





Message from Barbara Barnard Smith Executive Director Elena Brokaw



The Museum of Ventura County was founded by the County of Ventura in 1913. I'm pleased to say that today we continue to serve county residents and visitors, caring for a vast collection of 180,000 historical artifacts, artworks, official documents and agricultural machinery and implements. The MVC collection is unlike any other in the county—it holds more than a century of our county's history and art, and many of our artifacts predate the county by thousands of years. MVC exhibits tell the story of the county's past and celebrate the art and artists of our community.

The Museum had a revelatory and transformational 2017. This annual report endeavors to give you a flavor of our diverse exhibits, programs and events throughout the year. It tells the story, in pictures, of our efforts to invite the community to curate its own shows, to build partnerships with regional organizations and individuals, and to demonstrate our importance to our community's understanding of its past, present and future.

2018 promises much more dynamic change. We will continue the work of creating a sustainable and relevant museum, furthering our role as a major asset to our community's quality of life.

In next year's annual report I look forward to informing you of our progress on our strategic endeavors:

- Launching a capital campaign to secure an \$8 million endowment within the next five years.
- Implementing an improved business model that incorporates the endowment income and reduces dependence on private donations.
- Assessing and properly housing the Museum's one-of-a-kind collection of Ventura County history and art, which includes the County of Ventura Historical Collection.
- Establishing partnerships throughout the county to better serve young audiences and expand the Museum's footprint to serve the entire county.
- Attracting an expanded audience to diversify who the museum serves, where the museum provides programming and how the museum engages its audience in Museum activities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Elena Brokaw".

Elena Brokaw
Barbara Barnard Smith Executive Director



2017 EXHIBITS

Masterworks:
Sharing the Collection

Secret Paintings Exhibition:
Artist Michael Pearce

Summer of Love 50th Anniversary

Ayer y Todavía

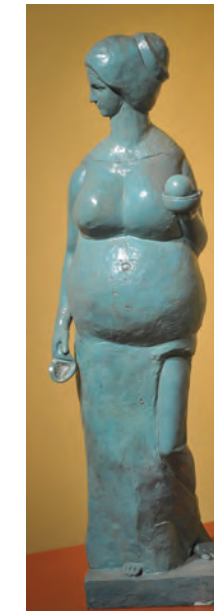
Throughout the year, the museum presents exhibits to enrich, enliven and enlighten. Exhibits are tied to local events, interests, artists and artifacts that help us understand our community, our history and our art. This year the museum proudly presented a wide range of exhibits that explored the diversity of thought and chronicled the culture and history created by a community through time.



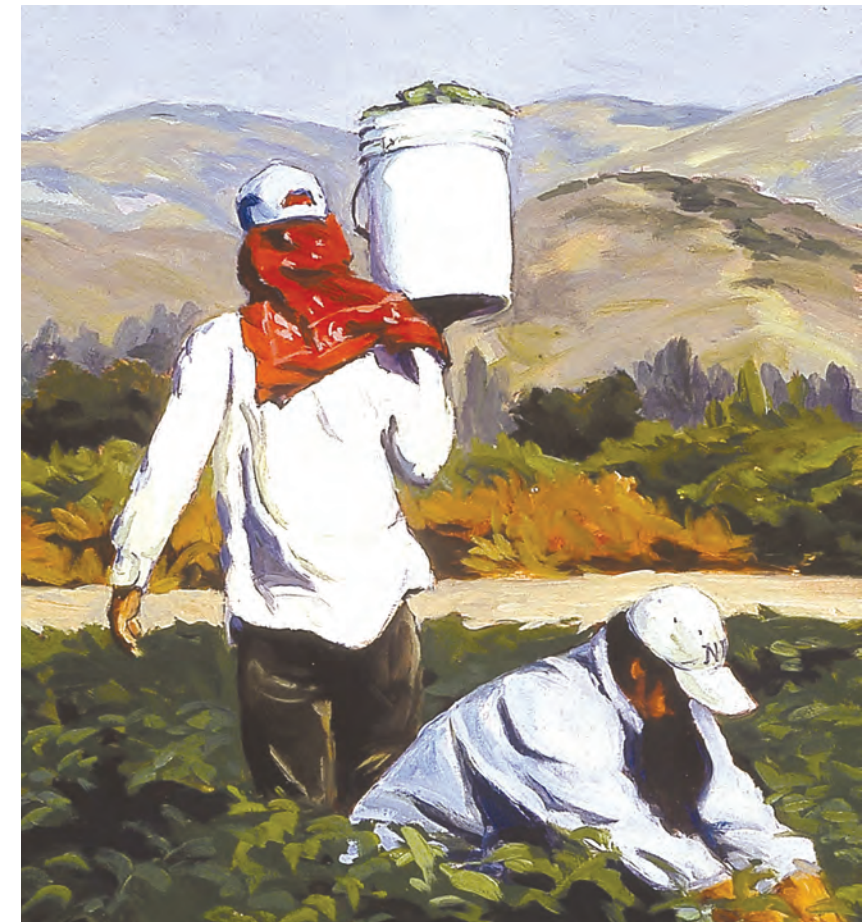
MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY

Enriching Exhibits

MASTERWORKS: SHARING THE COLLECTION

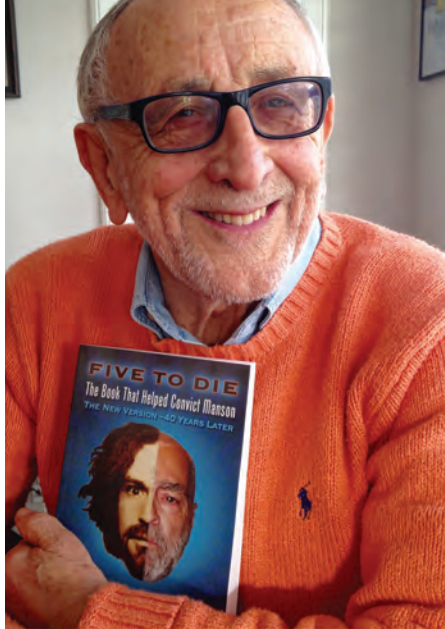


In January 2017, the Museum reopened its doors after four months of renovation and launched into the new year with the grand opening of *Masterworks: Sharing the Collection*, an exhibit featuring a century of Museum artifacts and print materials, along with iconic works by artists who have made significant contributions in their respective fields. This exhibit, presented in the Huntsinger Family Galleries, combined art and artifacts from the late 19th century with present works—emphasizing the significant breadth of the collection.



**SECRET PAINTINGS EXHIBITION:
ARTIST MICHAEL PEARCE**

The Museum was honored to be the first stop on a national tour for Michael Pearce's exhibit, *The Secret Paintings*. For this exhibit, Pearce selected 35 works of art, inspired by Renaissance and Pre-Raphaelite masters, including a monumental four-part work of oil on canvas themed for the summer solstice.



SUMMER OF LOVE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The Museum celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love with the community-based exhibit *Tune In, Turn On, Drop Out*, featuring iconic photographs, posters, fashions and rare memorabilia significant to the time.

The Summer of Love celebration included a series of films, speakers and special events, culminating with a live finale concert featuring the Grateful Dead tribute band, Cubensis.

Free First Sunday featured the wildly fun family favorite movie, "The Love Bug."

"Who Shot Rock-n-Roll?" One of the early innovators of rock 'n' roll photography, Guy Webster presented a talk about his 40-year career.

"Bringing the Heat" featured legendary drummer Fito de la Parra as guest lecturer talking about his life in rock 'n' roll.

Ventura County Poet Laureate Phil Taggart performed readings from the works of writer Charles Bukowski at a special showing of "Born Into This."

Veteran Film and Television Producer Steve Binder introduced a special showing of his legendary film, "The T.A.M.I. Show," the first concert movie of the rock era.

Suddenly That Summer: Charles Manson and the Crime of the Century. Visitors learned about the Manson family's connection to Ventura County.

Speaker Series. Journalist Ivor Davis and authors Mark and Aryn Phillips were the featured participants for a panel discussion on the 1969 Manson murders.

Coping Mechanism: Skateboarding in Ventura County. Museum-goers of all ages enjoyed a unique exhibit showcasing Ventura County's local influence on the evolution of skateboarding.

AYER Y TODAVIA

Visitors experienced Chicano culture and history, as well as current struggles and social issues, through the eyes of Chicano artists in *Ayer y Todavía*. The exhibit was presented in conjunction with Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA Latin American & Latino Art in LA, an initiative of the Getty.

The opening reception for *Ayer y Todavía* had a full house with many of the artists and collectors in attendance and featured music by the band Los Fabulocos.

Theater as Activism. Director Jorge Huerta, Ph.D. moderated a panel discussion on the origin and politics of the Chicano Teatro Movement, the work created by the Teatristas and the recent growth of Latino coalition-building in the American theatre.

Chicano Art Panel: The Stories Behind the Art. Artists Wayne Healy, Ignacio Gomez, David Botello and Margaret Garcia discussed the recurring images found in Chicano art and why those images define the Chicano identity.

“Why I Collect Art.” Ventura College professor and avid Chicano art collector Tomás Sanchez presented a talk on art and history as it intersected during the Chicano Movement in Southern California.

In Memorium: The Chicano Moratorium. The 1969 mobilization of more than 30,000 Chicanos in protest of the Vietnam War and the disproportionate number of Mexican-American casualties was discussed as a civil rights issue in this panel discussion.

17th Annual Dia de los Muertos Celebration. More than 1,500 visitors enjoyed the 17th Annual Dia de los Muertos Celebration—a free family event with live music, art, dance performances and crafts.

Dia de los Muertos Ofrendas: A Chicano Art Practice for Honoring Our Loved Ones. Special guest Roberto Vargas presented the use of ofrendas (altars) and ceremony for honoring loved ones.

Ayer y Todavía showcased exceptional artwork by Chicano artists Margaret Garcia, Frank Romero, Leo Limón, Salomon Huerta, Jack Vargas, Harry Gamboa, Diane Gamboa, Ignacio Gomez and Patssi Valdez, among others. The exhibit included many rarely-seen works on loan from collectors.



THE THOMAS FIRE—A COMMUNITY’S RESPONSE

On December 4th, no one expected that a historic fire would soon be raging across the landscape of our county. The Thomas Fire story is one of devastation, but it is also one of community and compassion. Like so many faced with the ongoing emergency, the Museum staff searched for ways to help.

Our small contribution to the community started with a box of donuts and a pot of coffee. The community's response was overwhelming. As we opened our doors to offer a space to gather, people donated food and their time, gathered to talk and took a moment to take a breath. These donations expanded coffee and donuts into activities for kids and moments for parents to let their guard down. Over 1,500 people came to the museums in Ventura and Santa Paula. We are utterly humbled by our Ventura County community and extend our thanks to the first responders and all who supported this effort.



Photo Credit: Nicole Noren



GEORGE STUART HISTORICAL FIGURES®

Really Awful People

Really Awful People portrayed some of history's most reviled and frightful people. The quarter-lifesize sculptural figures are renowned for their expressiveness and intricately detailed costumes.

Lost Empires: The Conquest of the Americas

Visitors learned about the early beginnings of the Mayan civilization, its sophisticated art, mathematics and architecture.

POP-UP EXHIBITS

Back-to-School Exhibit

From one-room schoolhouses to the formation of school districts, visitors learned how schooling has changed over the last 100 years through stories, objects and photographs—many were from the community, others were selected from the Museum's collection of educational artifacts.

A Woman's Place: The March on Washington

A timely exhibition that chronicled the stories, original artwork, posters, signs and hats from the Women's March in January 2017.

COMMUNITY GALLERY

Icons and Archetypes

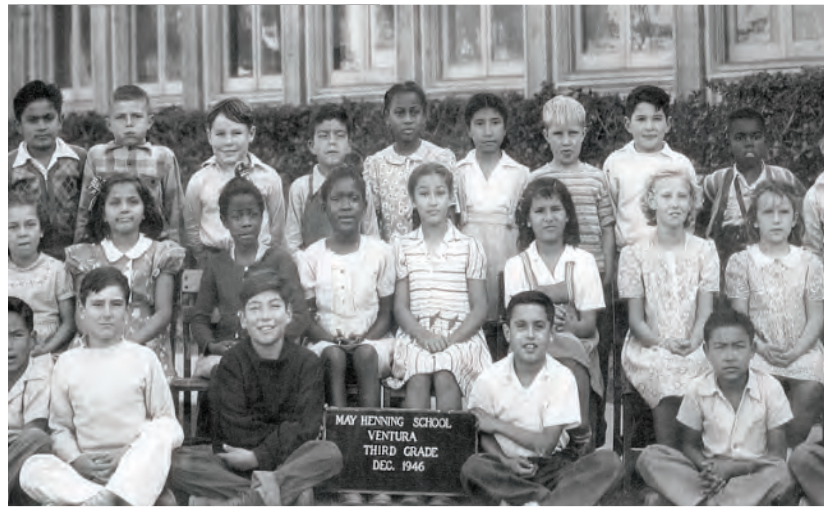
Large-scale oil paintings by Ojai-based artist Tom Hardcastle explore the artist's perspective of popular cultural icons and explored archetypes.

Manipulations

Manipulations brought together the interactive and symbolic work of sculptor Bob Privitt.

Is It Art?

This exhibit displayed items from the Museum's collection and challenged the public to decide what was art and what wasn't. The results were surprising!



AGRICULTURE MUSEUM OF SANTA PAULA



Located in the historic Mill building built in 1888 in downtown Santa Paula, the Ag Museum houses exhibits and a broad collection of tractors, farming implements, a living beehive and interactive activity stations for kids. These exhibits help visitors of all ages learn about the region's farming and ranching history and explores the present and future of the industry.

FEATURED EXHIBITS AND EVENTS INCLUDED:

Soil Sisters Photography Exhibit.

Documentary filmmaker and photographer Keri Oberly's photographic series on Ventura County's women farmers.

Vaqueros and Charros: Hard Work and Big Dreams in Ventura County.

A photographic essay by Cody Edison.

Annual Labor Day Tractor Fair.

A free family event with fun for all ages.

Dia de los Muertos.

A free community celebration with monarch butterfly crafts and a professional storyteller.

A Safe Place to Gather.

The Ag Museum provided community support with activities, food and refreshments during the Thomas Fire.



Enlivening Education

“We loved our field trip to the Museum! The docents were very knowledgeable and engaging. The pace of the trip was absolutely perfect with fun, hands-on activities, stories and opportunities to explore and examine artifacts.”

—Jenn Chen, 3rd grade teacher, City Christian School

The Museum is able to serve Title 1 schools throughout Ventura County through the generosity and support of foundations and donors.




K-12 School Tours. The Museum offers a selection of standards-based, Common Core-aligned field trips and activities on history, art and STEM-related topics.  ~~Te~~ ~~available at both museum locations.~~

Figure Drawing Group. Artist-in-residence Ryan Carr hosted a new figure drawing group, open to the public and free to attend. This popular group met twice-monthly to draw live, clothed models.

Speaking Of: Ventura County lecture series presents speakers, educators and experts sharing the rich stories of Ventura County. Our 2017 program included Ventura Mayor Erik Nasarenko, Limoneira Board Member Betsy Blanchard Chess and Port Hueneme Mayor Pro Tem Will Berg, among others.



The Research Library at the Museum of Ventura County

The library houses more than 150,000 resources pertaining to the history of Ventura County and its outlying regions. The research library is free and open to the public. Included in the collection are:

- Books
- Oral Histories
- Maps
- Architectural Plans and Drawings
- Manuscripts
- Periodicals
- Images
- Journals
- Ephemera



Through engaging activities, the Museum works to build community around our shared stories, expanding our conversations, honoring our cultures, highlighting what makes us unique, what makes us Ventura County.

MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY

Building Community

Artist-in-Residence. Artist Ryan Carr was selected as the museum's first artist-in-residence in a new program developed to connect the Museum with the local art community. Carr created *History Through the Trees*, a series of murals located in our newly renovated courtyard, and initiated a free twice-monthly figure drawing group.

Free First Sundays. January 2017 launched our Free First Sunday program with more than 1,600 visitors. Each month our Free First Sunday welcomed visitors at both the Main Street location and the Ag Museum, and featured a different theme with a fun craft for kids, thanks to the generosity of Museum supporter, Mimi Allin.

Appreciation Weekends. Throughout the year, the Museum offered free admission to various groups, including community workers, military and residents of featured ZIP codes.

Courtyard Events. The Museum regularly featured a wide variety of dance and music performances, often themed around exhibits, celebrating traditional customs and local culture.

Lunch + Music = MUNCH. Each Thursday the Museum hosted a free lunchtime gathering that featured live performances by local musicians.

ArtWalk Collectors Reception. Hosted in the Museum's Martin V. and Martha K. Smith Pavilion, the ArtWalk Collectors Reception showcases the juried works by artists featured in the annual ArtWalk Ventura. This free special preview event includes music, refreshments and awards ceremony.

ArtWalk Art Events. Featured artist Hiroko Yoshimoto gave demonstrations of Chinese calligraphy and ink painting in the Smith Pavilion. The Museum opens its doors with free admission for the two-day ArtWalk event.



A Father’s Dream, A Daughter’s Promise

When Robert (Bob) Pfeiler was in his 90s and approaching the end of his life, his daughter, Susan Pfeiler Brown, and her husband promised they would help fulfill his dream of a farm heritage museum.

A passionate fourth-generation farmer, Bob Pfeiler was an enthusiastic collector of workaday farming tools. “When my husband and I retired, we relocated to Somis and joined the Museum’s Farm Implement Committee with our focus being to help fulfill my father’s dream,” said Susan.

Today, the Agriculture Museum in Santa Paula stands as a testament to their love of family, farming and the community that share Bob Pfeiler’s passion.

Susan and her husband, Bob Brown, met as students at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. After the couple moved to Northridge in 1965, Susan began volunteering with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, fundraising for the orchestra and the Music Center of Los Angeles County. She eventually accepted a fulltime position with the Music Center Education Division’s premier school touring program, Music Center on Tour.

Both Susan’s father and grandmother strongly believed in giving back to the community, inspiring the Browns to follow that same path after retiring. “My favorite aspect of supporting the Museum is the people; it always comes down to the people. Volunteering and being active with the museum creates wonderful personal interactions and connections with the community,” said Susan, whose family’s farming history dates back to 1868, when her great-great-grandfather purchased land in Oxnard from Thomas Bard.

~~“My father was born on that ranch, and he started farming with his father full time in 1926, on the day he graduated from Oxnard High School,” she said. “He was acutely aware of how special Ventura County is.”~~

In 1955, Bob Pfeiler became a charter member and board member of the Ventura County Historical Society, which paved the way for the Museum of Ventura County. He served on the board for 28 years, including one term as president. Because Bob’s passion for collecting farm machinery was well known, in 1969 Board President Richard Willet suggested appointing a committee on the preservation and collection of farm machinery with Bob as chair. Bob worked to develop a base of supporters and initiated the fundraising campaign of early donors for the farm museum.

After Bob passed in 2002, the Pfeiler family sold their farmland and contributed a portion of the proceeds towards making his dream of a farm heritage museum a reality.

~~“My favorite memory is the 2011 opening of the Agriculture Museum. I loved the art; the way the interior walls looked on opening day was beautiful,” said Susan.~~

~~“Since joining the Museum’s board in 2005, Susan has served~~ on various committees dedicated to shaping the history and agriculture collections and inspiring people of all ages to get involved. She applauds the museum’s efforts to reach out to younger generations with events and opportunities that attract new visitors, volunteers and members.

“The Museum continues to provide a place for the community to gather and share its history, traditions, culture and diversity,” she said.



“My favorite memory is the 2011 opening of the Agriculture Museum. I loved the art; the way the interior walls looked on opening day was beautiful.”

2017 was a year of growth for the Museum, which worked hard to redefine its purpose and place in the community. Many of you supported us in this endeavor. We offer our heartfelt thanks to our community and to the following donors:

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MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY
Sponsorship Opportunities

The Museum offers business and sponsorship opportunities for companies and professionals committed to supporting the Museum of Ventura County's exhibits, programming and community outreach initiatives as a shared cause for enhancing the quality of life in our community.



2018 Exhibit Calendar

January 13 – April 8, 2018 – Museum of Ventura County

In High Style – The Photography of Neal Barr

Avant Garde – Sculpture by Lori Cozens-Geller

In Style – Fashions from the Museum Collection

March 10 – July 16, 2018 – Ag Museum

Letters of the Lost – Seeking news of loved ones after the St. Francis Dam Disaster – Correspondence to the County Coroner's office from throughout the country.

Vaquero Campfire – Vaquero history through saddles, spurs, marks and brands

Good Earth: Tilling the Soil – Tools and implements for preparing the fields for planting.

April 14 – April 29, 2018 - Museum of Ventura County

All Student Art Exhibit – Ventura Unified School District

April 14 – November 25, 2018 – Museum of Ventura County Nook Gallery

Women in the Nook (working title) – Monthly exhibits featuring the artwork of contemporary women artists in Ventura County.

April 14 – May 10, 2018 - Museum of Ventura County

The Art of Correspondence – Selected letters and writing implements from the Museum's Collection.

Please Write Back! – An interactive exhibit encouraging audience participation in writing, sending and receiving handwritten letters.

May 11 – June 17, 2018 – Museum of Ventura County

I Like to Ride My Bicycle (working title) – Pop-up bicycle exhibit in conjunction with the Amgen Tour of California.

May 18 – August 12, 2018 – Museum of Ventura County

Black and White and Read All Over – The art of comics, zines and graphic novels featuring the work of Jack Kirby, Pat McHale and Sergio Aragones (tentative) among other notable illustrators and comic book artists.

Natural State – Featuring works by Museum of Ventura County Artist-in-Residence Ryan Carr.

August 31 – November 25, 2018 – Museum of Ventura County

At the Table: Business, Food and Community – Visiting the history of food and culture throughout Ventura County.

Rise Up! – Panaderias and bakeries in Ventura County.

You Ate What? – Food-inspired art.

December 4, 2018 – February 3, 2019 – Museum of Ventura County and the Ag Museum

Thomas Fire, Our Stories – An exhibit commemorating the largest wildfire in California history and its impact to Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Featuring images, video, oral histories and artifacts collected from residents throughout the community.



Envisioning the Future



Dear Friends,

2017 saw your Museum engage in an aggressive and ambitious reinvention plan, which I am happy to report is well underway and succeeding.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of staff, a host of volunteers, funding partners and individual donors, the Museum reached or exceeded its goals for the year.

But there is much more to do.

The Museum is committed to expanding its abilities to celebrate the history, art and culture of Ventura County and the Channel Islands. We are committed to being more interactive, more relevant, more creatively engaged with people of all ages from our 10 cities and their surrounding areas.

Imagine your Museum with a café, with interactive exhibits, with exhibits using social media and technological tools. Look forward to satellite and pop-up exhibits throughout the county. Expect to see greater impact with ever-growing partnerships with universities, colleges, and musical and specialty groups like car enthusiasts, skateboarders and local nonprofits.

We are excited about this vision. This is our motivation, our passion, our responsibility.

Join us as we continue the journey to reinvent your Museum—join our social media sites, sign up for our newsletter, attend an event or exhibition, make a donation.

We look forward to working with you to shape your Museum of the future.

Warmest Regards,
Kate McLean
Chair, Board of Directors

Thank you to our volunteers!

Docents and volunteers have been the backbone of Museum operations since 1975. Docents were then and are now essential to the Museum's operation. They participate in cataloguing, research, curatorial efforts, library operation, school tours and exhibit creation and construction. Every year, docents collectively log tens of thousands of hours.

This support is essential to the Museum's ongoing operation. But it's more than that—the knowledge and expertise of our volunteers and docents enriches and deepens the impact of the Museum's programs, educational tours and exhibits. Volunteers and docents help create memorable experiences for our community, help find answers to difficult questions and inspire the next generation of Ventura County history and art lovers. Thank you!



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