HIDDEN LEAVES

VOL 10 - ISSUE 2

FALL
2023

A publication of Ilan-Lael Foundation

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS SINCE 1983

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IlanLaelFoundation.org

Seeking Balance

I like the word "metamorphosis" — a change from within, from immaturity to maturity. There are times when the world seems out of balance, and this is one of those times, but a long life brings perspective. We always seem to live in a time of transition, with major changes happening in much of our world.

As I woke up this morning, a thought came into my head: "I seek balance." Isn't this what the Ilan-Lael Foundation is about? Our logo is of a tree with its roots in the earth and its branches in the light. We are trying to put the entire world back into this kind of natural balance, and me and you are a part of it.

Recently Anne and I attended the Georgia O'Keeffe and Henry Moore exhibition at the San Diego Museum of Art. These great artists, both Modernists who gave us new ways of looking at the dialogue between art and nature, lived through the years of the Spanish flu epidemic of 1919, the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, nuclear anxiety, and the attack on the World Trade Center towers.

And here we are again, today, in a world beset by a deadly virus, wars, political uncertainty, and grave concerns about the future of the environment. The times are full of shadows and catastrophes, just like Moore's and O'Keeffe's.

So, how do we bring our world back into balance? How do we help our conscience and memory celebrate life and not run through it in fear? Perhaps by accepting that it is okay to not understand everything; that day and night, light and darkness, life and death are all part of the rhythm. Yes, the world is wildly out of balance, but the lowly caterpillar can turn into a butterfly.

To me, O'Keeffe and Moore were inhabiting the artist's role perfectly on this uncertain stage: trying mightily to bring their world back into balance. They did it by helping us see a part of nature more clearly. We can do the same.

— JTH

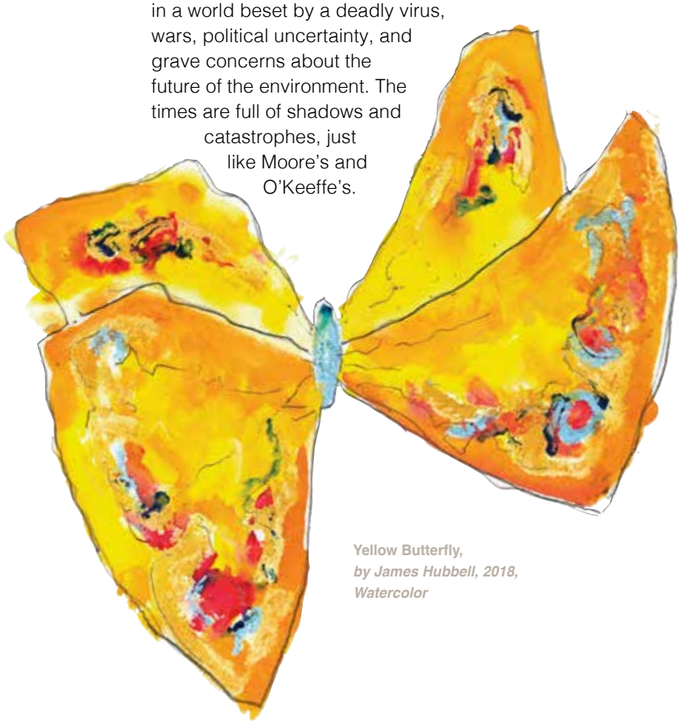
In An Unbalanced World

With wings
Soft yellow
Laced with golden
thread,
A butterfly
Strays into my
dream.

Come again
Sing again
The golden
rainbow's song
Within my day.

I be servant
Of your passing.
My gifts are
The magic
You left
Behind.

— JTH



Yellow Butterfly,
by James Hubbell, 2018,
Watercolor

HIDDEN LEAVES
VOL 10 - ISSUE 2
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Ceramic Maquette, 1975
PHOTO: John Durant

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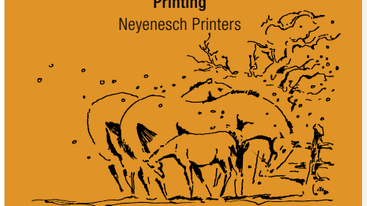

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Forty years is a long time. For giraffes and grizzly bears, it equals a lifetime. For an oak tree 40 years is when they begin to bloom and bear fruit. How prophetic that James chose the oak as the symbol of Ilan-Lael.

This year—2023—has been one of the most productive in our history. We celebrated Ilan-Lael's 40th anniversary and paid homage to our roots by ramping up the projects and programs that were started by James and Anne: Open House tours, art classes and workshops, talks and lectures, environmental and STEAM education for students, art exhibitions, and volunteer days offering hands-on learning opportunities. We reached out to renew old friendships with many of the people and organizations that helped make Ilan-Lael into the arts organization it is today, a center for art and environmental education, a place that fosters creativity inspired by nature and art, and a soul-inspiring beacon of beauty.

But Jim is never one to rest on his laurels. Inspired by his example, our eyes are on the horizon to discover what the next 40 years may bring. You likely heard about our Summer of Love campaign and Harvest Moon Dinner Fundraiser: combined we raised more than $100,000 to help protect and preserve the buildings and grounds of Ilan-Lael. Thanks to all of you who donated! We matched those dollars (and then some!) with gifts from private foundations. We're now on our way to going beyond maintenance needs, making improvements on the buildings and property which you'll begin to see next year, changes that will set the stage for another 40 years of creativity and inspiration.

Plans for how to put our physical assets to work are also taking shape. New programs for artists in residence, apprenticeships in our art studios, educational programs for K through college students, design-build art projects, and the creation of more peace parks around the Pacific are part of our long-term vision to unleash Ilan-Lael's unique brand of creativity into the world. We want to stoke the imagination of new generations who believe in the power of art and creativity to change society for the better.

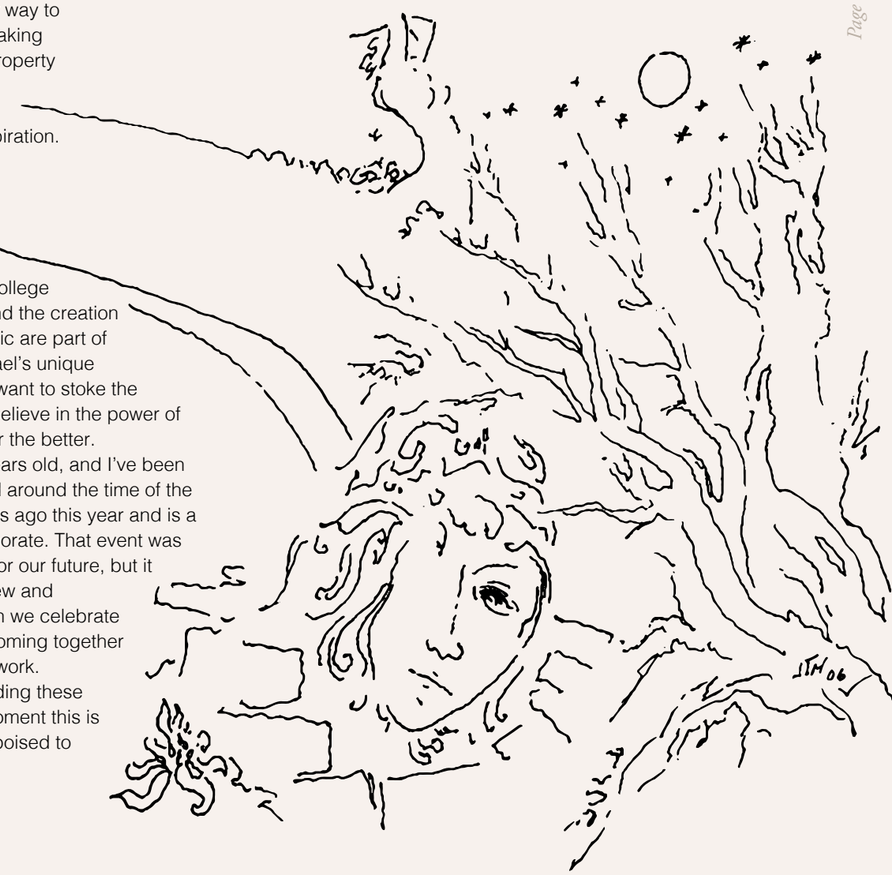
How can it be that Ilan-Lael is 40 years old, and I've been around for 20 of those years? I arrived around the time of the Cedar Fire—which took place 20 years ago this year and is a more somber anniversary to commemorate. That event was painful, scary, and full of uncertainty for our future, but it led to opportunities for growth. The new and unexpected emerged. The Foundation we celebrate today was the result of many forces coming together through vision, community, and hard work.

How time has flown and how rewarding these years have been. What an exciting moment this is to be 40 years old, and, like the oak, poised to fulfill our destiny.

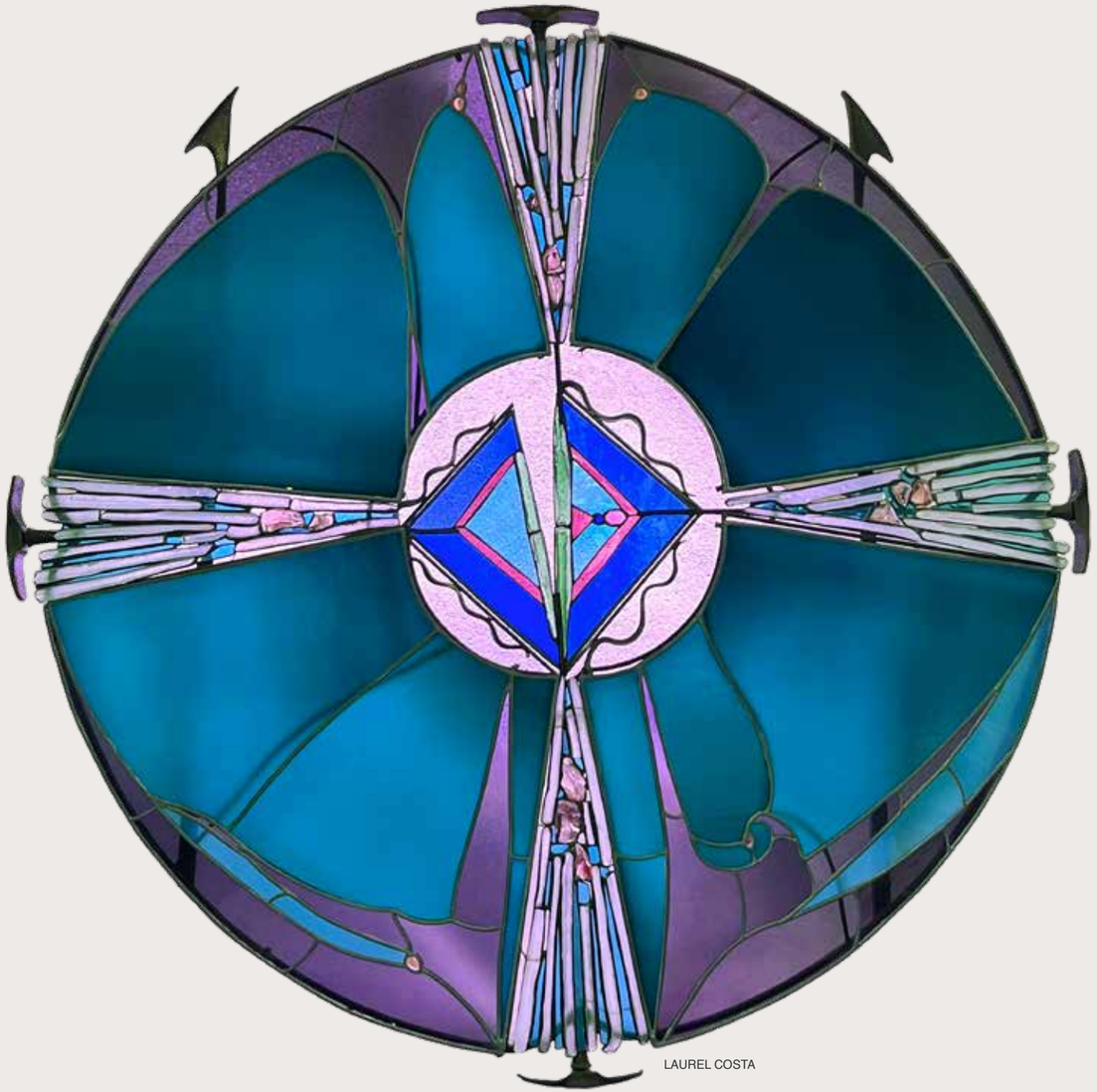
— Marianne Gerdes

"Jim is never one to rest on his laurels. Inspired by his example, our eyes are on the horizon to discover what the next 40 years may bring."

Dreaming of Acorns and New Oaks



Encore Performances



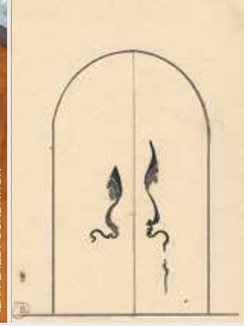
LAUREL COSTA

When Hubbell Art Finds a New Home

No one denies that Jim Hubbell is an incredibly prolific artist—his more than 17,000 objects in Ilan-Lael's archive attest to this, and at age 92 he continues to paint almost daily. Thousands of other Hubbell artworks have been commissioned by private owners and collectors. Once in a while, one of those pieces finds its way back into our hands. Sometimes they become part of our permanent collection (an almost endless source for present and future exhibitions!). Other times we seek to re-home them with enthusiastic new owners, or in public spaces such as museums where future generations will see and appreciate Jim's interpretations of nature's beauty. In every case, we are always thrilled to see a work and hear the story of the owner who enjoyed it, some for 50 years or more.

ILAN-LAEL FOUNDATION

Hexagonal stained-glass sconce hung at La Jolla's Chart House for three decades.



James Hubbell design rendering and the finished door pulls.

LAUREL COSTA

MOAH GALLERY

The Triton Mermaid window awaits restoration and new home.

"Prayer Wheel" Finds a New Public Home

Marcy Goldstone of La Jolla has had a long and rewarding relationship with Ilan-Lael and James Hubbell. This year, at age 87, she found herself leaving a spacious house (with stairs) to move into a senior living facility. One favorite artwork in her collection seemed too difficult to move, plus "I lived with *Prayer Wheel* for 38 years and felt it was so special I wanted the world to see it."

Volunteers Garrett Goodwin and Timothy Kebler stepped up to retrieve the art on short notice and deliver *Prayer Wheel,* (pictured at left) to Ilan Lael.

"We were stunned when we first saw it," recalls Marianne Gerdes. "It was large and lovely and complex in its construction. The convex circular artwork sits in a metal frame that is equally unusual. We immediately assigned it to our permanent collection and put it on display in the Ilan-Lael Center for all to see."

Marcy, a talented artist whose works in jewelry, paper sculpture, mosaic, glass, and watercolor are treasured by many family members and friends, was a volunteer with Ilan-Lael for many years. "I hope Jim lives to 110," she says. "I have everything he ever wrote. His works are precious. The fact that Jim is still here with his family creating new work? Wonderful!"

Not the Usual Hex

The Chart House Restaurant in La Jolla was a fixture along Prospect Street in La Jolla for over 30 years. Its architect, Ken Kellogg, worked briefly in the offices of Sim Bruce Richards during the 1950s. While with the Richards firm, Ken crossed paths with a talented young artist named James Hubbell, and their friendship and professional partnership began.

In the 1960s Ken was tapped to design the Chart House Restaurant chain's California locations. In 1974, James was commissioned to create a one-of-a-kind sconce to light the wall behind the bar of the La Jolla location. The result was a 3-dimensional stained-glass window in an unusual hexagonal shape, and it hung in place for over 30 years. The restaurant closed in 2004 and Bunny Clews, the Chart House's real estate agent, acquired the glass and stored it in her garage. In 2021 she generously decided to donate it back to the Ilan-Lael Foundation. Dusty and in disrepair, this sconce was given a new life by Hubbell Studio artists and recently sold to a new owner who now gets to enjoy this stunning piece of Hubbell history.

"I lived with *Prayer Wheel* for 38 years and felt it was so special I wanted the world to see it."

Doors to Their Hearts

Jacob and Dorothy Ettinger didn't fall in love because of James Hubbell's talent for making doors and iron handles, but when they first saw a pair made for their dream house in Rancho Santa Fe, they were over-the-moon. Many years later, their son Bruce saved the customized metal pulls when the house was up for sale.

"My parents adored Jim, and my concern when their house sold was that the new owners wanted it to be turned into something quite generic. When the sales contract for the house was written, I had the pulls excluded from the sale. I then reached out to a few specialized architects and art dealers to see if I could find an appreciative buyer. Then I thought, 'I know just the place.'"

"Dad appreciated great metal work," continued Bruce. "He had a successful machine-tool business, so when Jim took the project, they were delighted." When the Ettingers passed away, Bruce kindly donated the handles back to Ilan-Lael with permission for them to be resold. Ilan-Lael kept one set for our permanent collection, and made the second set available for purchase. Many thanks to the Ettinger family for preserving this bit of Jim's artistic history.

Once Backed by Light From the Sea

There's a notable artwork carefully stored in our collection that awaits restoration and a new home. The Triton Restaurant Mermaid and Albatross stained-glass window was created by James as a focal point for diners enjoying waterfront views at the Cardiff-by-the-Sea establishment. For 40 years, this glorious window, one of two dozen architectural artworks created by Hubbell Studios, served as a backdrop of celebrations and private and public gatherings. When the restaurant sold to new owner Steve Blumkin, he generously donated the artworks to the Ilan-Lael Foundation, which came at a most auspicious time as we were in the midst of building the Ilan-Lael Center.

Most of the Triton art is now in new homes with new owners. The exception is this large 8-feet-diameter round glass window which remains with us. We approached the San Diego History Center who would love to have this for their San Diego room. The glass, which was designed as a wall insert, must be retrofitted with a base and frame in order to function as a stand-alone piece. Cost may reach in excess of $30,000 for a full like-new restoration. If you are interested in helping see this historic stained glass become part of San Diego's collective historic memory, contact us for more information.

Loving the Little Things

JOHN DURANT

LAUREL COSTA

“One of the real joys for me in recreating the artists’ studios was because they’re so personal. When you look at a sketchbook, or sketch model, or the artist’s tools — the brushes, the handmade pastels they’re so intimate and directly connected to the artist that you feel like you have an insight that you don’t normally have when you look at the completed work of art.”

Anita spent 18 years with the Henry Moore Foundation in England, and can speak with authority to the sweep of the Modernist movement as much more than a new aesthetic.

“Both O’Keeffe and Moore were given solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1946. Think of it! The world was coming out of the trauma of World War II. MOMA is such a formidable institution, and it was not a small thing to have a solo exhibition there … and yet, Moore and O’Keeffe were selected that year. You have to ask yourself … why them in 1946? I think it has much to do with the affirmation of life you get from an experience with nature. Their work has something to say about how we identify as human beings with the natural world.”

Whenever she visits Ilan-Lael, Anita is reminded of how art connects us to the natural world and its forces, not only the good, but the incredibly challenging.

“Jim did a beautiful series of wildfire watercolors we showed in the museum a few years ago, and he gave us a few from the exhibitions. We are really happy to have those very special paintings. He spoke of how quickly the earth recovered and repaired itself after the fire.”

The next time you visit and tour Ilan-Lael, take a moment to appreciate the “debris” of James’s long life. It lines pathways. Occupies shelves, hidden and seen. Inspiration is everywhere, and a sense of positive possibilities make even the troubles of the world seem surmountable.

Far left: SDMA Deputy Director, Anita Feldman, peeks out from behind the museum’s massive Moore sculpture.

Left and above: vignettes from James Hubbell’s studio, where inspiration occupies every wall and shelf.

Above: Cortez Gazebo, *maquette by James Hubbell for park never built. Corian, dolphin vertebrae and copper.*

Below: James inside his stone-walled studio, the first structure on the property and original Hubbell home.

KAREN HINCHCLIFFE

Insights into why some artists must hold nature so close

by Peter Jensen

As your eyes scan the first words of text on this paper page, stop and take a moment to look up. Look at your desktop. Your windowsill. Your bookshelves. Are you surrounded by things made of nature, rather than natural things? Perhaps what was a tree is now but remnants, extant only as milled lumber in your desk and floor?

Perhaps you rely on representations of nature to remind you OF nature: a landscape painting; a family photo taken at Lake Tahoe? Is the view out your window at a nearby tree, or sliver of sunlight in the garden, enough? Or do your eyes, mind, and fingers long to hold and caress some natural object, contemplate it, bring forth memories of whence and where found? A beach stone? A bone? An autumn leaf? A raven feather?

In truth, some of us thrive amidst the clutter of found objects. Others don’t. No indictment of anyone intended. But let’s look at three artists whose eyes were hungry to see nature all around them, and whose hands were hungry to hold it close.

Anita Feldman, The San Diego Museum of Art Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Education, recently examined the role that found objects — natural rather than man made — played in the life of two iconic Modernist artists. Her exhibit “O’Keeffe and Moore” last summer brought us a trove of finished artworks by these masters, as well as recreations of Henry Moore’s and Georgia O’Keeffe’s studios, both wonderlands of found bones, rocks, seashells, skulls — what Moore called his “library of natural forms.”

We were reminded of Ilan-Lael and the studios and workshops of James Hubbell. What places of mystery and possibility! Here in Santa Ysabel are the castoffs from nature’s fire-fury — all the molten glass salvaged 20 years ago by Jim after the wildfires. Here are the found objects of Jim’s 50 years of wanderings through oaks and grasslands — the grand natural ‘scape cloaking the land beneath Volcan Mountain.

We asked Anita for insights into artists like Moore, O’Keeffe and Hubbell who populate their creative spaces with found objects. Not surprisingly, she holds these Gatherers in the highest regard.

“Georgia O’Keeffe and Henry Moore had the same kind of vision in looking at found objects: they would go for long walks in open landscapes and find stones or animal bones and hold them up to the sky and look through the apertures and see their world through these objects, and imagine them at any scale. They both played with scale, and had a kind of relationship with these natural forms that I think is really important. Collecting thousands and thousands of found objects was a primary part of their experience with art.”

JOHN DURANT

He Forged Beauty and Friendships

Remembering Artist Bill Porter

by Rebecca Morales

Truly a man and talent born of the earth, Bill Porter (3/17/39 -9/27/23) was a friend and colleague of Jim Hubbell's. He forged his life from steel as a blacksmith and metal artist and worked with Jim on some of his most iconic pieces, including the Palace Doors of Abu Dhabi.

For 12 years throughout the 1970s and '80s, the sparks flew and the forge glowed in the Hubbell Studio as Bill joined the team to work his metal magic. He was also a master of ancient and new metal and ceramic technology, and engineered and built the diesel-powered kiln outside the big studio. He liked to say his association with Jim was during some of Jim's most productive years. James agrees and says, "He was so open to new ideas. Working with him was wonderful."

Ensconced in the hills of Julian, Bill had his own studio where he pulled stock from a coal-fired forge and hammered it on a large floor-mounted anvil into curves and waves. His studio spoke of him and his art with steel pieces in various stages of completion along with hand tools interspersed among stacks of steel rods, wall mounted vises, torches, grinders, a power hammer, and drill presses. Much of the work on the bronze door frames for the Palace Doors of Abu Dhabi took place in Bill's studio.

Among the many places where Bill's artistry can be seen are the ironwork on the door to Jim's drafting studio, the Hubbell gates in the Julian library, the gate that marks the entry to Volcan Mountain, and Bill's own home. With help from Peter Mitten, a fellow artist/sculptor and teacher, they cast the first large James Hubbell bronze sculpture, "Opus," in 1980. Bill was so revered by the Hubbells that he became a mentor to Jim's youngest son, Brennan and others who wanted to learn the trade.

Perhaps one of his most enduring qualities was that he connected deeply with people and their interests. For many years, Bill opened his home to folk dancing taught by Anne Hubbell and Vicki and Peter Bergstrom, in addition to life-drawing groups led by Jim.

Bill Porter will be forever remembered as a good friend to the Hubbell Family and as a talented artist who made Julian a better place to live.

ILAN-LAEL FOUNDATION

Bill Porter loads the Hubbell Studio kiln, preparing for a fire.

COURTESY CLAREMONT LEWIS MUSEUM OF ART

Carolyn Owen-Towle at the Claremont Lewis Museum of Art Padua Hills Art Fiesta in 2011

Her Marvelously Art-full Life

We mourn the loss of our good friend Carolyn Owen-Towle

by Marianne Gerdes

As this issue of "Hidden Leaves" went to press, we received the sad news of the loss of a treasured friend, Carolyn Owen-Towle of San Diego. Carolyn served 20 years on Ilan-Lael Foundation's Board of Directors, but this was but a small slice of her passion for, and commitment to, the arts.

She was at home in southern California's art scene since birth. Daughter of noted California painter, architect and muralist Millard Sheets, her first crush was on woodworker Sam Maloof. She later became a friend and confidant to Martha Longenecker, founder of Mingei International Musuem. Carolyn served on both the Mingei International and Maloof Foundation boards.

She discovered "Hidden Leaves" magazine shortly after she moved to San Diego in the 1980s, and become an early member of Ilan-Lael. To James and Anne Hubbell, she shared her own family's struggle of managing an art heritage, giving valuable counsel to make plans for a long-range approach to their legacy. She married their son and daughter-in-law, Drew and Pam. She was a long-time member of the Ilan-Lael Foundation board and hosted ILF meetings at her home for 15 years.

Carolyn shared the pastorship of the 1st Unitarian Universalist Church in Hillcrest with her husband Tom for 24 years. Her religious calling invigorated her belief that art was essential to the human spirit. She was honest, open, caring, and kind, and words fail us as her loss sinks in. A life as large and meaningful as Carolyn's can't be summed up in a few paragraphs. She will be greatly missed and remembered fondly, and we will follow in her footsteps sharing our love, appreciation, and passion for art and people, without limits.

connecting people, art & nature

There are many ways to support Ilan-Lael…for today and tomorrow. Thank you to our 2023 donors. Your support makes all things possible.

JOHN DURANT

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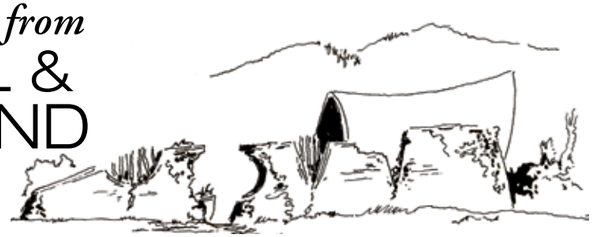


For more stories and beautiful photos, visit ilanlaelfoundation.org/NEWS

Batya MacAdams and Jenna Ann MacGillis performing in Ilan-Lael's very first visiting artist program.

Shadow, Music, and New-Found Magic

Visiting Artist Program at Ilan-Lael

Violinist and Vocalist Dr Batya MacAdam-Somer and visual artist and storyteller Jenna Ann MacGillis were invited to spend nine days this past August stretching and growing in their art as part of the inaugural Visiting Artist Program at Ilan-Lael. Both artists came to Ilan-Lael to reach beyond their comfort zone in a creative collaboration. The concept first began during long walks together in the Tijiuana Estuary. They dreamed of an opportunity to compose and perform a piece inspired by water using music, poetry and shadows. Combining these elements, they showcased an original performance in front of a live audience of 20 friends and family under Julian's dark skies while an unexpected lightning show flashed in the distance. The performance was a journey of discovery about nature and art for the audience and performers. Brennan Hubbell, who organized the program for ILF, summed up the impact:

"Sometimes it takes getting out of your house, your normal setting. And often a collaboration can push us too. It all adds to the sense that this leap you are going to make will work out. I thought it did and I think creating their art at Ilan-Lael provided a meaningful experience for both artists' careers that won't soon be forgotten."

To Sleep, To Dream

Congratulations to the winners of the Boys' House Raffle

Once again we offered a raffle for Open House visitors: an overnight stay in the Boys' House at Ilan-Lael! This unique opportunity was won by Isabel Wade of Los Angeles. Congrats to Isabel and thanks to all those who entered. Your ticket purchase helps support Ilan-Lael!

The Boys' House at Ilan-Lael.

A Tijuana School Stays Strong

With help from friends

Tijuana's *Colegio La Esperanza* community, led by school founder Christine Brady, bloomed anew when skilled and novice artists of all ages applied colorful mosaics to the outdoor amphitheater using tiles donated by longtime Ilan-Lael Foundation supporter Ingrid Coffin. The result is a striking scenic backdrop to the permanent walls behind the stage.

Christine, who enlisted James Hubbell and our volunteers to help with designs and building from the beginning, has been the guiding force behind the school for 30 years and never seems to tire of bringing new resources to her students and the community. She's already fundraising for her next project—a library. Christine relies on donations to keep the school going. At this time of year, your help is most welcome as she prepares for her annual Christmas Posada, a party to distribute gifts to the students, their families and the community. This event happens every December and for many it will be the only holiday gift they will receive. If you'd like to help by donating a gift (another need is cash for teacher bonuses), contact Jessie Meacham at cmeachm42@gmail.com. To learn more about the school, visit *theamericasfoundation.org*.

Thousands of broken tiles find new life in the amphitheatre's colorful new backdrop.

Architect Robert Thiele poses in front of the restored murals at the San Diego Automotive Museum.

An Orchid

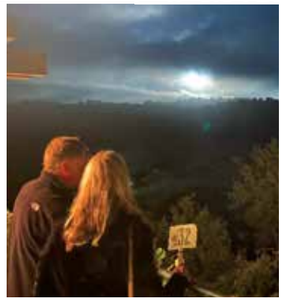
For Robert Thiele

Congratulations to Robert Thiele, architect and long-time friend of ILF who was recently awarded an Orchid for Historic Preservation for his role as lead architect/designer on the San Diego Automotive Museum. The Balboa Park Committee of 100 provided $715,000 to restore the murals on the exterior of the museum that were created for the 1935-36 California Pacific Exposition, the second great expansion of the park that added the Pan American Plaza. The murals, which are made with painted art tiles, represent commerce, scenic beauty, agriculture and industry. "The quality of the work is exceptional," wrote the judges. "The attention to detail is admirable. It made us realize that parts of Balboa Park can be better than ever.

A Magical Night to Remember!

Shine on Harvest Moon

What is certain to become an annual event, our Harvest Moon Fundraising Dinner brought together the Ilan-Lael community of friends and supporters on a mystical and magical autumn evening to celebrate Ilan-Lael's 40th anniversary. 120 guests and another 20 volunteers dined under the oaks on Julian fare and local wine, and capped the evening by watching the rise of Autumn's super moon. It was the culmination of our Summer of Love campaign which, combined with fundraising at the dinner, raised over $100,000 for Ilan-Lael.



Special thanks to our premiere event sponsor, Olive Public Relations, and additional sponsor Julian Farm and Orchard. And a huge shout-out to our dinner and wine providers, Julian Beer Company, Storum Ranch & Cider, Ramona Ranch Winery, Manzanita Ranch, and Mom's Pie.

Use the QR code above to view all the Harvest Moon photos on our website.

John and Gundula Save More by Giving

And it was easy to do!

John and Gundula Dunne have supported Ilan-Lael for decades. Gundula volunteers on projects like *Colegio La Esperanza* and Pacific Rim Park. She has also served on the Ilan-Lael Board for more than 10 years. For the past couple of Decembers, the Dunne's have made gifts to the ILF year-end giving campaign from their IRA using their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). "It is exciting to see the Ilan-Lael Foundation bring Jim and Ann Hubbell's work and philosophy into the community. John and I are always proud to help. And we don't mind the extra tax savings!"

Here's how the Dunne's benefitted using their RMD from their IRA:

- Because they are over 70 and a half, giving their IRA's RMD to Ilan-Lael means they don't pay the income tax due.
- Plus, they have lowered their income tax bill whether they itemize their tax deduction or not.
- It was easy to do: they completed this transfer by sending a short email to their IRA administrator requesting that part of their RMD be "sent directly to Ilan-Lael Foundation."

Call or email Marianne Gerdes at 760-765-3427 if you have any questions about this or other ways to save more taxes while supporting ILF.

Yes, Our Non-Profit Arts Organization Relies On YOU!

Make Your Annual Gift

Use the envelope provided in this newsletter, or donate on-line. Your gift in any amount is highly valued, for it supports the organization that cares for Ilan-Lael and helps us spread the message of the power of art and creativity throughout the community.

Support Our Endowment

Please help ILF grow and touch more and more people in the community by adding Ilan-Lael to your estate (will, living trust, retirement beneficiary, life insurance beneficiary or CRT). Gifts of real estate can provide tax advantages right away, while making a big impact on the future of Ilan-Lael. If you've already given, please consider an extra gift to help us build the endowment. For more information call Marianne at our office 760-765-3427.

Volunteer!

We always welcome helping hands to operate our programs, care for the buildings and grounds, and assist at special events. Join our volunteer mailing list to learn how you can take part in upcoming 2024 events! Let us know of your interest at info@ilanlaelfoundation.org.

Did You Know?

Ilan-Lael is available for Retreats & Events, Workshops and Private Tours. Call 760-765-3427

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A Pacific Rim Love Story

by Simone Butler

Cristobal Gonzalez and Evgeniya Golik are one of those lucky couples that met through James Hubbell's vision to unite diverse people and countries along the Pacific Coast. The couple, who now live in Bonita, south of San Diego, with their ten-year-old daughter Sofia, met in 2001 while working on a Pacific Rim Park in Yantai, China.

Cristobal, an architect and artist, first worked with James at the school Colegia Esperanza in Tijuana (Cristobal's home town), and he later helped build the Pacific Rim Park in that city, as well as the one at Shelter Island where the recent Friendship Walk II was held. Evgeniya was studying architecture and design in Vladivostok, Russia — her home — when she found out about the project in China and decided to help.

So, what drew these two diverse people together on the job site in China? "Well, she's very beautiful!" Cristobal confesses, and they both laugh. For him, it was love at first sight. "I remember the first time I saw her," he recalls with a dreamy look. "Her smile. It was maybe destiny; we ended up working a lot together."

Cristobal and Evgeniya display their art at the 2022 PRP Friendship Walk at Shelter Island.

Adds Evgeniya, "We got close in the first few weeks when we were designing together." That togetherness led to discovering their similar values and visions, so when they returned home — Evgeniya to Vladivostok and Cristobal to Tijuana — a long-distance relationship ensued (largely conducted the old-fashioned way, through letters, as Internet and telephones were unreliable). He visited twice as she was studying for her architecture diploma, and on the last trip, in 2004, he proposed. It took another year to secure her visa, but finally, in 2005, they were able to reunite and marry in San Diego.

They saw many romances bloom while working on the Pacific Rim Park, "but it's hard to make it last," says Cristobal. In that regard, they have James and Anne's shining example of a couple that's stayed together through thick and thin while honoring and supporting each other's creativity.

James, as an artist and a humanitarian, greatly inspires them. "He's the only living genius that we know closely," says Cristobal. "Anything he touches becomes this beautiful entity." Evgeniya adds, "And he's so prolific! Not age, not health issues or anything can stop him. He's just on fire." One memory stands out for her. It was James's birthday, and they were invited to join the family at a beach party. "Everybody was there to celebrate him," she recalls, "but he didn't want any of that attention. He sat in his chair painting through the whole thing. I was just amazed; this is his priority in life, you know. And I guess it comes with a price, maybe his family wishes he was more there for them. But he's a genius, and that's what geniuses do. They just create as much as they can while they're still on the planet."

Cristobal and Evgeniya are deeply grateful for the extended family that the Hubbells have created, especially through the Pacific Rim Parks. For them, James's artistic vision of peace and understanding has bridged two very diverse Pacific countries in a personal and enduring way.

Currently there are seven Pacific Rim Park sites including: Vladivostok's* Soil & Soul Park, *1994; San Diego's* Pearl of the Pacific, *1998; Yantai's* Tides Park, *2001 & 2018; Tijuana's* Entre Corazón y Mar, *2004; Puerto Princesa's* Salinlahi Park, *2009; Jeju's* Stepping Stones of the Pacific, *2010; and Kaohsiung's,* Pacific Birth, *2013.