



July - August 2021

No. 4

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to another year of exciting events and lectures. Unfortunately, we will not be meeting in person soon, but we look forward to "see" you again at our lectures on Zoom. Even though our Governor has proclaimed California open, we will continue this Fall with webinars until we all feel comfortable to gather again at the Asian Art Museum.

For the fall Arts of Asia lectures, we have an exciting list of speakers, and we encourage all of you to join us in exploring contemporary art. It may not be everybody's favorite, but do not forget, all art is contemporary the moment it is created; only time gives it another moniker. Our instructor of record for the series, Abby Chen, is a strong believer in this and has suggested that we follow the Asian Art Museum's lead in focusing on art and artists of the last few generations as well as artists who live with us here in the Bay Area, in the USA or other parts of the World, who are our contemporaries!

We will also look at the past, when we travel on Zoom to Myanmar, a country which is unfortunately much in the news lately and re-visit sites many of us have visited with our SAA travel program, and in literature like Amy Tan's "Saving the Fish from Drowning", which mentions the Society for Asian Art.

Please enjoy this newsletter and sign up for many programs.

With my best wishes for a relaxing summer,
Ehler Spliedt
President



A Docent's Perspective on Contemporary Art

By Peggy Mathers, SAA Board Member

As a docent at the Asian Art Museum, I love connecting with the ancient beauty of Asia. And as the Asian Art Museum expands its collection of contemporary art, I was initially a little disturbed by some of the "new" objects. After a very enlightening and enjoyable talk by Abby Chen at this spring's Arts of Asia lectures, I began to use the viewing techniques I had been trained in. I rested a while with a piece, watching my responses to it. No cheating and looking at the labels! What thoughts or sensations was I having? And asked what is this piece saying to me – the same way I encountered our Buddhas. What is the context surrounding the art that was driving the artist to create? We can do this in a new way now that we can know the artist and actually listen to the artist. We have a window into contemporary art we didn't have with the ancient art. I am so grateful that the fall Arts of Asia lecture series will shine for me a brighter light on my new world of Asian Art and its artists and teaches a new perspective on beauty.

Note: The Museum's Hambrecht gallery will be devoted to changing exhibitions of contemporary art. The painting shown on the right will be included in an upcoming exhibition, Into View, currently scheduled to open in November 2022.



A Lady and a Road Map, 1962, by Bernice Bing (American, 1936-1998). Oil on canvas. Asian Art Museum, museum purchase, 2020.26. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



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Fall 2021 Arts of Asia Lecture Series
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Fall 2021 Literature & Culture Course
Jin Ping Mei 金瓶梅: The Rivalry Intensifies



UPCOMING EVENTS (Subject to Change)

Wednesday, Sept. 15 2:00 p.m. Pacific Time Online Webinar

Member Event - A History of Asian Cinema with Penny Edwards



TRAVEL

ARTful Korea: Contemporary Art Tour

Oct. 23 - Nov. 2, 2021

Only a few spaces remain on this trip! See [trip flyer/reservation form](#) for details. Led by Asian Art Museum's Department Head and Associate Curator of Korean Art, Hyonjeong (HJ) Kim Han, we will visit various art venues, including National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul and Cheongju, Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art as well as other important contemporary institutions with special access granted specifically for SAA trip participants. The tours will visit both in and outside of Seoul as well as Jeju Island and Incheon. There will be ample opportunities to immerse in Korean culture, which will include walking through royal palaces, neighborhoods of traditional houses and antique districts, as well as lively open-air markets.



Left: Genius Loci, Jeju Island. Right: Moon Jar by Dongsik Lee. Photos courtesy of ARTful Catalyst TMG.

Society for Asian Art

July - August 2021, No. 4

Members' Newsletter
Edited by John Nelson
and Susan Lai

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ARTS OF ASIA FALL 2021 LECTURE SERIES

Crossing Boundaries: Understanding Contemporary Asian Art



Left: *Ended Season* (detail), 2011, by Zheng Chongbin (American, b. China, 1961). Ink and acrylic on paper. Asian Art Museum, Museum purchase with exchange funds from the estate of K. Hart Smith with additional funds from the Clarence Shangraw Memorial, 2012.5.
Right: *Large Bowl with Celadon Glaze*, 2011, by Kawase Shinobu (Japanese, b. 1950). Celadon bowl with undulating rim. Asian Art Museum, Gift in honor of Dr. Laura W. Allen, 2013.48. © Kawase Shinobu. Photographs © Asian Art Museum.

When: Fridays, Aug. 27 – Dec. 3, 2021 (No lecture on Nov. 26.)
Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Pacific Time
Place: Online Webinars
Fee: \$200 per person Society members and \$250 per person non-members.
Advance registration must be received by the SAA office no later than Aug. 20, 2021.
We will not be accepting drop ins for individual lectures.
Instructor of Record: Abby Chen

What is going on with contemporary Asian art? What are its messages? Who is the audience? What are the concerns of the artists? How are they using new and traditional media? What are the ideas about art in these works? How might we understand new works?

Contemporary art is all around us. It may attract or repel us. Its messages and means may be new, but the imperative to communicate successfully is more urgent than ever in a global market of ideas. Contemporary art is often deliberately transgressive — it crosses boundaries between media, genres, geographic regions, traditions, gender identities, national identities, politics, ideals of beauty, and ideas of permanence. Many of the artists are émigrés, who must cross boundaries to make their art.

Join us for an adventurous journey into the realms of contemporary Asian art. Led by Abby Chen, Asian Art Museum's Head of Contemporary Art and Senior Associate Curator, this lecture series features 14 scholars, curators and artists from around the world, who will address contemporary art practices and concerns across Asia and the Asian diaspora.

See the next page for the full schedule of speakers and topics and [sign up today](#).



ARTS OF ASIA FALL 2021 LECTURE SERIES

Speakers & Topics (Subject to Change)

August 27, 2021

Finding Your Way in the Wide World of Contemporary Asian Art

Abby Chen, Head of Contemporary Art and Senior Associate Curator, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

September 3, 2021

The Mercurial Moments in Contemporary Asian Video Art

Laura U. Marks, Grant Strate Professor, School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University

September 10, 2021

Pursuing Justice Through Cinema

Ohm Phanphiro, Artist and Visiting Professor, University of Idaho

September 17, 2021

My Body is a Canvas for My Art

Chaw Ei Thein, Conceptual and Performance Artist

September 24, 2021

Off the Wheel and Breaking the Mold: Japan's Ceramic Art Today

Laura Allen, Chief Curator, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

October 1, 2021

Voyage/Safar: Contemporary Works by Arab, Iranian, and Turkish Artists

Fereshteh Daftari, Independent Scholar and Curator

October 8, 2021

Ala Ebtekar Artist Talk

Ala Ebtekar, Artist

October 15, 2021 (*Note: Lecture will be from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time.*)

Building a New Tradition: Contemporary Architecture in China

Li Xiangning, Professor and Assistant Dean, Tongji University College of Architecture and Urban Planning

October 22, 2021

Summoning Ghosts

Hung Liu, Artist and Professor Emerita, Mills College

October 29, 2021

Messages, Materials and Meaning in My Art

Jean Shin, Artist and Adjunct Professor, Pratt Institute

November 5, 2021

On the Art of Timelessness in Contemporary Japanese Cinema

Akira Mizuta Lippit, Professor and Vice Dean of Faculty, Division of Cinema and Media Studies, University of Southern California

November 12, 2021

Transformations of Tradition in Mongolian Contemporary Art

Uranchimeg Tsultem, Assistant Professor and Edgar and Dorothy Fehnel Chair in International Studies, Herron School of Art + Design, Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis

November 19, 2021

Re-Telling Tales: Five Contemporary Women Artists from India (1997-2021)

Arshiya Mansoor Lokhandwala, Art Historian, Curator and Founder of Lakeeren - The Contemporary Art Gallery

December 3, 2021

Boundaries Crossed: Asian American Artists at Work

Marci Kwon, Assistant Professor, Department of Art History, Stanford University



MEMBER EVENTS

Myanmar: Sacred Art — Sacred Architecture *Mini Series* With Julian Brown

When: **Wednesdays, Jul. 14, 21 & 28, 2021**

Time: **2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Pacific Time**

Place: **Online Webinars**

Fee: **\$40 per person Society members; \$50 per person non-members.**
Advance registration must be received by the SAA by Jul. 7, 2021.

After leading us through Indochina in January, Dr. Julian Brown will provide us the opportunity to visit the spectacularly beautiful country of Myanmar in a three-part series. While this nation, formerly known as Burma, is very much in the headlines today, this series will focus on its unique art and architecture. Each lecture will focus on and examine a different sacred site.

Lecture #1 Khmer Gods in a Buddhist Pagoda – The History of the Mahamuni Temple

Lecture #2 The Stupa & the Church – A Sacred Biography of Yangon

Lecture #3 The Merit of Bricks – Bagan and Its Temples

Born and educated in England, art historian Julian Brown commutes between his homes in Normandy and Paris. He has a PhD from University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). He spends most of his time leading tours in Europe and Southeast Asia, in addition to lecturing on his research at universities, museums, and international conferences.

Sanxingdui: A Lost Civilization Reveals New Wonders With Jay Xu

When: **Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021**

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 SAA by Aug. 3, 2021.

A Bronze Age civilization lost for more than three thousand years was found in China's southwestern Sichuan province in the summer of 1986. Remains of a large-scale walled settlement in two underground pits filled with a staggering number of objects were discovered at the village of Sanxingdui. The discoveries included familiar objects such as bronze vessels, jade blades and actual elephant tusks, plus a rich array of extraordinary bronze sculptures, such as a monumental bronze tree thirteen feet tall, life-sized standing figures, and head and masks of fantastical supernatural beings with protruding eyes.

Nearly 35 years later, in March 2021, Sanxingdui again shocked the world with the discovery of six more pits containing more spectacular bronzes, creating a huge sensation across China. In this lecture, Dr. Jay Xu will review the 1986 discovery and introduce the results and ongoing process of the present excavation and talk about the material culture of this mysterious Sanxingdui civilization.

Jay Xu has been the Director of the Asian Art Museum since 2008. He received his PhD from Princeton University in early Chinese art and archaeology. Before joining the AAM, he held curatorial positions at the Art Institute of Chicago and at the Seattle Museum of Art as well as having hands-on experience at the Metropolitan Museum of Art as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Asian Art and in the Shanghai Museum of Art. He is the first Asian American to be elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



Shwedagon Pagoda.
Photo by Ko Ko Myoe on Unsplash.



Julian Brown

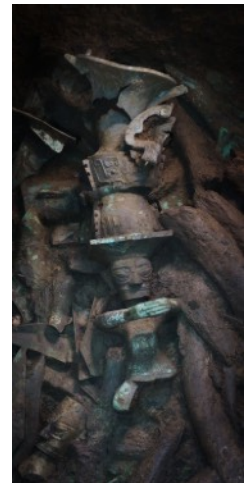


Photo: Chinese Media.



Jay Xu. Photo courtesy of
Asian Art Museum of San
Francisco.



MEMBER EVENTS

Let My Country Awake: Colonial & Post-Colonial Indian Art With Siddhartha V. Shah

When: **Friday, Aug. 20, 2021**

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 Aug. 13, 2021.

This presentation will focus on Indian art from the colonial and post-colonial eras in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum of Art (PEM) in Salem, MA. Established in 1799 as the East India Marine Society, PEM is the oldest continually operating museum in the U.S. Its collection of Indian art and objects focuses on the 18th century through modern times, including works acquired and collected by American merchants and sailors. Donated to PEM in 2001, the Herwitz Collection of post-independence art established PEM as the first museum outside India to highlight the works of its modern artists. This presentation will take us through the newly installed South Asian galleries to examine how a painful history of colonial occupation informed and inspired a vibrant modern artistic movement.

Siddhartha V. Shah has been the Curator of South Asian Art at the Peabody Essex Museum since 2018. He has had a long career as an entrepreneurial art professional with wide-ranging interests in South Asian and Himalayan art. He curated the installation of the new South Asian Art Galleries at PEM. He earned a PhD in art history from Columbia University and an MA in East-West Psychology from the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.



Maqbool Fida Husain, *Untitled (Raj)*, 1986. Oil on canvas. Gift of the Chester and Davida Herwitz Collection 2003, E301288.



Siddhartha V. Shah. Photo courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum.



LITERATURE & CULTURE FALL 2021 COURSE

Jin Ping Mei 金瓶梅: The Rivalry Intensifies With Stephen Roddy

When: **Mondays, Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11 and Oct. 25, 2021**

Time: **2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time**

Place: **Online Webinars**

Fee: **\$115 per person Society members; \$140 per person non-members.**

Advance registration must be received by the SAA by Sept. 6, 2021.

Attendance is limited to allow for class discussions.

Text: *The Plum in the Golden Vase, or Chin P'ing Mei, Vol. 2: The Rivals.* Translated by David Roy. Princeton University Press, 2006. ISBN 9780691126197.

In Chapters 21-40, the life of the Ximen family compound continues to be punctuated by episodes of jealousy and other eruptions of turbulence. No longer adding permanent members to his harem, Ximen Qing engages in fleeting sexual trysts with servants and other minor characters, sowing the seeds of current and future conflict. Just when this debauchery seems unsustainable, or his multiple misdeeds threaten legal consequences, Ximen Qing not only manages to escape but even discovers new luxuries. Cuisine, couture, horticulture, and especially jewelry and other accessories—we will explore the material richness of fin-de-siècle Ming society portrayed in the magnificent David Roy translation of this novel, this volume of which is subtitled *The Rivals*.

Stephen Roddy, a professor at the University of San Francisco, received his PhD in East Asian Studies from Princeton University, and specializes in the fiction and other prose genres of 18th and 19th century China and Japan. He teaches courses in Japanese and Chinese literature, culture, and language.



Orchid, approx. 1700–1800. China. Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Ink on paper. Asian Art Museum, Transfer from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift of an anonymous donor, B69D51. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



REGISTRATION FORM

How to Register

1. Go to our website, 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.

Please note that by registering for a program, you are giving consent to the SAA to be photographed or videoed as a participant.

Programs	Fee Per Person	Quantity	Subtotal
<input type="checkbox"/> Jul. 14, 21 & 28, 2021 Member Event - Myanmar: Sacred Art— Sacred Architecture <i>Online Webinars. Advance registration must be received by SAA by July 7, 2021.</i>	\$40 Members \$50 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> Aug. 10, 2021 Member Event - Sanxingdui: A Lost Civilization Reveals New Wonders <i>Online Webinar. Advance registration must be received by SAA by Aug. 3, 2021.</i>	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> Aug. 20, 2021 Member Event - Let My Country Awake: Colonial & Post-Colonial Indian Art <i>Online Webinar. Advance registration must be received by SAA by Aug. 13, 2021.</i>	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> Aug. 27 - Dec. 3, 2021 Fall 2021 Arts of Asia Lecture Series Crossing Boundaries: Understanding Contemporary Asian Art <i>Online Webinars. Advance registration must be received by SAA by Aug. 20, 2021.</i>	\$200 Members \$250 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11 & Oct. 25, 2021 Fall 2021 Literature & Culture Course Jin Ping Mei 金瓶梅: The Rivalry Intensifies <i>Online Webinars. Advance registration must be received by SAA by Sept. 6, 2021.</i>	\$115 Members \$140 Non-Members		

Total Amount _____

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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 _____

Social Media

The Social Media Committee would appreciate it if you could send us your photo memories of SAA travel and/or past events to augment our Facebook and Instagram posts. We will make sure you get copyright credit for your photos. Please email them to candacezks@gmail.com and include any captions. Thank you.

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LOTUS LEAVES

Spring 2021 Issue Now Online

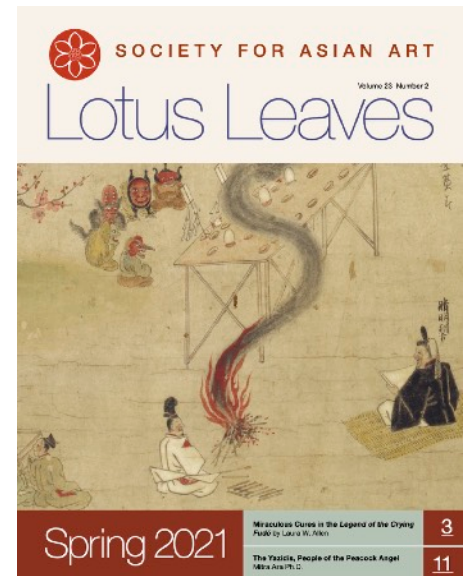
The Spring 2021 *Lotus Leaves* features an analysis by Chief Curator and Curator of Japanese Art, Laura Allen, of a hanging scroll in the AAM's collection, "Legend of the Crying Fudō". This marvelous artwork depicts a miraculous cure in an age long before vaccines. The other article by Professor Mitra Ara answers your questions about the Yazidis, the People of the Peacock Angel. Their history and beliefs have been lost in tragic news stories about their persecution in Iraq and Syria.

To access online issues of *Lotus Leaves*:

- Go to the SAA website, 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 at the same time "Ctrl" and "P" on pc's or "Command" and "P" on Mac's.



Cover of Spring 2021 Issue of *Lotus Leaves*.
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