

**ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTATIONS FOR THE
2011 VIRGINIA DOCENT EXCHANGE**

We suggest you review each presentation below and advise us of your preferences so we may be able to plan on having programs schedule as best as possible for you to attend. You will be able to select three programs of the twelve below.

CHRYSLER MUSEUM

Alexandra Hunter Phone: (757) 333-6268

Email: ayhunter@chrysler.org

Session Title: *The Science of Glass*

Presenter to be advised

The connection between science and glass is undeniable. In conjunction with *Art of Glass 2*, a region-wide celebration of glass in the spring of 2009, the Chrysler Museum of Art organized a new tour to appeal to local schools, families, and adults. The Science of Glass was an enormous success, and Chrysler docents continue to offer the tour in our permanent galleries. Chrysler docent and professor of chemistry at William and Mary College, Homer Smith, alongside Museum Educator Alexandra Hunter and experienced docent Sue Ellen Kaplan (who encourages students to discover the "Eureka!" moments of glass history), will highlight the tour and offer insights into how science can be integrated into any museum environment.

CHRYSLER MUSEUM

Dr. Richard Brown Phone: 757-333-6268 Email: ayhunter@chrysler.org

Session Title: *African Masks*

Dr. Richard Brown spent over thirty years as a missionary and practicing doctor in central and Western African. During this session, Dr. Brown will highlight his experience coming to know the rich cultures of Africa and share his knowledge of the African masks on display in the Chrysler's collection and his own home. The session will end with a discussion on how we, as educators, can best use these objects on our tours.

CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER OF VA

Holly Ackiss, Phone: (757) 425.0000 x.23 Email: Holly Ackiss <holly@cacv.org>

Session Title: *How Fresh Are YOU? ART: 21 – Art in the Twenty-First Century*

What is Contemporary? The CACV defines contemporary as the "significant art of our times." Many of the artists we show at the Museum are living and working today. The objects that we show are new, recent and often considered cutting-edge because the artists who made them are trying to show viewers something they have never seen before. While contemporary artists may refer to traditional

tropes or point to specific art historic references, they are typically attempting to break from tradition.

This presentation will discuss how contemporary artist are conveying certain ideas about aesthetics or multiple ideas about larger, societal issues, reflecting who we are as a culture and as a society today.

MAIER MUSEUM

PANEL

Session Title: *Taking the Fear out of Being a Docent*

This session will address common anxieties for those aspiring to lead tours, such as fear of public speaking, and not knowing everything about the history of art. "Seasoned" docents will share advice (more substantive than "just imagine the audience in their underwear") and answer questions and concerns from "emerging" docents.

MAIER MUSEUM

PANEL

Session Title: *How Academic Museums Engage Collge Students, Faculty and Staff*

PANEL

Reaching college-age students is a challenge for all museums, not just for those parts of an academic community. Panelists will describe programs, which have been successful, as well as initiatives that fell short of the mark. Among the topics covered would be the formation, care and feeding of a campus student docent "club".

MAIER MUSEUM

PANEL

Session Title: *Engaging Non-Tradional School Groups*

Throughout Virginia, school districts have cut back on field trips. At the same time, home schooling is on the rise. Panelists will share information about how their museum engages non-tradition school groups including after school programming, private "tutoring" and other ways docents can keep study of the visual arts part of a school-ager's life experience.

MUSCARELLE MUSEUM

Barbara A. Shotton Phone: (757) 221-8192

Session Title: *Design Systems in the Life of Nature*

Co-presenter: Marge Giesecking Phone: (757) 220-2476 Email: margeng@cox.net

There are a number of design systems throughout nature. We are going to discuss the following design systems: (1) spirals; (2) meanderings; (3) spheres;

(4) branchings; (5) radials; (6) hexagons, polygons, triangles; (7) clusters; (8) vertebrae; (9) grids

The objective is to create an awareness of these particular design systems as they exist in nature and relate them to works of art showing that the systems are also utilized by artists. These artistic creations of nature can be found in all of the media that artists use, e.g., painting, sculpture, drawing, architecture, photography, etc. The artwork of each artist may or may not be related to actual knowledge of these design systems in nature.

This workshop displays actual pictures of the above nine design systems in nature juxtaposed with samples of artists' works that have incorporated the design systems into their works.

UNIVERSITY OF VA MUSEUM OF ART

Marsha Berger Phone: (434 202 0842) Email: marsha@marshaberger.com

Session Title: *"Dr. Curator: or How to Stop Worrying and Learn to Love Modern Art"* Gay Frix, Lynn Siemon, Ronny Waters

Most new ideas present challenges, but none have puzzled so many as new forms of art. Technological changes press into our lives daily, and artists respond by turning away from the tried and true and move to new means of expression.

For the general public, lack of understanding of the unfamiliar usually produces anxiety. The docent is needed to help clear away the haze, and the docent's best friend is the curator. Whenever there is a "new decade" of art, one way to understand it is to take note of how the curator creates the theme for a show, selects the art, and places the pieces in the galleries.

Using slides of art in the permanent collection of the UVa Museum of Art, our presentation will show groupings of contemporary art that promote dialog among the pieces in each setting. This approach of analyzing what and why the curators select pieces raises everyone's level of comprehension. The docents are then better able to embrace, explain, and promote with passion the modern art in their museum.

UNIVERSITY OF VA MUSEUM OF ART

Aimee Hunt Phone: (434) 243-2050 Email: adh4q@virginia.eduMuseum

Session Title: *The Family Art Jam: Creating Depth in Children's Programming, Part Two*

The University of Virginia Art Museum's *Family Art JAMs* are programs for children ages 5-12 that combine age-appropriate tours and hands-on art projects carefully planned to make the Museum's exhibitions accessible to young children. In the second part of this workshop participants will be led through a

sample hands-on art making session, with discussion throughout on how to communicate essential information. We will explore structuring the exercise for maximum success, how to teach necessary motor skills, and getting children to “think big.”

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ART

Joyce Stargardt Phone: (804) 353-3736 Email: jfstarga@aol.com
Session Title: *Art and Science – A Winning Combination*

The fun and satisfaction for many art museum docents is exploring a variety of mediums in the visual arts. Docents can explain how materials used can reflect time, culture, geography and the experience of the artist.

Throughout the history of art natural and synthetic materials have been used to express artistic vision. In this session we will explore the combination of art and science in specific works. Participants will be provided examples of raw materials such as paper, wood, fiber and pigments. We will learn how these resources have been used in the art world by looking at examples from our museum’s collections. Come and explore how artists throughout the ages have used raw materials.

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ART

Celeste Johnston Phone: (804) 321-8155 Email: Cbotanart@aol.com
Session Title: *Write to Remember*

This Presentation and Workshop combines two successful presentations/workshops from the past and 1 tour from VMFA: (1) *To Rhyme it is to Know It*, presented at VMFA three years ago and (2) *The Looking Log* at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2003. The tour is VMFA’s tour, *The Write Stuff*.

It has been proven that rhyming helps us to recall and remember. Creating our own rhyme and verse increases that ability. The left-brain handles words, lists, numbers, dates and places. The right brain handles rhythm, imagination, color, shape and space. By using our left-brain and right brain in this manner or process we can create a rhyme, poem or verse that communicates to the reader or viewer the sense of a complete experience in a short time.

“We think because we have pointed our eyes at something we see what is there to be seen but we are profoundly mistaken,” David Perkins, *The Intelligent Eye*. Stopping to look for at least 5 minutes and putting into everyday words our impressions and observations we begin to see. Keep these words in mind as you look; discovery, surprise, puzzlement. By writing down our impressions, observations, discoveries and other questions we have asked ourselves we begin to vividly recall and remember. *The Write Stuff* tour adds another dimension - the 5 senses.

Combining the 2 PW's and the tour, we use experiences from everyday life to put art into words and if you close your eyes the words become art. Participants will take part by choosing a work of art; looking at it using the left-brain, right brain exercise, the looking log exercise and worksheets from *The Write Stuff* tour. Then the experience will be shared with the group. Gallery tour.

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ART

Alexandria McGrath Phone: (804) 794-3992 Email: amcgrath2@aol.com

Session Title: *Connecting With Teens*

Session Description/Objectives The adolescent visitor is perhaps the most unnecessarily maligned museum visitor, having been called "uncooperative," "rude," and "overly self-conscious." On the contrary, the adolescent visitor can find in the art museum an outlet for self-reflection, expression, and communication, which corresponds to the period of change and transition through which he/she is developing. The docent can find in the adolescent visitor a quiet and challenging but receptive audience.

Goal: To present ideas for docents, which make connecting with teen audiences easier, more productive, and more fun.

Summary:

1. Establishing rapport
2. Writing tours for teen audiences
3. Overview of three tours, using images on PowerPoint that has a proven history with teenagers. ("Reading a Work of Art", "Is it ART?" "Art History 101: connecting with the SOLs")

National Docent Symposium 2011

The registration fee is \$400 and includes meals, programs, and transportation to scheduled off-site functions. Plan to join us for pre-symposium events on Saturday evening, October 1 and all day Sunday, October 2. The pre-symposium events will require an additional fee.

Be sure to arrive by Sunday evening, October 2 for our welcome dinner hosted by the Saint Louis Art Museum. The NDS Conference will conclude on Wednesday, October 5 at 11:00 am. A post-symposium tour of the Arch will be available that afternoon.

Registration will open on April 1, 2011. Be sure to check back for registration information.

For more information:

<http://www.slam.org/nds2011/>

KRAMER/NDSC EDUCATIONAL GRANT APPLICATION

Applications should be returned no later than March 1, 2011. Questions may be directed to Paula Calvin by phone 206-632-1400, or by email at spcalvin@earthlink.net.

Name

Address

Phone Number (Home)

Email address

Name and address of museum or institution you are representing (no session presenters are eligible)

Name of staff member we may call as a reference

Phone No:

Email

Type of museum (e.g., art, science, natural history, etc.)

How many docents are in your program?
attended a previous NDSC Symposium?

Has a docent from this museum or institution

Does your museum provide financial assistance for docents to attend this symposium?

If not, is financial assistance necessary for you to attend?

Please write a brief statement explaining your interest in attending the St. Louis Symposium.

Mention any special talents or experiences that you can share with other docents. (Continue on the back side if necessary.)

How will your museum benefit from your attendance at the Symposium?

I am a volunteer docent and wish to apply for a Kramer/NDSC Educational Grant (\$400 waiver of registration fee) to attend the National Docent Symposium in St. Louis on October 1-5, 2011.

Signature

Date

Please return applications by March 1, 2011 to: Paula Calvin, 4423 Phinney Ave. N., #F, Seattle WA 98103; or by email to spcalvin@earthlink.net