



March - April 2020

No. 2

Come see the special exhibition,
Jean Shin Pause
on view February 6 – May 24, 2020
in Lee Gallery at the Asian Art Museum.
Here are some highlights.



Left: Sculptures constructed from obsolete cell phones in forms reminiscent of irregular, rough-hewn scholar's rocks in Chinese art.
Right: Donated data devices are entombed by cords to create orb-like seating.
Photos courtesy of Jean Shin.



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Spring 2020 Literature and Culture Course

The Literature of Soviet Central Asia with Emily Laskin

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Member Event - Annual Spring Dinner at Ton Kiang Restaurant

Saturday, March 7, 2020

Member Event - Textiles of Japan: The Thomas Murray Collection

Friday, April 3, 2020

Annual Book Sale

Saturday, April 18 - Sunday, April 19, 2020

Member Event - SAA Excursion to Monterey and Orientations



UPCOMING EVENTS (subject to change)

Thursday, May 21, 2020

Annual Meeting and Reception

Save the date! Invitations will be emailed to all members in good standing as of April 1, 2020. Be sure we have your email address on file!

If you have any questions about your Society for Asian Art membership status, please contact the SAA office, (415) 581-3701 or info@societyforasianart.org. Thank you.



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members, who joined the Society in December and January. 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!

David Isenman
Linda Leong
Pamela Major

Sandra Pan
Robert Schelly & Lingling Shang
Cora Yang

Society for Asian Art

March - April 2020, No. 2

Members' Newsletter
Edited by John Nelson
and Susan Lai

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ARTS OF ASIA SPRING 2020 LECTURE SERIES

Visions of the Afterlife in Asia



Left: Snuff bottle with a scene of Demon Queller Zhong Kui expelling evil ghosts, approx. 1800–1900. China; Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Porcelain with underglaze blue decoration. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Richard P. Arens, 2010.426.a-b.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Right: The night journey of the prophet Muhammad on the heavenly creature Buraq, approx. 1800. India. Opaque watercolors on paper. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Shawn Ghassemi, 2007.13.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

When: **Fridays, January 24 – May 1 (No lecture on March 27.)**
Time: **10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**
Place: **Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum**
Fee: **\$175 Society members; \$200 non-members for the series (after museum admission)**
\$20 per lecture drop-in subject to availability (after museum admission)
Instructor of Record: **Sanjyot Mehendale, UC Berkeley**

After our popular fall 2019 lecture series on the lesser-known religions of Asia, we expand our scope to explore beliefs about the afterlife and divine justice across Asia and view how different communities and religious traditions observe the passage of life to afterlife.

Please join us on a journey that will start with some of the earliest known traditions of Mesopotamia, the Abrahamic traditions, study ancestor worship in China, examine ideas about reincarnation across Asia, look at heavens and hells on the Silk Road, examine the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and follow the Night Journey of the prophet Muhammad. Distinguished scholars will address beliefs and practices from the Ancient Near East, Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Far East. The variety of beliefs is as broad as human imagination. Come hear about ghosts and spiritual beings from different traditions as well as burial customs of the Chinese diaspora during the 19th and 20th centuries.

January 24

Dying While Living and Living While Dead: Themes Across Asian Afterlife Beliefs
Christopher Moreman, CSU East Bay

January 31

The Descent of Ishtar and the Epic of Gilgamesh: Afterlife in Early Mesopotamian Traditions
Niek Veldhuis, UC Berkeley

February 7

The Art of Reincarnation in South Asian Religious Traditions
Melina Belli Bose, University of Victoria

February 14

Visions of the Afterlife in the Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls
Ron Hendel, UC Berkeley

February 21

Gods, Ghosts, and Felicitous Writing: Visions of the Afterlife in Ancient China
Jun Hu, UC Berkeley

February 28

The Road to Hell: Buddhist Visions of Naraka at Qizil
Sanjyot Mehendale, UC Berkeley

March 6

Korean Traditions of the Afterlife
Michael Pettid, SUNY Binghamton

March 13

Pure Land, Hell, or Emptiness? Buddhist Visions of the Hereafter on the Silk Road
Michelle McCoy, University of Pittsburgh

March 20

Navigating the Afterlife Through the Tibetan Book of the Dead
Jacob Dalton, UC Berkeley

April 3

Beyond Life as We Know It: The Wondrous and the Monstrous in Japanese Notions of the Afterlife
Mark Blum, UC Berkeley

April 10

Afterlives and Afterworlds in the Islamic Garden
Nerina Rustomji, St. John's University

April 17

On Corpses, Ghosts, and Amulets in the Funerary Culture of Thai Buddhism
Justin McDaniel, University of Pennsylvania

April 24

Traveling Between Worlds: The Afterlife of Art and Ritual in Indonesia
Kaja Maria McGowan, Cornell University

May 1

If You Are Remembered, You Still Exist: The Bone Repatriation of Chinese Immigrants
Summer Mei Ling Lee, Artist



LITERATURE AND CULTURE SPRING 2020 COURSE

The Literature of Soviet Central Asia With Emily Laskin

When: **Sundays, January 26, February 9, February 23, March 22 & March 29**
 Time: **10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**
 Place: **Koret Education Center, Asian Art Museum on 1/26 & 2/23**
Community Room, Opera Place on 2/9, 3/22 & 3/29
 Fee: **\$115 Society members; \$140 non-members (after museum admission)**

Central Asia has been a cultural crossroads for millennia but for much of the twentieth century, while the region was part of the Soviet Union, little information about its people or its culture reached the West. At the same time, under communism, new ways of life and thought developed in Central Asia: literature in local languages flourished, and new ideas about socialism and equality mixed with older forms of Central Asian culture, producing a unique body of fiction and memoir. In this course, we'll start with two different takes on Soviet Central Asia in the 1930's: the Russian Andrei Platonov, who saw the region as a *tabula rasa* where socialism could be built from scratch; and Langston Hughes, who visited and found an analogue to the American south. Then we'll work our way through the twentieth century, with texts by Sadriddin Aini, Chingiz Aitmatov, and Hamid Ismailov, through which we'll explore the modern and ancient history of this complex region.

Emily Laskin is finishing her doctoral degree in UC Berkeley's Department of Comparative Literature, where she teaches Russian and English literature of the 19th and 20th centuries. She works in English, Russian, and Persian and her writing focuses on the literature of borderlands and regions where multiple linguistic and literary traditions coincide.



Cup with calligraphic inscriptions, 1440–1460. Probably Uzbekistan; Samarqand, Timurid period (1370–1507). Nephrite. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B60J619.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



ANNUAL BOOK SALE

Annual Book Sale

When: **Friday, April 3**
 Time: **12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**
 Place: **Loggia, Asian Art Museum**
 Fee: **Free after museum admission**

Thousands of books, including collector's items, will be available at bargain prices benefiting the Museum's C. Laan Chun Library. Selections include Asian art, history, literature, religion, culture, cooking, novels, travel, textiles, jewelry and more.

The Society for Asian Art Annual Book Sale has raised more than \$100,000 for the Museum's library, one of the most extensive art libraries in the country.

It is not too late to donate books to the SAA for this year's Annual 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 the SAA. We are accepting books with Asian subjects only, be it art, culture, novels, history, travel, cooking, exhibition catalogues or others.

Due to construction at the museum, we are unable to accept book donations at the SAA office. You can drop off books at the Friday morning Arts of Asia lectures. 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.

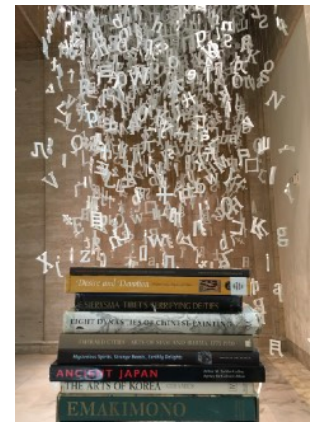


Photo courtesy of Peter Sinton.



Photo courtesy of Ehler Spliedt.



MEMBER EVENTS

Annual Spring Dinner

When: **Tuesday, March 3**
 Time: **6:00 p.m.**
 Place: **Ton Kiang Restaurant, 5821 Geary Blvd., San Francisco**
 Fee: **\$60 Society members; \$70 non-members**

Join us to celebrate the Year of the Rat and the coming of spring in many cultures across Asia.

We will feast on a tasty multi-course dinner on the second floor of one of our favorite Chinese restaurants, Ton Kiang. Sign up now to ensure your place at this most enjoyable social event. Wine will be served.



Year of the Rat

Textiles of Japan: The Thomas Murray Collection With Thomas Murray

When: **Saturday, March 7**
 Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**
 Place: **Koret Education Center, Asian Art Museum**
 Fee: **\$15 Society members; \$20 non-members (after museum admission)**



Cotton tsutsugaki (freehand resist). Japan, 20th century. Photo courtesy of Thomas Murray.

Textiles are an eloquent form of cultural expression and of great importance in the daily life of Japanese people, as well as in their rituals and ceremonies. Thomas Murray will speak to us about his Textiles of Japan Collection, composed of hand-made textiles used by country people, farmers, and fishermen. He will offer insight into Japan's complex textile history, discussing the Mingei Movement's philosophy that inspired his collecting, and warned that modernization would leave behind hand weaving and dyeing, encouraging the preservation of the craft and the traditional textiles. This very fine and extensive collection has recently been published in a widely acclaimed and lavishly illustrated book, *Textiles of Japan*.

Thomas Murray is an independent researcher, collector, lecturer and private dealer of Asian and Tribal art with an emphasis on Indonesian sculpture and textiles, as well as animistic art from other varied cultures. He also features Indian trade cloths from the 14th-18th centuries. A HALL magazine contributing editor for the last 30 years, he serves as their in-house expert on all tribal sculpture and textiles, with more than 50 publications.

SAA Excursion to Monterey and Orientations

When: **Saturday, April 18 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 19 10:30 a.m.**
 Time: **5:30 p.m. Saturday evening; 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning**
 Place: **Orientations, G.T. Marsh Building, 700 Camino El Estero, Monterey**
 Fee: **\$75 Society members; \$90 non-members**

Join us for another fabulous weekend with two of our favorite hosts, Jerry Janssen and Russ Young! As most of you know, the historic Marsh Building was originally built in the 1920s as a showcase for Asian art. On view this weekend will be a spectacular collection of antique bronzes, animal shaped Japanese incense burners (koro); Japanese and Korean tiger paintings, and a group of Western Han dynasty (206 BCE - 24 CE) pottery—jars and granaries. All of the Japanese pieces are from the late Edo (1603 - 1868) or early Meiji (1868 - 1912) periods.

We will enjoy wine and hors d'oeuvres beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday evening, followed by one of Jerry and Russ's signature elegant buffet sit-down dinners in the gallery. On Sunday morning, we continue with coffee and croissants, and a lecture by Robert Mintz, Deputy Director of the Asian Art Museum, giving us insight into the works on display.

Transportation and accommodations are on your own. There are several hotels within walking distance of Orientations. It is highly recommended to book hotels at your earliest convenience! Celebrate spring with a weekend in Monterey with good food, lively conversation, and magnificent objects in an incomparable setting.



Bronze shishi koro. Japan; Meiji period. (1868 - 1912). Photo courtesy of Orientations.



Tigers. Japan; early Meiji period (1868 - 1912). Photo courtesy of Orientations.

Read the Fall 2019 Issue Online

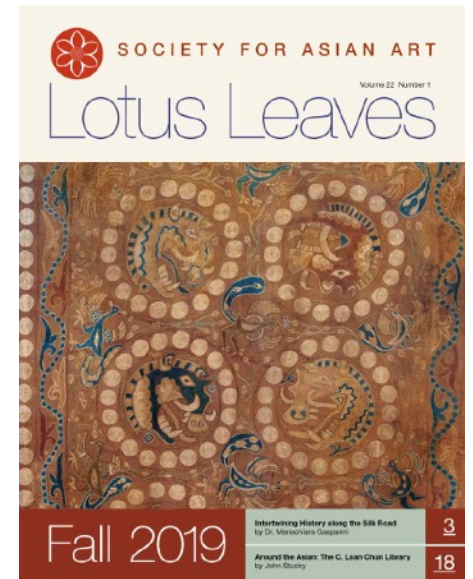
We are excited to present an article on the textiles that were traded along the Silk Road and how they impacted social and cultural life. Dr. Mariachiara Gasparini, Adjunct Lecturer at San Jose State University, is a specialist in ancient textiles, and is the author of a new book, *Transcending Patterns: Silk Road Cultural and Artistic Interactions through Central Asian Textile Images*. The issue concludes with an article by Asian Art Museum Librarian, John Stucky, about the history and collections of the museum's C. Laan Chun Library.

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 "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 Fall 2019 Issue of *Lotus Leaves*.
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SAA BOARD NOMINATIONS

The Nominating Committee is looking for candidates to serve on the SAA Board of Directors for 2020 - 2021.

This is a working board with all members serving on at least one committee. The committees plan and manage 100 or so programs every year. We currently have committees on Advisors, Arts of Asia, Finance, Investment, Library, Literature & Culture, Lotus Leaves, Membership, Member Events, Newsletter, Operating Procedures & Bylaws, Study Group, Symposium, Travel, and Upper Category Member Events.

If you would like to be considered, or wish to recommend a potential candidate, please contact the Nominating Committee via email at info@societyforasianart.org. Thank you.



A few of the SAA board members with Barbara Bass Bakar Director and CEO Dr. Jay Xu during the SAA 60th anniversary celebration at the 2018 Annual Meeting.



SAA board members mingling with SAA members during the SAA 60th anniversary celebration at the 2018 Annual Meeting.



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. Requests for refunds are granted for cancellations received by the SAA office via mail or email no later than one business week before the start of the event, lecture series, or literature course. International and domestic trips have their own cancellation policies.

Paid Programs	Fee	Quantity	Subtotal
<input type="checkbox"/> January 24 - May 1 Spring 2020 Arts of Asia Lecture Series: Visions of the Afterlife in Asia	\$175 Members \$200 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> January 26 - March 29 Spring 2020 Literature & Culture Course: The Literature of Soviet Central Asia with Emily Laskin	\$115 Members \$140 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> March 3 Member Event - Annual Spring Dinner at Ton Kiang Restaurant	\$60 Members \$70 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> March 7 Member Event - Textiles of Japan: The Thomas Murray Collection with Thomas Murray	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> April 18 - April 19 Member Event - SAA Excursion to Monterey and Orientations	\$75 Members \$90 Non-Members		

Total Amount _____

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Check Number _____ Check Amount _____ Check Date _____

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

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Signature

Date

Society for Asian Art Membership

The Society for Asian Art was founded in 1958 to encourage the study, understanding, and enjoyment of Asian art and culture. In 1960 it played a pivotal role in bringing the world-famous Avery Brundage Collection to San Francisco. We are an independent nonprofit 501(c)3 organization with our own membership. Become a paid member and benefit from the many educational opportunities sponsored by the Society. Please check out the benefits and privileges of membership and the various membership categories on our website, <https://www.societyforasianart.org/membership>. If you have any questions, please contact the SAA office at 415-581-3701 or info@societyforasianart.org. Thank you.

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SAA members enjoying a tour during the Gardens and Museums of Pasadena trip, November 12 -17, 2019. Photo courtesy of Jeff Roe.



SAA members enjoyed the beautiful Garden of Flowing Fragrance 流芳園 at the Huntington Library during the Gardens and Museums of Pasadena trip, November 12 -17, 2019. Photo courtesy of Jeff Roe.