



Alexis Jean Fournier, September, 1889, oil on canvas. Gift of Don and Diana Lee Lucker. 2006.71.1.

Friends Newsletter

President's Letter, September 2023

Bonjour, Les Amis de l'Institut,

August is behind us. With September we welcome the rebirth of our life in the arts and Mia. This month brings an emphasis on French culture and the French explorers who have influenced our current Minnesota life, as well as upcoming Friends events. Both the culture, and the explorers were here before all of us!

I hope to see you when we have exposure to French culture at our September lecture and luncheon. Note, the Pillsbury Auditorium is at capacity, but there will be overflow seating available in the Wells Fargo Community Room, no registration required. The lecture will also be recorded to view at a later date. Pre-lecture tours will be given, and members from the Rochester affiliate will have a post lecture tour. We have a short note on the lecture and the luncheon further in this newsletter.

We can see more evidence of the influence of French culture when we visit Des Moines in October. The city and river were named after early riverside settlements in Missouri and Iowa by Trappist monks from France. (Chris Vickery and I remind you about the Art & Architecture Tour coming up October 5-7, an opportunity you won't want to miss! I strongly encourage you to consider participating in the tour. It's great art at a great price.)

And that takes me to Father Hennepin and Joseph Nicollet. Both Frenchmen were active early on in Minnesota. Father Hennepin named the Falls of St. Anthony around 1680. Joseph Nicollet was an explorer and an exemplary geographer. He published the then definitive study on the interior of the United States in 1843. We pay homage to them as we travel the length and breadth of Minneapolis on roadways named for them.

A momentary change of focus, yet still on the theme: Art in Bloom 2024 has begun organizing and its co-chairs have already chosen its thematic art piece: *It's a Delicate Balance* by Christi Belcourt, a Métis artist. The painting is on view in G259, and what a delight it is: flora, fauna, and symmetry. The title evokes the importance of nature and balance. Its floral patterns are inspired by Michif beadwork. Indeed, Métis culture and languages are the product of the First Nations and the early French explorers.

Quelle joie! What a joy it is to remind you of the many wonderful opportunities to learn, socialize, and enjoy our friends among the Friends in the coming weeks. I trust you will find joy too, in meeting new Friends at these events. If you have questions that the articles do not answer or have comments prompted by the articles, call the office at 612.870.3045 or drop by the Friends Office. It's your office, too.

Sincerely,

Boyd Ratchye
Friends President

The schedule for our Friends events in September and October follows:

September 14: September Lecture: Michel Picaud

September 14: Fall Luncheon: A Taste of France

September 15: Friends Book Club: Horse by Geraldine Brooks

September 20: Friends Member Event: The Art of Bronze

September 20: St. Cloud Friends of the Institute Welcome Dr. Katie Luber

October 5: October Lecture: Leslie Urena

October 5 – 7: Des Moines Art & Architecture Tour

October 20: Friends Book Club: 1,000 Years of Joys & Sorrow: A Memoir by Ai Wei Wei

September Lecture: Michel Picaud

Notre-Dame de Paris: Rebirth of an International Treasure
Michel Picaud, President of the Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris

Thursday, September 14, 11:00

*Pillsbury Auditorium seating is at capacity, but overflow seating is available in the Wells Fargo Community Room, no registration required

For over four years now, the Cathedral has been undergoing a massive restoration and rebuilding effort, supported by the international fundraising efforts of the Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris. Our speaker on September 14 will be Michel Picaud, President of the Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris.

M. Picaud will share many exciting details of the restoration and rebuilding process, which has been challenging. The French have decided to reconstruct the spire and the roof in a way that resembles and respects its original design. “We want to restore this cathedral as it was built in the Middle Ages,” said Jean-Louis Georgelin, the retired French army general overseeing the construction.

There is an exciting year ahead as the project aims to be completed by December, 2024. Will they make the deadline? What are the remaining challenges? Will visitors to the Paris Olympics be able to see any of the work in progress?

A Taste of France Luncheon: September 14

We are delighted to salute our September Lecture topic and honor our speaker with a celebration of all things French! Our pre-lecture coffee buffet will feature miniature Beignets. Our “Taste of France” luncheon will include a choice of a Salade Niçoise (with Tuna) or a Vegetarian Salade Niçoise, together with fresh baguettes. Sweet French Macarons and Madeline Cookies will be served for dessert.

Don’t miss out—[if you haven’t already gotten your tickets, do so now!](#) And, “**Bon appétit!**”

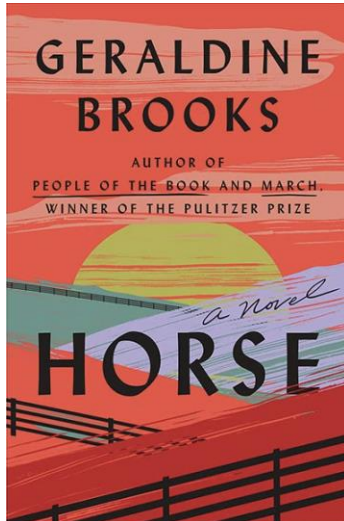
P.S. Do you know the history of the expression “Bon appétit!?” According to Le Figaro, there are a couple of traditions as to its origin. One story is that it began in the XIII century when superstition was rampant. Courtiers would say it to a nobleman before a meal to ensure that His Lordship wouldn’t choke or swallow anything poisonous.

Another tradition is said to have been popularized by Louis XIV. His courtiers would use the expression when the king excused himself from the banquets (which often lasted hours). The meaning was “Have a good digestion.” Indeed, the king would push his chair from the table and was escorted to a corner where, surrounded by portable screens and a chamber pot carried by servants, he could take care of whatever digestive “business” was needed. (Keep in mind there were no such things as bathrooms in chateaux.) A good digestion was desired so that the king would be back at the table to enjoy more food with his guests without too much delay!

Regardless of which origin you believe, Le Figaro warns that it is not an expression to use in polite company! Who knew?

Friends-Only Book Club Gatherings

Upcoming dates: Friday, September 15 and Friday, October 20



Join fellow book-loving Friends for the first book gathering of the 2023/2024 year. We meet at 10 am on Friday, September 15 in the Friends Office for an hour of lively discussion, followed by an hour-long guided tour of art inspired by the book.

What better way to kick off this new season of the Friends Only Book Club than with *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks? As described on her website, “A discarded painting in a junk pile, a skeleton in an attic, and the greatest racehorse in American history: from these strands, a Pulitzer Prize winner braids a sweeping story of spirit, obsession, and injustice across American history.”

Please sign up by emailing the Friends Office at friends@artsmia.org, or call 612-870-3045. This event is a Friends Member Event. Join the Friends today and attend the book club!

Mark your calendars for our next gathering, on October 20, when we’ll talk about *1000 Years of Joys and Sorrows*. “At once ambitious and intimate, Ai Weiwei’s *1000 Years of Joys and Sorrows* offers a deep understanding of the myriad forces that have shaped modern China, and serves as a timely reminder of the urgent need to protect freedom of expression (GoodReads.com).”

Friends-Only Private Event: The Art of Bronze

Wednesday, September 20
Blue Ribbon Bronze Studio
84 14th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413

Have you ever gazed at Mia’s bronze statues and wondered how they are created? Here is your chance, when we visit the Blue Ribbon Bronze studio of Minnesota sculptor Nick Legeros.

Legeros has a rich legacy of more than 500 works of art all over the city, including such icons as Goldy Gopher in front of Coffman Union at the University of Minnesota, and Sid Hartmann in front of the Target Center.

Prior to owning his own studio and working primarily on a commission basis, Legeros taught throughout the Twin Cities. From 1981-2002 he was an Artist-in-Residence at the Minnetonka Center for the Arts in Wayzata, Minnesota. He has also been a faculty member of the art department at Breck School in Golden Valley, Minnesota (1993-1994), Community Faculty at Metropolitan State University in Minneapolis, Minnesota (1988-1993), and an instructor at the Edina Art Center (1988-1993).

This is an opportunity to see the breathtaking process of bronze sculpting! From vision and design, to final touches – including the molten bronze pouring – we will watch a sculpture “come to life.”

Space is limited to 28 guests. Please email friends@artsmia.org to reserve your space, or call Lisa Mayotte (612.839.0645) with any questions you may have. We will meet at the studio (address above) at 10:00am.

Next up: Tentatively mark your calendar for Wednesday October 11, when we will be visiting another artist’s studio. More information to come.

St. Cloud welcomes Katie Luber: September 26

The [St. Cloud Friends of the Minneapolis Institute of Art](#) will present “**Katie Luber: An insider’s glimpse of what’s new at Mia**” on September 26 at the St. Cloud Country Club.

Dr. Luber will talk about how she is guiding the museum toward the future, with an emphasis on access and connectivity. Growing audiences by gathering around the broadest representation of the human experience, Mia, under her direction, offers both inspiration and information, solace and discovery. Expanding its curatorial expertise into new areas, such as Latin American art, the museum asserts the value of encyclopedic collections while becoming more reflective of its community.

The presentation by Dr. Luber will be followed by a dinner in her honor. For more information about our sister organization, contact Amanda Falloon with [St. Cloud Friends of the Minneapolis Institute of Art](#) at falloon@mac.com.

Art and Architecture Trip October 2023



Craving a unique get-away that's off the beaten path, yet sophisticated and historic? You can't beat the price for our Art & Architecture Trip to Des Moines! \$750 per person includes 2 nights in a beautifully restored historic hotel, all meals included, all transportation included in a luxury chartered bus, 5 privately guided tours and another 3 events to be enjoyed at our leisure.

"You will be amazed and delighted at the discovery of this city. There's so much art to experience! The Law Library at the State Capitol is absolutely spectacular—truly one of a kind!" raves Boyd Ratchye.

Each day in Des Moines will feature walking tours of one or more of the following unique destinations:

- The Des Moines Art Center with buildings designed by Eliel Saarinen, I.M. Pei and Richard Meier, housing the museum's contemporary and modern art collection
- Urban architecture by architects such as Mies van der Rohe, Helmut Jahn, Renzo Piano and David Chipperfield
- The Pappajohn Sculpture Park
- The historic Salisbury House & Garden
- The famed Owl's Head Neighborhood
- Mainframe Studios, featuring art from over 200 artists and live music
- The Iowa State Law Library, housed in the Iowa State Capitol. This historic library has been named one of the 45 most majestic libraries in the world.

The cost of the trip is \$750 per person for a shared double room. For a single room supplement add an additional \$150. The trip can accommodate 28 travelers.

Please note that final payments are due by September 15. Include the following note on your check: "Art and Architecture Trip Oct. 5-7" and address the checks to "Mia Friends of the Institute". Questions? Call the Friends office at (612) 870-3245.

Mailing address:

Minneapolis Institute of Art
Attn: Friends of the Institute
2400 Third Avenue South
Minneapolis MN 55404

Art in Bloom 2024 Signature Piece Selected!



With joy in their hearts, Art in Bloom 2024 co-chairs Diane Morrison and Barb Champ, are thrilled to begin planning Art in Bloom 2024! To kick it off, they are excited to announce the Signature Artwork is *It's a Delicate Balance* by Christi Belcourt.

Mia's website describes the painting as "blossoming flowers and wisps of greenery are intricately outlined in the color palette and style of Michif floral imagery, a part of an aesthetic system and a way of life made possible through careful observation of the

natural world.” This colorful depiction of many of nature’s endangered species reminds us of our interdependence in this fragile world.

Mark your calendars for the week of April 25 – 28, 2024 when we will join together in celebration of community and nature.

Would you like to be involved? We will be asking for volunteers to help with specific tasks later this year, but in the meantime we are looking for volunteers interested in taking on a larger oversight role. We’re putting together a supportive planning team, and especially encourage new Friends to join us in whatever way feels right for you.

Join us! Email Diane Morrison and Barb Champ, Art in Bloom 2024 co-chairs, at friendsartinbloom@artsmia.org. We would love to hear from you!