

# FRIENDS OF ETHNIC ART

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FEA Newsletter

October 2010

## *Go to the Mountain and Bring Back My Boulder:*

### **How Olmec Rulers Acquired Stone for Their Colossal Heads The 2010 Elizabeth and Lewis K. Land Memorial Lecture**

By Richard A. Diehl, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus, University of Alabama

Saturday, October 30, 2010 – 10 a.m.

Koret Auditorium, de Young Museum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco  
(Free admission)



*Olmec Colossal Head #1  
Xalapa Museum, Veracruz, Mexico*

Olmec civilization, which began sometime around 1400 BC, was centered in the Gulf Coast states of Veracruz and Tabasco in southern Mexico. Olmec architects and artists produced the earliest monumental structures and sculptures in Mexico, including enormous basalt portrait heads—weighing up to 24 tons—of their rulers. Many questions surround the creation and meanings of these monuments but none are more intriguing than how the Olmecs managed to move the stone boulders on which they were carved, some weighing more than 20 tons, over the many miles of swamps, jungles, hills, and rivers that separate their quarry sources from their final destinations at San Lorenzo and La Venta.

This presentation will examine how the Olmecs, who lacked large domestic animals, wheels, and other sophisticated mechanical devices, accomplished this feat, not just once, but many times during the course of their history. Combining archaeological evidence with insights drawn from other ancient civilizations as well as modern experiments in other parts of the world, Prof. Diehl will outline some of the technological and, above all else, social solutions the Olmecs must have employed in order to achieve tasks of a magnitude never previously attempted in the ancient Americas.

**Richard A. Diehl** received his Doctorate degree in Anthropology from Penn State University in 1969. Diehl is a Mesoamerican archaeologist specializing in pre-Columbian cultures of central Mexico. His research also included the Olmec culture of the tropical lowlands of the Mexican Gulf Coast. He has done research at San Lorenzo Tenochtitlan, Tula, Kaminaljuyu, and Metacapan. Among his numerous publications are the highly regarded books: *In the Land of the Olmec* (coauthored with Michael D. Coe), *Tula: The Toltec Capitol of Ancient Mexico*, and *The Olmec: America's First Civilization*.

This lecture takes place in conjunction with the de Young Museum exhibit **Olmec: Colossal Masterworks of Ancient Mexico**, opening on February 19, 2011. The exhibit travels from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where it opens in October. It is the first presentation on the West Coast of the colossal works and precious small-scale sculptures produced by Mexico's earliest civilization. See Other Events in this newsletter for a related panel discussion and symposium in Los Angeles on October 22-23, 2010.



If you have events you would like to have included in the **FEA Newsletter**, please send information to the newsletter editor, Carol Paxson, [paxson@polytope.org](mailto:paxson@polytope.org), or to Friends of Ethnic Art, P.O. Box 192430, San Francisco, CA 94119-2430. We will include the information as space allows.

#### **ADMISSION TO FEA EVENTS:**

Unless otherwise noted, lectures and museum admission are free of charge. Bring a friend!

#### **MEMBERSHIP:**

FEA welcomes those who are interested in ethnic art to join us. In recognition of continuing difficult economic times, you may join in the membership year September 2010 through August 2011 at no expense. Simply send your name, address, phone, and email to our President and Membership Chair, Jo Floyd, [jo.floyd@gmail.com](mailto:jo.floyd@gmail.com), or mail the information to the address above. We use phone and email only as an efficient way to contact you personally about FEA events.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGE?:**

Please let us know by sending your new contact information (mail and/or e-mail address) to the FEA address (above) or to Jo Floyd at [jo.floyd@gmail.com](mailto:jo.floyd@gmail.com).





Dave talks up an aboriginal painting.

## FEA Party—Good Times!

Our annual party and auction took place this past September at the Julia Morgan-designed home of Judith Hilberg. There was something for everyone in this beautiful location—Judith's huge, fascinating, and eclectic collection of tribal art, a terraced garden filled with contemporary sculpture, nooks and crannies to explore inside and out, and wide views of the Bay from the hilltop perch.

The Tribal Asia theme of this year's event was carried through with outstanding ethnic outfits displayed by our members, the tribal Asian objects and textiles in the auction, and the tasty, unusual pan-Southeast Asian food from Old Weang Ping Village in Oakland. We feasted on coconut milk soup; a rare Lao dish of salmon with a bamboo sauce; Pad Thai noodles; a lightly curried stew of pumpkin, roast duck and forest vegetables; and another rare dish of Morning Glory leaves and vines with bean curd. To top it off we enjoyed ice creams of exotic

South Asian fruits and chocolate-covered ginger pieces with our coffee. Delectable!

Of the hundred members who were in attendance, 37 went home with newly acquired treasures from the auction. Again this year we included a silent auction phase as well as the live auction. The 120 lots from both phases yielded a total of more than \$10,000 for the FEA coffers, to be put to the good use of sponsoring lectures, programs, events, grants, publications, tours, trips, social activities, donations, and museum co-sponsorships. Whew! A big *THANK YOU* to all of you who decided to go ahead and buy this year!

It takes an army of folks to put together our auction party every year. We'd like first to thank Judith Hilberg for opening her home and garden to us, for giving tours of her wonderful collection—and last but not least, for the tasty cucumber salad that accompanied our exotic meal. *THANK YOU, JUDITH!!*

A special thanks also goes to Gregory Ghent, who offered his home and expertise for auction preparation. Then there are the many of you who have given generously of your time, your own ethnic art collections, your organizational, computer, and photography skills, and your dignity (thank you auctioneers!). *THANK YOU*, Karl and Ginger Bareis, Marsden and Elizabeth Blois, Jaap and Mary Bongers, Winfield Coleman, Dave DeRoche (and Nancy DeRoche in spirit), Jeff DeLisio, Susan Dutcher, Jaret Elbert (and Gary Cole), Susan Evoy, Sally Forelli (and Betty Wass), Cecily Harris (and parents John and Molly Harris), Enrique and Judy Klein, Diana MacDonald, Paul Maher (and Anne Gregory in spirit), Eleanor Murray, Scott McCue, Michel and Louise Quenon, Karen Silverberg, Dick and Beany Wezelman, and the Estate of John and Monica Halley. We couldn't have done it without you. Can't wait until next year!



Roz models her new Miao jacket.



Judith enjoying the party.

### Finalists—Impromptu Hat Contest

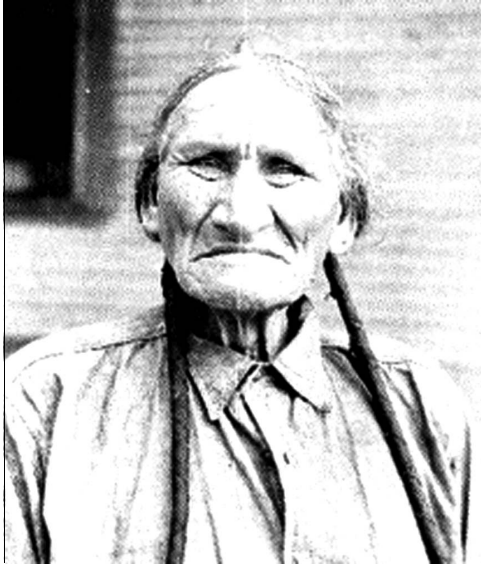


[Thanks to Jeff DeLisio for the photos on this page.]

# One Hundred Summers: A Kiowa Calendar Record

*A slide lecture by Candace S. Greene  
February 14, 2010, Marin Cultural Center*

Reviewed by Winfield Coleman



*Silver Horn (Haungooah)*  
(Photo by Gilbert McAllister, 1932)

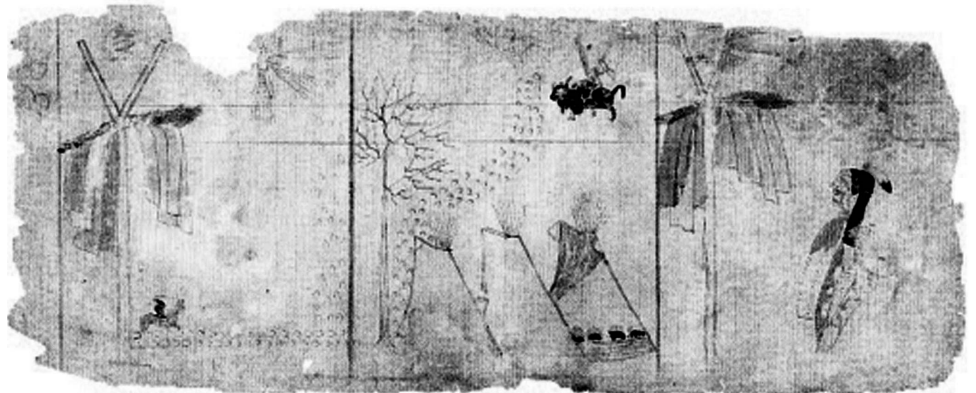
It almost didn't happen. While rummaging through the contents of the safe belonging to her late aunt, Nelia Mae Roberts, Marcia Bassity accidentally kicked a package wrapped in brown paper that evidently had been lying underneath the safe for decades. Thinking it was old paper, she hazarded a quick look before consigning it to the trash. Inside were many tattered sheets of paper, darkened with time and ravaged by vermin and water, but covered with pen and ink drawings glowing with delicate watercolor washes. Mrs. Bassity contacted the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History at the University of Oklahoma. Thus began the process of donating the drawings and other items from the Roberts collection, to the University. The university in turn contacted Candace Greene of the Smithsonian to identify them. Dr. Greene confirmed that they comprised a calendar history of the Kiowa people by the eminent Kiowa artist, Haungooah, also known as Silver Horn.

Having already completed a study of Silver Horn's life and work, Dr. Greene was the ideal collaborator for this project. Beyond her scholarly credentials, she had firsthand acquaintance with many Kiowa people. In addition, she had long served on the staff of the Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, and was familiar with its collections.

Calendars were not a major art form on the Plains. The Kiowa Indians are one of only three peoples north of Mexico (the other were the Teton Sioux and the related Yanktonai) who kept calendars. These consisted of pictographs that served as mnemonic devices to record the most important events of a year. They are sometimes referred to as winter counts, as the year was measured out by winters; but the events covered might happen at any time during the year. These calendars, painted on buffalo and cow hides, are unusual in giving a record of historical and proto-historical events from the Indian perspective.

While early Kiowa paintings on hide have not been preserved, a number of works on paper from the last quarter of the nineteenth century survive, most of them on the pages of ledger books or artists' drawing books. Generically called ledger books, these drawings, unlike the simple calendar pictures, include many details of the events they illustrate.

Silver Horn was a rare individual who both kept a calendar and made other types of drawings. An enormously gifted and prolific artist, his skill and his desire to communicate informa-



*A page representing the years 1876-1877*

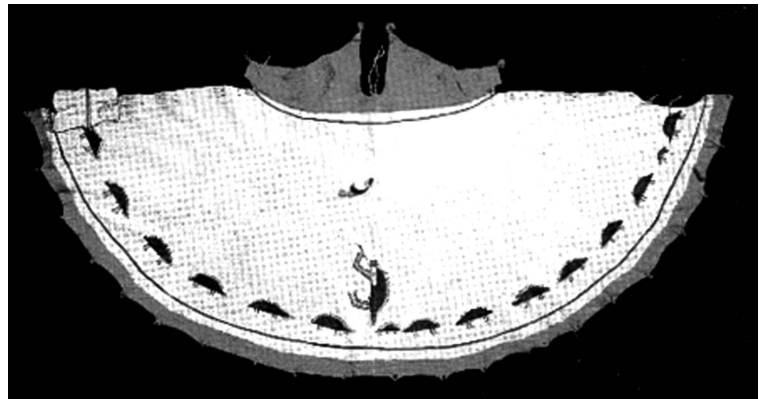
tion in graphic form, resulted in a calendar that is unique in the power of its images and the amount of information conveyed—far more elaborate than the calendar of any other calendar-keeper, and indeed in excess of the demands of the medium. In addition, Silver Horn brought the calendar into the 20th century, well beyond the scope of any other calendar.

The calendar is also unusual in that it depicts events both in summer and winter. A look at one page will give some idea of its scope. It covers the summer of 1876 to the summer of 1877. The seasons are divided by ruled vertical lines. The division on the left indicates 1876, the Kado (Sun Dance) When Sun Boy's Horses Were Stolen. The rayed figure indicates Sun Boy's name glyph. At this time, Indian Territory (Oklahoma) had become a haven for White horse thieves. The Kiowa never found the thieves. The forked pole with cloth offerings tied to it, and an eagle's tail, represents the center pole of the Kado; the numerous hoofprints represent the herd of horses, run off by a bearded White man in a hat, during the course of the ceremony.

The center division represents Rode A Buffalo Winter—the winter season represented by a bare tree. Sun Boy's name glyph is represented again, somewhat differently. He had received permission to lead a group of hunters off-reservation to hunt buffalo, which had become exceedingly scarce. A man fell from his horse and rode a buffalo, perhaps to avoid being trampled. The row of tipis probably represents the camp of the hunters, among them the Porcupine Tipi, reported to have been the last buffalo-hide tipi used by the Kiowa.

The division on the right represents the Measles Kado. The measles epidemic this year was particularly severe, killing even more children than the devastating epidemic of 1892.

This one page thus illustrates the many forces shadowing this dark period of Kiowa history: the White people crowding onto their land, stealing their land and property; the extermination of the buffalo and the resulting starvation; the erosion of traditional culture;



*The Porcupine Tipi of Black Cap, Smithsonian cat. #229,904*

and, most tellingly, the impact of pandemics on their community. This dismal view carries over into the twentieth century calendar, when the calendar ends in the winter of 1928-1929. The calendar represents delegations sent to Washington in futile attempts to negotiate with the government; tent revival meetings held by missionaries looking to save lost souls; and violent and tragic deaths.

But beyond their historical and artistic value, we are left with the question, why were the calendars kept at all? They were not intended to be a comprehensive calendar of the Kiowa, even though it reveals much about Kiowa history and culture. During the years of the first half of the calendar, the Kiowa were nomadic hunters, and many entries covered the shifting political landscape of alliances and conflicts with other nations, indigenous and non-native. The second half covers a time when the Kiowa were restricted to their reservations, and many aspects of their life were controlled or exterminated.

Kiowa pictorial calendars were created primarily as mnemonic devices, intended to organize tribal history rather than record it in full. The first calendar was created by Little Bluff, or Tohausan, who was principal chief of the tribe from 1833 to 1866. The first calendar entry is from 1828, only five years before Little Bluff's ascendancy. Dr. Greene suggests that the purpose of the calendar was to reinforce Little Bluff's attempt to fuse the various Kiowa bands into a nation by giving them a common history. In this attempt he was successful.

Silver Horn's record is unique in the level of its artistry and the amount of visual detail confined within each tiny image. It allows us to move beyond the specific events depicted to tracing the texture of Kiowa life during a period of enormous and heartbreaking change.

# FEA Events and News

## Land Lecture: How Olmec Rulers Acquired Stone for Their Colossal Heads

by Richard A. Diehl, Ph.D.

October 30, 2010, 10 a.m.

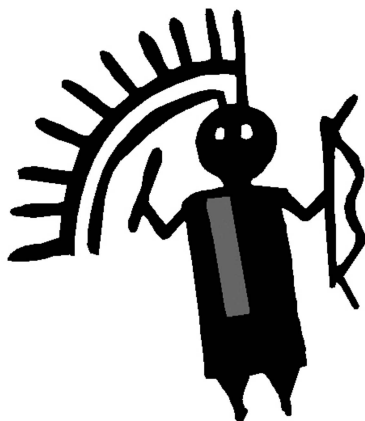
See the lead article in this newsletter for details.

## Crocker Museum and private collection tour!

Sunday, November 21, 2010

FEA has organized a special visit to the Loet Vanderveen Atrium of the new Crocker Museum in Sacramento, which opened on October 10 after three years of renovation and expansion. The Atrium displays the Crocker's growing collection of tribal art in a location where every museum visitor will be able to enjoy it. In conjunction with the Crocker visit, FEA members Paul Maher and Anne Gregory have invited us to lunch at their home and to view their outstanding collection of African art.

This is an event not to be missed! In order to reserve a place on the FEA-provided transportation, please RSVP to Susan Evoy, (650) 967-4742 or [susanevoys@yahoo.com](mailto:susanevoys@yahoo.com), so we can plan ahead. The event is \$20 if you RSVP by Nov 10 and \$25 thereafter. Send your check to Susan Evoy at 1539 Lilac Lane, Mountain View, CA 94043.



## Holiday Party

Sunday, December 5, 2010—Hold the Date!

For the second year, FEA is fortunate to be able to have our holiday party at the Bonhams & Butterfields viewing rooms (220 San Bruno Avenue, San Francisco), with a concurrent private preview of the Fine Native American Art auction, which will take place on December 6 starting at noon. Join us for festive ethnic food and conversation.

## Native American Art Studies Association sponsorship

FEA has voted to sponsor a Native American student to attend the next conference of the Native American Art Studies Association, to be held in Ottawa, Ontario, in October 2011. Our award will enable a young scholar to further his or her studies and make contacts within the field. In

the past, sponsorship has promoted continued active participation in the NAASA and significant contributions to the study of Native American art.

## Another dues-free year!

The FEA Board voted in June 2010 to continue our dues-free membership policy for another year. This means that current members and newcomers may join for free until September 2011. So tell all of your art enthusiast friends that this year is a great opportunity to join, meet like-minded people, and participate in intellectually stimulating and aesthetically satisfying events!

## OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

**Please note:** Although we have done our best to provide accurate time and date information, please check before you go in order to avoid disappointment.

### **Tribal SF 2010: 6th Annual SF Tribal Art Fair**

Fort Mason, Building D (former home of the Mexican Museum)

*Opening Night Preview:*

October 15, 2010, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., \$30 at the door

*Show hours:*

Saturday, October 16, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Sunday, October 17, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### **Textile Arts Council of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco**

*Ethnic Textile Bazaar 2010*

Sunday, November 14, 2010, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Moriarty Hall, St. Anne of the Sunset Church, San Francisco

The textiles on offer will include handwoven cloths and huipile from Central and South America, Indonesian antique batiks, Central Asian tribal textiles and jewelry, Amazon Shipibo cloths, jewelry from North Africa, Moroccan and Turkish carpets, textile books, and much more.

### **De Young Museum**

*To Dye For: A World Saturated in Color*

Through January 9, 2011

*To Dye For* features over 50 textiles and costumes, including a tie-dyed mantle from the Wari-Nasca culture of pre-Hispanic Peru (500–900 AD), a paste-resist Mongolian felt rug from the 15th–17th century, and a group of stitch-resist dyed 20th-century kerchiefs from the Dida people of the Ivory Coast. These historical pieces are contrasted with artworks from contemporary Bay Area artists.

*Docent Lecture: "Queens, Mothers, Matriachs: The African Woman in the de Young"*

October 24, 2010, 10:00 a.m.—Edith Freeman

*Docent Lecture: "Yua: Art of the Arctic"*

October 30, 2010, 2:15 p.m.—Jill LeCrone

### **Cantor Arts Center, Stanford**

*Vodoun/Vodounon: Portraits of Initiates*

October 13, 2010 – March 20, 2011

This photo exhibition provides a glimpse into the practice of modern-day vodou in the Republic of Benin. It features 25 diptychs by the Belgian photographer Jean-Dominique Burton. A documentary video, *VOODOO, the Origins*, plays alongside the artworks. Programs held in conjunction with the exhibit include a blessing by Bay Area Vodoun practitioners on October 13 at 5 p.m.; a series of films presented on November 4, 11 and 18 at 6 p.m.; a dance, music, and storytelling performance on December 2, at 6 p.m.; and a lecture entitled "Gods Without Green Cards," by Donald Cosentino, Ph.D., on January 13, 2011, at 6 p.m.

*Mami Wata: Arts for Water Spirits in Africa and Its Diasporas*

Through January 2, 2011

This exhibition explores 500 years of visual cultures and histories of the water deity widely known as Mami Wata ("Mother Water") through the diverse array of traditional and contemporary arts surrounding her — sculpture, paintings, masks, altars, and more from west and central Africa, the Caribbean, Brazil, and the United States. Guest curator Henry Drewal presents a lecture about Mami Wata and the exhibition on October 28 at 6:00 p.m.

### **Marin Museum of the American Indian**

*Hupa People of the 1950s: Photography by Ernest Marchall, 1920 - 1963, Member of Hoopa Valley Tribe*

Through January 20, 2011

A self-taught photographer, Mr. Marshall's work documents people of the area and changes in the land. His photographs capture four dances and beautiful ceremonial regalia.

### **Tribal and Textile Arts Show**

February 11-13, 2011 at Fort Mason

De Young benefit February 10, 2011, 6 p.m - 9 p.m.

### **Marin Art of the Americas Show**

February 26-27, 2011

Marin Civic Center Exhibition Hall, San Rafael

### **Endangered Threads Documentaries (ETD)**

This nonprofit has just released *Saving the Weavers: Small Assistance Programs for Maya Women in Highland Guatemala*, a 43-minute documentary focusing on ten dedicated people and their assistance programs. The 36-year Civil War (1960-1996) decimated the indigenous Maya population of Guatemala. Many of those who survived were widows without any means of support for themselves or their children. Other ETD films include *A Century of Color: Maya Weaving & Textiles*, *Manuela & Esperanza: The Art of Maya Weaving*, and *Splendor in the Highlands: Maya Weavers of Guatemala*. ETD documentaries are produced with both English and Spanish narration tracks. Although they are sometimes shown in museum settings, copies are also available online (\$20 plus \$6 shipping) on the nonprofit's website [www.endangeredthreads.org](http://www.endangeredthreads.org).

### **And Further Afield:**

#### **Los Angeles Asian & Tribal Art Show**

November 12-15, 2010, Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, Santa Monica

#### **Los Angeles County Museum of Art**

Olmec exhibition, related events:

*Panel Discussion: The Cascajal Block and Other Evidence of Early Writing in the New World*—Friday, October 22, 6:00 p.m.

*Symposium: New Discoveries*—Saturday, October 23, 9:00 a.m.

#### **The Getty Center, Los Angeles**

*Obsidian Mirror-Travels: Refracting Ancient Mexican Art and Archaeology*

November 16, 2010 – February 6, 2011

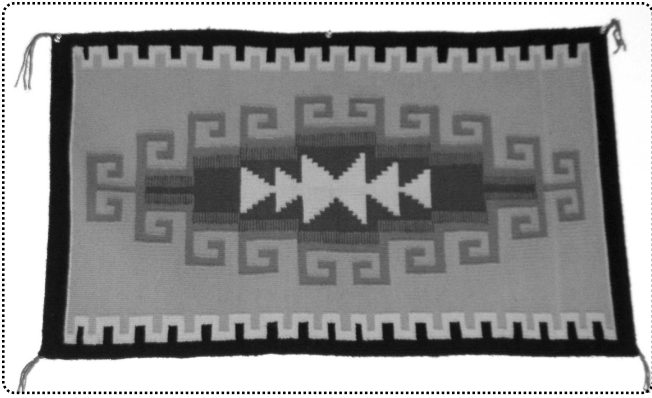
This exhibition explores representations of Mexican archaeological objects and sites made from the Colonial era to the present. The exhibition showcases depictions of the Aztec Calendar Stone and other Mexican antiquities as well as panoramic visions of Mexico. Some of the works exhibited are accurate, while others are fanciful; each portrays a distinct vision of Mexico.

#### **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**

*Dynasty and Divinity: Ife Art in Ancient Nigeria*

Through January 9, 2011

This major exhibition brings to Houston more than 100 works, most never before displayed outside Nigeria, dating from roughly 800 to 1400 AD.



**Friends of Ethnic Art**, founded in 1974, provides a focal point in the Bay Area for those interested in the traditional arts of Africa, Oceania, Central Asia and the Americas. FEA is a non-profit, educational, open-membership organization that offers illustrated lectures by noted speakers, social events and other programs to expand awareness of human expression in these traditional native arts. FEA has cooperative relationships with museums, universities and galleries in Northern California, as well as with noted academics and collectors worldwide. Our membership includes scholars, museum professionals, artists,

dealers, private collectors and other enthusiasts drawn to this field. FEA is dedicated to the continued advancement of education about and appreciation of the traditional arts of Africa, Oceania, Central Asia and the Americas.

### **MEMBER BENEFITS:**

- *A full annual calendar of illustrated scholarly lectures*
- *Insider views of museum exhibits and curator-led tours*
- *Visits and field trips to private collections, museums and galleries in the Bay Area and beyond*
- *Annual Ethnic Art Auction and Party*
- *Member newsletter with reviews of our lectures, highlights of upcoming events, news of special programs and ethnic art related activities*
- *The opportunity to make new friends with similar interests at informal FEA social events, in FEA social networks, by volunteering at FEA activities, and by working with the FEA Board of Directors*

*All FEA membership dues and income support the full range of FEA educational, social, and special interest activities and grants.*



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