



January - February 2025

No. 1

President's Message



Left: *Heroine*, 2022, by Rupy C. Tut (American, b. 1985). Natural pigments on handmade hemp paper. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Mortimer-Harvey Fund; with additional funding from the Sikh Women's Organization of Central California and the Sikh Foundation, 2022.124. © Rupy C. Tut. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Right: Vishnu asleep on the serpent in the cosmic ocean, 1850-1900. India or Pakistan; Kashmir region. Opaque watercolors on paper. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Gift of George Hopper Fitch, B86D15. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

As the year comes to a close, I would like to wish all a very joyous holiday season and the best for the coming year. On January 29th, we will usher in the Year of the Wood Snake in the lunar calendar. In Asian mythology, snakes symbolize transformation, elegance and intelligence. The Wood element is said to enhance the characteristics of creativity and stability associated with the snake. This auspicious combination encourages innovative, long-term planning, as well as careful and precise decisions. This is welcome news since the Society is embarking on a new website which will allow it to move forward in the upcoming years.

If you are still looking for that unique gift for friends or family, please consider gifting our Spring 2025 Arts of Asia Lecture series "Visualizing the Divine". Membership in the Society for Asian Art also entitles one to special study groups, member events, and literature courses, as well as exciting domestic and international trips with knowledgeable scholars.

I look forward to welcoming all of you to our exciting events and lectures in the coming year.

Gloria Garaventa
President

Society for Asian Art Board Nominations

The Nominating Committee is looking for candidates to serve on the SAA Board of Directors for 2025 - 2027. The SAA Board is a working board with all Board members expected to serve on at least one committee.

The committees plan and manage various programs each year. The committees that plan events are: Arts of Asia, Member Events, Upper Category Member Events, Literature & Culture, Study Groups and Travel.

We are also looking for volunteers with expertise to serve on Finance, Investment, Social Media & Website as well as Membership Committees.

If you would like to be considered or wish to recommend a potential candidate, please contact the Chair of the Nominating Committee, John Kouletsis, at john.kouletsis@gmail.com before March 7, 2025.



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Spring 2025 Arts of Asia - Visualizing the Divine

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UPCOMING EVENTS (Subject to Change)

Sundays, Mar. 2, Mar. 16, Mar. 23 & Mar. 30

Spring 2025 Literature Course

The History of Heaven with Brian Baumann

Monday, Mar. 10

Annual Spring Dinner

Thursday, Apr. 3 - Sunday, Apr. 6

Annual Book Sale



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member, who joined the Society in October and November. We are thrilled that you have decided to join us, and hope you find our programs and events interesting and engaging. Please don't hesitate to ask questions and give us feedback. Welcome!

Harriet Ukai



SOCIAL MEDIA

The Publicity/Social Media Committee is happy to share that our Instagram following has grown to over 400 people. The posts that brought in the most support were about the member events on "Simone" and "Radical Clay", which covered our trip to the exhibit in Chicago and the lecture by Janice Katz on the same subject. The new followers who supported the "Simone" event were largely children's book authors, and those who liked "Radical Clay" were mostly ceramicists. We're expanding awareness of our organization amongst new, and generally young people.

As always, we welcome you to submit photos of our events and programs for inclusion in our social media posts. Please email to candacezks@gmail.com.

Society for Asian Art

January - February 2025, No. 1

Members' Newsletter
Edited by Janet Constantinou
and Susan Lai

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Board of Directors 2024-2025

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*ex officio



Visualizing the Divine



Left: The Daoist deity Doumu, approx. 1700–1800. China; Fujian province. Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Porcelain, mold-impressed, with sculpted decoration. *Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, The Avery Brundage Collection, B6OP1362.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Right: Goddess of Earth, 1976, by Mayumi Oda (Japanese, b. 1941). Showa period (1926–1989). Silkscreen print; ink and colors on paper. *Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Gift of Dr. Stephen A. Sherwin and Merrill Randol Sherwin, 2023.32.* © Mayumi Oda. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

When: Fridays from Jan. 31 to May 9, 2025 except Mar. 7

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

Place: Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum & Zoom Webinars

Please see schedule on the next page for any exceptions.

Fee: \$200 per person Society members; \$250 per person non-members for the series.

Advance registration must be received by SAA by Jan. 24, 2025.

We only accept drop-ins for individual lectures in Samsung Hall on a space available basis.

Drop-in fee is \$20 per person per lecture.

All in-person fees are after Museum admission.

Instructor of Record: Jeff Durham

Since the dawn of human experience, there has been a search to understand the mysteries that surround us. As we contend with the unseen, the unknown, and the unknowable, beliefs in spirits, demons, gods, and other divinities have emerged to help us make sense of our time on Earth.

Join us as our Instructor of Record, Asian Art Museum Associate Curator Jeff Durham, guides us through 14 lectures on Visualizing the Divine. Noted scholars will discuss traditions from different parts of Asia, exploring how both ancient and contemporary cultures have depicted visions, feelings, and beliefs relative to the metaphysical and the otherworldly.

The Arts of Asia committee welcomes comments about our lecture series. Please email comments to info@societyforasianart.org.

Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information about this lecture series.



ARTS OF ASIA SPRING 2025 LECTURE SERIES

Speakers & Topics (Subject to Change)

Jan. 31, 2025

Tibetan Renaissance: Monastery Murals and the Rebirth of Buddhism

Jeffrey Durham, Associate Curator of Himalayan Art, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

Feb. 7, 2025

Insights in Living with the Gods

Bradley Bailey, Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Curator of Asian Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Feb. 14, 2025

Zoroastrianism

Daniel Sheffield, Associate Professor, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University

Feb. 21, 2025

Contrasting Expressions of Shinto between Ise and Izumi Shrines and Trajectories to the Contemporary Built Environment in Japan

Ken Tadashi Oshima, Professor/Director of History Theory, Department of Architecture, University of Washington

Feb. 28, 2025

Fluid Icons: The Mutability of the Sacred Image in Hinduism

Layne Little, Associate Professor of Teaching, Religious Studies Department, University of California, Davis

Mar. 14, 2025

The Buddhist Wheel of Rebirth, Past and Present

Stephen F. Teiser, D.T. Suzuki Professor in Buddhist Studies and Professor of Religion, Department of Religion, Princeton University

Mar. 21, 2026

Pagans in the Churches: Traces of Traditional Roman Religion in the Early Christian Architecture of Arabia

Sarah Wenner, Curatorial Research Fellow of Ancient Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Art, Cincinnati Art Museum

Mar. 28, 2025

Lives of Khmer Sculpture from Past to Present

Paul Lavy, Associate Professor of South & Southeast Asian Art History, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

Apr. 4, 2025

Traditional/Contemporary Continuity in South Asia

Swosti Kayastha, Fullbright Fellow, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

Apr. 11, 2025

Pure Land Buddhism as Practiced in Asia

Mark Blum, Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair in Japanese Studies, Department of East Asian Languages & Cultures, University of California, Berkeley

Apr. 18, 2025

Light of the Valley: The Renovation of Svayambhunath

Padma Dorje Maitland, Malavalli Family Foundation Associate Curator of the Art of the Indian Subcontinent, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

Apr. 25, 2025

The Lakshacaitya Paubha in the Asian Art Museum Collection

Samuel Grimes, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Fairfield University

May 2, 2025

It is Amun Who Made Me: A Tale of Two Houses

Marc Maillot, Associate Director/Chief Curator, ISAC Museum, University of Chicago

May 9, 2025

Visualizing the Divine Hands: Sutra Fragments and Imagining Deified Individuals in Japan's Early Modern Period

Akiko Walley, Maude I. Kerns Associate Professor of Japanese Art, University of Oregon



MEMBER EVENTS

Tour of *Making Their Mark: Works from the Shah Garg Collection* with Margot Norton

When: **Friday, Jan. 24, 2025**

Time: **11:00 a.m.**

Place: **Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA)
2155 Center Street, Berkeley**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members**

Join BAMPFA's Chief Curator Margot Norton as she leads a special tour of *Making Their Mark: Works from the Shah Garg Collection*. This exhibition focuses on important works by female artists from 1946 to the present and has received rave reviews in the San Francisco Chronicle, East Bay Express and on KQED. While the artists featured come from all over the world, the SAA has asked that special attention be paid during the tour to works by Asian artists like Thai artist Pinaree Sanpitak (whose Breast Stupa Topiary is displayed on the AAM's East West Bank Art Terrace) and Asian American artist Kay Sekimachi (who was born in San Francisco).

Margot Norton joined BAMPFA as Chief Curator last May after spending twelve years at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York City. In addition to having curated major exhibitions in New York and Venice, she has also lectured and written numerous articles on contemporary art.

Visit to Guillermina Asian Antiques & Folk Art

When: **Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025**

Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Place: **Guillermina, 101 West Richmond Avenue, Point Richmond**

Fee: **\$15 per person Society members; \$20 per person non-members**

Join the SAA for a visit to the unique premises of Guillermina in Point Richmond, a beautiful antique shop run by Emy LaFever since 1997. Focusing on Japanese mingei, tansus, pottery and baskets as well as lots of lovely pieces from Chinese and Southeast Asian cultures which Emy has acquired on her extensive travels through Asia.

Emy also has pieces from the collections of well-known collectors in the Bay area. Her gallery has a truly eclectic collection of Asian arts and antiques, which members of the Society will greatly enjoy.

After the gallery visit, we will have a no-host lunch at a nearby restaurant.



Installation view of *Making Their Mark: Works from the Shah Garg Collection*. Photo courtesy of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.



Photos courtesy of Jim Brown.



IN MEMORIAM

Gregory Connor Potts January 27, 1951 - November 2, 2024

We share the sad news of the recent passing of a beloved member of the Society for Asian Art. Greg Potts served on the board of directors from 2013 to 2019 and was Chair of the Travel Committee from 2016 to 2019. He also served on several other SAA committees and actively participated in many events, especially the SAA's domestic and international trips.

Born in Boise, Idaho, Greg grew up with Asian art in his home. After a long career at Bank of America in marketing, product management, and training, Greg traveled throughout Southeast Asia. Then a chance meeting at a dinner party with a long time SAA member led Greg to attend several SAA events. Impressed by the people he met, Greg started volunteering for the SAA and joined as a member.

Greg was a long time resident of Alameda. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of theater, especially musicals, and often attended performances at home and away. He served as President of the Board of the Altarena Playhouse in Alameda. A long time member of a running group, Greg and a close friend flew all over the world and competed in at least 20 marathons.

We will miss his gentle manners, good humor and generous nature.



Greg Potts. Photo courtesy of Sandy Binder.



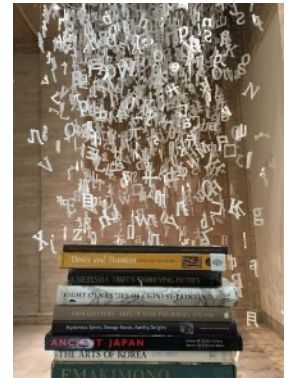
ANNUAL BOOK SALE

2025 Annual Book Sale

When: **Thursday, Apr. 3, 2025 1:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**
Friday, Apr. 4, 2025 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, Apr. 5, 2025 10:00 a.m. - closing
Sunday, Apr. 6, 2025 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Place: **Asian Art Museum Loggia**

Book lovers, mark your calendars! Thousands of books — including rare collector's items — will be available at bargain prices at the Society for Asian Art's annual Book Sale in the Asian Art Museum's Loggia. This year's special four-day event includes both a Thursday night, when the museum remains open until 8 PM, and a Free First Sunday. Tell your friends!



Photos courtesy of Peter Sinton

Donations for Book Sale

We now accept books throughout the year for our annual Book Sale. So if you move, downsize or are tired of all the books collecting dust in your home, please donate them to our Book Sale. We are accepting books with Asian subjects only, be it art, culture, novels, history, travel, cooking, exhibition catalogs or others.

Due to space constraints, we are unable to accept book donations at the SAA office. You can drop off books on Fridays when the Arts of Asia lectures are in session. If you have a lot of books, we are happy to pick them up from your home within the Bay Area. Please contact the SAA office at 415-581-3701 or info@societyforasianart.org for details.

Save the Date! Asian Art in Minneapolis May 12-17, 2025



Left: Unknown artist, Censer in the shape of a mythical beast, (Qing dynasty 1736–1795). Photograph © Minneapolis Institute of Art.
 Right: Fukuda Suikō (Japanese, 1895-1973), Gyrfalcon Hunting a Goose in Snow, 1928, two-panel folding screen; ink, color, and gofun on silk, 66 1/16 × 72 5/16 in. (167.8 × 183.67 cm) for image shown. Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the Center in memory of Dorothy Ann "Dot" Schafer. Photograph © Minneapolis Institute of Art.

Please join us on a spring trip to Minneapolis. A highlight of the trip will be visiting the Minneapolis Institute of Art, which has one of the finest and most comprehensive Asian art collections in the country. Curator-led tours will focus on Asian art galleries boasting some 16,800 objects, ranging from ancient pottery and bronzes to works by contemporary artists, with nearly every Asian culture represented. We will stay at The Hewing, a four-star boutique hotel in the North Loop neighborhood, which is situated in a good walking area among cafes, art galleries, boutique shops and restaurants. An email announcement with trip details and registration instructions will be sent the week of Jan. 13 to all SAA members and newsletter subscribers. The trip is limited to 20 SAA members and will be filled on a first-come first-served basis.

Save the Date! Mesmerizing Mongolia Jul. 2 - Jul. 18, 2025



Photos courtesy of Mongolia Quest.

Join us on a journey of a lifetime through the land of Genghis Khan. Together with the renowned scholar of Mongolian art and culture, Dr. Uranchimeg (Orna) Tsultem, you will have an opportunity to unveil mysteries of ancient and modern Mongolia, one of the least known countries left on earth. Dr. Tsultem was born and raised in Mongolia and obtained her Ph.D. in art history from the University of California, Berkeley, where she taught courses on Mongolian and Tibetan art. This trip will offer a great taste of the country including the mighty Gobi Desert and Orkhon Valley region in Central Mongolia strewn with remains of ancient monuments and Buddhist monasteries. You will have a chance to witness one of the greatest and most colorful cultural events – Naadam Games. These games, known as the three manly sports (for originating from military training – horse-racing, archery and wrestling) have been celebrated over several millennia by the local nomads. The trip will also offer an exclusive chance to visit some nomadic families. Mongolia has been building democracy over the last 34 years since it toppled the communist ideology in 1990. With all its mistakes and slowdowns, the country stayed on its course and became a beacon of democracy between two autocratic giants: Russia and China. Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton praised Mongolia as a model of democracy during her visit in 2012. An email announcement with trip details and registration instructions will be sent the week of Jan. 6 to all SAA members and newsletter subscribers. The trip is limited to 20 SAA members and will be filled on a first-come first-served basis.