

The Docent Muse



September 2015

The Art of Conversation

Jane Mackenzie, Chair, Docent Executive Committee

Do you think there is one quality that we docents share – other than being extremely intelligent and extraordinarily attractive? As I thought about this, it occurred to me that one thing we have in common is that we *love* a good conversation.

The importance of conversation on a tour was brought home to me earlier this summer when I gave a tour for one of the veterans groups who come every month from the VA Hospital. These groups are always very interesting and our routine is to tour for about 75 minutes, then have an informal discussion while we eat lunch in one of the classrooms. This particular day during lunch we were talking about the objects we had seen when one of the older, more battle-worn vets said to the group, “Before we came, I was trying to figure out any way I could to get out of coming to the museum today. I did not want to come; I have been to museums before; I have looked at art before. But, I did not realize how great it was to look at art and talk about it with a group of people. This was an amazing experience and I’m telling other vets not to miss it.” Talk about an affirming moment!

The conversations we have with visitors, with other volunteers and with staff are, for me, the best part of being a docent. We are lucky enough to be here to wind up the Birthday Year and start Mia’s new century. Enjoy your conversations. But, as my husband always reminds me when we are having one of “those” conversations, “Jane, you can’t listen when you’re talking.” Hate it when he’s right!

Docent Executive Committee 2015-2016



l-r: Emily Shapiro, Treasurer; Susan Tasa, Communications; Vicki Sperry, Secretary; Tom Byfield, Honorary Docent Rep; Rose Stanley-Gilbert, Newsletter Editor; Boyd Ratchye, Chair-Elect; Jane Mackenzie, Chair; Sue Hamburge, Social Chair; Debbi Hegstrom, Senior Educator, Docent Program

Fall Docent Luncheon

**Thursday, September 24, 11:30 a.m.
Villa Rosa Room**

Mark your calendars, update your PDA (aka Personal Digital Assistant) or tie a string around your finger to attend the 2015 Fall Docent Luncheon, Thursday, September 24, 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m. in the Villa Rosa Room.

We will honor the Classes of 1985, 1995 and 2005 for their commitment to Mia. Debbi Hegstrom will provide updates on museum topics and Jane Mackenzie, DEC Chair, will share insights from the 2015 National Docent Symposium.

Lastly, in celebration of the opening of the Mary Griggs Burke Collection, please help your table create

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a pop-up centerpiece by bringing an Asian-themed object or an Asian story to share. As always, your prompt RSVP and check are appreciated.



Kichizan Minchō (1352–1431),
Monju Bosatsu (detail)
Muromachi period, ink and gold on
paper, Mary Griggs Burke Collection

Please send your check for
\$25 made out to “Docents

of Mia” to DEC Treasurer

Emily Shapiro,
1033 Brompton Place
Mendota Hts. MN 55118-1003.

Evolution of the *Muse*

Rose Stanley-Gilbert, Muse Editor

There are two opposing views about the most helpful format for the *Docent Muse*. Some would like a scholarly, informative *Muse* exploring subjects in detail. Others would prefer a shorter, but still informative *Muse*, that fits into their busy time schedule. To accommodate both views, the *Muse* will be published in two parts.

The 2015 September *Muse* will be the *Muse* you recognize. Articles of moderate length will keep you informed of exhibitions, events, news and spotlight specific objects.

At the same time, the 2015 September *Muse Addendum* will be published. The *Addendum* features two articles by Kay Miller. *Bridging Delacroix: The Delicate Business of Creating an Exhibition* was first published in the *Muse* in December 2012. Kay’s article is a real “gem” and a perfect introduction to the upcoming Delacroix show. It is being re-published in the *Addendum* for your convenience. The second *Addendum* article, *Delacroix’s Influence on Modern Art* will be Kay’s complete article. With anecdotes, quotes and insights, it is a “must-read” for anyone touring the Delacroix. Following this article is a list of “Patrick Noon’s Recommended Books on Delacroix.”

With the publication of my first *Muse*, I’m so thankful for the behind-the-scenes work of last year’s *Muse* Editor Jane Stull and for the *Muse* Magician Merritt Nequette who handles all the formatting of articles and images to make the newsletter sparkle. There are not enough kind words to express my appreciation to you both. Thank you!

Delacroix’s Influence on Modern Art

Kay Miller

This is an abridged article. The complete article is published in the 2015 September Muse Addendum.

“Every major advance, every step in the evolution of painting in France in the last half of the 19th century – the beginnings of Modernism – owes something to Delacroix,” says curator Patrick Noon, Mia’s Elizabeth MacMillan Chair of Paintings. He spent much of the past five years organizing the landmark exhibition, *Delacroix’s Influence: The Rise of*

Modern Art from Cézanne to van Gogh, running from October 18 to January 10, 2016.

After opening in Minneapolis, the show will move to the National Gallery in London, Noon’s partner in putting the exhibition together. Noon brings together 35 seminal Delacroix paintings and 40 works by his followers and champions.



Delacroix’s passionate, revolutionary approach in painting ran afoul of Salon standards. “He was constantly criticized for being a bad draftsman, which was silly because, as his supporters pointed out, he’s not drawing with charcoal or pencil,” Noon said. “He draws by modeling form with color, not with line. Not with tonal graduations, but with tonal contrast. That gets him to the whole point of color theory.”

Within the 30 years of Delacroix’s death there were three major clusters of events – rediscoveries of sorts – that vastly increased awareness of his prescient ideas. Each generation of artists took what they wanted from his ideas and launched major art movements: Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Neo-Impressionism, Symbolism and Fauvism.

The first serendipitous cluster came after Delacroix’s death in 1863 with Baudelaire’s widely read eulogy and Fantin’s large *Homage* salon painting. They organized a Delacroix memorial retrospective and a successful studio sale with 800 of his works. At that time Redon, Cezanne, Renoir and Bazille were arriving in Paris.

The next major cluster of events came in 1885. Fantin-Latour, Manet and Baudelaire had chafed at

the official snub of Delacroix and decided that a major monument was needed. To raise money, they assembled an exhibition and thousands flocked to see it, including Seurat, Signac, and Gauguin. Seurat saw Mia's *Fanatics of Tangier* up for sale and made extensive notes on his color and his brushwork.



In a commercial gallery, Van Gogh saw Delacroix's *Christ on the Sea of Galilee*. "That's the picture that sets him off in terms of his whole approach to color," Noon said. "He writes extensively about it. After he goes to Arles, he goes on and on about that picture – the chrome yellow and Prussian blue. The juxtapositions for him are just mind-blowing. Then he starts painting that way."

Finally, the third period of rediscovery comes in 1893, with publication of Delacroix's journals. "You have Signac and Matisse reading them to each other," Noon said. Six years later, Signac publishes *From Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism* – his influential color treatise in which he quotes extensively, endlessly actually, from the journals.

Introductory gallery

Audio guides, Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* and self-portraits of artists influenced by Delacroix.

Emulation

Gallery 1 reveals Delacroix's persona and shows works by artists so taken by his paintings that they adopted his subject matter and approach!

Orientalism Imagined, Experienced, Re-Imagined

Gallery 2. As one of the earliest orientalist painters, there were three distinct phases for Delacroix's work.

Orientalism Imagined: Before Delacroix actually traveled to North Africa, he painted a number of

purely imaginary pictures inspired by the writings of Byron and Victor Hugo.

Orientalism Experienced: With French diplomat Charles de Mornay, Delacroix visited the Sultan of Morocco. Mia's *Fanatics of Tangier* (newly re-named *Convulsionists of Tangier* – Delacroix's name for it), were scenes he actually witnessed. One of the most important Delacroix pictures in North America is the *Convulsionists* which was part of the extensive collection of St. Paul railroad magnate James J. Hill. The richness of Mia's collection is owed to his descendants returning or giving us many objects originally collected by Hill.

Orientalism Re-Imagined: This third phase features the exotic and erotic – the orient reconstructed. He filters long-past North Africa experiences through his imagination to produce perhaps his most sensuous pictures. He could reimagine the experience, rather than trying to record it. These later orientalist paintings are about color theory, composition, and his approach to execution with brushwork.

Narrative Painting At A Crossroads - Truth In Art

Gallery 3 includes Delacroix's religious paintings and literary inspired work, as well as Delacroix-inspired paintings by van Gogh, Gauguin, Odilon Redon, Degas, Cezanne and Richard Parkes Bonington, the brilliant young British artist who once shared a studio with Delacroix.

Something totally modern is taking place in these pictures: "Narrative painting is no longer important, which is art for art's sake – aestheticism," Noon said. Subjects that he repeats aren't necessarily a reinterpretation. "The subject is just a hanger for their experimentation and self-expression." Monet will do haystacks. Van Gogh does 15 olive trees. Delacroix says, "A painting is just a bridge between the mind of the artist and the mind of the viewer. And meticulous definition, meticulous painting is just the art of being boring."

Delacroix's Legacy in Prose and Paint

Galleries 4 and 5 take visitors to the crossroads of modernism using landscapes and flowers. "The great advances in modernism take place in landscape painting because there's no subject... The artist doesn't have to deal with constructing a composition that clearly conveys a message." When you paint trees in a meadow, your painting is your optical experience: trees, the sunlight, the color.

“It’s the whole theory of simultaneous contrast of color. So you take primaries and secondaries or primaries and complementaries and juxtapose them.

One color pushes the other one back. So you’re creating space and volume by using different colors – not by creating gradations.” Signac and Seurat picked up on what they saw in Delacroix’s paintings and read in his journals and employ it in pointillist paintings. His flower pictures become the symbol of art for art’s sake thing. His flower paintings exist only to delight the eyes. They are not religious subjects or illustrations to be interpreted. They’re simply optical arrangements of colors.



Seven Masters and Gifts from Mary Griggs Burke

*Interview with Andreas Marks, Mary Griggs Burke
Curator of Japanese and Korean Art
Rose Stanley-Gilbert*

Seven Masters: 20th-Century Japanese Woodblock Prints from the Wells Collection

US Bank special exhibition gallery

In Japan at the end of the 19th century, demand dropped significantly for the once highly popular traditional woodblock prints, better known in the West as *ukiyo-e*. While Western collectors were more and more enchanted by the old prints, Japanese publishers and artists slowed production and created fewer new designs. This unique art form, without parallel in the world, seemed to have come to an end but suddenly a new kind of print was developed, *shin hanga*, that employed the highest production values possible.

From 1915 to shortly after WWII, *shin hanga* were marketed to Western as well as Japanese collectors. The first designers of these new prints were Western artists visiting Japan. *Shin hanga* artists explored more naturalistic light, colored lines, softer colors, and the pursuit of three-dimensionality and deep space. They chose the classic three themes as their motifs, Kabuki actors, beautiful women, and landscapes, that were so successful for *ukiyo-e* for hundreds of years. But instead of printing thousands of copies, as was common with *ukiyo-e*, publishers

produced *shin hanga* in more limited quantities, ranging from editions of 350 to as few as 29.

This exhibition presents over 100 prints and paintings in remarkably good condition. The introductory gallery explains the process of how a print is made. There are videos of Kabuki actors performing complemented by the expressive faces of the same actors in prints. Seven artists are spotlighted in the exhibition, the majority of them were primarily painters and rarely designed prints. Visitors will find compelling portraits, intimate moments of women, and a fresh take on landscapes. To complete the visitor’s experience, jazz music played in Japan in the 1920s and 30s will be heard in the galleries.

These works and themes are further illuminated in a 288-page publication with more than 300 images written by Andreas Marks that includes previously unpublished material.

Gifts of Japanese and Korean Art from the Mary Griggs Burke Collection

Japan and Korea permanent galleries

From the pre-historic era to around 1900

The Mary Griggs Burke collection was long considered the finest private collection outside of Japan and now the bequest has been fulfilled and the collection has been divided among Mia and NYC’s Metropolitan Museum of Art. All of the Japanese galleries have been reinstalled to accommodate a selection of highlights from this gift and visitors can delight in an entire room of flowers, find comfort and inspiration in a quiet gallery of Buddha and sages, and come eye-to-eye with an endangered species in a room dedicated to the world of cranes. For the literary-minded, one room holds folding screens illustrating the *Tale of Genji*. Whet your appetite? Over 170 spectacular works will be presented in this exhibition.



Nagasawa
Rosetsu,
Chinese
Children at
Play 1754-
1799

Rosetsu gained a reputation as an eccentric with his offbeat compositions and unorthodox techniques. In this screen (one of a pair), a throng of children, identifiable as Chinese by their clothing and hairstyles, play with a hulking, yet jolly, white elephant.

Standing before this screen the visitor is invited to enter the world of childhood, play and imagination. How would you play with an elephant? Rosetsu's work should appeal to kids of all ages.



Plate with Pumpkins
Edo period, ca. 1660s
Hizenware, Kutani;
porcelain with overglaze
enamels

Our plate is an early and rare example of Kutani wares which embraced bold designs in the five traditional colors of greens, blues, yellows, purples, and reds. Typically the designs cover most of the surface of each piece. What kind of patterns can you find on this piece? Overglaze enamels are low-temperature glazes, of powdered glass and minerals, used for added decoration and a glassy look. After the first firing, the overglaze is applied, and it fuses to the surface when it is fired again.

This plate with “purple pumpkins” is intriguing! There don't appear to be any true purple pumpkins. However, there are some very dark, almost black ones within a variety called *kabocha*, commonly called the “Japanese pumpkin.” Portuguese sailors introduced the *kabocha*, originally from the Americas, to Japan in 1541. What do you think inspired the artist to make pumpkins purple?

Mia in the News

Mia Welcomes Mick Jagger and Charlie Watts

Asst. Director of Security Patrice Cyriacks accompanied the two stars of the Rolling Stones during their visit to Mia. Both men are art collectors and Charlie Watts is a graphic designer as well. They were particularly impressed with Igor Mitoraj's *Eros* sculpture, Vik Munoz' *Verso* (Rembrandt *Lucretia*) and the Gerome.

Patrice and Ross Guthrie (Director of Security) worked with their personal security people to maintain the privacy of the two performers. Some of our visitors were astounded to be sharing the gallery with the singer and drummer, although a group of young people seemed oblivious to the celebrities as they walked past. Patrice reported that the 71-year-old

Mick seemed amused by this and pleased to be an anonymous visitor.

During their whole visit both musicians were gracious, reserved and appreciative. On behalf of performers, Mick Jagger's personal security asked if Patrice would like to attend their concert the following night and she immediately accepted. What a surprise to find out the concert seats were up front in the center of the third row! At the performance Mick did a shout out of “Minneapolis Institute of Art.”

Ginny Wheeler's Book Tour in the News!

In July, Ginny was giving a book tour of Daphne DuMaurier's *Rebecca*. Little did she know that Amy Rea, a freelance writer, was taking notes and snapping photos. The result was an article on the CBS Minnesota/WCCO website about Ginny's tour and how she selected “thought-provoking pieces of art to illustrate” the themes of the book. Amy Rea concluded by saying that “Rereading a book I hadn't read in years (but had always loved) was fun, but taking the tour was even better.” You can find the complete article [here](#).



If you would enjoy leading a book tour, please contact [Joy Yoshikawa](#). Book tours are an option for any docent, but fame is not guaranteed.

Kathleen Steiger brings Mia's Youth Book Tours to MPR

While listening to Kerri Miller on MPR, Kathleen heard a wonderful discussion about the Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* books. A listener called in and asked how she should handle questions from her daughter about the portrayal of Native Americans in books. Kathleen sent in a comment recommending *The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich which tells the story of a 7-year-old Ojibwe girl living on an island in Lake Superior. She added that Mia has free public Youth Book Tours that relate objects to the book every Wednesday and Friday in August. One of the presenters even read her comment on the air!

Inspired by Books on Friday Evenings

Our visitors have enthusiastically been attending book tours on Tuesday morning, Thursday evening and the Third Sunday of the month. To better accommodate our visitors, we are expanding book tours to Friday evenings at 6:30 beginning in September.

Farewell to MIA, or How I Learned to Love Mia

Rose Stanley-Gilbert

When I first heard about the new branding and pronunciation of Mia (“Mee-ah”), I was willing to give it a try. I understood the logic. The unpleasant reminder of “missing in action” for those of my age. The confusion with Miami International Airport. Well, that seemed less legitimate, since I’ve never been to Miami. In my neighborhood in the suburbs, saying “MIA” has been met with blank stares. I don’t think a new pronunciation will change things very soon. Out here, things in Minneapolis are considered far away and a little exotic.

Time to be objective. With a docent’s eye, I examined the old logo and its font. “MIA” enclosed in a rectangle was colorful but hinted at our neoclassical architecture: the building’s shape, its tall columns and long, narrow windows. The “closed box” logo suggests a “physical place” you must enter to find art. When I trained in ’95, visitors expected to passively receive a docent lecture. Then came VTS. People’s expectations began to make a “180.” Over the years, most visitors have not only adjusted, but are delighted with interactive tours! The word Mia is a new to us today, but it reflects the change that began in the 90’s. Perhaps we shouldn’t be surprised. Mia is just a friend who has been long over-due.

Some feel the new branding is superficial. What difference does language make? The dynamic quality of the English language has always fascinated me. Who knew an “apple” would become more than a fruit? Or that we would casually “google” something? We grow accustomed to new ideas, *our language adapts*. Many of us have a preference about Ms. versus Miss or Mrs. Some prefer Mr. or Sir. Others are more egalitarian and want no title at all. We embrace our choices because it is the way we see ourselves *and* how we want others to think of us. I see myself as a “senior citizen,” which is quite different from seeing myself as “elderly.” I think word choices influence how others see me, too. Mia, with its emphasis on art as “my experience,” is the way I see my role as a docent. It’s the way I want our visitors to think of us and art. So, I say farewell to the MIA, I’ve learned to love Mia.

Registration Department: Beyond Assigning Accession Numbers

Rose Stanley-Gilbert

New exhibition! Spectacular object on loan! Our appreciation deservedly goes to our curators, but we may not be aware that the curators have hard-working partners in getting things done! This article goes behind-the-scenes to focus on the role of the Registration Office. They do much, much more than assign accession numbers!

Megan Dischinger, the Assistant Registrar for Extended Loans & Exhibitions, graciously spent time talking with me recently about the Registrar’s role at Mia. The registrar’s office handles everything related to the *physical care of objects*, while the curatorial staff negotiates with lenders and does the scholarly research.

Overview of Registration

Exhibitions, Loans, Acquisitions. Their office coordinates exhibitions and rotations. Paperwork includes loan agreements, insurance, etc. Detailed condition reports help to maintain the stability of our collections. A database keeps track of all objects.

Installations. The staff prepares the gallery and the objects for viewing. Does a painting need a new frame? An object need a protective box? A primary concern is with object safety (barriers and alarms) and maintaining the correct environment (temperature, humidity, lighting).

Travel requires protective packaging, specialist art couriers, in-transit security, insurance.

Condition Reports.

Four condition reports are done when Mia loans an object: before it leaves Mia, upon arrival at the loan site, when it is ready to leave the loan site, upon arrival back at Mia. Even a simple ceramic bowl requires a trained eye to study it, noting any flaws, hairline cracks, glazing issues, previous damages. More complex objects require much more time. Imagine a report on the *Doryphorus*! Observations are supplemented by numerous photographs which help to identify changes over time. A photograph can make it easier to identify changes in condition, like increased metal corrosion. Last summer’s Finnish design show featured objects made within the last 15 years, but despite their excellent appearance, the documentation of condition reports and photographs filled three 3-inch binders.

Physical care of objects.

Mia maintains a controlled environment of 70 degrees (+/- 5 degrees) with the humidity at 50%. That can make the museum feel cool to visitors, as well as docents! Why is it necessary? Consider a painting done in oils on a linen canvas, supported by wooden stretcher bars and secured by metal nails. Each element expands and contracts to varying degrees with temperature and humidity changes. Without environmental controls, the painting's structure can deteriorate with those changes. The fine cracks seen on the surface of older oil paintings are caused by fluctuations in the environment. By contrast, acrylic paint remains flexible, which prevents the paint from cracking. Most pests enter the museum with our visitors! Insects can hitchhike a ride on anyone's clothes and can hide in *Art in Bloom* arrangements. Checking textiles for evidence of insects is routine and necessary.

Getting things where they need to go.

Before travel, paintings are wrapped in a plastic similar to a sturdy Saran Wrap. For three-dimensional objects, a perfectly-shaped cavity is created within a foam block to keep the object stationary. Wooden crates are created specifically for individual pieces. Objects travel by both specialized courier trucks and by airplane. Just as in the museum, travel conditions are kept at optimum temperatures and humidity. An authorized staff person from the museum acts as in-transit security, accompanying objects to their destination. Although travel can be exciting, it is more often a day spent driving to Chicago in an upscale U-Haul truck!

So what is the best part of working in Registration? Megan says it is being there when they open the crates and then to actually hold and examine each object. Hard not to feel a little jealous of that!

Arriving at Fresh Water: A Few Great Works

May 9, 2015 - February 21, 2016 - G255

Kay Miller

Native American artists create works of beauty and identity by drawing on traditional ways, but ingeniously incorporating new materials and ideas – perpetual change within a long continuum. In her first Mia exhibition, *Arriving at Fresh Water*, Jill Ahlberg Yohe, assistant curator of Native American Art, features fourteen prominent contemporary artists –

Anishinaabe, Lakota, Ho-Chunk and Navajo – who expand upon the beautiful traditional Native arts on view in galleries 259, 260 and 261.

“These artists are using color, vibrancy, wit, warmth and questioning for us to expand our view of what Native art is,” Ahlberg Yohe said during a gallery talk in May. “All of them employ universal themes: justice, family, community, self and history. Then they apply those to their own personal and cultural experiences in wonderful multi-layered processes.”

Bold blues, greens and pink unify the diverse paintings of three “fathers” of Anishinaabe art – Norval Morrisseau, George Morrison and Jim Denomie on one wall, and Frank Big Bear nearby. All four employ rich colors and textures embedded in the Anishinaabe art aesthetic, Ahlberg Yohe said.

Morrison painted *Lake Superior Landscape*, one of his very last large-scale works, when he was quite ill and was building Red Rock studio along his native North Shore. “I can see the lake change by the hour, from blue to yellow and rose,” he said of the view from his studio window. All those colors are here, along with Morrison’s familiar horizon line – his “edge of the world” – with its characteristic “oblique angle” tilt, the result of having tuberculosis in his hip as a boy.

After graduating from MCAD, Morrison moved to New York, where he was the first Native artist to be internationally recognized as an abstract expressionist. *Landscape* employs both the fluid gestures for which Jackson Pollock’s work was known and the blockier, rich color field style of Mark Rothko. Textured layers of built-up acrylics capture, then reveal the light. Morrison scrapes, gouges and repaints – merging near and far, top and undertow.

Shapes we glimpse, but cannot name, lie beneath Morrison’s lake surface. Native writer Gerald Vizenor attributed such mirages to Anishinaabe water spirits and spiritual beings. “They’re hidden,” Vizenor said. “But they’re there.”

Compare *Landscape*’s shapes, textures and colors with Morrison’s towering *Red Totem I* in the same gallery and his beloved wooden *Collage IX*.

Family, identity and cultural authenticity are featured in two works by emerging textile artist, Maggie Thompson, who is also curator of the Two Rivers gallery at the Minneapolis American Indian Center. In 2013, she graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design where she “realized I had a story to tell

and therefore I felt compelled to reach out to people to start dialogue through art.”

In *Assumptions*, Thompson wires smashed beer bottle caps to fabric in patterns inspired by beadwork to challenge stereotypes that alcoholism is deeply embedded in the Native community. Questions of identity arise in her evocative *Family Portrait*, a three-panel weaving that vividly illustrates “blood quantum,” the highly problematic method by which tribes and the federal government decide “how Indian” a person is. Identity here is Indian blood measured out in eighths.



“Growing up I always knew that I was $\frac{3}{8}$ Native from my Dad’s side of the family; with my Mom being primarily German and Irish,” Thompson wrote in a recent email. “Whenever I was with my Mom and a friend of mine who was also white, people that didn’t already know me, always assumed that my friend was my Mom’s daughter instead of me.”

Thompson grew up with her mother in a single-parent home. Why then, she wondered, did she feel so closely tied to her Native side? “I think this was just a piece that I needed to get out of my system in order to better understand myself. And to use as a teaching moment for others. There are a lot of people from many cultures who are dealing with the same issues surrounding identity – which I have been finding out through response to this piece.”

She kept the piece simple and easy to understand: The bands reflect charts that the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs set up to determine who can be officially categorized as Native American, and therefore eligible for financial and other benefits. Native American nations also established their own rules for tribal membership, with different tribes requiring more or less “blood quantum” for membership. The

very sight of blood quantum charts can be painful: Who is accepted into a tribe? Who is excluded?

“You’re only allowed by the federal government to register with one tribe,” explained CIF guide Marne Zafar. That is becoming a larger issue for individuals and tribes themselves as Native people intermarry. Zafar has cousins who are entirely Native, but cannot register anywhere because they are descended from eight or more Native American peoples.

In *Family Portrait* Thompson’s father is represented with six blood-red bands and two that are white, her mother with just eight white bands. Between them lies Thompson, defined – encapsulated – by three red bands and five white.

“This is my blood quantum,” she wrote. “What does that mean? I understand myself to be Native American but look at this blood quantum, what does that say?”

Who decides the identity of any person? Thompson leaves the question open. Perhaps her ultimate judgment lies in her warp: Woven through those tight, externally defined bands of *Family Portrait* are glistening strands of gold.

“To me it has that majestic, royal, sacred sort of feel to it,” Thompson says. “There is just something magic about shiny metallic yarns...It feels rich to me and adds another element of surprise.”

Musings from IPE

Debbi Hegstrom

Welcome back to another year of touring! The chill in the air and the leaves turning color always bring to me a sense of heightened anticipation and the opportunity for growth – I’m guess I’m just a perpetual student!

2015 Junior Docent Class

The docent class of 2015 officially began on 9/9/15! They are 48 members strong and come from a variety of backgrounds and interests. Please take a few minutes to look at the blue binder in the docent/guide study and get to know your new colleagues! We will be inviting you soon to participate in the mentor-mentee program as a crucial part of their assimilation into the docent corps. Marge Buss will once again serve as mentor liaison to the new class.

We’re sure you remember how much it meant when a senior docent extended a warm welcome and provided supportive guidance to you. We greatly

value the part you will play as our new junior docents develop the necessary skills to become active senior docents. Please note that we are asking for an ongoing, two-year commitment to this role. More to come!

STEAM Tours at Mia

We highly encourage everyone to attend the STEAM tour training on September 24, from 1:30-3:30 p.m. in Pillsbury Auditorium. Sheila McGuire will talk about this exciting new offering for Minnesota schools.

To meet the growing interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), and add the arts to this configuration – making STEAM – Mia School & Teacher programs has designed six tours for grades K through 5 that engage students in arts-centered learning and includes opportunities to do creative math, science, and engineering activities and even some technology. Pencils, paintbrushes, levels, and rulers are all tools that help artists and others solve problems.

These interactive tours stress skills such as observing and questioning, investigating, analyzing and reporting, and reflecting on big ideas. STEAM helps students make connections between the visual arts and scientific (let's find out) processes and innovative (what if) thinking. Students will use these skills to explore art works made by artists who engaged in problem solving and design thinking.

STEAM Tour topics:

K – *Weather and Seasons*

1st grade – *Birds with Adaptations*

2nd grade – *Plants*

3rd grade – *Scientific Inquiry: Animals*

4th grade – *The Design Process: Chairs*

5th grade – *Architecture*

This is just one of the many learning opportunities that will unfold as the touring year progresses. We appreciate your involvement and passion for what the arts bring to the lives of our visitors of all ages!

