



## California Chapter Celebrates Its Biennial Gala

By Debra Colletti



Seventy three California Patrons gathered at the California Club in downtown Los Angeles on October 7, 2017 to enjoy the Chapter's biennial dinner and distinguished speaker former Swiss Guard Mario Enzler. Well timed to take advantage of a lull in members' calendars before the busy holiday season got underway, the festivities began with a reception of cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at which members mingled and caught up with old friends. We were especially delighted to welcome into our midst our newest Patrons: **Alexandra Aiassa, Brian Chase, Richard and Maria Grimes, Andrea Plichta, and Brian and**

### **Allison Woram.**

The dinner began with an invocation by Msgr. Lawrence Baird. The menu featured Swiss comfort foods in honor of our speaker such as bundnerfleisch, a dried-cured beef similar to the Italian bresaola, veal medallions with herb spatzle, and baumkuchen, a chocolate almond cake with praline cream.

Chairman **Greg Stanislawski** briefed us on the year-to-date business of the Chapter and enticed us with announcements of future Patrons' events. Greg formally and appropriately bestowed on former Chairman **Michael Scott Feeley** the title of Chairman Emeritus, an honor that had been unanimously approved

by the Board. Other Chapter business conducted during dinner included brief presentations by **James E. R. Low**, Secretary and Executive Board member in charge of Social Media, and **Debra Colletti**, Vice Chair and Executive Board member in charge of Restoration Projects undertaken by the Chapter and individual sponsors. James introduced us to the Chapter's new and improved website, **[www.californiapatrons.org](http://www.californiapatrons.org)**, which is part of an ambitious media push spearheaded by James to coordinate California's digital content with the Vatican Museums' video-centric website that was launched earlier this *continued on page 2*

## Biennial Gala *from page 1*



*Joel Athey and Ann Lawrence Athey*



*Don Fischbeck,  
Brian Chase,  
Charo Montaro,  
Jeffery Littell*

year. James played for us a legacy video which can be accessed from the website and showcases the mission of the Chapter and the benefits of membership. Debra gave a report on the self-described “Dreamers Committee” on which she serves. The Committee, a multi-chapter Patrons’ initiative, was formed during the International Chapters meeting in March 2017, in response to Dr. Barbara Jatta’s, Director of the Vatican Museums, desire to undertake large scale restorations and infrastructure projects. The restoration of the Bramante Courtyard, often referred to as the Pine Cone Courtyard, was an entry in the 2017 Wishbook and is the Committee’s current focus. The Courtyard, through which most visitors to the Museums pass, is an exquisite example of High Renaissance design that influenced courtyards throughout Europe and even at

the Metropolitan Museum in New York City. Although institutional and corporate sources of funding are being pursued, the Committee is exploring and will propose opportunities for Patrons to participate on an individual level.

The highlight of the evening was Mario Enzler, former Swiss Guard, who enthralled us with Reflections of Life under St. Peter’s Dome. Mr. Enzler as a youth enjoyed dual citizenship with Italy and Switzerland. He eventually opted for Swiss citizenship when his father strongly suggested Mr. Enzler enter into military service. Laughs were elicited when Mr. Enzler informed us that he opted for Swiss Guard service because its commitment was much shorter than that of Italy’s military service! Mr. Enzler was blessed to serve during the papacy of St. John Paul II. The Patrons were quickly quieted and mesmerized

by Mr. Enzler’s numerous recollections of his Guard service and his many personal interactions with St. John Paul II, each more fascinating than the next. Some examples included the description of the Pope’s piercing blue eyes, his palpable spirituality, his devotion to prayer often conducted on a hard floor rather than a nearby comfortable kneeler, his quiet strength in times of physical distress, and his spontaneous words of support and encouragement and even a gift of a rosary to Mr. Enzler when they were most needed by the guard. Audible gasps could be heard among the Gala guests when Mr. Enzler, in a particularly poignant moment, pulled from his pocket and showed us the very rosary St. John Paul II had given him.

The evening passed too quickly, but good-byes were interspersed with mutual promises to reunite soon at another Patrons’ event! ■



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Biennial Gala *from page 2*



*Debra Shaw, Gerbard and Katrina Fuchs, Cecelia Assaf*



*Kathy Tusquellas, Nancy McDonald, Vicki McLoon*



*Mark McDonald and Brian Woram*



*Monica Fischbeck, Richard and Sherry Van Meter, Don Fischbeck*



*Michael and Susan Aberle, Jeffrey Littell*



*Jenifer Feeley, Mark and Nancy McDonald, Janet and Michael Feeley and Monica Lomenzo*

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# Biennial Gala *from page 3*



*Ed and Sara Nowak, Mario Enzler and Greg Stanislawski*



*Andrea Plichta and Brian Chase*



*John McDonnell, Jr., Kathleen Houston, Greg Stanislawski*



*Marie Grimes, Karen McClintock, Richard Grimes*



*Michael Feeley and Greg Stanislawski*



*Thomas and Mary Cesario*

# Patrons Delight In Degas

By Debra Colletti

On Sunday morning November 19, fifty California Patrons enjoyed early private admission to the exhibit Taking Shape: Degas as Sculptor at the the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena. We were honored to be joined by **Father Kevin Lixey**, the newly installed International Director of the Patrons. (Please see companion piece about Father Kevin on page 7.) The Degas exhibit was timely given that 2017 is the centennial of the French artist's death. Edgar Degas early in his life (wisely!) rejected a career in law in order to pursue his passions for drawing, painting and sculpture. He often is considered one of the original Impressionists, an appellation Degas rejected given his interest in contemporary subjects usually depicted in interior spaces. His creative uses of gestures, skewed viewpoints, angles and cropped figures often to depict motion were distinguishing characteristics of his paintings and drawings.

Perhaps fewer people are familiar with his prolific modeling in wax and plaster. Upon his death in 1917, nearly 150 small scale sculpted studies (some in pieces, some intact) of horses, dancers and bathers were found in his private studio. During his lifetime these works were never cast and were seen only by close associates and visitors. Degas' heirs selected 74 of the best examples to be cast and sold to collectors after his death. The Norton Simon collection of bronze modelos featured in the exhibit is the first and only set cast from Degas' original studies. We Patrons admired miniature  
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*James Low,  
Father Kevin  
Lixey, Greg  
Stanislowski  
and Debra  
Colletti*



*Brian and Allison Woram*



*Father Kevin Lixey, Monica Lomenzo  
and Stephen Page*



*Dennis Alfieri,  
Michael Feeley,  
Marcia Hobbs,  
Father Lixey*

## Degas *from page 5*

cast pieces of horses at rest or in mid-stride, a jockey mounted on a racehorse, and numerous female dancers in complex performance poses or more mundane actions such as adjusting their outfits. The highlight of the tour was the Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen, a large lifelike piece cast from the original which resides at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. and is the only one of his sculptures that Degas exhibited during his lifetime. The sculpture was controversial

when it was exhibited in 1881 because it realistically depicted the proud visage of a young hardworking ballet dancer and was adorned with mixed media such as clothing, a hair ribbon, silk slippers and even a wig of human hair.

The group adjourned to the nearby Valley Hunt Club for an elegant reception co-hosted by **Maria and Richard Grant and**

**Randy and Greg Stanislawski.** Over the course of more than two hours Patrons chatted and savored beverages, hors d'oeuvres, a buffet of petite sandwiches, cheeses, crudites and desserts. Chairman Greg Stanislawski introduced Father Kevin and we all took the opportunity to get to know him better. The Patrons

also welcomed our newest members **Ted and Yvonne Slaughter.** We appreciate and are delighted that Ted and Yvonne's first Patrons' event was such a resounding success thanks to the Grants and the Stanislawskis! ■



*Little Dancer*



*Stephen Page, Yvonne and Ted Slaughter and Greg Stanislawski*



*Vicki McLoon and Andrew McLoon*



*Dera Colletti and co-hosts Maria Grant and Randy Stanislawski*

**Degas** *from page 6*

*Katie Steinke, Karen McClintock, Nancy and Mark McDonald*



*Brian Chase, James Low, Mariana Pecora, Claudia Pecora*



*Camille and Thad Gembacz*



*Michael Feeley and Jenifer Feeley*

**Patrons Welcome Father Lixey!**



**A**s many of you already have heard, **Father Kevin Lixey LC** has assumed the position of International Director of the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums, replacing outgoing Director Father Daniel Hennessy. Father Kevin is a member of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ. He has served as a spiritual director for the Regnum Christi Movement of Apostolate based in Atlanta, Georgia, for the past five years. Prior to his assignment in Georgia, he served at the Vatican for eight years in the Council for the Laity, heading up the Office for Sport, of which he was the founding director. Father Kevin was ordained priest in January of 2001. He is originally from Flint, Michigan, and has a broad international experience thanks to numerous assignments abroad. We wish Father Kevin well and look forward to seeing him at many of our California Chapter events! ■

*Look for Invite in the Mail!*



Upcoming event for  
OUR current  
2018 MEMBERS

**Giovanni Bellini:  
Landscapes of Faith in  
Renaissance Venice**

the J. Paul Getty Museum  
in Brentwood  
1200 Getty Center Drive

**January 2018**

301 N. Lake Ave., Suite 900  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
Return Service Requested

CALIFORNIA PATRONS  
OF THE ARTS IN THE  
VATICAN MUSEUMS

