



Friends Newsletter

President's Letter, October 2023

As we say "*Au Revoir*" to Les Amis de Notre Dame de Paris, let us turn our focus to our own domestic happenings—schools opening, buses running, student tours at Mia and the Friends events for the fall.

We had a terrific launch of our Friends fall lecture with the visit of Michel Picaud, President of the Friends of Notre Dame de Paris, who gave us an inside look at the catastrophic fire. His lecture was fascinating and he gave us deeper insight into just how the people of France are committed to the cathedral, as well as an overview of the broad scope of its repairs and renovation.

On a personal level, I was moved by his commitment and that of his wife, Cecilie, to be with us for the September 14 lecture. You see, this past winter he was in an automobile accident in the French Alps where his left leg was broken and the car totaled. Despite this, while he was in the hospital recovering, he vowed to be in Minneapolis to give his presentation. And he was! How fine that was and what success the two of them brought us: a full auditorium and overflow room, and a grand lunch for 150 attendees.

We owe thanks, also, to our own members for working so hard to give all of us that wonderful experience. Thank you to Kris Erickson, the administrator of the Mark and Mary Fiterman Fund, for the concept of a Notre Dame de Paris lecture; to Barbara Proeschel for finding our speaker and making the lecture happen; to the lecture committee chairs, Josie Owens and Kathryn Schwyzer, for arranging this and others throughout the fall; and to the hospitality committee chairs, Sue Stillman and Anne Laurent, for the “delicieux” French-influenced lunch.

What’s upcoming in October? Lectures, tours, outreach, buses, and more. Just read further!

The Friends board and its committees have as motto this year: “Do Something Different.” And the lecture committee is doing something different: lectures at different times on different days. Keep your eyes open for those changes. Please consider attending the next Friends Lecture: Leslie Ureña, Associate Curator of Global Contemporary Art, will be speaking in the Pillsbury Auditorium on Thursday October 5 at 6 PM. Do note that date and time! There is further information about Dr. Ureña and her lecture later in this newsletter.

While we all enjoy art, education, and good lunches, we can also take pride in the work the Friends are doing to advance diversity, equality and inclusiveness at Mia. Last year the Friends transportation committee provided grants to schools in the Twin Cities region to assist in transporting students to Mia for tours and other art experiences. All told, we funded a total of 53 buses to bring an estimated 2,750 students from 32 schools. We assisted 12 schools in Minneapolis or St. Paul, 17 in the metro suburbs, two in Hudson, Wisconsin, and one in Faribault. 26 were public schools and 6 had a religious affiliation. This year we hope to do even better. Do help us spread the word to more schools. (Read the article from our Transportation Committee co-chairs, Therese Blaine and Steve Hoster.)

Additionally, the Friends has expanded access for school age children during summer months through the efforts of the Outreach Committee. Read about a collaboration with the YMCA held in August for 90 students and 12 chaperones. We were happy to see that number of chaperones. We trust it will light a fire and build trust for more such collaborations in the future.

All in all, we have many opportunities to learn, socialize, and enjoy new and old friends at our October events. If you have questions triggered by the newsletter or the articles or have comments on them, give us a call at 612-870-3045 or drop by the Friends office for a visit and a cup of coffee. It is your office, too!

Sincerely,
Boyd Ratchye
Friends President

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

October 5: October Lecture: Leslie Ureña

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

November 5: November Lecture: Yvonne and Gabriel Weisberg in conversation with Tom Rassieur, John E. Andrus III Curator of Prints and Drawings

November 17: Friends Book Club: *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann

September Lecture: Leslie Ureña

Shifting Focus: Curating Across Borders

Leslie Ureña, Associate Curator of Global Contemporary Art at Mia

Thursday, October 5, 6 PM

Pillsbury Auditorium

Leslie Ureña joined Mia in early 2023 as Associate Curator of Global Contemporary Art. She curates across mediums to research and further expand the collection's global scope. In this lecture, Ureña will discuss the trajectory of her curatorial practice, the discoveries she has made since arriving at Mia, and the exhibition "Another Look" (Harrison Photography Gallery, July 29-December 17, 2023).

Ureña's research and museum work has focused on migration, trans-national art practices, and photography as an agent of social change. Prior to her arrival at Mia, Ureña was curator of photographs at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, where she organized numerous exhibitions of photography and contemporary art, including co-curating "The Outwin 2022: American Portraiture Today." She has also worked in curatorial departments at the National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC), the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Dallas Museum of Art, among others; taught art history courses in Washington, D.C., as well as in Taipei, Taiwan, where she led the international team of an emerging art gallery.

Join us at the Friends Lecture on Thursday, October 5th at 6 PM.

[Tickets are available now.](#)

Friends Private Art Studios Tour: The Dow Artists Building

Wednesday, October 11

10-11 AM

2242 University Ave W, St. Paul MN 55414

We've all read about the artist colonies in Paris, Los Angeles, and New York. Come discover one right here in the Twin Cities, less than a 15-minute drive from Mia!

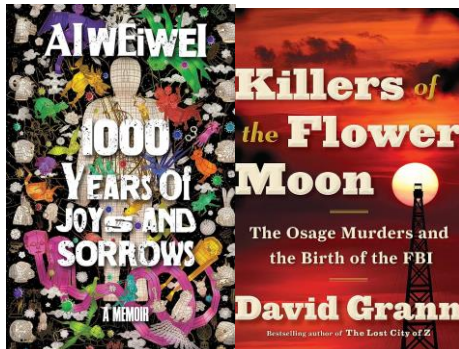
The Dow Artists Building in St. Paul boasts a colony of over 40 artists working in painting, photography, and sculpture. It is also home to over 20 outdoor murals and a collective gallery. This creative enclave is one of Minnesota's hottest destinations.

Friends will enjoy a private tour of five artists: painters Carolyn Brunelle, Anne Labovitz, Michael Kareken and Joan Cox, and the studio of ceramic artist Kevin Caufield. Each artist will give a brief introduction to their unique styles, and background on what led them to their vocation. Following the tour, we will have an opportunity to visit the Dow Art Gallery on the first floor, to view works by other artists in this unique enclave.

The tour is limited to 10 people only, so reserve your space today! Email friends@artsmia.org to reserve your space or call Lisa Mayotte (612-839-0645) for any questions you may have. Parking is available on site.

Friends Only Book Club

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



On Friday, October 20, the Friends Only Book Club will delve into the memoir of Ai Weiwei, one of the world's most famous living artists. Starting with his childhood under a totalitarian regime to his establishment as an icon of contemporary art and political activism, *1,000 Years of Joys and Sorrows* unravels the experiences that have fueled both his creative career and his passionate advocacy of human rights and freedom of expression.

In this book, Ai Weiwei tells a century-long epic tale of China through the story of his own extraordinary life and the legacy of his father, Ai Qing, the nation's most celebrated poet. In 2022, the year it was published, the book was named one of the best books of the year by Time, Bookpage, Booklist and Kirkus reviews.

The Friends Only Book Club begins at 10 AM in the Friends office for a one-hour discussion, then moves on to a one-hour tour led by a Mia guide. The Book Club fills up

fast, so sign up soon by emailing the Friends office at friends@artsmia.org or call 612-870-3045.

Mark your calendars! For our gathering on Friday, November 17, we will discuss *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann. This nonfiction book studies the murders of wealthy Osage people that took place in Oklahoma in the early 1920's.

Promoting our Transportation Fund

Please help us promote the Friends of the Institute Transportation Fund. Talk with teachers and parents in your neighborhood and social circles whose students might be interested in visiting Mia for a guide-led tour.

Educators from all K-12 schools, public, private and charter, are invited to complete an online application on Mia's [website](#). Grants are awarded in increments of \$250 for one bus, with a maximum of two buses per school. Grants are prioritized for metro-area schools that serve diverse and underserved students, but all schools are encouraged to apply.

For more than 25 years, a vital mission of the Friends has been to ensure that K-12 students have opportunities to visit Mia. Last year we funded 53 buses to Mia. Prior to Covid, we brought 164 buses to Mia. We are working to get back to that same or higher level of busing support. Won't you help us?

Please spread the word to parents and educators to help us meet our goal of giving 5,000 students the opportunity to experience the wonder of Mia's world-class permanent collection.

YMCA Children Visit Mia – Many for the first time!



On August 24, an enthusiastic group of 90 Kindergarten through 5th grade students and their chaperones toured ***ReVision: Art in the America***. For many, this was a first time visit to Mia.

The day was the result of a collaboration between the Friends of the Institute and the St. Paul Midway YMCA'S "Summer Power Programming," which offers enrichment programs focused on quality, small group, and age-appropriate activities. The Friends Outreach Committee provided the busing (through the Friends School Bus Grants Program) as well as the tours. The children also visited other areas of the museum with their chaperones who led them in an activity and ended their time at Mia by enjoying their lunch in the courtyard.

If success can be measured by the decibel level of the excited students, it was a huge win. Indeed, inquiries were made into continuing our collaboration with the YMCA Midway into the school year and beyond. Enthusiasm abounds!

The Friends Outreach Committee, Tamara Meyer and Mary Lewis, Co-Chairs, meet monthly with Boyd Ratchye, Friends President, and Virajita Singh, Mia's Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer to build opportunities for inclusive programming.

A great big thank-you to guides Josie Owens, Vicki Sperry, and Elizabeth Winga for their time and flexibility in touring the children.