

FROM THE CHAIR...

Nancy Kelly, *Docent Executive Committee*

As summer comes to a close and fall beckons, I always get excited about Mia's great variety of tours for the new year. We have the very popular book tours. We have specialized tours for a variety of groups, Discover Your Story, Touch Tours for the Blind and Low Vision, veterans' tours, Road Scholar tours, Osher Life Long Learning tours, and a variety of others, including tours for school and special interest groups and people of all abilities.

As the incoming chair of the Docent Executive Committee (DEC), I am looking forward to working with this wonderful group: Tammy Meyer, Chair elect; Kathy Rothenberger and Randall Johnson, Social Chairs; Jim Allen, Treasurer; Karen Kletter, Communications Chair; Mark Catron, *Muse* editor (with publishing assistance from Merritt Nequette); Kathryn Schwyzer, Secretary; Honorary Docent Representative Pat Wuest; and Senior Educator Debbi Hegstrom.

I think we all struggle to keep up with the rapid changes in Mia's galleries. So, this year the DEC will be discussing ways by which docents, working with Mia staff, can improve communication about changes in the galleries. We will look at receiving better and quicker information on new accessions, and art objects leaving and returning to the galleries. And we will explore ways to obtain and disseminate object information from curatorial departments on a timely basis.

In early August, I noticed a wonderful new Van Gogh drawing we have on loan in G353 that was perfect to use on a recent tour. There are also other wonderful drawings in this room as well, including those by O'Keefe and Kokoschka. They are part of the *First Blush* exhibition, on view until March 31. Information about smaller exhibitions like this is available on the Mia website.

The DEC will also be discussing ways that we docents can take an active role in Mia's drive for diversity and inclusion. With the variety of tours mentioned above, we must continue our education and awareness to make tours welcoming and inclusive for people of all abilities. Our challenge is to continue to strive to be respectful of all cultural and social sensitivities. Learning Innovation staff will continue our education on diversity and inclusion this year and keep us up to date on Mia's Center for Empathy and the Visual Arts.

Docent forums in the last year were very well received. It was great hearing directly from the curators about the changes in the galleries, new accessions and fresh insights about familiar objects. We will continue this practice.

Mia has two amazing special exhibitions planned for 2018 and 2019.

2018-2019

Upcoming...

September 17, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Docent Fall Luncheon

Send check/RSVP by September 10

September 20, 27

Lectures for *Love Affairs: Tales of Genji*

September 29

Required Training Session #1

(Alternative Date October 11)

November 4 to April 14

Special Exhibition: *Egypt's Sunken Cities*

November 15 to February 24

MAEP: *Tamsie Ringler Exhibition*

Ongoing Exhibitions...

Through November 18

Enchanted Mountains: Chinese Landscape Painting from Mia's Collection

Through March 10

Love Affairs: The Tale of Genji in Japanese Art

Through January 6

Art From Chicago

Through July 21

Without Boundaries: Fiber Sculptures and Paintings by Women Artists

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Musings from IPE

Egypt's Sunken Cities runs from Nov. 4 to April 14. *Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists* runs from May 26 to August 18. These should keep us busy this year. There are also several great smaller exhibitions, as well.

I look forward to working with DEC members on behalf of the docents this year. The committee welcomes and appreciates your comments and suggestions.

STUFF THAT WORKS

Kara ZumBahlen, Associate Educator, IPE

The late Douglas Adams once wrote, "We are stuck with technology when what we really want is just stuff that works." [*The Salmon of Doubt: Hitchhiking the Galaxy One Last Time (2002)*.] That "stuff that works" has sometimes proved elusive during the last several months as we have overhauled the IPE [website](#), and redesigned the Mia [homepage](#). So, you may ask, what is the current status?

We have resolved the major issue with our IPE site to get it back online, but work continues. We will soon be moving it from its current third party company server and into the server environment with the Mia website. This will allow our media and technology staff to more quickly address issues as they occur. Also, we are fixing broken links between the IPE site and [artsmia.org](#) and posting materials received while the website was down.

With the site inoperable, I have received many requests for biweekly schedules, rosters, video links to trainings and object files. Those requests have shown me both how important this resource is for docents to prepare for tours and also how docents provide most of its research content. I would like to focus more effort on providing additional information for those purposes. To that end, this fall I will be reviewing a backlog of new object files and older "Object of the Month" files to post on the website.

Note: Posted object files can be found in the menu at "Research Resources/Object File Process" table of contents. If you are interested in creating an object file for a permanent collection object, the process is explained on that same page. To search the IPE site for a specific object file, locate the search box and enter the artist's name or title of the work, followed by the words "object file." To browse files available on the site, select "Permanent Collection/All Object Files" in the menu.

Our website has served as a great way to share special exhibition information. Look for that to continue. We also hope you will continue to share information you find that connects to the exhibitions. A resource document for *Egypt's Sunken Cities* will be updated as information becomes available, following the model started with the *Martin Luther* exhibition. You will still find special exhibition training and workshop videos located under the "Videos" menu heading. The posts under that heading are chronological, so you may want to scroll through previous pages. You can also search for a particular video by the date of the training session.

The IPE website has a long and complicated history, as now reflected in its menu. Digital content has sometimes been added without consideration for the site's structure and the logic and usability of the menu. Look ahead for some menu revisions, especially for tour outlines and tour descriptions, which are currently hard to find.

Please keep sending information to me to post, and regularly check the infor-

EASY WAY TO PAY

Jim Allen, DEC Treasurer

Still carrying around that heavy purse, wallet, checkbook or, if you're a Solomon Islander, that bulky roll of feathers and bark (Mia, #90.80A,B)? Here's an idea that will bring you into the 21st century; save the planet by reducing paper (or feather) waste; reduce your postal expenses; save time; and, best of all, make your kids and grandkids think you're cool.

The DEC now has a new way to receive your payments for trips, luncheons, the Sunshine Fund and any other purpose.

It's pretty simple: a free app on your phone. You simply download the app and enter your name, email address, phone number and a link to your bank account or debit card. Then all you need to do is tap the app, log in, identify your payee, the amount to pay, and hit "send." Voila! It is done. You get an email receipt of the transaction and your bank shows the debit on your statement.

DEC is registered with two apps. "Cash" is the app used by the Mia coffee shop (they call it "Square," the business version of "Cash"). The other one is called "Venmo," which is, I think, simpler and is the one that kids are using the most. On either one, if you write in "Mia Docents," the amount of your payment will be deducted from your account and show up in the Docent account at Sunrise Bank instantly. Neither we nor the bank will know your bank account number and you won't know ours, so it is quite secure. Here are the websites: [Cash](#) [Venmo](#)

Pretty soon you will be using one of these app-based payment systems to share a lunch tab with a friend, send a birthday present to a grandchild, and pay bills. Try it out. It will save you from searching for an envelope, looking up the address, writing the check and posting the envelope. Give it a try and feel good about how hip you are.



Unknown artist, Solomon Islands
Feather Currency (tevau), 19th century
Vegetable fiber, feathers, bark, shell, seed
pods, wood, pig tail
The William Hood Dunwoody Fund
90.80A,B
G256

mation that has been shared in the “Peer Sharing” categories. Much of it connects to artists and artworks on display. This information is also “tagged” for search, so you can search the artist’s name to bring up any extra research materials and object files. And do take some time to explore the site! Besides the object files, discover additional resources connected to our other volunteer programs, such as Art Cart Manuals (currently under “References & Policies/ Art Cart/Manuals”) and Art Adventure sets (under “Programs/AAG/AAG Sets”).

If you would like a one-on-one session to explore website resources or the fundamentals of online research, please email me, [Kara ZumBahlen](#), to schedule a time to meet. Our IPE staff hopes the website continues to function (literally!) and grow, and becomes a better resource for you in the years ahead. I know we will encounter a few bumps in the road. Building a better digital infrastructure is a “learning experience” for us all: “A learning experience is one of those things that says, ‘You know that thing you just did? Don’t do that.’” Adams, *The Salmon of Doubt*.

The Triple Bonus of the Traveling Docent

When docents travel, good things happen. By virtue of their exposure to Mia’s artistic and educational resources, their travel experiences are enriched. Those experiences, in turn, enhance their appreciation of Mia’s world-wide collection on their return. And ultimately, Mia’s patrons reap the final bonus in more entertaining tours. So, here’s a piece (see below) from one of your well-travelled colleagues:

BEWARE THE EVIL EYE

Jim Allen

As you may know, the “evil eye” is a curse cast upon a victim by the malevolent gaze of a malicious person. When you are the object of the evil eye, you may not be aware of it, but injury or misfortune will surely follow.

Traveling in the Levant, we encountered many tokens or talismans that serve as antidotes to the perils of the evil eye. We found two types that were especially prevalent, and, as it happens, Mia has one of these in our African gallery.

The most common remedy, one that is an especially popular modern image, is a talisman called a nazar, a glass amulet with concentric circles of dark blue, white, light blue and black. Very effective, I’m told, but not high art and so not in our collection.



Another protection against the evil eye, also common in the Middle East and Northern Africa, is referred to in many ways. Its general name is *khamsa*. We saw *khamsas* frequently in our travels, on doors or walls, in tile, or worn on clothing. Here is one hanging on a door in Morocco. We have a beautiful example of something similar in our African gallery. The word *khamsa* (or *hamsa*) comes from the Arabic *khamsah* or Hebrew *khamsa*, meaning five, referring to the five digits of the hand. But a *khamsa* is also referred to as the “Hand of God.” In Muslim cultures, it may instead be called the “Hand of Fatima” after the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. Jewish people may refer to it as the “Hand of Miriam” after the sister



Unknown Arab, Berber, or Jewish
Hand pendant, about 1850
Silver, enamel, glass
The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad
Memorial Fund
91.141.17
G254

of Moses and Aaron. Christians may call it the “Hand of Mary.” In fact, the *khamsa* may predate *all* these religions and derive from ancient Phoenicia where it was used to honor an ancient goddess.

Although *khamsas* from these diverse cultures may bear similar design elements, they may also take unique forms. Some are abstracted slightly into a symmetrical two-thumbed form like ours, while others bear a more realistic one-thumbed hand like the door ornament pictured above. When Islam spread across North Africa in the 750s, amulet design, decoration and detail transformed according to the traditions of local cultures – often with silver-inscribed pattern and bright colors. Our object is such a case, with dense decorations of waves and circles defining the fingers and encircling the palm. At the center is a reddish glass surrounded by green and orange beads. The central glass may recall a carnelian semi-precious stone said to be worn by the Prophet in a silver ring.

As the Islamic “Hand of Fatima” the *khamsa* refers to an important figure in the history of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad was orphaned at an early age and grew up with his cousin, Ali, who was about a year younger. They were fast friends as children and remained so as adults, and Ali became a close follower, protector and lieutenant to the Prophet when he started preaching. Ali eventually married the Prophet’s daughter, Fatima.

Muhammad died in 632, leaving no obvious successor. Abu Bakr [ah-boo bahk-r] a close companion of Muhammad, was elected as his successor (Caliph). But there was dissension within the community as some followers thought that Ali, Muhammad’s cousin and son-in-law, should be leader. All future caliphs would be descendants of the Prophet. (Ali did become Caliph in 656.) Followers who favored Ali and believed that the caliphs should be descended from Ali and Fatima became known as Shi’a. Muslims who favored Abu Bakr and believed that the leaders should be elected from his descendants are known as Sunni.

Our *Hand Pendant* is a wonderful piece to use on tours because it offers multiple narratives: it recalls a rich history of Islam, the Middle East, Northern Africa and the Iberian peninsula, showing how local cultures can adapt to conquering religious traditions and embellish them with their own artistic traditions; it reveals common iconography of three great monotheistic religions; and it offers evidence that religious symbols so important to each religion were actually borrowed from a common ancestor.

LOVE AFFAIRS: A WALK THROUGH *THE WORLD OF GENJI*

Meg Ubel

Eight galleries. More than 150 objects. One really long story. When asked what the newly-opened exhibition *Love Affairs: The Tale of Genji in Japanese Art* is all about, Aaron Rio’s reply was prompt: “Love and sex.” The title, in other words, says it all – or does it? I recently had an extended conversation and guided tour with Rio, Andrew W.

FRIENDS LECTURE SERIES 2018-2019

Thursdays at 11:00 a.m.
in the Pillsbury Auditorium
Tickets available on Mia website
Presented by Friends of the Institute
and Mia

September 13
Aileen Ribeiro
*How Do I Look? Fashion and
Appearance in Art*
A Mark and Mary Goff Fiterman Lecture

October 11
Amanda Lucidon
*Chasing Light:
Photographing Michelle Obama*
A Mark and Mary Goff Fiterman Lecture

November 8
Mary Abbe
*Wrestling Art into Words:
A Random Walk through Mia*

December 13
Nick Wilding
How to Forge a Rare Book

January 10
Erika Doss
*Monumental Troubles: Reckoning with
Problematic Public Art in America*

February 14
Nora Naranjo Morse
Current Works of Inspiration

March 14
Damian Robinson
*The Sunken Cities and Shipwrecks
of Ancient Egypt’s Alexandrian Coast*

April 11
Andrea Bayer
*On the Unfinished in Art: works
left incomplete by chance or intention*

May 16 (note: third Thursday)
Lonnie Bunch
Founding and Current Director of the
Smithsonian’s National Museum of African
American History and Culture

Mellon Associate Curator of Japanese and Korean Art, and intern Trevor Menders, through the exhibition, and all things Genji. Here is an overview of exhibition information that may prove useful as you seek to incorporate Genji on tours.

First, however, about that story. The *Tale of Genji* was written in the early 1000s by a lady-in-waiting of the imperial court known as Murasaki Shikibu, an extraordinarily well-educated woman for her time. Regarded as the world's first novel, and a pinnacle of Japanese literature, the story begins with the life and romantic escapades of an imperial prince known as "Shining Genji," while the final chapters involve his heirs. The tale is vast and complex, spanning 75 years in 54 chapters and hundreds of characters. It's truly a soap opera of Japanese court life, full of sex and intrigue, presented in the refined and understated language of the Heian period (794-1185 CE).

Importantly, Genji motifs and references are now woven into Japanese culture, and they appear in art produced in every conceivable medium, from lacquerware to 21st-century manga comic books. Over the centuries, this art has allowed people to access and relate to well-known Genji scenes without reading the book. The original tale has also spawned many parodies and spinoffs, and a sizable body of *shunga* (erotica).

Mia's exhibition highlights this diversity of Genji-related artworks. Rio thinks visitors will be amazed by "how much of it we have," and how colorful it all is (there is but one ink painting in the entire show). *Love Affairs* is not a "historical show" organized by era, nor is it a narrative telling of the Genji tale. Instead, the exhibition is arranged by theme in galleries 237-239, 251-253, 226 and 227. G252 is the primary entrance, but visitors can also enter at G226 or G237 and do not need to visit every gallery to achieve a meaningful experience. Bright red banners in the galleries and small red logos on object labels orient visitors and make things more cohesive.

Love Affairs is co-curated by Rio and Andreas Marks, Mary Griggs Burke Curator of Japanese and Korean Art, Japanese and Korean Art Department Head, and Director of the Clark Center for Japanese Art. The exhibition "perfectly marries" objects from Mia's collection with a prestigious set of prints on loan from the collection of Paulette and Jack Lantz, according to Rio. The works on display over two successive rotations include virtually every Genji-related object in Mia's collection, including many from the recently acquired Clark and Burke collections.

Walking through the exhibition, Rio identified objects that he considers highlights. Here are a few of his picks, along with an overview of the layout of the spaces.

Galleries 237, 251, 252 and 253 are titled *Genji-e*, a wide variety of Genji pictures telling the original tale. A corner of G237 is devoted to the author, including the large hanging scroll *Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera*. Rio calls this "one of the most stunning paintings in the exhibition. I pulled it out of storage five or six times and can't stop looking at it." The early 20th-century work portrays Shikibu gazing out



Watanabe Seitei
Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera,
 c. 1900-1910
 Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk
 The Louis W. Hill, Jr. Fund
 2009.8.2
 G237

over the lake at the Buddhist temple where she is said to have been inspired to write *The Tale of Genji* one autumn night. Moonlight bathes her reclining figure, which stands out as the only spot of color in the painting. Her long luxuriant hair flows over her aristocratic kimono, in the style of ladies of the court in the 900s. The kimono is decorated with eulalia grasses, which are associated with moon viewing in Japan because they develop autumnal, feathery seed heads that shimmer in the moonlight.

Also in G237 is a woman's *Wedding Robe*, or *uchikake*, one of three such robes in the exhibition, each positioned so as to be visible from several galleries. The robe's strikingly colorful images embroidered on blue silk highlight the "absent motifs" concept, non-figural images evoking a specific Genji scene without showing the actual human characters. In the scene referenced on the robe, a young Genji performs a traditional court dance (called *gagaku*) outdoors in autumn for his stepmother the Empress, who, as a result of a fling with Genji, is carrying his child. The robe shows only crimson maple leaves, some patterned standing curtains, and one of the large flame drums (*kaen daiko*) that accompany the dance. Rio commented, "the amazing thing is, all you need are those three things in combination and it communicates all it needs to." In case it occurs to you that this might be an odd choice of theme for a wedding robe, Rio notes that many wedding robes with Genji imagery exist, and Genji-themed items were quite popular for women's wedding trousseaus. We can only speculate on the reasons why. (To add some atmosphere to a tour, videos of *gagaku* dances are available on YouTube.)

G252 contains several works depicting a well-known scene from Chapter 24, the "Butterflies" chapter. Genji organizes a spring festival with leisurely pleasure boat rides and dances by his consort Murasaki's young attendants dressed as birds and butterflies. The stars of the gallery are a pair of screens entitled *Episode from the "Butterflies" Chapter of the Tale of Genji*, delicately painted and bursting with color and gold. One screen depicts court ladies riding on boats decorated with phoenix- and dragon-head prows; the second screen shows the iconic "butterfly dance," with costumed dancers carrying vases of cherry blossoms and yellow mountain roses. The screens are notable for their small size, and were probably used to protect a person from drafts while sleeping.

Commanding the view in G253 is the object Rio considers unquestionably the masterpiece of the exhibition: a large pair of screens entitled *Scenes from the Tale of Genji in the Four Seasons*. Visually striking and "confidently painted" in the Kano school style, the two screens portray a wealth of Genji scenes to look at and dissect. The scenes are notably arranged by the season in which they occur in the book, beginning with the blossoming cherry trees of spring on the far right, and ending with winter snow on the far left. Viewers might be interested in the importance of seasons, and change of season, in daily life in early Japan.

The left screen depicts the same scene described above on the wedding robe, in which Genji dances for his stepmother, although here there is a full complement of human figures including the enormously



Unknown Japanese
 Wedding robe (uchikake) with design of standing curtains, maple trees, and large drum,
 late 19th century
 Silk with gold embroidery
 Gift Of The Clark Center
 For Japanese Art & Culture;
 Formerly Given To The Center By Koji Wada
 2013.29.374
 G237



Unknown Japanese
Autumn and Winter [left of the pair
*Scenes from the Tale of Genji in the
 Four Seasons*], mid 17th century
 ink, color, and gold on paper
 Gift Of The Clark Center
 For Japanese Art & Culture
 2013.29.14.1
 G253

attractive Genji himself. The right screen includes a famous scene in the upper right corner, in which Genji's nephew plays *kemari* (today's hacky sack) with Genji's son. During the game, they catch a glimpse of Genji's young wife through the curtains to her quarters, which have been pulled aside by two sparring cats. The nephew promptly falls passionately in love with Genji's wife and, consistent with the theme of the exhibition, a tragic love affair ensues.



Unknown Japanese
Spring and Summer [right of the pair
*Scenes from the Tale of Genji in the
 Four Seasons*], mid 17th century
 ink, color, and gold on paper
 Gift Of The Clark Center
 For Japanese Art & Culture
 2013.29.14.2
 G253

Much more information about these screens, and the many other Genji episodes they depict, can be found in a new ArtStory article that was prepared especially for this exhibition. The ArtStory will be accessible during the exhibition on the touch screen in G237.

G226 addresses the most famous parody of the Genji tale, a serial novel called *A Rustic Genji by a Fraudulent Murasaki*. In this Edo-Period blockbuster, the tale is reset in medieval Japan and Genji is recast as a samurai. G227 highlights the popularity of woodblock prints with Genji parody themes, featuring especially four pairs of printed images. Each pair includes a print of the same image but from different print editions. Fans of woodblock prints will enjoy comparing the prints for variations in color. G238 contains Genji- and parody-related erotica, a popular genre of art in Japan especially during the Edo Period. Many of these works are quite explicit, and the gallery has stanchions at its entrances alerting visitors to the content so they can steer around it if necessary.

Finally, G239 takes a playful approach to Genji: the games, contests, music, dance, sports and other amusements that are featured in the tale along with games specifically produced with a Genji theme. A highlight of this gallery is an elaborate incense game of wood and lacquer inlaid with mother-of-pearl, gold, and other metals. Players take turns getting a whiff of a particular incense and compete to identify the scent or the chapter of *The Tale of Genji* associated with the scent.

Fragrance played an important role at court during the Heian period and featured prominently in the tale. Our game includes a variety of small implements used to prepare and heat the incense, as well as ivory tiles, a writing box and other game pieces. The display might spur a discussion of the pillars of Japanese culture and comparison of the “Way of Fragrance” to the “Way of Tea,” each with its own specialized tools and ceremonies.

On this brief walk through the world of *Genji*, I certainly found love but also much more: exquisite painting, eye-catching color and objects to fit many tours and themes. There is far more to *Love Affairs* than can be adequately covered here, so do attend the upcoming gallery training sessions on September 20 and 27 to get the full story from the curators. In addition, Rio and Marks, along with Lynne Miyake, professor of Japanese at Pomona College, will discuss *Love Affairs* at a ticketed Mia [talk](#) on December 8.

A BOOK TOUR PRIMER

Emily Shapiro

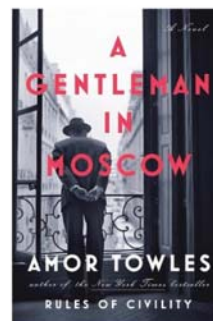
Many of us have had the wonderful opportunity to develop and lead a public book tour as part of our docent work. If you have not yet had this chance and would like to know more about how other docents have approached this unique task, the following is a Book Tour “Primer” based, in part, on the wildly popular June, 2018 tours of *A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Towles (hereafter AGIM). Perhaps this Primer will inspire you to say “yes” when the next biannual email arrives asking if you are interested in leading such a tour.

Lesson 1. You are not alone.

Book tours involve collaborative docent teams who gladly share their ideas about possible tour themes, routes and objects. For example, the AGIM docents began brain-storming via email weeks before the first June book tours began. We also met at Mia and roamed the galleries en masse, “prospecting” for art objects. The treasure trove of potential objects we unearthed bore little resemblance to the lists each of us had compiled beforehand because our ideas multiplied geometrically with each group insight and unexpected discovery.

Lesson 2. Book tour themes can – and should – be adapted to YOUR interests and skills.

Just as we bring different strengths and perspectives to docent work generally, we bring the same diversity of approach to our book tours. In June, some docents chose to focus on literary tools, such as symbolism, narrative structure, setting and style that Towles used to create the world inhabited by the book’s protagonist and other characters. Other docents took a more thematic approach, emphasizing the book’s main philosophical ideas, such as mastering one’s own destiny in opposition to constraints of the social or political order. Still others approached the book from the standpoint of its many richly described characters and linked these characters and their personalities, actions, and occupations to works of art in Mia’s galleries. In truth, we all probably did all of the above, in different measure.



Mia’s June 2018 book tour selection. Future monthly selections may be found at new.artsmia.org

Lesson 3. Plan your route and object list carefully but be prepared to be flexible.

This lesson is hardly unique to book tours; it is part of every docent's tour experience. Book tours often require heightened sensitivity to this lesson, however, because tour groups can be large, and many shared art objects can be equally important to everyone's tour. In June, the large crowds for tours of AGIM throughout the entire month required us to communicate constantly with each other regarding tour routes and objects, and to have a plan "B" (or even plans "C" and "D") in the event that our paths crossed. It helps to know in advance which objects on your list you can live without, if need be. Focusing even more than usual on what is essential versus what is merely "nice" will keep the tour experience satisfying for all.

Lesson 4. Have as much fun as your tour participants are having.

Perhaps the best part of leading book tours is knowing how enthusiastic your tour participants are to be there, and how excited they will be to discover how you have connected the book to the art. Many participants attend more than one tour per month, just to see how various docents have solved this puzzle. Moreover, book tour attendees often come with their friends or even their entire book club, so they're more likely to participate in the group discussion than other public tour groups. If this sounds like every docent's fondest wish, it is. Happy book touring!

WHAT IS IN YOUR BEARD? AND THE HERMIT ANSWERS

Jeanne Lutz

This beard with its ravines and knobs and peaks?
Its pathless woods and oak openings,
prairies and cliffs? Its hollows and ponds?
Corky white elm trees are in it,
and a young eagle eating a blue jay.
The nest of a pigeon is in it, cursed
crowfoot, shepherd's purse, and spotted
frogs hopping, slopping their water
along my jaw, and the eyes of a fish
perishing in its head. Snakes thick
on the hillside and wood ticks are in my beard,
a lumberman's shanty and a lumber man
in an unbecoming squat. A penciled packing list
for the trip: half-thick coat, best pants,
compass, writing paper, twine, and spy-glass.
A separate scrap of paper giving the different
pockets in which I have placed my money,
and a meadow in which I sought and finally found
the wild apple tree with a long tap-root growing down
I declare! into the bluish-green clay of my heart.



Salvator Rosa
Saint Humphrey (Onuphrius), c. 1660
Oil on canvas
The John R. Van Derlip Fund
64.2
G330

“UNLOCKING” CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING

Linda Krueger

Running until November 18, *Enchanted Mountains: Chinese Landscape Painting from Mia's Collection* provides an outstanding opportunity to develop a deep understanding of and appreciation for one of China's greatest cultural achievements. Here are ten keys to unlock this cultural treasure and one of Mia's most impressive collections.

First, landscape painting was born in China. By the end of the Tang dynasty (907 CE), it had already evolved into an independent genre, and the Five Dynasties and Northern Song periods became the “great age of Chinese landscape.” Landscape painting did not appear in the Western art tradition until 15th-century Italy, and it developed into an independent genre in 17th-century Holland.

Second, Chinese landscape paintings are called *shanshui*, “mountain and water pictures.” Mountains and water features are the central focus of these paintings; everything else is secondary.

Third, mountains have long been deemed sacred in Chinese culture and were believed to be pillars separating heaven from earth. They are also a great analogy for Confucian social order: “A great mountain is dominating as chief over the assembled hills, thereby ranking in an order arrangement the ridges and peaks, forests, and valleys as suzerains of varying degrees.” [From *Brush and Shih, Early Chinese Texts on Painting.*] A great example of majestic mountains is *Towering Mountains and Fantastic Waterfalls* by Zhang Chenglong.

Fourth, water features provide a role model for human harmony, the Tao: “Taking the path of least resistance, always yielding, [water's] effectiveness is unsurpassed.” *Landscape with Scholar Viewing a Waterfall* by Cai Jia illustrates the Chinese practice of seeking spiritual guidance from studying waterways, either in nature or as they are portrayed in paintings.

Fifth, the Chinese artist tries to capture the spirit, the inner essence, the life force, the *chi* of the landscape. The objective, physical likeness is less important: the artist will depict the opposite side of the mountain if that better captures the essence he seeks. The Chinese say that they paint from their “heart-mind,” recalling the Western expression “mind's eye.”

Sixth, Chinese landscape artists rely heavily on brush strokes and line to capture the essence of landscape features. They call upon their experience as calligraphers to develop a rich vocabulary of strokes. *The Souging of the Wind in the Pines Echoes the Melody of Spring* by Shen Zongjing is a great example of different types of strokes. By way of contrast, it was not until the Age of Impressionism that line and visible brush strokes were valued in Western landscape painting.

Seventh, Chinese landscapes always include voids, or areas of blank paper. Chinese artists consider these voids an integral part of a paint-



Zhang Chenglong
Towering Mountains and Fantastic Waterfalls,
c. 1600
Ink and color on silk
Gift Of Ruth And Bruce Dayton
2008.26.2
G203



Cai Jia
Landscape with Scholar Viewing a Waterfall, 1722
Ink and color on paper
Gift Of Ruth And Bruce Dayton
2002.94
G203

ing that can inspire viewers to think and imagine. The ephemeral mist often depicted by these voids is considered the “life-breath” of the painting. Good examples can be found in the hand scroll *River Landscape* by an unknown artist.

Eighth, most Chinese landscapes use “floating” or “multiple point” perspective, often from three different viewpoints. Contrast this to the linear perspective of Western landscapes, at least until the Age of Impressionism, Post-Impressionism and Cubism. *Landscape After Huang Gongwang* by Wang Yu exemplifies this floating/multiple point perspective.

Ninth, Taoists warned that the five colors will blind the eye to true perception, and Chinese color theorists believe that people can conceive all colors in the various tones of ink. So artists use only black ink with, at most, subtle touches of blue (azurite) and green (malachite). *Landscape in the Style of Mi Fu*, attributed to Gao Kegong provides a great example of the effectiveness of toned ink painting.

Finally, Chinese artists today continue the landscape painting tradition more than 1100 years after landscapes became an independent genre. *Artificial Wonderland II - Taigu Descendants* by Yang Yongliang, a digital print from 2016, demonstrates that while the genre continues to evolve, it remains strong, the longest surviving landscape painting tradition in the world.

Clearly, this is an exhibition that you should not miss.

MUSINGS FROM IPE

Debbi Hegstrom

As we approach a new touring year, I am energized by all the good work docents and guides are doing...study groups are examining Mia's collecting legacy, accessibility opportunities, and conversation-inspiring public tours; a burgeoning variety of tour topics beckons; and if you are interested in expanding your repertoire, training sessions will be offered for some of these topics, as noted below:

[Art in Bloom](#) – tours that explore fresh floral creations and the art that inspired them.

[Artful Stories](#) – preschool tours, based on particular themes—look for training in early spring.

[Book tours](#) – facilitated discussions of artworks related to popular books.

[Discover Your Story](#) – tours for people with dementia and their care partners.

[Purcell-Cutts House](#) tours – training to be offered in November!

[STEAM](#) tours – students in grades K-5 discover relationships between science and art.

[Specialized Tours](#) for people with disabilities: touch tours, ASL-interpreted tours, tours for people with cognitive or mobility challenges.

Our adult book tours have been so popular that we have added an-

other tour time, Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. Help spread the word! September's book, *The Submission*, tells a fictional story of a design for a 9/11 memorial chosen by a jury (from anonymous entries), that turns out to have been created by a Muslim-American architect, and the resulting personal and political aftermath. It's an insightful and compelling read.

Public Tours Spark Conversations

Add your voice to current, thought-provoking conversations. This is our tag line for public tour topics that engage visitors in conversations on timely topics. These are the topics to be explored this fall and winter:

September - Body Language

Decipher messages we send as expressed in images of the human body.

October - Going Global

Globalization has been with us for centuries, and stunning artistic achievements were at the center.

November - Arts of Native America

Experience the role of tradition and innovation in superb works of Native American art.

December - Winterlights: Celebrating the Season

Cultures around the world celebrate the return of the light, bringing rebirth and renewal.

We are going to be watching the public tour numbers for growth. If you haven't yet seen the new Book & Public Tours card, you can pick one up at the Info Desk in the lobby. Or pick up several to distribute to your friends, family and the cohorts you belong to.

In the year ahead, we look forward to exciting special exhibitions and permanent collection rotations. There's always something new happening, and staff will be working to keep you updated with new accession proposals and curator presentations.

By now you have reviewed the Fall Continuing Education calendar; plan to join us for as many sessions as possible. At required sessions this year, we will continue to look at ways to ensure Mia is welcoming to everyone and learn from each other's best practices that are happening every day in the galleries!