



May - June 2020

No. 3

A Message from the Society for Asian Art President

I hope this newsletter finds you healthy and safe during this difficult time. As we continue to shelter-in-place due to COVID-19, I'd like to express my gratitude to you, our members, for your support. The Society Board and committee members were disappointed that we had to cancel our wonderful programs this spring, so we appreciate your understanding. I'd like to especially thank those of you that donated the canceled program fees to the Society.

Please be assured that when public officials deem it safe to do so, we will resume our excellent Asian art and culture programming. This newsletter assumes we resume our normal programming in late summer. Depending on the health guidelines in place at the time, we will also explore options such as online programming, social distancing, etc. In the meantime, you can watch videos of our excellent past Arts of Asia lectures, including the recent Spring 2020 lectures from *Visions of the Afterlife in Asia* by going to the [Arts of Asia Archive](#) on our website. The webpage of each lecture series contains a link to the videos available.

Finally, like many nonprofits, our revenue stream has dried up due to canceled programs, so we ask that you please renew your membership promptly when it becomes due. Although our operating costs are low, we must cover ongoing costs to maintain the office, the website, and the membership database and to plan for future programs. Please also consider increasing your membership level or making a donation. We need your support now more than ever.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding. Please remain vigilant about your health and safety, so we can all enjoy learning more about Asian art and culture soon.

Trista Berkovitz
President



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The Old Testament as Literature
With Ronald Hendel



BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

Due to the COVID-19 preventative measures mandated by the state and local governments and to protect the health and safety of our members, the Society for Asian Art will ask members to vote for its 2020-2021 slate of Board of Directors by email instead of in person at the Annual Meeting of members.

On Saturday, May 23, 2020, SAA members will receive an email listing the names of twelve directors who wish to serve or continue serving for the next fiscal year. Please follow the link in the email to cast your vote. The term of these directors will be until they fulfill their two-year term and successors are duly elected and qualified. We ask that you review and vote for the slate as soon as possible, but no later than Sunday, May 31, 2020. Each member in good standing as of May 1, 2020 is entitled to one vote, and no proxy voting is permitted. The results will be announced in the July-August newsletter.



IN MEMORIAM

Alice Lowe 1922 - 2020

Alice Lowe, a beloved key player in the museum's history, passed away on March 2 at the age of 97. She volunteered as part of the first class of docents for the Brundage Collection and was an active Docent until 2015. Among her numerous roles over the years, Alice served on the board of the Society for Asian Art and as its President from 1986 to 1988. Alice organized the Marco Polo Ball in 1984, which raised \$100,000 for the SAA. She also served on the San Francisco Asian Art Commission from 1985 to 1999 and as its Chair from 1989 to 1993.



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Members' Newsletter
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and Susan Lai

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Board of Directors 2019-2020

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*ex officio



ARTS OF ASIA FALL 2020 LECTURE SERIES

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) (subject to change)**

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

Place: **Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum (subject to change)**

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: **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.

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



The Old Testament as Literature With Ronald Hendel

When: **Sundays, Aug. 30, Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11 & Oct. 25 (subject to change)**
Time: **10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**
Place: **TBD**
Fee: **\$115 Society members; \$140 non-members (after museum admission)**

We 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.

Ronald Hendel, Ph.D. is Norma and Sam Dabby Professor of Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies at UC Berkeley, where he's been a member of the faculty since 1999. Prof. Hendel approaches the Hebrew Bible from a variety of angles - history of religions, textual criticism, linguistics, comparative mythology, literature, and cultural memory. He is editor-in-chief of The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition, a new critical edition of the Hebrew text. He is also writing a new commentary on Genesis for the Yale Anchor Bible.



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.



Spring 2020 Issue Available in May

Read the Fall 2019 Issue Online

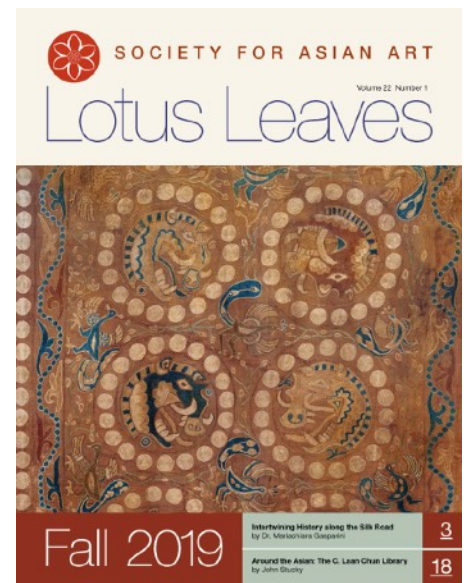
We are excited to present an article on the textiles that were traded along the Silk Road and how they impacted social and cultural life. Dr. Mariachiara Gasparini, Adjunct Lecturer at San Jose State University, is a specialist in ancient textiles, and is the author of a new book, *Transcending Patterns: 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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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"/> August 21 - December 4 (<i>subject to change</i>) Fall 2020 Arts of Asia Lecture Series: Heroes and Villains in Asian Art and Culture	\$175 Members \$200 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> August 30 - October 25 (<i>subject to change</i>) Fall 2020 Literature & Culture Course: The Old Testament as Literature with Ronald Hendel	\$115 Members \$140 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

_____-_____-_____-_____/____/____
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

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 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.

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Here are some highlights from the special exhibition,
Lost at Sea: Art Recovered from Shipwrecks,
now in Tateuchi Gallery at the Asian Art Museum through August 3, 2020.



Concretion of ceramics, approx. 1450–1490. Vietnam. Stoneware, stone, antler, shell, corroding iron, and remains of sea creatures. *Asian Art Museum, Acquisition made possible by Betty and Bruce Alberts, Will and June Arney Roadman, Annie and Cameron Dorsey, Jean and Lindsay MacDermid, Rhoda Stuart Mesker, and Ann Witter, 2000.31.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



Blue-and-white jar, approx. 1450–1500. Northern Vietnam; Chu Đậu. Stoneware with cobalt decoration under glaze. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of David and Mary Bromwell, 2010.492.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.