

The Travertine Times

The J. Paul Getty Trust Volunteer Program



MAY

2019

The Travertine Times

THE J. PAUL GETTY TRUST VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Spring 2019

In this issue:

| | |
|--|----|
| Save the Date | 5 |
| Find the Getty Iris | 6 |
| Harry's Haikus by Harry Gipson | 6 |
| Suryah Oliver-Ramirez by DaNetta Rizzo | 8 |
| Getty Center Art Tip Sheet by Jim Heubach | 10 |
| Year of the Pig by Lily Yan | 11 |
| Something Revealed: California Women Artists Emerge, 1860-1960 (September 29 th , 2018 – March 31 st , 2019) by Roberta Allen | 12 |
| "Remembering..." by Gail Weiland | 16 |
| The Delightful Barcelona by Elma Hovanessian | 18 |
| Introducing... The Volunteer Class of 2019! | 21 |
| Villa Focus: Head of a Figure of the Early Spedos Variety by Matt Wilson | 22 |
| Visit to Pakistan by Munni Kapadia | 24 |
| Trip to Africa by Lori Kerman | 27 |
| Memoirs from My Travels, and the Trajectory in Pictures from My Travel Book by Lou Jenkins | 29 |
| Getty Museum Visits with the Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services by Sumako Cohrs | 35 |
| At Eternity's Gate: A Movie Review by Matt Wilson | 37 |
| Ask the Travertine! | 38 |
| In Memoriam | 39 |
| Our Contributors | 41 |



An Interview with Lisa Lapin

by Matt Wilson

This past fall, Lisa Lapin joined the Getty as our new Vice President for Communications. She came to us after serving as the chief communications officer and Vice President of Stanford University. Prior to joining Stanford in 2008, she was the assistant vice chancellor for university communications at UC Davis, and before that, director of UC Davis' news service. Lisa began her career as a reporter and editor at *The Sacramento Bee*, a reporter for the *San Jose Mercury News*, a reporter/stringer for the Los Angeles National Desk of the *New York Times*, and a reporting intern

at the Business Desk of the *Los Angeles Times*. As Vice President for Communications, she collaborates with the Getty's four programs to develop strategies for communicating the Getty's institutional vision across digital, social media, and traditional platforms.

Lisa spoke recently with the *Travertine Times* about the role of communications in an institution like the Getty, the relationship between the Getty and L.A. journalists, and the remarkable global esteem in which the Getty is held.

What do people most misunderstand about the role of communications?

Some people think it's just about talking to the press, and the media, and issuing press releases. Other people think it's just about advertising. It's actually about positioning the Getty with the broad global public, and raising awareness about what we do in the minds of all of the audiences that are most important to us. We have many audiences that are important to us. There's a global public. There's a global professional audience. There are

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

art lovers, and art enthusiasts; and the audience I care most about is *potential* art enthusiasts. And our job is to reach all of them, and we do it many different ways. So, reaching out to news media is just one way, and placing ads about exhibits is just one way. Actually, some of the more critical work we do is helping to tell the bigger story about the Getty as a full, bustling enterprise that has really deep, rich scholarship, and really deep, rich expertise to put to bear on global cultural heritage. And we are so much more than a museum. So, our job is to surface all of that activity. We're now producing a lot more video content; we're getting more strategic about how we use social media. We're now doing a redesign of the Getty websites. The websites are a bit old, and not up to the most current standards. But we're trying to reach all of our audience, and our audience is vast and global. We view our mission very, very broadly.

The Getty, relative to other museums, even in Los Angeles, is fairly new.

It is. This is a really young organization. Absolutely.

Do you think that presents an additional challenge?

Yes, it does. One of the things we just launched is a brand positioning project. We're 20 years at the Getty Center, but we're maybe 25... 26... 27 years with four programs. And, of course, the Villa is the oldest component. But, even then, the Getty is a young organization. So, what we haven't done is brand positioning that knits the entire Getty together under some common messaging - messaging that elevates us as a whole. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and that is so true with the Getty. So, we are now at a point in the maturity of the organization where doing true brand positioning work makes a lot of sense. The whole organization is really ready for it.

We just launched a project, and we expect it to result in a brand positioning framework and some new guidelines and tools to help guide our storytelling going forward.

You've previously worked as a reporter at the *L.A. Times*. What do feel the relationship is between the Getty and L.A. newspapers?

You know, that was one of the first questions I had, coming in. I've met with the journalists who cover us most closely; the *L.A. Times*, and the *New York Times*, actually. And they rave about their relationship with us. They have great respect for the media relations team here, which was wonderful to hear. And I think the *L.A. Times* treats us very fairly. We get great coverage of exhibitions. What the *L.A. Times* hasn't been resourced to do is cover other aspects of what the Getty does. We did just have the *L.A. Times* at the Eames House conservation open house, last week. Which was nice, because it wasn't really an exhibit, and yet they came. Encouraging them to cover some of the work of the GRI, and the GCI, and the foundation, has been a little bit more difficult. They have an arts critic, so we get exhibition coverage. But we don't get coverage of the rest of the Getty. We invited Norm Pearlstine, the current *L.A. Times* executive editor, to the Getty for lunch. It was his first time here, and he had lunch with

(Continued on page 4)

Volunteer Program Important Numbers

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Volunteer Emergency Line | 310-440-7204 |
| DaNetta Rizzo DRizzo@Getty.edu | 310-440-7534 |
| Matt Wilson MWilson@Getty.edu | 310-440-5176 |
| Bianca Cifuentes BCifuentes@Getty.edu | 310-440-6531 |
| James Mitchell JMitchell@Getty.edu | 310-440-7532 |

(Continued from page 3)

Jim Cuno and I. And he loved it! As a result of that lunch, he enthusiastically joined us at our birthday celebration for Frank Gehry, and we hope that he'll stay engaged with the Getty. We're still working on cultivating the relationship, and he's a relatively new editor to the *L.A. Times*. But I actually think the relationships are pretty positive.

What about the relationship between the Getty and the L.A. City government?

That seems positive as well. The Villa folks are probably aware that Mayor Garcetti held a staff retreat at the Villa. He asked specifically if he could come and have a staff meeting there. They met in the dining room where we normally do Tea by the Sea, and it was a nice place for them to gather, and strategize. It was truly just a staff retreat. That he thought the Villa was a great setting for his team was quite a compliment. Then there's Edgar Garcia, who is the Mayor's Arts and Culture Deputy. He was one of [the Getty Foundation's] undergraduate interns, and now he's in the Mayor's office! And so, he's an ambassador for the Getty, and the Mayor's office, too. We have ongoing frequent dialogue with local city council representatives, and Los Angeles County supervisors. Much of this work takes place in our Facilities Division and [Getty COO] Steve Olsen's office and relates to our property and development issues. It's quite positive. They may involve things like transportation projects, and the planning process and city approvals for the new parking venue, Oak Parking, that we're going to build here at the Center.

Has it been challenging in the communications field to transition into social media?

I started working with social media back when it first

emerged. When I was at Stanford, we were actually the very first University to have what they then called a Facebook fan page; when Facebook started branching out from having personal pages to allowing businesses and other entities to have their own Facebook presence. They did a big splash, and it was the White House, and Disney, and it was Stanford; and there was a press conference with Mark Zuckerberg, and it was in these little offices in downtown Palo Alto. I think at that moment in time, Facebook had fewer than 100 employees. It was a small operation, and that was 2008.

The challenge with social media is that it just keeps evolving. And it's just about keeping up, and making sure your strategies are working as the way that people use the social platforms evolves. The Getty has 36 different social media channels on different platforms, ranging all the way from Pinterest and Instagram to Facebook and Twitter. Unfortunately, that number of channels is really confusing for the people that just want to follow the Getty. So, we're just trying to figure out what would be the ideal strategy, going forward. Facebook started as a place where small communities with common interests could gather, and exchange ideas, and talk, and plan events, and things like that. It's evolved to recognize the larger, and larger, and larger users. Most of our 36 social platforms are small, and that's not an advantage right now. The bigger you are, the more likely you are to get your content into people's newsfeeds.

Do you have a preference between print media and social media?

Well, I think the future is all digital. And there are audiences that still consume media primarily in print. We have to be mindful and respectful of that fact. But when you look at survey after survey... It used to be

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

people under 20 weren't reading print, then it was people under 30 not reading print, now it's people under 40, and even 50 not reading print. So, right now we're in this phase of needing to be all things to all people, but over time, print is going to be less and less important, and digital is going to be more and more important.

Has there been anything about working with the Getty that's been surprisingly different from the other organizations you've done this kind of work for? Because, this is the first museum environment for you.

Yes, it is the first arts-specific organization. But I did a lot of work with arts communication at Stanford. We opened an art museum, and I created an arts communications program and strategies at Stanford. Because, while Stanford is very well known for science, and engineering, it actually has one of the world's greatest arts education programs and art history programs. We were always working to try to elevate attention to the arts at Stanford. So, I actually spent quite a bit of time on arts communication there. More than you might expect. But I don't look at my job here

as just supporting a museum. This is a very robust arts organization. And it really is like a mini-university. The Getty is structured that way. Our Programs here could be like a school within a university, each headed by a dean. And the professional experts in those Programs, whether they're conservation scientists, or curators, could be seen as faculty in a university. And our visitors could be viewed as students. So, there actually are more similarities than you might realize.

What's been really rewarding is seeing how media and others respond to some of our great stories. When we did a media event in Luxor, at King Tut's tomb, to announce the culmination of the GCI work, and hand off to the Egyptian cultural authorities, that was just a global story! It went around the world. And just really recently, with the Notre Dame tragedy, we've had inquiries from all over the world, "Does the Getty have conservationists that are going to help France?" And we might, in the future. It's really premature to know. What was rewarding was that, around the world, people immediately recognized us as a place with expertise that could help in that kind of a situation.

The Getty's reputation is so strong, and that's been really gratifying. ■■■

Save the Date



The next All Staff Meeting will be at the Getty Center on Tuesday, June 4th at 10:30am in the Harold Williams Auditorium.

The Getty Villa will be open on Memorial Day - Monday, May 27th. (The Center will be closed.)

... but The Villa and the Center will both be closed on Thursday, July 4th.

There will be a Family Festival at the Getty Center on Saturday, June 15th. It will complement the exhibition: *Book of Beasts*.

The 2019 Outdoor Classical Theater Production at the Villa Will Be... The Heal – Opening Thursday, August 29th.



Find the Getty Iris!

We've hidden a small iris (like the one below) somewhere in this issue. We will draw 5 winners at random from everyone who correctly locates the iris by July 1st, 2019. If you are selected, you will win an *Iris* prize! To enter our *Find the Getty Iris!* contest, please email Matt at MWilson@getty.edu with your name, shift, and a brief description of the iris location. Good luck!



Hidden iris will be much smaller!

Note: the Irises on the Getty Center Art Tip Sheet on page 10 are not the hidden iris!

Harry's Haikus

by Harry Gipson (Center Saturday B1)

A Haiku is a 17 syllable poem. Typically, the syllable breakdowns are:

The first line has 5.

The second line has 7, and

The last line has 5.

Haikus originated in Japan, and are supposed to convey subtle, understated messages.

1. The Getty Center
in majesty crowns a hill.
Trams climb to beauty.
2. Getty Villa does
grace a Malibu canyon
in sheer elegance.
3. Little brown sparrows...
quarrelsome, chirping...
fly away as one.

4. Beings from deep space...
why don't they talk to us?
Do we talk to ants?
5. Through light years they come.
Imagine what they must know
to get here anyway.
6. Creatures from out there...
maybe they can smell colors
and telepath thoughts.
7. Reject elegance?
Then sink into tackiness.
I will tell Chanel.
8. A sad gay merman
with mermaids in a blue sea...
no other mermen.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

9. Love me now silly.

I won't always be in eyes.

Eyes don't see forever.

10. See what creeps show you...

every last bad bit of it.

Red flags are not white.

11. Dandelion seed puff...

blow on it and cheat the wind.

Give Earth air kisses.

12. Lurching toward something...

feeling that we've lost our way.

May love be ahead.



Photo by Laurie Kahan (Center SGV Tuesday 1 and Tuesday 2).

Suryah Oliver-Ramirez by DaNetta Rizzo

Although many of you have already met her, I'd like to introduce Suryah Oliver-Ramirez who has come to the Getty through the Year-Up Program. Suryah started at the Getty in early February and will be with us through August 2, 2019. She is assisting and learning about the Getty by helping the Volunteer Program but also assisting with Emergency Preparedness and other security tasks.

Suryah was born in Bellflower, CA. and moved with her mother to Peoria, Arizona when she was 3 years old. In elementary and high school, she played tennis and participated in dance-team and choir.

She returned to Los Angeles when her birth father reached out to her. Suryah always wanted to live in California, so she took him up on his offer. She also had incentive to return to L.A. because her father disclosed that she had a twin sister and 3 brothers who were anxious to meet her.

While she was finishing up her high school diploma studies at Emerson Adult School in Los Angeles, she was approached by a woman from Year-Up. She was impressed with Suryah's enthusiasm and energy and asked her if she was interested in joining the Year-Up Program. At first she was reluctant. But after doing some research (and with some encouragement from her father) she applied and was accepted into the program.

Her first day at Year-Up was exciting and embarrassing. Year-up has a strict, professional dress code and she was out of dress-code when she arrived. But she put that behind her and started her course work along with 80 other interns who started at the same time she did. Her courses included Intro to Business, IT Coding, Negotiations, and Project Management.



The Getty partners with Year-Up and has five Year-Up Interns this term. Year-Up matched Suryah with the Getty because of her interests in helping and interacting with people and her desire to work in a beautiful place. She will admit, however, that before her first day at the Getty, she had never been to either the Center or the Villa.

In the short time that Suryah has been with us, she has already put her Year-Up education to work. She helps with school arrivals during the week and has assisted the volunteer staff with new volunteer interviews, new volunteer training, and volunteer recognition. Every Wednesday afternoon, Suryah and her fellow interns return to Year-Up for continuing education, program updates, and meetings with their advisors.

What's in store for Suryah after her term at the Getty is completed? "I definitely want to stay in Los Angeles and get a job helping people. Corporate America needs

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

more women, especially women of color.” And how is she getting along with her new-found family? “I’m best friends with my twin sister. We both missed so much that we spend all of our free time together.”

Now that she has been at the Getty for a couple of months, Suryah is adjusting very well!

“Everyone is so friendly, and it’s easy for me to feel comfortable, especially with Bianca and James. I also love it when the volunteers talk to me, even though I don’t know anything. I’m really young 😊.”

If you are interested in learning more about Year-Up, please visit their website:

<http://www.yearup.org> ■



Brooklyn Bridge (2019) acrylic on canvas Irving Starr (Center SGV Thursday 1)

Getty Center Art Tip Sheet

by Jim Heubach (Center Saturday B2)

[Editor's Note: Long-time readers may remember that Jim enlightened us with his art tip sheet way back in the October 2013 issue of the *Travertine Times*. Here he is again, with an update, and a little personal history!]

Lou Jenkins' article [from the November 2018 issue of the *Travertine Times* – "Renaissance Art: What Is It? Where Is It?"] brought back thoughts of my own inspiration to become a Getty volunteer. Yeah, I was retiring from paid work, so I wanted to do something useful to others. But, also, as a selfish guy, I had recognized that my knowledge from schools, and

occupations, and experiences was incomplete when it came to art. I couldn't do it, and didn't know how others did it, and why, and what the historical record showed about the development of what we call "styles". How to learn? Volunteer!

After a couple of years of hearing visitors ask this and that about a particular artist or work of art, I decided that it would be helpful if they had access to what I came to call a "tip sheet". Starting with the oldest works in the Center's collection and then going onward, I categorized and showed the gallery locations of some of the exemplar artists of each style. I update it when the special exhibitions are changed. ■■■

Getty Center tip sheet – styles*/exemplars (gallery locations), != among top 100 artists
Gothic/Medieval-ceremonial, divine, idealized
 Martini, Daddi (N201)
 Fabriano, Vivarini (N202)

Renaissance-anatomy, perspective, order
 Giambologna, (N205).....
 ! Titian, Dosso Dossi (N205)
 ! van der Weyden (N203)
 ! Uccello (N103), Palissy (N102)
 ! Massacio, ! Fra Angelico (N202)
 ! Holbein the Younger (N103, 203)
 Correggio, Fra Bartolomeo (N204)
 ! Breughel the Elder, Tacca (E102)



Mannerism-contortion, enhancing reality, imagination- ! Pontormo (N204)
 Vittoria (N101)
 ! Bronzino (N204)
 ! El Greco, ! Veronese (N205)
 G. de la Tour (E202)



Baroque-grandiose, ornate, dramatic
 ! Bernini (E101, 201)
 Solimena (E102, 103)
 ! Gentileschi (E201)
 Guercino, Carracci (E201)
 ! Van Dyck (E201, 202)
 ! Claude, ! Rubens, Murillo (E202)
 ! Poussin, C. Le Brun (E202)
 ! Brueghel the Elder (E202)
 ter Bruggen, ! Hals (E203)
 ! Ruisdael (E204, S106)
 Steen (E204)
 ! Rembrandt (E205)!!



Breughel the Younger (S113)
 Reni E201, 206), Rosa (E206)

Rococo-frothy, energetic, happiness
 ! Hogarth (S106)
 ! Tiepolo (S201, 205)
 ! Chardin (S202, 203)
 ! Fragonard, ! Watteau (S203)
 ! Canaletto (S201, 205)
 ! Liotard (S206)



Neo-classicism-harmony, solemnity, virtue
 Canova (S204)
 Vernet (E202)
 ! David (S204)
 Houdon (S202)
 E. Le Brun (S114)



Romanticism-passion, sentimentality, the divine in nature – ! Gainsborough (S202)
 ! Turner, ! Delacroix, ! Gericault, ! Friedrich,
 ! Moreau (W201), Alma-Tadema,
 Bouguereau (W202)

Realism-objectivity, sobriety, empathy, details
 La Roldana (E201)
 ! Corot (W201, 203)
 ! Courbet, ! Millet (W203)
 ! Rodin (W103, 204)



Uncategorical-1st 'modern' painter=
 ! Goya (W201)

Impressionism-immediate sensation through color and light
 ! Manet (W104, 203) ! Millais (W202)
 ! Pissarro, ! Monet, ! Renoir (W204)
 ! Degas (W203, 204)
 ! Cézanne (W204, 205)

Post-Impressionism-design & emotion in color
 brushwork
 ! Van Gogh (W204)
 ! Gauguin (W204)



Expressionism-emotion, distorted form and color ! Munch, Ensor (W205)

Symbolism-fantasy, suggestion, disturbance
 ! Giacometti (Entry Hall)
 Rousseau (W203)
 Moore, Hepworth (Sculpture Terrace)

Art Deco-
 ! Lichtenstein (outside of E205)

Exhibits- *Pontormo*: Miraculous Encounters (W PL); *Pastels*: 18th Century Portraits (S106);
Drawings: Spectacular Mysteries of the Renaissance Revealed; (W PL); *Photography*: Mapping Space/New Acquisitions; Rejlander; Reenactment in Contemporary Photos (W LL);
Sculpture-Greek/Roman Antiquities (S PL);
MONUMENTality (Research Inst.)
Other notable – Baldassari (Lecture Hall foyer);
 J. Paul Getty, Life and Legacy (S PL)

Not represented: Fauvism, Cubism, Dada, Pop Art, Abstract/Figurative Expressionism, Post-Modernism, Surrealism
 *artists didn't necessarily start/finish with the same style. != according to a recent book.
 N= North, E=East etc. JWH 4/18/2019

Year of the Pig

This past February, Lily Yan celebrated Chinese New Year with all of her Getty Center Sunday C1 shift-mates. Gong hei fat choy! Gong xi fa cai!

All photos courtesy Lily Yan.



Something Revealed: California Women Artists Emerge, 1860-1960 (September 29th, 2018 – March 31st, 2019)

by Roberta Allen (Villa SGV Friday 2)



Housewife (circa 1935) Ruth Miller Kempster
Oil on canvas Courtesy of Constance Crawford

Our initial contact with the *California Women Artists Emerge* exhibit at the Pasadena Museum of History was the article in the Los Angeles Times (October 5, 2018) enticing us to travel to Pasadena to view the first installment. Midway through the exhibit's run, forty pieces were removed and seventy-five were added to accommodate the display of over 290 works borrowed from family, collectors, museums, and galleries.

The artists featured in the four volumes that inspired the two well-attended exhibits had to have a fifteen year history working in California. They were selected both for their work as well as being artists with compelling stories, according to co-curator Joseph Morsman. The volumes consist of detailed biographies, information on art associations,

verification of exhibitions, and richly illustrated photos of the work of these talented, and mainly unknown, artists. What better place exists to display and honor California women artists than Pasadena; a landmark city that reveres the past. And what better curator, filled with dedication and affection for the work of women artists, than Maurine St.Gaudens.

The exhibition compliments the four volumes of *Emerging from the Shadows: A Survey of Women Artists Working in California, 1860-1960* by Maurine St. Gaudens (Schiffer Publishing, 2015). As a youngster, Maurine was influenced and inspired by her late grandfather; the noted San Francisco jeweler Maurice St.Gaudens. Maurice instilled in his granddaughter a deep love and appreciation for art. She is also related to the sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens. (The film *Glory* features his bronze relief *Memorial to Robert Gould Shaw and the Massachusetts Fifty-Fourth Regiment*.)



Olvera Street, El Pueblo de Los Angeles (circa 1935)
Vera C.M. Staples Oil on canvas
Courtesy of Michael Kelly, Kelly Gallery, Pasadena

It is timely that, not only in California's institutions, but also at the Dallas Museum of Art in Texas, women artists are being recognized and celebrated. A recent Berthe Morisot exhibit of 70 of her paintings is on its way from Dallas, Texas to Paris, France; opening May 26, 2019. (Fortunately, Berthe was well supported by

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

her spouse, Eugene Manet, brother of Edouard Manet.)

We also visited the Women's Museum of California at Liberty Station, San Diego, where currently there is a thoughtful exhibit on women from many backgrounds and careers; including women artists represented by a series of paintings paired with pertinent quotes.

"I am independent, I can live alone, and I love to work."

Mary Cassatt (1844 - 1926)

This sums up what it takes for women artists to pursue their life's work.



Untitled – alternative title: *School House Through the Trees*
(1915 – 1920) Almira A. Judson Oil on board
Collection of Jerry Jackson

Historically, there was a time when women artists had to sign a man's name to their work as it was frowned

upon for women to pursue art in the same manner as their male counterparts. They lost name and identity via marriage, as well. Women had to be content with painting domestic scenes and were not free to capture what might have been gritty or more worldly. Women have had to make deep sacrifices to be artists; often foregoing marriage and family along with having outside jobs in order to support themselves.



Monterey Cypress (circa 1925) Vivian F. Stringfield
Oil on canvas applied to artist board
Courtesy of the Stringfield Family

To briefly digress ... in our recent past it was also challenging for women to pursue careers in medicine, the law, science, and other fields due to discrimination. In spite of their passion to be artists, exhibiting and selling their work was often most difficult. A personal observation of mine is that it is miraculous that so much of the art and their stories have been preserved and cherished. In doing this research, I was motivated to walk around our home to see if women artists are represented, and I am happy to say that they are.

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

“Passion is the bridge that takes us from pain to change.”

Frida Kahlo (1907 - 1954)

Three hundred and twenty women artists were featured in St. Gaudens's book, all of whom were working in California from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century; creating Realism to mid-twentieth century Modernism. There are countless others who still remain under-appreciated or have gone unrecognized.



Untitled -
Alternate title:
Two Women
Plaque (1927-
1930)
May Hamilton
(a.k.a. Diane
May Hamilton
de Causse)
Glazed
earthenware
Courtesy
Stephen and
Deborah Soukup



Vanishing Hollywood
Boza Hessoova (a.k.a. Beatrice Hess) Oil on canvas
Courtesy Michael Kelley, Kelly Gallery, Pasadena



Road Near Mt. Wilson, California (1927-1928)
Belle Goldschlager Baranceanu
Oil on canvas private collection

Many women artists, although active during their lifetime, faced a variety of challenges and circumstances which were often not the case with their male counterparts: raising families, lack of educational opportunities and gallery/exhibition representation.

Sadly, the prevailing thinking has been that female artists' work is not a good investment or collectible. Of note, The Crocker Museum in Sacramento and UCI have women artists included in their collections of California art. Visitors can feast their eyes on the work of Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot, who happened to have been friends and colleagues.

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

The results of Maurine St. Gaudens's methodical research are staggering when considering the number of artists represented. Many women artists were inactive due to a variety of circumstances: raising families, education, travel. Many relocated from elsewhere with their art scattered or simply forgotten. With the death of an artist, her work might have been relegated to storage or lost. Even though some of these women artists were unknown, their personal stories deserve a place in history.



Carol Caskey Weston various scenes
Courtesy of the Weston Family

It is fascinating to read about these women; how they arrived in California, where they studied, and with whom. These women artists captured the times; providing a legacy of art found in people, nature, architecture, etc. With the many changes in California, we are given impressions of the past presented on canvas by these varied and talented artists. Thank you, Maurine, for a true labor of love. ■■■

“How wonderful it is that nobody need waste a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

Ann Frank (1929 – 1945)



Blue Monday in Chinatown (circa 1932) Florence Young
Oil on canvas
Collection of the Pomona College Museum of Art

Additional Sources:

Maurine St. Gaudens and Joseph Morsman Interview at the
Pasadena History Museum

American Art Review, December 2018

Berthe Morisot by Tompkins, *WSJ*, March 20, 2019

Women's Museum of San Diego, Liberty Station



Evening (circa 1938) Ruth Miller Kempster
Oil on canvas Courtesy Constance Crawford

"Remembering..."

by Gail Weiland (Center SGV Wednesday 2)

Sharing some memories
from long ago...

of all the school groups;

Here's what I know:

At first there were few,
and slow paced days...

Then the numbers grew,

And a changing of ways.

Early to rise

With closed sleepy eyes;

We wait and wait,

For a bus that is late.

Soon we're happy to hear:

There are buses...they're here!

Board the bus saying hello,

Okay students...it's time to go.

Remember no gum, water or food,

But we know you'll be good.

I will never forget,

the face of a child,

from the impish young,

to teens somewhat wild.

I will miss mornings

of needing sleep,

that turned to delight

seeing those rosy cheeks.

I will miss hectic days

of late, late buses;

and those that say,

I'm feeling too rushed!

Or the chaperones who

look to you for guidance....

and when that's what you do,

they're filled with ebullience.

Not to neglect our favorite color

that not so cool shade of green.

A badge of help and honor,

Says it's time to convene.

Now it's time for us to say,

That there's going to be a day....

we will have to end,

the job of working with friends.

But before we go,

we want you to know;

Though our time here is done,

Remember us when we're gone. ■■■

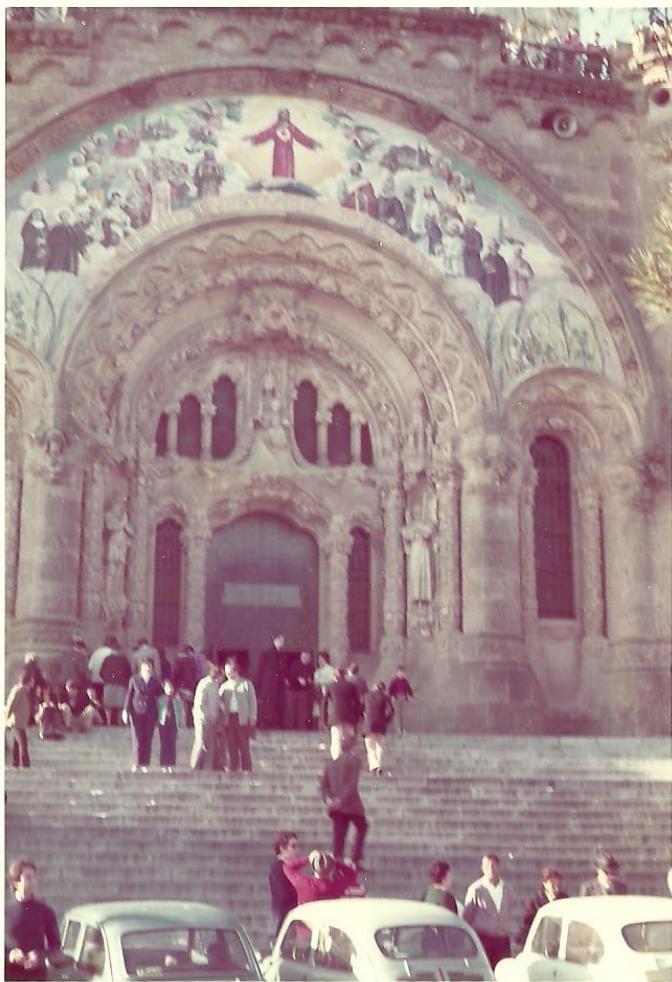
All photos by Laurie Kahan
(Center SGV Tuesday 1 and Tuesday 2).



The Delightful Barcelona

by Elma Hovanesian (Emeritus)

All photos courtesy Elma Hovanesian.



In 1971 my husband and I made a bold decision. When the schools closed in Tehran, we took our son (12) and daughter (7) to London with the intention of enrolling them in British schools; while we would explore the possibility of a permanent sojourn after a year. The previous year, having attended a summer school in the south of England, we thought it might be a good idea to help them enhance their little knowledge of English and get acquainted with British culture. I had been a student in London in the mid-1950s and was familiar with its lifestyle. So, we rented a two-bedroom furnished apartment in Ealing Broadway (a suburb in West London), and after my husband left for Tehran with the

plan of returning during the Christmas and Easter holidays, I took courses at the Chiswick Polytechnic.

Throughout that year, we travelled to Spain, Italy, and Greece; not to mention the various trips we made inside the British Isles. When you live in Europe, it is so easy and cheap to travel in the continent. So, during spring break, the four of us took a two-week package tour of Spain that included a surface trip and lodging in Barcelona. At Victoria station, we took the train to Dover where we boarded a ship and crossed the English Channel to Calais. It took us two more train trips to Paris and Barcelona before arriving the next day, Good Friday.

We stayed at the Hotel Paris, a bed-and-breakfast run by a Catalonian family. It was located on an alley, off the lively Las Ramblas, a broad pedestrian-only promenade, flanked by two traffic lanes. We were urged to go out and see the Good Friday procession. Out there, we saw a large crowd of Spaniards who were observing and commemorating the event by walking and carrying the crucifix of Jesus Christ and the image of Virgin Mary surrounded by white flowers and related paraphernalia. It was a scene whose re-enactment we would witness years later in Pátzcuaro, Mexico.

Walking in the nearby street, we passed the windows of a few pastry and confectioners' shops where we saw pastries, chocolates, and candies specifically created and designed for Easter. I remember a castle made of chocolate and colorful Easter eggs made of marzipan. Among them I saw something similar to the Armenian traditional Gata – a sweet round pastry like a loaf of thick bread – which my mother used to bake for the occasion, with the difference that they had put a couple of whole eggs on top of the dough that had cooked and cracked in the oven.

(Continued on page 19)

(Continued from page 18)

During the day, Las Ramblas turned into a huge produce market with varieties of vegetables, fruits, meat, poultry, fish, seafood, breads, cheeses in blocks, flowers, birds, and goldfish. Strawberries were piled up on a board like a hill. So were string beans, fava beans, okra, and greens; all plentiful and reasonably priced. Today, looking at the images of the same place on the internet, I can't believe my eyes. It is not the same market that had impressed me forty-seven years before. It is a spectacular showroom that caresses the eye and nurtures the soul.

On Easter morning we took a tour of the thousand-year-old Benedictine Monastery that was the sanctuary of Our Lady of Monserrat. There, high in the mountains, after waiting in a long line of worshipers, we kissed the hand of the Black Virgin; a statue carved in black marble and dating back to the 12th or 13th century. In the basilica, we listened to the Hymn of Monserrat and other ecclesiastical songs sung by the Escolania Boys' Choir; a choir that was founded in the 13th century. We visited the monastery's art gallery where we saw works by Italian and Spanish artists such as Caravaggio and El Greco along with modern ones like Picasso and Miro.

On our way back, we stopped at one of the best wineries in Catalonia where we were offered samples of a variety of wines. We bought two bottles of the kind we had liked. In those days the price of alcoholic drinks in Spain was almost equal to the price of water. I don't remember the price of wine, but I do remember the price of a large bottle of whisky that we bought for one English pound. Late that afternoon, back at the hotel, we danced in the close-by town square to a live band; together with the locals. We Armenians are fun loving people. Give us some lively, rhythmic music, and we will jump to our feet in an instant.

We took local tours of the city and its environs during the day and explored every corner of that lovely city. We saw the Santa Maria, one of Christopher Columbus' three ships, anchored in the harbor, not far from our hotel. It was empty except for some thick heavy ropes that were coiled in a corner and smelled of decaying wood. Thirty years later, when my daughter's family visited Barcelona, the ship wasn't there anymore. I remember hearing that it had caught fire and burnt.



One of the notable places we visited in Barcelona was Montjuïc, the Jewish Mountain, or the Hill of the Jews, which we climbed using a funicular; a cable railway. We found beautiful gardens on top of the hill overlooking the Mediterranean with well-tended flowers where people were roaming and enjoying the fresh air and quiet. In the past, markets and a Jewish cemetery had existed there, and some of its gravestones were preserved in its museum, which we visited, as well as its art galleries. In its soccer stadium, the soccer-loving Spaniards gathered to watch the games and encourage their champions.

We also visited the Picasso museum, where we saw his early Blue Period paintings; some of them done at the age of nine. Among his works, I noticed a few small souvenir albums belonging to his classmates in which he had drawn an image, written a few words of wisdom, and

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

signed. I remembered that I too had a souvenir album in elementary school which I gave to my friends to write, to draw, or to stick their photos in.



The next Sunday afternoon, we attended their national bullfight. Not that we were crazy about the bloody sport which would probably end up with the demise of the bull and the injury of the bullfighter, but since we were in Spain we wanted to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience of the event and to share the memory with our family and

friends. As we walked toward the building, we noticed hundreds of cars parked bumper-to-bumper in the street, but once inside the arena, to our surprise, we found it half-empty with spectators, apparently tourists like us.

Later, we found out that the missing crowd in the arena belonged to the nearby soccer stadium where a game was going on at full blast.

Most nights we stayed in the hotel. And while the children slept and other guests were gone, we sat with the owner's family in the hallway and got involved in their discussions over a cup of tea and cookies. We talked about our families, countries, and yes, politics. The father was a French-educated Spaniard with conservative political views. He was in the habit of starting in English, then switching to French when he got excited. I understood French and liked to listen to his genuine, refined accent. But my husband politely reminded him to switch back to English. In contrast, his son and daughter, who were university students, had more liberal views. They opposed him and bitterly criticized the despotic policies of their leader, General Franco, who had ruled Spain since 1936. When we showed surprise at the low prices of alcoholic beverages, the son laughed and said, "Franco has made the purchase of alcohol easy, so that people can drink and drown their frustrations in it!" Franco died three years later, in 1975, at the age of 82. Those talks were the highlights of our days in Spain, and its captivating experiences set a trend for our next trips to other countries in the continent. ■■■



Photos by Paris Heric (Villa Thursday B).

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