

Docent Doings

March 2015

President's Message

Hoping to come to terms with the sad news that Jenni Stenson would soon be leaving the Education Department, docents gathered at the February 23 general meeting to learn first-hand from Todd Smith, OCMA director and CEO, what we might expect going forward.

Many voiced concerns regarding plans for filling the vacant position, OCMA's education philosophy, the touring schedule, and issues related to abandoning next year's docent training and the internship program.

Smith assured docents that he's taking immediate steps to fill Jenni's position and hopes to have someone in place by summer. He noted that he will be looking for an educator who is "entrepreneurial," "hard-working," has "museum work experience," and "understands the importance of tour programs and how to engage audiences beyond the museum."

Smith stated that finding the "right person" is of primary importance. That person will be one who has the respect of peers across the country and who also "appreciates the uniqueness of OCMA," its focus on contemporary and modern artists, and its role in the community.

As for his education philosophy, Smith noted that he favors a balanced touring approach that is inquiry driven yet includes "content" that enables audiences to make connections between what they "see and feel" and the art historical relevance of a given work. He believes that tours that are either strictly inquiry or strictly lecture-based are not the most effective.

Smith stated that the present touring schedule will continue through the end of the school year. Beyond that, he says it's difficult to predict. Much will depend on the strengths the new education head brings to the mix. It's possible that the tour program as we know it will be balanced with a pilot program involving school visits.

Other changes are driven by budget constraints. Smith said that the museum is going through a "belt tightening period" and cannot support either a docent training class or a formal internship program. Nevertheless, both Smith and the new education head will work out ways to "fill the gaps."

In addition to finding ways to "fill the gaps," Smith intends for the new education head to devote 50% of his/her time to the tour program and to serve as the docents' primary liaison with the museum.

In the meantime, while awaiting our new head, please continue to ask your questions. I am always open to hearing from you and will do my best to get the answers you need.

Nancy Kiddie
President
Sustaining Docent 1999

Surprises abound in new OCMA show

When the roster of artists for the spring 2015 exhibits was announced we docents didn't know what to expect. Dieter Roth, Fred Tomaselli, and, most of all, Alien She, seemed mysterious and obscure after the old friends from the permanent collection in the *Avant-Garde Collection*.

The good news is that the three mini-shows are full of revelations and discoveries. Inspired by the Riot Grrrl movement that began in the 1990s, the artists of Alien She are battling stereotypes, injustice, and violence against women by building communities and promoting an anti-consumerist, do-it-yourself ethic. Many Riot Grrrls started out as fans of punk rock but felt excluded by its sexism and homophobia.

Curators Astria Suparak and Ceci Moss have collected creatively designed flyers and zines produced by Riot Grrrl groups around the U.S. and the world to show how information was publicized in those pre-internet days. The seven artists featured in the show have incorporated the Riot Grrrl perspective in their work using fiber arts, sculpture, photography, and video. "This exhibition provides a view into the passion and diversity of the original Riot Grrrl movement and

highlights how these ideas have broadened, evolved and mutated in the work of contemporary artists," the curators said.

One of the artists, Ginger Brooks Takahashi, said she was not really a Riot Grrrl, but her punk rock band played at a Riot Grrrl convention. To her, the community aspect of the movement is its most important product. Brooks Takahashi's works include the documentary poster of her six-year bookmobile project, which traveled around the US and Canada to promote zines and self-publishing. The booted legs, created from driftwood, are wearing rainbow socks to signify inclusion of all LGBT people in one body.

Fred Tomaselli, whose collages and *New York Times*-inspired paintings are on view, grew up in Orange County. His first exposure to art as a child came at the Newport Harbor Art Museum where he remembers seeing Llyn Foulkes' "bloody heads." That showed him that "painting could be a window onto other realities," he told the crowd that gathered to hear him on opening day. Psychotropic drugs, featured prominently in the collages that represent his early work, also provided that window – another way he used to alter his perceptions.

Tomaselli's *Times* series, in which he uses as a starting point the daily *New York Times* front page photo, began in 2005, when he was inspired by the story of Bernard Ebbers, CEO of WorldCom, who had been indicted for fraud. He might have viewed Ebbers only as a robber baron, but the photo showed him clutching the hand of his wife, revealing his humanity. That ambiguity of feeling and the similarity to the story of the

expulsion from the Garden of Eden, gave him the idea for the painting. His newspaper works are about preserving the ephemeral, he added, agreeing with OCMA Chief Curator Dan Cameron that the days of print media are numbered.

The inspiration for Dieter Roth's 6 *Piccadillies* was a postcard of Piccadilly Circus in London, said to be the most reproduced postcard scene in history. Roth, who died in 1998, took that perfect image, with its three evenly spaced buses, iconic fountain, and giant neon advertisements, embellishing it through various painting and printmaking techniques with fascinating colors and textures. Roth (whose name is pronounced Rot) was famous for using decay-prone organic materials in his work, once grinding up a book and combining it with actual sausage in a commentary about writers' literary output. OCMA is the proud owner of the 22-print series of his paint-embellished prints now on display.

Appropriation, an overall theme of the show, is also expressed in the newly acquired works on view in the Misappropriations gallery. The term Misappropriations is a play on words that alludes to artists' borrowing and adapting already existing visual and textual material.

Asad Faulwell, a young artist of Persian and Irish heritage, was inspired by the movie *Battle of Algiers* to depict the faces of female guerillas/terrorists who are the unsung heroines of the Algerian revolution against France in the 1960s. Their faces are gray and anonymous, but their importance is signaled by the coronas of Islamic-style decoration around their heads.

Kristin Morgin used unfired clay to create the fragile-looking cello, one of nine she has produced over the last 10 years. In *The Onlookers*, one of many musical instruments she has created in this distinctive style, Morgin has added paint, ink, graphite and roofing tacks to the piece. "I create things I want to get close to, experience it by the making and then move on to the next thing," she said on opening day.

Barbara De Groot
Memorial Committee
Active Docent 2004

Docents Give a Heartfelt Send-off to Jenni Stenson

The Docent Board and Council gave Jenni a going away surprise party at Barbara De Groot's beautiful and spacious home. Like parents watching their child leave home for the first time, it was bitter sweet.

President Nancy Kiddie led a brief Board meeting, after which she spoke about Jenni. By the time she finished, there was not a dry eye in the room. Jeanne Johnson presented Jenni with a photograph memory book, which she and Nancy had created. Lynda Wilson had collected money for a gift card and also created badges for writing personal notes, which she presented. Mimosas were passed and everyone toasted Jenni.

Jenni responded by saying that her experience with the Docents was the best and most inspiring part of her nine years at OCMA. She promised that this would not be the end. She will keep in touch by email and through a blog she is creating.

Barbara made everyone feel very welcome. Gale Edelberg organized the menu. Nearly 40 docents contributed, to Jenni's gift card. They also brought food and drink, and then went on to help with the cleanup. As evidenced by the outpouring of affection, Jenni will be greatly missed.

Gale Edelberg
Hospitality
Sustaining Docent 2004



Photo courtesy of Desiree Glenn



Photo courtesy of Barbara De Groot



Photo courtesy of Barbara De Groot



Photo courtesy of Young Shin



Photo courtesy of Young Shin



Photo courtesy of Desiree Glenn



Photo courtesy of Young Shin



Photo courtesy of Young Shin



Photo courtesy of Desiree Glenn



Photo courtesy of Barbara De Groot

Docent Kudos

Big thanks to Mary Blacker, Barbara De Groot, Pat Jorgensen, and Lynda Wilson for compiling their notes from artist talks on Opening Day. Kudos to Anita Mishook and Lynda Wilson for organizing a very thoughtful Continuing Education session.

Important Dates to Remember

03.02.15/10:00am
Docent Council Board Meeting

03.02.15/11:30am
Docent Council Book Club
Join fellow docents in the community room for a discussion around Siri Hustvedt's The Blazing World.

03.08.15/11:00am
Free Family Day
Bring the entire family to OCMA for a free day of exhibitions, hands-on art projects, as well as a special showcase of artwork and performances by our community partner, the Orange County Educational Arts Academy. Enjoy family tours, story time, and new interactive games in the galleries.

11:00am – 4:00pm Hands-on art making led by local artists

11:30am – 12:00pm Story time

12:00pm - 12:30pm Performances by OCEAA Students

1:00pm - 1:30pm Family Tour

1:30pm – 2:00pm Story time

2:00pm - 2:30pm Performances by OCEAA students

3:00pm - 3:30pm Family tour

03.09.15/10:00am
Docent Council Meeting

03.13.15/7:00pm
Panel Discussion

Nearly 25 years after the seminal panel on the F Word at CMJ, join the original moderator Evelyn McDonnell and original participants Tracie Morris and Alice Bag reawaken the memory of Riot Grrrl and explore how our relationship to the F Word (feminism) has shifted.

6:00pm Join us at for a book signing with speakers

7:00pm Conversation

03.22.15/11:00am

Meet the Makers

Pick up your OC Makers Map at OCMA and start your tour with a look at Alien She, an exhibition that celebrates the Riot Grrrls—a punk feminist movement that inspired many artists to embrace DIY culture. Continue your day with a self-guided tour of local maker studios for an afternoon of unique behind-the-scenes interactions.

03.28.15/6:00pm

E.A.T.food: Exploring Art through Food

Explore Art Through (E.A.T.) Food! Indulge in a culinary evening where food and art cross over. Delight in mouthwatering creations from local chefs from around Orange County, each creating a dish inspired by the artwork on view.

2015 Spring Exhibitions Research

Research for the current exhibitions is available online at:

<https://spring2015ocma.wordpress.com/>

Additionally, the following documentaries are available online to help you further understand the Riot

Grrrl and DIY (Do-It-Yourself) movements:

Riot Grrrl Documentaries

[The Punk Singer](#) (Netflix)

[GRRRL](#) (excerpt)

[Don't Need You: The Herstory of Riot Grrrl](#) (Youtube)

Riot Grrrl Film

[Ladies and Gentleman, The Fabulous Stains](#) (Netflix)

DIY Documentaries

[Roll Up Your Sleeves](#) (Vimeo)

[Makers](#) (Vimeo)

[DIY or Die](#) (Netflix)

April Reading Group Selection

The April 6th gathering will be the annual planning meeting, and will also include a group reading of Anne Grob's latest play. Copies are available from Anne via email: avgrobb@gmail.com



Courtesy of Diane Chernis

Upcoming Birthdays

March:

Tara Rashid – 3/8

Lois Jacobs – 3/25

Edie Levin – 3/25

Jayne Klunder – 3/27

Barbara Roberts – 3/28

Betsy Ginter – 3/31

April:

Jane Fowler – 4/4

Shari Fraser – 4/9

Barbara Klein – 4/16

Joyce Rosenblum – 4/25

Call for Contributors

Docent Doings is looking to increase its offerings of unique, original content pertaining to the OCMA docent experience. If you attend a fieldtrip,

view a film during Movie Madness, take part in book club, or participate in any other docent activity and are interested in writing about your experience, we'd love to hear from you! For details please email Desiree Glenn at desiree.glenn@gmail.com

Deadline for the next *Docent Doings*

Monday, March 30, 2015

Submit all copy to:
desiree.glenn@gmail.com