While it is hard to believe that a new year is upon us, we are very enthusiastic to begin a fresh decade at The Ringling. This year will be filled with stellar exhibitions, thought-provoking conversations, fabulous performances, activities for energetic families and the expansion of our outreach into the community. I am excited that we will be reopening the Original Circus Museum in February after six months of renovation and reinstallation of the collections. The new design will highlight the collection with a fresh look, insightful reinterpretations, and increased accessibility.

We also eagerly anticipate welcoming the inventive work of Howie Tsui. His Retainers of Anarchy is a fusion of fantastical martial arts tropes and characters presented in the form of a large-scale animated drawing.

If you have not yet seen the other exhibitions we currently have on view—Ai Weiwei: Zodiac (2018) LEGO, Syd Solomon: Concealed and Revealed, Manuel Alvarez Bravo: Specters and Parables, Remaking the World: Abstraction from the Permanent Collection, or Sun Xun: Time Spy, there is still time!

Our sensational Art of Performance series continues with its spring season. Audiences will be delighted with diverse presentations including puppetry, innovative Flamenco dance, classical music, and many more. We will be celebrating Earth Day at The Ringling April 22 as the Artichoke Dance Company treats us to an innovative performance in the Museum of Art Courtyard.

Spring at The Ringling brings a resurgence to Mable Ringling’s Rose Garden, which is part of our 66-acre Level 2 arboretum. The garden has undergone some renovations and has been replanted with hardier bushes that are able to withstand the Florida climate. Look for an even more magnificent display of blooms!

We welcome 2020 and we look forward to seeing you at the museum!
Retainers of Anarchy
Art, the fore. Presented in the Monda Gallery for Contemporary creating ironic cross-references that bring contradictions to a decade, he has explored Asian history and popular culture, Born in Hong Kong, raised in Nigeria, and now residing in Modern and Contemporary Art Keith D. and Linda L. Monda Curator of By Ola Wlusek

OPENS MAR 15

scroll with sound considers wuxia in the form of a large-scale, hand-drawn animated video threads of social and political realities. This counter-narrative landscape inspired by an ancient Chinese scroll is quickly but visibly strenuous tasks. The serene setting of a traditional Tsui's marginalized characters laboriously engage in mundane accomplishments. Instead of presenting a glorified view of a melodramatic dialogue. are accompanied by spectacular swordplay and references social life during the core of the work is Tsui's personal interpretation of the genre; Continental Art and elevate the nuances of her generation's black experience while centering on expressions of intimacy and female-centric desire. Even though Lawson's subjects are often depicted in domestic interiors or everyday moments, her work captures the complexities of their psyches as they appear confident and vulnerable simultaneously. Lebanese-Palestinian-American artist Rania Matar’s project A Girl In Her Room presents moving portraits of young women in the US and in Lebanon. Matar’s project is an intimate exploration of the material conditions inside the personal spaces her subjects create for themselves as they navigate from adolescence into adulthood. The viewer is invited to reflect on the markers of difference between these two cultures, but also consider the possibilities of a universally shared female experience.

Being Seen also includes numerous works by significant women photographers from the twentieth century, added to the collection in 2017. The viewer is invited to reflect on the markers of difference between these two cultures, but also consider the possibilities of a universally shared female experience.

Among the highlights of the exhibition are recent additions to the Museum’s permanent collection of works by contemporary artists, including Zanele Muholi, Deana Lawson, and Rania Matar. Works by Muholi, a South African visual activist who advocates for the black LGBT+ community, are being shown from her series of bold self-portraits Somnyama Ngonyama, Hail the Dark Lioness, which will be featured. In these images, Muholi embraces and intensifies their blackness, provoking the viewer to acknowledge South Africa’s political history and recognize the presence of queer black identity. Deana Lawson’s sensitive tableaux recenter and elevate the nuances of her generation’s black experience while centering on expressions of intimacy and female-centric desire. Even though Lawson’s subjects are often depicted in domestic interiors or everyday moments, her work captures the complexities of their psyches as they appear confident and vulnerable simultaneously. Lebanese-Palestinian-American artist Rania Matar’s project A Girl In Her Room presents moving portraits of young women in the US and in Lebanon. Matar’s project is an intimate exploration of the material conditions inside the personal spaces her subjects create for themselves as they navigate from adolescence into adulthood. The viewer is invited to reflect on the markers of difference between these two cultures, but also consider the possibilities of a universally shared female experience.

Being Seen also includes numerous works by significant women photographers from the twentieth century, added to the collection in recent years. This exhibition offers visitors a rare opportunity to explore themes of agency, visibility, and gender through the lens of a broader historical context.

Sponsor support was provided for this exhibition by Gulf Coast Community Foundation and Herald Tribune Media Group.

By Ola Wlusek
Keith D. and Linda L. Monda Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art

By Christopher Jones
Stanton B. and Nancy W. Kaplan Curator of Photography and Media Arts

Ola Wlusek
Keith D. and Linda L. Monda Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art

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Over 27 years ago, Stan and Nancy Kaplan fell in love with The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. Stan, a tram driver of “The Ring Around”, happily transported Ringling guests around campus from 1992–2001. The Kaplans remember well the years of exciting Medieval Fairs on the grounds, eating mangos from the trees in front of the Cottage, and getting to know people from all over the world. Originally from Philadelphia, the Kaplans are still as in love with The Ringling as they were then. So much so that they have decided to share their passion of collecting photography and Scholars’ Rocks with Ringling visitors for generations to come.

Their incredible gift includes a prolific collection of photographs by prominent artists such as Eugène Atget, Imogen Cunningham, and Edward Weston as well as a fascinating collection of Asian Scholars’ Rocks. Additionally, the Kaplans have chosen to endow both a curatorial position at The Ringling and a Photography and Media Arts Program. Their legacy will ensure that The Ringling can continue to build an outstanding collection of photography and media art and program ambitious exhibitions into the future.

Stan’s interest in photography began at age 10, when he built a darkroom in his house. Although, like many, he soon became frustrated by his skill at taking photographs, he was never deterred from appreciating photography. His first purchase was an Ansel Adams photograph roughly 30 years ago at an auction house in Philadelphia, and today, his collection is voluminous. When asked to choose a favorite amongst their vast collection, Nancy immediately mentioned Madame Bijoux—a 1932 portrait by Brassai, which hangs in their kitchen. She loves the expressive quality of this work, also cites nudes by Ruth Bernhard, and prints from the Japanese artist Tsukioka Yoshitoshi’s One Hundred Aspects of the Moon series among her picks. Stan identified Portrait of the Eternal, a photograph of a famous Mexican actress who is caught in contemplation by Manuel Álvarez Bravo as one of his top choices. This photograph is currently on view as part of the Manuel Álvarez Bravo: Specters and Parables exhibition in the Ulla R. and Arthur F. Searing Wing.

Where does their tremendous Scholars’ Rocks collection come into play, you ask? One day while attending an art and antique fair at the Sarasota Art Center, Stan bought one for Nancy not having a clue what it was and he carried it home to surprise her. Nancy was extremely delighted—yet curious, and was determined to become her own Scholars’ Rocks scholar. Their collection now numbers over 100 rocks, which will become part of The Ringling’s Asian art collection. Also known as Gongshi, the naturally occurring or shaped rocks are traditionally appreciated by Chinese scholars. They sit on bases that are custom carved to fit the rock and are named for the regions they originate from. The Kaplans donated a large limestone Scholars’ Rock to The Ringling in 2001, which is currently on display in the Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Center for Asian Art.

When asked for suggestions on how others might amass a great collection, Stan and Nancy agreed that networking with others interested in the field had been very beneficial to them. Attending auctions and learning from other collectors have proven to be valuable experiences in both increasing their knowledge base and adding essential pieces to their collections. The Kaplans feel that working with Christopher Jones, who will be the first Stanton B. and Nancy W. Kaplan Curator of Photography and Media Arts at The Ringling, has been an important component in making the decision to make their gift to The Ringling.

“IT IS A SHAME TO HAVE A COLLECTION AND NOT BE ABLE TO SHARE IT.”

–Nancy Kaplan
The Ringling will convene a symposium February 14 to celebrate the legacy of abstract painter Syd Solomon. The day of talks will focus on Solomon’s life, early influences, long relationship with The Ringling, the importance of nature in his work, and his famed home and studio at Midnight Pass on Siesta Key.

The day will culminate in a reception during which participants can meet the speakers and spend time in the exhibition Syd Solomon: Concealed and Revealed. The speakers include Mike Solomon, the artist’s son, who will give a keynote reviewing the long relationship between his father and the Museum. Art historian Dr. Gail Levin will discuss Solomon’s contribution to the war effort and its impact on his career as an artist. Architect Max Strang will explore the architecture of Solomon’s residence at Midnight Pass, designed by renowned Sarasota School architect Gene Leedy. Scientist Karen Willey will highlight the unique ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico barrier islands by discussing the cycles of the earth, geology of the islands, and the plants and animals that created the world in which the artist lived and worked. Curators Michael Auping and Ola Wlusek will be in conversation about Solomon’s work and how the contemporary arts scene in Sarasota has evolved since Solomon first arrived in town in 1946.

The Syd Solomon: Concealed and Revealed Symposium will offer additional context to Solomon’s oeuvre along with the archival materials from The Solomon Archive, on view as part of the exhibition. The archival room showcases early figurative artworks, including Solomon’s only self-portrait, and a landscape of his native Pennsylvania, as well as drawings and watercolors painted overseas during the war. Even though he was assigned the task of producing instructional brochures with methods for concealment, and praised for his inventive approaches to camouflage, Solomon brought back with him numerous drawings on paper in charcoal and crayon depicting the realities of war that unfolded before him. Also on view are vibrant prints inspired by nature. In his writings on the transcendental importance of nature, Solomon refers to “the wind, the sea and their current, and the shoreline as an accepting and rejecting barrier to the waves—all transformed and sometimes distorted by changing light observation through water or weather.” These documents, in conjunction with the symposium, offer deeper insight into Solomon’s life in Sarasota, his legendary house and studio, his unique artistic practice, and his impact on The Ringling.

Additional details and tickets are available on ringling.org.

Support for this symposium and Art of Our Time is provided, in part, by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and Gulf Coast Community Foundation.

**MUSEUM OF ART REINSTALLATION**

By Sarah Cartwright
Ulla R. Searing Curator of Collections

In November, The Ringling unveiled the newly-reinstalled Gallery 21, representing the latest phase in the multi-year project to reinstall all 21 galleries in the Museum of Art. Taking inspiration from the architectural sculpture John Ringling incorporated into the space, Gallery 21 now focuses on Mr. Ringling’s collecting of late 19th-century art. John’s purchases of art from his own lifetime can now be seen in historical context, against the backdrop of changing taste in mid-1920s New York. During that period, which coincided with Mr. Ringling’s most active buying, many late-19th-century works were being sold from famous Gilded Age family collections, and the quickly-expanding Metropolitan Museum of Art was selling or returning to donors similar works it no longer wished to keep. Mr. Ringling was in the right place to take full advantage of this opportunity.

In 1926, Mr. Ringling purchased art works and decorative interior elements from both the Astor and Huntington mansions prior to their demolition. Though the Astor salon and library interiors (which Mr. Ringling installed in Galleries 19 and 20) are well known, the sculpted architectural elements from the Huntington mansion have received far less attention. The new installation of Gallery 21 encourages visitors to appreciate the frieze of cavorting putti, the enormous fireplace, and elaborate door surround, all carved in the 1890s for the lavish new home of railroad magnate Collis P. Huntington (for more on these sculptures, see page 22).

Mr. Ringling also pursued late 19th-century paintings which had been prominently displayed at the Metropolitan Museum, notably the enormous Emperor Justinian by Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant—a work which was very well known in New York—and the Mystery of Life by Carl Marr. Emperor Justinian was displayed at The Ringling in the 1940s, but has been in storage for many decades. It is especially exciting to be able to return it to view in January as part of the reinstallation of Gallery 21 (for more on its conservation, see pages 12–15).

By acquiring well-known works from famous New York collections, Mr. Ringling no doubt hoped to ensure prestige and critical favor for his new museum in Sarasota.

**REINSTALLATION**

By Laura Steefel-Moore
Head of Educational Programs
Ola Wlusek
Keith D. and Linda L. Mondo Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art

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The Ringling Archives links the past to the present by making historical resources accessible to staff, researchers, and the public. The archives collects and manages museum records, Ringling family papers, photographs, manuscripts, and materials relating to the history of the circus, Wild West shows, and allied arts.

The archives has been working hard to establish a DigiLab, designed to enable the digitization of the collections. The goal of digitization is to make the collections more widely accessible, while, at the same time, ensuring their preservation by minimizing wear caused by frequent handling. Private donations have helped the archives to fund the creation of a dark room and the addition of a new controlled lighting system and photographic station. A grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), supported by the Mellon Foundation, has made it possible for the archives to have digitized the Buster Bailey films in the Tibbals Circus Collection. The films will be made accessible on DigiNole, the online digital repository of Florida State University. A second grant, secured by the archives from the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA), has initiated an institution-wide digital assessment, the goal of which is to better enable The Ringling to preserve and provide access to its diverse digital collections.

The archives has recently partnered with the marketing department to increase public awareness of its collections through social media. This partnership has enabled the archives to highlight museum and circus materials that relate, often in fun and playful ways, to various themed days, such as Museum Meme Day (#MusMeme), shared through posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Particularly popular have been the “hashtag parties” that allow social media users to discover selected archival materials via themed hashtags, including #ArchivesAncestors and #ArchivesFacialHair featuring some of the finest mustaches and sideburns in the collections.

Recent work on the collections has enabled the archives to contribute to a number of exciting curatorial projects. The archives has supplied Christmas cards sent to John and Mable Ringling for a holiday display at Ca’ d’Zan, as well as exhibition and photographic files used to help prepare the current exhibition of the work of Sarasota artist Syd Solomon. The archives has also sourced film footage of the Museum of Art from 1946 that has helped to inform the reinstalltion of Gallery 21. Perhaps most exciting of all is the discovery of previously unknown film footage of the Ringlings from the late 1920s. The footage includes shots of John and Mable at Ca’ d’Zan, the Museum of Art, and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus. Clips of the footage, and stills taken from it, will undoubtedly feature in future projects.
A RETURN TO GLORY

The Conservation of Emperor Justinian

Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant, Emperor Justinian, 1886. Oil on canvas; 148 x 260 in. Bequest of John Ringling, 1936. SN442

DISCOVER MORE @ ringling.org
By Barbara A. Ramsay, Chief Conservator

The Ringling is nearing completion of another exciting art conservation project. Emperor Justinian is a monumental (13' x 22'), late 19th century, oil on canvas painted by Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant. This accomplished French artist created this painting with the goal of winning the coveted Medal of Honor at the Paris Salon of 1886. He was not successful in that regard but he did sell the painting to an American collector in 1887, who then donated it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The painting was displayed in a prominent location at the Met for many years, before the museum returned the painting to the family of the donor in 1928. Emperor Justinian was then purchased by John Ringling early in 1929, as his new museum in Sarasota was being completed.

Not displayed at The Ringling since the 1940s, the massive painting has been rolled up for much of its life at the Museum. As a result of previous handling and housing, the paint layers had suffered cracking, flaking, and loss, and pronounced distortions had become entrenched throughout the canvas support. Many tears and holes further weakened the embrittled canvas. In addition, materials used by the artist had caused the upper paint layers to contract upon drying in some areas, creating a characteristic craquelure that revealed the underlying paint colors. Surface grime and discolored varnish also masked the true colors. Major intervention was necessary in order to preserve Emperor Justinian, make it possible to display the painting once more, and ensure that it was presented in a state that accurately reflected the artist’s intent.

Due to the scale of both the painting and the project, the Conservation department explored the possibility of having Emperor Justinian conserved by ArtCare Conservation in Miami, but with the direct involvement of The Ringling painting conservators. Concurrently, a conversation was started with the Getty Foundation, which had embarked upon an international Conserving Canvas initiative directed toward grant support for museums undertaking the "structural" treatment of paintings on canvas. A significant goal of this initiative was to provide meaningful and practical training opportunities for emerging and mid-career museum painting conservators who had not had the chance to hone their skills in these aspects of conservation treatment. The philosophy of "minimal intervention" has been practiced in the painting conservation profession for several decades, leading to unanticipated gaps in the knowledge and experience of young professionals.

In June 2019, The Ringling was awarded grant support from the Getty Foundation in the amount of $176,800—for the major structural treatment of Emperor Justinian and for training residencies for several emerging and mid-career painting conservators. The painting was shipped to Miami in July and a meeting of senior painting conservators was convened to examine the painting and discuss the proposed treatment. Project lead Barbara A. Ramsay invited six trainees to participate in the project—from The Ringling (Megan Salazar-Walsh and Elizabeth Robson), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (José Lazarre), the Detroit Institute of Arts (Blair Bailey), the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (Danaila Serrano). Additional trainees from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Meredith Watson) and The Ringling (Bitzy Couling), along with ArtCare conservators and three painting conservation professors from Queen’s University, SUNY Buffalo State, and NYU, joined in on a Training Workshop provided by ArtCare in November.

After careful study and documentation of the painting, conservation treatment proceeded with this international team of conservators, under the direction of an ArtCare senior conservator (Oliver Watkiss). Stabilization of the actively flaking paint layers and repair of the canvas were carried out. Severe distortions were reduced and the painting was reinforced by the attachment of a new canvas to the back of the original. Surface grime and degraded varnish layers were removed. Final stages of treatment include application of a new varnish, infilling of areas of loss, and inpainting to reintegrate the design. Every stage of treatment required meticulous choreography due to the monumental scale of the painting.

Emperor Justinian will be installed in January 2020, assuming a place of honor in Gallery 21, among other 19th century works of art collected by John Ringling.
The company is great, but in a world where great isn’t a guarantee of survival, what other ingredient is needed? What does this Brazilian hip-hop, contemporary street-dance ensemble have that allows it to be—on its worst day—humble and stunning at the same time, in spite of the odds against its endurance? How has this unsuspecting company survived and thrived for more than a decade of marginalization and economic turmoil to shine like a funky, elegant, and brazen hip-hop church hymn capable of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the ranks of the best, smiling and sweating from the heart, again and again? Resilience. This is a term used in the environmental sciences to describe circumstances, species or ecologies that will outlive the harsh and pitiless shifts of climate change.

Speaking with Artistic Director and Choreographer Sonia Destri Lie about the company’s odyssey for national recognition in Brazil reveals her toughness and dedication to the dancers. She has challenged a group of unlikely young people to create a world-class touring dance ensemble, and from this was born a community of artists who are redefining the word favela in the psyche of Brazil and the world by making their dance and their daily work a political, as well as aesthetic, response to their social and geographic environment. They are doing it with the physical poetry that our species is known for. They are here to teach us a little bit about the international soul of hip-hop, and resilience, along the way.

While in Sarasota, CUD will give three different Masterclasses and Workshops with Sarasotans of all ages. These classes are examples of the various kinds of community engagement offerings available this season through the Art of Performance series. One will be at Booker High School, another at the West Coast Black Theater Troupe’s classrooms, a third will take place at The Ringling in the Perret Performance Studio. These workshops are not grueling studies in dance technique, but fluid, fun immersions into the art of getting down. No experience required, just a desire to dance!

A performance ensemble is a living organism that responds to its environment as a matter of course, and hopefully adapts and evolves through time to stay vital and relevant. Like a greater and greater number of organisms in the biosphere, it can be at risk for extinction as environmental pressures mount, and a complex system of success factors and art-inhibiting influences affect its survival. Dance is a particularly vulnerable species in the arts. This biological analogy came to mind during the inaugural Arts and Ecology Incubator at The Ringling this past November, where a group of participants spent three days asking questions about the relationship of aesthetics, the environment, and how scientific and artistic processes are driven by impossible questions, risk, and wonder. During that same week, Companhia Urbana de Dança (CUD) was finishing up the fall portion of their 2019–2020 U.S. tour, which focuses on cities in the South. While their performances March 24–26 will be their first in Sarasota, they have toured widely throughout the U.S., enjoying critical acclaim from Miami to Helena to Washington, DC and New York. They have graced the stages of The Joyce Theater, The Walker Art Center, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Their journeys cultivate avid fans, and they, in kind, thrive. CUD’s work resonates with audiences of all ages and cultural backgrounds and transmits a singular Brazilian energy. Following their joyful and defiant triumphs, one is struck by what it must take to sustain their aggregate of qualities: hard work, generosity, and an unreasonable amount of conviction with high levels of uncertainty. Most of these performers come from the favelas of Rio, and dance has created a life path otherwise unavailable to many in their home communities.
Gulf Coast Community Foundation has awarded a generous $50,000 Arts Appreciation grant to The Ringling that will support the Art of Our Time initiative during the 2019–2020 season. The foundation's Arts Appreciation grants provide unrestricted funding to cornerstone arts and cultural organizations in the region to help them pursue their artistic missions.

Through its support of Art of Our Time, Gulf Coast is recognized as a sponsor of the contemporary exhibitions Remaking the World: Abstraction from the Permanent Collection, Ai Weiwei: Zodiac (2018) LEGO, Syd Solomon: Concealed and Revealed, Skyway 2020: A Contemporary Collaboration, Being Seen: Recent Aquisitions from The Ringling Photography Collection, and Howie Tsui: Retainers of Anarchy.

This floral affair celebrates the legacy of Mable Ringling and her fabulous rose garden. Grab your hat and join us for mimosas, delicious treats, entertainment, and a special take-home project with the Founders Garden Club.

ROSE GARDEN REDUX

Maintaining a rose garden in Florida is no easy task; it takes dozens of volunteers and a dedicated grounds team to manage the garden of over 400 bushes. Last November, Mable Ringling’s Rose Garden underwent a major reinstallation. Replanting efforts this season have focused on adding tried-and-true bushes that are naturally disease resistant. By planting roses that are better suited for Florida’s unique environment, The Ringling can reduce usage of pesticides and promote healthier, more stunning roses. The rose garden boasts over 65 varieties of roses—from the much beloved McCartney and Mister Lincoln roses, to newer hybrids such as Violet’s Pride and Brindabella Purple Prince. With towering climbers, eye-catching hybrids, and delicate miniatures, there is a rose guaranteed to delight and inspire every visitor.

ARTS APPRECIATION GRANT

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SAVE THE DATE!

WINE WALK TO CA’ D’ZAN
FRI, MAR 20, 6:00 - 10:00 PM
Join us as we sip, stroll, and enjoy delectable delicacies, entertainment, and surprises all while celebrating our beloved Ca’ d’Zan.

BLOSSOMS GARDEN PARTY
SAT, APR 11, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
This floral affair celebrates the legacy of Mable Ringling and her fabulous rose garden. Grab your hat and join us for mimosas, delicious treats, entertainment, and a special take-home project with the Founders Garden Club.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

Associate Director of Collections and Chief Registrar Marian Carpenter’s article, titled Views From the Field: The Challenges To Being Inclusive In Museum Collections, will be published in the next issue of the American Association for State and Local History’s History News magazine and the NCPH/AASLH Inclusion Historian Handbook. The article details Carpenter’s professional experiences in dealing with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion during her 20-year museum career.

The Inclusive Historian’s Handbook was created by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) in conjunction with the National Council on Public History (NCPH). The handbook is a digital resource designed to guide users in centering inclusivity, diversity, equity, and public service in public history work.

Carpenter, who serves as AASLH board member and is the former chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, said, “These specific accounts are shared in hopes of motivating my colleagues working in the museum field to be aware of these issues around inclusivity in collections, spark discussion, and speak up in defense of proper cultural representation.”

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The Ringling recognized all of our wonderful volunteers at a special breakfast program in November. Hollie Corbitt, Volunteer Coordinator shared that 500 volunteers were active during the last fiscal year, and they served 56,918 hours in 24 assignments over 16 departments, which is the equivalent of 27 full-time employees and a donation of more than $1.4 million.

Center Ring Stars for 2018–2019 were selected from nominations submitted by the volunteer corps. The volunteers chosen were Joe Angers, Barbara Arch, Olivia Haynes, and Leslie Young.

Volunteers who contributed 500+ hours during 2018 – 2019 were Leslie Young (506 25 hours), Roberta Schaumleffel (517 hours), Liliana Hoffman (519.5 hours), Paul Ingrassia (535 hours), Ingrid Nutter (552.75 hours), Jean Etsinger (617.25 hours), Connie Cooper (625 hours), Jill Dickerson (670 hours), Donald McCarvey (676.25 hours), John Fisher (729.5 hours), Wilmer Pearson (773.75 hour), and Larry Kellogg (1,004 hours). Special Recognition was given to Debra Short, the Florida Association of Museums Outstanding Volunteer 2019.

ROSE GARDEN REDUX

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ROSE GARDEN REDUX

Maintaining a rose garden in Florida is no easy task; it takes dozens of volunteers and a dedicated grounds team to manage the garden of over 400 bushes. Last November, Mable Ringling’s Rose Garden underwent a major reinstallation. Replanting efforts this season have focused on adding tried-and-true bushes that are naturally disease resistant. By planting roses that are better suited for Florida’s unique environment, The Ringling can reduce usage of pesticides and promote healthier, more stunning roses. The rose garden boasts over 65 varieties of roses—from the much beloved McCartney and Mister Lincoln roses, to newer hybrids such as Violet’s Pride and Brindabella Purple Prince. With towering climbers, eye-catching hybrids, and delicate miniatures, there is a rose guaranteed to delight and inspire every visitor.

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MEMBERSHIP

CIRCLE MEMBER EVENTS

CIRCLE BEHIND THE SCENES
Ai Weiwei: Zodiac (2018) LEGO
THU, JAN 9, 5:00 – 7:00 PM
Join Steven High, Executive Director, and Dr. Rhinnon Paget, Curator of Asian Art, for a tour of Ai Weiwei: Zodiac (2018) LEGO. A reception will follow on the Museum of Art south loggia.

Reinstallation of Gallery 21
Part I: Conservation Conversation
TUE, FEB 4, 10:30 AM – NOON
Circle Members are invited to the Conversation program with Barbara Ramsay, Chief Conservator, and Dr. Sarah Cartwright, Ulla R. Searing Curator of Collections, about The Ringling’s efforts to conserve the grand painting Emperor Justinian by Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant and the reinstallation of Gallery 21.

Reinstallation of Gallery 21
Part II: Preview and Reception
FRI, FEB 7, 7:30 – 9:30 PM
Circle members are invited to join Dr. Sarah Cartwright, Ulla R. Searing Curator of Collections, and Barbara Ramsay, Chief Conservator, for a reception and tour of Gallery 21. View the recently conserved and resplendent Emperor Justinian by Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant, and hear about the work that went into this gallery reinstallation.

CIRCLE RECOGNITION COCKTAIL RECEPTION
Community Drum Circle led by Inez Barlatier
THU, FEB 20, 5:00 – 7:00 PM
In recognition of your continued support of The Ringling and our programs, we invite Circle Members to join us for a cocktail reception and celebration on Ca d’Zan terrace. Then, at sunset, join kami artist Inez Barlatier on the Bolger Campiello for a lively and rhythmic celebration of the full moon. Bring your own hand drums, dance, or just watch and enjoy!

Friends Events
MEET AND GREET WITH ARTIST YIN MEI
SAT, JAN 18, 11:00 AM – NOON
Members of all Friends groups are invited to attend a meet and greet with artist Yin Mei. Light brunch fare will be provided.

MEMBER EVENT
COFFEE AND CONVERSATION
TUE, APR 28, 9:00 – 10:30 AM
Join Executive Director, Steven High, for an update on what we have accomplished as we approach the end of the season and look towards the next fiscal year. Coffee and breakfast fare will be served.

Legacy Society Event
LEGACY LUNCHEON
THU, MAR 26, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Legacy members of The Ringling are invited to a luncheon to recognize their continued support!

Attention Long-Time Members
Have you been a member for 15 years or more? Watch your mailbox for your invitation to our Legacy Society Luncheon on March 26.

Stay Informed
Due to changes in exhibition schedules, programs, speaker availability and many other factors, scheduled events may change and new events may be arranged! Please visit ringling.org for the most current listing of our upcoming events.

Member Travel
The Ringling offers travel opportunities to members both through local trips, as well as globally through the Museum Travel Alliance. Any member of The Ringling at any level is welcome to attend any of the offered trips for access to unique, high end cultural travel programs. To learn more visit ringling.org/membership.

Save the date!
SKYWAY 2020: A CONTEMPORARY COLLABORATION
JUN 17 | Circle Member Exhibition Preview and Dinner
JUN 18 | VIP Exhibition Self-guided Tour and Reception
JUN 20 | Member Day

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT
Donna Hanley and Karen Smith

When and how did you first hear about The Ringling?
Shortly after relocating from upstate New York to Sarasota in April of 2013, we wanted to find a space that would provide us with what we had loved about our home in New York, a two-acre rural property with many gardens of trees, flowers, and vegetables. We found what we were looking for immediately at The Ringling.

What about The Ringling inspires you?
We are inspired by the Ringling family story and how the love for their surroundings and the community shaped the look, feel, and culture of the museums and grounds. From Mable’s passionate attention to detail to John’s avid pursuit of diverse art from around the world, their efforts have created a unique destination.

What is the benefit you enjoy the most from your Membership?
The best benefit of our Duo Membership is the opportunity for us to bring our guests to a place that we are proud of and love.

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What do you hope to continue to gain from your Membership?
We appreciate how The Ringling continues to evolve and grow in response to the changes in our community and in our culture. We hope that progressive attitude will continue to bring us objective, diverse, exciting, and beautiful experiences.
The reinstallation of Gallery 21 has provided an occasion for conducting new research on the works of art displayed there (for more on this project, see page 9). Dominating the room, but long overlooked, are the architectural elements permanently installed in the gallery—the fireplace, door surround, and marble frieze—all of which were salvaged by John Ringling from the Fifth Avenue mansion of railroad magnate Collis P. Huntington when the home was destroyed in 1926. The frieze in particular has been largely unstudied, despite being the centerpiece of the mansion’s Great Hall.

The marble frieze consists of twelve panels of cavorting putti, each depicting a month of the year, executed by Austrian-born sculptor Karl Bitter in 1892-93. The intervening panels, illustrating the arts and sciences, were designed by the decorating firm Ellis, Kitson & Co. Although references to the seasons were not uncommon in Gilded Age décor, Bitter’s Twelve Months Panels are especially enigmatic and may have been so even for a contemporary American audience. The inspiration for the work comes from a 19th-century German take on the medieval genre of the “Labors of the Months,” a way of representing the months of the year through scenes of human industry and recreation. When the panels were installed in Gallery 21 in the late 1920s, they were placed entirely out of order, suggesting confusion in their interpretation.

Some of the frieze imagery is relatively straightforward, such as dress-up play at carnival time (February) and Christmas toys (December). To interpret others however, it helps to know 19th-century German popular art, especially as seen in calendars and children’s books, for which the twelve months (Die zwölf Monate) were a constant theme. In the September panel for example (see above), a children’s book illustration seems the likely source for the young girl huddled in the corner with her hand lifted to her cheek. She is upset after being struck in the head by a falling apple, as her playmates on the other side of the panel pick the fruit from a tree.
MEMBERS SAVE 10%*  
*excludes clearance items

Open Daily  
10:00 AM - 5:30 PM, Thursdays until 8:00 PM  
Located in the Visitors Pavilion

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**TRUNK SHOWS**

**FEB 12**  
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Ebijou**  
Elma Felix’s necklace designs are carefully handmade using high quality textiles, cotton fibers and metals in her Sarasota studio.

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**FEB 18 & 19**  
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Italianissimo**  
Husband and wife team, Diane & Mauro believe their line of Murano glass jewelry should be as fun as it is fabulous, as creative as it is affordable.

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**FEB 25 & 26**  
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Sugar Sand Silver**  
Working with sterling silver, natural stones, pearls, and sea-glass, local artist Kim Schmeits's pieces are hand-crafted in her Sarasota studio where she creates casual yet elegant pieces.