



## ... news flashes from the Ethnic Arts Council

May 2018

### CHAIR'S MESSAGE – Rick Baum



#### THE AFRICAN FUND GETS A WORTHY NAME!

The Board of Directors of the EAC has named its newest specialized fund **The Polly Nooter Roberts African Fund**. It will support all things African - exhibitions, research, publications, fellowships, innovative projects and more - and in doing so we hope to perpetuate Polly's passion for African art and culture, past and present.

The EAC benefited for years from Polly's generous sharing of knowledge, insight and enthusiasm about the nature, origins, and aesthetics of the art of Africa. We reveled in the cross-pollination of the art of the Luba and of Alison Saar. She showed us bridges between people, forms and expressions of art, and the ideas of beauty that unify our understanding of the place of art in the world. We were beckoned to enter that world and to call it home, and we are so much better for having accepted that invitation.

Polly is a model of what happens when an impassioned teacher meets an audience eager to learn the special secrets at the heart of that ardor. That ardor plays such an important role in our organization and in our lives. We are forever grateful to her!

#### THE BOARD RETREATS TO PLAN THE NEXT 50 YEARS (OR SOME OF IT)

Planning for the future is something we constantly tell ourselves to do, and somehow something always seems to come up and distract us. The Board will be looking at the future of the EAC as part of a weekend retreat to Ojai at the end of July. The topics will include what kind of organization will we be in ten years. Devotees? Academics? Collectors? How will we attract new and younger members



while satisfying the needs of our existing ones? How can we better tap into the rich ethnic diversity of our community to spread the bounty of ethnic arts? Will we be able to prosper and grow in an era of expanding choices and instant gratification?

**SAFARI TO CAPE TOWN, NAMIBIA, BOTSWANA AND ZIMBABWE**

**Nicola Monro**

Our 21-day Southern Africa Safari group numbers 9 EAC members and we begin on September 1 in Cape Town with a packed program including a day in the Cape Winelands, a day tour of the city and the beautiful Cape Peninsula and a morning with a VIP tour of Zeitz-MOCAA, the only contemporary African art museum in Africa. We will follow that with visits to prominent African tribal and contemporary art and field collectors.



The Namibia safari includes guided walking and driving safaris in game parks and heritage areas such as ancient rock painting sites, visits to the OvaHimba, Bushman-San, and Herero settlements where traditional lifestyles are increasingly encroached by modernity. Namibia is home to the world's largest population of cheetahs and black rhinos, desert elephants and lions. We will meet community leaders and hear more about how they mitigate threats such as climate change and the pressure to acculturate to western lifestyles and values.

A five day optional tour will take our group to Botswana, and especially Chobe National Park where a plethora of wildlife can be viewed. And of course the group will travel next door to Zimbabwe to visit Victoria Falls , the largest waterfall in the world alongside the amazing biodiversity associated with the rainforest microclimate.



This tour will serve as the template for future EAC curated art & culture tours offered to our members and aimed at providing an historical and social context to the country and peoples whose art we admire and often collect.



## The EAC Grants Program

Feelie Lee • Chair, Grants Committee



Once again the EAC Grants Program continues full force since its formal beginnings in 2004. Over the past fourteen years the EAC has awarded nearly \$300,000 in grants and in-kind support to a variety of individuals, non-profit organizations and especially local museums.

In the latest cycle (from 2015 to 2017) more than \$85,000 has been awarded for nine museum-based projects which includes a Handbook and e-Book on **Latin American Colonial Art**; an archaeological focused exhibition on **Mesoamerican Figurines** excavated in Peten, Guatamala; a comprehensive exhibition, **Striking Iron**, on blacksmith art in Africa along with a scholarly book at the Fowler; and last the

first full presentation of **Fiji Art and Life** opening in 2019 at LACMA.

By supporting difficult-to-fund research projects, important publications, unusual exhibitions, and/or travel and related activities, EAC provides our local museums with much-needed support in a timely manner, often within a **month** of their submission. Such a partnership insures that the EAC mission is further advanced by the expertise of museums and their staff. While EAC is not the Ford Foundation by any means, its seed grants (ranging from \$10-\$15,000) with a one month turnaround time is a welcome and reliable source for cash-strapped individuals and museums. All EAC grants are based on a request for proposal (RFP) emanating from the EAC Board and, depending on monies raised, are given out annually.

Like many organizations the EAC offers a range of restricted grants alongside its general grant offerings. To wit: the **Virginia Field Scholars Fund (VFSF)** focuses on all thing Pre-Colombian; the **Polly Nooter Roberts African Fund** encompasses all things African (including African American); and the **President's Fund** is dedicated to the future health and welfare of EAC.

As EAC looks to the future, there will be challenges as well as opportunities to address the changing demographics (where have all the collectors gone?), the proliferation of social media platforms offers EAC funding options for film and video projects to better amplify its Mission, the importance of hands-on/experiential programs like field trips & curated international tours to name a few.





These will be exciting times for a Grants Program to make an impact....and again insure that the EAC remains a dynamic force in promoting the understanding and appreciation of ethnic art –both ancient and contemporary - through its programs and activities.



**NEW MEMBERS: 2017 to the Present ...**

**A warm WELCOME to our new members. EAC appreciates your expertise, enthusiasm and support.**

**Gassia Armenian  
Darya Jones  
Kim Richter  
Susan Keane  
Valerie Lezin  
Laura Neuhoff  
Peggy Weidman  
Lynn Doran**

**Lauren Irell  
Chris Jones  
Carryl Carter  
Suzanne Muchnic  
Miranda Nesler  
James Trotto-Bono  
Victoria Gerard  
Miriam Smith**

**Stephanie & Brian Morehouse  
Marie & Time Molina-McCaslin  
Susie & Robert Thum  
Mary Lou Solbrig  
Andrew & Ellen Kaplan  
Carol Epstein  
David & Kathryn Olson**

**Tony Berlant  
Susan Raphael  
Peter Keller  
Marydee Donnan  
Justine Linforth  
Ellen Pearlstein  
Larry Kent**



**Endnotes:**

Please send any relevant information, upcoming events, articles to consider for future issues of the EAC e-News to Nicola Monro, Editor, at [nicolamonro@gmail.com](mailto:nicolamonro@gmail.com)

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**The Ethnic Arts Council of Los Angeles (EAC)  
• Advancing the knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of Ethnic Art •  
[www.ethnicartscouncil.org](http://www.ethnicartscouncil.org)**

**Become a member! Contact: Tamara Hoffman at  
[tamara.hoffman222@gmail.com](mailto:tamara.hoffman222@gmail.com)**

