



July - August 2023

No. 4

President's Message

As we begin the new fiscal year, I want to thank all of our Board members, committee members and the membership for their support of the Society for Asian Art over the past 12 months.

It has been over a year since we resumed our in-person Arts of Asia lectures and we are still far behind the pre-pandemic attendance in Samsung Hall. It is wonderful that we are now able to take part in the lectures on Zoom, but it isn't the same as meeting in person. To encourage more attendance, we will be holding a small reception after the first lecture of the fall series on August 25. If you haven't registered, please do so now and join us in Samsung Hall on August 25.

The other member events have been varied and well attended. Watch for these events in the coming newsletters.

The Travel Program has returned to normal with two exciting trips to be offered in the coming weeks – one to South India and another to Paris. See the Save the Date notices in this newsletter for details.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to seeing you at the museum at the Society for Asian Art events.

Marsha Vargas Handley
President

Hell: Arts of Asian Underworlds



Bima Swarga, approx. 1970, by Wayan Ketig (Indonesian, 1930–2010). Pigment on cloth. Overall: 58 1/16 x 113 11/16 in. (147.5 x 288.8 cm.) Horniman Museum and Gardens, London, 1988.2. Photograph © Horniman Museum and Gardens

Don't miss the chance to see the special exhibition, *Hell: Arts of Asian Underworlds*, on view June 16 through September 18, 2023. The majority of the 48 works on view are on loan from other institutions and collections. Several of the Asian Art Museum's pieces are newly acquired and are being shown for the first time.

Sign up for the July 28 member event with Jeff Durham, Curator of Himalayan Art at the Asian Art Museum, to gain a deeper understanding of this special exhibition. See details in the Member Events section in this newsletter.



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South India: Temples, Art, Architecture and Crafts

Apr. 21 - 28, 2024

Springtime in Paris with the SAA



UPCOMING EVENTS (Subject to Change)

Sept. 30, 2023

Upper Category Member Event - Gallery Visit with Rupy Tut



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members, who joined the Society in April and May. We are thrilled that you have decided to join us, and hope you find our programs and events interesting and engaging. Please don't hesitate to ask questions and give us feedback. Welcome!

Cynthia Ferrer & George Webber, Jr.
Gail Eiselman

Lewis Lem



SOCIAL MEDIA

The Social Media Committee is pleased to direct you to our Facebook page to see the many photos that were captured on the recent SAA trip to Japan. You will find photos of nature, sculpture gardens, temples and tour participants. These photos have prompted more than our usual number of likes on our Facebook page. Special thanks go to Etusko Kobata for her photo contributions. In the coming months, we will begin to post and promote the fall Arts of Asia lecture series.

Society for Asian Art

July - August 2023, No. 4

Members' Newsletter
Edited by Susan Lai

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Views from the Other Side



Left: *Diversa Orbis Terræ*, 1706, by Pieter Schenk (Dutch, 1660–1711). Ink and colors on paper. Asian Art Museum, Gift of David Salman and Walter Jared Frost, 2016.283. Photograph © Asian Art Museum. Right: Arrival of a Portuguese ship (detail), approx. 1620–1640. Japan. Six panel folding screen, ink, colors, and gold on paper. The Avery Brundage Collection, B60D77+. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

When: Fridays, Aug. 25 – Dec. 8, 2023 (No lecture on Nov. 3 & Nov. 24)
Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Pacific Time
Place: Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum & Online Webinars
Fee: \$200 per person Society members; \$250 per person non-members for the series.
We will only accept drop-ins for individual lectures in Samsung Hall on a space available basis. Drop-in fee is \$20 per person per lecture.
All in-person fees are after Museum admission.
Instructor of Record: Sanjyot Mehendale

Precious objects from far-away places have always been treasured and collected, prompting great curiosity about their origins and the identities of their makers. Advances in maritime technology at the beginning of the 15th century led to a veritable explosion of material and information exchange between distant nations. Christian Jesuit priests traveled to all parts of Asia, leaving behind visible legacies; at the same time, China emerged as the springboard for ideas and cultures that spread throughout Asia and beyond, while the Ottoman empire created artwork reflecting its intermediary position between East and West.

At the dawn of the 20th century, countries debated the meaning of national identities and modern society. Meanwhile, European military power and colonial policies drastically altered the course of history. As their world changed, how did Asian countries react? Join us as we explore in 14 lectures, the art and ideas that resulted from these interactions, conflicts, and exchanges.

Please check our website for the most up-to-date information about this lecture series.



ARTS OF ASIA FALL 2023 LECTURE SERIES

Speakers & Topics (Subject to Change)

Aug. 25, 2023

A Curious Affair – Toward an Understanding of Art and Globalization
Forrest McGill, Wattis Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

Sept. 1, 2023

Timurid-Mongol Influence on the Mughal Empire in India
Lisa Balabanlilar, Joseph and Joanna Nazro Mullen Professor in the Humanities, Rice University

Sept. 8, 2023

The importance of Cross-Cultural Exchange in the 16th/17th Century Mughal Empire
Mika Natif, Associate Professor of Art History, Corcoran School of the Arts & Design, George Washington University

Sept. 15, 2023

Dialogues between Photography and Ink Painting in Modern Chinese Art
Mia Yinxing Liu, Assistant Professor, Department of the History of Art, Johns Hopkins University

Sept. 22, 2023 *This lecture will be presented in Koret Education Center on the 1st floor of the museum.*

Art and Power in Southeast Asia
Paul Lavy, Associate Professor, Department of Art and Art History, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Sept. 29, 2023

Architecture of 18th Century Pondicherry
Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Professor and Bader Chair in Southern Baroque Art, Department of Art History and Art Conservation, Queen's University

Oct. 6, 2023

Early Twentieth Century Influence of Japanese Art on Indian Artists and on Indian Modernism
Aida Yuen Wong, Professor of Fine Arts and East Asian Studies, Brandeis University

Oct. 13, 2023

Sinophile Painters and Patrons in 18th Century Japan
Robert Mintz, Deputy Director, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

Oct. 20, 2023

TBD

Oct. 27, 2023

Ottoman Art between Europe and Asia
Walter B. Denny, Professor Emeritus, Department of Art and Architecture, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Nov. 10, 2023

The Dutch Mission to China of 1795 and the Forgotten History of Western Encounters with China, as Explored through Maps and Art
Tonio Andrade, Professor, Department of History, Emory University

Nov. 17, 2023

The Importance of Early Printed Painting and Drawing Books
Chelsea Foxwell, Associate Professor of Art History, Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Dec. 1, 2023

Muslim Art and Architecture, Designed and Created in China for Use by Chinese Muslims
Qamar Adamjee, Provenance Researcher South and Southeast Asian Art, Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art

Dec. 8, 2023

Shifting Perspectives: Asian and European Art in a Global Context
Deborah Hutton, Professor of Art History, Department of Art and Art History, The College of New Jersey



MEMBER EVENTS

Visit to Qualia Contemporary Art Gallery With Dacia Xu

When: **Friday, Jul. 7, 2023**

Time: **11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

Place: **Qualia Contemporary Art Gallery, 328 University Ave., Palo Alto**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members**
Advance registration must be received by SAA by Jun. 30, 2023.



Join fellow members to view the joint exhibitions, *Further Along* by artist Wang Tiande and *Garden of Mind* by artist Pan Hsinhua at Qualia Contemporary Art Gallery.

Further Along offers a look into Wang's hybrid ink paintings that feature his new body of work that engages with Chinese poetry and the tradition of brush and ink painting. Wang's unique style is characterized by his unconventional use of incense to incorporate his iconic burn-mark technique alongside text based, conceptual inquiries into the reproduction and circulation of Chinese poetry. Born in Shanghai and a graduate of the China Academy of Art, Wang is currently a professor at Fudan University in Shanghai. He has had many solo and group exhibitions around the world.

Garden of Mind presents recent works by Pan Hsinhua, featuring landscape paintings that fuse traditional aspects of Chinese culture and philosophy with allusions to contemporary Taiwanese society. Pan's use of powdered mineral pigments creates bold hues. He consciously draws from both ancient and recent history, shaped by heritage and tradition. A graduate of Taipei National University, where he currently teaches and lives, Pan is celebrated for his unique artistic language, skillfully blending the past and the present in his art works.

Director and owner of the gallery, Dacia Xu, will guide us through the exhibitions.

Hell: Arts of Asian Underworlds With Jeff Durham

When: **Friday, Jul. 28, 2023**

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

Place: **Koret Education Center, Asian Art Museum**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members.**
Advance registration must be received by SAA by Jul. 21, 2023.

The question of questions: What happens to us after we die? Is there a netherworld into which we depart after our physical form disintegrates? And if so, how might its dangers successfully be navigated? *Hell: Arts of Asian Underworlds* reveals some of the visual answers that Asian artists have provided to these eternal human riddles.

With more than forty objects in painting, sculpture and video, *Hell* takes the visitor on an art-driven journey that unfolds in several stages. Don't miss this special opportunity to hear Jeff Durham, Curator of Himalayan Art at the Asian Art Museum, guide us on this journey.

Jeff Durham has published many academic articles focused on the issue of exhibiting sacred art in secular places. His previous exhibitions range from small to large and include *Divine Bodies: Sacred Imagery in Asian Art*, *Enter the Manadala*, and *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment*. Prior to joining the museum, Dr. Durham was Professor of Religion at George Mason University in Virginia, St. Thomas Aquinas College in New York, and the University of North Carolina.



Top: *Inquiring the Sea in the Secluded Hermitage*, by Wang Tiande, 2023. Xuan paper, ink, burn marks, stele rubbing.

Bottom: *Heaven and Earth*, by Pan Hsinhua, 2019. Ink and color on paper (mineral rock). Photographs courtesy of Qualia Contemporary Art Gallery.



Akeldama, 2006. By Luis Lorenzana (Filipino, b. 1979). Oil on canvas. Lent from a private collection.



MEMBER EVENTS

Back Alleys, Hushed Stories and Secrets of Chinatown With David Lei

When: **Thursday, Aug. 3, 2023**

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

Place: **Meet at Portsmouth Square, Plaza Level, Chinatown, San Francisco**

Fee: **\$20 per person Society members only. Limited to 20 participants.**
Advance registration must be received by SAA by Jul. 27, 2023.

Step back in time with David Lei, who will share with us much unknown lore in these 30 square blocks, known as Chinatown. We will meander through this densely populated and bustling neighborhood on foot, ducking in and out of alleys and stopping at intriguing and lesser-known locations.

This is our second Chinatown tour with David Lei, who knows all the stories, history and culture of this intriguing area. David is a leader in San Francisco’s Chinese American community as well as a longtime supporter and friend of the Asian Art Museum and the Society. He has served on multiple nonprofit boards, such as the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) and many others, in addition to having helped curate exhibitions and develop documentaries relating to the Chinese American community.

A no-host dim sum lunch will follow at City View Restaurant, 33 Walter U Lum Pl., San Francisco.



Photo by Kate Ng on Unsplash



David Lei

Visit to a Collector’s Home With Annie Dorsey

When: **Sunday, Aug. 20, 2023**

Time: **3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

Place: **Private Residence in Sausalito**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members only. Limited to 15 participants**
Advance registration must be received by SAA by Aug. 13, 2023.

Enjoy spending time with fellow members while visiting a Society member’s home that is filled with Buddhist, Hindu and Jain art from all over Asia.

Annie Dorsey will try to be a good “docent” and share information on her collection and answer your questions while explaining her deep, long-time interest and study of these cultures that developed into a passion. Tea, drinks, and nibbles will be served while we enjoy the art and the views.



Photo courtesy of Annie Dorsey.

Address will be provided to registered attendees.

Donations for Book Sale

We now accept books throughout the year for our annual Book Sale. So if you move, downsize or are tired of all the books collecting dust in your home, please donate them to our Book Sale. We are accepting books with Asian subjects only, be it art, culture, novels, history, travel, cooking, exhibition catalogs or others.

Due to space constraints, we are unable to accept book donations at the SAA office. You can drop off books on Fridays when the Arts of Asia lectures are in session. If you have a lot of books, we are happy to pick them up from your home within the Bay Area. Please contact the SAA office at 415-581-3701 or info@societyforasianart.org for details.



LITERATURE & CULTURE

Fall 2023 Literature Course The Old Testament as Literature with Ronald Hendel

When: **Sundays, Sept. 10, Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Oct. 22 & Nov. 5, 2023**

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

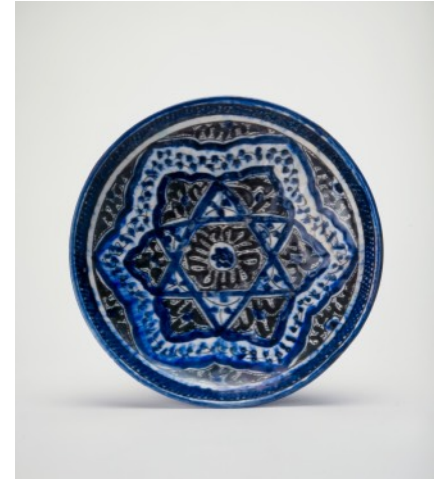
Place: **Opera Plaza Community Room, 601 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco**

Fee: **\$150 per person Society members; \$175 per person non-members for the course.**

Advance registration must be received by SAA by Sept. 3, 2023.

We are excited to be able to offer a literature course with Dr. Ronald Hendel, Norma and Sam Dabby Professor of Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Hendel will explore the literary features and resonances of the various genres of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, including history (the David story), myth (Genesis), prophecy (Isaiah and Jeremiah), love poetry (Song of Songs), and wisdom (Job and Ecclesiastes). Topics will include the beginning and end of the world, the complex psychology of biblical characters (including God), and the techniques of biblical literary style in poetry and prose. All readings are in English translation.

Dr. Hendel has been a member of the Berkeley faculty since 1999 and has served as chair of Jewish Studies, the Department of Near Eastern Studies, and the Graduate Program in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology. Dr. Hendel approaches the Hebrew Bible from a variety of angles – history of religions, textual criticism, linguistics, comparative mythology, literature, and cultural memory. He is the author of many books and articles, including *The Book of Genesis: A Biography*.



Bowl with star motif, approx. 1300–1400. Iran. Fritware with underglaze decoration. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1962.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



Ronald Hendel



UPPER CATEGORY MEMBER EVENTS

Each year, the Upper Category Member Event Committee brings together a roster of special events for SAA members in the Contributor, Donor and Sponsor levels.

As the pandemic gradually comes under control, we have re-launched our popular in-home Society Conversations as well as collection viewing gatherings.

Since the beginning of 2023, we have organized a variety of special events, including a virtual studio visit with artist Ala Ebtekar; a Society Conversation in a private home with LACMA Curator and Head of Art of the Middle East, Linda Komaroff; a Sponsor member event in a private home with the Asian Art Museum's Barbara Bass Bakar Director and CEO, Jay Xu; and a Sponsor and Donor member event at Iwasawa Oriental Art on the art of incense and calligraphy.

If you are not yet an Upper Category member, we invite your participation. Please [contact the SAA Office Manager](#) to upgrade your membership, or [join as an Upper Category member](#).

Please save the date of Sept. 30, 2023 for a gallery visit with artist Rupy C. Tut to view an exhibition of her works at the Institute of Contemporary Art San Francisco. An invitation will be emailed to Upper Category members in July.

Save the Date

South India: Temples, Art, Architecture and Crafts

January 16 to February 1, 2024

Join the Society for Asian Art on a fabulous trip of discovery to South India. We will start our journey in the east coast city of Chennai to visit museums and live dance performances followed by a stay in a beach resort in Mamallapuram, next to the delightful Shore Temple. A highlight of the trip will be a visit to the great Shiva Nataraja temple in Chidambaram, as seen in the painting in the current exhibition, *Beyond Bollywood: 2000 Years of Dance in Art*. We will spend several days exploring the Great Living Chola Temples and palace complex around the city of Tanjore. Our voyage will include many UNESCO World Heritage Sites, a visit to the French Quarter and the Tamil Quarter in the charming town of Pondicherry, the verdant scenery of Kerala, and the unique star shaped temples of the ancient Hoysola culture. We will end in the cosmopolitan city of Bangalore, stay in a historic hotel, and visit a highly regarded new art museum.

We will be escorted by two scholars and met in various locations by specialists in local culture and history. The pace of life in South India is more relaxed, the food is delicious, and the hotels will be one of a kind.

Email with trip details and registration instructions will be sent in mid June. This trip is limited to 20 SAA members.

Springtime in Paris with the SAA

April 21 - 28, 2024

Who doesn't want to spend April in Paris? SAA members will have the opportunity for a week-long stay in the City of Light joining the very popular SAA speaker and scholar, Dr. Julian Brown, to explore a variety of Asian art collections following an itinerary put together by Conley & Silvers, the premiere travel agency that organized the SAA's very successful Indochina trip this past January.

Staying in a five star hotel in the 9th arrondissement of Paris, SAA travelers will be just steps away from the Opera Garnier, the Champs Elysées, and many of the best shops in the city. The tour will include time at the Guimet National Museum of Asian Arts, which has one of the largest collections of Asian art in Europe. Another highlight of the tour is sure to be the day spent at Chateau de Fontainebleau with its collection of over 1,200 pieces of Asian art. Our visit will include access to private rooms not seen by the general public and a catered lunch at the Chateau. Travelers will also visit several other outstanding Asian art collections, including a specially arranged visit to Musee Ennery housed in a 19th century mansion and founded by a collector with a passion for Asian culture.

Email with trip details and registration instructions will be sent in early July. This trip is limited to 20 SAA members.



Shiva as Nataraja enshrined with dieties, approx. 1825-1875. India; Tamil Nadu state. Pigments, gold leaf, and limestone paste on cloth stretched over wood. Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Jane and James Emison Endowment for South Asian Art, 2014.57.

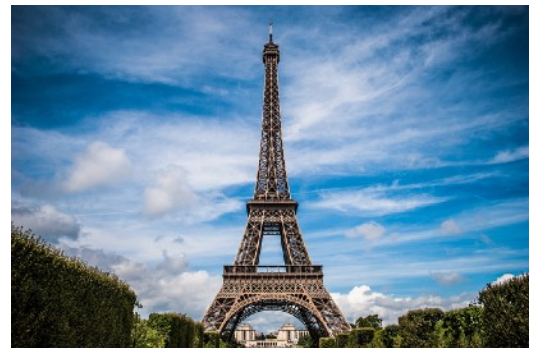


Image by [Nuno Lopes](#) from [Pixabay](#)