



March - April 2021

No. 2

### Happy Year of the Ox!

The Chinese Year of the Ox begins on February 12, 2021 and lasts through January 31, 2022. People born in the Year of the Ox (1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009 and 2021) are said to be honest, diligent and dependable. Although we are not able to meet in person to celebrate at an annual spring dinner, we wish all our members and friends a healthy new year and plenty of good fortune!

### Society for Asian Art Board Nominations

The Nominating Committee is looking for candidates to serve on the SAA Board of Directors for 2021 - 2022.

This is a working board with all members serving on at least one committee. The committees plan and manage 70 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, Publicity & Social Media, Study Group, Symposium, Travel, Upper Category Member Events and Website.

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](mailto:info@societyforasianart.org). Thank you.



The Chinese New Year greeting, 年年有餘 (nian nian you yu), is a wish for abundance.

The character for fish, 魚 (yu), is a homophone for the character for over or more than 餘 (yu), the reason fish are commonly depicted. Photo by Susan Lai.

### Save the Date! Society for Asian Art Annual Meeting and Lecture Thursday, May 20, 2021

Invitations will be emailed to all SAA members in good standing as of April 1, 2021. Be sure we have your email address on file. This meeting will be online only.

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



## IN THIS ISSUE

### **Fridays, January 22 – April 30 Online Webinars**

Spring 2021 Arts of Asia Lecture Series  
The Power of Images in Asian Art: Making the Invisible Visible  
**Late registration is still available. Contact the SAA office.**

### **Tuesday, March 16 Online Webinar**

Member Event - The Island of Sea Women  
With Author Lisa See

### **Tuesday, March 23 Online Webinar**

Study Group - Understanding Indonesian Puppets  
With Kathy Foley

### **Wednesday, April 7 Online Webinar**

Member Event - Medieval Persian Tiles Between the Field and the Museum  
With Keelan Overton

### **Wednesday, April 21 Online Webinar**

Member Event - Emerging Asian Megacities  
With John Zarobell

*Society for Asian Art*  
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Members' Newsletter  
Edited by John Nelson  
and Susan Lai

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\*ex officio



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members, who joined the Society from October through 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!

Lindell Bruce  
Pamela Davis  
Jennifer Garrison  
Gregory Ghent  
Mary Roggero  
Irene Schaefer

Betty & Jack Schafer  
Cynthia Shen & Shailendra Rastogi  
Charlotte Temple  
Carolyn Weinberger  
Beany & Dick Wezelman



## IN MEMORIAM

### **James Murad 1935 - 2020**

We are saddened to inform our members of the passing of long time SAA member, James Murad, on Dec. 31, 2020. Jim and his wife, Ruth, have been loyal members and supporters of the SAA for many years. We will miss Jim's presence at our lectures and events. Jim also served as president of the Asian Art Museum Commission. We send our deepest condolences to Ruth and their family.



### The Power of Images in Asian Art: Making the Invisible Visible



Left: The historical Buddha Shakyamuni, approx. 1700–1800. Mongolia. Bronze with gilding. Asian Art Museum, Gift of the Asian Art Museum General Acquisitions Fund and an anonymous friend of the Asian Art Museum, 1994.21.a-c. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Right: *Black Enso*, 2014, by Masako Takahashi (American, b. 1944). Pigment inkjet print on paper. Asian Art Museum, Gift of the artist, 2017.13. © Masako Takahashi. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

When: **Fridays, January 22 – April 30, 2021 (No lecture on April 2.)**

Time: **10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Pacific Time**

Place: **Online Webinar**

Fee: **Advance registration is now closed. Late registration is available at \$225 per person Society members and \$300 per person non-members. Please contact the SAA office. We will not be accepting drop ins for individual lectures.**

Instructor of Record: **Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker**

Why do images have the power to inspire, give us access to the divine, show us the eternal, even guide the soul after death? Why are images so powerful that they are dangerous? This series of lectures explores the power of images in Asian art by looking at the intentions of the makers of the images and the specific roles the images were intended to play. Our journey crosses the breadth of Asia, from the abstract geometric designs in Islamic art to the sensuous figures of Khajuraho, from the Daoist paintings of the literati in China to the Thai amulets that ward off ghosts and disaster. We explore a variety of traditions to deepen our understanding of how images work.

Our Instructor of Record is Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker, Carver Professor Emerita of East Asian Studies, Mills College, and our lecturers are experts from across the U.S.

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



# ARTS OF ASIA SPRING 2021 LECTURE SERIES

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## Speakers & Topics (Subject to Change)

### January 22, 2021

Rasa: The Essence of Indian Art and The Enigma of the Sculptures at Khajuraho  
Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker, Carver Professor Emerita of East Asian Studies, Mills College

### January 29, 2021

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

### February 5, 2021

The Widening Gyre: Rippling Connotations of Shiva's Cosmic Dance  
Forrest McGill, Wattis Senior Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

### February 12, 2021

Navigating the Afterlife through the Tibetan Book of the Dead  
Jacob Dalton, Khyentse Foundation Distinguished University Professor in Tibetan Buddhism, University of California, Berkeley

### February 19, 2021

The Visible and Invisible in the Art of Zanabazar  
Uranchimeg Tsubtem, Assistant Professor and Edgar and Dorothy Fehnel Chair in International Studies, Herron School of Art + Design, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

### February 26, 2021

Images of Afterlives and Afterworlds in the Islamic Garden  
Nerina Rustomji, Associate Professor and Chair, History Department, St. John's University

### March 5, 2021

Mathematics and the Divine in Islamic Art  
Carol Bier, Research Scholar, Center for Islamic Studies, Graduate Theological Union

### March 12, 2021

Living Images and the Ephemeral in Medieval Northwestern India  
Deborah Stein, Adjunct Professor, California College of the Arts

### March 19, 2021

Rajput Paintings: The Power of Seeing and Being Seen  
Laura Weinstein, Ananda Coomaraswamy Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

### March 26, 2021

Beyond Life as We Know It: The Wondrous and the Monstrous in Japanese Notions of the Afterlife  
Mark Blum, Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair in Japanese Studies and Head Graduate Advisor, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of California, Berkeley

### April 9, 2021

On Corpses, Ghosts, and Amulets in the Funerary Culture of Thai Buddhism  
Justin McDaniel, Professor and Undergraduate Studies Chair, Department of Religious Studies, University of Pennsylvania

### April 16, 2021

Seeing Large in Small: The Power of Scale in Chinese Landscape Painting  
Jun Hu, Assistant Professor of Chinese Art and Architecture, University of California, Berkeley

### April 23, 2021

Colonial Representation in South Korean Cinema  
Jinsoo An, Associate Professor, Korean Program, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of California, Berkeley

### April 30, 2021

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



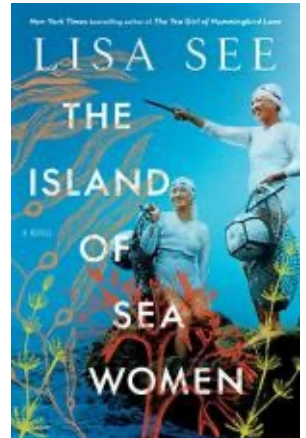
# MEMBER EVENTS

## The Island of Sea Women

With Author Lisa See

When: **Tuesday, March 16, 2021**  
Time: **10:30 a.m. to 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 March 9, 2021.**

*The Island of Sea Women* is a story about the free-diving women of South Korea's Jeju Island. An enthralling and engrossing story about the intersection of family, friendships and history. In this, her newest novel, author Lisa See reaches new depths exploring the matrifocal *haenyeo* society in Korea, caught between tradition and modernization. This novel spans wars and generations, but at its heart is a beautifully rendered story of two women, whose individual choices become inextricably tangled. The book has won many awards and accolades. Barnes & Noble chose this novel for its nationwide March 2019 Book Club.



*Lisa See is the bestselling author of The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane, Snow Flower and the Secret Fan, Peony in Love, Shanghai Girls, China Dolls, and Dreams of Joy. She is also the author of On Gold Mountain, which tells the story of her Chinese American family's settlement in Los Angeles. Her books have been published in 39 languages. Ms. See was the recipient of the Golden Spike Award from the Chinese Historical Association of Southern California and the History Maker's Award from the Chinese American Museum. She was also named National Woman of the Year by the Organization of Chinese American Women.*



Photos courtesy of Lisa See.

## Medieval Persian Tiles Between the Field and the Museum

With Keelan Overton

When: **Wednesday, April 7, 2021**  
Time: **2:00 p.m. - 3:30 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 March 31, 2021.**

**Please note that this lecture will NOT be recorded. It can only be viewed on the day of the event. Please only register if you are able to attend on April 7th.**

Renowned for its vivid, jewel-like colors and variety of patterns, medieval Persian tilework (ca. 1200-1350) can be found in virtually every gallery of Islamic art, including that of our own Asian Art Museum. The "tale of the tile" as it moves from monument to museum will be told by Dr. Keelan Overton, the very popular Islamic art specialist who has also led SAA trips to Iran in 2016 and 2018. Her talk will begin by discussing the function of the tiles in their original settings. She will also explore the "afterlife" of individual tiles and tilework ensembles in museums today with commentary on the current debates surrounding ethical museology. Particular attention will be paid to the Imam Zadeh Yahya at Varamin and the Sufi shrine at Natanz.



*Keelan Overton is a historian of Islamic art and architecture whose most recent book is the edited volume Iran and the Deccan: Persianate Art, Culture and Talent in Circulation, 1400-1700. She has served previously as the Curator of Islamic Art at the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art in Honolulu and as an Associate Curator at LACMA. An independent scholar in Santa Barbara, Dr. Overton is currently teaching at Pomona College and is working on a book on the global history of Persian tiles that has been awarded a Getty scholar grant.*



Photos courtesy of Keelan Overton.





## MEMBER EVENTS

### Emerging Asian Megacities With John Zarobell

When: **Wednesday, April 21, 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 April 14, 2021.**

This talk will focus on the artistic and everyday life in today's Asian Megacities, especially Delhi and Jakarta, and the relationship between the arts and urban development. We will also look at how cultural districts and other state-sponsored planning initiatives have employed the arts as a means of urban development.

Recent studies have shown that it is important to look at the activities of marginalized residents to capture the complexity of urban and artistic experience to promote the visibility of the invisible residents of metropolitan areas that can transform their cities and how artists are helping in this process in some of the megacities of Asia.

*John Zarobell is Associate Professor and Chair of International Studies at the University of San Francisco. Formerly, he held the positions of assistant curator at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and associate curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. His books, *Empire of Landscape* (2010) and *Art and the Global Economy* (2017), were published by University of California Press. He is currently working on a long-term research project on Emerging Asian Megacities. Dr. Zarobell also serves on the Society's Board of Advisors and wrote an article on this subject in the Spring 2018 issue of *Lotus Leaves*, the Society's scholarly journal.*



Delhi metro station. Photo by John Zarobell.



## STUDY GROUP

### Understanding Indonesian Puppets With Kathy Foley

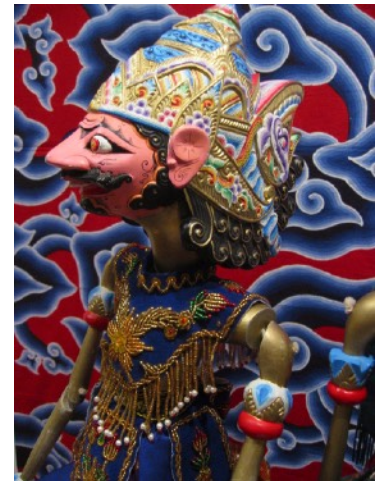
When: **Tuesday, March 23, 2021**  
Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Pacific Time**  
Place: **Online Webinar**  
Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members**  
**Advance registration must be received by the SAA by Mar. 16, 2021.**

Have you walked by the Indonesian puppet showcase in the Southeast Asian Galleries and wished you had a better understanding of their purpose and importance in Indonesian theater? This is your opportunity to broaden your knowledge. Master puppeteer Kathy Foley will give a presentation on the Wayang way. Principles of vocal use, movement, music, and character will be her points of focus. Get ready to participate in drum syllables, simple voices, wrist movements, and hand gestures!

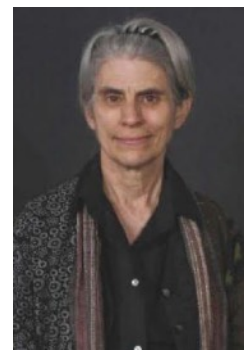
A significant focus in the story is the importance of character. It is often seen as the central issue. For example, a white faced hero faces a red faced antagonist. This confrontation implies binaries in the universe that are associated with other principles like good-evil, north-south, mountain-sea and divine-demon. The character of Punakawan the clown represents cosmic unity. The clown is seen as both a high God of the universe and a lowly servant. The duality is an important concept.

Selective scenes from the Ramayana and other narratives will be performed by Kathy Foley. Hinduism, Islam, indigenous thought, and other factors merge into the story and are important components of the play. This will be an insightful and interactive presentation by a master puppeteer!

*Kathy Foley, Distinguished Professor Emerita of Theater Arts at the University of California, Santa Cruz, has also taught at University of Hawaii, University of Malaya, University of Yonsei, and Chulalongkorn University. She was editor of the *Asian Theater Journal* from 2005-2018 and was the first non-Indonesian invited to perform in the prestigious all Indonesian National Wayang Festival.*



Wayang Golek Purwa puppet of the character Bhatara Sambu from Jelekong, Ciparay, West Java, Indonesia. Photo courtesy of Kathy Foley.





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## LOTUS LEAVES

### Read the Fall 2020 Issue Online Now!

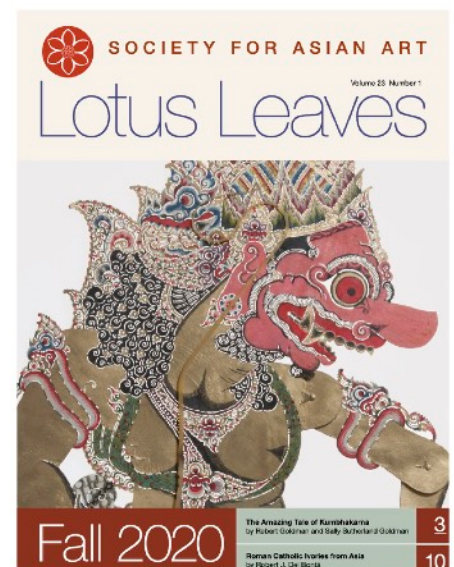
The Fall 2020 *Lotus Leaves* explores two very different facets of Asian culture. Robert Goldman and Sally Sutherland Goldman tell "The Amazing Tale of Kumbhakarna," the giant who was Ravana's brother in the Ramayana. Robert J. Del Bontà explores collections of early Christian art from India and Sri Lanka in "Roman Catholic Ivories from Asia."

#### 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.
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Cover of Fall 2020 Issue of *Lotus Leaves*.  
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