

November 2025

Treasure House News



President's Message

It is finally feeling like fall weather and the edges of the ginkgo leaves are beginning to change color. This also means that the opening of our new exhibition, "Mythical Creatures: The Stories We Carry", is drawing near.

Our Exhibition and Training Committees put their heads together and created a series to get all of us ready for the touring season. These **'Conversations About'** are designed to re-introduce all of us to the changing dynamic of touring and how we can adapt to the different needs of each age group. At the end, we feel that each of us who attended will be confident in their touring.

I encourage all of you to attend these conversations and re-engage your passion for educating our next generation. Each of you have so much knowledge to share with these young children, and the school districts really depend on these tours to give the students a chance to learn outside of the classroom. At a time when school budgets are tight, these museum tours give young people a chance to experience art and culture that the curriculum does not provide.

I look forward to seeing all of you and sharing dialogues about our experiences.

Yvonne

IMPORTANT DATES

November 4 at 9am

Docent Council Board Meeting
(Board members only)

November 4 at 10am

Docent Council Meeting
(note first Tuesday)

Conversations to Prepare for 2026 docent touring

10/28, 11/10, 12/1, and 12/15
All scheduled for 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Meher McArthur Book Talk

December 5th at 6:00 pm

December 9 Holiday Party

(In Lieu of Docent Council)

Gallery Showcase

Nakhwa

By Annette Drey

In the small room across from the Silk Road exhibit, USC PAM is presenting two recently conserved Korean paintings known as *nakhwa*. In Korean, *nak* means “to scorch” and *hwa* means “to draw”—literally, “drawing with fire.” *Nakhwa* is a traditional Korean form of pyrography in which artists use heated irons, warmed over charcoal, to create images in varying shades of brown on materials such as paper, silk, wood, or leather.

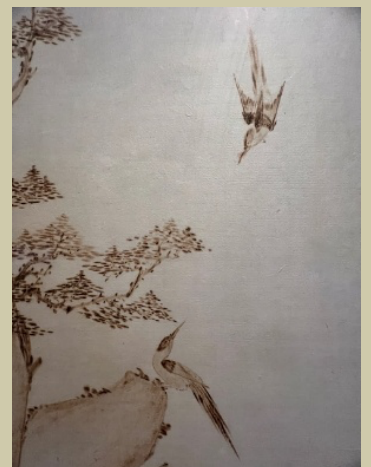
Two types of irons are used: a fine-tipped one for delicate lines and details, and a flat one for broader, shaded areas. Mastery of the technique requires precise control of temperature and pressure to avoid burning through the surface. With skillful hands, artists depict landscapes, rocks, figures, and birds-and-flowers, echoing the textures of traditional brush painting. An artist who practices this craft is called a *Nakhwajang*, or master of pyrography.

This style of painting emerged in early 19th-century Korea and flourished into the early 20th century. Initially regarded as a form of folk art, it nearly disappeared before its very recent revival.

The two *nakhwa* in USC PAM’s collection (dated from the early 20th century) depict vibrant landscapes of lotus flowers, birds, pines, and fishermen. Though artistically significant, they remained in storage for years due to their fragile condition and lack of proper mounting. The works were deeply creased, wrinkled, and stained, and their restoration required techniques distinct from any other art form.

In 2020, a research professor from Seoul rediscovered these artworks during a visit to our museum. Thanks to a grant from the National Museum of Korea, USC PAM launched a multi-year conservation project of these works in 2023. After two years of careful restoration, the paintings have been brought back to life and are now on public view for the first time.

A PDF showing the step-by-step conservation process is linked below:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mPt7govn4VQ3BDxgidUUvORQ0oPpIP2/view>



*“Nakhwa” landscape art,
Korean pyrography,
Gently conserved.*

Asian Highlights

JEJU ISLAND WALKING FESTIVAL

By Bruce Cristol

15th **2025 JEJU OLLE**
WALKING FESTIVAL

2025 제주올레걷기축제 2025.11.6^{Thu} - 8^{Sat} / ROUTE 17·18
2 courses in 3 days



Jeju is a volcanic island located 50 miles southwest of South Korea. It is dominated by Hallasan, a volcano 1,947 meters (6,388 ft) high and the highest mountain in South Korea. The island measures approximately 73 kilometers (45 mi) across, east to west, and 41 kilometers (25 mi) from north to south. Initially an independent kingdom called Tamna, it became a vassal state of Korea under the Goryeo dynasty. By 1404 the Tamna state came to an end and the Joseon dynasty absorbed Tamna.

Turmoil erupted on the Island almost three years after the end of World War II. Described as the Jeju uprising, the Jeju

Committee of the Workers' Party of South Korea (a Communist entity) launched an insurgency against the US-backed South Korean regime of Syngman Rhee (April 1948 - May 1949). It was a brutal civil war in which between 18,000 and 30,000 people perished, many of them civilians.

Today, known for its mild climate, picturesque scenery, and unique cultural traditions—such as the Haenyeo (female free divers), distinct dialect, and local specialties like tangerines and black pork—Jeju has become a popular destination for both Korean and international visitors.

Events, such as the Jeju Olle Walking (올레) Festival held annually in November, draw Koreans, Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, Canadians, British, and American tourists to the island. Although it does not commemorate a specific historical event, it nevertheless features Jeju island's natural beauty accessible via walking trails.

The festival, inaugurated in 2010, brings the locals together with the international visitors to hike select portions of the Jeju Olle Trail during the comfortable month of November. Key aspects of the festival include:



- (a) celebration of nature: the event highlights the island's volcanic landscapes, coastal paths, and autumn scenery
- (b) community bonding: an opportunity for people to gather and connect while walking the trails together
- (c) cultural experience: visitors can enjoy traditional rituals, music, and food related to Jeju's distinctive heritage.
- (d) promotion of walking: the festival is organized by the Jeju Olle Foundation to promote the island's extensive network of walking trails.

*Volcanic beauty,
Jeju walking festival,
Cultural bonding.*

Docent Spotlight

By Richard Ewell



Lisa Koizumi was originally from Chicago Heights, but grew up in St. Louis. Before her senior year of high school her family moved to Hawaii, where she first became interested in Asian arts at the University of Hawaii. She finished college at the University of Missouri where she received her Food Science and Human Nutrition degree.

Lisa worked in the food manufacturing field for over 20 years. In 2001, while working for a chocolate manufacturer in Chicago, See's Candies offered her a job at their Los Angeles factory as a Quality Assurance and Food Safety Manager. She worked for See's Candies for 14 years. She met her husband Masahiko in 2002 while roller skating at Moonlight Rollerways in Glendale. They got married in 2003 and have 3 children: Toshiro, Cho and Emi. Toshiro is studying at Moorpark College and Cho is in her first year at UC Davis. Emi is a Junior at Santa Susana Arts Magnet High School in Simi Valley where Lisa also works part time.

Lisa and family currently live in Canoga Park. She re-ignited her interest in Asian art on their family trips to Japan. She has been teaching origami for 15 years and became interested in becoming a docent after she had taken a shibori workshop at PAM, which she enjoyed. Then she saw an ad for docent applications for PAM on social media. She was very happy to be chosen and considers PAM her second home and the docents her second family.

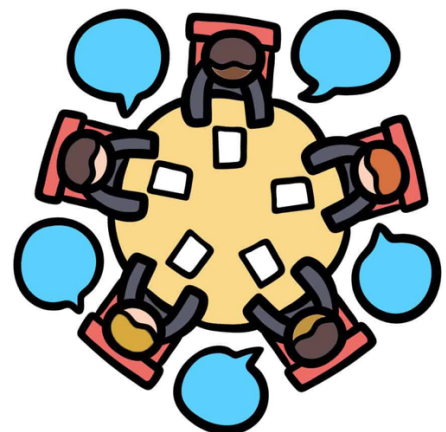
Docents On the Go

By Annette Drey



Docents enjoyed Meher McArthur's presentation at the opening of the exhibition titled "Yokai Parade: Supernatural Monsters from Japan" at the Japan Foundation Los Angeles. The exhibition covers yokai culture from its inception to the present day. The exhibition provides a very useful foundation for looking at the yokai picture scroll that will be featured in the upcoming exhibition at USC PAM.

Conversations About...



10/28, 11/10, 12/1, 12/15

**Learning together makes us
stronger together**

Touring Topics

By Fran De La Rosa

Preparation - Not Just for Scouts!

Docent Educators, like any educator, love teaching. They love the challenge, the contact, and the rewards. Yes, there are rewards: a face lights up when a connection is made or a young visitor thanks you for teaching them. How to make that happen: preparation!

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE. Do your homework; gather as much information as possible about the group. If it is a school tour, investigate the school online. Most schools or districts have school websites that list general information. A school may be a STEM/STEAM program, a dual-language program, or an art magnet. Adult tours may be a women's club or a senior center. This information will help form your tour plan.

CONNECT WITH VISITORS. One sure-fire way to make an immediate connection is to let visitors know that you know something about them. From calling them by name, knowing that their school mascot is the Owl, or expressing familiarity with their senior center, everyone wants to be validated, and acknowledging a seemingly minor fact goes a long way.

SET YOUR GOALS. What do you want your group to know by the end of the tour? Naturally, they are not going to learn the entire historical context of an object, but if they take away one fact, question, or feeling, you can consider the tour a success. With that in mind, you should not aim to be the "sage on the stage," but rather a "guide on the side" to provide an opportunity to expand a visitor's knowledge.

CONNECT THE THEME. Most tours are developed around a central theme, and sometimes it feels like a stretch to connect your tour to that theme. Try developing a sub-theme that helps visitors understand the main theme through direct connections. For example, if the theme is "Nature," develop a sub-theme of "Materials" and discuss the natural materials used in the work.

LISTEN. Once you have asked the "perfect" question, let it sit for a moment. Generally referred to as "think time," patience is important when leading a tour. Allow time for the visitor to hear the question, process the question, formulate an answer, and speak. This is actually one of the hardest tasks of a Docent Educator. Wait time. It does take practice, but it is well worth the wait.

BE FLEXIBLE. What could go wrong? A late bus, fewer Docent Educators, or distractions. Be prepared to go with the visitor's interest. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know, but let's find out together." You and your visitor will find these occasions most enjoyable.

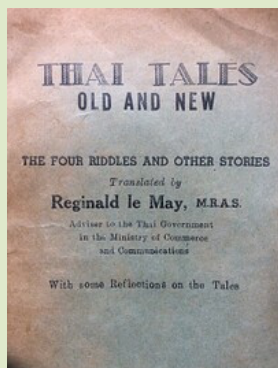
The Scouts presented a timeless lesson: be prepared. That, combined with experience, will always assure a successful tour.



Library Corner

By Lisa Koizumi

See what your Docent Library has related to the **November THN** articles:

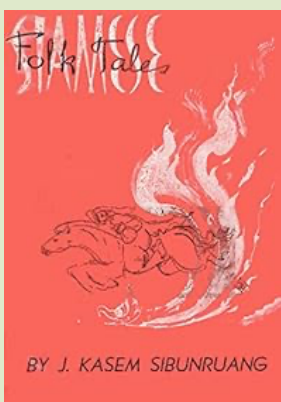


Thai Tales Old and New

By Reginald Le May
Call number: SS May 015

This collection of 28 folktales, translated by R. Le May, offers a lively mix of humorous, animal, and magical stories. Blending Buddhist, Hindu, and local animist traditions, the tales feature kings, monks, animals, and everyday people,

revealing Thailand's rich imagination, moral insight, and timeless wisdom.



Siamese Folk Tales

Vol. 1: Narrated in English
by J. Kasem Sibunruang
Call number: SS Sibu 014

This collection of five Thai folk tales blends magic, morality, and transformation. Stories like *The Golden Goby* and *The Eyes of the Twelve Queens* highlight virtue, jealousy, and justice through kings, queens, and spirits. Rooted in

tradition, the tales reflect Thailand's rich storytelling heritage.

Holiday Announcement



Donate Your Treasures for Our 12/9 Holiday Party

With Thanksgiving approaching, many may be clearing out their homes — it's a perfect time to donate gently used items to support the docent fundraiser!

We're looking for gently used items like:

- ✓ Unique home décor
- ✓ Clothing & accessories
- ✓ Handmade items
- ✓ Collectibles

Drop-off at: Docent Office
By: December 5, 2025

Questions? Contact Eiko Kubota

All proceeds support Docent Council!

Around Town

By Maureen Nyhan

The THN welcomes your input! Please send any local or online activities you think USC PAM Docents might be interested in! The deadline is the 20th of the month prior to publication. The earlier the better! You may send them directly to Maureen: moho1234@gmail.com

Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena

50 Years: A Golden Anniversary Weekend Celebration

DATE: Saturday, November 8 –

Sunday, November 9, 2025

TIME: 12:00pm – 7:00pm

As we mark 50 years as the Norton Simon Museum, join us for a weekend full of live music and art-making activities, plus the exhibitions [Gold: Enduring Power, Sacred Craft](#) and [Retrospect: 50 Years at the Norton Simon Museum](#). The celebration begins Friday and continues through Sunday. Admission to the Museum and all the activities are free and designed for visitors of all ages. [Register](#)

Chinese Historical Society Celebrates 50 Years

Good refresher course!

DATE: Golden Dragon Restaurant Saturday, November 8

TIME: 4pm to 6:30pm

[RSVP and More Info](#)

UNIVERSAL CITY

KOKUHO - limited release in LA at the AMC Universal City Walk starting November 14. Japan's second highest grossing film and official entry to the 2026 Academy Awards.

More information and trailer: <https://gkids.com/films/kokuho/>



Japan foundation Los Angeles

DATE: Nov 12

TIME: 2:000pm - 8:30pm

Register: [More Info](#)

IN PERSON Lecture: Japanese Sculpture before the Eighth Century! The Beauty of Japanese Sculpture: Before and During the Asuka Period.

The ingenuity and creativity of the people living in pre-Buddhism Japan can be seen in their surviving pottery and metalwork.

ONLINE Lecture: Onigiri: A Cultural Encounter by Professor Gavin Whitelaw

Date: Thursday Nov 13,

Time: 7:00 - 8:15PM

Admission FREE - [RSVP REQUIRED](#)

Drawing on his research and firsthand experiences in Japan, Dr. Whitelaw will discuss how onigiri (rice balls), a staple of Japanese convenience stores, reflects the country's evolving social and cultural landscape.



SHOSEIAN TEAHOUSE

Brand Park, Glendale

Date: Sunday, November 16

Time: 1:00-4:00PM

The martial arts and the healing arts have always been closely related together. Masashi Odate-sensei of the Katori Shinto Ryu will teach the basics of the healing art of shiatsu. Shiatsu is a pressure point method of body work that is highly effective in reducing pain and stress throughout the body. He will also explain the flow of Ki-energy and how to direct it for healing.

Pre-register at the glendaleteahouse.org website. Class size will be limited. Cost is \$25

Docent Musings

By Maureen Nyhan

Remembering an Exhibit in the “Old Japanese Gallery”

Some may remember the “old” Japanese Gallery, officially named the *Toshie and Frank Mosher Gallery of Japanese*, long-time support of Japanese art and the Museum. Prior, it was simply the Japanese Gallery, or Gallery 12. A favorite feature was the *tokonoma*, a small alcove traditionally used for displaying art or flowers. Children on tours were fascinated by it, imagining how they might use such a space in their own homes.

The gallery’s ceiling was made from thirty-nine painted panels from a 15th-century Buddhist temple. The children



liked spotting familiar figures and symbols within the intricate designs. Visitors enjoyed hearing how the ceiling’s figures and scenes represented pilgrims on their journey, standing in symbolically for those who could not make the pilgrimage themselves.

In 2011–2012, the year I completed docent training, the museum hosted *Meiji: Japan Rediscovered*, a memorable exhibition guest-curated by Kendall Brown. The Meiji period (1868–1912) was one of Japan’s most dynamic eras, marked by political reform, rapid modernization, and artistic innovation. Japanese artists began experimenting with new materials and techniques while responding to growing Western interest in Japanese aesthetics.



Studio portrait of a traditional Japanese street vendor, probably sold as a souvenir in the late 19th Century.

The exhibit featured works primarily from the Museum’s own collection—oil paintings, cloisonné, ivory carvings, ceramics, and other objects created for Western audiences. Many items were designed as souvenirs or export goods for travelers captivated by Japanese craftsmanship. Period photographs, popular with American tourists during the Meiji era, depicted iconic scenes such as Mt. Fuji, artisans at work, and women in traditional attire.



Woman with Fan, Rakusai

This cross-cultural exchange sparked a global fascination with Japanese art, leading to the so-called “Japan booms” in Europe and the United States. The enthusiasm for Japanese design and aesthetics, as seen in woodblock prints, pottery, bronzes, and kimono, can be likened to the passion many young Americans today feel for Japanese anime and manga.

The “Old Japanese Gallery” remains a cherished memory for many docents and visitors alike. I hope to share more reflections on its history and exhibitions in a future issue.