

The Docent Muse

February 2008

*Poetry – the art of rhythmical composition,
written or spoken,
for exciting pleasure by beautiful, imaginative,
or elevated thoughts.*



My hope is that this issue of *The Docent Muse* will pleasure you!

My work as the muse Erato (AIR-ah-toe) has been to bring together the words and thoughts of our fellow docents for your reading enjoyment.

What a passionate group they turned out to be.

As for me ... I especially love lyrical poetry. You know, the songlike outpouring of the poet's own thoughts and feelings.

However, my other interest is in the erotic. Erotic poetry. If you read closely, you will find some. I hope it pleases you.

With love,
Erato

The Poetics of Touring

Charles Ellis

Do you ever use poetry in your tours? Here is a poem I have used, one from the Song dynasty:

Tune: "Gazing at the South" (Wang Chiang-nan)

So much to regret

*Last night my soul within a dream
Seemed again, as in former days,
to wander the imperial gardens,
Where carriages drifted like flowing water,
the horses like dragons;
And the breath of spring
was just upon the moonlit flowers.*

p. 301, *Sunflower Splendor*

The leaf pattern tea bowl from the Chi-chou kilns in Hupei province is a favorite object of mine. I memo-

rized this poem so I could give an authentic voice to the melancholy of a Chinese empire in decline. The poem would give, I hoped, an emotional context for this delicate tea bowl.

It might have, too, except I found that presenting the poem to a group forced parts of it to flee, like the breath of spring on moonlit flowers.

A judiciously chosen poem can help tour members find additional depth. Next time, I read it from an index card. Much better.

My men's group, the Woolly Mammoths, uses poetry a lot in our gatherings, so I suggested we meet at the Museum with each member bringing their own paper and pencil.

We visited the woman of *LaMouthe*, a Hokusai print and *Dr. Arrieta* among others. I presented each piece using inquiry, then gave the group 3-5 minutes to write a poem. I provided a one-page sheet of poetic forms and rhyme schemes.

This worked very well, though it does limit the number of objects one can see. We read our poems after each object, but there would be no need to do that.

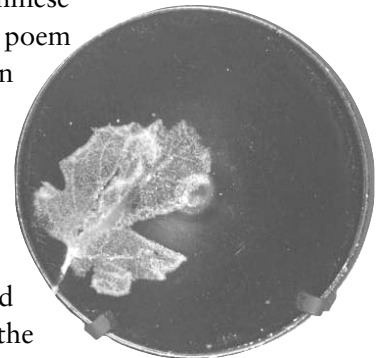
A more obvious place to focus on poetry, however, involves objects which incorporate poetry as part of the work itself. There are many examples, especially in the Chinese and Japanese collections. The literati painting, *Bamboo and Rocks* by Hsieh Cheng, for example, includes this poem:

*Bamboo and rock stand paired alone in harmony
The multitudes of plants and flowers are in vain
Spring, summer and autumn cannot transform them.*

Only the elegant plum has greater virtue.

Wooden Bridge Cheng Hsieh

Though I have not done it yet, a close reading of this and other poems already in or on various objects



could add a great deal to certain tours and tour themes. A close reading is a careful examination of the text, its history, its probable meaning when written and, in our case, the probable reason for including it in the work. Here, of course, at one level Hsieh Cheng's poem promotes a literati value of endurance in the face of change.

Another opportunity for the inclusion of poetry lies in those works which illustrate a scene or a story line from a poem. Works on display right now include *Diana the Huntress* (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*), an illustrated copy of Ovid's *The Arts of Love*, *The Jade Mountain*, *Erminia and The Shepherd* (*Jerusalem Delivered*) and *The Sacrifice of the Rose* (which makes use of well-known symbology about the rose established in French poetry) among many others. Here again a close reading of the poem referenced by the work's image will add depth and clarity to understanding the art and offer further chances for inquiry.

Another sort of object to include in a tour might



be images of poets themselves. *The Poet Contemplating a Waterfall* and *Orpheus and Eurydice* are examples.

Poetry can add depth and context to objects. Writing poetry can be a tour activity. Taking note of poetry incorporated in MIA objects can enrich a tour, as can learning about poems that inspired painting and sculpture. Finally, we can also show representations of poets themselves.

If you use poetry in your tours, I would like to collect your ideas or experiences for a follow-up sometime in the year ahead. You may e-mail me or put your contribution in my mailbox.

Sunflower Splendor is a historical collection of Chinese poetry. Wu-Chi Lu and Irving Yucheng Lo, Garden City, New York, Anchor Press, 1975.

A Zeshin Retrospective

William Bomash

Now that we are looking forward to the upcoming exhibition of Japanese art, the Weber collection, it might be a good time to recall briefly the outstanding Japanese Zeshin exhibit that has just concluded. The Shibata Zeshin exhibit was extraordinary in its scope, subtlety and beauty. A hallmark of Zeshin's work

was the meticulous and superb craftsmanship evident in everything he made.

The art works in this show provided us with excellent examples of the Japanese *iki* aesthetic – a simple, elegant, and understated beauty often tinged with subtle humor. So seemingly unpretentious were some of the pieces that you had to study them carefully (some were better seen with the aid of a flashlight) before their real beauty became apparent. Rather than being assaulted by a profusion of vibrant colors and shapes, you were more likely to be seduced and charmed by their subtleties.

Highlights of the exhibit that illustrated Zeshin's artistry included the exquisite document box ornamented with bamboo leaves; the small simulated rosewood incense box, cracked and repaired to suggest a treasured heirloom; the wonderfully creative *inros*, the small containers that Japanese men hung from their belts; and, of course, the *pièce-de-résistance* of this exhibit, the magnificent set of five stacked boxes with the waterwheel and willow design. In addition to lacquerware, the exhibit featured a number of Zeshin's paintings. Of particular interest were the works showing his amazing ability to paint with lacquer on paper or silk.

We are fortunate that we aren't left only with fond memories of Zeshin's art as we have a number of his works in our own collections. We have several of his prints in our print collection and three items that are on display now in the Japanese galleries. These include a lovely ink painting of a waterfall done on silk in gallery 253, and an album of twelve paintings in ink and color together with a the magnificent pair of luminous gold screens depicting the four seasons painted with lacquer on paper in gallery 251.

Be sure to check out these beautiful objects next time you are in the Japanese galleries and take a moment to reflect upon the wonderful works by Zeshin that we saw in the recent exhibition.



Georgia loves Georgia

Georgia Engebretson

The Georgia O'Keeffe exhibit was a joy to tour. Visitors were truly interested in sharing their opinions about "what was happening in the paintings," and how it made them feel. Whether children or adults, each tour was filled with fascinating, new ideas. Gardeners saw fiddlehead ferns, musicians saw violins. As an introduction I asked what they knew about Georgia (O'Keeffe, not me). Many mentioned flowers and skulls. By the end of our tour they had a deeper understanding of Georgia and her art.

The name Georgia is not common and I have met very few with that name in my life. Many people asked if I were touring this show because we have the same name. My answer was no, although it was fun to use our name so often, just as I'm doing now. I didn't know Georgia very well and was interested in learning more about her. The exhibit made this easy, starting with her early charcoals and progressing through different stages and influences in her life.

I ended all my tours with the landscape in the back of the last room; some called it the blue circle with white line. To me it symbolized the culmination of everything she created, the greatest simplification possible of a landscape. In another context even I might question the value of this painting, but after touring the show and sharing our thoughts, most people really did find it was a wonderful piece. It made the experience special for me.

Georgia was a strong, independent woman who continued to develop her own unique creative style, while other American artists tried the different "isms" that were introduced from Europe. Throughout her life Georgia evaluated and revisited themes, even when her eyesight failed, going back to the graceful swirls of her early charcoals. Georgia is a great American artist and a true icon of twentieth-century art. I admire all she accomplished as a woman, especially her ability to create the image of herself she wanted the world to believe.

I don't know if I would like to compare myself to Georgia, but I do share her love of nature, particularly flowers. Georgia has inspired me to look much more closely at landscapes, watching the way light and perspective affects their appearance. This spring when my gardens begin to bloom I'm going to try to find the details that she saw in flowers, magnifying and simplifying them. I asked my tour groups how

they would create a portrait of someone close to them, not painting a likeness, instead painting how they felt about the person. I have been thinking about this question myself, which colors would I use, what type of brush strokes would convey my feelings? Having never painted before this might be a formidable task, but I might try.

I feel privileged to have toured this exhibition and become acquainted with Georgia O'Keeffe.

Musings on Frida Kahlo

Grace Goggins

Touring the Walker Art Center's *Frida Kahlo* exhibit over the last three months has been a fabulous experience. Many times, while touring the show, I found myself wishing I could share with my tour groups all the wonderful artworks pertaining to Frida and her world that we have on view at the MIA. I found the work of Frida Kahlo to be a magical mixture of freedom and pain, humor and cruelty, strength and weakness, ancient and modern, personal and universal, and always beautiful and totally engaging.

Coming to the MIA and finding those pieces that are a part of her world was great fun and connected her to the rest of the world for me. For those of you in Frida withdrawal, now that she has left the Twin Cities for Philadelphia, here is a sampling of works on view here that will put you into Frida's world for a little while.

Man of Sorrows by Morales. Frida admired the Renaissance and Mannerist portraits. Christian symbolic language in this painting appears in some of Frida's work .

Moritz and Anna Buchner by Cranach. Cranach's work was a favorite of Frida's father. She admired other Northern European masters such as Pieter Bruegel and Hieronymus Bosch

Madonna and Child – Nicola d'Ancona. I just think Frida might like this one. Her mother was a Catholic *mestizo* woman.

The Family by Ruffino Tamayo, a younger contemporary of Frida and Diego. One of the "big four" of Mexican modernism.

Picasso, Duchamp, Kandinsky, Tina Modotti, Lola and Manuel Alvarez Bravo and Juan Miro all had the pleasure of Frida's company

Americas gallery – Colima and Mayan ceramics. See beautiful representations of the animals that Frida lived with. Also jade masks. Masks appear in a

prior to my graduation, and I assume the Girl Scouts all received their folk art badges, as well.

The current exhibit, *Wind and Whimsy*, reminds me of that tour, as it would have added a lot to my presentation. I did use the *Archangel Gabriel*, the weathervane from the Winslow House Hotel, now heralding all visitors to the exhibit. The seeds for this exhibit started in 2004 when John and Lee Driscoll donated their large collection of rooster weathervanes to the museum. On the cover of the 2004 Antiques Show catalogue, the *Black Hamburg*



rooster appears, owing its form to 19th century genetic studies of crossbreeding for the best in meat, eggs and appearance! Serendipitously, two other major collectors in the Twin Cities, Stew Stender and Deborah Davenport and Bob and Carolyn Nelson, agreed to loan many examples of their

weathervanes for the exhibit.

When Mary Ingebrand-Pohlad offered her fanciful whirligigs, everything fell into place. Roxy Ballard, with her usual genius for installing our exhibits, and Cori Wegener, who has now become a veritable expert on weathervanes and whirligigs, have both done a terrific job with these sculptural forms and given us something fresh and unexpected at the museum. While in the Cargill Gallery I have heard a number of appreciative comments from visitors who probably never would have thought of these objects as art.

Weathervanes gave us our first weather reports. Their patinated and often rusty surfaces are a testament to their exposure to the elements and to the vagaries of human conduct (note the bullet holes!) However, when you see the variety of shapes, sizes and subjects that have adorned the roofs of barns, carriage houses, churches and public buildings, you realize their makers were creating art.

On that first folk art tour, I also showed the Girl Scouts the crazy quilt by Florence Barton Loring, wife of Charles Loring, the “father” of the Minneapolis Park system. Mrs. Loring assembled the quilt which has blocks made by some



prominent women in Minneapolis society at that time. I included the paintings by Clementine Hunter, the James Read painting, Portrait of a Boy, and a school girl needlework. Other quilts have hung in the gallery since then, and a beautiful sampler by 10-year old Nancy Sibley now hangs outside the Bell Court, replacing the one by Abigail Lyon.

I'm sure I showed the *Connecticut Room* to the Girl Scouts where I would love to see crewelwork bed hangings and a coverlet to bring beauty and lightness into the room. I am fond of the Period Rooms, but on my wish list is some simple, beautiful Federal furniture for the Providence Parlor and an oriental carpet for the MacFarlane Room. However, in the meantime we do have a number of new objects in the galleries: a wonderful document box, new paintings and pottery; and until April 13, 2008, we may all enjoy *Wind and Whimsy*, a delightful slice of Americana!

Go For The Drama. It's Free!

Jennifer Curry, Tour Office

We're quickly approaching our busy touring season and many docents will find confirmations with a “Children's Theatre Company” tour topic listed on their assignment.

If you've been assigned one of these tours, you are entitled to a voucher for a free ticket to the performance you're touring. Please stop by the Tour Office to pick up your voucher and a brief description of the tour theme.

Then head over to the CTC box office to pick a performance date and get your ticket. The vouchers are a wonderful perk to touring CTC-related tours and we hope you'll take advantage of them.

As always, feel free to ask Paula or myself any questions you may have regarding the vouchers or your tours.

Honorary Docents

The Honorary Docents are going back in time in February. Our book for the month will be *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Matthew Welch will give us a tour and the history of *The Arts of Japan*. March 26th will see us at the Pavek Museum of History and in April we will tour the newspaper production plant of the *Star Tribune*.

All Honoraries are welcome to join us. Call me: Arlene Baker 612-374-5027.

This poem is used to heighten the “undisguised eroticism” seen in the hanging scroll entitled *Courtesan in her Boudoir* by Utagawa Toyokuni.

I am looking forward to enjoying our courtesan’s “provocative insouciance.” Aren’t you?

Arts of Japan: The John C. Weber Collection

Sheila McGuire

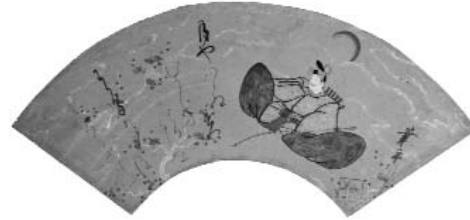
I gladly accepted the *Muse* editor’s invitation to write about the upcoming exhibition, “Arts of Japan: The John C. Weber Collection,” because I knew I could please our poetic Muse of the Month, Erato. Like Erato, I cannot wait to see the impressive images of the *Thirty-six Immortal Poets*, dazzling scrolls on the theme of imaginary poetry competitions, and the exquisite objects related to Murasaki Shikibu’s poetic *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*). And these are only the poetry-related objects. This large exhibition also features robes, lacquerware, ceramics and screens.

My preview of poetry-themed objects in the exhibition begins with a pair of magnificent 17th century screens featuring the Thirty-six Immortal Poets. The picture here provides you with a first glance of a few details of these fabulous screens, which you will not find in the catalogue since they were only recently acquired by John Weber and added to our exhibition by Matthew Welch.

The theme of the thirty-six Immortal Poets has its roots in an 11th century canon established by Fujiwara Kinto (996-1075), a Japanese nobleman, scholar, and poet. He compiled thirty-six *waka* (36-syllable poems) by celebrated authors of the past who became known as the *Sanjurokkasen*, or Thirty-six Immortal Poets.

During the Heian period (794-1185), aristocratic men and women competed in poetry contests in which judges decided how well they improvised verse on given topics. Winning poems were preserved in imperial poetry anthologies. In the 12th century

painters began to produce albums and hand scrolls that represented imaginary portraits of the poets, each with a sample of his or her verse. These 17th century screens showing the aristocratic poets in their Heian-period clothing are testimony to the enduring popularity of this theme over the centuries.



A poet from a pair of screens of *The Thirty-Six Immortal Poets* 17th c

Is this not that moon?
And Spring: is as the Spring of old
Is it not?
Only this body of mine
Is as it ever was

Ariwara no Narihira, poet trans. Matthew Welch

The Weber Collection also features scrolls and scroll fragments that illustrate imaginary poetry duels between poets who lived in entirely different eras. Artists created images of the two poets, cleverly paired for any number of reasons, together with examples of their verses. One such example in the Weber exhibition, a small fragment of a handscroll, mounted as a hanging scroll, illustrates a fictive competition between the poets “the mother of Michitsuna” (937-995) and Kojij, who lived about two hundred years later. Informed viewers would know that both poets were concubines of famous men and that their poetry, though different, shared some common features. The earlier poet reveals her blackened teeth as she opens her mouth to recite her poem, while the later poet carefully watches her opponent from behind her fan.

Matthew Welch has suggested that an apt comparison to these competitions would be an imaginary competition between Maya Angelou and William Butler Yeats, perhaps between poems by each on the theme of death. The notion of these imaginary competitions is not entirely unlike asking visitors to choose a favorite work of art after crossing the world on an hour-long highlights tour of diverse objects connected only by a clever tour theme. Or, think of it as pitting Ni Tsan against van Gogh in a landscape-painting competition.

Another Muromachi handscroll portrays *The Genji Poetry Match*. In this imaginary poetry competition, 36 characters from Murasaki Shikibu’s *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*) each offers three of



Ono no Komachi, poet

their poems for a 54-round competition. The scroll shows pairs of poets, male and female, engaged in repartee, each surrounded by his or her poem. The paired poets have little or nothing to do with one another in the story, and the poems, taken out of context, are separated from their original addressees. The scroll is filled with surprises that undoubtedly continue to amuse highly sophisticated readers today. For those of us who can only access this work as a visual *tour de force*, it will not disappoint. The poetry, written in a lively, flowing script dazzles. The figures, painted largely in black ink are mesmerizing, especially in contrast to the floral-patterned curtains rendered with softly-gradated ink tones and washes.

This scroll is just one of the amazing objects in a whole gallery dedicated to the love and lore of Genji. A particularly eye-catching Tokugawa period folding fan mounted as a framed painting depicts the elegant court procession of the young emperor Reizei. Much in the style of a handscroll, the procession and subsequent hunting scene are cleverly combined in a continuous narration. Don't miss the charming detail of the dog dashing off to flush a pheasant. Though painted in the 18th century when the shogunate had restricted courtiers' rights, this miniature image recalls the splendor of the 11th century nobility.

Another incredible Genji object is a delicate incense box with an image based on the 24th chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, "Butterflies." The design on the box hints at the poignancy of a poem the empress Akikonomi exchanges with Murasaki, Genji's love, by incorporating eleven of the poem's thirty-one syllables. Only the single syllable "ro" appears on the cover design; the others must be discovered among the rocks and trees inside of the box and its lid. Be sure to look for these.

This sneak preview focuses only on a few objects related to poetry. To get the full story, mark your calendar for Monday, February 11, when Matthew Welch will lecture on this very special exhibition. Until then, think about who you would like to see in an imaginary poetry competition and why. If you need inspiration, just call Erato.

The Prints of Sean Scully

Debbi Hegstrom

"We will do 30-minute gallery conversations for this exhibition. It will be a great opportunity to talk about abstract art and a contemporary artist."

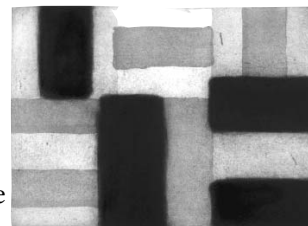
So reads the teaser from the annual questionnaire where we asked you to make your special exhibition choices. As the time approaches, I want to give you a preview of what is to come, and some talking points that you can weave into gallery conversations, whether you are touring the show or not.

The Prints of Sean Scully features more than 65 original etchings, aquatints, woodcuts, lithographs, and mixed-media prints. Born in Ireland and now an American citizen, Scully has made prints through collaboration with master printers around the world. This exhibition originates from the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the only institution in the United States to own a complete master set of prints, given to them as a gift of the artist. The prints range from large-scale, monumental compositions reminiscent of his paintings to smaller, more intimate expressions of the artist's ideas.

Sean Scully is known for his part in the revival of abstract painting in the 1980s. But he has also been making original prints for more than 25 years and considers these works to be as significant as his paintings. The richly layered prints, like his paintings, convey a distinctive approach to abstraction based on relationships. As Scully says,

I'm not fighting for abstraction. Those battles have already been fought. I'm using those victories to make an abstraction that is, in fact, more relaxed, more open, and more confident. I take it for granted I don't need to abstract reality anymore; that has already been done. That would be the equivalent of reinventing the wheel. What I am doing is using all the ground that has already been gained; I'm occupying it to try to make something that is more expressive and that relates to the world in which we live. In that sense my abstraction is quite figurative. It is not very remote.

Scully's architectonic compositions (forms with an architectural structure) are bold arrangements of vertical and horizontal bands, lines, and rectangular forms that suggest walls, windows, portals, masonry, or fences. They come out of his personal travels and experiences, such as viewing the bright colors and striped patterns of textiles in Morocco, or walls made of stacked blocks at a



Mayan archaeological setting. In Mexico he was fascinated by the mystical quality of the light on the ruins with its changing intensity throughout the day. Pale yellow walls in the full sun of the morning

turned to deep orange in the evening; vibrant greens turned to gray and then blue-black in the fading light.

Scully witnesses the change of light on surfaces as a powerful metaphysical experience. He wants to undermine the façade as a restricting architectural unit or barrier. Rather, his varied juxtapositions of forms and colors evoke a mood attached to the people, places, and events of his memories. This is the type of experience he identifies as essential to his art-making:

I simply cannot think that human beings will be able to discard their desire and need for something that is sublime, something that transports them, takes them out of time, takes them out of the banality of the everyday world... to make something is tremendously powerful in and of itself. Even before we get to the point where we judge its value, the fact that someone has gone to all the trouble to make something is very moving.

He identifies aspects of his work with Monet's serial images of *Rouen Cathedral*, where, he says, stone almost becomes spirit. Another point of reference is the grid-like structure that Cézanne placed upon his beloved *Mont Ste.-Victoire* in Southern France. Scully admires how Cézanne did not select an awe-inspiring peak, but rather "a stubborn mountain with an interesting façade." Like Monet and Cézanne, Scully bases his abstraction in physical objects or structures. Here he is talking about his paintings, but could also be describing the visual effects of his prints:

What I am painting is a simple divisional structure, but you see the way it is painted, what color it is painted, and how many times it is painted in relation to that simple structure. . . . I've re-established something that I think had been broken—that the abstractionists kept building on abstraction and I think they forgot what it was originally based on. What I did, basically, was I went back to what it was originally based on... That is why I can make so many different compositional forms. It comes very naturally out of the way I draw and work and paint; one thing leads to another, which leads to another... they are abstract paintings and they are quite lyrical. But they remind you of things that exist in the world. They remind you of the way the world is ordered.

Another way to look at his work is in relation to rhythmical and mathematical structures that produce an evocative, emotional effect upon the viewer. This romantic approach stands in direct contrast to the cool detachment of Minimalism with which his work has a certain affinity. (He does acknowledge his place in a historical continuum including artists such as

Kandinsky, Mondrian, and Stella, whose works you can reference in our galleries.)

It's based on rhythm or simple architectural structures. You can also relate it to music, rhythmical musical structures or mathematical structures. I'm not making them complicated. They are very simple. Within that the painting of them can be quite emotive. So, the emotive painting is, in effect, rendering something, it's attached to something that in fact takes the place of the object in figurative painting. That is why I believe people lock into my work so naturally.

Scully states that his work is about the complexity of relationships as "something that has to be negotiated." He works and re-works familiar colors, shapes, and forms, "constantly nuancing the same material and pulling out different meaning." In the same vein, he is interested in what viewers have to say. He considers his prints to be open to many interpretations, associations, and impressions, based on the viewer's own personal experiences and attitudes.

Don't miss the opportunity to hear from the artist himself. He will give a talk about his work on Sunday, March 2, 2008 at 2 p.m. in Pillsbury Auditorium as part of the opening weekend. Admission is free for members, but you must reserve a spot by calling 612-870-6323. And we will explore further as you prepare to discuss these evocative works in upcoming gallery conversations.

Quotes are from "The Prints of Sean Scully," Smithsonian American Art Museum podcast, 2007, and Florence Ingleby, ed., *Sean Scully, Resistance and Persistence: Selected Writings*. London and New York: Merrell Publishers, 2006.

A Passion for the Past

Patty McCullough

Let me begin by saying the title of this article was the theme for the 1997 MIA Antiques Show. It is interesting to note that increasingly "antiques" at shows are often from the not-too-distant past. However, in my case the past is the 18th and 19th centuries and the passion is for the paintings, furniture and folk art of America.

In February of 2000 when I was in my second year of docent training, Debbi Hegstrom called me and asked if I would conduct a folk art tour for a Girl Scout troop. With my usual, "I don't think I'm ready," I apologized, but noted there really wasn't much folk art in the museum. Debbi was very gracious and told me there was no pressure, and that was fine. Needless to say, fifteen minutes later I recovered and left Debbi a message telling her I would do the tour. I did put together a folk art tour

few of Frida's paintings. Masquerades are a part of Mexican culture.

Chalchiuhtlicue – goddess of lakes and streams. Protector of women in childbirth and symbolic of healing soothing cooling properties of water. A new piece in this gallery! Part of the native meso-American creation beliefs. Frida and Diego had a large collection of pre-Columbian art and Mexican folk art.

Nayarit house – The Nayarit house in Frida and Diego's collection was one of her favorite pieces. Many other items in this gallery speak to the Native American view of the cosmos as the the interaction between opposites. The concept of duality informs much of Frida Kahlo's work.

The Knight family – by Diego Rivera. The last stop is this large family portrait by the great love of Frida's life, Diego Rivera.



Viva Frida! Viva la vida!

Let's Hear It for the Girls

Allison Thiel

Two icons of the 20th century art world rolled into town this past fall. Georgia O'Keeffe and Frida Kahlo succeeded in heating up the local museum scene, here at the MIA and over at the Walker.

According to Paula Warn and Kathleen Barber at the MIA, and Susan Rotilie at the Walker, the ladies managed to cook up some pretty hot attendance numbers. The Walker counted up 113,000 visitors and the MIA counted up 62,000! Over 175,000 people came out to experience the artwork of these two highly personal artists!

Our MIA guides engaged 9,300 people in discussion as they helped them look carefully at Georgia O'Keeffe's works. That means almost 15% of those attending chose to take a tour with our fellow docents. I am sure it was well worth their time.

The Search to See, Part II

Michele Yates

While talking with Allison about writing a reminder about the second part of the *Scheel Collection*, she mentioned the inspirational muse for this issue, poetry.

If one definition of poetry is a group of deliberately chosen words to express meaning and evoke emotion, it's not a huge leap to see the photographs in this collection as a kind of visual poetry.

One image from the exhibit came to mind immediately. Eugene Smith's photograph, *Spanish Spinner*, evokes so much rhythm, movement and grace, while also giving us much information about a particular place and time. Smith, who was doing a photo essay for *Life Magazine*, had chosen to photograph to Spanish village in the 50s, choosing to capture its villagers' common everyday experience.

There's poetry also in the way this image is exhibited. It is the first of three side-by-side photographs that have to do with spinning, or wheels. It's followed by Margaret Bourke-White's image of huge industrial wheels of the *Ft Peck Dam Project*, and then by her moving portrait of *Ghandi* seated by a spinning wheel. We know that Ghandi used to spin his own cloth to make his clothes.

Just as a beautifully-written poem can help us relate to universal yet personal emotions, so can these photographs show us the "unknowable but recognizable" that Fred Scheel was searching for in his collection and his creation of photographs.

If you missed Part I, this is an opportunity to enjoy Fred Scheel's generous gift. Wander through the gallery and explore which images evoke visual poetry for you!

Let Yourself Be Seduced by 900 Years of Beauty

courtesy of John C. Weber

*shirazaruya
ause no makura
ikanarishi
nemidaregami no
toko no yamakaze*

*Perhaps you can guess
what has just happened
during a tryst by the pillow!
Asleep, my hair was tangled
by a tempest in the bedroom.*