



Mark Your Calendars
February 14th
9:00-11:00AM
Vero Beach Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: Pearl Lau
Teaching Artist for the
A+ART Program

E-Newsletter Volume 5
January 29, 2024



Greetings Circle Members,

We had outstanding attendance and a very informative presentation by VBMA Education Director Sara Klein at our January meeting. If you were unable to attend, the committee reports in this newsletter will catch you up.

Our annual breakfast meeting is on Wednesday, February 14, at 9:00 am at the Vero Beach Yacht Club. This is a full breakfast and mimosas will be back by popular demand! RSVPs for this event are required, and as always, guests are encouraged! Please watch your email for your invitation, and respond as soon as possible.

Our guest speaker will be Pearl Lau, instructor for the fall A+ART program, which was funded by The Circle last season! Pearl graduated from Art & Design HS and was an art director in Manhattan for over 20 years. She also holds a BA and MA in Art Education from CUNY, NYC. Pearl has taught at Northeastern University in Boston, the School of Visual Arts in New York and the NYC Dept of Education, where she was twice named New York City's Art Educator of the Year. We will hear directly from Pearl about the impact the A+ART program has on her students, with ample time for your questions. This is another touchstone that your Circle membership provides to the programs we support!

Introduce your friends and neighbors to the work of The Circle by inviting them to a meeting and help us meet the financial goals outlined in our strategic plan. Our annual breakfast meeting is a great opportunity to do just that. We had six guests at our January meeting, and four of them joined The Circle that day. It's that easy – so keep spreading the word!

Special thanks to this year's annual Breakfast underwriters: Elise Geary, Barbara Ruddy, Sue Van Der Strict and Susan Von Hagen.

We could not continue to provide this wonderful event for our members without them. We do still need a few more underwriters to help offset meeting costs, so if you can help, please contact me at trudy@tphllc.com or [206-409-2484](tel:206-409-2484).

With Deep Appreciation,

Trudy Powers Hoffman
Chair

Hospitality

Diane McGinn & Mary Wright

The Hospitality Committee was in full swing for the January meeting. Our committee has expanded to ten members who enjoyed working together to make our members and guests feel welcome and excited to be at The Circle meeting. There was a buzz in the air as people found friends and gathered around tables, genuinely happy to be there. There wasn't an empty seat in the house...a great beginning to 2024!

We are looking forward to our annual February Breakfast meeting which will be held on Wednesday, February 14th at the Vero Beach Yacht Club. This meeting is always well attended and the location makes it quite special. Pearl Lau, who is the teaching artist for the A+ART program for children on the autism spectrum will be our guest speaker. Please mark your calendars and be sure you RSVP for this popular event, and bring a guest. Please let us know how we're doing and send us your ideas and suggestions to make our events even better.



Membership & Special Events

Catherine Cooke & June Fitzgerald



We are pleased to report that our Circle is growing. We currently have 147 members and have welcomed 32 new members this season so far.

At the January meeting, Catherine Cooke and June Fitzgerald presented the planned Circle Members-Only Events scheduled for this season. Members flocked to sign up, and the response was overwhelming.

On Sunday, February 4th from 4-7pm, there will be a docent-led tour of the new exhibit, *Ancient Egypt and the Napoleonic Era*. The cost is \$30 per person. This event will be open for members to bring one guest, but closed to the public. The maximum number for attendance is 40, but if enough members sign up, another docent may be added to accommodate the larger group. This will be a very special night with refreshments and tours just for us!

Be fashion forward at the “Mad Hatter’s Tea Party” on February 22nd from 4-6pm, hosted by June Fitzgerald at her home in the Bermuda Bay community. There is no charge for this event and it is limited to 50 people. June plans to have tea, Prosecco and sandwiches plus fascinators to add to the atmosphere and complete the theme!



“Windsor Gallery Tour & Lunch” - we have planned three outings: Tuesday, February 27th and Thursday March 14th starting at noon and Tuesday April 9th at 10:30am. The cost is \$50 per person, details for payment to follow. These events filled up quickly, but don’t despair, often plans change and those on the wait list will be next in line! Please call Catherine Cooke at 516-330-1786 to be added to the waiting list.

A special Egypt themed “Cork and Canvas” event in the VBMA studios is planned for Thursday, March 21st from 6:30 – 8:00pm. The cost is \$45 per person. The Museum provides all materials and attendees can bring their own beverage and snacks. There is lots of interest for this night as well. Stay tuned to see if we can add another date, and please keep checking The Circle webpage for more updates.



The Site Visit committee has gotten off to a wonderful start and are focusing our energies during the next few months on sharing with our membership the many VBMA community access programs we can support next year. We are gradually transitioning the name of our committee from “Site Visits” to “Program Observations.”

Our January 10th membership meeting allowed us to complete our six program observation teams with four members each. On January 17th, these teams met for orientation/training on the new observational and presentation format. The team members shared ideas, experiences, and team coordinators were selected to facilitate their group’s progress. Our successful Pre-K team was able to organize earlier and observe in the fall, when the students attended the program at the VBMA. Working together as a group and learning first hand about these impactful art focused programs has been a rewarding experience for our team members.

Going forward, the teams will be observing their programs in the community during January and February, attending an optional presentation/help workshop on 2/28, and sharing their observations and experiences at our March presentation meeting. We believe these observations will help our Circle Members make informed decisions about which of these wonderful art-focused programs accessible to all in our community they wish to cast their vote to support.

Click [here](#) to view Sara Klein’s presentation on the six proposed programs for funding consideration presented at the January meeting.





Meet Robyn Orzel

Robyn P. Orzel has served as Director of Development at the Vero Beach Museum of Art for 20 years. Robyn has also led the Museum as the Associate Executive Director for 18 years, working along side former Executive Director Cindy Gedeon and current Executive Director Brady Roberts. Robyn and her Development team of four are responsible for all Museum events, memberships, sponsorships, grants, volunteers, capital campaign support, special projects and, of course, The Circle.

Robyn was born in West Point, New York to a U.S. Air Force family and graduated from Wilkes College in Pennsylvania. She got her feet wet as a Production intern at WNEP-TV in Scranton, PA and began her Museum career at the Dayton Art Institute in Dayton, Ohio. Robyn “does it all” – balancing professional and personal successes while volunteering her time and experience to fellow industry fundraisers.

Twenty years ago, Robyn answered her ringing phone and changed her life, and the life paths of many others. The headhunter who called recruited her to the VBMA and she hasn’t looked back. Robyn doesn’t like to talk about herself but she has been instrumental in the growth of the VBMA and local arts and culture in and around Vero Beach. She is easily recognizable with her red hair and big personality, but what makes her shine is her strategic approach to non-profit fundraising; growing the endowment; spearheading record setting campaigns, and building confidence among donors and community partners alike.

Robyn proposed The Circle of Friends (now The Circle) in 2009. Members would pool their money to make a greater philanthropic impact for deserving programs. As you know, The Circle has grown and thrived since 2009, and we are so fortunate to have Robyn’s direction as we continue on this mission. Robyn shared recently, “I am grateful to The Circle members for 15 seasons of hard but fun work; raising nearly \$500,000 to increase access to art education programs for all community residents. I look forward to what’s ahead for The Circle this year and beyond.”

The Circle would like to thank Robyn for her many contributions to our past, present and future!

Communications Update

Cathy Cronin

In The News...The Thursday, January 18th issue of *32963* contained a great article on The Circle. Hope you saw it but if not, you can find a link on our website under the *In the News* section. Go to www.vbmuseum.org/the-circle-news or scan the QR code below to access the website.



Four of our talented Circle members are exhibiting their work at the Friends of Contemporary Art (FOCA) Guild Event at the Environmental Learning Center. This juried exhibition runs from January through February 28th. Look below for photos of them with their work: Suzanne Roff, Elise Geary, Stuart Weismiller and Susan Hale.



Flowers Bloom While The Earth Weeps - Suzanne Roff



Best Firefly Night Ever - Elise Geary



Garden Club Wannabes - Stuart Weismiller



It Could Just be Something I Dreamt - Susan Hale

The Vero Beach Art Club's *Art By The Sea* exhibit at the VBMA featured several Circle artists. The exhibition was open January 19 - 21.



Peach Pastures - Stuart Weismiller



Coralium Mortalis - Suzanne Roff



Far, Far Away - Elise Geary

The Communication Committee is working on a Welcome Kit for new members to provide an overview of the Circle, an understanding of our history and tradition, our mission statement, the programs we support and ways to get involved. This will be a seamless way for all new members to become informed and feel welcomed. We hope to have this ready by the February Breakfast.

Please keep checking our website for more updates on the Members-Only Special Events. These events fill up quickly, so check the site often as we have quite a few fun events planned this Season! vbmuseum.org/thecircle. Note, if events are full, please call Catherine Cooke at 516-330-1786 to add your name to the waiting list as some who have signed up may have to cancel as things come up. In fact, last year, we were able to accommodate everyone!

Members are our best brand ambassadors for spreading the word about The Circle. Help us get the word out! Send us photos with your Circle friends out and about together, at Museum events, celebrating birthdays, attending Galas, attending Special Members-Only events, and just having fun. Please email photos to Sue Van Der Stricht and Suzanne Roff. We will add them to the Photo Gallery on the website, on the VBMA social media pages, as well as The Circle site. AND send us news for our newsletter. We want to acknowledge your accomplishments!



The Circle
2023-2024 Event Calendar

Mark Your Calendars!

Wednesday	February 14th	9-11A	Breakfast - Guest Speaker	Vero Beach Yacht Club
Wednesday	March 13th	10-11:30A	General Meeting Site Visit Presentations	VBMA Holmes Great Hall
Thursday	April 11th	3-5P	Closing Reception & Final Vote	VBMA Buck Atrium

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2023-24 Circle Steering Committee Members

Steering Committee Chair:	Trudy Powers Hoffman	trudy@tphllc.com	206 409-2484
Membership Co Chairs:	Catherine Cooke	catepru@aol.com	516 330-1786
	June Fitzgerald	jfitzgerald@sorensenrealestate.com	917 744-7530
Hospitality & Special Events Co Chairs:			
	Diane McGinn	dianemcginn14@gmail.com	414 778-2116
	Mary Wright	mlwdiwvero@gmail.com	305 336-4566
Site Team Co Chairs:	Anne Golensky	annegol@aol.com	203 525-2671
	Lori Lazorik	Lori.lazorik@gmail.com	772 475-3753
Secretary/Finance Chair:	Joy Ann Coll	jacoll1118@aol.com	772 559-6288
Communications Chair:	Cathy Cronin	acathy.egan@gmail.com	914 772-0647
VBMA Circle liaison:	Natalie Murdy	nmurdy@vbmuseum.org	772 231-0707, 154

[Please click here to access the Member Directory.](#)