Welcome to the new Irvine Museum Collection at UCI

It is with great pleasure that I introduce a new chapter in the remarkable history of this great Collection. With this newsletter, the University of California, Irvine welcomes The Irvine Museum Collection to a new collaboration through which both will greatly gain. Through the past decades, The Irvine Museum has built the well-deserved reputation as the home of the most extensive, most beautiful collection of plein air California art or California Impressionism, as Jean Stern has named it. Through love of the land, Southern California light and landscape, and appreciation of California's complex culture, The Irvine Museum Collection has come to epitomize these most enduring and endearing traits of our surrounding region.

With the insightful generosity shown by Joan Irvine Smith and James Irvine Swinden in passing the collection to UCI which, after all, shares its name with the Collection and the family, initiated the university’s entry into a new realm. UCI fully understands the vital importance of its role as the custodian of The Irvine Museum Collection; and intends to exhibit it with precisely the same care it has received since its earliest days. Working with Jim, with Jean Stern, and with the wonderful Irvine Museum Collection staff we have come to have a renewed appreciation for the relationship between art and the culture from which it springs.

We are embarking on a very ambitious plan to build a nationally-recognized home for the Collection, the UCI Museum and Institute for California Art, of which The Irvine Museum Collection will be the centerpiece. The Collection will receive the same public access it currently does, or more, in new galleries built to enhance its beauty. We have just embarked on this project and look forward to working with you to realize its potential, making UCI a national magnet for the exhibition and study of California art.

I am honored to be part of this project and to be working with Jim Swinden, Jean Stern, and The Irvine Museum staff toward the fulfillment of our ambitious goals. I am eager to share more with you as it occurs. Please keep in touch with us to stay abreast of the latest developments, as California Impressionism and The Irvine Museum Collection take their proper places at the pinnacle of American art.

Stephen Barker, Ph.D.
Director, UCI Museum and Institute for California Art
Dean, Claire Trevor School of the Arts, UCI
The Irvine Museum Collection at the University of California, Irvine, has achieved national standing by having the premier collection of California paintings of the Impressionist Period (1890–1930). This collection was formed under the stewardships of Joan Irvine Smith and James Irvine Swinden. Over the past twenty-five years that I have been Executive Director, it has been acclaimed by being shown in over seventy-five museums throughout the country. To date, our museum is the only institution to have traveled an exhibition of California Impressionist paintings to Europe, with venues in Paris, Krakow and Madrid. Moreover, in order to document this unique American art style, we have published twenty-one books: thirteen to accompany our various traveling exhibitions, and eight monographs, books devoted to the life and art of individual artists. These monographs have included such luminaries as Guy Rose, Paul de Longpré, Albert R. Valentien, Joseph Kleitsch, Franz Bischoff, William Wendt, John Frost and Arthur E. Beaumont.

In 2014, the decision was made to start a definitive collection of works by contemporary artists who paint in a similar approach to the historic masters. We set our standards high, with the aim of accepting only the best examples of works by award-winning artists. The first contemporary painting to enter the collection was a gift of the artist Jesse Powell. The painting, entitled “Spring Bloom, Pt. Lobos,” received overwhelming approval from our patrons when it was put on display. Later, we were gifted superb works by John Cosby and Jim McVicker.

In 2016, our museum became a part of the University of California, Irvine. Since then, we have accepted three magnificent works for the UCI collection by three remarkable artists: Jeff Sewell, Rick Delanty and Merika Adams Gopaul. We are planning to develop the contemporary art collection and create a lasting tribute to the visual delight that characterizes California’s art.

Jean Stern
Executive Director
Education and Outreach

An exciting educational outreach opportunity developed with one of our partners, the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association (LPAPA). Our joint endeavor, entitled The Plein Air Project, expanded last April to include a three-day event with the Thomas House Family Shelter, a temporary home for families with children.

The first phase of the project began on a Wednesday with a painting demonstration given at the Thomas House by LPAPA’s Director of Education, Jeff Sewell. On Friday, the young artists and some of their parents visited The Irvine Museum Collection and were given a private tour by museum staff aided by professional artists Jeff Sewell and Rick Delanty. The program culminated on Saturday with a painting session for the children back at Thomas House. With easels, canvas and paint in hand, the young artists as well as several experienced painters from the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association, spent the morning creating wonderful paintings. These were framed and given to the children who painted them.

We are grateful to the artists of the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association who so generously offered their time, inspiration and instruction to guide the children with their own creations. These talented LPAPA artists were Jeff Sewell, Rick Delanty, Greg LaRock, Karen Luz, Fernando Micheli, Jeff Horn and Cynthia Britain. We also offer a special note of gratitude to Linda Stern, the catalyst for the event. She worked tirelessly to organize the project and assisted at both the tour at the museum and the “paint out” at the shelter.

Founded in April of 1987 by Mary and Bernie Selz, the mission of Thomas House Family Shelter is to provide a safe and supportive environment with the resources necessary for families with children to remain together while empowering them to become independent and self-sufficient.

Our thanks go out to the dedicated members of the Thomas House staff, Mary Selz, Founder; Natalie Julien, Executive Director; Jose Aleman, Youth Development Coordinator; Nina Rodriguez, Facilities Coordinator; Grace Valdez, Senior Case Manager and Nancy Linares, Case Manager.

Dora James
Curator of Education
The Irvine Museum Collection is proud to announce the publication of our newest book, *Arthur Beaumont: Art Of The Sea*. This is the definitive work on the art and life of our country’s premier painter of U.S. Navy warships. Written by the artist’s youngest son, Geoffrey Beaumont, this fully illustrated book draws on the author’s family archives, personal anecdotes, and firsthand knowledge to create an intimate and thorough account of both the man and the artist. *Arthur Beaumont: Art Of The Sea* has 272 pages and is profusely illustrated with color plates and black/white archival photographs.
Dusk till Dawn
June 1 opening reception

As in the past few summer exhibitions, “Dusk till Dawn” featured a number of works by award-winning contemporary painters. We were fortunate to have some of these excellent artists attend our gala reception.

At the opening reception for “Dusk till Dawn”: James Irvine Swinden with artists Stephen Mirich, Jennifer Diehl, Rick Delanty, Michael Obermeyer, Jeff Sewell, and Executive Director Jean Stern

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We are grateful for the generosity and support of our Patrons.

For information on how you can become a part of preserving our history, contact The Irvine Museum Collection at the University of California, Irvine irvinemuseumcollection@uci.edu or 949/476-0294.

This list includes cash gifts given to The Irvine Museum Collection Patron Program between October 1, 2016 to September 31, 2017.

For errors or omissions please contact: Leslee Fitzgibbon, Visitor Services 949/476-0294

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