

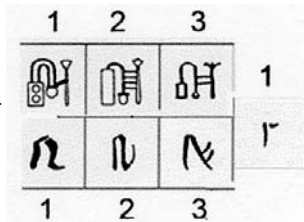
Romancing the Glyphs

Sharon Hayenga

Egyptian hieroglyphs have been romancing the world for nearly 5,000 years. Indeed they are a governmental fantasy. During the Middle Kingdom only 10,000 people, from among a population of 4,000,000, were hieroglyph literate, a mere .03%.¹ Clearly that included only pharonic families and associates. But what a legacy: since then, without signs of weakening, the world has found brilliantly colored vipers, scarabs, ankh, and dismembered hands, appearing on huge temples and public television, as compelling as the pyramids. Ironically, hieroglyph is not even an Egyptian word. It comes from the Greek *hieros* (sacred) *gluphien* (writing).²

Most think hieroglyphs are the Egyptian language. Fascinating as hieroglyphs are, the history of language in Egypt is actually much more complex. Like the Sumerians with cuneiform, long before 3100 BCE, Egypt managed life with a language which was spoken only, one which probably died only after the intrusion of the Greeks around the change of eras. And scribes, finding pictograms too clumsy and inefficient to use well on papyrus, derived a written language from the hieroglyphic pictograms that ran concurrently with hieroglyphs for nearly 2,000 years.³ Carvers used hieroglyphs on monuments; scribes had the choice of hieroglyphs or the derived language for work on papyrus.

Look at the first and third images on the top line of the language progression chart.⁴ Midway through the life of hieroglyphs, the earliest images of which appeared around 3100 BCE, these images show the tools of the scribe, while also representing the complete concept *scribe*: two inkwells for mixing colors, attached to a small bag of water for the mixing, and both tied to the scribe's brush. The first image in the top row appeared c.1500 BCE, the second near the end of hieroglyphs, c.500-100 BCE. The first and third images were of the type used primarily by carvers; scribes could use all three, but more often took the second image in the row. The more detailed and thus dramatic pictographs appeared stronger and more powerful on



obelisks, temples and tombs than the language developed by the scribes.

The second line in the chart, with the progression of images 1-3, is the scribe's language called *hieratic*, which was a written derivation of hieroglyphs, used almost exclusively for writing on papyrus, because it required less space and was stylized to be used more efficiently in such manuscripts as *The Book of the Dead*. The images in this illustration range from 1900 BCE-100 CE. In the written applications, hieratic symbols retained the exotic mysteriousness and aesthetic appeal of the associated hieroglyph pictograms themselves. However, they lacked the appeal of snakes and dismembered body parts that capture the imagination of the young of all ages.

The single box at the end of the chart is a scribe image in *demotic*, a language imposed by the Greeks c.100 CE. It replaced both the pictogram and hieratic forms of the Egyptian language. The demotic was followed in a few hundred years by *Coptic*, the language of early Christians in Cairo. All forms of the Egyptian language were extinct at the change of the eras from BCE to CE.

In the context of these illustrative images and their associated dates, it is important to remember that the MIA's *False Door* preceded all of them: it was carved c.2400 BCE.

As prolific as the Egyptian carvers and scribes had been, and in spite of major archeological discoveries with hieroglyphs on them, no one since pharonic Egypt had been able to decipher them until 1829 when Jean-Francois Champollion solved the puzzle. As late as 1821 he had published a well-received paper in which he argued that hieroglyphs had no associated language/phonetic sounds at all,⁵ that there was neither speech nor "words" that could be associated with the pictograms. Fortunately he kept at it and by 1829 he had changed his mind as he opened Egypt for the world to see.

Awareness that hieroglyphs had images with both content and sound was made possible by the discovery along the Nile in 1799 of the *Rosetta Stone*. The Rosetta Stone had three discrete sections of language on a single surface, one which was virtually completely understood (Greek), one which was substantially understood (demotic), and one which was not understood in any way (Egyptian hieroglyphs). The Egyptian portion contained 1,471 discrete pictograms in addition to cartouches (names of royalty).

Understanding came from the application of the Rebus Principle.⁶ It can expand the linguistic concepts of pictograms by using imputation, thus allowing pictograms to have both content and phonetic values, in addition to its capability to represent ideas and different aspects of time (past, present and future). Champollion tediously compared the Greek and demotic sections of the stone until he was able to see that the two were identical in language. He then took what he knew to be the content of the two completed sections and worked with

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the hieroglyphs, trying to find single and combined symbols that could create *words*. He was able to determine that the Egyptian segment of the stone contained only 66 discrete hieroglyphic words from among the 1,417 pictograms. Knowing the phonetic sounds of the Greek and demotic he was thus able to assign both phonetic values and content to the hieroglyphs and established that the Egyptian section of the stone was identical in content to the Greek and demotic. The Rosetta Stone contained the identical content in all three languages, though the Greek and demotic lacked the cartouches.

Hieroglyphic alphabets appeared immediately and let the whole world view pharonic Egypt. There are three alphabets, all probably developed immediately following Champollion's work. They are, however, different, so have been given discrete titles. The first is the *uniconsonantal* alphabet.⁷

Sign	Trans.	Equiv.	Sign	Trans.	Equiv.	Sign	Trans.	Equiv.
	ʒ	a		m	m		š	sh
	i	i		n	n		k	q
	y	y		r	r		k	k
	ʿ	e		h	h		g	g
	w	w,u,o		h	h		t	t
	b	b		h	kh		t	tj
	p	p		h	kh		d	d
	f	f		s	s		d	dj

It may have revealed itself first because it is the easiest to work with. It contains just 26 pictograms (all single-letter sounds) and their associated phonetic values. The middle column is the *transliteration*, which means the sound is rendered *literally* into another language, but favoring the Egyptian in instances where there is no English equivalent (i.e. “3”). The third column, *translated*, means that in our case the English alphabet is favored and the phonetic symbols appear more clearly as phonetic values in English.

The other two alphabets appear here only in truncated form.⁸

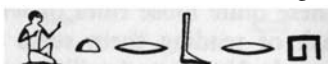
Biconsonantal signs					
	ʒw		mn		sʒ
	mr		sw		wʒ
	ms		nb		kʒ
	wr		bʒ		
Triconsonantal signs					
	'nb		hʒp		bʒp
	wʒb		nʒr		sm'
	ndm		d'm		

There were thousands of images, as many as 700 by only the Middle Kingdom. The *biconsonantal* images show pictograms which carry two-letter content. Notice the raised hands on the low right: it is the symbol for *ba*. The *triconsonantal* alphabet uses symbols transliterated into three-letter sounds. Notice the one on the upper left, the *ankh*. Symbols

from all three alphabets may be combined in any way to allow the formation of complex expressions. The term *conso-*

nantal is associated with these alphabets because the Egyptian language has no pictograms for vowels. A few pictograms carry vowel-like sounds, but in the absence of vowels an “e” is to be imputed. There is no indication of the sound that might go with the imputed “e.”

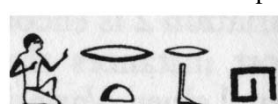
The fun part starts here: working with hieroglyphs. The first is a sequence of constructions for the word Herbert.⁹ All the necessary pictograms come from the *uniconsonantal* alphabet. First, there are a few rules: (a) no vowels allowed, (b) no punctuation allowed, (c) there are no spaces between words, (d) neither upper nor lower case may be used, (e) the language is read from *right to left*, and, last (f) if something is missing, as a literate person, you are expected to know what it is and impute it. The first step is to recognize that the expression should read “trbrt.” In the beginning it might look like this:



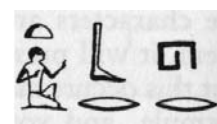
These characters are correct, but the total word is certainly unappealing. Additionally, notice the picture of the man, which does not appear in an alphabet of any kind. Symbols such as this are *determinatives*; they provide supplemental forms that help clarify the language. Some of them include legs running, an old man—the cane is added, *etc.*¹⁰ So at this point, the language has three components: *uni*, *bi*, and *triconsonantal* alphabets, plus *determinatives*.

Happily, this is not the only form that *trbrt* might take. The variety of hieroglyphic choices leading to the same content is part of the challenge of the language and is illustrated in the discussion of *Iry N Akhet*, which follows.

But back to Herbert. The word is more interesting if one uses the carver/scribe/s privileges and stacks the glyphs:



It looks even better if the man is included in the stack:



Notice that the artist is allowed to change symbol size and symbol placement in service to aesthetic and logistic needs. Egyptian literacy is very demanding.

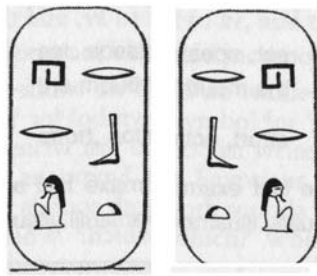
Give Herbert a tomb, with a false door. The beginning task is to inscribe the name vertically on the left side of the

tomb door, reading down from right to left. It would be an affront to tomb-convention as well as the *ka* and *ba* to arrange the door they both enter and leave asymmetrically: they must see the beginning and ending of the name the same way without regard to whether they are entering or leaving, which

means the name on the right is “flipped.” The tomb door is one of the very few instances in which this right-to-left convention is allowed because of its particular service to the spirit and soul.



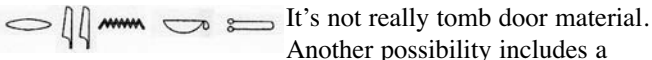
There is no indication that Herbert is a pharaoh, the determinative would have been different, but had he been so, his name would be encircled in a continuous rope and become *cartouche*. (next page)



Because Iry N Akhet's tomb door is housed in the MIA, its possible incarnations may be more interesting to docents. In the manual and materials on line, notice that Professor Schaden¹¹ provided both a transliteration of Iry's name, IR-N-3KT, and a very

accessible translation IRY-N-Akhet Lector Priest. The "3" is a glottal sound that appears in the uniconsonantal alphabet and is associated with the hieroglyph of a vulture, an image which the carver left out of Iry's name on the tomb. In conformity with tomb tradition the carver did create the mirror image of the name and reading it from right to left will give students a little more insight into the language.

There are many other ways in which the name and title could have been written, which is one of the reasons why Egyptian is so much more difficult than English. Among the possibilities is one with nothing but uniconsonantal symbols.



It's not really tomb door material.

Another possibility includes a hieroglyph from the triconsonantal alphabet as well as the determinative for a man. The mountain on both the left and right side of the setting sun actually stands for the complete word "akhet."¹²

It would have



been easier to read and taken less space, but the carver made the artistic choice, selecting hieroglyphs which looked good together and used the spaces on the door well. It does look good.



Starting from the right and on the right side the symbols literally read "irinhkat":

- The glyph that looks like an eye reads "iri."
- The jagged line reads "n."
- The bird is "akh."
- The loaf of bread reads as "t."
- Atypically there is some space between the two words and notice that the loaf of bread has arbitrarily been made smaller.
- So the first name is actually "iri-n-te-hka."
- The lector piece in transliteration is "behrek."
- The leg glyph is "b."
- The pot-stand is "k"
- The intertwined rope is "h." Given only "bkh" the role of the imputed "e" and the importance of the ability to supply missing sounds.

The cartouche of King Tutankhamen reveals the complexity and flexibility of the language.¹³ Images in the cartouche contain four of the elements of the Egyptian hieroglyph language: all three alphabets and logograms, which are the new and last concept. Determinants, the 5th element, do not appear here, as they did not on Iry's tomb. *Logograms* are ideas which contain a complete concept or idea themselves. Look at the top third first:



- The feather is from the uniconsonantal alphabet and stands for "t."
- The game board is a biconsonantal with the combined sound "mn."
- And the only purpose of the water, with its "n" sound, is to reinforce the "mn." The three combined sounds have a phonetic value of *imn*.

If one was a literate Egyptian, s/he would recognize immediately that this sound stood for *amun*. This is a logogram: *amun* was regarded as the king of gods in the New Kingdom, thus his name appears first out of respect, and his attributes become those of

Tutankhamen. (The "t" looks like a

lost feather, though it probably provided a "t" for Tutankhamen.

The bottom two-thirds of the cartouche contains many logograms.

- The phonetic value of the half-circle (like the feather) has the phonetic value "t."
- The chick has the phonetic value "w," a weak consonant which functions as "u."
- The ankh is both a triconsonantal and a logogram for "life" or "living."
- The shepherd's crook is a logogram standing for "ruler."
- The tri-shade column (bottom center) is a logogram for Heliopolis, a large city near Cairo; also it is a synonym for Thebes, the capital.
- The heraldic plant (looking like an umbrella holder) is the logogram for Upper Egypt.

The entire cartouche, framed by the symbolic unbroken rope, reads, *Tutankhamen, Ruler of Thebes*.

It's more difficult to read than both Herbert and Iry N Akhet, but doing so provides much more insight into how really difficult Egyptian hieroglyphs is as a language: the way it is consonantal, leaves images out which the reader must supply, and relies on context and colloquialism. It is an artistic language, requiring choice and skill in the selection, arrangement and sizing of images, not to mention color selection. And it is an intelligent language requiring sophisticated literacy without the help of punctuation, the separation of glyphs and the requirement that the pictograms of a single word or concept be kept together. To the creator it is a language of opportunity. To the literate reader it is a clear and beautiful way of communicating power and a relationship to the gods. To the millions of others, each image, each word and concept is a puzzle to be solved.

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¹ Robinson, Andrew. *The Story of Writing* [Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 1995] p.106.

² Bonewitz, Richard L. *Hieroglyphs* [Stoughton Hoddard, London, 2003] p.4.

³ "Egyptian Hieroglyphs". *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EgyptianHieroglyphs...] p.2.

⁴ Robinson, p.106.

⁵ Robinson, p.28.

⁶ Robinson, p.12, 42.

⁷ Kamrin, Janice. *Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs* [Harry N. Abrams, New York, 2003] p.24.

⁸ Robinson, p.100.

⁹ Bonewitz, p.24.

¹⁰ Gardiner compiled and classified a complete list of symbols, including determinatives and logograms, which appears in many books on Egyptian hieroglyphs.

¹¹ Schaden, Otto. IR-N-AKT [Docent Manual and on-line, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, nd] p. 8.

¹² Wilkinson, Richard H. *Reading Egyptian Art* [Thames & Hudson, London1992] p.135.

¹³ *National Geographic Photo News Gallery*

[<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/11/photogalleries/king...>] pp. 1, 6.

¹⁴ Robinson, p.35.



The Curators' Corner

Overshadowed by the opening of the Target Wing, several galleries in the old building experienced transformations this summer as well, among them Gallery 209 which morphed from Islamic art to the Hodroff Gallery of Chinese Export Porcelain. Christopher Monkhouse and Jennifer Carlquist showed Docent Muse reporter Bob Marshall around and answered his questions.

What is "Chinese Export Porcelain"?

As the name implies, it is porcelain produced in China for the export market, principally, but not exclusively, Europe.

How is it different from the porcelain displayed in the Jade Corridor?

The main difference is influence: everything from the shape to the decoration is different for the Western market. It's the dialogue between East and West that makes Chinese export porcelain so interesting. There is also, of course, a difference in quality. The Asian department is largely collecting imperial material; more time is taken on that production and only the finest pieces are retained. The export pieces were cranked out in Industrial Revolution fashion; we know of ships that carried 700,000 pieces at a time.

This is not to say there weren't fine objects produced. And even something that might have been considered crude in China was often displayed as a treasure once it reached Europe. This small teapot is an example: when it arrived broken after shipping, it was not thrown away, it was sent to a jeweler and a precious metal spout was added on.



Why is this material in the Dec Arts area, rather than Asian? Export porcelain was such an important part of European interior decoration, and later American interiors, that you just can't divorce it from its intended market. And, as you can see in the display cases around the French Grand Salon, it had an enormous impact on the development of European ceramics. You wouldn't have Dutch Delftware, to take just one obvious example, if it weren't for Chinese porcelain.

Briefly, how is this gallery arranged?

To the left of the entrance we were able to fit our map, so on the west wall we focus on the international nature of this material. We show how designs were sent over from Europe to be copied in China, and we highlight some European forms that didn't exist in China, like the candlestick, coffeepot and monteith. At the far end of the wall we point out some of the foreign markets for which wares were produced, including India, the Middle East and America.

To the right of the entrance is an introductory panel, and then we start the east wall with the earliest pieces, which were made for the Eastern market, by which we mean in and around China – Korea, Japan, Indonesia and Persia. Next come pieces salvaged from ships that sank in 1643, 1690, 1752 and 1817. By highlighting these shipwrecks we reinforce the risks involved and point out an important contemporary source for scholarship on the China trade.

We have a large display of blue-and-white ware, which was the largest part of the market early on. Blue-and-white is more stable in the kiln and less expensive to produce; so it was used to supply the huge quantities that were initially demanded. And finally at the end of the east wall we make direct reference to the shipping trade with pieces that portray ships and famous ports along the China trade route.

The two breakfront cases on the side walls echo the display in the Hodroffs' home and allow the viewer to get close to the objects. In the middle of the room we display larger pieces – punch bowls and tankards – that look gorgeous from any angle. The gallery climaxes with the sideboard on the end wall. This was the secular altar of the dining room, where, both in Europe and America, your best pieces of export porcelain would be displayed. And here we display highlights from our rich collection of armorial porcelain, pieces that were custom-ordered to show off a family's coat-of-arms.

Why did you include furniture in the gallery?

The sideboard was acquired with this gallery in mind. It's not extraordinary, but it's real and of the period. It provides context, reminding how the porcelain would be used and displayed. The chairs were originally considered Chinese, but we now know they came out of India and would have been picked up on one of the stops on the voyage from China back to Europe. Speaking of context, we need to encourage people to visit the *MacFarlane Room* upstairs. The same artists who painted export porcelain painted that wallpaper, which was brought over on the same ships.

What was America's role in the export porcelain market?

America stepped in as Europe was phasing out. Remember that European monarchs were mad to learn the secret of porcelain. The Germans discovered the technique in 1708, but the French didn't catch on until around 1740 at Vincennes, where their royal porcelain factory was founded before moving in 1756 to Sèvres. In an effort to protect and build their own porcelain industries, European governments levied tariffs that rose as high as 90% by 1790. As European domestic porcelain became more established, it simply wasn't worth the two-year wait involved in ordering porcelain from China.

Conversely, after America became independent, it was free of tariffs and built up its own shipping fleet. It had no porcelain factories of its own; so imports from China were sought-after status items.



We show an example from the first armorial service brought over to post-Revolution on an American ship, for the Morgan family of Hartford (ancestors of J. Pierpont). They lifted a coat-of-arms from an English family in the Caribbean and, in case that was too subtle, had the name "Morgan" painted on the pattern. The large punch bowl in the central case shows the familiar rose medallion pattern that was hugely popular in America. President Grant ate off this pattern in the White House in the 1870s.

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If a Docent could only show one piece in the gallery, what would you recommend?

One of the rarest and most beautiful objects is the lighthouse coffeepot; it shows the influence of Western decoration as well as Western form. It is beautifully painted, probably based on a botanical by Maria Sybilla Merian by way of the Dutch artist Cornelius Pronk, who went in for this incredibly labor-intensive fish-scale background.



Another favorite is the figurine of dancers, rescued from a shipwreck, broken and covered with barnacles. A mold was made in China from the Meissen original (displayed next to it); and any time you make a copy from a mold, the copy will be slightly smaller than the original, as you can see here. Only five of these were recovered – all broken with only tiny fragments of paint remaining.



Only five of these were recovered – all broken with only tiny fragments of paint remaining.

Among the pieces on the sideboard, point out the Okeover plate, which had so much elaborate decoration, even shadowing, that each piece cost ten times the normal price for armorial china.



Do you have any complete sets of export porcelain?

A museum like ours can't really collect whole sets; they're hard to store and you can't display them. We did receive half of the Duque de Agrada's dinner service – about 150 pieces. We show the soup tureen and stand below his portrait and plates on either side of it. It's actually very rare to have a portrait of someone who commissioned a service, with his coat of arms on both. We also have an armorial plate from the Pignatelli service, belonging to the family of the *Comtesse d'Egmont Pignatelli*, whose portrait we recently acquired.

Will the objects in this gallery change?

A significant portion of our most fabulous pieces of Chinese export are on view somewhere in the museum. We do have more in storage, but it's mostly the same forms we have on display, especially plates. At the same time, installing this gallery has given us a clearer picture of what we've got – and what we still need. The Hodroffs have been tremendously generous, both in donating objects and helping us build this gallery, and they are continuing to collect – we hope with this gallery in mind.

While looking for Oceania one day...

Tom Byfield

Have you even found yourself in pursuit of tour material only to be diverted by something completely unrelated? Of course you haven't, you're normal. I, on the other hand, have the attention span of a small Chihuahua with fleas.

The other day I was trying to find some information on oceanic artifacts in preparation for an unexpected tour that appeared in my box like a past due notice from the Department of Taxation. I was not thrilled. I must have missed the lectures on Oceania. All I could remember of that area were its exports and that from a high school class: pepper from Micronesia, pearls from Polynesia, rubber from Melanesia and milk from Magnesia. Other than that I didn't have a clue.

I would rather have spent the day popping bubble wrap but I went like a good docent to the den instead. Our den contains all of the detritus one would expect having been married to the MIA for ten years, plus the residue of many previous decades. Now I have seen dens in other docents' homes that are models of form and function worthy of publication in prestigious architectural magazines. They are dens that smell of old money, wainscot panels of cherrywood, leather-covered antique desks, flocked wallpaper with original oil paintings of muscular thoroughbreds tossing their haughty heads in disdain of anything unhorsy. On the other hand, our den looks like one recently visited by a successful suicide bomber now frolicking with thirty-four virgins. It shows all the ambience of a Tidy Bowl commercial.

There are papers scattered everywhere, books stacked in no logical order, and drawers stuffed with our accumulation of pizza coupons. In such chaos futility reigns, and I often feel as helpless as the owner of a sick goldfish. But I am the obedient docent, the one who stayed home while his profligate brother caroused in Arizona returning as a prodigal in the spring. I have yet to see my fatted calf. Duty must prevail so I held my nose and dove in. I soon got sidetracked.

In pawing through the aggregate of my class notes, cards and MIA papers, I came across some lists that had been written years ago. They had nothing to do with art but were remnants of fossils deep in my geology in a stratum long covered over. One had to do with cookbooks. A friend who hated to cook asked me to think of some titles she could paste on the covers of her books that would discourage anyone who saw them from eating at her place even if invited. The labels included:

How to Cook Sushi

Chow Mein and Other Chinese Dog Dishes

The Medicine Man's Cookbook – The Complete Book of Entrails

Stir-Fry Recipes from Leavenworth

One Hundred Ways to Grill Road-kill

The Gourmet's Guide to Salmonella and other Seafoods

Another list of sorts that also bubbled up from the accumulated debris was one that dwelt with the sometimes fanciful names given animal groups: a pride of lions, a pod of whales, an exultation of larks. I apparently was trying to assign a group name to ladies of easy virtue:

A jam of tarts

A frost of hoars

A flourish of strumpets

A statue of libertines

An essay of trollops

An anthology of pros

I was undoubtedly fantasizing as I have never met a lady of easy virtue. (My wild oats turned to shredded wheat early on.) That I would spend time on such trivia forces me to admit the possibility that I had been golfing without my hat, leaving me with few wires plugged into reality – a condition some would say continues today.

After spending an inordinate amount of time reveling in nostalgia, I remembered why I went to the den in the first place. After plumbing the nether regions of my notes I finally came across some references to the Pacific Ocean civilizations and their artifacts in the MIA. The tour I put together did not leave the group breathless and clamoring for more, but I escaped without bodily harm. There were a few murmured "Thank yous." As Shakespeare would say, "damned with faint praise." I think they would have preferred hearing about ladies of the evening.

U.S. Academic Decathlon

Sharon Hayenga

The United States Academic Decathlon has chosen the MIA's Chinese Collection as the site for its competitive preparation in art studies for 2006-2007. The Academic Decathlon is a competition among secondary schools that choose to field teams: each team comprises nine members (three each, with grade averages of A, B and C).

The competition involves ten disciplines: art, economics, essay, interview, language and literature, mathematics, music, science, social science and speech. The curriculum is sharply defined and changes each year. Study print materials and illustrative CDs are available from the organization's Web site (http://www.usad.org/curriculum/outlines/2006_2007/artlist_0607.html).

Last year participating schools were assigned to visit the National Portrait Gallery in Washington DC. This year participants have been assigned to visit the MIA and study 17 specific objects from the China collection:

The Tripod Ritual Vessel

Pendant in the form of a Dragon

Female "Long Sleeve" Dancer

Spirit Jar (hun ping)

Boy Leading an Ox along the Farm Path

The Bodhisattva Kuan-Yin

Book of Sudhana from the Garland Sutra

Verse in Cursive Script (not on view)

Bamboo and Rocks

Imperial Throne

Empress's Twelve-symbol Robe

Blue-and-White-Dish (gallery 210)

Pillow (gallery 204)

Official Seal (gallery 215)

Cricket Container (gallery 217)

Cosmetic Case and Mirror Stand

Groups are encouraged to book tours. One group, from San Diego, has already spent two days touring and studying the specific objects as well as a broader look at the entire Chinese collection and Museum.

Keeping in Touch



From the Docent Chair

Selfishly Mondays are my favorite day in the museum. Of course I enjoy most of the Monday morning lectures but I am specifically thinking of my time alone in the galleries.

So often I will buzz through the galleries on a mission to find the perfect puzzle piece to complete my tour, subconsciously avoiding the grandeur of the museum. Mondays permit me to slow my pace, allowing the silence to envelope my day. I have my favorite pieces of art and can privately dream in a perfect world of where they would hang in my home. However, realistically my love affair with each of them will necessitate return trips to the museum, not my bedroom and living room.

Even though we do relish this calmness we do know that Tuesday will come and visitors will enter our private world. We are here to share not only our knowledge but also our passion and kindness with these people. When we see them wandering with a map hugging their faces, approach them, asking if they would like assistance. Perhaps suggest a key piece of art you especially love along the way or even walk them to their place of destination. Remember how lost we have been in the museum, and may still be. Wouldn't it be nice to aid their confusion?

It is incredible how wonderful someone's smile can make you feel; not necessarily as wonderful as having that gallery all to your self on Mondays but not too far from that. It only takes a few moments to make a huge difference in someone's visit to our special place; surely we can all spare the time.

Pam Friedland

From the Museum Guide Programs Staff

Welcome back! We love the beginning of the year. There is always so much catching up to do.

If you have reviewed your Continuing Education calendar for the Fall you know there is a lot going on. How fortunate we are to begin the year with our Joan Herreid Docent Memorial Lecture featuring Jack Weatherford, acclaimed scholar, author and professor of anthropology at Macalester College, talking on "Genghis Khan and the Silk Road." Many of you may be familiar with Dr. Weatherford through his books, including *Indian Givers* and *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*. Richard Herreid started this endowment in 1989 in memory of his wife Joan, docent class of 1981.

The very next week we are pleased to offer our very first Sylvia Druy lecture. This wonderful new endowment was established by Sylvia's grandchildren and other loved ones to honor her on the occasion of her 90th birthday. Our guest speaker for this inaugural lecture is Carla Atwood Hartman, Director of Education, Eames Office, and former Master

Teacher of Architecture, Design and Graphics, Denver Art Museum. Carla is the granddaughter of Charles and Ray Eames. She will talk about how to have conversations in the galleries addressing materials, forms, periods—even gender and personality—when it comes to chairs.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the morning of Wednesday, October 25th. Wednesday? Yes. We have a special guest speaker for junior docent training, Dr. Vivian Mann, Morris and Eva Feld Chair in Judaica, The Jewish Museum, New York, and Advisor to the Master's Program in Jewish art, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York. Dr. Mann will be lecturing on the history of Jewish Art from ancient times to 1600. Although we do not have objects in our collection from this time period, we wanted to address this important part of art history as part of our chronological approach to training. We are pleased to be able to fund this lecture with our Ruth Mackoff Shapiro Docent Education Fund, established by Dr. Sidney Shapiro as a memorial and tribute to Ruth, his late wife and long-time docent.

Because we want all of you to have the opportunity to come to this lecture we have scheduled it in Pillsbury Auditorium. We will also tape the lecture for anyone who cannot attend. If you are a Wednesday docent and plan to attend, please check out for the morning to avoid being assigned a tour.

Promoting Memberships

The museum has set some very ambitious membership goals for the year ahead. We believe docents can play a vital role in helping the museum raise awareness of and increase sales of memberships. Some of you are already in the habit of asking visitors if they are members or telling tour groups about the benefits of membership. We challenge each of you to find a way to integrate membership information into your public and adult group tours. We don't expect you to sell memberships, but feel you are in a great position to inform people and even direct them to the Visitor and Member Service areas where memberships are sold. Let's discuss your techniques and successes at our first annual meeting. Thank you in advance for your help! (Please note that prices and membership categories are changing—see the MIA Web site soon for more information.)

Annual Meeting

We are excited about our new tradition, which we will begin on Monday, October 16th—A Docent Annual Meeting. In conversation with last year's and this year's Docent Executive Committees, we have already determined that an important agenda item will be discussing touring the new museum. We would also like to review some basics of best docent practices and share some information about the museum's goals for the year ahead. Please be sure to let us know if there are other topics relevant to all docents you would like to have addressed at the meeting.

Research Files

Take some time to acquaint yourself with the bigger and better files in the docent/guide library. We have developed many new files and built up existing files. We couldn't have done this without all of the help we received from many people

including fabulous interns, docents and junior docents, and Collection in Focus guides over the past year. You will find a lot of new files for the Ancient, African, Japanese, Islamic, Pacific Islands and Modern Art collections. We will continue to build files and encourage any of you who have researched new objects (or uncovered new research on familiar objects) to share them with us so we can make them available to everyone.

Twin Cities Docent Symposium

Please plan to join your fellow guides from the MIA and other local institutions for the second Twin Cities Docent and Guide Conference, *Terms of Engagement: Crafting the Visitor Experience*, on October 30 at the Walker Art Center. Panel topics to be offered include education technologies, touring seniors/visitors with disabilities, working with teens, using storytelling on tours, and writing and tours. There will be afternoon breakout sessions on a variety of topics, including a *Whose Muse* book discussion, “best practices” for different age groups, and tours of the Walker’s special exhibition, *Heart of Darkness*, or permanent collection. The keynote speaker is Bob Sain, former director of LACMALab, who will talk about new ways of presenting art and engaging visitors. Check your mailbox soon for a registration form.

Debbi Hegstrom

Book Signing September 13

Please join us for a conversation with Patricia Gebhard about her new book, *Purcell & Elmslie: Prairie Progressive Architects*, on Wednesday September 13 at 3:30 p.m. in the Friends Lecture Room, first floor Target Wing.

Purcell & Elmslie: Prairie Progressive Architects explores the work of two important members of the organic architecture movement, and celebrates their tremendously important contributions to American architecture and the Prairie School. Wishing to return to simplicity and honesty, Purcell and Elmslie created homes and buildings that were consistent with a democratic society – simple forms, the natural use of textural materials and decoration, and buildings that accommodated the nature of a site. As did Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, Purcell and Elmslie held the conviction that a building does not end with its simple structure, but reaches its final and logical culmination in the clothing – color, situation and natural environment, together with its decoration of glass, terra-cotta, and other textural materials.

The only book to contain details from their extensive office records, as well as from letters, unpublished writings, notes and personal conversations with William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie, this comprehensive volume encompasses the history of the firm, from their residential designs such as the Purcell-Cutts House in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to commercial buildings such as the Merchants Bank in Winona, Minnesota, to civic buildings such as the Woodbury County Courthouse in Sioux City, Iowa.

Debbi Hegstrom

Minneapolis Woman’s Club Symposia

Three docents and one curator have volunteered to bring the MIA to the Minneapolis Woman’s Club, a nonprofit organization near Loring Park which contributes all funds raised throughout the year to local charities. The Club also maintains and operates the Ard Godfrey House.

In a September four-part series, that includes a 90-minute power-point lecture/discussion, followed by lunch and a one-hour tour at the MIA,

(a) Fern Miller will introduce the Chinese Collection;

(b) Patrick George will cover modern and modernism as well as the new building;

(c) Lynn Teschendorf will present the French room and decorative arts; and

(d) Matthew Welch will introduce the Japanese Collection as a memorial to John A. O’Keeffe, who had planned to do the presentation.

Response has been enthusiastic with more than twice as many participants as had been expected. The Woman’s Club has been involved with many museums locally but the September program is unprecedented and is the first MIA presence or visit in several years.

Separately, Bill Griswold will be the speaker for the Tuesday morning luncheon in late September at the Club.

Sharon Hayenga

Honorary Docents

Many thanks to Nancy Pennington for representing the honorary docents over the past two years. The new representative is Arlene Baker.

From the Editor...

With the new addition to the MIA, a new logo and branding, it seemed time to re-design *The Docent Muse* just a bit. Most of the change is in the masthead and the first page.

Bill Griswold has agreed to write a column for the *Muse* but there was not time for this first issue. Look for his comments in future issues this year.

The position of editor of the *Muse* seems to have come under the scrutiny of Homeland Security. In preparing the lead article for this issue, some of the e-mails containing the ancient hieroglyphs were intercepted (or somehow never got from there to here) with commentary returned to the sender about the Patriot Act. So if I’m not around for the next issue...

A number of docents have indicated an interest in writing an article for the *Muse*. Articles can be about a work of art in the collection, a particularly interesting tour group, or whatever else might be of interest to the docent community.

Submissions for articles may be sent any time to me at mcnequette@stthomas.edu

The deadlines for future editions of the *Muse* are:

Winter issue – December 1

Spring issue – February 2

Summer issue – May 4

Merritt Nequette