



# FRIENDS OF ETHNIC ART

P.O. Box 192430 ~ San Francisco, California 94119-2430

Hotline: 415/487-8706

Website: [www.friendsofethnicart.org](http://www.friendsofethnicart.org)

FEA NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2008

## IN THIS ISSUE

### FEA Sponsored EVENTS

- **Feb. 10:** Two programs: **Dr. Wolfgang Schlink on *Australian Aboriginal art*** & **Dr. Daniel Mato on *Art of Metal in Africa***.
- **Feb. 25:** **Winfield Coleman on *Horse Masking of the Plains and Plateau Indians***.
- **Mar. 8:** **Dr. Richard Hansen on the ancient Maya site of *El Mirador***.
- **Mar. 16:** **Winfield Coleman on *Masks at the Marin Museum of the American Indian***.
- **Apr. 27:** **Michael Hamson on the *Art of Field Collecting***.

We are sponsoring two fascinating lectures

## Sunday, February 10

In conjunction with the annual SF Tribal and Textile Arts Show

Location:

The Firehouse, Fort Mason, San Francisco

The Firehouse is just to the right as you enter the Festival Pavilion at Fort Mason

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**11:00**

**Dr. Wolfgang Schlink**

### ***Aboriginal Australian Art—Understanding & Collecting***

Wolfgang Schlink, Director of Tribal eARTh Gallery in Los Angeles, explores the art and culture of the first Australians. Aboriginal art opens the window to a fascinating culture of some 50,000 years and offers rich ethnographic and anthropological testimony. At the same time its present-day abstract aesthetics and vibrant colors make the art attractive to the contemporary art collector. The richly illustrated art talk will also examine the market for Aboriginal art and offer tips for the buyer.

Dr. Schlink recently curated the exhibition *Australia Contemporary Aboriginal Art & Modern Architecture* at the MODAA Gallery in Culver City, CA. He serves on the board of the Ethnic Arts Council of Los Angeles. FEA members will recall his superb Firehouse lecture in 2007 *Barter, Blood, and Beauty—Beads in the Age of Discovery*.

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**2:30**

**Dr. Daniel Mato**

Professor Emeritus of Art History, Faculty of Fine Arts, The University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada

### ***Forged from the Fire: The Art of Metal in Africa***

For more than 2000 years, African artists have been creating objects made from metal, forged in iron or cast in bronze, which are integral to African life and take many forms. Tools, weapons, ritual sculptures, jewelry, and currencies are made symbolic and aesthetic by the hand of the blacksmith specific to his culture. In traditional African life, the blacksmith has a role that is fixed in myth and ritual and cannot be separated from his craft. Bronze working dating to the first millennium establishes a path that continues through today in the making of metal objects for adornment, ritual, or trade.

Dr. Mato will address the function, aesthetic, and history of these wonderfully crafted objects with illustrations from different cultures of sub-Saharan Africa.

## Friends of Ethnic Art events (cont'd.)

**Sunday February 25**

**At the Marin Center, San Rafael**

During the Kim Martindale Antique Indian and Tribal art show, at the entrance to the Marin Center.

**11:00**

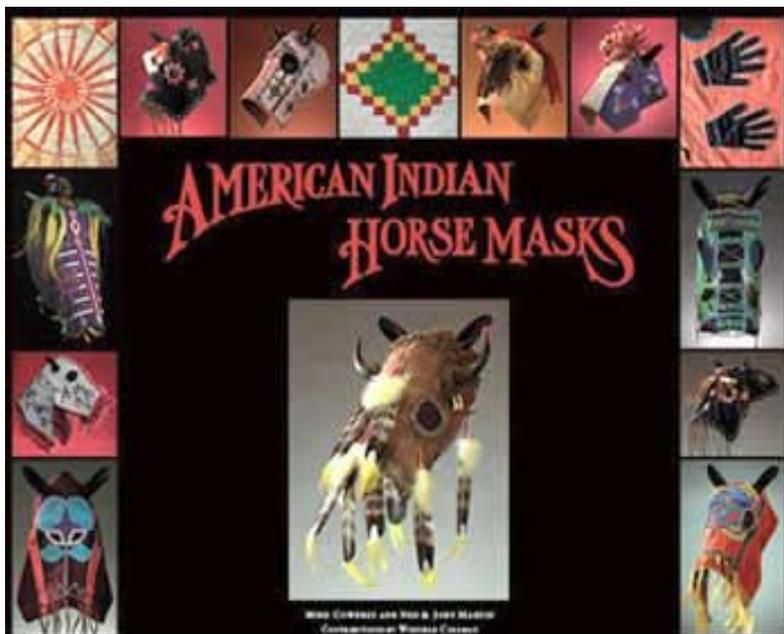
**Winfield Coleman**

***Dressed to Kill: Horse Masking of the Plains and Plateau Indians***

Mr. Coleman will cover masking in the broad sense, focused especially on the wonderful masks drawn over the heads of horses, but also touching on various other accouterments and, especially, horse paints, as well as the historical origins of these various components.

**Winfield Coleman** is an artist and a scholar who has published numerous articles on American Indian culture, and illustrated museum catalogs and ethnographic books. He is a contributor to the award winning book, *American Indian Horse Masks* (Hawk Hill Press, 2006). From 2002 to 2005 he was Curatorial Assistant at the Cantor Art Center, Stanford University. He also is a board member of the Friends of Ethnic Art.

***American Indian Horse Masks* is the 2007 winner of the Witterborn Book Award for the best art/historical book of the year. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.**



### **The FEA Newsletter**

is published several times a year. If you have events you would like to have included, please send information to:

Friends of Ethnic Art

PO Box 192430

San Francisco CA 94119-2430

We will attempt to include the information as space allows.

### **Admission to FEA Events:**

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

### **Please Note:**

All events listed in the FEA newsletter are subject to schedule changes. Please call ahead to confirm date, time, and price of admission at each event's venue.

### **Address Change?**

Send a postcard to us at Friends of Ethnic Art or contact our hotline or website.



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## **Friends of Ethnic Art events (cont'd.)**

**March 8**

**1:00**

**Location: The Belvedere Community Center  
450 San Rafael Ave, Belvedere.**

**For directions see below or [www.btrecreation.org/facility.htm](http://www.btrecreation.org/facility.htm)**

We are honored to present in cooperation with the Global Heritage Fund:

**Dr. Richard Hansen**

***The Wonders of the Mirador Archeological and Wildlife Area:  
Investigations and Opportunities in the Heart of the Maya Biosphere Reserve***

Dr. Hansen is a world-renowned explorer, archaeologist, author, and conservationist working deep in the jungles of Guatemala to save the Cradle of Maya Civilization – El Mirador National Park.

Featured on National Geographic's one-hour special, *Dawn of the Maya*, ABC's *20/20*, CBS's *60 Minutes*, The Discovery Channel and CNN, Dr. Hansen has dedicated his life to saving Mirador, a part of the archaeologically and naturally rich Maya Biosphere.

The world's largest pyramids and oldest Maya cities reside deep in the Mirador jungle, about two days on foot from the nearest village. Two thousand years ago, Mirador supported one of the largest populations and one of the most complex civilizations in the Americas. For over two decades, Dr. Hansen has been scientifically excavating, researching, and conserving these ancient Maya cities and investigating the dynamics which led to the rise and fall of this amazing civilization.

At Mirador today, there is an opportunity to save the intact rainforest and rich wildlife habitat, as well as the earliest Maya cities while creating thousands of new jobs for the surrounding communities. If Dr. Hansen is successful, he will reverse the catastrophic destruction of the last Maya Biosphere in Central America. According to the World Wildlife Fund, the Maya Biosphere has already lost over 65% of native rainforest in the past 20 years. Mirador has the potential to raise millions of dollars in new tourism revenue to the emerging economy and people of Guatemala through sustainable community-based tourism.

Dr. Hansen is currently President of the Foundation for Anthropological Research and Environmental Studies (FARES) and was recently awarded the National Order of the Cultural Patrimony from the President of Guatemala. After graduating from Brigham Young University and obtaining a M.S. degree in Anthropology, Dr. Hansen went on to receive his Ph.D. in Archaeology from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Until 2004, he was a scientist with the Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics at UCLA before joining the faculty of Idaho State University in Native American Studies.

***A special event at a private home in Tiburon will follow the lecture (from end of lecture to 5:00).***

***For current Friends of Ethnic Art members only, no guests allowed as space is limited.***

***Reservations required, first come first served.***

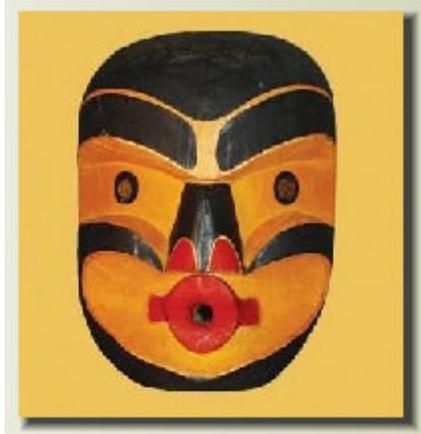
***Phone Gregory Ghent at 510-232-0818 or email: [gregoryghent@yahoo.com](mailto:gregoryghent@yahoo.com)***

The Belvedere Community Center is located below Belvedere City Hall with entrance on Community Road, 450 San Rafael Avenue, Belvedere, California 94920.

***From San Francisco*** - take 101 North. ***From Northern Marin*** - take 101 South. ***From the East Bay*** - take the Richmond Bridge to 101 South.

***Exit Tiburon Boulevard heading east.*** Turn right at Beach Road. Turn right at San Rafael Avenue. Bear right on to Community Road. The Belvedere Community Center will be directly to your left.

## Friends of Ethnic Art events (cont'd.)



**March 16**

**1:00**

**The Marin Museum of the American Indian**

2200 Novato Blvd. @ Miwok Park, Novato CA 94948 P  
415.897.4064

### MASKS of the AMERICAS

A lecture and tour of the exhibition led by  
curator

**Winfield Coleman**

*For current FEA members and guests only.*



©Becky Olvera Schultz

A combined exhibition of contemporary Native American and Southwest Masks by Becky Olvera Schultz, and traditional masks from the collection of the Marin Museum of the American Indian.

*The exhibition was partially funded by a grant from the Friends of Ethnic Art, and it runs until April 20, 2008.*

Becky Olvera Schultz, an award-winning artist with five previous solo museum exhibitions, has been featured in national publications and her masks are in private collections throughout the US, Canada & Europe.

Winfield Coleman, curator of the museum masks exhibit, is an artist, published scholar of American Indian Culture and Illustrator of museum catalogs and ethnographic books. See page 2 of this newsletter.

A very special look into

## ***The Art of Field Collecting***

An illustrated lecture by

**Michael Hamson**

**Sunday, April 27, 7:00pm**

410 Jessie St. Unit 502  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Public parking at 5<sup>th</sup> and Mission

*One of the reasons I started in this business is because I had heard that it was still possible to field collect older, authentic pieces of tribal art in Papua New Guinea. I made my first trip in 1994 and have made over forty trips into the bush of New Guinea since then. Even in 1994 it was considered very late to attempt to collect traditional art directly from the people at the village level. Conventional tribal art wisdom at the time was that all the best pieces of New Guinea art were collected in the 1960s and only a smattering of respectable pieces had come out in the decades since. Luckily conventional wisdom is often wrong.*

*As is often the case word travels fast about what I am looking for - so it is no surprise to find a pile of artifacts set out beside the path leading into whatever village I may be walking into. But nothing could prepare me for the line up of amazing and unique carvings that awaited me when I walked into the unsettling Rauti Village. I immediately recognized a splayed female figure of the type illustrated by Tribal Arts that was collected in 1926. But the other pieces, healing figures, were of a style yet unknown to the world of New Guinea art. I ended up buying three of these pieces that first trip and five more on subsequent trips (two of which I donated to the National Museum and Art Gallery of Papua New Guinea). There are still masterpieces yet to be found in Papua New Guinea.*

Michael Hamson, *The Elegance of Menace, Aesthetics of New Guinea Art*, 2005



## MORE EVENTS OF INTEREST

### **Makishi: Mask Characters of Zambia**

Thursday, March 27, at 7:00 pm, Free

Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University presents the 2008 Ruth K. Franklin Lecture on the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. This year's lecture is by independent scholar **Manuel Jordán Pérez**, who will focus on the exhibition "Makishi: Mask Characters of Zambia," on view March 26–June 29, 2008.

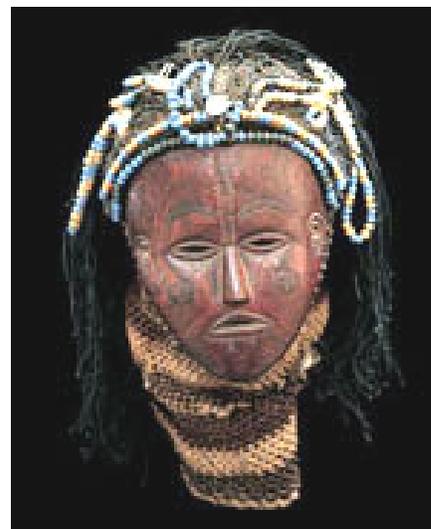
Manuel Jordán, a former Cantor Arts Center curator, selected the works in the exhibition from the collection of the Fowler Museum at UCLA, and he wrote the essay for the catalogue that accompanies the exhibition. Jordán's lecture will explore the rich masquerade tradition of ethnic groups living in the "Three Corners" region of Zambia, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of Congo: the Chokwe, Mbunda, Lunda, Luvale/Lwena, and Luchazi peoples.

Jordán wrote about the mask traditions in the exhibition catalogue, "By virtue of the spiritual or supernatural powers they embody or engage, masquerades — events involving many masked performers — appear throughout Africa to assist in human transitions that range from coming-of-age rituals to funerals. . . . Masks also mediate human conflicts through divination or problem solving and may be summoned during ominous times to help society understand and cope with major calamities such as war and illness. Masquerades are vital forms at the cutting edge of society, and as such they are in a constant state of adaptation, responding to the new by assimilating and negotiating it in public arenas where redefined or new mask forms are able to address current political issues, new technologies, or any other form of socially critical, current information."

Ruth Franklin was the first Phyllis Wattis Curator for the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas at the Cantor Arts Center. Just prior to her retirement and her untimely death in 2000, she assisted in selecting Manuel Jordán Pérez, Ph.D., as the next Wattis Curator. Franklin's curatorial work significantly strengthened the Cantor Arts Center collection. In 2002, an anonymous donor endowed the Ruth K. Franklin Fund for Lectures and Symposia in the arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. Memorial gifts from numerous donors also supported the Franklin Fund, which makes possible an annual lecture or symposium in perpetuity. The Center presented the first Ruth K. Franklin Symposium in 2003.

More than 100 makishi, or mask characters, figure in the remarkable masquerade traditions of a constellation of ethnic groups living in the 'Three Corners' region of Zambia, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Makishi embody ancestral spirits, and they may assume human, animal, hybrid, or abstract appearances. This intimate exhibition focuses on 24 wooden masks, drawn from the collection of the Fowler Museum at UCLA, and explores the drama and complexity of the masquerades in which the masks are used. Catalogue available. Open Wed-Sun 11am - 5pm, Thursdays until 8pm; Closed Monday and Tuesday Exhibition tour date and time: Ongoing every day from March 26, 2008 through June 29, 2008. 11:00 AM.

The lecture, presented in the Cantor Arts Center auditorium, begins at 7:00 p.m. The public is welcome. Admission is free, with open seating. For more information, call 650-725-3115 or visit the Center's Web site at [museum.stanford.edu](http://museum.stanford.edu).



A makishi dancer performs a traditional dance of the Lovale people.

## **OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

### **New Documentary**

#### **Surveys 100 Years of Maya Weaving**

Endangered Threads Documentaries, an educational nonprofit, has released *A Century of Color: Maya Weaving & Textiles*, a 53-minute, bilingual documentary. It surveys 100 years of continuity and change in Maya weaving and textiles of Guatemala.

With stunning footage of today's Maya, the documentary highlights continuity and change over the century, and introduces the viewer to the effects of cultural changes brought about by the recent 36-year Civil War; introduction of Spanish language in rural schools; penetration of television broadcasting; expansion of tourism and artisan organizations; modernization of the role of women; pressure from a globalized world economy; and importation of vast quantities of cheap, new and used clothing.

Margot Blum Schevill and Kathleen Mossman Vitale co-wrote the script for the production, which took four years to complete. Many Friends of Ethnic Art members will recall the preview and stimulating presentation we sponsored by Margot & Kathleen last year at the Marin American Indian show.



Elena Domingo Mejía weaves on her back strap loom next to her daughter Lilia. They live near the community of San Rafael Petzal in Huehuetenango. *Photo by Kathleen Mossman Vitale 2005.* Copies of the ETD documentaries are available through the Endangered Thread's website, [www.endangeredthreads.com](http://www.endangeredthreads.com).

### **WANT TO BE REMINDED BY EMAIL OF FEA EVENTS?**

#### **It's easy: Just give us your email address**

FEA is adding to its growing list of members who are being reminded of upcoming events by email. This list is confidential and will not be sold or shared. Email us at [info@friendsofethnicart.org](mailto:info@friendsofethnicart.org).

### **The newsletters and programs are now posted on our website [www.friendsofethnicart.org](http://www.friendsofethnicart.org)**

And join the conversation among FEA members at the new NING:

<http://friendsofethnicart.ning.com/>

for members to share their interests among other members (and the board), and be able to communicate with other members en masse or individually. Ning members can also post photos, videos, and music!



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