

Eye to Eye



DECEMBER 2009

Greetings,

The holidays are fast-approaching – a time when family members and close friends gather to enjoy each other's company.

Over 60% of the seniors ELDERGIVERS serves have no visitors, *anytime of the year*. For them, the connections they make in the Art With Elders (AWE) classes and the warmth and friendliness of our Artist-Instructors alleviate some of this loss. This issue, though, focuses on the other 40% of elders we serve and gives a different perspective on AWE – through the voices of their children.

December is also a time when we think of the needs of others and of our community as a whole. In the adjoining column, Debra Dolch shares her reasons for making ELDERGIVERS a top priority for her charitable giving. The "giving page" in this issue offers ways in which you, too, can support ELDERGIVERS. Please read it and make your own generous gift.

Finally, the 18th Annual Art With Elders Exhibit opens January 9th 2010 for a seven week stay at the San Francisco Main Library. Don't miss it. It's one of our best.

Happy Holidays from all of us to all of you!

Pam Hagen, Editor

ELDER ARTIST

SAM HINTON – An easy segue

One of the fathers of the folk-song movement that began in this country in the 1930s, Sam Hinton is perhaps best known for music that got school children and folk-festival audiences tapping their feet and singing along for decades. By his own reckoning, he knew over 2,000 songs. But he was hardly a stranger to the visual arts.



A DONOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Debra Dolch, a CPA, is the principal of Debra J. Dolch Fiduciary Services. Her firm acts as Trustee, Conservator, Executor and/or Agent under Advanced Health Directives for a variety of clients throughout the Bay Area, the majority of whom are seniors.

This thoughtful and inspiring San Franciscan has generously invested ideas, time and money in ELDERGIVERS from its very beginning. She served as a board member from 1989 to 1991; was a strong advocate for Art With Elders when it was in its infancy in 1991; and helped secure the funds to hire AWE's first program director in 1995. She has made a significant financial donation to ELDERGIVERS every December for the past two decades.



See page 3 for an interview with Debra.

Trained as a zoologist, Sam served as the Director of the Aquarium-Museum at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego. He became accomplished at calligraphy, developed a real talent for scientific illustration of marine life and, over a twenty-year period, wrote and illustrated 1,200 installments of a weekly newspaper column "The Ocean World".

"My father loved working on those illustrations almost as much as he enjoyed crafting his songs," Leanne Hinton reminisces. "Their precision, realism and subtle coloring particularly appealed to him."

"He stopped playing his guitar in his mid 80s and about that time lost the ability to do the fine details in his drawings," Leanne continues. "Life became a bit boring for him. That's why it was such an enormous pleasure for



Blue Coronary by Sam Hinton
Selected for the 18th Annual Exhibit

me when he was able to participate in Art With Elders classes at Raksha Homes.”

“The work he did in the AWE classes was totally different from his illustrations – abstract and full of bold colors. AWE opened up a fresh creative front for my father and he moved into it effortlessly. It was delightful to see him express himself in this new way. His attention was so clearly focused on painting when he had a brush in his hands.”

Veronica Rojas, AWE Artist-Instructor, laughs. “Sam was always the last to leave the class. I had to gently take the materials from him.”



Sam with his son, Matt, and his daughter, Leanne.

Sam Hinton died peacefully on September 11th surrounded by his daughter and her family, listening to his recorded version of “You’ve got to walk that lonesome valley.”

Is there not a certain satisfaction in the fact that natural limits are set to the life of the individual, so that at its conclusion it may appear as a work of art?

Albert Einstein

ELDER ARTIST

PEGGY BARRON – Back at it!

“If you were to cut her, she’d bleed paint,” Amy Barron chuckles as she describes the role that art has played in her mom’s life.

Peggy Barron is one of the few students in the Art With Elders program who has had previous art experience (at right as a young prize winner). Although she has had no formal training, her mother, Helen Hutton Hood, was an artist in the Work Project Administration in the 1930s and nurtured a creative environment at home. She let her daughter draw on the back of her own canvases.



As a young woman with three children of her own, Peggy started a small business renting her framed artworks to dentists’ and doctors’ offices. Today she’ll tell you, “I like to keep my paint brush wet!”

But, when Peggy traveled with a group of artists to Provence in the late 1990s for the purpose of painting and found she just couldn’t paint, she became quite stressed. This continued for many years after her return to the States. The family tried several interventions: her son, Bob, asked her to create a lighthouse scene for his birthday – one of her favorite subjects; Amy tried getting her interested in collage. Nothing seemed to work. “It was as if her artistic fire had gone out,” Amy recalls.

It was when Peggy moved into Nacario’s Home in San Francisco that she finally picked up a brush again – in the Art With Elders classes. Her daughter explains that “Your Artist-Instructors gave her the confidence she needed and jump-started the creative juices.”



Life Circles by Peggy Barron
Selected for the 18th Annual Exhibit



“Mom doesn’t remember as much as she used to, but art is at the core of her soul. She’s happier now, more talkative, more alert, less stressed. We drove by Cheap Pete’s in August

and she said, ‘We ought to pick up some frames.’ I was elated,” Amy grins. “She hadn’t said that in ten years!”

Pictured above: Amy and Peggy at Nacario’s.

ELDER ARTIST

SELINA POONG – A new hand at art

If you don’t mind stretching analogies, Selina Poong *did* have some familiarity with art prior to her introduction to the Art With Elders classes at Eden Villa. For 40 years, this outgoing, gregarious mother of four was an Avon lady and quite practiced at using the cosmetician’s brush and palette to bring out the best in her client’s faces.

But her daughter, Elizabeth Mark, marvels at what her mother has accomplished with a different brush and palette and under very different circumstances in the past two years. Selina had a stroke in 2008, at age 90, that took away the use of her dominant right hand and pretty much silenced her speech. She came to live at Eden Villa.

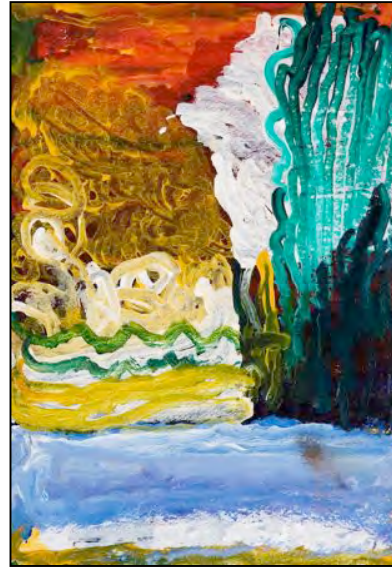
“There have been no artists in our large family and here Mom comes along and with the help of Art With Elders taps this well-hidden vein of talent! We’re all very proud of her,” Elizabeth says with some surprise in her voice. “And her teacher, Veronica Rojas, who has been very encouraging, is impressed with what she’s learned to do so quickly with her left hand.”



“Mom has trouble talking now, which could be very frustrating for someone who’s so people-oriented and a natural salesperson,” Elizabeth goes on. “But she’s come to depend more on imagery, and less on words.”

Pictured above: Elizabeth Mark, Ron Gin and Selina Poong at Eden Villa.

Ron Gin, Elizabeth’s boyfriend, spontaneously pinpoints another role that art plays in Selina’s life. “It’s given her a very welcome source of pride. Whenever any of the six grandchildren visit, she’ll take them over to the wall on which Eden Villa staff have hung her paintings and point to them with obvious delight. She feels like she’s contributing again, to the Eden Villa community and to her family.”



Mrs. Poong’s brood is eagerly looking forward to enjoying her acrylic, “Seasonal”, in the surroundings of the Jewett Gallery when the 18th Annual Exhibit opens at the San Francisco Main Library in January of next year.

Seasonal
by Selina Poong
Selected for the
18th Annual Exhibit

INTERVIEW WITH DEBRA DOLCH

“It’s natural for me to nurture what’s best in my community. I had the strong example of my elders,” Debra Dolch explained recently in an interview with Brent Nettle, Executive Director of ELDERGIVERS. “I grew up in an extended family that valued me as an individual. In turn, I was eager to hear the stories my grandparents, great grandparents, uncles and aunts willingly shared – each one seemed to have a lesson for me. All of them were involved in some way in making their communities a better place for everyone.”

BN You and your staff go to great lengths to make sure your clients have as high a quality of life as possible, including connections to community.

DD That’s one of the many points of agreement I share with ELDERGIVERS! Human relationships provide meaning in our lives. When these are threatened by age or institutionalization, there can be negative impacts in mental and physical health and longevity. Depression, for instance, is widespread and often untreated in the senior population; much of it is the result of isolation. To me, feeding the spirit is as important as providing food and shelter. Knowing that we are valued and contributing members of the human family is vital to our spiritual well-being.

BN Is this a reason you take such an active interest in Art With Elders?

DD It's certainly one of them. Many of my clients – and their families – have benefited tremendously over the years from AWE classes and the exhibits. I've seen individuals I care for come alive in these intimate settings where people are gathered to explore a common interest.

BN What are they gaining?

DD So much! Making art is an act of self-discovery. Knowing who we are is a first step towards understanding others and inviting them into our lives. The practice of art involves choice, engagement in the creative process, pride of accomplishment in a finished work – the joy of shapes, colors, textures. The intimacy of the classes offers potential for making friends and for belonging. The public exhibits offer a wider world.

BN What about the role of our teachers?

DD They are key, aren't they? Because they're professional artists and by nature see things differently, they look deeper than the surface appearance, question the status quo and challenge stereotypes. They see wonderful promise and potential in their elder students. They're amazing – so upbeat and quick to compliment and encourage.

BN Debra, as a seasoned giver yourself, in this season of giving what do you look for when determining which causes deserve your support?

DD I'm predisposed to causes that support seniors, who have given so much to us. It's our turn to give back to them. Basically, I take great joy in an organization that makes a clear difference in the lives of those it serves. I am drawn to a cause in which there is palpable excitement about its mission; it makes me want to be part of it. And finally, I appreciate a nonprofit in which there is a minimum of bureaucracy, one that's transparent. I guess that's the accountant in me speaking!

BN Why is ELDERGIVERS particularly attractive to you as a donor?

DD All of the above. Everyone is focused on the mission. How can you not give when everyone else is giving their all? The organization is an open one. I know where my money is going, and because it's a lean operation, I am confident that the greater portion of what I contribute is going directly to benefit the elderly. I know from experience these benefits are tangible. My gift is a matching gift in a sense – I make it to match the passion and commitment of ELDERGIVERS' board and staff.

ART WITH ELDERS SALE
Saturday, December 12, 2009, 10am – 3pm
First Congregational Church
1323 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109



Corner of Polk and Bush Streets

Take advantage of this opportunity to find a unique gift for friends and family. We will be selling 70 paintings from earlier Art With Elders exhibits. All are framed and include a picture and a biographical sketch of the artist. Paintings are priced from \$25 to \$250.

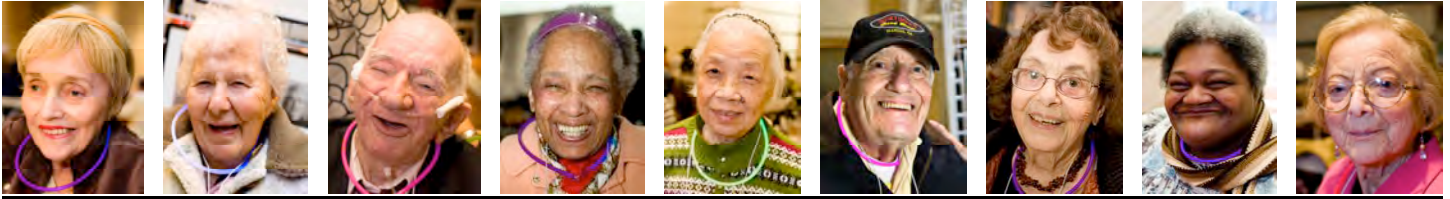
Nine Lives: Uncovering the Wealth of Life Stories Within Our Nursing Homes will be on sale for just \$7, marked down from \$20. These books are an exercise in wisdom-harvesting – picking the ripe fruit of long lives and sharing it with the community.

Here are some of the paintings that will be on sale:

(clockwise from top left): *Swimmer* by Joyce Cain, *In the Mist* by Marie Gallucci, *Two Men and a Baby* by Sabien Marquit, and *Portrait of Frida* by Zenaida Montalvo.



Giving Page



ART WITH ELDERS

*There is a way
that you can help introduce the adventure of art into the lives of
seniors in San Francisco Bay Area long-term care sites
that is just right for you!!*

IF YOU'VE GOT IT, CASH IS BEST!

Please make check of money order payable to ELDERGIVERS. Any amount is appreciated.

MATCHING

Will your employer match your gift? Check with your boss, or HR dept.

ON-LINE -- CREDIT CARD

Go to www.eldergivers.org and click on GIVE NOW – follow the directions from there.

APPRECIATED STOCK

Have you benefited from one of the market rallies this year? Call us at 415.441.2650 and we'll make it easy for you to donate stock.

VEHICLE

Give us your used car or truck (in good shape, please) and take a tax deduction for the amount of the sale price.

MEMORIAL

Honor the life of a family member or special friend.

CELEBRATION

Recognize a milestone in the life of a family member or special friend – anniversary, birthday, a new job!

eBAY AUCTION

You can sell an item on eBay and make ELDERGIVERS a full or partial beneficiary. See our website for detailed information.

PURCHASE AN AWE PAINTING

See our website for more information and for upcoming sales.

IN-KIND OR TIME

Do you have art supplies you'd like to donate? Expertise at event-planning? Newsletter production? Contact us!

HOW DOES YOUR DONATION HELP?

- \$ 25** Buys paint brushes for one elder artist for six months
- \$ 50** Frames one painting for the AWE Annual Exhibit (there are up to 90 paintings in each exhibit)
- \$ 80** Presents a two-hour AWE class taught by a professional artist
- \$ 100** Pays the cost of one kiosk for the Annual Exhibit (there are 16 kiosks in each annual show)
- \$ 250** Prints 1,000 AWE brochures to accompany the Traveling Exhibit
- \$ 500** Covers the cost of moving the Traveling Exhibit from one location to another (averages eight moves a year)
- \$ 750** Enables up to 10 AWE artists from one facility to enjoy a day field trip to a local art museum
- \$1,000** Meets the minimum sponsorship level for the next Annual Exhibit
- \$ 2,800** Provides six months of weekly painting classes for ten residents of one Bay Area long-term care facility
- \$ 5,600** Offers one full year of classes
- \$10,000** Puts your name, as primary sponsor, on the next Annual Exhibit!



ELDERGIVERS is a 501(c)(3) organization. Federal ID #94-3099821. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.

Contact us at: info@eldergivers.org
or 415-441-2650

Celebrating Art With Elders at the San Francisco Main Library



18th Annual Art With Elders Exhibit in the Jewett Gallery

Saturday, January 9 thru
Sunday, February 28, 2010

Celebrating Art with Elders, sponsored by ELDERGIVERS, the Library, and The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, will showcase watercolors, acrylics, oil pastels, crayon, pen and ink and pencil drawings and collages created by diverse elders who reside in long-term care facilities around the Bay Area.

The majority of the artwork in the exhibit has been made by seniors who have only recently discovered their talents through ELDERGIVERS' Art With Elders painting program. From Victor Ries at age 102 to Walter Jordan in his late forties, the exhibit reflects an ethnic and cultural mosaic of African-Americans, Asians, Filipinos, American Indians, Hispanics and Caucasians who have found fresh meaning in life and a new way of expressing themselves through the visual arts.

For more information, see exhibits and events at www.eldergivers.org.
Photo of library skylight by Joe Mabel.

Illustrated Lecture: Creating Space for Creativity

Saturday, January 9, 2:00, Free
Koret Auditorium – Reception following event

Lillian Cartwright, Ph.D., will explore the role which environment (physical, social, psychological, etc.) can play in nurturing creativity. This illustrated presentation will draw on the experience of the renowned photographer, Alfred Stieglitz, and his phenomenally successful Gallery "291" in New York at the turn of the 20th century.

Dr. Cartwright's presentation will be followed by three shorter talks, also illustrated, by Artist-Instructors who teach weekly classes in the Art With Elders program: Mark H. Campbell, Veronica Rojas and Rafael Vieira.

Three Short Documentary Films

Followed by a discussion with the filmmakers
Saturday, February 20, 2:00, Free
Koret Auditorium – Reception following event

The Library and ELDERGIVERS, with Legacy Films and The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, will screen three short films: **Bella, Bella**, which profiles Bay Area artist Bella Feldman; **Shadow & Light**, which focuses on artist Elaine Badgley Arnoux; and **Smitten**, the story of art collector Rene di Rosa. This will be followed by a discussion with the filmmakers led by Sheila Malkind of Legacy Films.

Lillian Cartwright, Ph.D. (UC Berkeley in Psychology), has studied and written extensively about lives over time. Her interest in individuals, their experiences, memories, and emotions informs her work as an artist. She studied at the Pratt Institute, SF Art Institute and California College of the Arts. Exhibited throughout California, her watercolors and collaged water-based media work are held in collections nationwide. She has taught for AWE.



Mark Campbell, MFA, has most recently exhibited at the Amsterdam Whitney in New York, Gallery of Modern Masters in Arizona, The Peter Barlow Gallery in Chicago, and Gallery Keoki in California. His work is in the collections of Carlos Santana, Aretha Franklin, Michael Narada Walden, Lillian & Robert Bohlen, the U. of Michigan, U. of San Francisco, and Hampden Sydney College. He is the AWE Program Director at Laguna Honda Hospital.



Rafael Vieira, BFA, began life in Brasil, was raised in Miami, and moved to the Bay Area to study at the SF Art Institute. His work is characterized by his drive to examine issues faced by immigrants and social criticism. He's exhibited in Miami, Atlanta, Washington DC and San Francisco. Rafael is an AWE instructor at five senior residential sites in San Francisco.



Veronica Rojas, MFA has shown her work internationally and has been represented by SFMOMA Artists Gallery and Perdurabo Art Agency. A Visual Aid Grant recipient, she was nominated for The Eureka Fellowship and Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant. Her paintings have been reviewed in Artweek, Latin Eyes and were recently included in the Visual Aid Book of Artists. Veronica is an AWE instructor at three long-term care facilities.



Sheila Malkind, MA, MPH is the director of the Legacy Film Series. She moved to the Bay area from Chicago, where she directed the Silver Images Film Festival for three years, presenting films that celebrate older adults. She holds an MA in Clinical Psychology and a Master of Public Health degree specializing in gerontology. She is a published writer and photographer.



ELDERGIVERS
Connecting the Generations