	<i>Art, Tourism and Travel in 19th c Paris</i> (Lori)	17
Val Verde	<i>Impressionism and the Franco-Prussian War</i> (Lori)	103
Total Attendance 174		Average attendance 58

From our Provisional Chair

Patty Santiago



The provisional docents will be spending most of their time and energy in the coming weeks concentrating on their 45-minute *Highlights* tours. On Wednesday May 7th, I will be inviting their mentors to meet with them after our Docent Council meeting to offer whatever additional guidance may be needed. Evaluations for those tours will be on Wednesday, May 21st and Thursday, May 22nd. Many thanks to Ralph Wilson who gave a presentation on American Art in April. Elizabeth Russell will be giving a talk on Contemporary Art this Wednesday, April 30th, completing the class study of Art History. As always, a huge note of gratitude to Barbara Ross who has faithfully served as co-instructor again this year. And for me, once again, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to instruct this very capable group. Join us for Graduation and the Service Recognition Ceremony on Friday, May 30th from 4-6pm, as we welcome our new docents and honor those who have reached service milestones. *Patty*

Docent Book Club News

From Gail Stichler



Dear Readers,

Here are the details for our next book club meeting:

Book: *Riven Rock* by T. C. Boyle

When: Monday, May 5, 10:30am

Location: the All Learning Lab (ALL). FYI, the FRC and the "old FRC" that was across the hall are now part of the Art Learning Lab (ALL).

After the May book club gathering, the next time we meet will be in the Fall. Dates for the 2025-2026 book club meetings will be published in the September *La Muse*. For the fall, our book selection is: **Paris in Ruins: Love, War, and the Birth of Impressionism** by Sebastian Smee, chosen to expand our knowledge of France's social, cultural and political context during the 1860's/1870s as background for our two fall exhibitions that open October 5th and run through January 25, 2026. Here is the information from the SBMA website:

The Impressionist Revolution: Monet to Matisse told through works from the Dallas Museum of Art's exceptional holdings; and *Encore: 19th-Century French Art at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art*. The latter exhibition of SBMA works, including paintings, photographs, sculpture and works on paper is an unprecedented exhibition in its own separate gallery that will complement *The Impressionist Revolution*, demonstrating how Paris became an international 19th-century phenomenon; how an array of artistic, literary and political figures made Paris their scintillating home; and how the construction of the Paris Opera can be seen as a symbol for the many cultural, social, and political forces that Paris faced within a restless, often volatile France, Europe, and world.

On view in conjunction with [The Impressionist Revolution: Monet to Matisse from the Dallas Museum of Art](#). *Gail*

From our **Research Chair**

Barbara Ross



"Ah, summer – that long anticipated stretch of lazy, lingering days, free of responsibility, and rife with possibility. It's a time to hunt for insects, master handstands, practice swimming strokes, conquer trees, explore nooks and crannies, and make new friends."

Darrell Hammond

And perhaps summer can be the perfect time to write a research paper? My final request for the year involves these three pieces of artwork listed below. Would you consider writing a paper on one of them? Each piece is special: *Figura Emisaria* is very popular and has been used in many docent tours, and *tearing flesh from the bone* is currently displayed in the exhibit *By Achilles' Tomb: Elliott Hundley and Antiquity*. *The Riverbank, Herblay* will be included in our exhibition, *Encore: 19th-Century French Art from SBMA*, coming in October. Please let me know if you're interested.

Have a wonderful and relaxing summer.

Barbara



Figura Emisaria
Daniel Lind-Ramos
2020. Assemblage



tearing flesh from the bone, Elliott Hundley
2011. Assemblage



The Riverbank, Herblay,
Paul Signac, 1889. Oil on canvas

The Enchantment of Precision:
Bernar Venet, Jonsi, and Diebenkorn
By Ricki Morse



spotlighting the duality and the commonality.

The French sculptor, Bernar Venet (b. 1941) was born in Provence to a chemist/teacher father, one of four boys. He had gotten to know a local



Bernar Venet,
Photo by Gerard
Schachmes, 1983.

artist whose painting of bouquets of flowers seemed mundane, but he bought some paints, considering a hobby. At eleven, he happened into a bookstore and saw an image of a woman washing her feet. Inquiring about it, he was handed a book entitled Renoir, Impressionism, words unknown to him. “I found out this Renoir’s paintings cost a lot of money. And I knew then I would not go work in a factory. After that I copied Renoirs, impressionists, then Picasso, blue period.”

“As soon as I got involved in Conceptual Art – mathematical forms – the direction was set, the content has been consistent since. What I did was already Minimalism. The material was the sculpture. Charcoal was the sculpture.” The lines developed a life of their own, collecting, expanding, coalescing: The titles of his works tell us how he views his art: *Indeterminate Lines*, *Arcs in Disorder*, *Two Unesteemed Lines*. These are ongoing processes, like individual lives, worthy of our regard as individuals. We are not surprised that he became an art collector. “I was born in

a society that allowed me to become an artist, to work, to go to New York, to meet these great artists, to exchange work with them, to sell work ever since. My thanks to this society that endures in my sculptures. While my art collection goes to my wife and children, all my sculpture remains on public view in appreciation to the gift of this world.”



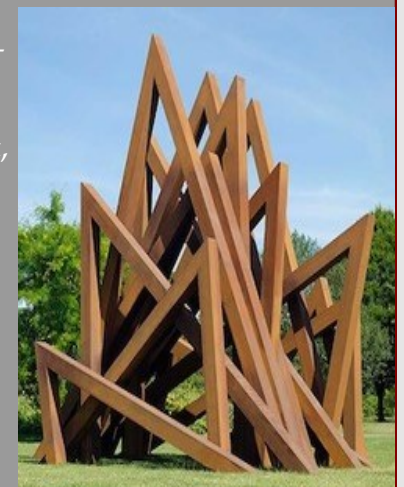
Bernar Venet, 217.5 Arc, 2023,
steel sculpture, Museum of
Modern Art, Dublin



Bernar Venet, *Three Indeterminate Lines*, 2008, steel sculpture, Hong Kong.



Bernar Venet, *Looking Forward*, 1963, pile of charcoal.



Bernar Venet, 17 Acute Unequal Angles, 2016, steel sculpture, Regent's Park, London



Jónsi performing with his band, Sigur Ros, 1994, Reykjavík.

Jónsi (b. 1975) is an Icelandic musician, since 1954 the singer and guitarist for the post-rock band, Sigur Ros, known for their ethereal sound—Jónsi’s cello bow performance on the guitar with his falsetto voice, plus a bassist and a keyboardist. Sigur Ros in



Sigur Ros performing in 1994, Reykjavík.

English is Victory Rose, the name of Jónsi’s little sister, born in the week the band was formed. Over the years they toured internationally, produced eight albums and achieved worldwide fame. Jónsi himself relocated to Los Angeles where he began to explore his genre-breaking approach to the visual arts.

His first visual work of art was *Obsidian* in 2021, an experience including scents, reverberations and lighting, evoking the experience of being inside a volcano. Unable to witness the eruption of the Fagradalsfjall volcano in Iceland in spring 2021 due to the pandemic, Jónsi has imagined this unique event as a sixteen-channel composition, played across 195 speakers, accompanied by a sweet and smoky scent. Overhead, a single circular light alludes to the summit of the volcano, out of which sound and smell spill like lava, speaking to the intimate poetry of the experience. A video is available on the internet.



Jónsi—Obsidian (jonsi.bandcamp.com)

In 2022-23 his immersive artwork entitled FLOD opened at the National Nordic Museum in Toronto and later in Australia. Tik Tok filmed the installation with the artist on a darkened stage. The sound/light/scent/movement immerses us in water, as if we could breathe water, an out-of-body feeling becoming real in the moment.

For this exhibition, our curator borrowed a Jónsi electronic work from a gallery in Los Angeles, *Tremor*, 2024. “A steel plate amplified the sound; eventually it’s frequency matches that of the plate causing it to forcefully vibrate.” Jónsi reaches us more viscerally than oil on canvas, causing an actual modification in our physical environment, an experiential event. Jónsi, as a musician, is an expert in affecting our environment, from his cello bowed guitar notes to his contra tenor voice. By adding other natural elements— vibration, scent, lighting effects—he creates an imaginary environment, invading our world with his vision.



Jónsi, *Tremor*, 2024, steel plate, transducer, and electronics, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, L.A.



Richard Diebenkorn, 1951,
portrait photograph



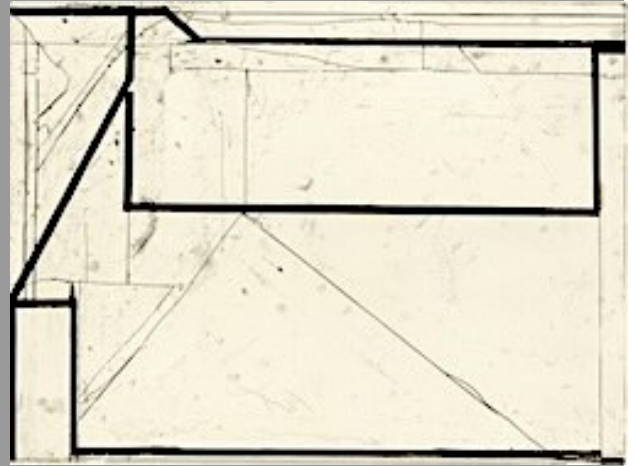
Richard Diebenkorn, Cityscape, 1963,
oil on canvas.



**Richard Diebenkorn, Ocean Park
Series #18, 1968.** oil on canvas.

Richard Diebenkorn (b. 1922) followed a more traditional route into the art world. Reared in San Francisco, he entered Stanford University in 1940, majoring in studio art and history. At Stanford he was exposed to the European modernism of Cezanne, Picasso and Matisse while absorbing local exhibitions of Arthur Dove and Edward Hopper. During his service in the Marine Corp. from 1943-45, he visited MoMA in NYC. Using the GI Bill, he enrolled in the graduate program at the California School of Fine Arts where he became friends with David Park. However, his work was not traditional, but highly individualistic, abstract, echoing California color values and freedoms. Our #1, 1977 etching reveals the geometry underlying beach paintings of this period.

The *Ocean Park* series was hailed as “abstract work of uncommon authority and profundity.” The neighborhood of Ocean Park became available to him when he took a teaching position at UCLA in 1966 and opened a studio in nearby Santa Monica with a view of the beach. The *Ocean Park* Series displays the culmination of Diebenkorn’s abstraction, removing identifying details as irrelevant, retaining the light, spirit and mood of the spaciousness.



Richard Diebenkorn, #1, 1977, etching and dry-point, ed.14/25, **SBMA.**



**Richard Diebenkorn, Ocean Park
Studio Window, 1970,** oil on canvas.



**Richard Diebenkorn, Ocean Park
Series #40, 1971,** oil on canvas.

The Last Page



Docents at Wrigley Field Loree Gold, Merle Guadagnini, Charlie and Pattie Firestone. The score for the Cubs vs Phillies game.: it was tied 1-1, so went into the 10th inning. Phillies scored 2 runs, so the final score was 3-1 Phillies.



L: Dinner at Michael Jordan's Steakhouse;
R: Drake Hotel, High Tea with Loree Gold and Barbara Boyd



Dear Docents,

Publishing *La Muse* every month is truly a group effort. I thank our board members for submitting their messages without complaint, and for working with me on edits. And I give a special expression of gratitude to Ricki Morse for her continued research on contemporary artists currently on view so that touring docents have something to work with touring our visitors. These are challenging artists with little information available beyond critical reviews from exhibitions and interviews from the artists themselves. Your efforts are appreciated.

Congratulations to the provisional class. Welcome to our council!

Look for your next *La Muse* in September.

Lori



Lori Mohr, Editor 2009 —
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