

The Docent Muse



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Piecing together China's First Emperor Qin Shihuang

Wendi Chen

Qin Shihuang and Mao Zedong are two significant Chinese rulers: the former has lain in a mysterious dark mausoleum several hundred feet under Mount Li outside the ancient capital Xi'an for over 2,200 years, and the latter has been openly kept in a crystal coffin in a mausoleum on Tian An Men Square for only 36 years in the modern capital Beijing. The ancient ruler achieved his immortality not by preserving his physical body, which he tried so hard to attempt in his lifetime, but by what he had left behind.

The modern leader, though physically preserved so far, seems to be gradually fading from public attention. It's fascinating to see what an insatiable appetite our volunteer museum guides have for any information relating to the Qin Empire, its rulers, and the subterranean world for China's first emperor. One wonders why Qin Shihuang generates so much global interest.

One of the reasons for this fascination can probably be traced to the mysterious and controversial nature surrounding Qin Shihuang. It is as if he were hidden inside that bronze chariot (a replica of the unearthed *an che*) in the MIA lobby, and we couldn't help but want to steal a closer look at him. Is he an amicable man who would just suddenly step outside the chariot and shake our hands? Or is he a mean and formidable man who would quickly order everybody in the museum to clear out and then order all the treasures at MIA to be shipped to his capital Xianyang? It is known he did exactly that with all the six states he conquered.

Since the historical records about Qin Shihuang are so scanty and unreliable, scholars over the past two thousand years have been allowed the liberty of interpreting available information on their own terms and creating images of Qin Shihuang that seemed

feasible to them. Thus, the question remains, should he be regarded as a great ruler who created China as we know it today, or was he a demonic villain who committed much violence and brought great misery to millions of people? How should he be judged? With the help of the objects in our special exhibition, we can make an attempt to answer these questions.

The most prominent objects in the galleries, the warriors and horses, are appropriate representations of the Qin Empire and its ruler. After all, the State of Qin was known for its very formidable military power. It possessed the most effective organization, the most advanced weaponry, skillful military strategies, and fierce fighters.

The *General* in our exhibition, who stands confident and dignified, belongs to a core class of loyal members of the Qin State. His family might have served the emperor for generations, and he would have sacrificed his life for the country at any moment, just like the historical General Meng Tian.

The *Military Officer* standing next to the General is inferior to him in rank. He has earned this position through fighting many successful battles. Each enemy head this officer brought back allowed him to rise steadily to his current position.

The *Light Infantryman* standing to the General's right belongs to the most numerous and lowest military rank. But he and his fellow infantrymen, together with the *Archers* and *Cavalrymen*, form the major fighting force. These young warriors, having gone through rigorous training and holding ambitions of earning a title, a house, some land, and even servants, as the military merit awarding system stipulated, were



forever waiting for the battle drum to sound the signal to charge.

After four years of rigorous training, highly-skilled archers, standing or kneeling, were placed in the front of the battle formation ready to shoot the very first shots. Using deadly three-sided bronze arrows on crossbows and accompanied by ferocious cavalymen charging at the disoriented enemies on foot, they could bring down tens of thousands of enemy fighters in no time. Not surprisingly, the Qin Army, one million strong, was feared by all the other states. It was this army that enabled Qin Shihuang to conquer all the other six states in about ten years and establish the unified Qin Empire.

It was not only the human forces that made the Qin Army invincible. It was also how they were equipped. The Qin technologies for manufacturing weapons were advanced and the management of that process efficient. This enabled mass production of high quality bronze swords, daggers, halberds, crossbows, arrows, and spears. Just in Pit 1 (of the four pits excavated), approximately one mile to the east of Emperor Qin Shihuang's tomb complex, where an estimated 6,000 terracotta warriors stand in battle formation, about 40,000 pieces of bronze weapons were found. The consistent size and quality of these weapons suggest mass production and high quality control.

There are perfectly designed bronze trigger mechanisms for the crossbow that ensure a long shooting range and accuracy. The shooting range for a crossbow with this mechanism is 300 meters with a killing range of 150 meters.

The three-sided arrows found here, when compared to the two-sided arrows used by other states, were much more deadly. Also the Qin swords and spears were substantially longer than their counterparts in other states, giving the Qin army more fighting power.

On top of the sophisticated weapons, there were the legendary horses for the cavalry. As their teeth tell us, all of the horses were in their prime (4-6 years). They were strong, swift, and brave. Since the State of Qin bordered the Chinese north-western frontier, the Qin



military benefited from their interactions with the nomadic people who had excellent horsemanship. This gave the Qin army another advantage over the other states.

Looking at the impressive underground terracotta army and reading about Emperor Qin's brutal acts of burning books and burying scholars, one may conclude that he was an absolute barbarian who was only capable of arousing fear in all those with whom he came contact. That has been the general perception of him for over two thousand years.

The portrait at the entrance to the special exhibition, an imaginary work of someone in the 18th century, illustrates that viewpoint. I have heard elementary school children commenting on the portrait with these words: "He is angry." "He looks mean." There is some truth to these kids' innocent comments, though they were mere reactions to the visual image on the wall. However, Qin Shihuang was a multifaceted man. One could say he was an open-minded man, who valued talents and abilities more than blood relations.

Like a number of his predecessors, he employed talented individuals from other states to be his top officials. His Prime Minister Li Si, whose calligraphy is on one of the *stelae*, came from the State of Chu. The famed General Meng Tian's family originally came from the State of Qi but became one of the most trusted families by the Qin rulers. Zhao Gao, who would play a crucial role in bringing down the Qin Empire, was from the neighboring state Zhao. A criminal who was to be punished by a death sentence, Zhao Gao was pardoned by Qin Shihuang and entrusted with a very important position – to be in charge of the Imperial Seal. These few historical facts seem to show us a different image of the First Emperor from what one might imagine when viewing the exhibition.

We can glimpse another side of the emperor, his love of things both fine and grandiose, in some other gallery objects. Aside from the scale of his tomb complex and thousands of life-size warriors, horses, and chariots, the architectural remnants from his palaces also tell us about Qin Shihuang's pursuit for the finest and most extraordinary.

The roof tile ends with exquisite designs of animals and the paving stones with such delicate patterns all bring back the glory of the palaces in the ancient capital of Xianyang. The bronze bells evoke

the beautiful sounds of music performed at sacrificial rituals to Heaven, Earth, and ancestral spirits that the emperor took extreme care to administer. Those exquisitely-made bronze food and wine vessels, *ding*, *hu*, *he* and *pan*, some of which were spoils from various military conquests, speak of the reverence to cultural heritage and refinement.

All the small but precious bronze, gold, silver and jade objects for decorating chariots and harnessing horses show exceptional care for quality and beauty. Emperor Qin's underground water park, excavated in the year 2000 with forty-six bronze water birds (cranes, swans, and wild geese) and fifteen terracotta figures (thought to be musicians training the birds), indicates a fond love of natural beauty. Qin Shihuang seems not only a man of military ingenuity but also of cultural sophistication.

However, what has really made Qin Shihuang a larger-than-life historical figure was his effective ruling. He relied on laws to manage a vast unified empire at a time when the newly defeated states were reluctant to cooperate. In a matter of a decade, he implemented many necessary reforms to strengthen the new country, including the standardization of the written language, measurements, weights, currency, and legal codes. Without the standardization of the written language, China might have turned out to be like Europe, with a number of different languages. This would have made the political unification impossible.

The bronze weight with *Gaonu* inscribed on it carries Qin Shihuang's edict enforcing the standardization of measurements which enabled viable trading and efficient taxation. In addition, the standardization of currency was crucial to the function of a unified country as one can easily see from the vastly different shapes of coins from other states. It's safe to assume that all these changes were possible only because of the supreme power the emperor held that allowed the enforcement of his strict, ruthless laws.

Unfortunately, what assisted the First Emperor in his unification – the absolute power of the emperor and the strict legal system – also led to his undoing. Emperor Qin's unrestrained ambitions for the new empire and for himself would eventually bring about the downfall of his empire.

He had grand construction projects: building hundreds of miles of highways for the army and transportation, constructing extravagant palaces in

the capital, improving irrigation systems to support agricultural production to feed his large military and labor force, building the Great Wall to fend off the nomadic invaders, expanding the territory in the South, and at the same time, using enormous amounts of construction labor and material resources to build his extravagant underground palace for his afterlife. At one time, the labor force alone for building E-Pang Palace and his tomb was as large as 700,000 people. Imagine the heavy burdens, both physical and financial, that all this construction placed upon his people.

It is true that Qin Shihuang's unified empire was short-lived, lasting for only fifteen years (221-207 BCE); however, the imprints the First Emperor made on Chinese civilization have lasted for over two thousand years. The most important of all is his standardization of written Chinese language. For example, what's carved on the stone tablet in the exhibition, made more than 2,200 years ago, can still be read by a modern Chinese person.

His political system of centralized government with the supreme power resting in the hand of the monarch was adopted by the subsequent dynasties till the beginning of the 20th century, and to some extent, is still used today. Above all, the unified country called China (originating from Qin), still exists. By all measures, he has been regarded as an extraordinary man. Though not meant to be seen in posterity, the scale of his burial complex – his bureaucratic apparatus in the form of governmental officials, his military army thousands strong, his accompanying concubines, his imperial stables, his troupes of entertainers, his private wildlife park, his invaluable bronze chariots possibly to carry him to another realm, and many other valuables still inside his untouched tomb – can be matched by none, as far as we know.

Emperor Qin has thus been called “Emperor of All Emperors,” which is not too much of an exaggeration. The means to achieve his great ambitions were not all admirable, but his long-lasting impact on Chinese civilization cannot be denied. Even though he didn't leave a bronze statue of his own image for later generations, his terracotta warriors are proof of what kind of commander-in-chief he was. In contrast, Mao Zedong left many larger-than-life-size statues of himself; however, will any one of them ever make it to MIA? I doubt it.

Looking forward to touring TCWarriors

Grace Goggin

This article was originally an email that Grace Goggin sent to docents who were touring the Terracotta Warriors exhibition. It was brought to my attention as containing information that would be of interest to the broader docent community. So, with Grace's permission and some editing here it is. Enjoy!

Marilyn Smith

I have not done my first TCW tour yet, so keep that in mind as you read this!

I think it can be hard to make some of the material in this show relevant to today's visitors. I'm thinking about pulling the following tricks out the bag.

Find something familiar to the viewer to connect them to the object. For example: The bronze bell might connect with the Liberty Bell, church bells, hand bells, door bells or dinner bells. I can see a discussion following about how bells function for us today and how they functioned in ancient China, *i.e.* to make music, in spiritual contexts/settings, to help connect humans to the cosmos/divine, as a symbol of authority/power, to signal/summon. This also sets up a nice compare and contrast of the *bo* bell with any of these more familiar bells. It can also lead to what all the *bo* bell's bosses and flanges, inscriptions, shape, two tones and surface decorations are for.

Some groups love stories and some of the pieces go with good stories. The *Kneeling Archer* brings to mind archer Yi and the ten suns. I think of Yi as sort of a Chinese Hercules.



Editor's note: Archer Yi shot down nine of the ten original suns that took turns bringing daylight to the earth because they had rebelled and all shone at the same time scorching the earth. In this way he gave us our one sun.

The bronze *dings* bring to mind the story of Emperor Yu and the Nine Cauldrons and bells bring to mind the story of the dog who married the princess.

Editor's note: According to legend the Nine Tripod Cauldrons were created following the foundation of the Xia Dynasty (c. 2200 BCE) by Yu the Great, using tribute metal presented by the governors of the Nine Provinces of ancient China. At the time of the Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 BCE) tripod cauldrons came to symbolize the power and authority of the ruling dynasty with strict regulations imposed as to their use. There are several versions of the dog who married a princess story and we will have to ask Grace to tell us the one that includes a bell.

Follow Kay Miller's lead and go for the juicy parts of Qin Shihuang's story along with his accomplishments, *i.e.* – his young age at the time of his rise to power, his obsession with immortality using cranes, deer and a terracotta warrior army, his paranoia, his ruthlessness and cruelty, his mausoleum complex with tomb workers killed and buried in the complex, rivers of mercury with water birds, his death while on the fifth expedition which was kept secret and a cart of rotting fish following his chariot was used to disguise the smell of his rotting body. This last part of his story could work well in the lobby with the chariot replica. If you get involved on a tour with Sima Qi, the grand historian, be sure to mention his castration by the Han emperor. Yikes!

When crowds press in, go for some non-audio tour pieces.

- *Jewelry and agate beads.* Some of the kids will have picked up agates at the lakeshore. Use the symbolism of fish, dragons and cowrie shells.
- *Gold case with a tiger, ducks and bears.* Use of the Chinese symbolism of these animals can present an opportunity to compare what we associate with these animals today.
- *Roof tiles/drainage pipe.* It's fun to decipher and figure out what's depicted on the tiles, and anything to do with sewage will make an impression on kids of all ages.
- *Weapons.* Qin swords and arrows. Our curator's story about museum workers cutting their fingers on the still sharp blades, and his own experience bending the blades of such swords till the ends touch could be interesting to audiences.
- *Stone armor and the burial practice of jade/stone body armor and body orifice plugs.* Again, kids of all ages will find this interesting.
- *Chun Yu.* there is a large chunk missing in the back. I thought it was fun to see the inside of the bell/drum.

Share personal stories and memories evoked by an object. Your stories and those of visitors are often very memorable, and are part of what makes actually going on a tour more satisfying for some than an audio tour. Even if the story is as simple as telling about seeing camels in Xi'an while visiting the Great Wall, or seeing a sword on an episode of *Pawn Stars*, or seeing one on *Antiques Road Show* on TV.

When I was a girl, it was a special treat when my mother had time to get her special round wooden treasure box out of her top dresser drawer and tell me the story of when she left China as a teenager. We would sit on her bed and she would carefully hand me the box to open as she told the story. The round box was smooth and polished. It had a round wooden lid inlaid with different colored woods that formed a picture of a rooftop scene with a stork standing beside a chimney.

The box was a gift to my mother from her father who had gotten it in Strasburg, Germany when he lived in Paris in the late 1920s. Inside the box wrapped in cream-colored felt were a small agate dog, two tiny carved ivory elephants, and a few round agate beads, like those that are a part of the pendant in the *Terracotta Warriors*' exhibition.

To this collection of precious items collected throughout her childhood, two heavy yellow gold rings, and two small gold ingots were added the night she left China. That night she left her ill mother, two brothers and a sister behind. She took this round box with her on a boat to meet her father in Taiwan, where he, as a government education official fleeing the communist take-over, had gone. Because she was the youngest child, he sent for her first. As events unfolded, the rest of the family were unable to make it out of China before the doors were closed. The story would always end with her wish to see her mother and sister again.

I can still feel the heavy weight of the small gold objects in my hand, the warmth and roundness of the wood box, the smooth coolness of the agate, and the lightness and grooves in the ivory elephants. When I see the agate beads, jade pendants, and small gold items in the exhibit, I can't help but think that these items found in tombs of people from the turbulent pre-Qin Warring States period were a precious part of lives lived so long ago. Perhaps they were touched

in the same way by war, great change, family ties and middle-of-the-night journeys.

When I look at ancient Chinese bronzes, I always feel a little bit embarrassed by the way my younger brother and I treated the replica of a bronze tripod that sat on our fireplace hearth when we were kids. We would throw gum wrappers, burrs stuck to our sweaters, socks, sticks, pinecones, pebbles, really any small item we were too lazy to take and put where it should go, into the *ding*. I didn't know what the bronze object was. I only knew my uncle (father's brother), whom I had never met, had sent it to my father. It was many years later that I finally learned what it meant to my father.

My grandfather was a merchant and my father grew up in a family with two older brothers and four older sisters. My dad had a difficult time as a student. He was always very stubborn and falling short. Because he hated practicing calligraphy, he would have to go up to the teacher to get his hands rapped with a stick when his assigned homework was done, because that was the punishment for unsatisfactory work. He had decided he would rather get hit with a stick than practice calligraphy. Like my mother, he also fled to Taiwan. But, with no money or possessions he had to stow away on a coal barge. After three days he arrived penniless and dirty on his brother's doorstep.

He did manage to get into college after discovering that most of his life he had been nearsighted. He found school much easier after getting his first pair of glasses. Eventually, he left Taiwan for America to pursue graduate study in chemistry at Emory University, and to follow my mother who was the first one to have the idea of going to school in America. After he arrived in the United States, the first thing his brother sent him was the replica of the bronze *ding*. It was to celebrate his achievements as a scholar, the first in his family, and also to tell him – even though you have crossed the ocean, we, your family and ancestors, are still with you and you are with us.

Musings from MGP

Debbi Hegstrom

Having trouble getting into the spirit of the season? Feel like curling up into a ball and hibernating as the days get shorter? Celebrations taking place around the world remind us that the light will return. This is

a time of year to reflect on renewal and regeneration; a time to do something you've never done before. So, I've got a few suggestions and an incentive:

Go on a *Winterlights* tour. Learn about winter holidays at home and far away that are different from your own. Find out on what day the Buddha achieved enlightenment.

Introduce yourself to Karleen Gardner, our new Director of Learning & Innovation, and Jackie Lucas, our new L&I Administrative Assistant.

Ask them what they think of the Minnesota winter so far. Which southern states are they from?

Pick an object in the museum you've passed by many times (without stopping) and learn three new things about it.

Have you seen the tiny warriors around the metropolitan area? They have been distributed far and wide in a guerilla-marketing effort to raise awareness and curiosity about the *Terracotta Warriors* exhibition. Pick up some tiny warriors in the tour office, take pictures of them in unusual places, and send them to Garnette Kuznia, gkuznia@artsmia.org (MIA's social media person).

Go on an *Inspired by Books* tour in December (*The Madonnas of Leningrad*), January (*The Great Gatsby*), or February (*Washington: A Life*).

Visit *Supper with Shakespeare* in the *Tudor Room*, set up with Ivan Day's amazing culinary delights. What's the original meaning of the term "banquet?" Some items are made with sugar (held together with a sap binder), and some are completely inedible. Take a guess; then ask the docent which is which!

Send me a report of what you did/found out and the first person to complete them all will get a prize! (Perhaps there's an exhibition catalog you've been wanting . . .)

Here's an update on visitor statistics for the *Terracotta Warriors* special exhibition:

At the half-way point (6 weeks), over 50,000 people have seen the *Terracotta Warriors*. More than half of all museum visitors are attending the exhibition. Visitor numbers have surpassed *Rembrandt in America* numbers at the same point. This will certainly be one of the top 10 exhibitions by attendance at the MIA!

We are in the throes of setting up Continuing Educations sessions for February through May. If you

have a speaker in mind, please send a name and phone number or email my way.

The galleries are full of school children and adults every day. You are helping them make meaning and memories of what they see. Thank you – I wish you a happy holiday season with time for renewal and regeneration as we anticipate the New Year!

You're Invited!

Terry Nadler

Imagine being transported back to Shakespeare's time! What would it be like to attend a wedding feast? There would be fascinating people, sumptuous food and all the revelry! In Tudor times, the wedding guests would leave the main dining hall and retire to our *Tudor Room* for the final banquet course. You'll be able to view this banquet and see the decorative tarts, marchpanes, and a sugar banqueting house up close. Earlier in the day, the bridal couple was wed in the local church. Then, at the end of the service, the bridal party would have paraded out of the church with a blessed cup of wine and the bridal cake leading the way. All the guests, including you, follow behind them dancing their way to the wedding feast.

This is what will be evoked in the MIA's exhibition, *Supper with Shakespeare: the Evolution of English Banqueting* installed in the MIA's *Tudor Room* and the adjacent Briggs Court (G332). This unique visitor experience is the work of guest curator Ivan Day, preeminent English expert on historic culinary history and table settings, Eike Schmidt, James



Ford Bell Curator of Decorative Arts, and Corine Wegener, former department Associate Curator, who worked with Ivan Day on the initial preparations for the exhibition.

Ivan's theme demonstrates how Tudor wedding customs were based in subtle references to the biblical feast of Cana where Jesus turns the water into wine. Look for drinking pots filled with Hippocras, a sweet, spiced wine popular at Tudor weddings and other celebrations. Notice the highly ornamented rosemary sprigs which are symbols of marital fidelity.

This wine is ready for the bride to toast the groom. And, the sideboard will still be strewn with remnants from the previous courses – savory food, like hearty meat pies and a Bride Cake or two! There will be eating utensils lying about, even though men thought forks, an imported Italian idea, effeminate until England’s King Charles I declared later in 1633 “It is decent to use a fork”! Ivan Day is loaning the MIA some of his antiquarian cookery books to share his sources for the food.

Eike Schmidt has said that the *Tudor Room* will be transformed. It will be better lit with lighting that is focused so viewers can marvel at the fascinating final course of the wedding feast. There will be additional changes as well. As mentioned earlier, visitors will be able to have a really close-up look at all the intricate food. And, with better lighting, visitors will get an improved look at the entire *Tudor Room* as well – its walls, the panelings and all its other magnificent details. Eike has provided another surprise – music! He has commissioned Ethan Holbrook to create a special sound installation – a work of art in itself. This will be the start of appropriate music in the other period rooms too. To quote Eike, “We want to transport people [museum visitors] back to the old times; but on the other hand, we are people of our own age, and we want to make a connection to the present day using contemporary music as well.”

As an expert food historian, Ivan Day is creating all the amazing sweets in the exhibition. While his goal is to tell the story of the final course of a Tudor wedding feast, he adds that “on the buffet there will be some elements from the previous courses in the wedding feast.” The final course of the wedding feast is a spread of sweet foods called the “banquet.” In today’s world, we think of a “banquet” as a lavish meal of many courses. But in Shakespeare’s day, the banquet was the last course of what was called a “feast” with many courses and was comprised of only sweet dishes. According to Ivan Day, these sweets were very popular and were often designed in complex, artistic and amusing ways. For example, there could be fake walnuts with messages inside when opened.

Ivan Day lives in Cumbria, northern England on Wreay (pronounced “rear”) Farm in the Lake District. This is where he will be making the banquet food for the MIA exhibition. He was originally trained as a botanist who got side-tracked in Greece

while working on his masters degree. He discovered a passion for antiquity and the scientific roles medicine and food play. At the age of thirteen, he says he had the “happy accident” of collecting old cook-books because of their “amusing” ingredients and he started to cook from an 18th-century cookery book. Antiquarian cookbook collecting led to buying antique kitchen utensils and more recipe research. This paved the way towards his life-long exploration of food and its pervasive role in history!



Over the past 40 years, he has gained a reputation as the sought-after expert in the re-creation of very detailed historic food and table settings. He also is a lecturer and writer. Day says that his museum work started in 1994 when he was approached by the Bowes Museum located in Barnard Castle of north-east England to be the guest curator of a seminal exhibition called the *Tempting Table*. This, in turn, led to other exhibitions at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles and at the Museum of London. In more recent times, he has produced exhibitions for Hillwood in D.C., the Met and Bard Graduate Center in New York, as well as the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, and he is the curator of an exhibition of historical paintings of food and dining at the Bowes Museum UK entitled *Feast Your Eyes*.

So you might be wondering – how did this exhibition come about, and how did Mr. Day become involved? According to Eike Schmidt, “Well, the idea came about actually during the trip of the MIA Director’s Circle to Scotland last year where a food lecture and tasting experience was organized by Ivan Day.”

Ivan Day continues the story: “Last year, I was contacted by Corine Wegner, (former MIA associate curator, Decorative Arts, Textiles and Sculpture) who invited me to submit a proposal for an exhibition on dining in one of the MIA period rooms. I decided to dress the wonderful Tudor room in the museum with food from the time of Shakespeare. What followed

was a series of skype calls and firming-up plans for the exhibition. While Corine has moved on to a new job at the Smithsonian Institution, Eike Schmidt has ably taken over!”

Eike mentions that in addition to the *Tudor Room*’s English banquet spread, there will be many objects in the adjacent Briggs Court. Eating utensils will be shown related to the history of dining. In particular this will include two recent MIA acquisitions – not English, but very rare and both from the late 15th century – items that Shakespeare would have been familiar with. The Venetian coral-handled knife and fork set, described on artsconnected.org. Another object is the 2011 donation by Tom Rassieur, John E. Andrus III Curator of Prints and Drawings, Prints and Drawings department head: an exquisite Venetian wine glass (1575-1600) which can be admired for its very delicate thin blown glass, a very broad rim and slender capacity.

According to Eike, there will be other banquet-related objects from the MIA collection that are being pulled out of storage which have not been seen for quite a while. In total, several dozen objects will be displayed. There won’t be a catalog, but there will be a listing of the objects and the gallery label text available online in advance of the exhibition opening. Eike will have resources on reserve at the MIA Library. And Ivan Day will be giving a special training session for touring docents, with hints on how to tour this exhibition.



As a final word, Eike, with a smile, mentioned, “It’s really thanks to the docents that this exhibition will be brought to life. Because we can’t invite people who come to visit to sit down and eat at this banquet. You have a very, very important role in this.”

So, enjoy being a guest at a Tudor Wedding Banquet!

Bridging Delacroix: The Delicate Business of Creating an Exhibition

Kay Miller

Putting together a major exhibition requires curators to be a little like a Hindu god, with multiple arms juggling dozens of tasks. If curators expect to borrow premiere paintings – Manet, van Gogh, Whistler and Matisse – from other museums, they’d better have something new to say, a long lead time and an internationally prominent partner with which to say it.

Relationships are key. Diplomacy, charm and a bit of verve help. Occasional political intrigues crop up as curators discover competing exhibits and tease out which museums will lend to them, but not to rivals who have been stingier lending their own works. *Quid pro quo* is the name of the game. And, always, your reputation precedes you.

“People don’t have a clue what goes into making an exhibition,” mused Patrick Noon, Patrick and Aimee Butler Chair of Paintings and head of the MIA Paintings Department. “They think you can just make a few calls and produce a great show. But it takes a phenomenal amount of work.”

For four years, Noon has been working on a seminal exhibit tentatively entitled *Delacroix and Modernity* that he hopes will push the boundaries of how we think about modern art and the role that French artist Eugène Delacroix played in its evolution. Although the show is not scheduled to open until Oct. 18, 2015 through Jan. 10, 2016, in time for the MIA’s centennial, Noon is in the thick of research and planning. His project is a great illustration of what MIA curators regularly go through arranging a show with national and international reach, one that packs a wallop but appears seamless.

Since joining the museum in 1997, Noon has curated exhibitions on Homan Hunt, Edgar Degas, Marc Chagall, Alexander Calder, Georgia O’Keeffe and Francis Bacon. For those and thematic shows on American landscape paintings, Nordic landscape paintings and *Crossing the Channel: British and*

French Painting in the Age of Romanticism, Noon teamed with national and international museums.

“We have some status in this business,” Noon said. “But you really do need a partner that has some clout internationally to make it work. It’s not to say that we wouldn’t get the loans on our own but it’s much easier if you have the National Gallery in London, which is not someone you say no to readily.”

Landing the National Gallery was Noon’s first major hurdle. Like the MIA, it is known for an excellent collection and its willingness to lend to other museums. It also has three major Delacroix, as well as works by major artists he influenced.

Noon broached the joint exhibition idea when Nicholas Penny, director of the National Gallery and long-time friend, was at the MIA to give a lecture during the Titian show. Penny found Noon’s idea intriguing: an original, thoughtful take on Delacroix’s impact. The next time Noon was in London, he met with Penny and two curators in the director’s office.

“Did you bring any visuals with you?” Penny asked. “Do we need to go somewhere and set up a PowerPoint?” “I said, No it’s right here,” and flipped open my iPad. He was intrigued with the presentation. They had seen iPads but they just weren’t as prevalent over there as they are here.”

Around the table, the curators flipped through Noon’s wish list of paintings that would tell the story: “Impressionism doesn’t spring from nowhere. I think there’s a tangible connection between what we consider modern art, starting with Impressionism, and British art and aesthetics at the beginning of the century,” said Noon, who is an expert on 18th, 19th and 20th century British and French art. “Delacroix is the bridge, the purveyor of that message, both in his paintings and his writings.

“I’m interested in what happens around the time of Delacroix’s death and the last couple decades of his life and what the artists who are coming into prominence at that time are seeing. The first big wave came immediately after Delacroix died when his entire studio was on display. Manet, Fantin-Latour and Whistler were all in Paris at that time, looking at his *oeuvre* and reacting to it.

“Then you have the next generation – Bazille, Redon and people like that coming up from the provinces.” They were influenced by several exhibitions of Delacroix’s work, including a huge retro-

spective in the 1860s and another in 1885, both at the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris.

“So 1885 – that’s the year that Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cezanne start seeing again the bulk of Delacroix’s work. Seurat goes to this show and he makes extensive color notes from our *Fanatics of Tangier* which was in the exhibition! Then, in the 1890s Signac writes that treatise crediting Delacroix and Impressionism with completely changing the way that people view nature.”

The National Gallery folks were sold. They set a date. After Minneapolis, the show would travel to London for a February 10 through May 15, 2016 exhibition.

Next, Noon sent out “letters of intent” to twenty museums, naming specific works he hoped to borrow. Those letters are a sort of “save the date” with a two-page description of the project and how their object fits into it, asking them to “pencil this in” and if someone else asks to borrow it, please tell them no.

At the time, Noon had been sitting on requests from some of the museums asking to borrow MIA paintings. “I started those letters out by saying, ‘I’m pleased to inform you that our trustees agreed to lend you our Manet for your show. So, this might be a good time to mention a project that we’re doing,’ ” Noon chuckles, knowingly. “It’s all about relationships. If they *can* lend, they *will* lend.”

A few museums responded, regretting that the works were unavailable. Some were too fragile to travel. Others had just returned from a major Delacroix exhibit in Spain, where its largest bank, Caixa, sponsors exhibitions that are free to the public. Caixa had hired Louvre curators to organize a huge Delacroix show for Barcelona and Madrid.

“That’s an incredibly expensive proposition and they paid the Louvre a fortune to organize a Delacroix show for them,” Noon said. The Louvre itself was prohibited from loaning some of their Delacroix paintings because the terms under which the works were originally bequeathed to the museum specify they remain in France.

“So the Louvre was going around asking *other* people to lend *their* pictures.” At this, Noon raised his eyebrows. They asked to borrow the MIA’s *Fanatics of Tangier* and Delacroix’s *View of Tangier* landscape.

“If I wasn’t involved with this project I would have said no because what am I going to get out of

this? The Louvre is making a *fortune*.” They also asked to borrow three Delacroix from the National Gallery. “Their reaction was the same as mine. Between the two museums, we were lending more than we’re asking the Louvre to lend to us. But we had no choice. Their objects are *key!*”

Timing is all important, Noon knew. He needed to make sure there was enough time between the closing of the Delacroix shows in Spain and the opening of his MIA exhibition, so that lenders to their show wouldn’t balk at the request. Paintings need time to rest. And home audiences get disillusioned if every time they go to the museum to see favorite pieces they are out on loan.

To get the federal indemnification that insures such priceless works of art, Noon will have to apply at least a year-and-a-half before the show. Each requires an independent dealer or expert from the auction houses to confirm their valuations. If he applied too late, the pool of money would be drained by other shows and the MIA would face a huge insurance bill.

While at the Barcelona exhibit, Noon ran into an old colleague, an independent curator. She asked what he was working on. Behind the scenes, she was quietly trying to organize a Delacroix show for the Royal Academy in London. Privately, she was sounding out the French to see what paintings she might borrow. Curators are in the position of choosing between suitors: Who gets the prize picture? Implicit for them is the question: “What is the Royal Academy going to do for me? They don’t have a collection. We have a relationship with National Gallery.” Later, Noon learned through a Paris colleague that the *Musée Eugène Delacroix* had turned the freelancer down, “whereas they will lend to London and Minneapolis because they want to borrow from us.”

By June, Noon was drafting formal loan requests. Each stressed the importance of that object to the show. MIA Director Kaywin Feldman signed the letters, sometimes jotting a charming note to director colleagues, saying she hoped they could help make the show a success. Then the letter was express mailed to London for Penny’s signature.

“If we get a positive response, we follow up. We satisfy whatever terms the lenders want.” Sometimes they request a facilities report, detailing the MIA’s exhibition space and climate control. Noon already

had gotten a number of verbal assurances that loans would be forthcoming. “They respect the institution. They know what’s at stake. If they can part with the object, they will.”

One of the very few turn-downs was for a particularly beautiful version of Delacroix’s *Christ Asleep During the Tempest*. It had been in the Barcelona show and its museum felt that the picture had been traveling too much. Noon’s backup was another version at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the very painting that inspired van Gogh’s *Olive Trees*, with Delacroix-like silvery greens and half-tones.

In the heart of the summer, work with London colleagues was temporarily suspended as curators left town to avoid the crush of people attending the Olympics. During that time, the MIA applied for a National Endowment for the Arts grant to support research and fund to travel to see the art first-hand and plead the case to borrow it. In October, the project was awarded a \$40,000 grant over two years, a boon to Noon, who must also keep tabs on project costs.

All the while, he was planning the catalog. What new ground would it plow? Who would write which essays? “Most lenders want to know that there’s going to be a publication. We insist on it, actually. If you’re going to borrow an important object, you have to have a very good reason to justify it. You want your collection to be show-cased. That can’t be done if you’re not doing a proper publication. The reason you lend to these things, you really want to advance the scholarship. You also want the world to know you have these great objects and maybe they’ll come to see them in person.”

Typically museums don’t charge each other loan fees. “You don’t barter your collection as a fund-raising tool.” They know how quickly that practice would escalate to the point that museums couldn’t afford major loans. But museums do pay to crate, insure, conserve and transport borrowed works, as well as the travel fees of couriers who accompany the works here – “a huge outpouring of money.”

“You may have a sponsor, but they’re not paying the whole cost of the show. The question is – can you really afford to borrow 75 pictures from 75 institutions, each of which is going to require courier fees?” So, Noon tries to limit the number of lenders, drawing several works if he can from extensive collections

at the Met and the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

Noon well knows how seminal many MIA pictures are. The *Tuscan Poets* has twice been to the Uffizi, most recently in 2011. *Mlle Lange* was so important to a Parisian show on Girodet that the museum director said if they couldn't borrow it, there would be no show, Noon said. "They ended up building a special room for it."

When the Pompidou in Paris mounted a Bonnard show, Noon was loath to lend *Dining Room in the Country*. It's too big and too important. "We have nothing to replace it." Bonnard's great grandson was sent to Minneapolis to plead their case. "If you lend this picture, I will give you four related sketches that I own," he said. They were pencil drawings of the cats in the painting, a very hard offer to refuse.

"Our picture was the centerpiece of the show. That's why they wanted it so badly. Everybody who went to that show commented on how that great Bonnard is from Minneapolis."

The power of such loans was evident when Henri Loyrette, director of the Louvre, was here for the opening of the Louvre show. As he walked through the galleries with Noon, he was visibly surprised to see such famous works as Poussin's *Death of Germanicus*, van Gogh's *Olive Trees*, Cezanne's *Chestnut Trees at Jas de Bouffan*, Caillebotte's *Nude on a Couch* and Beckmann's *Blind Man's Buff*. "I've never been here, but I know all these pictures," Loyrette told Noon. "I think I know your collection just from the loans you have made over the years."

Reflections of a fly on the wall (aka the guard in the gallery)

Mary S. Bowman

Docents have a larger audience than we may always be aware of as we do our tours in the galleries. Observations made by these additional observers can help us design tours more interesting for the kids who visit every day.

Interested? Read on...

Signs you're losing the kids

We study and research our objects; we want to download all this info onto the kids. Too much info can have kids staring at the ceiling, wheeling in circles, looking anywhere but at the piece we're trying to show them. Big words (what the heck does THAT word mean?) can leave docents speaking in what

amounts to a foreign language as far as the kids are concerned.

Using too big a timeline. Remember when your grade school history teachers threw dates and facts at you and lost you? Same thing happens during tours. Kids want to know how an object relates to them. Do they have a desk this fancy in their homes? Tie that ancient object or centuries-old piece of furniture into something in their lives. They may not need to know who made that old chair; but they can imagine how it would feel to sit in it. Comfy? No? Now they're focused on the chair.

Showing the kids something we're pretty sure they've never seen before, control yourself and use just a few facts about one piece. Maybe they'll remember one of them and want to come back with their families to share that.

Using a decorative desk to point out the animal images incorporated in the design? They may be interested in the animal, but the desk itself, maybe not so much. Know when to give up and move on.

Ask them questions! You can even use the same 2-3 questions for every object. Involve them.

"Would you want this in your house? How would you use this? What do you think this is for? Would you like to see this painting, statue, chair every day?" If they can relate, they'll want to come back and bring their families.

Pet peeves

Docents know we can't touch the art and we tell the kids to keep a 12-inch distance between themselves and the art and any pedestals it sits on. (By the way... what's with that Brancusi *Golden Bird* pedestal?) But we docents can get too comfy with the art and get too close ourselves. Seeing this, kids and their parents/chaperones will get too close, too. Docents are always modeling behavior in the galleries. If we disregard our own proximity guidelines, the kids may behave while they're on the tour; set free after the tour, they'll do what they saw you do.

Got a group of kids and several chaperones (or even just two or three)? If sitting is in order or the group is tiring, kids sit on the floor, adults get the benches. It's just good manners, and good modeling for life beyond the museum.

When docents leave a gallery, stay away from the walls. Kids will follow where you walked and get even closer to walls and art hanging on them. When you walk down hallways, stay in the center. Again,

you will be modeling keeping a distance from the art.

Don't walk too fast. If you need to hurry to get to everything, maybe you're using too many objects. Walk too fast and get too far ahead, you may be starting your spiel before your audience gets there and they'll miss out on the good info you want to share.

Ah, the naked art issue! Really small kids don't care. It'll be the older kids smirking and snickering and pointing. Art should expand minds. Don't perpetuate stereotypes. Here's your chance to explain how an artist needs to understand the human form, even when the body portrayed in a painting or sculpture is covered by clothing. If the artist doesn't understand the human body, a covered one won't look right, either. You might even tell kids it's harder to paint or sculpt the nude body so when an artist portrays one well, he or she may even be "showing off" ...look how well I do this!

Oddly, kids don't seem to have the same reaction to nudity in religious art. So Mary nursing baby Jesus or nearly naked bodies beneath crosses do not prompt giggles. Kids have been programmed from home or church to accept that without the giggling and snickers. But if you hear a ruckus behind you and you know what prompted it, take that moment to educate. Let the museum trip be liberating!

Memorable moments in the galleries

Following closely on that last subject, our gallery guard said, "One 11-year-old boy did this on his own when a group of classmates got overly silly over a statue. He turned and looked at them and said, 'You guys are so immature!'"

An example of a fact gone awry

In the showing the red Native American dress decorated with many large teeth, a nearby guard heard this comment: "This dress is decorated with the buck teeth of an elk."

Tour suggestions

Docents can give object suggestions to teachers in our pre-tour conversations or emails, and suggest that these might be discussed in the classroom before kids come for their tour. The guard called it pre-teaching. It's fun to hear students exclaim "Oh! We saw a picture of this at school! We talked about this in class!"

We ask teachers if there are specific things they'd like included in the tour. We can also ask them if there are any things they'd prefer we avoid.

What objects usually get good responses from kids?

The Veiled Lady

Animals – the bear scarfing down oatmeal

City Glow – a colorful, imaginative DVD show in the modern galleries

Teens seem to like a tall and imposing oak Tiffany clock case currently in G303

Tornado over St. Paul – some of our visitors have actually seen one (or what one can do)

Sarah Allen – when everyone from kids to adults questions something about this painting, we don't have to remain rigidly serious in the discussion. People come to have fun, too.

Our guard in the gallery wants visitors of all ages to know that museum guards are not villains. They're there to protect and preserve the art, and as we already know, many of them are artists, too. How can docents convey this to our tour groups? Let them know that docents and guards work together. When a guard seems to follow a group, he or she is making sure those individuals can be trusted in the galleries.

So whether you're leading a tour or just walking through, greet them with a smile, a wave or verbally. No one wants to be treated as though they're invisible.

Happy touring to you!

VTS –Do We Need It?

Mary Lewis

It seems like forever that the MIA has been using this thinking strategy to look at art. Actually, VTS has been around the MIA only since 1998.

Abigail Housen is a cognitive psychologist who has spent the past 40 years researching and creating a working strategy to better understand how people change in their thinking as they become more exposed to art. Her approach is called "Visual Thinking Strategies," or VTS. The world was introduced to VTS in 1998 at Abigail Housen's small guest cottage when she invited trainers from major national museums to be trained in its approach to art. Sheila McGuire and I represented the MIA in Abigail's first group of trainers.

That experience and exposure to VTS has changed how I conduct tours as a docent. Previously, I would stand in front of an art object, (trying to block the label copy from the audience) and lecture about the art. I tried to tell interesting facts laced

with good stories and earth-shattering transitions. People seemed to like my tours. But they were always looking at me, listening and nodding in agreement to what I was saying or nodding in amazement or amusement at the facts and story. They were not necessarily looking at the art.

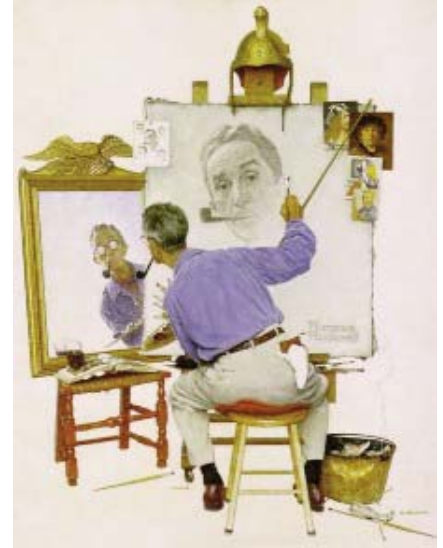
The basic genius of VTS is that it trains people to first look the art. For beginning art viewers, it is best if the art has a narrative image. Then, viewers are asked to talk about what they see in the image and finally to back-up their observations with “data” (from images in the art). VTS asks open-ended questions so that the viewer must look at the art to answer. Open-ended questions make viewers think. In the art world, VTS is the starter course 101. The art world is loaded with options, hey, you can major in art history, get a masters, a PhD, or better yet, become a docent, the sky’s the limit, but, first and foremost, viewers have to connect with art. This is what VTS is all about.

In order to connect with the art, the first stage of VTS gives the directive: take a moment to look, then it asks three basic questions. The directive is important in that it starts training the viewer to look at the art. It is the same reason why doctors in the operating room are told to pause before beginning an operation and go through a checklist. It is building mindfulness, the ability to be present in the moment without prejudice or preconceptions.

The first question is, “What’s going on in this picture?” I often couple this question with the question, “What do you see?” These are two different questions, but when I first start a tour I don’t know where my audience is developmentally as far as visual literacy is concerned. “What do you see?” asks for a list. Very early stage viewers first name things they see in pictures. “I see a boy,” “I see the ocean.” “What’s going on in the picture?” asks for something more advanced. It poses a challenge, a puzzle, and asks the viewer to figure it out.

When a viewer names something she or he sees, “I see a cat,” the only response needed is to affirm that the viewer sees a cat. If a viewer makes an opinion statement, “The man looks mad,” then as a docent I follow it up with the second basic question, “What do you see that makes you say that?” This is asking, and training, the viewer to provide evidence for her observation. Evidential reasoning is a critical thinking skill. It also tells a lot, culturally.

This fall, I was showing Norman Rockwell’s, *Triple Self-Portrait* to several different classes of second graders. I was surprised that they did not know what the painter had in his mouth! They asked, “What is that thing sticking out of his mouth?” When I asked, “Does any one know what is in his mouth?” no one could answer. The “No Smoking” crusade in our society has been effective.



When a viewer mentions what they see or makes inference to something in the image, I paraphrase or say back the essence – in my own words – of what the viewer has stated. It can be as short as three words. It sums up what the observer has stated. I never repeat word-for-word (how boring) the observer’s statement.

Paraphrasing is one of the most powerful tools a docent can use. In paraphrasing, I’m telling the participant not only have I heard them, but that I also understand them. It is a validation of the speaker because I am paying attention. It acknowledges the speaker and gives the highest compliment one person can give another. It conveys to the viewer, “I hear you” and that, “I understand you.” Isn’t that what we strive for everyday? The feeling that we count, that someone is listening.

Paraphrasing also gives everyone another chance to hear what someone has observed. It allows the audience to internally examine whether or not they agree or disagree with the observation. This stimulates other opinions, especially differing opinions. It introduces the concept of multiple possibilities. An aspect of critical thinking is seeing and feeling comfortable with multiple, and sometimes conflicting, viewpoints. Don’t you wish Congress had VTS training?

Teachers love VTS because paraphrasing allows students to hear and use vocabulary. Observations are restated with correct grammar – all without the student feeling corrected. Paraphrasing helps stu-

dents' language development by having them speak their thoughts. As docents we know the importance and pleasure of oral speaking. Paraphrasing encourages this ability.

The last basic question is one that adds depth to a discussion. "What more can you find?" It's such a simple question that it's sometimes hard to imagine how powerful it is. This question tells the viewers they are not done with looking and that there is more to see and think about. Good art can be looked at year after year. This last question begins the training of continued looking and re-examining of art.

The last several years the Friends of the Institute has provided for free bus transportation for all Minneapolis Public Schools second and third grades to have a VTS tour at the MIA. Each year this gift has brought more than 5,000 students from 30 Minneapolis schools to the MIA. Not only has it brought great museum exposure to these students but it also has resulted in museum familiarity for the teachers. Art museums can be intimidating and many people feel uncomfortable and inadequate about art. After several years of experiencing the Friends' gift the teachers enthusiastically look forward to their class trip and plan their curriculum around museum objects they have come to know. In 2012, the gift of bus transportation and a VTS tour has been given to all MPS second grade students.

Teachers report that skills learned from looking at art transfer to other academic areas. Here is a sample of what teachers are reporting:

The students in my classroom are bilingual students who really benefit from oral language activities. VTS gives these students an opportunity to share their ideas and practice the English language. This is a class where all of my students participate and feel very comfortable sharing their observations. It also gives my students a chance to really use their listening skills. They are able to have conversations about their observations and give reasoning of why they may agree or disagree with each other.

Michelle Fonseca, Andersen School, 3rd Grade

As a classroom teacher, I use VTS whenever we begin a new book during a Reader's Workshop mini-lesson. I will give the students some time to simply look at the front cover and use their VTS skills to tell me what they notice. It is a way for students to all feel immediately successful before I get to the "meat" of the lesson. As the year has progressed, I've noticed their skills getting stronger and stronger. They are able to access prior knowledge, compare and contrast and make connections. These are all reading

comprehension strategies that they work on during Reader's Workshop.

Sarah Hippert, Lucy Craft Laney School, 2nd Grade

There are more than the three basic questions. When I give a tour I am listening for my audience to address the other VTS questions as well. The other VTS questions are:

"What more can you say about this person? Let's examine the characters in this picture more closely."

What can you say about the setting of this image?
Where is this happening?

Look for setting clues that include architecture, geography, climate, nature, point of view, distance and light. Keep probing, "what more can you find?" if students seem to miss some elements.

What more can you say about when this is happening? What does this picture tell us about the time depicted? Look for time of day, season, era.

What contrasts can you find in this picture? What is the same? What is different in the picture? Or, from a previously discussed image.

Where do you think the artist was positioned to make this picture?

What do you think interested the artist when making this picture? Begin the question with, "Let's think about the artist who made this work"

This question is looking for the intent of the artist, the motivation.

On a tour I listen for comments that address these questions, listening for observations that address who (people) where (setting), when (era, time of day, season, etc.), contrasts and artist motivation.

Knowing the advanced questions helps to hear and paraphrase what viewers are saying and identifying. For example, when a viewer says "This looks like it happened a long time ago." Paraphrasing could go something like, "You are helping us date this picture. What do you see that makes you say it is not happening right now?"

Do we really need VTS? Let me tell you about what occurred when I showed the MIA's *Elk Hide* to three third grade classes – in three different schools. With the *Elk Hide* on PowerPoint largely displayed on a white board in the classrooms, I asked the leading questions, "What do you see? or What's going on in this picture?" A hand raised and a student said, "I see cars." Quizzically, I came back with, "What do you see that makes you say cars?" The answer:



“Those black things. They’re cars.” He was pointing at the buffalo.

Quietly stunned I asked, “What more can you find?” Another hand went up and the response was, “I see a giraffe.” “What do you see that makes you say, “giraffe?”

“See those long legs, (pointing to a running horse with legs stretched out in running stance) that’s a giraffe.”

Another student raised his hand and volunteered, “I know why it’s a giraffe.” “What do you see that makes you say giraffe?” “The long neck,” (pointing to the stretched neck of a running horse). I was quietly trying to figure out what was going on.

The next image was an 8thc ivory *Assyrian Tribute Bearer*. The students’ observations were as good as any adults I have heard discuss this image. So what was with the elk hide and cars observations?

With the second image they showed it was not about brainpower – they had plenty of that. I think it is about exposure. The students need exposure. Lots and lots of exposure – to many things.

Abigail Housen has noted that one gets better by eyes on canvas. The more you look, the better you get/understand. As with doing anything well, you need 10,000 repetitions before you become proficient. Cubism shattered the art world by changing how art is presented from a single perspective to multiple viewpoints. VTS changes how art is viewed from a passive to an interactive exploration.

So, do we need VTS in the schools and in the museums? You bet. The more exposure we can provide students, the better we will all be for it. This is about our future; it is about developing students’ critical thinking and their future role in our society. It is

also about how art and museums can interact with a large, growing new constituency.

Mary Lewis, docent, is a coach and trainer for VTS. Since 2000 she has been contracted by Minneapolis Public Schools to coordinate the VTS program in the K-8 schools. She has also trained teachers from local districts and various states, as well as various professional groups including doctors at the University of Minnesota and Mayo. For the MIA she helps coordinate the Friends’ Gift bus transportation VTS tours for the second grade.

Dateline: Minneapolis December 1, 1925

M.I. Artsinger

In my last report dated January 1915, I wrote extensively about the inaugural exhibition at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. A total of 54,208 people came to the new Institute in that month, followed by over 29,000 in February, and settling to around 12,000 in March. By 1920, after the Great War, attendance for the year was almost 83,000 – or a little over 6900 visitors per month.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions have carried apace over these first ten years. Most of the inaugural exhibition consisted of loaned objects, and many lenders extended the stay of their treasures. One of the first major exhibitions after the opening was a group of paintings and drawings (the latter owned by the MIA) by Burne-Jones and Rossetti, giving an interesting idea of the Pre-Raphaelite School in England. In the following years, collections of laces, brocades, and tapestries have proved to be extremely popular. The current season of 1924-25 will feature forty exhibitions of various types.

Acquisitions

With many generous donors, the Institute has acquired some great works, starting with a large cast of the *Doryphoros* that arrived in March 1915. This is a wonderful addition to our collection of casts of antique sculpture. Later in 1915, Mrs. Chas. J. Martin presented a tapestry of *The Falconers* in memory of her husband. The Society also received a gift from Mrs. Edward C. Gale of eleven pieces of Chinese porcelain, eight of which were formerly in the Morgan Collection. In 1916, paintings by Gilbert Stuart, Domenico Tiepolo, and John Singer Sargent were added. The print collection was established with

an anonymous gift of 6000 prints. Objects acquired in 1918 included a Chinese *Avalokitesvara* and a Pissarro painting.



In 1920, Mrs. John R. Van Derlip purchased two large sculptures – a 15thc German *St. Catherine*, and an exquisite 16thc Italian fountain, which became a centerpiece in the Rotunda. The first purchase of 1924 was an El Greco, and a Titian was acquired in 1925 – to be seen for the first time in December.

Advertising and Events

Placards advertising events at the Institute in the early days were purchased by business firms and placed in the windows of the street cars operated by the Twin City Rapid Transit Co.

Other events for members included an annual themed New Year's Eve party, which drew a crowd of 5000 people in 1918, following the armistice. A series of four concerts for members was inaugurated in 1923. Held in the upper central gallery, attendance sometime reached 800 attendees.

Education Program

Mr. Rossiter Howard was appointed educational director for the Institute in January 1919. Recently Professor of Fine Arts at the University of South Dakota, he had lived for twelve years in Europe prior to the outbreak of war. Principally in Paris, he devoted himself to art instruction and lecturing. At the Institute, he established a popular series of lectures for Sunday afternoons. These expanded into talks on industrial art to groups of men and women engaged in manufacturing or commercial pursuits. Saturday afternoons, he gave talks to children. Talks on the furniture collection were also provided to salespeople in furniture stores. And he gave numerous talks to community groups.

In 1921, a small collection of duplicate materials from the MIA traveled to five high schools in Minneapolis. After the schools had adequate cases, the objects were installed by museum staff persons. When Mr. Howard left the Institute at the end of March 1922, to take up a similar position at the Cleveland Museum of Art, the education work continued with the services of Mr. Dudley Crofts Watson, the director of the Milwaukee Art Institute. Although on a part-time basis, Mr. Watson made

numerous trips to Minneapolis. All but one of the 69 schools with sixth through eighth grade classes made at least one visit to the Institute in that year. A few came seven times. Mr. Watson also spoke at the six high schools as well as at colleges and business schools.

In 1924, children in upper grades, by a requirement of the Board of Education, attended the museum at related intervals, and were instructed by a member of the museum staff. A total of 50,000 students visited the museum that year.

Period Rooms

In April 1920, a period room called the Jacobean Room – later the *Tudor Room* – was installed. The *Providence Room* followed in 1924. Museum Development encouraged continued progress toward acquisition of appropriate woodwork, walls, ceilings, and antique glass from ancient European buildings of the time for the Period Rooms.

Art School

The Art School had moved from the Public Library Building to the Institute, which was a considerable improvement. However, its position on the first floor opened onto a public corridor, and there was obviously no possibility of top-lighting. The idea of moving yet again, to its own building, was encouraged by a letter in September 1915 from Ethel Morrison Van Derlip, offering \$25,000 for a building in Dorilus Morrison park for the Art School – to be named the Julia Morrison Memorial Building in honor of her mother. In addition, \$2500 per year was promised for the first three years after the building was completed, toward the salary of a director. There were 144 students enrolled in 1915. The building was completed in November 1916. By the 39th anniversary in 1925, 427 students were enrolled in the School.



Bequests, The Friends, Building Addition

Ethel Morrison Van Derlip, daughter of Clinton Morrison who had donated the home and land of his family's estate – called *Villa Rosa* – for the original building of the Institute, died in November 1921. Much of her estate was bequeathed to the Society and the Art School. Provisions were made that half the income from the endowment would be devoted to purchase of objects of art, but only those of unusual

quality and desirability. The other half could be used for general purposes of the Institute at the discretion of the Trustees.

As a fitting and permanent tribute to the work carried on by Mrs. John A. Van Derlip on behalf of the Society and the Institute, a group of Minneapolis women organized a society in 1922 to be known as *The Friends of the Institute*. Eventually they began a series of lectures. Annual membership was \$2.00.

The Society of Fine Arts celebrated its 40th anniversary in 1923, having been established on January 31, 1883. In this tenth year of the Institute, the Trustees have looked back upon the first decade. The original \$500,000 that was raised to start the museum was used exclusively for the building itself.

Consequently, there were no funds to purchase art. Many of the early exhibitions were possible only by securing loans of art works from local individuals and other museums. However, by this year, the endowment was \$2,000,000. Half of that had come from the estate of William H. Dunwoody in 1914; \$750,000 from the estate of Ethel Morrison Van Derlip, and another \$100,000 from the estate of Major John Bigelow.

Expansion of the ten-year-old building has been discussed for most of the past five years. Of particular need is an auditorium. In December of this year, a dinner, given by the Trustees of the Society to more than 200 businessmen, assured a guarantee fund for the operations expense of a new wing. It was stated that an announcement for plans of an addition to the museum would be made in the new year. That will have to wait until my next report.

Editor's comments

Having read through Mr. Artsinger's report of 1925, it occurs to me that a number of significant works still on view were acquired in these early years. I have chosen fourteen of them that docents might like to include in a *First-Ten-Years Tour* of the MIA. The current gallery numbers are included.

15.34	<i>The Falconers</i> tapestry	France 15thc	340
15.38	<i>Plate</i>	China K'ang Hsi Period (17-18thc)	218
16.1	Tiepolo, <i>Head of a Philosopher</i>		307
16.2	Stuart, <i>Portrait of James Ward</i>		324
16.20	Sargent, <i>Luxembourg Gardens at Twilight</i>		357
16.747	<i>Cassone</i> (Wedding chest)	Italy 15thc	340
17.52	Iznik <i>Pitcher</i>	Turkey 16thc	243
18.5	<i>Avalokitesvara</i> (Kuan-Yin)	China 571CE	200
18.19	Pissarro, <i>Place du Théâtre Français,</i> <i>Paris: Rain</i>		351
20.10	<i>Fountain</i>	Italian 16thc	235

20.11	<i>St Catherine</i>	Austria 15thc	340
24.1	El Greco, <i>Christ driving the Money</i> <i>Changers from the Temple</i>		341
25.30	Titian, <i>The Temptation of Christ</i>		330
25.403	Koehler, <i>Rainy Evening on Hennepin Ave</i>		302

According to a quick search of ArtsConnectEd, the Dunwoody Fund has been involved in acquiring 2253 objects by this time in 2012.

A cute comment from a child

Ginny Wheeler

We had just finished trying to figure out why Richard Shaw might have wanted to use porcelain to create *Gubbin's Return*. I wrapped our conversation up by telling the youngsters that Shaw was a contemporary artist who was still creating figures like this one when a young boy said, "He can't possibly still be alive. It says right here that he was born in 1941."



Greetings of the Season