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Mystery in Masterpieces event is artfully done

By Erin Graffy

‘**W**hen is a flock of sheep not a flock of sheep?’ This was the question partygoers asked as they ran from painting to painting. It was time once again for Mystery in Masterpieces, the biennial fundraiser of the Women's Board of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

The Women's Board raises funds for the museum's acquisitions, exhibits, special projects and education. That's why the Mystery in Masterpieces event was so appropriate. It showcased the paintings in the exhibit and — what an education! — guests had to carefully study all the paintings in eight galleries and even read the description text. Mystery in Masterpieces is their big fundraiser for the year.

Clues were given for each gallery and attendees had to determine which painting best fit each clue, based on the painting itself or perhaps by reading the accompanying description. One clue referenced a "flock" and had guests racing from painting to painting of the pastoral scenes. We saw some cattle — hmmm, but those don't count. Another painting had only one sheep ... could that constitute a "flock"?

The correct canvas featured a flock — of birds!

The Women's Board Executive Committee was happily out in force, enjoying the antics of the attendees; among them: president Carolyn Williams; incoming president Helene Segal; vice presidents Fran Morrow, Jeanne Fulkerson and Melanie Brewer; treasurer Cindy Steffen; secretary Gayle Cummings; Liz Heitmann; and Lynn Brown.

Mystery in Masterpieces co-chairs Gwen Baker and Kathy Weber had the scene well-organized. Volunteers marked the time in which people turned in their answers. In the case of a tie, the early bird would win.

Puzzle master Jamie Fleming and clue cohorts John Jensen and Gary Krueger left no pun unturned to confuse and amuse the crowd. One clue — "Headwaiter" — referenced Carlo Dolci's portrait of Salome serving up the scalp of John the Baptist. (Groan!)

Our time was up in just one hour! The crowd, including sponsors Katherine Murray-Morse, Neil Eggleton, Sarah Main, and Tom and Catherine Pickett, jostled into the auditorium to learn the answers and the top 10 finalists. Larry Feinberg, CEO of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, thanked the Women's Board for their amazing support and work on behalf of the museum.



From left, back row, Kathy Weber, co-chair of Mystery in Masterpieces; puzzle master Jamie Fleming; and Larry Feinberg, CEO of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. In front are second-place winners Ralph and Irene Wilson with the prize painting, "Golden California Hills," donated by artist Willis Heath.

More of the officers of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art Women's Board include, from left, Jeanne Fulkerson, vice president of development; and Lynn Brown and Liz Heitmann, publicity co-chairs.

ERIN GRAFFY/NEWS-PRESS PHOTOS

Mystery in Masterpieces event is artfully done, Santa Barbara News-Press, continued



Santa Barbara Museum of Art Women's Board executive committee, from left, Carolyn Williams, outgoing president; Cindy Steffen, treasurer; Helene Segal, incoming president; Fran Morrow, membership chair; and Gayle Cummings, secretary.



Generous sponsors helped to make Mystery in Masterpieces a success for the Women's Board of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. From left, Neil Eggleton, Sarah Main, Tom Pickett, Catherine Pickett, all from CURVATURE, and Gwen Baker and Katherine Murray-Morse.

On with the answers, which co-chair Ms. Baker introduced: "This is known as 'cheers and jeers!' "Puzzle master Fleming announced each clue, then showed the appropriate artwork on a screen, accompanied, accordingly, by hurrays or hisses from the crowd.

The top 10 winners/partners were Maggie Gallant and Mike Cochran, Mike and Diane Wondolowski, yours truly, Nancy McGrath, Robin Madden and Dinah Baumgartner, Bob and Mary Eikel, Melanie and James Brewer, Marshall and Gretchen Milligan, Ralph and Irene Wilson, with Carolyn and Don Vogt as top winners of Mystery in Masterpieces. They solved all but three clues correctly and finished early; they were the 20th to turn in their answers and won a framed original oil, "Sunset at Hendry's Beach," by Ralph Waterhouse. An evening artfully done!