



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

**MAY 2013**

### **SPECIAL EDITION:**

#### ***BEHIND THE SCENES MUSEUM TOURS AND STUDY GROUP INFO!***

**At our October 2012 Annual Dinner and Silent Auction, three opportunities to bid on available slots for behind the scenes tours were offered. All available spaces were sold out, raising additional monies for the EAC General Fund.**

#### **Behind the Scenes: Fowler Museum at UCLA (by Mark Johnson)**

Last January 10 EAC members had the privilege of touring the inner sanctum of the Fowler Museum, led by curator Roy Hamilton, a specialist in Indonesian tribal art. We were first shown the main room for evaluating new donations, with a large group of pieces laid out on tables. Each item is identified, authenticated, and examined for condition issues, including insect damage, prior to official inclusion in the collection.

Another room on the tour held items for further detailed examination. One area was used for building miniature models of proposed exhibition space. Another room held items prepped for display.

The highlight was a walk through the onsite storage facilities. Like most museums, storage is limited and often chaotic. The Fowler is no exception with larger pieces stored in all of the available open space and smaller items stuffed into movable shelves.

The Fowler is holding a large collection of artifacts, but of special interest to yours truly, are the objects from Indonesia, many from the Jerome Joss collection. Joss was an important and eccentric local collector, who passed away some years ago. Amongst the treasures were ancestral figures (Tau-Tau) and vault doors from Sulawesi Island, altar figures (Aitos) from Timor Island, and ironwood sculptures (Patong) from Borneo Island.







## Behind the Scenes: Southwest Museum (by Philip Garaway)

On Saturday, January 12th, a small group of EAC members participated in a behind-the-scenes tour of the Southwest Museum in Highland Park. Acting director Kim Walters and museum curator Paige Bardolph led the tour. Assisting was Philip Garaway, EAC board member and Native American art dealer.

The group was taken throughout the museum and saw the conservation and cataloging of the museum's extensive collection of Native American artifacts. Much of the collection will be moving to the museum's new state-of-the-art storage and research facility in Burbank. We had the opportunity to walk through their basket storage facility, which currently houses some 14,000 examples of historic Native American Baskets. Their collection of baskets happens to be one of the two largest collections in the world.

We also had the opportunity to visit the Braun library that holds a vast collection of important early photographs of the native people of the American southwest. It also holds a vast collection of recordings of Hispanic and Native American music recorded by the late Charles Lummis.

Founded in 1907 by Charles Lummis writer, adventurer, and self taught anthropologist the Southwest Museum was LA's first museum. His home, which still stands near the museum in Highland Park, became a salon for early LA artists and intellectuals.

We ended the morning with a picnic in the museum's central patio and the conversation was lively and animated. It happened to be a glorious winter day with views of the snow covered San Gabriel's and downtown LA. A special thanks to Georgia Case, EAC board member, who help organize the event and who brought wonderful food for all to enjoy.







## Behind the Scenes: LACMA

In December of 2012, a larger group of EAC members and guests were given a private tour of the conservation department at the LA County Museum of Art.





## EAC STUDY GROUPS:

### Tribal Asia Study Group: 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting in January (by Mark Johnson)

In January, the Tribal Asian Study Group held their 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting to discuss tribal art. Martha and Avrum Bluming hosted a wonderful and informative meeting on the arts and culture of Austronesian peoples, especially the aboriginal cultures of Taiwan Island (Formosa Island). They presented a slide show and talk, based on a recent trip they took to Taiwan, where they were able to visit a few important collections.

San Francisco based dealer and tribal art expert, Tom Murray generously loaned two rare and beautiful objects from this area (an Atayal shell jacket and a Paiwan or Rukai sword). Martha and Avrum also provided a couple of additional pieces (a Paiwan or Rukai double wedding cup and shaman's box). It is extremely difficult to find such objects and we were lucky to have an opportunity to see these pieces in person.

If you are interested in seeing other objects from this area, please visit the Fowler Museum at UCLA. They have a complete canoe from the Yami people, a large wood granary from the Paiwan or Rukai people, a large wood sculpture/panel from the Paiwan people, and a hat with animal teeth, likely from the Paiwan people.

For more information on the Tribal Asian Study Group, please contact Mark Johnson at: [gallery@markajohnson.com](mailto:gallery@markajohnson.com).







\*Photo of Atayal shell jacket courtesy of Tom Murray.



## Additional proposed Study Groups:

EAC board member and African art collector, Richard Baum has agreed to host and sponsor an organization meeting for an African Study Group. If you are interested and participating and/or contributing in this group, please contact Richard directly: [rnbaum@hotmail.com](mailto:rnbaum@hotmail.com).

Study groups for Native American Indian and Pre-Columbian art have been suggested. Any EAC members interested in these topics may contact Mark Johnson, who will direct these enquires to other potential contributors.



## Endnotes:

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**Contact: Mark Johnson, Editor at [gallery@markajohnson.com](mailto:gallery@markajohnson.com)**

## **The Ethnic Arts Council of Los Angeles (EAC)**

**• Dedicated to Advancing the Knowledge, Interest, and Appreciation of Ethnic Art •**

**Become a member! Contact: Tamara Hoffman:**

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