

## A Merry and Bright Evening

Neil and Sonia Singla, graciously and generously, again opened their beautiful home to the Pasadena Art Alliance. Members and their partners welcomed the holiday season with a high-spirited dinner party serenaded by a wonderful guitarist and plied with delicious hors d'oeuvres. Members were lit (even if they weren't drinking) because flashing lights were the fashion accessory of the evening. Necklaces, tiaras, earrings and halos shone in through the dark, lit up smiling faces, and added much fun to an already delightful gathering. The PAA ladies love to party! Thank you, Diane and Tamara for your hard work on our behalf.



## Jessica Korzenecki

Jessica and husband Tom are native Chicagoans who have lived in Pasadena for forty plus years. They have one son, Nick. Early in their marriage they were corporate nomads having been transferred by Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) to Iowa, Houston, Philadelphia, and to LA twice. Jessica retired from ARCO as an executive over 20 years ago having worked primarily in finance with assignments in government relations and in human resources. Since retiring, Jessica has been engaged in numerous volunteer activities including serving on the boards of Mayfield Senior School, Kidspace Children's Museum, Holy Family Church, and an NGO in Haiti. Besides being with family and friends, Jessica is happiest when her bags are packed for any travel adventure.

Jessica did her undergraduate work at Barat College, a small Catholic liberal arts school, where her interest in art history began and was nurtured. While her passion was art history, she



majored in economics, eventually getting a master's degree, thinking job prospects would likely be more lucrative. (She was correct.)

Her favorite class was the History of Modern Art, with all of the instruction being done at the Art Institute of Chicago.

At the same time, Tom was studying engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology, where Mies van der Rohe established the second Bauhaus after being expelled from Germany. Jessica and Tom's long interest in the

Bauhaus began at IIT.

Jessica studied letterpress for several years prior to the Covid Pandemic and hopes to resume studies at the Armory next fall. Tom is a printmaker, focusing on engravings. He has taken several printmaking classes at the Art Center.

The Korzeneckis are splitting time between their homes in Pasadena and Chicago. She is currently in Chicago for a wedding.

Jessica is looking forward to learning more about contemporary art and supporting the arts community.

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## Did You Know ?

In the early 1950's, it was most common for college students to catch the train to campuses around the country. PAA member Gretl Mulder grew up on the Foothill Ranch in Azusa, which was mostly orange orchards. The Super Chief tracks cut through the ranch and there was a small platform exclusive to the ranch. So, when it was time for her to go off to Smith College in the east, all she had to do was stand by the tracks and hail the train. It stopped for her, and she was off to Chicago and the East Coast.





## Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio

Warm hugs and greetings rebuffed the chilly morning air in the patio at the Geffen Contemporary, as PAA members gathered on January 4, 2024, for the first meeting of the year. The meeting was full of news regarding the exciting activities of the coming months (see additional articles in this *Artifacts*) and was followed by a fascinating tour of the current exhibit, “Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio” (in part funded by the PAA).

Aparicio is a young artist whose family came from El Salvador. They lived in various LA communities, including nearby Highland Park. Our guide through the exhibit was Curator Anna Katz, whose lively and thorough explanations and stories about the artist and his work made for a rewarding visit. In this his first solo show, Aparicio focuses on the variability of history, and on recounting and remembering histories of individuals and groups not always included in historical documents or other writings.

A graphic at the entrance to the show represented how images (and thus events) are seen differently depending on one’s location in relation to the event. His works with rubber (the Caucho series), use rubber (of Salvadoran origin), to peel layers from the bark of local neighborhood trees slated for removal. The use of this rubber references Indigenous Pre-Hispanic technology and scientific developments that have become essential to our modern world, but which as a contribution are as overlooked as the migrant communities such as the one he grew up in. A delicious buffet lunch was enjoyed afterwards at Far Bar on First Street.



**Art Auction 2024** will be held Saturday, April 13, from 6–10pm, at the iconic Santa Anita racetrack. The track has a great history: built in early 1900's, re-built after burning down in 1909, and officially re-opened on December 26th, 1934, which is to this day “Opening Day” of the season.

The track has hosted any number of winning jockeys and superstar horses, from Man O'War to Seabiscuit. The design is vintage deco, and now we will add our own retro-chic flair!

We will occupy the Mezzanine Level, which overlooks the track, and in the distance, the San Gabriel mountains. Dinner will be buffet style, and there will be drinks at the bar and small bites passed as well. Entertainment has not yet been secured, but we are working through some musical ideas. We are also working with the media team at the track to have a loop of PAA images organized to run on the TV monitors in the space.

**Handbid** will be used for the auction. Most members already have the app on their phones from the last Auction. Bidding details to be determined, but maximum bidding will again be allowed.

**Parking** at the track is free, and for those who need assistance walking, there will be limited use of golf cart service. Check-in is accessible by escalators, elevators, and stairs.

More details to come! —*Susan Reynolds*



*From the Archives*

## **The Story of Carmelita Park (Part 1)**

On New Year's Day, just a month ago, many of us turned on the TV to watch the Rose Parade begin the journey down Colorado Blvd., with the iconic backdrop view of the beautiful Norton Simon Museum and the lovely San Gabriel Mountains. Did you know PAA has some deep history in the construction of that building? Art Alliance (as it was known at the time) was a major pillar of support, soliciting donations, and holding numerous fundraisers to finance the construction.

But while you know well the location of the Norton Simon, you may not know it was built on the land formerly known as "Carmelita Park".

Originally known as Carmelita Gardens, this large tract of land—located between Holly Street (north) and Colorado Blvd. (south), and between Orange Grove (west) and Vernon (east) was a horticultural haven in the late 1800s, owned by Jeanne and Ezra Carr. Mrs. Carr dedicated time, effort, and money to transform the uncultivated land into what would become the grandest garden in the area. But after years of work, financial fortunes



changed, and losses forced the Carrs to sell. The new owners, Simeon G. Reed and his wife Amanda had their own plans for the property: to preserve the gardens and build a grand Victorian residence. But Mr. Reed did not live to see his wish fulfilled. Mrs. Reed oversaw the project to

completion and lived in the new home until her death in 1905. (WPRN, Nov. 2023, Goodwin, J).

Over the years, ownership changed hands several times. In 1922, a new movement was underway to acquire the property and dedicate it to the City of Pasadena as a public park. An agreement was struck, and the Victorian home was repurposed as a home base for the Pasadena Art Institute, whose primary goals were to establish and maintain a museum and library of art and to encourage the study of fine arts.

In next month's issue of Artifacts, find out how the gardens were transformed into the Norton Simon Museum, and the essential role of the Art Alliance in that project.

*Rita Flynn, Chair of Archives Committee  
Presentation to PAA Membership  
MOCA, January 4, 2024*



## February 1 Valentines Fund-Raiser

Valentines will festoon the meeting area of the Blinn House (160 N. Oakland Ave) at our February 1 General Meeting/Grants Report. Be sure to COME EARLY to get the best selection of beautiful Valentines handmade by a crew of talented PAA members. Cards are available with a wide range of sentiments—there is something for everyone! All proceeds contribute to the Grants Fund.



### Sad News . . .

We regret to inform you of the passing of our dear longtime member Harriet Koch on January 7th at the age of 89.

Harriet became a member of PAA in 1974. Her husband Al (Albin) Koch survives her. Harriet and Al have been fixtures and loyal supporters of the Pasadena Art Alliance over many years. As was her strong desire, she had continued living at her home, where she passed away peacefully.

We will notify the membership of information on a service as that becomes available.

Members may send messages of condolence to Harriet's husband:

Al Koch, 1506 E. California Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91106

*We wish to Al—and to all who loved Harriet—our deepest condolences.*