Scene and Heard: Vatican Splendors

The Vatican Splendors exhibit gave LLI members a glimpse of treasure and history on their March 15 field trip to the Museum of Art/Fort Lauderdale. Including almost 200 works of art, the exhibit includes many pieces on display for the first time. The central focus begins with the history of the original Ancient Basilica, which was commissioned by the Roman Emperor Constantine and built upon the tomb of Saint Peter, the first leader of the church.

Construction of the Renaissance Basilica was commissioned in 1506 A.D. by Pope Julius II to replace the ancient decaying structure. The Renaissance Basilica contains many of the finest works of Michelangelo and Bernini, some of which were featured in Vatican Splendors. The main purpose of the exhibit was to trace the history of the Vatican hierarchy in Rome by revealing its faith-based works. The art shows the succession of the Papal Authority, which spread from the Byzantine and Roman Empires to Constantinople and even to the Asian world in places like Korea.

Dating from Saint Peter in 60 A.D., the portraits of almost 20 popes from Pope Innocent XI through Pope John Paul II to the present reign of Pope Benedict XVI, emphasize this succession. Art lovers especially appreciated an exhibit highlight, which was the full-size restoration cast of the renowned statue known as the Pieta sculpted by Michelangelo in 1499 A.D.

LLI Coming Attractions

Monday, April 11
12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
“President’s Vision for Nova Southeastern University”
The LLI is proud to welcome NSU President and COO George Hanbury, Ph.D., who will detail his vision and future mission for the university.

Tuesday, April 12
12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
“The First Amendment, Part I”
Don’t miss the first of a three-part class with professor Gary Gershman on the constitutional first amendment.

Thursday, April 21
12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
“Andrew Lloyd Webber”
He’s finally back! The LLI has missed seeing professor Bill Adams in our classroom, and we are thrilled to welcome him back with a musically exciting class on the great Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Monday, April 25
12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
“Analyzing Iran”
We last saw professor Dustin Berna in a panel discussion on Afghanistan. Don’t miss professor Berna when he returns to give an in-depth presentation on Iran.

For a complete listing of upcoming events, please see the LLI calendar.
Featured LLI Personalities

Richard Ascher, Member

Richard Ascher taught second graders in elementary school for six years before retiring in the summer of 2010. In October of the same year, Ascher joined the LLI. Our institute was recommended to Ascher by his friend Shelly, a longtime member who introduced him to other members during Welcome Week. Like many members, Ascher lost a treasured companion before discovering new friendships at the LLI. He met his wife Judy in 1973, and they were together for nearly 15 years before Judy acquired muscular dystrophy. A loving husband, he regularly assisted his wife with pool therapy. The treatment extended her life by five years before Judy passed away in 1992.

Currently, Ascher shares a special relationship with Shelly. She is an animal doctor with a passion for pets and a mother of grown children. Ascher, who places a high value on lifelong learning, said, “I have always enjoyed helping people grow in their personal and educational life.”

With 29 years of experience teaching and assisting others, and at 69 years of age, he feels he is just getting started.

Linda Maurice, Director

Linda Maurice has recently been appointed to the position of director of the Lifelong Learning Institute. Having gained a lot of experience coordinating for the LLI, Maurice comes to the job with a real affinity for our community. “Becoming the LLI director has given me a wonderful sense of belonging to an organization that is growing and is also a fun place to be,” she said. “I love getting to know the LLI members, their backgrounds and interests, and then trying to meet those interests in our curriculum.”

Maurice’s career experience was primarily in journalism, marketing, and public relations. More than any other job, Linda says becoming a mother was the most life-changing experience she has had. “Raising my children, learning who they are as individuals, and helping them to start finding their own ways in this world is something that is not only fulfilling as a parent but also instructional,” she explained. “It has helped me to grow as a person.”

The LLI community has also taught her that at all ages, there are unlimited benefits to expanding our knowledge. “Working at the LLI has opened my eyes to a whole new aspect of life—how to pursue a vibrant and exciting adulthood,” she admitted. It is clear that Maurice’s work as a director means a lot to her. “I hope I can work to further enhance the educational and social options and choices available to all of us as we continue to ‘grow-up’.”

Elaine Rinaldi, Instructor

Elaine Rinaldi was a concert pianist in high school and college. She studied at Mannes College in New York City and was determined to overcome obstacles and show the world that a woman could be a conductor. Rinaldi’s philosophy is that wherever you are in life is where you were meant to be, and when life says “no,” you don’t have to agree.

Prior to becoming a conductor, Rinaldi was the chorus master of the Florida Grand Opera Group. She says this experience of working with musicians helped her to understand how to communicate feeling for music. She practiced using gestures to demonstrate the emotional content of the music and indicate what she wanted to hear. She finally achieved her goal in 2005, when she became the first female conductor of the Miami Orchestra at the Adrienne Arsht Center.

Rinaldi is passionate about the impact of classical music and feels good about blazing a trail as a female in this community. She says, “I have made and continue to make a difference.” During the month of March, Rinaldi’s orchestra group in Miami performed at the Miami Seaquarium and presented a free concert of Mozart music in Collins Park. Rinaldi, who is enthusiastic about her experience as an LLI instructor, said “I am always happy to be around people who like to learn.”

The LLI Newsletter is a product of the LLI Members Advisory Committee. Content is provided by Dennis Simunek.

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