



**July - August 2020**

**No. 4**

### Message from Incoming President, Ehler Spliedt

Dear SAA Members,

To increase the knowledge and enjoyment of Asian art and to support the Asian Art Museum are the two main purposes listed in the bylaws of the Society for Asian Art.

It is with great pleasure that I accepted the choice of the SAA Board to be the President of this wonderful organization and it will be my honor to work with all of you to carry out these purposes.

As we continue to live with the effects of COVID-19, we will constantly review the ways and means to help carry out these purposes. Thanks to the internet and the work of geniuses in Silicon Valley, we can adjust our programming. But, due to social distancing recommendations, we have lost one of our greatest assets - social togetherness. There is no substitute for an in-person lecture or walk through of an exhibition or for a seasonal get together in one of our favorite restaurants.



Our outgoing President in her message in the last Newsletter asked that we all remain vigilant about our health and safety, so that we can all enjoy learning more about Asian art and culture. With that in mind I would like to assure you that the various committees are planning a variety of programs for the remainder of 2020 and we will be flexible enough to adjust to the health officials' recommendations for responsible socializing and protecting our mental and physical health.

As you may already know, the Arts of Asia Fall 2020 Lecture Series will take place online as Zoom webinars. (Sorry, Nazneen and I will not be able to welcome you at the door every Friday.) Member events will also be online. For now, interactive Study Group events may not be possible. The Literature group will be offering a short course online in November and will be looking at how to handle the literature classes going forward. However, to plan any activities, we need your help by maintaining your membership with the Society, otherwise we will fail in our main purpose: to support the Asian Art Museum.

As incoming President, I would like to thank the outgoing Board members for their hard work and support and I welcome the new members to the Board and look forward to work with all of you for the continued success of the Society for Asian Art. Finally, I want to thank outgoing President, Trista Berkovitz, for two years of leadership. Under her guidance the Society changed its investment policies to ensure long-term financial stability, with the goal that we can continue to support the Asian Art Museum. Luckily, Trista will continue to serve on the board.

As some of you may remember, it was my honor to serve as SAA President in 2010-2012, and you may wonder why does he agree to do it again? It is because of my interest in Asian art, the Society for Asian Art, its programs, and you, its members, and my great appreciation for the Asian Art Museum.

I look forward to seeing you all in person soon, in the Asian Art Museum. Do reach out to me if you have a question or suggestion.

Sincerely,  
Ehler Spliedt  
President



## IN THIS ISSUE

### Friday, July 17

Member Event **Online Webinar**

Jade: Stone of Heaven

With Marsha Vargas Handley

### Friday, August 14

Member Event **Online Webinar**

Now and Then: Buddhist Art at the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive

With Julia White

### Fridays, August 21 – December 4

Fall 2020 Arts of Asia Lecture Series **Online Webinar**

Heroes and Villains in Asian Art and Culture

Instructor of Record: Stephen Roddy



## UPCOMING EVENTS (subject to change)

### Sundays, November 8 & November 15

Fall 2020 Literature Course **Online Meeting**

Raise the Red Lantern: Nation, Spectacle and Concubines

With Wei Yang Menkus

Class size will be limited to 20 attendees for this discussion-based course. Look for details in the September-October newsletter.



## 2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to all members who voted for the Society's new Board of Directors. 156 members cast their ballots with 153 members approving the nominated slates, both continuing and new. The resulting list of Board members who will serve the Society from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 are noted in the column to the right.

We particularly welcome our new Board members Candace Kahn, Anne Katz and Debbie Ottman and thank Forrest McGill and Deborah Clearwaters for staying on as our ex-officio Directors.

We are now set to move forward!

Sincerely,

Nazneen Spliedt, Nominating Committee Chair

Etsuko Kobata, Secretary

### *Society for Asian Art*

July - August 2020, No. 4

Members' Newsletter

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and Susan Lai

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### Board of Directors 2020-2021

President	Ehler Spliedt
Past President	Trista Berkovitz
Vice President	Margaret Edwards
Vice President	Marsha Vargas Handley
Secretary	Etsuko Kobata
Treasurer	Ed Baer

Edith Benay  
Margaret Booker  
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Deborah Clearwaters\*  
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Kirk Gibson  
Thomas Ihrig  
Nancy Jacobs  
Candace Kahn  
Anne Katz  
Phyllis Kempner  
Peggy Mathers  
Forrest McGill\*  
Lawrence Mock  
Howard Moreland  
John Nelson  
Debbie Wong Ottman  
Pamela Royse  
Kathleen Slobin  
Nazneen Spliedt  
Sylvia Wong

\*ex officio



### Heroes and Villains in Asian Art and Culture



Left: The Boy Krishna holding a stolen butterball and dancing, perhaps 1600–1700. Southern India. Bronze. Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B60B192. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Right: The hero Rustam slaying a dragon, from a manuscript of the Shahnama (Book of Kings), 1600–1650. Northern India or Pakistan. Opaque watercolors on paper. Asian Art Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George Hopper Fitch, B74D20. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

**When: Fridays, August 21 – December 4, 2020 (No lecture on November 6 and November 27.)**  
**Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Pacific Time**  
**Place: Online Webinar**  
**Fee: \$175 per person Society members; \$200 per person non-members for the series**  
**Advance registration must be received by the SAA by August 14, 2020.**  
**We will not be accepting drop ins for individual lectures.**  
**Instructor of Record: Stephen Roddy, University of San Francisco**

Our distinguished scholars explore some of the greatest stories in history, stories that still speak to us today, and the art they have inspired. Come look at historical figures, religious leaders, and characters in epics and great works of fiction. We will see how history is transformed in the Romances of Alexander the Great in Asia and the Japanese war epic, *The Tale of Heike*. Come witness the fights against demons by Tibet's first Lama, Milarepa, and Rostam, the great hero of the *Shahnameh*. Who are the heroines behind the heroes: the woman who created *Tale of Genji*, and the real hero of the *1001 Nights*, Shahrazad? We will contrast the roles of moving religious performances, including Krishna's dance as divine play, and the powerful Shia passion play, the Ta'ziyeh of Hussein. We will explore how two powerful political leaders, King Sejong of Korea and Mao Zedong of China are depicted. Examine the challenges posed by heroes and villains in three epic novels of Chinese literature, *The Three Kingdoms*, *Water Margin (Lords of the Marsh)*, and *Jin Ping Mei (The Golden Lotus)*. Join us to learn about the different kinds of heroism in the *Ramayana*, and how Bali's Rangda and Barong restore cosmic balance.

See the next page for the full schedule of speakers and topics and sign up today.



# ARTS OF ASIA FALL 2020 LECTURE SERIES

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## Speakers & Topics

### August 21

It's Right to Rebel! (zào fǎn yǒu lǐ): Heroes, Justice and Anarchy in *The Water Margin*, *Jin Ping Mei* and Beyond  
Stephen Roddy, University of San Francisco

### August 28

The Hero Dances: Representing Krishna's Play  
Forrest McGill, Asian Art Museum

### September 4

Alexander Dhulqarnayn: Mariner, Mountaineer, Sage, and Islamic Holy Figure  
David Zuwiyya, Auburn University

### September 11

Dīvs and Dragons as Adversaries: Rostam Faces his Zoroastrian Demons  
Touraj Daryaei, UC Irvine

### September 18

Decoding Milarepa: Tibet's First Lama  
Jeff Durham, Asian Art Museum

### September 25

What Kind of Heroism Appears in the *Ramayana* of India?  
Paula Richman, Professor Emerita, Oberlin College

### October 2

Defanging the Demonic and Dancing the Divine: Bali's Rangda and Barong in Cosmic Balance  
Kathy Foley, UC Santa Cruz

### October 9

The Changing Faces of Heroism and Villainy in *The Three Kingdoms* Story Cycle 220-2020  
Kimberly Besio, Colby College

### October 16

King Sejong the Great Korean Scholar King  
Michael Robinson, Professor Emeritus, Indiana University Bloomington

### October 23

Arrogance, Bravery, and Betrayal – Visualizations of Some Towering Figures in Japan's Medieval War Epic *The Tale of Heike*  
John Wallace, UC Berkeley

### October 30

The "Woman's Hand" in *Tale of Genji*: Illuminated Manuscripts through the Ages  
John Carpenter, Metropolitan Museum of Art

### November 13

Ta'ziyeh: The Shia Passion Play  
Negar Mottahedeh, Duke University

### November 20

Shahrazad, Superhero of the *1001 Nights*  
Suzanne Gauch, Temple University

### December 4

Red Media: Tempering Hearts with Mao Zedong  
Jennifer Dorothy Lee, University of Chicago



## MEMBER EVENTS

### Jade: Stone of Heaven With Marsha Vargas Handley

When: **Friday, July 17**

Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Pacific Time**

Place: **Online Webinar**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members**  
**Advance registration must be received by the SAA by July 10, 2020.**

This lecture will discuss the importance of jade in Asia with an emphasis on China. The different stones that were called jade will be described in this historical review. Other cultures that used jade for ornaments and ritual objects starting in 5000 BCE through the 20th century will also be featured.

*Marsha Vargas Handley, ASA, studied in Asia and conducted wholesale business in antique Asian ceramics. She opened her first gallery in the Bay Area in 1973 and was the owner of Xanadu Gallery in San Francisco until her retirement in 2015. She has been an Accredited Senior Member of the American Society of Appraisers for more than 40 years appraising a wide range of Asian antiques including ceramics, furniture, Chinese and Japanese paintings and prints, jade and hardstone carvings. Ms. Handley is a Trustee on the Board of Directors of the Asian Art Museum as well as a member of the Board of Directors of the Society for Asian Art.*

### Now and Then: Buddhist Art at the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive With Julia White

When: **Friday, August 14**

Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Pacific Time**

Place: **Online Webinar**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members**  
**Advance registration must be received by the SAA by August 7, 2020.**

Two exhibitions featuring Buddhist art, one current, *Divine Women: Divine Wisdom*, and one planned for next year, *Beyond Boundaries: Gandharan Buddhist Art*, will be the focus of this curator's talk by Julia White. *Divine Women* focuses on images of women in the context of Buddhist and Hindu art is the current exhibition, which has been extended until next year. *Beyond Boundaries* will feature works from the Gandharan region dating to the 3rd to 9th centuries, drawn from public (including the Asian Art Museum) and private collections. This exhibition is co-curated by Ms. White and Dr. Osmund Bopearachchi and is slated to open in April of 2021.

*Julia White is Senior Curator for Asian Art at the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive, where she has organized notable exhibitions of Chinese and Japanese painting, and Buddhist art of Tibet as well as on numerous other topics. Ms. White is a graduate of UC Berkeley, where she studied with the late Professor Emeritus James Cahill. She has lived and traveled widely in China, Japan, and Southeast Asia.*



Chrysanthemum bowl, India, 18th century.  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



Jadeite pendant by Wang Shusen.  
Christie's, Hong Kong, November 2017.



Tyche, Gandhara, 3rd century. Schist. H: 36".  
BAMPFA. On long-term loan from a private collection. Photo courtesy of Christie's.





## Read the Spring 2020 Issue Online

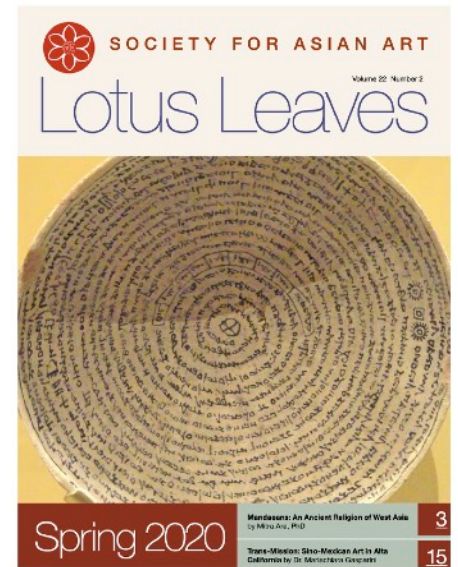
This issue features two articles on topics that may be new to many SAA readers. The first article, by Dr. Mitra Ara of San Francisco State University, surveys the Mandeans, an ancient religion of the Near East that has survived to this day. Did you know that John the Baptist was a Mandaean? The second article is by Dr. Mariachiara Gasparini (soon to be teaching at the University of Oregon), who follows her fall 2019 article about textiles on the Silk Road, with an examination of Chinese textiles and trade goods that came to the missions of Alta California through the Spanish maritime trade routes via Manila and Mexico.

### To access online issues of *Lotus Leaves*:

- Go to the SAA website, [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org).
- Click on the “Lotus Leaves” tab on the banner along the top of the homepage. This will open the *Lotus Leaves* webpage.
- Click on “View PDF” of the issue you would like to read.

### To print a copy of *Lotus Leaves*:

- Open the PDF file of the issue that you want to print.
- Press “Ctrl and P” on pc’s, or “Command” and “P” on Mac’s at the same time.
- Follow the commands on your computer to print a copy.



Cover of Spring 2020 Issue of *Lotus Leaves*.  
© Society for Asian Art.

Summer is the perfect time for an outdoor picnic.  
Enjoy the beauty of this picnic set in the Asian Art Museum’s collection.



Picnic set with design of four seasonal flowers and Chinese children at play, approx. 1800–1868. Japan. Edo period (1615–1868). Lacquer and gold on wood. Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B60M156.a-n.  
Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



# REGISTRATION FORM

## How to Register

1. Go to our website, [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org), sign up and pay online; OR
2. Print and fill out this registration form, and send it with a check or the credit card information to:  
Society for Asian Art, 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102.

SAA does not issue tickets or confirmations. You will be contacted ONLY if your registration cannot be completed. A valid email address for each registrant must be provided for online programs.

The Society for Asian Art's cancellation policy requires at least one week's advance written notice in order to receive a refund of registration fees. Requests must be received by the SAA office no later than one week before the start of the event, lecture series, or literature course. This excludes our travel programs, which have separate cancellation policies, as well as any programs where a specific refund policy is stated on the event page or description.

Paid Programs	Fee Per Person	Quantity	Subtotal
<input type="checkbox"/> July 17 Member Event - Jade: Stone of Heaven with Marsha Vargas Handley <b>Online Webinar (Advance registration must be received by the SAA by July 10, 2020.)</b>	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> August 14 Member Event - Now and Then: Buddhist Art at the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive with Julia White <b>Online Webinar (Advance registration must be received by the SAA by August 7, 2020.)</b>	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> August 21 - December 4 Fall 2020 Arts of Asia Lecture Series: Heroes and Villains in Asian Art and Culture <b>Online Webinar (Advance registration must be received by the SAA by August 14, 2020.)</b>	\$175 Members \$200 Non-Members		

Total Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Charge registration fees to my credit card (CHECK ONE): ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

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Credit Card Number Expiration (MM/YY) CVV (3 digit # on back of Visa, MC or D; 4 digit # on front of AmEx)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Donations for Book Sale

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, our annual Book Sale was postponed. We ask that you hold onto your book donations until the museum reopens later this year. If you are moving or downsizing and have a lot of books, we are happy to pick them up from your home within the San Francisco Bay Area. We accept books with Asian subjects only, be it art, culture, novels, history, travel, cooking, exhibition catalogues or others.

If you have any questions, please contact the SAA office at (415) 581-3701 or [info@societyforasianart.org](mailto:info@societyforasianart.org). Thank you.

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Enjoy these paintings of nature in the Asian Art Museum's collection.



Middle Summer, approx. 1980–1990, by Pan Gongkai (Chinese, b. 1947). Ink on paper. Asian Art Museum, Museum purchase, Jack Anderson Collection Fund with assistance from the artist, 1998.52. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



Morning Delight, 2007, by Pan Gongkai (Chinese, b. 1947). Ink on paper. Asian Art Museum, Gift of Pan Gongkai, 2007.48. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.