



California Patrons Encounter Pontormo

By Debra Colletti

On February 27, 2019 the J. Paul Getty Museum in Brentwood welcomed the California Patrons when they visited to tour the exhibit **Miraculous Encounters: Pontormo from Drawing to Painting**. Jacopo de Pontormo (1494 - 1557), painter and draftsman, was one of the preeminent Italian artists of the 16th Century. His masterpiece, a large altarpiece of *The Visitation*, which has never been displayed outside of Italy, was the showpiece of the Getty exhibit. Guided by the able tutelage of Davide Gasparotto, Senior Curator Paintings Department, and Julian Brooks, Senior Curator Drawings, we Patrons had a rare opportunity to admire up close *The Visitation*. The altarpiece, although noted in historical records of 1677, was mostly overlooked until 1904 when it was “rediscovered” in a small church in Camignano, outside of Florence. Painting with oil on panel, Pontormo depicts



Bruce and Judith Brown and Kathy and Bill Villaseñor



Pontormo's The Visitation

the encounter between the Virgin Mary and her cousin, Saint Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, during the early days of their pregnancies. They are accompanied by two handmaidens whose outward gaze looks out to the viewer while Mary and Elizabeth embrace each other. A recent restoration revealed the sumptuous colors and intricate details of the robes that drape the women. The colors are so vivid as to make the viewer feel as if one is viewing a much more contemporary piece of art. Also on display were a preparatory chalk drawing for *The Visitation* and Pontormo's two portraits of young Florentine men, one in military garb, and the other dressed in traditional clothing of Pontormo's day.

After the tour, we adjourned to the nearby Bel-Air Bar and Grill for a reception which was generously sponsored by **Bruce**

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Gold Leaf Jewelry Sparkles Again

By Debra Colletti

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of **Joe and Elsa Behney**, two necklaces in gilded silver and several gold leaf decorative pieces have been restored and returned to the Gregorian Etruscan Museum. This exquisite jewelry is part of an enormous cache of treasures from the Regolini-Galassi Tomb which dates back to 675 - 650 BC and is one of the richest and most representative Etruscan tombs ever discovered. The precious items uncovered were worthy of kings and queens. In 1836 the Papal Government sponsored

the excavation of the tomb, located in Cerveteri about 50 km north of Rome, and purchased the entire contents of the tomb which have been exhibited at the Vatican Museums for almost two

centuries.

The condition of the jewelry had deteriorated considerably. The necklaces were made of gilded silver; their sheen was no longer visible as both pieces

had corroded significantly. Some of the bead and cylindrical embellishments as well as the clasp had been so compromised that there were holes and gaps further undermining the integrity



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and **Judith Brown**. Patrons partook of passed hors d'oeuvres and an open bar and lingered to catch up with friends. Many thanks to Bruce and Judith for hosting our first event of the year!



Vicki McLoon and Nancy Cooper



Fr. Kevin Lixey, Pat Manzo, Ann Delaney, Joe Incaudo and Janet Feeley



Portrait of a Halberdier

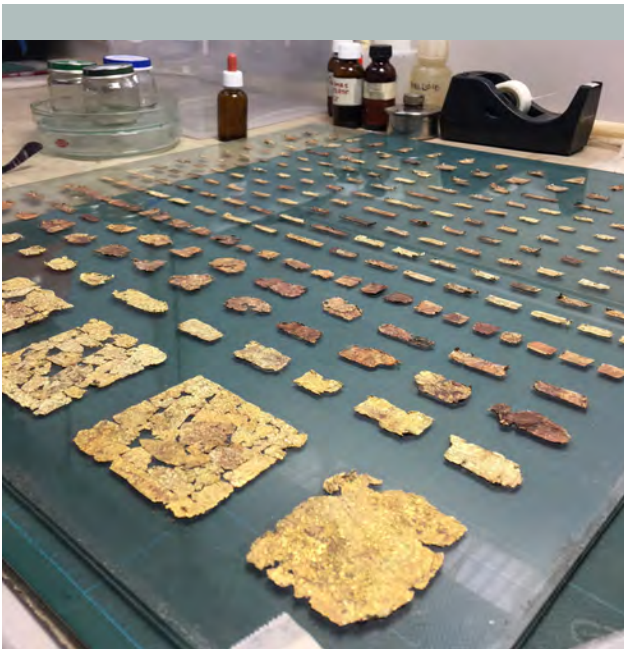
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of the necklaces. The gold foil decorative pieces of various sizes and shapes and embossed with geometric patterns such as rosettes and circles may have adorned articles of clothing. For purposes of an earlier exhibition, many of these pieces had been glued haphazardly on to glass panels. During the restoration process, the necklaces were dismantled from the existing supports, microscopically cleaned and re-installed on newly created supports. The foil decorations were painstakingly removed from the panels, cleaned with a light hand; some were reposted to new supports while others were placed in closed containers for exhibition.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Behneys for sponsoring the restoration of these precious pieces! ■



Painstakingly cleaning the myriad of pieces



The array of gold foil decals

Before and after



Patrons Get Up Close

By Debra Colletti

On June 23, 2019, after the public had gone, about 40 California Patrons gathered at the Cultural Center on the Christ Cathedral Campus in Garden Grove to tour **Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel: The Exhibition**. This Patrons event was well-attended due to its popular subject matter as well as its convenient location in Southern California.

The exhibit is the brainchild of Special Entertainment Events, a Los Angeles based firm, and consists of dozens of licensed photographic reproductions of the famous frescoes that adorn the ceiling and the altar wall of the the Sistine Chapel at the Apostolic Palace in Vatican City. The exhibit has toured internationally with stops in Montreal, Houston and China. The reproductions are staged on the walls and a suspended canvas ceiling in an auditorium. This allows the visitor to stand very close to the images and to admire the intricate details of dozens of famous biblical themes including the Creation, Adam and Eve in the Garden, the Flood, and of course the Last

Judgment. Even Patrons who have had the good fortune to visit privately the Sistine Chapel were thrilled to be able to get "up close and personal" with Michelangelo's iconic masterpiece. The program included an informative video that showcased the techniques used by Michelangelo (some of his own making), his

contentious relationship with Pope Julius II, and the physical ordeals that he endured to bring this masterpiece to fruition.

Although not part of the regularly scheduled program, we were thrilled when fellow Patron and co-host **Rand Sperry** arranged for us to gain entry and then led us on a tour of the soon to be completed Christ Cathedral. Rand served for several years on the committees that were instrumental in advising the Diocese of Orange County during its acquisition of the Cathedral



The Exhibit

Patrons enjoying the video



*Greg Stanislowski
and Dr. Katie Clark*

To Michelangelo

Campus in 2012 and the subsequent renovations. The Cathedral, formerly known as the Crystal Cathedral, with its distinctive glass spire, is a landmark of Southern California. The glass facade contains over 10,000 panes of glass giving the building a transparent quality. The property has been undergoing extensive renovations to convert it into a place more compatible with the celebration of the Catholic liturgy. A central altar that contains the relics of several saints including those of Junipero Serra and John Paul II occupies the center of the Cathedral. The glass panels were lined with fabric shades to reduce the amount of heat in the building, and to filter the light to great effect. The famed Italian-made organ was disassembled, shipped back to Italy for restoration, returned and re-installed. The onsite reception was catered by White House Catering and was hosted by **Debra Colletti, Scott Cooper, and Rosemary and Rand Sperry**. Patrons enjoyed an ample and delicious buffet of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, a dessert station, and a wine bar. ■



Rand Sperry leads the tour of Christ Cathedral



Beverly Sobraske, George Treadwell, Kathy Rolfes-Treadwell and James Low



The Mabendra Family



Rosemary and Rand Sperry



John Paul and Anna Andree



The Van Meter Family with Abbott Hayes

Patrons Revere Rodin

By Debra Colletti

On August 24, 2019, sixteen Patrons convened at the Cantor Arts Center on the campus of Stanford University to tour the exhibit **Rodin: The Shock of the Modern Body**. Our introduction to the Center was facilitated by longtime California Patrons **Bobbie and Mike Wilsey**. We were again blessed to be joined by **Fr. Kevin Lixey**, the International Director of the Patrons of the Arts. The afternoon included visits to the ongoing Rodin exhibit as well as to the Rodin Sculpture Garden.

At the time of his death, Auguste Rodin (France, 1840-1917) was counted among the most renowned artists in the world. Still wildly popular today, Rodin continues to be recognized for making figurative sculpture modern by redefining the expressive capacity of the human form. The installation covers three galleries and features nearly 100 Rodin sculptures depicting his groundbreaking approach to the body and is the largest collection of sculptures by Rodin in an American museum. The Garden was dedicated in 1985 to honor B. Gerald Cantor, the primary donor of

the Center's Rodin collection, and is evocative of the Parisian gardens in which Rodin exhibited his public art during his lifetime.

It was an especially hot summer afternoon. **Dr. Katie Clark**, the California Patrons' newly retained Events Coordinator, thoughtfully distributed gift bags of water bottles and sunscreen products as well as made available a basket of paper parasols that shielded those of us without hats from the sun! The afterparty, held onsite (and inside!) featuring hors d'oeuvres and other much appreciated refreshments, was sponsored by co-Chairman **James Low**. Thanks to everyone for making this Northern California event a huge success! ■

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Bobbie Wilsey, Fr. Lixey, and Mike Wilsey

Scott Cooper and Debra Colletti

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*Dr. Katie Clark
and Fr. Lixey*



Michael Stebr and Bonnie Stebr



Kapil Mabendra, James Low and Brian Chase



*Dr. Katie Clark with Claudia Casta-Pecora and
Marianna Pecora*

Introducing Dr. Katie Clark

The California Chapter is pleased to announce that it has retained the services of **Dr. Katie Clark** as Events Coordinator. Dr. Clark holds a PhD in medieval religious history from Oxford University, where her research included time at the Vatican Secret Archives, the Vatican Library, the Bibliothèque National Française, and many local archives and collections across Europe. Her work focused the cultural, social, and religious history of the late medieval Mediterranean. She concentrated particularly on the impact of the papacy's arrival on local devotional practices in Avignon between 1309-1378. She taught at Oxford and the California

Institute for Technology, and was a Centenary Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, a Marshall Scholar, and a Beinecke Scholar. Dr. Clark left the academy in 2011 to become an entrepreneur in the arts and humanities. She currently owns two businesses and is engaged in a number of public service and philanthropic efforts both locally and internationally. In 2018, she was elected to public office as a Trustee of the Altadena Library District.

Katie's touch has already been evident at several Patrons' gatherings. For example, those of us who attended the Rodin exhibit on a particularly hot day in August found bottled water,



sunscreen and even a basket of parasols waiting for us! If you have not already met Katie, please introduce yourself to her at the next Patrons' event! ■



James Low Appointed Co-Chairman

As the California Patrons builds on the wonderful legacy of Michael Feeley's chairmanship and the Chapter assumes more responsibility within the International Patrons of the Arts

organization, the need for a co-chairman became clear. In early Spring, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors unanimously approved James E. R. Low to assume the job of co-Chairman to serve alongside Greg Stanislawski. ■



CALIFORNIA PATRONS
OF THE ARTS IN THE
VATICAN MUSEUMS

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