

A SILVER LINING TO CONSIDER

A note from Kara ZumBahlen, Associate Educator

After a long hiatus, CIFocus is back, with stories that are by and for our one-of-a-kind guides! That's why we want your stories.

For information on how to share your story or idea, see page 26.

We have had a tumultuous six months since Mia closed and we moved to work from our home offices. Learning Innovation staff continues to work from home even though the museum has re-opened. In June, our friend and colleague Ann Isaacson made the difficult decision to retire. We also had staffing changes with positions eliminated through layoffs, and these layoffs included the positions of Juline Chevalier, Head of IPE, and Jennifer Curry, Tour Coordinator. Debbi Hegstrom, Senior Educator, and I now are here as your IPE staff contacts, and we're happy to be working with you all. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us via email, at dhegstrom@artsmia.org or kzumbahlen@artsmia.org.



With our normal lives disrupted, it often is hard to see any positive outcome from this pandemic. As the museum worked to reopen its doors safely to staff and visitors, we started to realize that much of what is being planned would help improve the accessibility of our spaces moving into the future. For instance, the reopening team at Mia considered how visitors would be able to have a touchless experience in the museum, from entry to exit, by installing automatic doors to touchless toilets and sinks in the restrooms. As the museum is comprised of buildings with various architectural ages, having a consistent and accessible experience for visitors throughout the museum will be a welcome improvement. With reopening at a lower capacity, we have had quieter galleries with less traffic, perhaps allowing for a time when neurodiverse visitors will be more comfortable in our spaces.

As IPE staff plans for our virtual tour experiences starting mid-October, other Mia staff has already moved programming online into virtual experiences, such as our popular Family Days and Third Thursdays. These virtual offerings continue and are especially beneficial for those who are most at risk for visiting public spaces. Virtual tour experiences will allow us to continue to fulfill our mission, "collecting, preserving, and making accessible outstanding works of art from the world's diverse cultures."

IPE CONTINUING EDUCATION SESSIONS, VIA ZOOM

IPE is offering Art Breaks as staff schedules allow. We may take a deep dive into one artwork or subject, or cover more of a broad overview.

So far, we have had lively discussions on works including the Tatra, Sam Gilliam's "Carousel Merge", and works by contemporary women artists, and we look forward to continuing these breaks. The sessions are a great way to stay connected during this time. If you are interested in attending and would like to learn how to use Zoom, contact me and I will set up a tutorial. We are providing videos of the Art Breaks and other CE sessions. You can find these posted on the video page of the IPE website: <https://ipevolunteers.org/objectfiles/videos/>. In lieu of a formal CE calendar, we will continue to let you know of scheduled Art Breaks and other sessions in the weekly CE message we send out on Mondays.

We look forward to working with those of you who have volunteered to give adult virtual tours. Training sessions are scheduled at the end of September and first part of October, and virtual tours will begin to be scheduled after October 13. Even after we return to Mia, we will continue to offer virtual tours. However, we all look forward to touring and facilitating at Art Carts in the galleries once again, when it is safe to do so.

— Kara



With New Light: Mia's Reinstalled Himalayan, South, and Southeast Asian Art Galleries

KEEP IN MIND ...

The South Asia Galleries are reopening! Fresh and engaging displays reintroduce audiences to the interconnected, immensely diverse artistic traditions of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Himalayas.

**October 15, 2020 - October 17, 2021
Gallery 211, Gallery 212,
and Gallery 213**



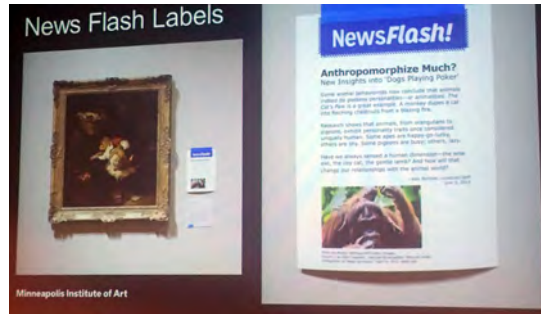
Virtual vacations: Art for traveling without leaving home

CHECK OUT ...

The Mia BLOG is authored by members of Mia's Marketing team and edited by Tim Gihring, Mia's brand narrator.

A recent post focuses on the virtual vacation as experienced through art seen in the galleries.

<https://new.artsmia.org/stories/virtual-vacations-art-for-traveling-without-leaving-home/>



NewsFlash: As flu season rages, a look back at epic pandemics of the past

EXPLORE DIFFERENTLY ...

Curious about relationships between art and artists, art and the real world issues or, art and people?

Mia's NEWSFLASH—seen online or on Mia walls—offers insight to those curious who want to know more, who want to explore and compare art relationships past, present, and future.

Here's a NEWSFLASH on pandemics, including the bubonic plague, as depicted in works at Mia.

<https://new.artsmia.org/stories/newsflash-as-flu-season-rages-a-look-back-at-epic-pandemics-of-the-past/>

THE START OF MY NEXT CHAPTER

Dear CIF Guides,

This recent weather was a great excuse to pull out the wool "Saga" blanket, and as you can see the whole family loves it. It lives on the couch during the waking hours and then gets put on the bed at night. It gets used. Thank you.

It has been six months since I left my office at Mia because of the virus; who knew then that it would impact all our lives in such big and small ways? I am enjoying retirement, especially spending time with Ted and Sabine (dog), and wonder how I ever had time to work. But, I miss you all and think of you often.

Take care, stay well,
Ann

This limited-edition wool blanket created for the American Swedish Institute and designed by Laurie Jacobi for their special exhibit, "The Vikings Begin," features intertwining dragons as noted on a Swedish Viking Age runestone and is surrounded by a border of the Futhark Runic alphabet. In Scandinavia, dragons symbolized then (and now) strength and bravery, and offered protection as one sailed into the unknown.



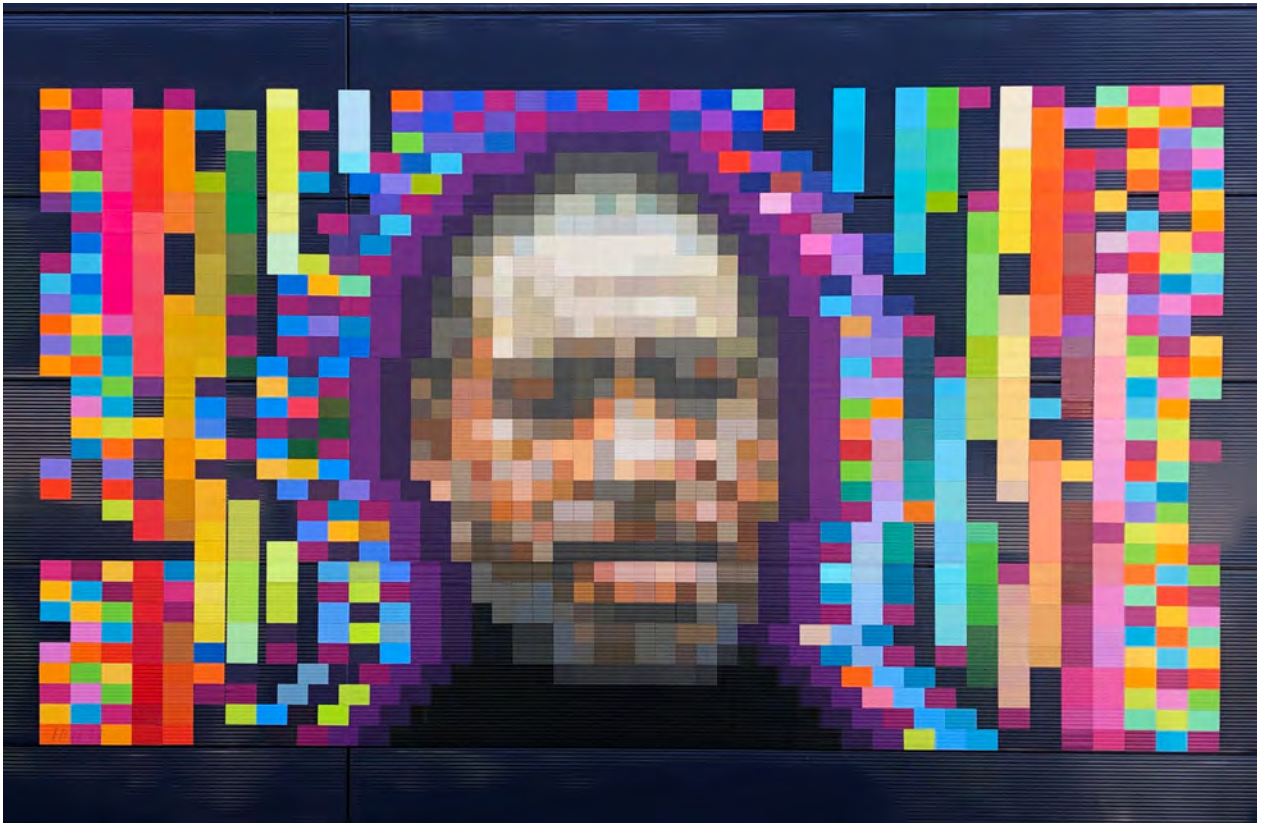
Photo: Ted Rueff

CONNECTIONS:

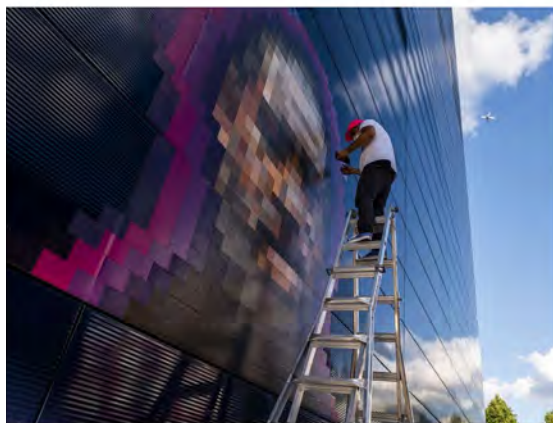
Mia, the Guthrie Theater and George Floyd • by M Marne Zafar

On the early Saturday morning of June 27, walking toward the Mill City Farmer’s Market in Minneapolis, my eye caught a brilliance of color not usually seen on the Guthrie Theater walls. As I was quite close to the building, I stepped back into the street to see a mural of George Floyd. Knowing that this art would not be painted—and so, “permanent” for a paint’s lifespan—I had such a sense of wonder questioning “how was this art done?” Looking closely, I saw that this mural was formed by placing separate magnets on the Guthrie Theater’s metal exterior. So beautiful. So striking. I quickly snapped a photo and later, went online to see who this artist was who created.

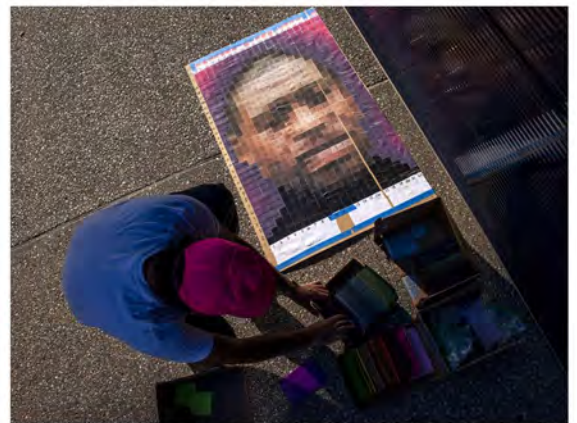
It was Twin Cities-based artist Eric Rieger (also known as HOTTEA) who worked on this installation called “Pure Imagination” outside the Guthrie Theater on Wednesday, June 24. The artwork, a portrait of George Floyd, was formed by placing hundreds of individually painted magnets on the metal exterior of the theater.



Completed mural of George Floyd at the Guthrie Theater. Photo: M Marne Zafar



Artist Eric Rieger, also known as HOTTEA, works on an art installation called “Pure Imagination” outside the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Image Credit: AFP



Artist Eric Rieger, also known as HOTTEA, works on an art installation called “Pure Imagination” outside the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Image Credit: AFP

Mia has also had the pleasure of working with this avant garde Minneapolis installation/ yarn graffiti artist. In 2012 he installed "Letting Go" at Mia's Target Atrium. Comprising over 82 miles of yarn, this artwork hung across two floors and was a take-your-breath-away moment when viewed at the museum.

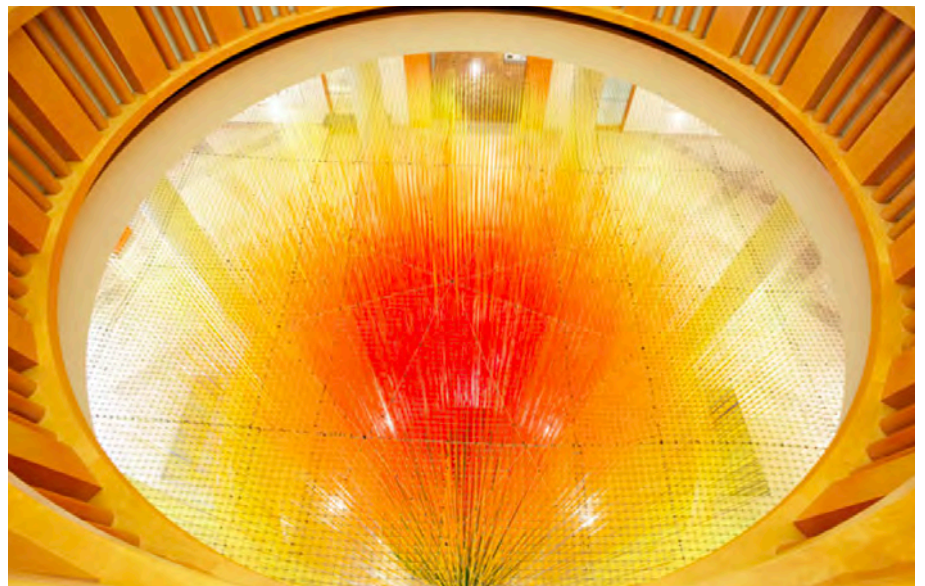
"At least once in our lives we have all had to let go of something we truly love. Whether it be a pet, personal object or in some cases, loved ones.

This piece is my interpretation of the sun. The sun brings life and also represents happiness, warmth, and energy. When letting go of something or someone we truly love, sometimes it is okay to celebrate their lives along with mourning. This piece represents the warmth and love I have received from those I have had to let go of."

— HOTTEA



Installation of "Letting Go." Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art



COVID-19 and UNFORSEEN DISCOVERY:

As Seen through an Embroidery Project • by Manju Parikh, Photography by Manju Parikh

It started as an act on impulse. I was looking at the images of embroidery that a few MCAD stitching circle volunteers had brought to the workshop on February 23 for the Mia exhibit "When Home won't let you stay: Art and Migration." They were looking for volunteers. It seemed like a new adventure to embroider a panel for an exhibit by 25 million Stitches: One Stitch for Each Refugee.

I took a panel and gathered a variety of colored floss and some samples of embroidery. It was a risky proposition for one who has not done any stitching for decades except mending hems or putting on a button! I looked forward to join the Sewing Circle, a group of women who sew and knit on Monday evenings in my building.



I started with a nice bright pink-colored floss doing a row of running stitches. With no practice, the stitches were uneven and I would remove and redo the stitches. It was going to take a long time with one stitch at a time and trying to make them even. A friend came by and showed me how to do a few stitches

at a time. She said that I will not finish my project in time at the rate I was going!

Since this was my first attempt, I had no blueprint for the whole panel. I began timidly repeating the running stitches in a rectangle. After making a few rectangles, I knew that I had to take the plunge and made a bright yellow color arc. Suddenly I felt free and started making waves. Every evening I settled in a comfortable chair and worked on my project. I looked at the colored threads and wondered, "what color would look good next to this one?" Slowly one-sixth of the panel began to look pretty with a rainbow of colors.



COVID-19 had played an important role in this project and it too got represented in one of the sections.

The May 10 deadline was fast approaching; the pressure to finish gave the momentum to keep stitching; some evenings I was working away until past midnight. As the project was finishing, I looked at it with wonder and joy. It was not a piece of art whose contours were conceived clearly before I began. However, as I looked at the colors and designs, they definitely brought back memories of nomadic women of Gujarat in western India (where my parents came from) and their brightly colored embroidered garments. It left me wondering about the latent influence of my cultural heritage, which this project helped me discover.

For more information: www.25millionstiches.com

For the healing influence of sewing, see: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/feb/23/the-calming-effects-of-sewing-can-help-people-express-and-calm-themselves>.



AMPLIFYING INDIGENOUS VOICES:

A Conversation with Roy Taylor • by Shawn Gilliam and Marne Zafar

As host of the weekly radio show “Indigenity Rising” on KFAI, now in its fourth year, Roy Taylor has stayed on top of key topics through a Native perspective. Although his program’s format and advocacy had largely shifted from politics to the arts, it took a new turn earlier this year following the surge of COVID-19 and the death of George Floyd. We connected with Roy to learn more.

“I essentially became an advocate of Native arts, interviewing a lot of people in music, in theater, and in literature—everyone from scholars teaching in universities to poets and novelists. And I honestly thought, is this turning into more of an arts program? It’s different from the original intent to balance covering the perspectives of local and global communities.”

— Roy



Q: For friends and fellow guides who may not know, tell us how you got your start—and how your program focus has shifted.

A: Laura Waterman Wittstock, a well-respected Native journalist, invited me to be her co-host for the show “First Person Radio” some years ago. Laura’s forte was politics and news personalities focusing on local and, to some extent, national issues. Our viewpoint was that the Native perspective was different, almost alternative, with a reality, identity, and experience that is very different politically and socially.

After Laura retired, I continued along those lines, because my background is also as an activist in politics and working on campaigns and lobbying for Native issues. But I was also looking to do something a little more expansive and global, not only featuring local perspectives but those of Indigenous people around the world, which I presented to our selection committee and board, and they approved. So we’re talking about Africa, Asia, Australia, America and, to some extent, Europe—mostly Scandinavia.

Q: Is that also when you started to shift away from primarily covering politics?

A: About two or maybe three years ago, soon after I started on my own, a world of arts and entertainment—including acting and voice-over work, too—opened to me. And I thought, especially in this community, there’s a strong cadre of Native people in those fields, as well. Why not highlight them?



So I essentially became an advocate of Native arts, interviewing a lot of people in music, in theater, and in literature—everyone from scholars teaching in universities to poets and novelists. And I honestly thought, is this turning into more of an arts program? It’s different from the original intent to balance covering the perspectives of local and global communities. But then COVID-19 hit, and I realized we’ve got to go back. And then, six weeks later with the murder of George Floyd and everything that happened after that, I determined that I have to cover this.

Q: And what does that coverage look like?

A: I can’t do spot reporting, but I have to follow the situation as closely as I can. If you listen to the program today, you’ll see that I always ask my guests, “What impact has this had on you and your family, how are you doing, and what have you been doing that you were not doing before that could be helpful?”

So we're back to covering more community issues and things like the census and the election.

I still occasionally reach out to someone who is producing a play or a book. Lining people up for the show, I joke, is kind of like being an air traffic controller. We bring them into the program one at a time so we can get their voice out there.

Q: So it sounds like the arts still have a place in the program, yes?

A: Yes. Catherine and I do a semi-regular movie review, for example, because there's a lot of Native and Indigenous cinema. We first started out trying to do mostly American Indian movies, but there's so much coming out of Canada and Australia and New Zealand, too. The last time we did this, in January or February, we reviewed a Canadian First Nations zombies and cannibals movie. Needless to say, movies like that don't end up getting much coverage in the mainstream media. And at the end of the day, that's what we're all about.

TUNE IN: Hear Roy Taylor and "Indigenity Rising" on KFAI Fresh Air Radio 90.3 FM and streaming at KFAI.org every Wednesday at 1 p.m.



REFLECTING ON A TIME OF CHANGE:

The new Cross Currents tour model and more • by Bryan Pepper

Until the development of virtual tours, Mia's Cross Currents tour was our newest model. Once the pandemic is over, that model will return. Here's I think that's a good idea.

"... Some stayed a few minutes others spent a long time at my object. One college age student said it was the first time she felt she spent time with an object rather than just giving it a glance before moving on to the next piece. She said she would be spending more time studying objects rather than rushing on to the next."

— Bryan

2019 was an event filled year for us. We celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary, downsized and moved for the 20th time and took a Rhine/Mosel Rive cruise with Grand Circle. Then in late January, after we got settled in our new Apple Valley senior Co-Op, we took a Road Scholar 10-day cooking class in Sicily.

In February of 2019, after looking at our calendar and touring the Contemporary Galleries with all of their new objects, I knew putting a tour together would be a challenge, so I asked to be taken off the tour schedule and just do art carts. I really enjoy the guide community, as it is the most diverse helpful group of people I've ever worked with. The art carts are rewarding when you see a young faces light up as they learn something new. However, I wasn't learning anything new. I wasn't having adult conversations. So when Ann announced they were going to try a new type of tour—Cross Currents—I jumped at the opportunity.



The visitors thought it was a great idea. Some stayed a few minutes at my object, others spent a long time. One college-age student said it was the first time she felt she spent time with an object rather than just giving it a glance before moving on to the next piece. She said she would be spending more time studying objects rather than rushing on to the next.

One couple said they made it a point to visit when these type of tours were being given. All felt it was more personal and they were able to ask the questions they wanted to. One student said she felt the museum was becoming more engaging. Parents with younger children said it was nice to have a discussion on the child's level as well as

learning what they wanted.

On a personal note, I think I engaged with five times more guests than I did on a public tour. All in all, a successful idea.



Format of Cross Currents Tour on March 15, 2020

Cross Currents Tour

Sunday, April 19
11:30am-1:30pm
 Join us for the next Cross Currents self-directed tour, highlighting a new selection of artworks and cultural belongings.

Modern and Contemporary:
Kalshik Wily, Santa-Dumont - The Father of Aviation II
 Gallery 310

Europe and America 1600-1900:
Tudor Rooms
 Gallery 325

Modern and Contemporary:
Mark Dion, The Curator's Office
 Gallery 378

Mia 3rd Floor



Cross Currents Tour

Encounter and Exchanges

Sunday, March 15, 11:30am-1:30pm
 Take yourself on a gallery Quest of cultural connections. A museum guide will greet you at each of the free stops. Go at your own pace. Visit as many you'd like.

China:
Jade Mountain
 Gallery 210

Americas:
George Morrison, College II, Landscape
 Gallery 269

Mia 2nd Floor

Share your art adventures! #artsmia

SCOUTING OUT ART:

Girl Scouts River Valleys explore Mapping Black Identities • by M Marne Zafar

As a Mentored Troup Leader for Girl Scout Troup 58036 based in Saint Paul, my co-leader Brittney Baker Hutchinson and I focus on engaging our girls in experiences. My girls are from the Rondo and Central neighborhoods, and in truth, the reasons for them joining Girls Scouts was (per their parents) a way for the girls to have their eyes opened to “stuff” beyond their communities. One key feature of the Girls Scouts program is earning badges; they signify interests, skills, accomplishments and to remember every adventure and show the world what she’s accomplished. With the girls being Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, and Cadettes, ages 5 to 12, this has meant finding a badge where all can participate ... and they all love to do art!

When I mentioned going to Mia, I found out two things: 1) none of my girls—or their parents—had ever been to an art museum and 2) most thought a place like this was not necessarily for them. Needless to say, this made my decision to take them on a field trip to Mia a “must do.”

So, we went on the Sunday before Mia shut down due to COVID 19. What a fun day it was! I gave tours of “Mapping Black Identities” and “Enduring Souls,” and also, the Just Kids photography exhibit.



Sophia and Khloe painting in arts activity room.



Ann reserved a room for us to spend the day painting, drawing and being “serious” about their own art-making. Our time spent in the galleries were filled with ooo’s, ahh’s and so many questions about the work. What they especially loved were the very large abstract painting by Sam Gilliam and Sam Bowling.

One of my girls, Khloe Dao, had this to say when leaving “Where does the museum buy all of the paintings? Would they sell one to me?” When I spoke to the process of acquiring and well, they did not sell to individuals except under certain circumstances, Khloe said (very seriously) ... “They will need to look at my work. They will want to buy from me.”

Made me smile!



Girl Scouts River Valleys
Troup 58036
with Sam Gilliam painting
as backdrop.

Ziah Hutchinson
creating collage/drawing.

Scouts with
Marne and Brittney
after JUST KIDS tour.

Photos: M Marne Zafar



CHRISTI BELCOURT:

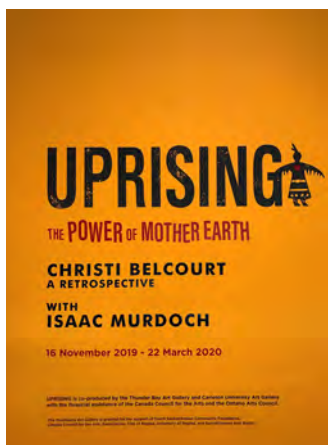
Reconnecting with a “Hearts of Our People” Favorite • by Shawn Gilliam

“Reconciliation without land returned and a correction of all that has resulted from our dispossession is not even possible.”
— Christi Belcourt

Many of us fell in love with “The Wisdom of the Universe” by Christi Belcourt (Michif) from last year’s groundbreaking Mia exhibition “Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists.” The incredibly detailed painting, which looked like beadwork, documented dozens of plant and animal species listed as threatened, endangered or extinct in Belcourt’s Ontario, Canada, home.

So it was serendipitous when a trip to Saskatchewan, Canada, just before pandemic shutdowns, led me to the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina and “Uprising: The Power of Mother Earth,” a mid-career retrospective of 30 of Belcourt’s works. Paintings including “United for Water, United for Mother Earth” detailed her role in the Indigenous resistance movement and efforts to project natural resources.

Several paintings by Isaac Murdoch (Anishinaabe) came together with Belcourt’s works to further underscore the key points of this movement.



But it was more than paintings. Nearly 20 different designs of protest banners by both artists served as further reminder of ongoing efforts not only in Canada, but at Standing Rock in North Dakota and South Dakota.

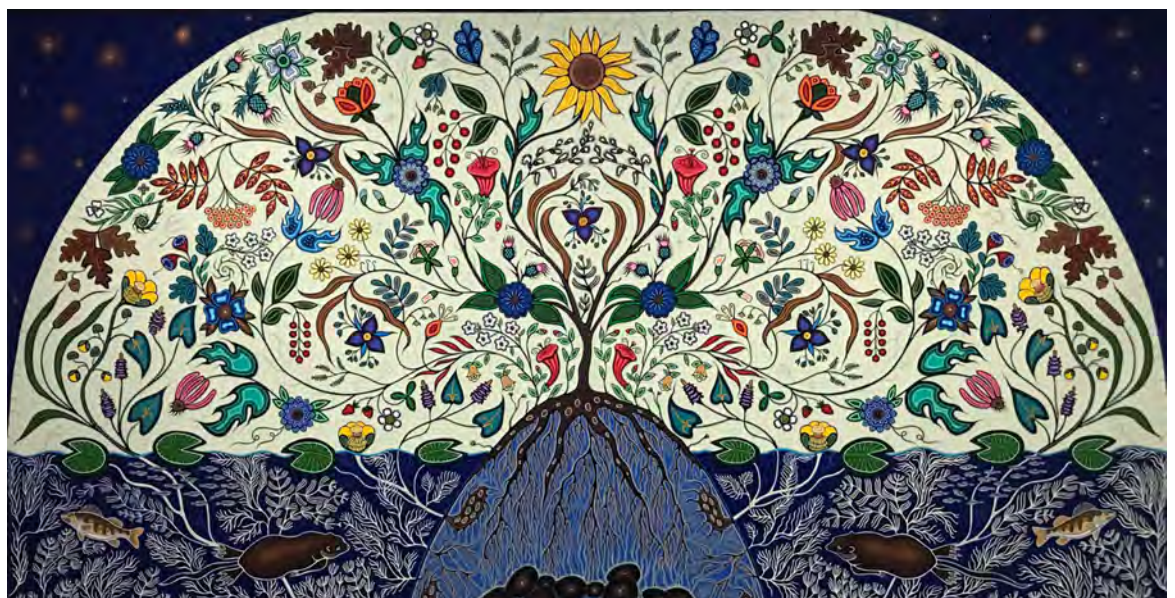


Their banner art is available for free download here. (Note that the site is down for reconstruction at the moment; fingers crossed it is up again soon.) <http://onamancollective.com/murdoch-belcourt-banner-downloads/>

For more information about Belcourt and Murdoch's banners and artistic activism, check out this story from the CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/community-art-build-banner-pipelines>.



Photos: Shawn Gilliam



MUSINGS ON MAKING THE BEST OF THIS TIME

- WITH MUSIC • by Rafael E. Tarrago

*“Can you imagine
my moving here for
the opera and symphony
orchestra and theaters,
and finding myself for
six weeks staying at home
as if I were in Holguin
(my small hometown
in Cuba).”*

— Rafael

One reason I came here from the University Libraries at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend Indiana was the rich cultural life in the Twin Cities. Can you imagine my moving here for the opera and symphony orchestra and theaters, and finding myself staying at home as if I were in Holguin (my small hometown in Cuba).

I thought that I was going to do a lot of reading, but not so, because reading at night makes me sleepy now. It must be because I spend so much of the day writing emails back and forth and consulting the Libraries Catalog or some database or another. I watch TV a lot: the news, British mystery serials, and documentaries.

During this time of virtually no live performances, I also enjoy watching operas streamed by the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. The best performance that I have seen was that of “Tosca” in April, with Sonya Yoncheva in the title role. Previously recorded, the operas are available periodically and for free at metopera.org. *Each performance is available for 24 hours, and you can start playing it anytime from 6:30 p.m. Central on the day scheduled until 5:30 p.m. Central the next day.*



Photo: Met Archives



Photo: Marty Sohl/Met Archives

WORTH THE READ:

Innovation and Creativity from the Comfort of Home • Shared by Scott Appelwick

Here is a Washington Post article I found interesting, although it doesn't directly pertain to Mia or art. It's about Isaac Newton and is more directly related to higher education. Just the same, it does speak to the creative possibilities during a time of isolation during a pandemic.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2020/03/12/during-pandemic-isaac-newton-had-work-home-too-he-used-time-wisely/>



DURING A PANDEMIC, ISAAC NEWTON HAD TO WORK FROM HOME, TOO. HE USED THE TIME WISELY.

By Gillian Brockell, March 12, 2020

Isaac Newton was in his early 20s when the Great Plague of London hit. He wasn't a "Sir" yet, didn't have that big formal wig. He was just another college student at Trinity College, Cambridge.

It would be another 200 years before scientists discovered the bacteria that causes plague, but even without knowing exactly why, folks back then still practiced some of the same things we do to avoid illness.

In 1665, it was a version of "social distancing"— a public health tool making a comeback this week as governments, schools and many businesses, including The Washington Post, send people home to try to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Cambridge sent students home to continue their studies. For Newton, that meant Woolsthorpe Manor, the family estate about 60 miles northwest of Cambridge.

Without his professors to guide him, Newton apparently thrived. The year-plus he spent away was later referred to as his *annus mirabilis*, the "year of wonders."

First, he continued to work on mathematical problems he had begun at Cambridge; the papers he wrote on this became early calculus.

Next, he acquired a few prisms and experimented with them in his bedroom, even going so far as to bore a hole in his shutters so only a small beam could come through. From this sprung his theories on optics.

And right outside his window at Woolsthorpe, there was an apple tree. That apple tree.

The story of how Newton sat under the tree, was bonked on the head by an apple and suddenly understood theories of gravity and motion, is largely apocryphal. But according to his assistant, John Conduitt, there's an element of truth. Here's how Conduitt later explained it:

" ... Whilst he was musing in a garden it came into his thought that the same power of gravity (which made an apple fall from the tree to the ground) was not limited to a certain distance from the earth but must extend much farther than was usually thought. 'Why not as high as the Moon?' said he to himself... " In London, a quarter of the population would die of plague from 1665 to 1666. It was one of the last major outbreaks in the 400 years that the Black Death ravaged Europe. Newton returned to Cambridge in 1667, theories in hand. Within six months, he was made a fellow; two years later, a professor.

So if you're working or studying from home over the next few weeks, perhaps remember the example Newton set. Having time to muse and experiment in unstructured comfort proved life-changing for him — and no one remembers whether he made it out of his pajamas before noon.



FOR READING, FOR PLEASURE:

Art Book Finds and Virtual Tours • by M Marne Zafar

There is nothing like curling up to read a good book except when it is a book that speaks to intrigue or is a tell-all that delights in its reveal.

*"That's the thing
about books.
They let you travel
without moving
your feet."
— Jhumpa Lahiri*

*"Art is not
what you see,
but what you make
others see."
— Edgar Degas*

These days when one needs an "art fix" the virtual tour is one approach to seeing the world of art in museums across the globe. Exploring artists one loves or viewing collections that are new, these museums are pushing the boundaries in showcasing art that wants—and needs—to be seen. Mia will also be embarking on presenting virtual tours and by watching/participating, perhaps, I am sure we will stretch ourselves in "how to see/feel" art.



***The Art Forger* by B.A. Shapiro**

On March 18, 1990, thirteen works of art worth today over \$500 million dollars were stolen from the Isabella Stewart Garner Museum in Boston. It remains the largest unsolved art heist in history, and Claire Roth, a struggling young artist, is about to discover that there's more to this crime than meets the eye.

***Dr. Seuss's Horse Museum* by Theodor Geisel**

Illustrated by Andrew Joyner, this book celebrates a horse who guides children on a tour through an imaginary art museum which only exhibits famous equine-based artworks. It asks the question: "Art. What's it all about?" using a horse to introduce artistic interpretations.

***Metropolitan Stories* by Christine Coulson**

Coulson worked at the Met for 25 years, often writing speeches or lectures for the museum's director to deliver. Her debut novel goes behind the scenes at the museum with a series of loosely connected stories about the people and objects that fill the galleries.

***The Art of Gathering* by Priya Parker (an audiobook)**

A book that speaks to how we spend our time together, at work, at home and beyond. At a time when coming together is more important than ever before, Parker focuses on how one can invigorate connections and conversations.

VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOURS to Delight: New favorites of mine

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/musee-dorsay-paris>

National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/museo-nacional-de-antropologia-mexico>

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/from-home>

National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/national-museum-of-modern-and-contemporary-art-korea>

A CAREER WITH AN EXCITING NEW “INGREDIENT”

Changing jobs is challenging when times are good. But right before a pandemic?

Catherine Gillis finds the challenges more palatable, literally, than you might think.

by Shawn Gilliam

When she landed the role of Chief Growth Officer at Ingredient, a food content marketing agency based in Minneapolis, her personal and professional interests came full circle. “It all kind of knits together.”

— Catherine

Food has a way of connecting people like nothing else. It’s an idea Catherine Gillis and Roy Taylor brought to the table when they got married 25 years ago. “We love to cook and we love to have people to the house, and we’ve always wanted hospitality to be one of our core values as a family,” Catherine says. So when she landed the role of Chief Growth Officer at Ingredient, a food content marketing agency based in Minneapolis, her personal and professional interests came full circle. “It all kind of knits together,” she says.

Little did she know when she took the job one year ago, however, that a pandemic would soon change the way people around the world live, work, and connect. But as luck would have it—and as we all know—people connect over food. Turns out, the timing was perfect.

YEARS IN THE MAKING

Even before taking the job, Catherine was familiar with the digital agency after working with its team on a consulting basis for about six years. “Most of it was strategic—helping them identify where their business was going,” Catherine says. In the early days, the agency’s name had nothing to do with food. “Its name was ideaPark, and its favorite clients were all food clients,” she says. The name change to Ingredient strengthened the commitment to that focus: Engaging consumers with food content through email marketing and social media (namely Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest). “It was around the time social media was really starting to take off for brands, and companies were needing to figure out how to engage consumers,” she says. Lunds & Byerlys and upscale Southern California grocer Gelson’s Markets are two of Ingredient’s largest clients.

HER ROLE IN A NUTSHELL

As Chief Growth Officer, Catherine is in a partner-level position with several key responsibilities, beginning with marketing the Ingredient brand and new business. “The brand, in some ways, is a very well-kept secret, even though it’s the digital agency of record for Lunds and Byerlys and Gelson’s, and we do a lot of work with General Mills as well as emerging brands,” she says.

Catherine is also charged with helping develop leadership capabilities and growing the company to provide career paths for employees—a group that now stands at around 35 people, including a culinary team with a head chef and culinary production assistants, as well as photographers, videographers, writers, graphic designers, and strategists. (Under non-COVID-19 circumstances, they work in a lofty space complete with a heavy-duty kitchen on East Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis.) “We want to create career paths where people stay with the company,” Catherine says.

As part of the executive team, she also is responsible for overall operations and key initiatives. One key initiative is making sure diversity and inclusion are fully realized and operationalized going forward.

MAKING THE BEST OF COVID-19

Catherine started managing direct reports—the account team, following the departure of that department’s head—one week after the company started working remotely March 12 in the wake of COVID-19. “They’re direct reports, but I think of them as my colleagues,” she says. “Managing the team and getting to know people mostly through Zoom calls makes it more difficult to develop a rapport and address their needs, but it’s gone so much better than I thought it would. I don’t think we’ve missed a beat.”

A UNIVERSAL CONNECTION

Working in an industry that’s long been a passion—and remains important, even during a pandemic — has been a refreshing, rewarding change for Catherine. “We connect brands and consumers around the culture and celebration of food,” she says. “Obviously food is sustenance, but every celebration has a culture of food around it, too.”



Book Design: Tina Sims • Food Photography: Matt Palmer and Jenny Salita

Guides have a long history of sharing dishes at our summer and winter parties. Ingredient recently published a cookbook, with chapters divided by season, to share with clients. Here’s one of Catherine’s favorite recipes from the chapter on fall.

LAVENDER PANNA COTTA & ROASTED PLUM COULIS • servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

For the panna cotta:

- 1 1/4 oz envelope unflavored gelatin
- 3 tbsp cold Milk
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp dried, culinary lavender
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

INGREDIENTS

For the roasted plum coulis:

- 3 ripe plums, halved, stones removed
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 firmly packed brown sugar
- 6 sprigs, thyme
- 1 tbsp water
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 3 shortbread cookies, crumbled for garnish



Food Photography:
Matt Palmer and Jenny Salita

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- 6 6-oz ramekins or wine glasses

DIRECTIONS

- 1. To make the panna cotta:** In a small bowl, sprinkle gelatin over the cold milk and let it bloom, or soften, for 10 minutes. Set it aside.
- 2.** Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, bring the cream, sugar, and lavender to a simmer.
- 3.** Remove the cream mixture from the heat and let it stand for 5 minutes. Pass it through a mesh strainer to remove the lavender.
- 4.** Whisk the gelatin mixture into the warm cream until smooth and completely dissolved.
- 5.** In a small bowl, whisk the yogurt until it's smooth, and then whisk it into the cream and gelatin mixture.
- 6.** Brush the ramekins with the vegetable oil and fill each one with 1/2 cup of the panna cotta. Cover the ramekins with plastic wrap. Transfer them to the fridge until the panna cotta is set, 2 to 4 hours.
- 7. To make the roasted plum coulis:** Preheat the oven to 400°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

8. Place the plums on a baking sheet, cut side up, and fill each half with 1 teaspoon of butter and a sprinkle of brown sugar. Top each plum with a spring of thyme.
9. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove the thyme sprigs and let the plums cool for 10 to 15 minutes.
10. Slice two of the plum halves into 3 wedges each and set them aside.
11. Transfer the remaining plums into a blender with the water, lemon juice, and sugar and purée until smooth.
12. Dip the ramekins, 1 at a time, into a bowl of hot water for 3 seconds, and then gently invert the ramekin over a small dessert plate. NOTE: if you're using wine glasses instead of ramekins, there's no need to turn out the panna cotta.
13. Top each panna cotta with plum coulis, sliced plums, and a sprinkle of the crumbled shortbread cookie and serve immediately.



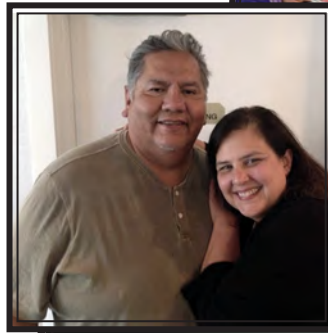
Food Photography: Matt Palmer and Jenny Salita

PARTY THROWBACK:

CIF Get-Together Pics from the Past • Photos by Shawn Gilliam

If there's one thing CIFs know how to do, it's have a party; and, for many, it's about the food that's made to be shared! Here's a look back at our Summer 2013 and Winter 2014 parties!

We are all looking forward to the day we can catch up again in person over good food, something nice to drink, and stimulating conversation!



OUR STORIES, YOUR STORIES

We want to hear from YOU!

CIF Guides, this is OUR newsletter, and want YOU to be a part of it!

No submission is too small. A few possibilities for you to consider:

*"Friendship is born
at that moment
when one person
says to another:
What? You, too?
I thought I was
the only one."
— C.S. Lewis*

1. Insights from recent trips to Mia, another museum or cultural experience in the Twin Cities, or a museum you've visited on a trip (even if it's from before the pandemic).

2. Personal and professional events, honors, and achievements.

3. Favorite books or magazine/newspaper/blog articles you believe will be of interest to your fellow guides.

Please do not feel limited by the possibilities above or hold back or feel shy in any way!

Send submissions to Marne Zafar and Shawn Gilliam in the body of an email, Word document or whatever format suits you best. Our addresses are nativeam@me.com and shawngilliam@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Handwritten signatures of Marne Zafar and Shawn Gilliam. The signature on the left is 'Marne Zafar' and the signature on the right is 'Shawn Gilliam'.