

# IMAGINE MORE



THE CAMPAIGN  
SANTA BARBARA  
MUSEUM OF ART

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The beaming faces above of architect Bob Kupiec and Director of Facilities and Installations John Coplin reflect the feelings of all Museum staffers and Board members on April 14 when the City of Santa Barbara issued a building permit for the long-planned, much needed renovations for SBMA's historic State Street home.

Bob, John, and their respective staffs had worked years on the daunting task of preserving the esthetic integrity of a 100-year-old building while updating its structural integrity to accord with 21st-century codes—while at the same time improving the flow of the interior spaces, bringing the art-handling functions up to modern museum standards, and adding 20% more gallery space!

Construction work has begun, but we are still far short of the funds that will be needed to complete this amazing project. Please ask yourself what you can do to help us preserve your great Museum—and let us know.

John C. Bishop, Jr., Chair, Board of Trustees

## An Architect for the Museum

When the Museum received the building permit for its renovation, no one was happier than the Principal of Kupiec Architects PC. "We can finally stop carrying around 50-pound rolls of paper to hearings," Bob Kupiec said. More seriously, it was an important step on a journey that began four years ago when the Museum retained his firm to develop a master plan to rescue a building that was badly in need of buttress and repair and didn't work all that well to begin with.

The Museum Director and Board could hardly have found a more qualified architect for the job. Before starting his firm in New York in 1981, the Brooklyn-born and -educated Kupiec worked five years for Marcel Breuer, architect of the iconic Whitney Museum building on Park Avenue. For ten years, Kupiec's own firm was the "secret weapon" for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, designing galleries on time and under budget. He completed projects for the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, the New York and Brooklyn Public Libraries.

Overseas he helped restore the Museo de Arte de Ponce in Puerto Rico and the only surviving synagogue in Auschwitz, Poland; and his firm received an AIA Honor Award for Urban Design for the restoration of Manhattan's Bryant Park.

In 2003, wife, daughter, and lifestyle brought Bob to Santa Barbara, where he has done projects for institutions and residential clients. He was completing a major renovation of the old "Anacota Plaza" building for Antioch University—another award-winner—when SBMA came calling.

"So many museum jobs are 'vanity' projects, a director or patron or architect wanting to make their mark," Bob observed. "Santa Barbara, in contrast, needed a building with walls that didn't shake in an earthquake, a roof that didn't leak, and a climate control system that protected the art. While we take on these urgent matters, we also have the opportunity to address the manifest circulation problems and turn a random collection of gallery spaces into one coherent building."

"The Museum will have a better way to tell the story of its art. And not incidentally," concluded the architect, "the Wow! factor will be very high."

# Our Donors, Past and Present

Lenore and Herbert Schorr are avid contemporary art collectors, but not the kind that go after “big names” for status or investment. For decades they have regularly attended gallery openings, met the often “unknown” artists, and live with what they like. Lenore says, “We look for something we haven’t seen before—something that is representative of its time and makes a contribution.”

Another trait that distinguishes the Schorrs: when they move or their living space gets too full, they don’t store their art—they give it away, preferably to an institution that will support the artists involved. One fortunate beneficiary has been the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, thanks to the Schorrs’ friendship with Julie Joyce, whom they met going to L.A. galleries even before she became the Curator of Contemporary Art at SBMA. Their friendship led to gifts of 56 works of art before the Schorrs moved back to New York in 2014.

The Schorrs began collecting in New York in the 1970s, and in the early ‘80s they discovered the downtown scene of Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Art historians, in fact, credit Herb and Lenore with being Basquiat’s first collectors, and a major piece they own is currently on display at the Met Breuer.

When the Schorrs arrived in L.A. in 1989 the art scene was always on the verge. L.A. collectors had no confidence in local artists and still went to New York for their serious purchases. “We found great things that the locals wouldn’t buy,” remembers Lenore. L.A. artists also lagged their New York counterparts when it came to self-promotion; and “if art is not promoted, the artist won’t go anywhere,” notes Lenore.



“Kevin Appel,” she comments, “is a wonderful artist but with a laid-back personality.” “We have Appel paintings in all our children’s homes,” adds Herb, “but SBMA got the best

one [at left]—it was used by MOCA as an invitation to a major show. We gave you an even bigger piece by Noah Davis, an important young artist who just died. It will be interesting to see what happens with his work.”

Indeed, it will be interesting to follow the careers of all the 40 mostly California artists whose works are now in the SBMA collection, thanks to the foresight and generosity of Lenore and Herb Schorr. Another Basquiat, maybe?



“The habit of looking at pictures starts with kids’ books,” notes Christine Holland, “and if you’re a visual person you continue the habit in art museums.” For the last eleven years, in her capacity as a volunteer Docent, Christine has helped visitors to look meaningfully at the art in SBMA.

Christine moved to Santa Barbara for a legal job but stopped practicing law after marrying her husband Michael. She began auditing art history classes at UCSB and later joined the Docent program. “To me, a visit to the Museum is not just about the beauty of the objects, but the historical, religious, and cultural context of the art. Art helps us better understand our own lives, how we fit in the world.”

Christine serves on the Docent Council Board and schedules all adult tours, and she has chaired the Museum Collectors Council, where members see art in collectors’ homes and get to know people who live with art on an everyday basis. She also serves on the board of the Ensemble Theatre Company and on the advancement committee for the Music Academy of the West.

“I admire all the programs SBMA puts on: the camps and classes for children, the educational and social events for adults, and of course the wonderful work done by the Docents—all furthering the Museum’s mission of integrating art into peoples’ lives.”

For Christine and Michael, deciding to support the Imagine More campaign was an easy decision. Says Christine, “The renovations *must be done*, and the designs are beautiful. Our Museum means a lot to me, and it means a lot to the community.”

“When we give to this campaign, it’s not just for today’s generation, but for generations to come. And we add ourselves to the history of giving—think of all the cultural assets we have in Santa Barbara thanks to the generosity of those who have come before. We are grateful we have the opportunity to support the Museum.”

# From the Permanent Collection

We are embarking upon this renovation because, primarily, it is our responsibility to protect and preserve our permanent collection. Many significant treasures are entrusted to our care, including those here.

“The poetry of motion,” is how one writer described the sculpture of George Rickey—blades of stainless steel that are never still, never touch, and never seem to line up the same.

The physical elements themselves are not the art; they define the motion that is.

For 50 years, Rickey was America’s, if not the world’s, preeminent kinetic sculptor, constantly tinkering and innovating, creating almost frictionless, noiseless machines that move in multiple directions with the slightest air current. Like Moholy-Nagy, seen at SBMA last year, Rickey’s work is a synthesis of technology and art.

He chose blades for his works because of their simplicity and lack of figurative association, approaching the limit of abstraction. With a hand-held rotary sander he etched curving lines in the blades, adding life through reflected light.

“Though I do not imitate nature, I am aware of resemblances,” Rickey said. The artist’s subject is not a tree, but the waving of branches.

*Six Random Lines Excentric III* is a late work, begun when the sculptor was 85 and not installed until 1999, seven years later. It replaced a much earlier work by Rickey that consisted of two large mobile squares that dangerously reflected light onto State Street and is now displayed at SBMA’s Ridley-Tree Education Center.



*Diptych - The Seasons I* predates *Six Random Lines* by more than four decades and speaks to George Rickey’s career as a painter before he turned to sculpture.

Although George Rickey was based in upstate New York, where his large pieces were fabricated, he taught at UCSB in 1960; for more than a decade starting in the mid-1980s he maintained a winter studio in Hope Ranch, where he would experiment on a smaller scale.

“Excentric” was Rickey’s word to describe the motion of the six blades: a large

cone above the pivot where the blade attaches to its arm, and a small cone below. Movements are random, but controlled. There is a limited repertoire of possible movements but an infinite range of relationships.

Looking at a Rickey sculpture becomes an act of watching. It takes your mind off the busyness of your life and liberates you to enjoy the moment.

Opposite inset left: Kevin Appel, *House: west view out*, 1999. Acrylic on canvas over panel. SBMA, Gift of Lenore and Herbert Schorr.

Opposite inset right: Christine Holland in front of Maria Helena Vieira da Silva’s *Cité Lacustre* (1957).

Inset: George Rickey, *Diptych: The Seasons I*, 1956. Oil on metal. SBMA, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Warren D. Tremaine.

Top right: George Rickey, *Six Random Lines Excentric III*, 1992-1999. Stainless steel – unique. SBMA, Gift of the Estate of George Rickey.

In addition to building an important permanent collection of contemporary art, SBMA has organized major exhibitions of 20th-century art. Among the highlights from recent years:

*Tamayo: A Modern Icon Reinterpreted*

*Charles Garabedian: A Retrospective*

*Pasadena to Santa Barbara: A Selected History of Art in Southern California, 1951-1969*

*Labour & Wait*

*The Paintings of Moholy-Nagy: The Shape of Things to Come*



László Moholy-Nagy, *Composition*, ca. 1922-23. Paper collage on paper. SBMA, Gift of Mrs. Charlotte Mack.



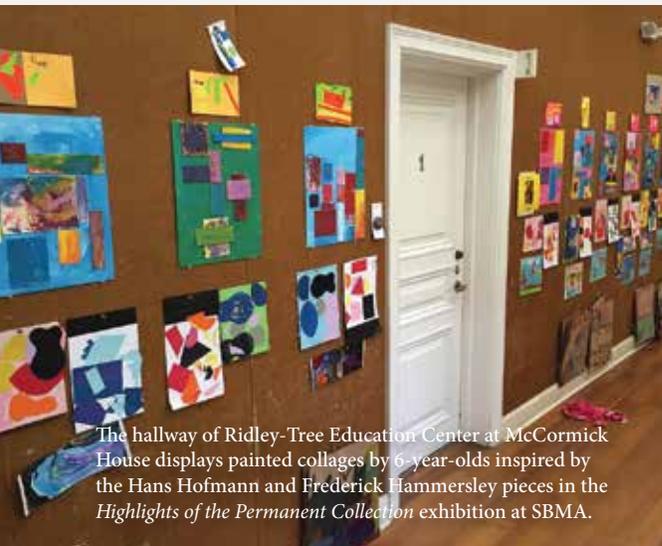
THE CAMPAIGN

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Permit No. 352



The hallway of Ridley-Tree Education Center at McCormick House displays painted collages by 6-year-olds inspired by the Hans Hofmann and Frederick Hammersley pieces in the *Highlights of the Permanent Collection* exhibition at SBMA.

If you would like more information about SBMA's capital campaign or want to know how you can contribute, please call or email Ron Dufault, Capital Campaign Director, 805-884-6468 or [rdufault@sbma.net](mailto:rdufault@sbma.net). He will be glad to hear from you.

Visit us at: [campaign.sbma.net](http://campaign.sbma.net)

## Continuing Education

The impacts of renovation aren't limited to SBMA's home on State Street: approximately 2,000 square feet have been carved out of the Ridley-Tree Education Center at McCormick House on the corner of Arrellaga and Santa Barbara Streets for secondary art storage and the wood shop, crucial to exhibition-related construction. But with admirable flexibility from staff and students, SBMA's education program hasn't missed a beat—they've just discovered new uses for old spaces.

For one week during April spring break and for nine weeks this summer, SBMA offers Art Camps for 61 children, ages 5-12. Seven Teaching Artists, assisted by a dozen local high schoolers earning community service credits, lead separate classes in drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, sculpture and other inventive media. Pieces currently on display in the Museum are used as models, not to copy but to use as inspiration for the students' own imagination and creativity.

A ceramics studio in the basement of Ridley-Tree Education Center houses two kilns and 13 potting wheels. Using the current exhibition *Puja and Piety: Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist Art from the Indian Subcontinent* as inspiration, the instructor has modeled a lotus box and a scary mask of Hanuman for her nascent potters to work from. Before and after class, students can relax or work in the Community Reading Room, now transformed into informal studio space. The enclosed outdoor courtyard along Santa Barbara Street, where George Rickey's *Two Planes Horizontal-Vertical II* presides, has become another space for group play.

When schools are in session, the Center hosts one-day-a-week, 12-week After-School programs, and during the school day a variety of programs use the space. Art Express, for example, supplements 6th-graders classroom study of the ancient world with talks by department educators about SBMA's classical collection and hands-on art making with Teaching Artists. With much of the collection off-view, the staff and programs of Ridley-Tree Education Center are more important than ever in keeping the youth of Santa Barbara connected to the Museum.