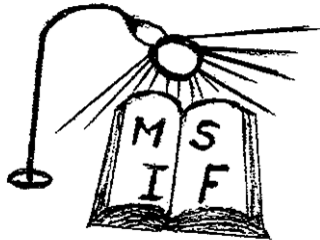


# The Minnesota Scholar

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## MISF ANNUAL PICNIC

### In-Person Reprieve



(Photos by Carrie Miller)

The annual picnic took place again at the small shelter at Cherokee Park in Saint Paul under overcast skies on the balmy day of August 28. There were fourteen people gathered in this reunion of sorts. Some people came early; others found their way later.

President Steven Miller happily welcomed arrivals. There was a grill for hotdogs and plates and utensils for everyone. Some people brought potluck; some brought their individual lunches. Tom Abeles tempted picknickers with his tray of brownies. It was delightful to visit with fellow scholars, getting reacquainted, catching up on news or just chatting and reading body language in this return to an in-person gathering. And, so, we ran out of time, before we ran out of conversation.



## Art to Science

by Evelyn D. Klein

In today's world, art and science seemingly stand on opposite poles, science the lead letter in the all-important STEM and art often at the bottom of curricular options. While STEM education is promoted and its well-paid professions flourish, art-based careers today often do not find the same general demand, promotion, respect, or income, except for a relatively small number of artists. Yet, conversely, the overwhelming number of working scientists are little known and disappear into the system of their employment, unless they work perhaps independently, are first in their field, publish on their own, or for extraordinary accomplishments, attract attention. Yet art and science have each a distinguished history and, at times, a symbiotic relationship that brings us to the twenty-first century.

The philosophical dichotomy of art and science may have found its early expression with the Greeks, advocates of much of modern western thinking. Plato, for instance, considered art "an imitation, an illusion... a collection of mere appearances like reflections in a mirror or shadows on a wall." Yet his younger contemporary, Aristotle, advanced these thoughts with his theory that "art is an attempt to grasp at universal truths in individual happenstances." These thoughts point the way into the future.

My own earliest notion of art and science as a young person coincided with the popular belief of opposites. Coming from a family of artists and scientists, with me as thinker/observer and awakening artist/writer in the background, I often wondered how these seeming opposites can exist in the same family with conversations carried back and forth between family members on aspects of the two as if they were parts of one.

My father a graphic artist, created woodcuts, devised methods for perspective, three dimensionality, shading and color to the often black and white art of woodblock prints. He wrote a treatise on perspective drawing, "Basics in the Visual Arts." He invented a shaped handle for the toothbrush, years before one made it to market. At the same time, it was

fascinating for me to discover that my father and older, physicist brother worked on a calculation for the visual perspective of a building on one of his woodcuts. My middle brother, a mathematician, is an avid photographer in his spare time. My son's drawings of souped-up cars in elementary school, pictures that now grace my wall, led to him becoming a design engineer. In the meantime, I became engaged in writing, fashion, decorating, and illustrating. But the creative vein goes beyond immediate family. One of my father's brothers was a physicist who invented a high-fidelity speaker many years ago. Another uncle was a professional photographer. As I came to conclude, visual art has always been part of technical design, just as scientific influence has its role in art.



(Photo by Gary Klein)

Recently, recovering from eye surgery, as both visual and literary artist, who regularly examines, observes, analyses, compares surroundings and events, I drew comparisons in my recovery, documenting the process. This became of value later in consultations with the physician and in facilitating my recovery. Surprisingly, this process led me to a re-examination of the relationship between art and science.

It is conceivable that art actually initiates the scientific process with thoughts, ideas, images that arise in the imagination. And just as science contributes to our knowledge of environment and universe, so does art. And they do so in stages of given time periods in history.

Beginning with the American Heritage Dictionary definitions, we can draw some interesting parallels between art and science:

"Art is the conscious use of the imagination in the production of objects intended to be contemplated or appreciated as beautiful, as in the arrangement of forms, sounds, or words. Products of this activity; imaginative works considered as a

group.” Also, ”a skill that is attained by study, practice or observation.”

“Science” is “the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena. Such activities restricted to a class of natural phenomena.” Also, “A systematic method or body of knowledge in a given area.”

The two definitions are so similar they are almost interchangeable. Yet the word “investigation” has been omitted from art in the definition above, a word so prominent in science, but it is also a technique in art whether it concerns images, color, shading, instruments, or tools. Interestingly, the word omitted from science is “beauty.” But we only need look at some of the architectural structures or mechanical or technological devices in existence, those which use mathematics or physics to calculate aesthetic features that contribute to the beauty and functionality, all at once, of the constructs in question.

The root words for both art and science come to us from Latin. Art comes from the prefix “ar-,” meaning to fit together. Science comes from “skei,” in its earliest meaning, to cut, split, on to Old French and Middle English meaning knowledge, learning. Of course, the word “study” used above and “knowledge” meet at the corner of art and science.

Thus, art and science are not opposite poles. Art, an image, an intuitive thought, sound, sensation, scent, etc., is easily the beginning stage for both, as both emanate from a creative mindset carrying these stimuli into creations. The much-revered scientist, Albert Einstein, once said: “I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination.” And that is how it frequently begins for artist and scientist alike. We relate to our surroundings according to what we hear, feel, touch, and see, perceive, and imagine, become aware of, analyze, examine, compare, study to understand, and create. And we further develop whatever it is that we envision, catches our attention, desire, need, or stirs our curiosity to satisfy our purpose, or reach our goal in both art and science. Because until we satisfy that curiosity, that longing to understand and make that which is sought or imagined our own, we do not truly see or appreciate our surroundings or extended world. Nor do we find our place in this existence until we do.

As art and science have a lot in common, they can, metaphorically, be regarded as siblings of the

same parents, namely creativity and empiricism; they are cousin to perception and memory and/or stages of development. Their goals or outcomes may be different, but the process will be based on the above as they lead to a better understanding of our environment, its aspects, possibilities, and function. And language, that much overlooked aspect of human existence in today’s world also plays an important role. It is creator of words, systematic arranger of context, exposition, clarity, and meaning. A clear-cut, oral or written description of scientific findings and technological functions is an art in itself. Yet lack of language consistency in many technological areas, particularly in the quality and absence of user manuals in the marketplace, points to an abandoned need.

Both scientist and artist can rely on achievements of the past, build on them, carry their work and creations, techniques and processes forward into the present and future, unless they embark on something entirely new, when they will rely on their own intuitive knowledge, experience, perception, and creativity to develop their end product. Neither art nor science may always come out with the exact envisioned results, because sometimes new effects, new inventions carry incidental or accidental outcomes. But that is part of their creative course.

History is rich in examples of this phenomenon between art and science. And I see art as the beginning, the stirring of imagination and intuition of what is and what can be in science. So many of the things we take for granted today were once the figment of someone’s imagination, as we will see in the following instances.

Some of the earliest evidence of art and historical record are ancient cave drawings. They are more than crude images on rock. They are a record of creatures and life of a vanished past. The early Greeks, that settled in their region long before the rest of Europe, gave the world Euclid of Alexandria, around 323-283 B.C., known as the “father of geometry,” with his book, *The Elements*, dealing with plane geometry, its calculations and accompanying illustrations, still in use today.

Italian Leonardo Da Vinci, 1452-1519, part of the High Renaissance, one of the greatest artists of all time, was not only painter, draftsman, sculptor but also scientist, engineer and architect. Primarily recognized for his priceless art, such as *The Last*



*Supper* and the *Mona Lisa*, his best-known paintings, he also enriched the world with his scientific drawings of anatomy, botany, astronomy, cartography, and paleontology.

(Leonardo Da Vinci)

Albrecht Dürer, 1471-1528, contemporary to Da Vinci and artist of the German Renaissance, was an innovative painter, printmaker and theorist, whose works include paintings, engravings, woodcuts and books. Incorporated in his work were written expositions including mathematics on perspective and proportions.

Charles Darwin, 1809-1882, English naturalist, geologist, and biologist who originated the theory of evolution, gave us *On the Origin of the Species*. Working with John Gould, ornithologist, collector, illustrator and publisher of bird books, his identification of birds sheds light on Darwin's book by assisting him with the classification and illustration of birds Darwin described.

The Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur, living in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, were inventors, builders and pilots of the first successful motor-controlled airplane. Of course, the building of the plane began with illustrations containing mathematical specifications for its building, the accuracy of which, of course, was instrumental in its capacity to fly.

The well-known architect, Cass Gilbert 1859-1934, early advocate for skyscrapers, is known for design and building of many state capitols, including the one in Minnesota, as well as the United States Supreme Court building and other prominent structures and lesser-known buildings and residences in the U.S. Obviously, these began with drawings that eventually became blueprints that led to their construction.

Photography had its beginning with a series of lesser-known originators since about the early 18<sup>th</sup> century with experiments in mechanism, material, process, development, and end-product and continuing its development into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, like so many technologies. Technology-based, photography renders pictures. But are these pictures

snapped by an instrument, a camera, art? Yet if we consider the camera a tool, an adjustable one it may be, why not? Ansel Adams, 1902-1984, American landscape photographer and environmentalist, with his method of tonal range, achieved depth and clarity of images. As my brother the mathematician and photographer pointed out, Adams felt: "You don't take a photograph, you make it." And in his artistic, visually selective approach and expression, he also noted: "A photograph is usually looked at – seldom looked into."

By the same token, my son points out that while the computer may not exactly be thought of as an ideal artistic drawing tool, having replaced the drafting table, it functions differently but particularly well for three-dimensional drawing and animation, where the engineer can actually test the function of movable parts in the design stage of the machine in development.

To return to Albert Einstein, 1879-1955, German-born, American theoretical physicist, who devised the theory of relativity, among many other achievements, he received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921. The drawings that accompany many of his findings are fascinating, artistic and scientific all at the same time, illustrating once more that science and art are part of life and of each other. Albert Einstein said: "After a certain high level of technical skill is achieved, science and art tend to coalesce in esthetics, plasticity, and form. The greatest scientists are artists as well."

When art and science converge, it is a family connection, from cave art to space travel in an assimilation of imagination, creativity, and functionality. Its members carry on conversation between experience of the senses, individual perception and vision, between fields of study, knowledge and development that continually evolve. They are spurred on by the curiosity and longing to know, discover, elucidate, illustrate, develop, and safeguard this human existence.

~Evelyn D. Klein, author, educator, artist, and editor, has a B.S. in Secondary Education and an M.S. in the Teaching of English. She taught in the public schools, at Century College and the Loft Literary Center. She is the author of three books of poetry, prose and illustrations. Two of her books were placed in the Minnesota Historical Society's permanent library collection.



## Where Are the Women Artists? Try Russia!

by Carol Veldman Rudie

**T**he world of Western art often laments the lack of notable women artists. Many have wondered why all of the major names in nearly every era of artistic practice are those of men. When exploring the artistic production of women, historians tend to turn to the craft world. Women were home decorators, weavers, embroiderers, rug makers. But until quite recently, women were often footnotes in art history classes.

When I joined The Museum of Russian Art, I wondered whether women artists would be present in that distinctive cultural mix of West and East, Middle East and Nordic. To my delight, I discovered that Russia had produced a wide range of great women artists, many of whom were international stars. The museum's exhibits often included works by these artists. It took very little effort to locate name after name and to experience their creativity.

The question began to haunt me: Why was the Russian culture able to produce so many women artists? In an effort to outline and so, perhaps, guide the speculation into possible answers, I offer a brief sketch of the women artists as they appear in that history.

Western style art came to Russia—especially to the Romanov court and capital in St. Petersburg—through the efforts of Tsar Peter the Great (1672-1725). While he was especially eager to learn Western shipbuilding and navy development in his European trip, he took in the styles and habits of the cultures that he visited as well. One of those was a desire to foster Western-style art.

While Peter the Great might take credit for the introduction of this art into his empire, his daughter Tsarina Elizabeth (1709-1762) supported the first Academy designed to train gifted children in the art forms associated with European traditions. This academy found its second royal supporter when Catherine the Great became tsarina. Many portraits of her were done by graduates of that Academy, now distinguished by the adjective “Imperial”. She also, famously, employed Denis Diderot, French philosopher and art critic, to be her art agent.

Through his auspices, she purchased entire collections of European art from various impoverished noble families, built three hermitages to house the purchases, and valued her collections as part of her self-image as an Enlightenment monarch.

Not surprisingly, St. Petersburg became a destination for European artists. One of these was the woman painter Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, who spent the years 1795-1801 in St. Petersburg. While she was certainly known and respected before, among the Russian aristocracy she was enormously popular for her portraits. The grandchildren of Catherine sat for her as did numbers of others both in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Catherine herself wanted a portrait done by LeBrun but died before the portrait could be painted. According to LeBrun's journal, she loved her time in Russia, made many personal friends, and cried when she left.

How is it possible to measure the combined influence of two art-loving tsarinas with the practical presence of a beloved female artist? Whatever the answer, the history of Russian art evidences the continuing ability of Russian women to become recognized artists. One such example is Maria Bashkirtseff (1858-1884). Growing up, she and her divorced mother lived mostly in Europe rather than in their home in Ukraine. Eventually, Bashkirtseff entered the Academie Julien, a private art school in Paris. Although women were rarely admitted to art schools, certainly not into the most prestigious ones, this academy was an exception. Here, women had their own classes but experienced the same curriculum and level of instruction as their male counterparts.

Bashkirtseff was trained in the realism style of the day, producing an enormous amount of work considering her short life. She exhibited in the Paris Salon every year, starting in 1880. One of her most remarkable paintings is *The Studio*, a women's class busily painting a partially clad model. Her real ability shows best, however, in her paintings of urban life, subject matter of not only Paris but also of the Russian artists practicing in the social realist tradition. The

most well-known of her urban paintings is *The Meeting* of a group of boys from the Paris slum.



(Maria Bashkirtseff)

While Bashkirtseff is representative of the ability of Russian artists generally finding success in Europe, most Russian artists spent time—sometimes long periods of time—working in various countries other than Russia. However, the story of another artist, Elisabeth Merkurjevna Boehm (1843-1914) is a different one. She became famous while remaining in Russia. Also, part of a noble family, she grew up on the estate of her parents located near Yaroslavl. Her formal art education began at age 14 when she became a student at the School of Painting at the Society for the Promotion of Artists. There, and later in private lessons, she studied with Ivan Kromskoi, one of the 14 artists who led Russia's social realist art movement. Studying at the Imperial Academy of Arts resulted in a medal for her paintings of animals.

What made her famous throughout Europe, however, was what she did with her artistic talent in print: watercolors, silhouettes, and etchings. She created illustrations for a folk library series of books. Her distinctive, etched silhouettes were featured and popularized at the various world fairs, earning her prizes, and turning that art form into a popular craze. Printing her signature watercolors into postcards gave her the status of the most prolific artist in that print medium. Her distinctive style is easily recognizable by those who collect these printed pieces.

Both of these women artists illustrate the importance of access to both art training and to instruction by the best of the practicing artists of the time. But another possible reason for the successes of Russian women as artists might exist as well. Individual artists were often members of artist families. Such was the case with an important artist of the 1890s World of Art in St. Petersburg. Founded by Alexander Benois as both a movement and a magazine, this aesthetic influenced and included artists in all the arts—literary, performance, visual—and created an art scene that spilled over into Paris. Benois, himself an artist, critic, and historian, was

part of the generally artistic Benois family. His father was an architect, one brother a watercolorist, another an architect. Assorted nephews were in various artistic pursuits. One brother-in-law, Eugene Lanseray, was a sculptor. One niece was the painter Zinaida Serebriakova (1884-1967); her two brothers were also talented artists.

Serebriakova added a distinguished academic career to her personal family background by studying with Ilya Repin (one of the best artists of the time), spent time in Italy, and finished her education in Paris. By 1910 she was publicly recognized for her painting through an exhibit put on by the Union of Russian Artists. Although thoroughly embedded in the World of Art movement, she was also distinctive within that group of artists. Her subject matter focused on rural and family life rather than on the grander themes often employed by other painters in this movement. Her figures are often monumental, always classically serene, and clearly infused with personal interest. In 1924 she received a commission in Paris, the location of many Russian artists including the Ballet Russe, traveled there but wasn't allowed to return to the Soviet Union. Separated from her mother and two oldest children, she remained in Paris and continued to work as an artist. When she was finally allowed to resume contact with her Soviet family in the 1960s, her works were also exhibited there with enthusiasm.

Finally, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the emergence of an internationally famous group of women artists who re-imagined art along Avant Garde lines. So famous and important was this group of women artists that they are collectively called "Amazons of the Avant Garde". Each developed very distinctive styles, went in different artistic directions, and experimented wildly with various artistic media. Each was also a full participant in the many movements that came and went during this very creative era.

By this time in Russian cultural history, women artists were not an anomaly but simply a part of the artistic world. Nobody better illustrates this group of women than Natalya Goncharova (1881-1962). Growing up on her family's country estate put her in touch with the Russian countryside, caused her to dislike the city when her family moved to Moscow, and made her uncomfortable in schools. Finally, she enrolled in the sculpture classes at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture and graduated. While there, she met her artist husband, Mikhail Lationov, who told her that she was a painter rather than a sculptor. From then on, she painted, first

in an impressionist style, then in a Symbolist style, and then in a more primitivist and expressionist approach. Her use of peasant life and freer brushwork came as a result of her time in Paris and her exposure to the French paintings that were part of the great Moscow collections of Morozov and Shchukin.

But what really formed her artistic vision was her passion for Russian life and art. She built on both of those: the icon, peasant life, woodblock prints, folklore became the canvases for her experimentation. She illustrated the works of avant-garde poets, became an abstract artist, pictured the futurist vision of planes and trains, collaborated with Larianov in a distinctive style they called Rayonism. Finally, she took to the theater—something most Russian artists did—to create some of the most innovative set and costume designs for the Ballet Russes. Her sets for *The Golden Cockeral* (1914) took Paris by storm. This development and work happened between 1909 and 1916. Her 1913 one-person exhibition in Moscow contained over 700 paintings from all of these phases of her artistic life.

Goncharova's level of creativity was typical of the women who participated in this avant-garde energy. Many of these women also were part of the visual creativity that characterized the early days of the Soviet Union. The next generation of 20<sup>th</sup> century women artists continued to be trained and to create art throughout the Soviet era. Prominent women artists participated in the various non-conformist art groups that developed after the Khrushchev Thaw. Throughout, women artists were equal participants in the artistic dialog that accompanied the vicissitudes of Soviet cultural history.

This briefest of surveys returns to the question that continues to puzzle me: Why so many great women artists in Russian culture? The answer deserves more careful attention. Meanwhile, I simply offer the joy that comes with each glimpse of their work.



(The Museum of Russian Art)

**For viewing pleasure –**

See a description of some LeBrun Russian paintings at <https://www.batguano.com/nikolenko.html>

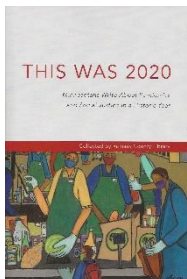
A collection of Bashkirtseff's work can be found at: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/marie-bashkirtseff>

To see a collection of Boehm's work go to these two cites: [http://expositions.nlr.ru/eng/ex\\_print/paskha/bem.php](http://expositions.nlr.ru/eng/ex_print/paskha/bem.php)  
[https://arthive.com/artists/2113~Elisabeth\\_Merkurevna\\_Boehm\\_Endaurova/works/27778~Silhouettes\\_of\\_children?lang=EN](https://arthive.com/artists/2113~Elisabeth_Merkurevna_Boehm_Endaurova/works/27778~Silhouettes_of_children?lang=EN)

A quick overview of Serebriakova's life and work exists here: <https://www.dailyartmagazine.com/zinaida-serebriakova-russian-artist/>

For a book on the Russian "Amazons" in art, see *Women Artists of Russia's New Age* by M.N. Yablonskaya.

*~Carol Veldman Rudie holds a PhD from the University of Minnesota which includes a minor in Art History. She is coordinator of outreach education at the Museum of Russian Art, where she presents background on Russian art and culture. She has been a lead docent since 2005 and developed its docent program. Her special interest involves forming and educating groups to tour Russia.*



This book of essays and poetry was edited by the Ramsey County Library, published by the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries. It was made possible by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Included in the anthology is the poem "Quarantine Companions" by MISF member Evelyn Klein.

## Publication News



## Book Review

### “Romantic” Love: A Brief Literary Tour

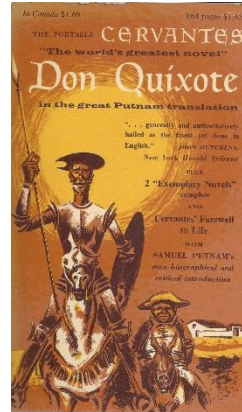
by Michael Woolsey

**D**ramatic tales of romantic love are as old as recorded human history, and their appeal has not abated throughout its course. As such, it is one of the more recurrent and memorable themes of human storytelling.

But what do we mean by the term “romantic?” Why not just claim that tales of love between humans have dominated human storytelling? What is added by the word “romantic?” Among its dictionary definitions, the words “passionate,” “impractical,” “extravagant,” “imaginary,” and “idealistic” are common, and occasionally the words “sublime,” “supernatural,” and “exotic;” but it has also been characterized as a form of “madness.”

A very curious human phenomenon is this one of romantic love, and famous histories have emphasized both its obsessiveness and impracticality. So, it was said that Hellen of Troy’s “was the face that launched a thousand ships,” causing the 10-year siege of Troy and ending in its destruction. Likewise, Mark Antony was said to have lost a kingdom (Rome), due to his infatuation with the shape of Cleopatra’s nose! Both histories are tragic in form and seemingly out of all proportion to the object of romantic ardor that is said to have caused them.

In the Middle Ages the concept even spawned a specific literary form, that of the knight-errant. Separated at a physical distance from the courtly lady of his infatuation, he roamed the earth performing chivalric, heroic deeds with the hope that the record of those deeds would get back to the beloved and finally win both her heart and access to her presence. Formalistically, chivalric love-at-a-distance was depicted as concomitant with both soulfulness of the lover and idealization of the beloved, both conditions famously satirized in Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*. For the Don is therein repeatedly depicted as the “knight of the woeful countenance,” and the distant “lady” of his obsession an imaginative idealization of the quite ordinary peasant girl, Dulcinea. His “heroic” deeds, famously exemplified by his doing battle with a windmill, depict his romantic love as a form of madness, due



originally to his having read a plethora of knight-errant tales.

All this came to mind as my local Great Books seminar group recently found itself, over a 6-month period, discussing a series of readings that had romantic love as its common thread. I say “found itself” as the sequence was quite unplanned. Rather, we were just drawn into it, as one reading and seminar seemed to

suggest another and then another.

We began, innocently enough, with *Love in the Time of Cholera* (1985), a novel by Nobel Prize-winning author Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The story begins as a young telegraph clerk with poetic tendencies (Florentino), becomes enamored of a much younger schoolgirl (Fermina) from a higher class of society, writing long, poetic letters to her and serenading her by violin from a park near her home named “Park of the Evangels.” Accordingly, Florentino is described by others in the story as “one inspired by the Holy Spirit.” Distanced by their different societal classes, as well as by her disapproving father, Florentino remains fixated on Fermina over a period of 50 years, during which time she marries another man, bears children, and is eventually widowed. During all this time Florentino has multiple affairs with other women in attempts to assuage his passion for Fermina. Like Don Quixote, he is a very soulful man, and like Mark Antony’s passion for Cleopatra, he idealizes a particular physical attribute of the beloved: her “almond-shaped eyes.” Toward the end of their lives, Florentino finally achieves Fermina’s love and companionship, but only at the cost of the lives of two of his young, previous mistresses, one who is murdered by a jealous husband and another who takes her own life for being abandoned by Florentino. For the rest of his life, he is afflicted by guilt for these deaths, despite his triumph of finally uniting with Fermina.



So here you have several recurrent themes of romantic love: divine inspiration, love-at-a-distance, life-long infatuation, and tragedy. You also have a sharp distinction between sexual and idealistic love, a thread continued in our next reading, which was Plato's *Phaedrus*. Here Plato's Socrates distinguishes between two kinds of romantic passion which he regards as mutually exclusive. One he demeans as only sexual and bestial, and often hurtful to both lover and beloved, but the other he regards as divinely inspired by a god (*Eros*) and which, as such, cannot be evil. This latter type of "madness" is a "divine gift" and the source of the "highest blessings granted to men." Among these are (1) the gift of "prophesy," (2) the "madness of those possessed by the Muses" (e.g. poets, musicians), and (3) the "madness of love," which is "the greatest of heaven's blessings." He follows this with a mythical tale that claims every immortal human soul, thousands of years before encasement in its body, once had a glimpse of "divine beauty," some for a longer time than others, and those few are infatuated when they "see anyone having a god-like face or form, which is the expression of divine beauty." The memory of such a lover "is carried to the true beauty, whom he beholds . . . like an image placed upon a holy pedestal. He sees her, but is afraid and falls backwards in adoration . . . And from that time forward the soul of the lover follows the beloved in modesty and fear."

In other words, the presence of the beloved "reminds" the divinely inspired lover of a higher and more perfect form of beauty, of which the earthly beloved is but a suggestive image, making idealism an essential aspect of romantic love. Despite the highly imaginative aspect of Socrates' myth, it seems as fitting an account of romantic idealism as any other!

This idea led seamlessly to our next reading, *Death in Venice* (1912) by Thomas Mann, where Socrates' assessment is both explicitly cited and liberally paraphrased to explain the sudden and dramatic transformation of an established, "aging" man (Gustav Aschenbach) a universally acclaimed writer, accomplished, austere, disciplined, and dignified, into an undignified and infatuated lover of a 14-year-old boy (Tadzio), whom he encounters by accident on a summer vacation in Venice, Italy. As in the knight-errant tales, it is love-at-a-distance, as Gustav never touches or speaks to the boy. He just obsessively views and hears his "musical" voice, day after day, as he plays before him on the beach. All Gustav's literary accomplishments and fame, his lifetime of arduous work at his craft, then seem as

nothing to him, as he becomes "intoxicated" with this "representation of eternal beauty," and "beauty itself, form as divine thought." As exhilarated as he is by this obsession, it makes him in the end careless both of his own life and that of Tadzio, for he chooses to stay in Venice despite clear evidence of plague (cholera) in the city. Moreover, he willfully neglects to warn Tadzio's family of the danger they are also in by staying on. In other words, he accepts both his own death from cholera and the possible death of his beloved, rather than to be separated from him.

Again, love-at-a-distance, this time ending in self-destruction; but one of our seminar group questioned whether it is a tragic story, asking: "Did Gustav die happy?"

The theme of self-destruction was continued in our next reading, of Vladimir Nabokov's notorious *Lolita* (1955), a book originally banned in various locales for its frank depiction of pedophilia. As in *Death in Venice*, the protagonists are an older man (Humbert Humbert), a renowned litterateur, here aged 40, and a pubescent child, here aged 12. But in contrast to *Death in Venice*, the child (Lolita) is his adopted daughter, and the story is largely devoted to their intense, 2-year, sexual relationship.

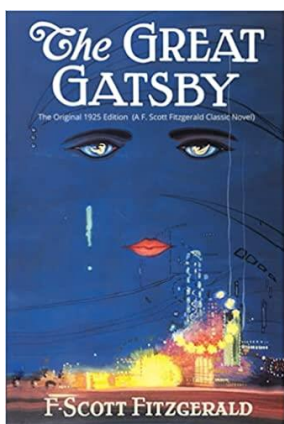
The love-at-a-distance theme is absent here. Rather, the tale recalls Socrates' contention that the sexual, "bestly" type of romantic love is often hurtful to both lover and beloved, contending among other things that this type of lover "cannot help being jealous, and will debar his beloved from the advantages of society." For Humbert is chronically possessive of Lolita ("she was mine, mine, mine"), and jealous of any contact she has with other people, regardless of the effect on her. Accordingly, he is wracked with guilt, describing himself variously as a "maniac," "wretched," a "pervert," and "monster," and hears her "sobs in the night – every night, every night – the moment I feigned sleep."

However, his infatuation is not devoid of idealism, as he lyrically describes Lolita's physical and childish beauty, claiming that "The bestly and the beautiful merged at one point, and it is that borderline I would like to fix, and I feel I fail to do so utterly." He describes himself as both "enchanted" and "*beyond happiness*" suggesting his infatuation to be some combination of Socrates' two forms of romantic love, the "bestly" and the "divinely inspired."

Eventually, after two years, Lolita escapes from him. He is devastated by her absence, finds and murders her supposed abductor, and spends his last days in prison. Lolita also dies shortly thereafter, in

childbirth, having by then grown up and married someone her own age. Prior to all that, however, she and Humbert reconcile, he finally acting as loving parent, providing her and her husband with the funds they need to start a new life. But, by Nabokov's own assessment, it's a "tragic tale."

Our final reading in this series was *The Great Gatsby* (1925), by F. Scott Fitzgerald. It's a story of American ambition and prosperity following World War I. Again, we find here love-at-distance, as a young and impoverished Jay Gatsby meets and is infatuated by Daisy, a Southern Belle from a higher class of society, and from whom he becomes separated by his service in the war, her subsequent marriage to another, and his relative poverty. A decade or so later he achieves contact with her by



becoming rich himself (via illegal bootlegging) and acquiring a Long Island, NY mansion near hers. However, the idealization thread takes a significant twist here, as Gatsby is fixated not so much on an aspect of Daisy that recalls "divine beauty," as he is by the impression that the sound of her voice "has money in it."

Like *Lolita's* lover, he wants to completely possess his beloved, and Daisy's initial willingness to abandon her unfaithful husband (Tom) for Gatsby appears ultimately insufficient to him, as she is unable to admit that she has always loved only him, and never Tom.

Shortly thereafter, Gatsby is mistakenly murdered for the accidental death of Tom's mistress. It happens while he is hopefully awaiting a phone call from Daisy. It's a tragic ending, as Daisy never either

makes that call or acknowledges Gatsby's subsequent funeral.

The story recalls several, previously noted aspects of romantic love. First, Gatsby is infatuated by a woman he met a long time ago and has idealized ever since their separation. Second, there is a particular physical feature of hers, like Helen's face, Cleopatra's nose, and Fermina's almond-shaped eyes, that transfixes his ardor: her upper-class, "moneyed" voice. Third, like Humbert, he is satisfied by nothing less than sole possession of his beloved (of ALL her affection). Fourth, like Gustav's infatuation with Tadzio, and Humbert's with *Lolita*, his with Daisy leads ultimately to a tragic ending.

Yet, in each of these stories, the joy of the lover's "divinely inspired," even "mad," passion, seems to outweigh all more mundane considerations. Per Socrates:

... the soul of the lover will never forsake his beautiful one, whom he esteems above all; he has forgotten mother and brethren and companions, and he thinks nothing of the neglect and loss of his property; the rules and proprieties of life on which he formerly prided himself, he now despises, and is ready to sleep like a servant, wherever he is allowed, as near as he can to his desired one.

*~Michael Woolsey is a Board Member and past President of MISF. He holds a B.A. from St. John's College in Annapolis, MD (Liberal Arts), an M.A.T. from the University of St. Thomas (in Secondary Education), and an M.A. from the University of Minnesota (in Liberal Studies). He retired from 3M in 2004, as a Lead Analyst in Information Technology.*

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## ~Remembering~

**Robert Thimmesh** (1937-2021) was president of MISF from 1993 to 1995. Bob was interested in art, poetry, and science. His most far-reaching accomplishment as president was the establishment of MISF as a fiscal agency for non-university affiliated scholars. Thanks to Bob Thimmesh, MISF is now in a position to provide fiscal agency to MISF scholars. He died April 19, 2021.

**George R. Anderson** (1934-2021) was president of MISF from 1999 to 2001. Born in Iowa, he earned a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Iowa in 1961. Although he taught chemistry, he had a great passion for the humanities. He joined the Scholars to promote the conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. Under his aegis as president, board member terms were extended from one year to three years, and MISF resolved to enter the computer age with an eye to increasing its accessibility. George Anderson died October 8, 2021.



## At Large

### Around-the-World Scholars

by Lucy Brusic

One of the new pleasures of MISF is a chance to meet other independent scholars from around the world – virtually, that is. Steve Miller and Lucy Brusic were invited by Barbara Ellertsen, secretary of the Partner Group Leaders of independent scholars from Australia, the UK, Oregon, New York, San Francisco and San Diego, to participate in their quarterly meetings.

Zoom makes it possible to cooperate around the world and meeting times of the board are arranged to work on both sides of the Pacific. In fact, one of the suggestions that came from the September meeting was to set up a cooperative calendar so that presentation times for regular meetings did not conflict with those of other partner groups. There was some question as to just which calendar program would work best for this operation. The decision was that we need to connect with tech people.

However, as I listened to the last meeting on September 20, I was surprised to hear that the problems that confront the member groups around the world are the same as those that confront MISF – that is, how to attract and hold on to younger members. All the attendees felt that the only way to get the attention of the younger people currently rising in academia was through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, Google ads, and Linked in. Recognizing that it takes manpower and expertise to take advantage of media sites, people suggested that NCIS might host a series of web seminars to explore software for scholars.

The Partner Group representatives will meet again in January.

*~Lucy Brusic is a longtime member and board member of MISF and past editor of TMS.*

#### *The Minnesota Scholar*

A subscription to TMS is a benefit of membership in MISF. Subscriptions can be obtained for a \$15 annual fee. Single issues are \$7.50. Send subscriptions and address changes to MISF at the return address below.

*The Minnesota Scholar* welcomes submissions. We are especially interested in topical issues, current events, and memoir in the form of essays, articles, and book reviews. Articles should be no longer than between 1,500 and 1,800 words. Use as little formatting as possible. Please submit your work electronically and in a word document attachment with an explanation in the body of the e-mail. All submissions will be acknowledged. The editor reserves the right to decline to publish an article deemed unsuitable. No second party submissions. For guidelines and queries contact the editor.

The editor has the right to edit manuscripts. *TMS* assumes no responsibility for contributor errors. Opinions expressed by the contributor may not reflect the opinions of the editor or MISF. Copyright reverts to the individual author after publication.

Submission deadline for the next issue is May 6, 2022.

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# Programs & Meetings



June 26, 2021

## MISF Annual Meeting

MISF President Steven Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed members and visitors and began with a description of the organization's purpose and activities and invited non-members to join. He explained the following:

The organization's **website**, recently reconstructed by Mike Woolsey, webmaster, is a good source of information about MISF activities. An important benefit for members and function of MISF is its ability to acquire and monitor research **grants** for its members, which it has done successfully over the years.

**The Minnesota Scholar**, MISF's biannual journal, edited by Evelyn Klein, offers members the opportunity to contribute articles and information of scholarly interest.

**Past programs** included lectures on:

The Electoral College, presented by Alan E. Johnson; Mapping Prejudice Project, presented by Denise Pike and Marguerite Mills; Rock Steady Boxing, presented by Kim Heikkila and Katie Grove; Celebrating Earth Month, presented by Brenn Fromm; Poetry Day: Ellingtonia, The Great Migration, and The Promised Land with Philip Bryant

**Study Groups** include:

Our two ongoing study and discussion groups, the History Group and the

Philosophy. These groups meet the first and second Wednesday of the month respectively at 7:00 p.m., over Zoom, for the time being. A third and new group, a Futures Study Group, is planned to begin in September.

**MISF Treasurer Emily Pollack reported:**

Membership is increasing.

Expenses are lower because we did not have as many meetings and include the journal.

The MISF books, *Scholars Without Walls*, are selling at Amazon.

**MISF board member elections:**

Board member elections were held for Emily Pollack, Charlie Roger, Charles Yancy who were running for second terms. All were re-elected by unanimous vote.

Terms expiring next year are those of Steve Miller and Barb Sommer.

Discussion concerning **additional nominations** for the board. The board currently consists of seven members but twelve are allowed. Mike Woolsey nominated Ruth Campbell. She said she would think about it. Carol Rudie indicated her interest to join the board. She was elected by unanimous vote.

The meeting was then turned over to Barb Sommer who introduced the speaker.

*~Submitted by Evelyn Klein*

## Cass Gilbert's White Bear Cottages

Presented by Rheanna O'Brien

Rheanna O'Brien, former educator and Associate Director of the White Bear Lake Historical Society, shared her extensive research including dates and illustrations on well-known Minnesota architect Cass Gilbert and his local connections, designing homes and other buildings particularly around the White

Bear area. Of specific interest to O'Brien were Gilbert's White Bear cottages.

Cass Gilbert was born in 1859 in Zanesville, Ohio. When he was 9 years old his family moved to Saint Paul. In 1878 he enrolled to study architecture but left after a short time. He went to Europe to study the architecture there, visiting London, France, and

Italy. He then worked in New York for a time but eventually returned to Minnesota. He, then, started a network with the Minnesota Boat Club.

Work was scarce at that time, so he remodeled his mother's home in Saint Paul. Subsequently, his first church commission was the Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church in Saint Paul. After that, 1883-1884, he designed the J. A. Adams house, quite a sizeable residence in Saint Paul.

From his connection with the Minnesota Boat Club, he learned that people wanted cottages in White Bear. Most of the cottages he designed no longer exist. Many were built on Manitou Island which is closed to the public now. Following are some of his cottages:

One of the earliest houses he designed is the A.K. Barnum Residence, 1883-84, one of the earliest homes he designed. He was strict and hands-on in his work.

In Cottage Park, White Bear Township, the Rueben Galusha Cottage, 1884, still stands today as designed.

The C. P. Noyes Lodge, was commissioned in 1884.

The Jasper Tarbox Cottage, 1889, still retains many exterior features, although the interior has been redesigned.

St. Paul and White Bear Lake Railroad casino and restaurant was built 1892 at Wildwood Park. It gave a panoramic view of the lake and cost \$4,513.

Other cottages built were the William B. Dean Cottage, 1893-4; Skinner Cottage at Acorn Point, 1893-4, which had to be remodeled inside due to a fire; C. W. Bunn Cottage, 1895 at Manitou Island; and the R. B. C. Bement Cottage.

Other buildings he designed include the Granger Lodge, White Bear Public School, Webster School which no longer exists, and White Bear Town Hall, 1885. He used pebble embedded stucco on many of his buildings. The town hall now has shutters and will be used as an educational building.

His legacy among many others includes the Minnesota State Capitol, 1901, and the state capitols of Arkansas and West Virginia, among them, the U.S. Supreme Court Building, the Saint Louis Art Museum and Public Library, and the Gilbert family home, among many others.

The White Bear Lake Historical Society offers boat tours, 2-1/2 hour tours for \$35.00, and can be arranged by contacting the White Bear Lake Historical Society.

This enlightening Zoom lecture attracted 21 participants.

September 25, 2021

## The State Law Library

Presented by Erica Nutzman

Erica Nutzman spoke to the Scholars, September 25, on the subject of the State Law Library. Nutzman is the head of technical services for the Law Library. She oversees the collection, ordering, and arranging things.

The Minnesota State Law Library is the oldest continuing library in the state of Minnesota. It was established in 1849 when Minnesota was still a territory. It was then located in a tavern that was also the home of the territorial government. Today the Law Library is located on the first floor of the Supreme Court building. There are 15 staff members all of whom have law degrees.

The library has many collections ranging from legal books, Supreme Court briefs, and self-help legal notes. The library also provides public access to such websites as Westlaw.

There is also a collection of material about former justices. This material can be biographies or other source material. In modern times, this part of the library has expanded to include oral histories and transcripts from serving judges. The library has included recorded interviews since the 1970s. Nutzman said that the library would like to have interviews from all the judges ("oral histories give insight into the thoughts of the judges"). However, some justices prefer to write out their own stories.

A special collection room includes rare and unique materials and a history of the court. The earliest rules of the court were handwritten. A special treasure is a book of signatures of judges from 1858 to 1970.

Many of these collections have now been digitized and can be accessed on the web. Some of the digital material includes the oral histories of the judges, the Minnesota Reporter, legislative manuals,

roll books, and minutes of the constitutional conventions. Digitizing work is proceeding apace but will speed up in 2022.

Nutzman said also that the Law Library plans digital exhibits. An upcoming exhibit will describe the jobs that judges held before they were appointed to the court. An exhibit about the 19th Amendment is also planned.

She also pointed proudly to the online archive into which all judicial opinions since 1992 and briefs

since 2006 have been scanned. Librarians are now starting to work backward to older documents.

Who may use the library? The library is open to the general public. It is open from 8:30 to 4:30 Monday to Friday. More information about the library is available on the Law Library website which is <<https://mn.gov/law-library>>.

~Lucy Brusic

October 2, 2021

## Sherlock Holmes and Copyright

Presented by Nancy Sims

Nancy Sims is a lawyer librarian at the University of Minnesota Libraries. She led members through the history of copyright, addressing a person's rights as creator of copyrights and shed light on how variations in copyright affect Sherlock Holmes mysteries.

**Copyright Essentials:** Usually, the creators own the copyright, unless other factors are involved, such as employment or a commissioned work. If there are multiple creators, they are joint owners. Owners are often not the same as the creators.

**What kinds of works are copyrightable?** Among them are literary, musical, and dramatic works, pantomime, dance, pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works, motion pictures, photographs, etc. Further rights a copyright owner owns are rights to do/authorize others to reproduce and distribute, perform and prepare derivative works, such as translations and adaptations.

**Public domain and how long do copyrights last?** Historically in the U.S. copyright went through many changes. In 1790 copyright extended to 14 years. In 1831 it went through revisions and 1870 it was extended to 28 years. In a 1909 act it was extended to 56 years. For a time, registration was required and had to be renewed after a certain period. Now it is automatic. Copyright law changed in 1976 when a law was passed to life plus 50 years. In 1996 it was extended to life of the creator plus 70 years. Copyright applies to published as well as unpublished works.

**International History:** By and large, copyrights vary somewhat between countries, although they have to conform to EU law. The Bern Convention established life plus 50 years, without

formalities. The United States did not join the Bern Convention until 1988. French tradition held copyright as a matter of natural right. The government, therefore, can't get people to register a natural right. The United Kingdom is an original signatory.

**Copyright on Arthur Conan Doyle:** The copyright on Sherlock Holmes varies, partly because of the varying copyrights in the United Kingdom and the United States and changes in the law over the years. In 1887 Doyle's copyright was life plus 50 years. Some of Doyle's work was copyrighted by sequence of story, adding to today's confusion. In 1927 his last story would have life plus 50 years. In the U.S. the first story had life plus 56 years. Stories had to be registered and renewed partway through his life.

It is, therefore, confusing that in 2021 some of his stories still have copyright. In the U.S. some stories had retroactive term extension "frozen" in the public domain in 1923. Currently, anything published prior to 1926 has no copyright.

In the U.S. we tend to require people to follow our copyright law. Publishers who publish in various countries follow strictest laws of those countries. If you have things on server, U.S. based law is followed.

**Eligible subject matter for copyright** involves original work fixed in a tangible medium of expression, recording, or written on a chalkboard.

**Excluded from copyright are:** Idea, principle, concept. This is to promote sharing and discussion of ideas inspired by creative works. This is considered more important than the protection of the work. In addition, special expressions, names, titles,

and short phrases are also not protected. Even when there is a copyright, people can use others' stuff by adaptation, traits that are unprotected.

**Fair use** involves smaller pieces (quotations), parody, satire, criticism. Examples are

the TV show *Elementary, A Study in Honor* by Claire O'Dell, the movie *Without a Clue*, a commentary on the original.

This stimulating presentation was attended by about 30 members over Zoom.

November 20, 2021

## Racial Paradox of the Twin Cities

Presented by James Brewer Stewart

James Stewart began his program with these words by William Faulkner: "The past is never dead. It's not even past." He continued by saying that Minnesota lives in a paradox, a gap in what appears to be and what actually is. When it comes to being hard on minorities in terms of incarceration and life expectancy and more, Minnesota vies with Mississippi and is on top of the scale. How can this be in the land of Humphrey and Mondale?

It all began before the Civil War and is connected to the immigrants that came to Minnesota, such as the Swedes, Germans, and Irish. They did exceedingly well. They pushed out the native population and used the natural resources to accommodate themselves.

Initially, Minnesota was an outpost. Black people had no role, were discriminated against, had no votes, no rights to testify at a public trial. When Minnesota entered the union, it had no connection to the political problems of the day. Minnesota had its own force of Reconstruction. It engaged in violent suppression of native people, driving them out with the support of the Republican Party. At the same time, Minnesota took the lead in women's rights. As opposed to other states, there were no Black migrations to Minnesota at this time, unless they came as servants of slave holders.

But freedom and justice were for the white population only with a huge success story in industry that drained natural resources. As part of the ethics of white success, the military came from white farms. Therefore, the Farmer-Labor Party wanted magnates to treat workers equitably.

As late as 1924, a well-educated Black couple moved into an affluent, white Saint Paul neighborhood with their guards. Still, they were eventually sued and kicked out. A push came on against people who were not from northern Europe. The Ku Klux Klan established a foothold in Minneapolis and in the police department.

During the great migration of African Americans moving to Minnesota and other places, most were urban people, mostly farmers. Hence, in the years 1950-1970 the minority population increased. However, the way resources were allocated, they could not participate in the mainstream, no matter what they did. They were restricted to urban, menial jobs. And after the Black couple were thrown out, districts were redlined. Redlining was an extension of Jim Crow law.

Hubert Humphrey, later, became the epic hero for the Civil Rights Movement to ensure voting rights. And now – civil rights become a problem of the South.

James Brewer Stuart is Professor of History Emeritus at Macalester College, author of books on abolitionists, slavery, and racism, and founder of Historians Against Slavery. For more information contact him at [steward@macalister.edu](mailto:steward@macalister.edu)

This enlightening presentation was attended by approximately 30 people.

*~Unless otherwise noted, meeting reports are by the editor.*

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## Study and Discussion Groups

Groups meet once a month. Books and topics are chosen by participating, attending members. See [metup.com](http://metup.com)

**History Group** meets first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. over Zoom, facilitated by Curt Hillstrom.

**Philosophy Group** meets second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. over Zoom, facilitated by Curt Hillstrom.

**Futures Group** meets third Wednesday of the month over Zoom, facilitated by Tom Abeles. See [meetup.com](http://meetup.com) or contact Tom at [tabels@gmail.com](mailto:tabels@gmail.com)

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## Upcoming Programs and Meetings

Meetings will be held over Zoom, until further notice, the fourth Saturday of the Month at 10 a.m.

**January 22, 2022 over Zoom**

**Historic Layers: Russian Alaska**

**Presenter: Carol Veldman Rudie**

Are Asia and America connected? This geographic question occupied Russian explorers, entrepreneurs, and tsars in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The answer led them to probe the American coast, trade for furs, and map the land. Alaska remained part of the Russian empire until it was sold to the U.S. Learn about this unique history as it shapes Alaskan culture to this day.

Carol Veldman Rudie is coordinator of outreach education at the Museum of Russian Art. She has been lead docent there since 2005 and developed its docent training programs. Her special interest involves forming and educating groups to tour Russia. Her Ph.D. work at the U of MN includes a minor in Art History.

**February 26, 2022**

To be determined.

**March 26, 2022**

To be determined.

**April 23, 2022**

To be determined.

**May 28, 2022**

**Ginny Hanson Poetry Day**

**Presenter: Donna Isaac**

She will read from her poetry publications and new poems she is working on.

Donna Isaac hold English degrees from James Madison University in Virginia and the University of Minnesota, receiving her MFA from Hamline University. She taught English and writing in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and in the Twin Cities and teaches now at the Loft, Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts, and through Cracked Walnut. She helped found the reading series Literary Bridges featured by Next Chapter Booksellers, St. Paul. With individual poems published in various publications, her books include chapbooks *Tommy*, *Holy Comforter*, *Persistence of Vision* and her first full collection of poetry *Footfalls*.

**June 25, 2022**

Annual Meeting. Program to be determined.





