

## The Docent's Bête Noire: Decorative Arts

Lynn Teschendorf

"Decorative arts" – The words strike terror in the hearts of many good docents. When asked why, most cite lack of knowledge and a reluctance to tackle a daunting subject that seems gargantuan. But think about it. Do you use the period rooms? Do kids in your groups linger at Monti's veiled lady or the Texas longhorn chair or Dali's lobster telephone? They're all decorative arts, and you know way more about them than you think you do.

### Observe and Enjoy

After all, we're talking about the same things you have in your house and use every day. Anybody not have furniture? Glass? Plates and silverware? Jewelry? And remember, no one on a tour ever asks what art historical period some object belongs to. We are trained to encourage our visitors to observe and enjoy, not load them down with the elements that identify a certain style. And this is why Decorative Arts should be so easy for everyone. You don't have to tackle the variations in the Neoclassical style as it manifests itself in silver versus ceramics. You don't have to talk about art objects that are unfamiliar and exotic. All you have to do is relate a particular piece to something everyone has at home.

### Story Telling

Do you like to tell stories to the kids on your tours? Instead of telling them the Lakota creation story or the rape of Lucretia, tell them about Henry Clay's abortive run for the presidency<sup>1</sup> (and the fabulous bedroom suite commissioned for him) or St. Nicholas restoring to life the three murdered schoolboys from the tub where they'd been salted down for lunch<sup>2</sup> – (and the tortoiseshell box of perfume bottles) or Jason and the Argonauts and their quest for the golden fleece<sup>3</sup> – (and the Renaissance marriage casket). Use the terracotta sculpture of Judith

instead of one of the paintings to tell of her little run-in with Holofernes, or a suit (properly called a "harness") of armor to relate the story of Ivanhoe.

Not convinced? Well, I'm going to make it easy for you. In the next several issues of the *Docent Muse*, I will offer articles about the decorative arts Big Three: furniture, silver and ceramics. I'll give you a little history for each category, and talk about some of the objects you might find interesting and fun to use on tour. But I'll start here with a preview – on glass.

### Glass

Glass has been around for over 3,500 years. It began in the form of small solid objects like beads and amulets. By about 1600 BCE, artists in Egypt and Mesopotamia had figured out how to make hollow vessels such as jars and bottles by winding hot glass around a clay-mixed-with-dung-and/or-sand core and then breaking out the core. (Examples of core-

formed glass can be seen in the *Egyptian Gallery*.) The casting of glass in molds soon followed, but it wasn't until about 50 BCE that glass blowing was invented. The free blowing of glass objects with a blowpipe and blowing glass into a mold were enormous breakthroughs. Now glass could be rapidly and cheaply mass-produced,



Syrian Glass Ewer  
3rd century C.E.

resulting in its widespread use by all classes of society. (Examples of such glass can be seen in the *Greek/Roman Gallery*.) And, besides being cheap, why was it

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### Dates to Remember

**Fall Luncheon: Sept. 9** (Note change)  
Sept. 2 Reservation deadline  
Time & place remain the same

**MN Historical Society Tour: Sept. 10**  
Time: 10:30 a.m.  
Sept. 3 Reservation deadline

**Book Club: Sept. 30** (Note Change!)

**Winter Docent Muse Deadline: Nov. 4**

so popular? It's re-usable, washable and impermeable (which means it doesn't retain nasty odors or flavors to impart to its contents).

There are many glass objects in the museum that can be used on tours, starting with **Dale Chihuly's Sunburst** chandelier (made of over 1,000 pieces, each separately blown, and weighing in at over 3,000 pounds). However, the Chihuly is not exactly the kind of object we all have in our homes and use everyday. But what about **lamps**? There's one by Tiffany in the Duluth Room, as well as some beautiful Tiffany fireplace "tiles." The lamp is known as the Mandarin or Lotus Leaf lamp, which fits in with the naturalistic and Asian flavor of the room. Though Tiffany lamps are really "in" these days and are considered "arty," Tiffany himself considered them more commercial than artistic. The lamps were a convenient way to get rid of tons of glass chips remaining from his monumental windows.

Everyone has **windows** in their homes. On a tour, you could show the Tudor Room or the Frank Lloyd Wright hallway or the John LaFarge stained glass window. The LaFarge window was one of three designed for the dining room of one of James J. Hill's St. Paul homes (razed in 1892). The remaining two were installed in the dining room of Hill's son Louis' house at 260 Summit Avenue – and they're still there. Although LaFarge called the design a Persian arabesque, to me it looks like a tree branching out into intertwining leaves, buds and limbs.

**Mirrors?** You could use the Italian Baroque mirror in the third floor rotunda. Lots of people have punch bowls – but not many look like the one by Baccarat in Gallery 307, made of blue and frosted cased glass (one color is blown inside the other, and they fuse as the inner color inflates). The scenes were created using a template and acid-etching. They should look very familiar – satyrs, maenads and probably Dionysus/Bacchus himself in a goat-drawn chariot – just like the Greek volute krater and the Corot painting on the wall in the same gallery. And what better motif for a punch bowl?

Compare your own **glassware** to the "paper-chain" stemware designed by Otto Prutscher, or to the incredibly thin, clear glassware designed by Josef Hoffmann in that alcove off the Fauves gallery. Have you ever seen anything so impractical? Prutscher was known for his cameo glass, where the colored outer layer is cut away to reveal the clear inner layer. He liked to challenge the natural laws of stability, often making the foot smaller in circumference than the bowl, and the stem far longer than necessary.

Well, I could go on and on. I hope this has made Dec Arts a little less intimidating, and given you some ideas you can use on tours. Until next time...

<sup>1</sup>See the docent file and the label copy.

<sup>2</sup>See "Nicholas of Myra" in Hall's *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*

<sup>3</sup>See any book on mythology

## Curator's Corner: African Gallery

Bob Marshall

*If your African repertoire is limited to the Ife Shrine Head, Benin leopard, Kuba belt and Nkisi Nkondi, you may think not much changes in these precincts. But those who look further this fall will find something new at every turn. To help us spot the recent additions, MIA Director **Evan Maurer** walked through the galleries with Docent Muse correspondent Bob Marshall and offered the following comments.*



Let's start with the Swahili door, which we moved around the corner to the library entrance. From northeast Africa, just below Egypt, it shows an Arab influence and therefore goes very well with the surrounding Moroccan exhibits. In its place we have a new big display case that gives us a chance to show more of our growing African collection.

There is a grouping in this case: objects in the left half (numbered 1-6) are all West African cultures, while those on the right (7-11) are from the Congo and relate to the large case of masks.

*Note: You will find many new names on these labels; keep in mind that there are hundreds and hundreds of African groups that can be differentiated stylistically and culturally, many of which have just begun to be studied in the last twenty years.*

One of the more unusual objects is the "generous woman" spoon, a type found only among the Dan and Bassa people. The transformation of a utilitarian object into a ceremonial object by adding a sculptural element, like the woman's head on top of this spoon, is a common and important phenomenon in African art. Unlike our culture, where art is something other people do and which you can live with or without, in Africa it's part of the fabric of society. Tribal art is fully integrated into the everyday as well as the ceremonial culture of the people.

Getting back to this spoon, we know it was used – say to serve rice from a pot to the folks sitting around the plaza at a ceremony – from the chip and the patination at its edges. Serving others is an act of generosity and respect that is in turn respected. If you serve others enough times you're presented by the women's society with an object like this as a sign of the fulfillment of your role in the community.

At the bottom of the case are two ancestral and power figures which are interesting because they are wearing Western clothing – considered a sign of status. The Ibibio figure at the left has a pith helmet, shorts, boots and a jacket. Incidentally, its jaw could move, allowing it to "speak" at a ceremony. You can relate this use of Western clothing to the wonderful Thomas Adulate sculpture just across the doorway.

Other new and unusual objects in this case include a chimpanzee mask from the Hema people, the only ones who make chimpanzee masks. (I don't remember the specific use of such a mask; but if you have a specific question like that, please write it down and give it to the department.) The

Lukasa board (8) is a mnemonic device: the beads are a secret code that an elder or diviner would use in the recitation of stories. To the left of that is a marionette, showing a theatrical aspect to the presentation of one's culture. The Songe figure (9) is wearing the same kind of Kifwebe mask we display in the next case. And I find the figures numbered 10 and 11 fascinating together: they are from the same cultural area but show two very different abstractions of the human figure.

Turning around from this case you'll see a new collection of Chokwe items, ranging from the throne you're familiar with to a comb. Again, we see how utilitarian objects can be made special with the addition of iconography, in this case the headdress of Chibinde Ilunga, the progenitor of the Chokwe people. Also on this side is a Tanzanian case, illustrating a tougher, more basic approach to carving.

In the big case of masks, we're using examples almost all from the Congo. Here it's interesting to note the maquillage, the different face painting on each. Every pattern has a distinct meaning. You'll also note several white masks: white is the color of death, so these masks probably represent deceased ancestors. All the masks have slits at the eyes, to see out of. The Kifwebe masks routinely show nose hair, which I think might have been an indication of age.

We've put up two oversize masks: a Pende mask from West Africa over the new Dogon case, and a black Dan mask from Central Africa over the large mask area. These are masks that, when not being worn, would probably have been displayed on initiation huts. The four raised areas on the crest of the Dan mask represent magic power bundles.

To the left as you go into the small funerary gallery you will find a case of Ethiopian and Somali objects, in honor of the many Minnesotans who hail from those cultures. After I bought a number of Ethiopian objects I heard from guides that the Somalis felt left out; but because theirs is a Muslim country, there is little visual art and hardly anything on the art market, except milk containers and headrests. The headrest on the right is very typical in its shape and in its side panels, with their Islamic-influenced design. This one also has a symbol of universal creation and rebirth on the top, where your neck would rest.

Across is a case of small objects – that's the common denominator and the case's purpose: to show African artists working in a different scale. Also, different materials: ivory, bronze, wood. Small Pende masks are common. This one represents an antelope. The centerpiece of the adjoining divination case is a newly acquired diviner's bag. It's in fabulous shape now, complete with all its cording and beads; but when we got it from an African dealer (at a good price), it was so dirty you could hardly see any color.

Finally, let's head back to the case behind the Kuba belt. The most important of many new additions here is the Asante shrine group. For this object, we know who the artist is, and for whom he made it. It would have been set up on an earthen shrine, much as the pieces are laid out here. You can clearly identify the objects the chief's attendants are carrying – all symbols of power: a sword, a stool, a flintlock (and a keg of powder on the guard's head).

To the left is an interesting Cameroon palm wine container, made of a specially grown gourd or calabash, covered with beadwork and with an animal on top of the stopper. You can relate this to the ceramic palm wine jug, adorned with dancing ladies, just to the left of the interactive station.

Continuing left you can't miss the impressive metal object that looks like a two-handed sword. This is the focal point of an agricultural ritual, and is made by a blacksmith from the worn blades of iron hoes that Yoruba women bring to the priest. It has a phallic top because its ritual is about the fertility of the earth. Between ceremonies it is kept in a sheath like the beaded example next to it. Two horses rise from the surface – symbols of power that you can relate to the nearby Djenne rider and horse. The interlocked design on the scabbard is related to authority and chieftainship and is one you'll find on the Kuba belt as well.

We are, as you know, continually rotating textiles. They are, perhaps, the most obvious example of the African love of pattern; everything in the Kuba world is covered with patterns, and they all have names. This reminds me of the story of the Western trader who drove up to a Kuba chief's house on his motorcycle, looking to swap some beads. The chief looked down on the ground and saw the motorcycle tracks in the dirt, looking like a Kuba pattern. "I'll take those tires," said the chief. "But I need them to get out of here," the trader protested. "I'll take the tires," said the chief.



## Musings

*Tom Byfield*

Sitting through a soporific lecture one often begins to slip from the approved state of awareness into a neutral jurisdiction, allowing the mind to waft undeterred by the lifeless monotone of the speaker. This seems to happen to me with greater frequency as my age advances and my hearing declines. I begin to ponder the imponderable – at what point does the human buttock actually die?

Attending a symposium on Free Trade and the Monetary Fund the other day I felt myself drifting off. I admit I have the attention span of a caffeinated humming bird and the reason I get lost in thought is because it is unfamiliar territory. If you were sitting next to me and listened very carefully, you could actually hear my eyes glazing. At any rate, I was wishing I were anywhere else, like at a Twins game. Thinking about baseball reminded me that most stadia today have commercial sponsors – the Xcel and Target Centers for instance. Even game announcers are not immune to this contagion. "This pitching change is brought to you by AT&T Wireless" and "The Pepsi Cola play of the game," *ad nauseam*. Then because my internal wiring has been sickly since I tried to jump start my electric nose hair trimmer, I began to wonder how the MIA could profit from this phenomenon.

In an orgiastic spurt of inspiration I realized we are sitting on a veritable gold mine. We could profit from this trend by selling advertising rights to many of our beloved *objets*

*d'art*. Docents could incorporate these promos into their transitions, and the MIA coffers would be bulging. (Bulging coffers are not fat smokers.)

The possibilities are endless. We could announce, "This grain stack by Monet is proudly presented by Archer Daniels Midland – fine seed is what we do." "The Nkisi Nkondi segment of our tour is sponsored by Ace Hardware," perhaps followed by a singing rendition of – "Ace is the place for your helpful hardware man." Unless of course the docent has a voice like mine. Or, "This bronze by Giacometti is of his younger brother, Diego, and is brought to us by the Slim Fast folks." Again, "You are looking at a marvelous painting of Lucretia which is provided by the makers of Dutch Masters cigars" or by "Old Dutch Potato Chips." Whee, let's have a bidding war!

Then, just when I began thinking about selling the signage on the building itself, feeble clapping signifying the end of the symposium brought me back to reality and I scorched out of there like a tom cat at a neutering clinic.

Don't look for these suggestions to be implemented anytime soon. When I put them to the powers that be, their response was Gothic in its silence.

## I'll Have a Giclée

*Glenn Keitel*

If you have been visiting the commercial galleries recently, you may have heard "Yes, that's a giclée." Well, the term was new to me. I thought it might be a new medium, comparable to oil or acrylic.

Not exactly. Giclée is a process for reproducing an original oil or acrylic painting, watercolor, photograph or digital image. In the crudest terms, giclée is color ink jet printing. Giclée comes from the French meaning "spray of ink." However, this is not printing a color picture on your ordinary desktop color ink jet printer.

A giclée printer is large and expensive – it uses up to 12 different ink colors at an apparent resolution of 1800 dots per inch on paper or canvas up to 35" by 47" in size. The printer uses a digital image created from the original by a very sophisticated scanner. The inks are archival water-based colors. The final print is treated with ultraviolet-resistant and protective coatings.

The quality of a giclée print is reputed to be higher than a traditional lithographic print and to have a wider range of color than a serigraph or lithograph.

For the artist, giclée prints are a highly effective production process. Instead of having to order perhaps a hundred lithographically printed copies, a large up-front investment, and then hope to sell enough to make a profit, the artist can have the original work of art scanned and stored digitally. Then, one or a few prints may be produced as needed.

It possibly won't surprise you to learn the companies making giclée reproductions claim the prints are "museum quality." One web site lists a number of prominent museums "currently using giclée." I have not been able to determine if the MIA has a giclée in its collection.

## In Memoriam – Jenny Byfield

Although she had been battling cancer for several years, Jenny Byfield's death on August 5 came as a shock to her docent classmates and colleagues. Jenny began serving as a docent in 1975 and continued to lead tours until just a few months before her death. She enriched the lives of all who knew her with her knowledge and love of the fine arts - especially textiles. It is fitting that Jenny's work will be carried on by her daughter Michele Byfield Stead who is a member of the current junior docent class.

## Bea Huston Memorial Gift

Bea Huston's generosity of spirit and wonderful sense of humor endeared her to her colleagues in the class of 1998 and to all who knew her. As a result, all were deeply saddened when Bea was diagnosed with advanced cancer early in 2001 and died a few months later on August 21.

The Class of 1998 contributed more than \$500 to a fund in her memory. The fund was used to purchase *The Great Artists* – a series of 30 videos which includes the following sub-sets: Dutch Masters, English Masters, Romanticism & Realists, Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. Every sub-set contains six 50-minute videos – each of which chronicles the life and artistic achievements of a specific artist.

Artists included in the series are: Bosch, Rubens, Rembrandt, Bruegel, Vermeer, Van Dyck, Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Blake, Turner, Constable, Courbet, Friedrich, Rossetti, Delacroix, Goya, Whistler, Monet, Renoir, Degas, Pissarro, Seurat, Manet, Cézanne, Munch, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Rousseau, and Toulouse-Lautrec.

The videos will be available for docent use this fall.

## Book Review:

### *Artemesia* by Alexandra Lapierre

*reviewed by Mary Labrosse*

This extensively researched historical novel covers the very colorful life of Italian artist Artemisia Gentileschi (1592-1653). Born at a time when artists were the celebrities of the day, her father, Orazio Gentileschi, was a much in demand Roman painter as well as a drinking companion of Caravaggio.

Artemisia was apprenticed to her father at an early age and not only mixed his paints but was often his model and collaborator. As she matured she became the object of desire and gossip and when she rebuffed the advances of her father's close friend and fellow painter, was raped and subsequently seduced with his promises of marriage. Upon learning the scoundrel already had a wife, she and her father pressed charges and used the courts to achieve justice.

The author weaves transcripts of actual witness testimony throughout the trial narrative including descriptions of the tor-



Artemisia Gentileschi  
detail from *Self Portrait  
as a Lute Player*

ture used on witnesses, including Artemisia, to exact the ‘truth.’ The Gentileschi won the case but the surrounding public scandal ruined their reputation and forced Artemisia to accept a less than desirable marriage with an inferior painter and a move to Florence. There her artistic genius flourished. She evolved independently of her father and, in spite of her husband, became literate and educated (although never achieving the desired “deportment” so important to ladies of society).

She was the first woman to join the much exalted *Accademia del Disegno* that brought together the elite among painters, sculptors, architects, scholars and professors. Artemisia was mentored by the grand nephew of Michelangelo, enjoyed the friendship of Galileo and traveled in the heady circles of the Medicis. The story unfolds with her growing acclaim and retinue of admirers and patrons all the time providing a vivid look at the social mores governing Baroque Italy. It ends with her reunion with her father in the court of Charles I of England where the author reconciles the lifelong competitiveness between the two as Artemisia realizes that her father has lost his touch with age and she again becomes his pupil in order to maintain the Gentileschi reputation. Their final collaborative effort – *Allegory of Peace and the Arts under the English Crown* – decorates the ceiling of the entrance hall at Malborough House, London.

This is a story of a woman who defied convention and was officially affirmed as an artistic genius at a time when women were never considered much more than property. The book concentrates on Artemisia’s work that depicts women of strength and dominance. The author interestingly arranges the chapters by paintings that can be interpreted to reflect and highlight this very unconventional life, including *Susanna and the Elders*, and *Judith Slaying Holofernes*. Conveniently included are color plates that illustrate the quality of Artemisia’s work and as one reads one often flips the pages to view the works to confirm the author’s suppositions.

Lapierre shines when taking a scholarly approach to Artemisia’s story capturing the artistic squabbles, gender restrictions, government thievery, and sexual philandering of the times in an easy read. Most captivating is her account of the secret disbursement and sale of the famous art collection of the Duke of Mantua that included works by Caravaggio, Titian, Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci and Artemisia’s part in how they ended up at the English Court. Imagine that Neanderthal duke selling priceless works of art to a heretic just to raise money when he could have sold titles like other duchies in tight circumstances!

The author is less successful with the fictionalized thoughts and dialogues of the characters, somewhat bordering on the ‘lust novel’ that no one admits to reading, but the story of Artemisia is so engrossing that one is compelled to broaden the experience with additional reference material so as to compare the works of the daughter to the father and to revisit the works of their fellow artists.

### **How does this book aid in touring?**

The author has done her research as evidenced by the accompanying notes and bibliography. Therefore one can confidently use it as a reference to the life and times of Baroque Italy. This is helpful when planning an “Artist’s Inspirations” tour, or a “European Art” tour. The list of notable characters is a who’s who of seventeenth-century art and aids in getting a handle on the political influences as well as the different personalities of Rome, Venice, Florence and Naples and their respective rulers. The issue of how artists executed the edicts of the Council of Trent in their works is addressed and the question of creativity versus technical ability is examined in the context of the life of Artemisia. The reader is left with the impression that, in the words of the cartoonist Saul Steinberg, “Art precedes technique, just as the smell precedes the cake” – in the case of Artemisia Gentileschi, a remarkable woman in remarkable times.

### **A Special Note**

The exhibition *Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy* is at the Saint Louis Art Museum through September 15. There will be an international symposium on Artemisia’s art on September 13-14. Those unable to go to St. Louis might wish to visit the museum’s special Website at [www.slam.org/gentil.html](http://www.slam.org/gentil.html)

## **Docent Book Group News**



With the beginning of the new season, the Docent Book Group will resume its bi-monthly gatherings. To start the year, the group will read and discuss *Headlong*, the highly-praised novel by Michael Frayn, who is perhaps best known as the author of the play *Noises Off*.

In this novel Frayn treats us to the story of an unlikely con man who wagers wife, wealth, and sanity in pursuit of an elusive Old Master. Martin Clay, an easily distracted philosopher, and his art historian wife, are invited to dinner by a boorish local landowner. They are asked to assess three dusty paintings blocking the draught from the chimney. But hiding beneath the soot is nothing less – Martin believes – than a lost work by Bruegel. So begins an hilarious trail of lies, concealments, desperate schemes and soaring hopes as Martin – betting all that he owns and much that he doesn’t – embarks on a quest to prove his hunch, win over his wife, and separate the painting from its owner.

The group will meet at the MIA on Monday, September 30 (note date change) immediately following the morning lecture. The meeting room will be announced closer to that date. Docents interested in joining the group are invited to contact **Dale Swenson** by e-mail at [dmsswenson@aol.com](mailto:dmsswenson@aol.com) or by leaving a note in his mail box.

**Note:** Since the lecture on September 30 has been cancelled, there may be yet another date change. Dale Swenson will notify members of the group by e-mail.

## Keeping in Touch...



### Letter from Docent Chair

Last year Jane said she was honored to be your Docent Chair (I admit it, I looked it up). I've tried to think of another way to say the same thing here, but I can't come up with another word. I am truly honored to be your Docent Chair. It is a privilege to work with you, my peers, a group of remarkable and talented people.

When trying to think of what to say in my letters this year, it occurred to me that something useful might be in order. So, in this letter let me tell you about the interview I recently had with Pat Edwards, who works in the Interactive Media department. (Obviously, this idea assumes you have a computer and are connected to the Internet.) I asked him what the department has created that could help docents do their job more easily and efficiently. Three helpful ideas emerged. To begin, go to the following Website: [www.artsconnected.org](http://www.artsconnected.org). Click on "art gallery." Click on "only show art with images" and "Walker Art Center" to remove the check marks in each box. Now, you are ready to get started.

*Useful Item #1:* What's on view in a specific gallery? To try it, in the "enter keyword" box, type in "G200" and then "go." This will bring up the objects in gallery 200, which is the Sculpture Court, currently filled with Chinese objects from the Bruce and Ruth Dayton exhibition. With a map of the museum, you can check on any gallery in a similar way. Just type "G" and the number of the gallery immediately after. The contents of the galleries are updated on-line at least once a week.

*Useful Item #2:* Make your own tour. Go back to the opening page of "art gallery" and click on "Art Collector." Follow the directions, entering your e-mail address and a password, then do a search for objects you need. You can save them as your own customized tours, complete with all label copy and frequently an image.

*Useful Item #3:* Get really close-up to the art! Find a work of art with an image and click on it – repeatedly – to see fine details. I just looked at the van der Helst painting, and a few clicks revealed the most incredible detail – and you can print it.

Please do let me know if any of these ideas are helpful to you, and my apologies to those among us who don't play on computers.

I hope many of you can join me on our field trip to the Minnesota History Center on September 10th. I look forward to seeing you this fall!

Carol Burton

## News from Museum Guide Office

Welcome back! Fasten your seat belts. Let the year begin.

### VTS Update

Before things speed up too quickly, take some time to think about thinking and how it relates to art and what we do as art educators. Think about these words written by Rudolf Arnheim in 1969, in his book *Visual Thinking*:

The arts are neglected because they are based on perception, and perception is disdained because it is not assumed to involve thought. In fact, educators and administrators cannot justify giving the arts an important position in the curriculum unless they understand that the arts are the most powerful means of strengthening the perceptual component without which productive thinking is impossible in any field of endeavor.

Arnheim would be thrilled today if he knew that our Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) partnership with the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) is thriving because educators and administrators here *do* recognize the power of art to stimulate critical thinking. VTS has been generously funded for an additional year by the Annenberg Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The MPS have recognized the value of this program by continuing to support the partnership as well. In a year like this one, this commitment says more than ever.

Docents are critical to the success of our VTS partnership. Thank you to all of you who participated over the past four years and those who will continue to provide this important support to students and teachers in Minneapolis. Special thanks to the junior docent class, all of whom partnered with a VTS class last year.

We are looking forward to another great VTS year ahead! Stay posted for training date and times. Please don't hesitate to let either of us know if you'd like to participate this year. It's not too late!

### New Reading Materials

If you are looking for new and stimulating reading material, look no further than the docent/guide library. We added many new titles to the library and replaced others that were missing. Thank you to Eleanor Nickles for many of these new books! Here is a list (by section) of those books that were catalogued over the summer:

#### Art History

*Instant Art History*  
*Annotated Mona Lisa*  
*Annotated Arch*

#### Reference

*Art Institute of Chicago: The Essential Guide*  
*Dictionary of the Arts*  
*Women, Art, and Society*  
*Great Tours!*  
*Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*  
*Dictionary of Art Terms*  
*Art for Dummies*  
*Art of Tibet*  
*Indian Art*

**Himalayas**  
**India**

**Southeast Asia** *The Golden Age of Persian Art*  
**Japan** *How to Look at Japanese Art*  
*Edo: Art in Japan 1615-1868*

**Asia** *The Asian Galleries: MIA*  
**China** *Looking at Chinese Painting*  
*Chinese Art*  
*The Arts of China*  
*Splendors of Imperial China*  
*Treasures of the Chinese Scholar*  
*Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*  
*The Chinese Potter*

**Ancient** *Eye of Horus (Egypt)*  
**Renaissance** *Cathedral of Siena and Cathedral*  
*Museum*

**Baroque** *A Worldly Art: Dutch Republic*  
*1585-1718*

**19th Century** *Claude Monet*  
*Impressionism*  
*Pre-Raphaelites*  
*Art of Impressionism*  
*Beyond the Easel*  
*Van Gogh's Van Goghs*  
*Homecoming: The Art Collection*  
*of James J. Hill*  
*Art For Young People: Pierre*  
*Auguste Renoir*  
*Gauguin*  
*Ensor*

**American** *American Painting*  
**20th Century** *Theories of Modern Art*  
*Egon Schiele: Eros and Passion*  
*Concepts of Modern Art*  
*Fauvism*  
*Henri Matisse*  
*Chuck Close*  
*Jacob Lawrence American Painter*  
*Painting Revolution: Kandinsky,*  
*Malevich, and the Russian*  
*Avant-Garde*  
*Thomas Hart Benton: The*  
*American South*  
*Democratic Visions: Art and*  
*Theory of the Stieglitz Circle*  
*1924-1934*  
*Realism in 20th Century Painting*

**Art of the Americas** *Art of Mesoamerica*  
*Study of Maya Art*  
*American Peoples*  
*Painted Perfection*

**African** *African Art*  
*The Art of African Textiles*  
*The Yoruba Artist*  
*African Art in the Cycle of Life*  
*Royal Benin Art*  
*Ethiopia: Traditions of Creativity*  
*Dictionary of African Mythology*  
*Art and Craft in Africa*  
*Complete Printmaker*

**Visual Arts/**

## Critical Theory

*Interaction of Color*  
*The Ephemeral Museum: Old*  
*Master Paintings and the Rise*  
*of the Art Exhibitions*  
*Nothing If Not Critical*  
*Visual Thinking*  
*Jack Lenor Larsen: A Weaver's*  
*Memoir*  
*Field Guide to American Victorian*  
*Furniture*  
*Pottery in the Making*  
*Illustrated Dictionary of Ceramics*  
*Body of Clay, Soul of Fire:*  
*Richard Bresnahan and the*  
*Saint John's Pottery*

## Textiles

## Decorative Arts

Other books were added throughout the year, so be sure to peruse the shelves for something new to you!

Also be sure to check out the greatly expanded collection of videos in the library. And, we will be adding files on many modern art works soon, thanks to the hard work of Karleen Bratlund, Jr. Docent Instructor, and Maggie Goodspeed, Intern.

## Social Committee Announcement

The **Fall luncheon** for Docents and Junior Docents will be at 12:30 p.m. on **Monday, September 9** (note date change) at the home of Candy Gravier, 4909 Bywood West, Edina.

It will feature a harvest buffet of delectable delights and refreshments which are sure to tempt even the most discriminating "palette!"

Reservation deadline: Monday, September 2

Cost: \$15 per person

Checks, payable to Docents of the MIA, can be deposited in the Docent Lounge or mailed to: Mary Labrosse, 10196 234th Street East, Lakeville, MN 55044-8298

## Honorary Docents' News

### Thank you!

A big thank you is due to Margaret Leddick and Barb Diamond for planning last year's successful, well attended monthly programs and stimulating book club sessions.

### A New Year of Activities

This year the general programs will be on the 4th Wednesday of the month and the book club will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Both will start at 10:30 a.m. All Honorary Docents are invited to join in these activities.

### Mark Your Calendar

September 18 - Book Club at Ruth Waterbury's

September 25 - luncheon at Nancy Gethin's (reservations by September 18, please)

### In Memoriam

Bill Hastings, husband of **Ruth Hastings**

John Dozier, former President of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, and husband of **Mary Kay Dozier**.