Artist Zondile Zondo featured in *Ubuhle Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence*
As you all know, the Bowers Museum is in a time of great transition following the loss of our beloved President, CEO, and my dear friend, Dr. Peter C. Keller, this past fall. A tribute to his legacy of leadership at the Bowers Museum, which spanned more than three decades, is made in the pages to follow. The Museum was also honored to host an intimate celebration of life service, during which his closest friends and family remembered him with tears and appreciation. Furthermore, I want to acknowledge and thank the many generous supporters who donated in Dr. Keller’s memory. These funds are being used to continue his legacy and grow his favorite permanent collection exhibition Spirits & Headhunters: Art of the Pacific Islands.

As we look to the future, I am working closely with the Bowers Museum Board of Governors and our tremendous staff to search for a new President and CEO. While mourning our loss, the entire Bowers Museum Family comes together to embrace the possibilities ahead and we thank you all sincerely for your continued support.

I’m thrilled to see existing plans already laid that will take us successfully forward for years to come. There is so much excitement around our exhibition schedule and upcoming partnerships with world-class institutions, but what I can share in the immediate future are the excellent exhibitions coming this summer.

Please enjoy a sneak peek at Ubuhle Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence as well as California Art Club’s 112th Annual Gold Medal Exhibition in this spring/summer edition of the Passport. I also want to encourage you to bring friends and family for a visit during the final months of Guo Pei: Art of Couture. Iconic designer, Guo Pei, has once again stunned us with her collection of breathtaking gowns, many of which have never been seen off the runway. Don’t miss this featured exhibition, which will adorn our galleries through May 14.

As the Chairwoman of the Board of Governors, it is my pleasure and honor to work alongside the Museum’s Board, staff, and volunteers to continue bringing the world to you, and I’m thrilled to see Dr. Peter Keller’s legacy live on through a shared commitment to excellence amongst us all, just as he would have wanted.

Anne Shih

Cover: Zanele Muholi, Portrait of Zondile Zondo, April 2013. © Zanele Muholi / Ubuhle Artists
The Phantom, the “Man who Never Dies,” first appeared in a comic strip by Lee Falk in 1936, predating Superman by two years. Relying on animal companions and his akimbo Colt .45 pistols, the costumed superhero fights the likes of tyrants and pirates to honor his forebears and protect the fictional African nation of Bangalla.

Between 1973 and 1977 the strip was translated into Tok Pisin and published in Wantok, a weekly periodical distributed throughout much of Papua New Guinea. As a hero who resonated with the island’s practice of ancestor worship, the popularity of the Phantom quickly led to his appearance in advertisements, government campaigns, and more. Around the late 1980s, a period of intertribal war broke out in the Western Highlands Province. Shields that had officially been outlawed by Australian authorities half a century before saw a resurgence, as did the practice of painting designs to intimidate opponents and bestow the wielder with strength. However, instead of being decorated with traditional ancestor forms, many shields were repainted with fearsome depictions of the Phantom.

Phantom War Shield, late 20th Century
Wahgi Valley, probably Jiwaka Province, Papua New Guinea, Melanesia
Wood, rattan and commercial paint
2022.10.1
Bowers Museum Purchase in Memory of Dr. Peter C. Keller

Now on view in Spirits and Headhunters:
Art of the Pacific Islands
IN LOVING MEMORY
OF BOWERS MUSEUM
PRESIDENT & CEO,
DR. PET

“Peter was a remarkable man and with every year that I (and, later, Olivia) got to know him, my respect and admiration for him grew ever stronger. His fierce intelligence, endless curiosity, love of travel, sense of adventure, spirit of exploration, appreciation of beauty, art and history and deep understanding of culture and his passion for sharing all of that with everyone that he met (not to mention all those that visited Bowers) seemed to know no bounds. And that wonderful twinkle in his eyes—when we would share a story or two about far-flung travel. He was hard to beat for places that he had not been to!”

—Chris Rainier, National Geographic Photographer, Founder and CEO Sanctuaries Foundation

“Peter was a loyal friend, an intrepid traveler/explorer, and visionary leader in the museum world. We traveled to the end of the world and back together, and I will miss his intelligence, curiosity, but most of all his friendship. He made an impact on countless lives and his legacy will live on, inspiring many in the years to come.”

—Ed Roski, President and Chairman of Majestic Realty, Co.

“Never stop digging!”

Scan this QR code to read Peter’s full obituary, share a memory, and upload a photo, video, or story.
Flat Peter: Travels with Peter Keller

Continue your travels with Peter by bringing Flat Peter along with you!

- You can follow Peter's adventures with all the friends, family, and colleagues who loved him on Instagram @flat_peter.
- Take a photo like this and tag @flat_peter.
- If you do not have Instagram you can email the photo to flatpeterkeller@gmail.com, and we will post it for you.
- If you would like to create your own Flat Peter please visit flatpeter.com.

“Peter was a perfectionist, a very hands-on boss and a visionary. Most of all, he was a very caring leader, always supporting and treating staff like family. I had the honor and privilege to work for him for almost 23 years and learned so much from him in that time.”
—Thuy Nguyen, Bowers’ Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President

“For over 27 years, Peter has been a partner and family friend, and with his leadership and experience we have brought amazing exhibitions from all around the world to Orange County. Peter, we all miss you!”
—Anne Shih, Bowers Museum Chairwoman of the Board of Governors

“Peter had the unique ability to be everywhere, for everyone, all at once; and that makes the impact of losing him immeasurable. He challenged everyone to think beyond the obvious answers, to raise the bar every day.”
—Kelly Bishop, Bowers’ Vice President of External Affairs

“Like everyone I was stunned and deeply saddened by the news of Peter’s passing. I found it simply impossible to believe. He was so vibrant and alive, and when we last met he was dreaming and scheming and making plans like a school boy. As I mentioned in a note to several of the Bowers team, to keep Peter’s spirit alive, the best thing that we can do is support the museum, his extraordinary creation and living legacy.”
—Wade Davis, Canadian cultural anthropologist, ethnobotanist, author, and photographer

Flat Peter at the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore
Guo Pei
ART OF COUTURE

CLOSING MAY 14
Tickets at bowers.org
Members-Only Opening

A Night of Celebration for TWO incredible exhibitions:

UBUHLE WOMEN
Beadwork and the Art of Independence

112th Annual Gold Medal Exhibition

Friday | July 7, 2023 | 6–9 PM

Look for your invitation in the mail!
UBUHLE WOMEN
Beadwork and the Art of Independence
JUL 1 – AUG 27
HOPE
A MESSAGE FROM BEV GIBSON,
CO-FOUNDER OF UBUHLE: BEAUTIFUL BEADS

At this time, swamped with one inconceivable challenge after another, one would think that you would have to be barking mad to have hope in our beloved country of South Africa. Amidst the blackouts, heat, floods, riots, fuel crisis, inflation, corruption, unemployment, and horrendous crime statistics, we hold on, securely, to the hope that we have. A hope fed by the American public and your exceptional museums who have embraced and celebrated our art, the ndwango.

Our journey from rural Africa to America has not been without its challenges. At the time of the opening at the Smithsonian we didn’t know if we would make the year. Finances were tough. The American public visited the exhibition, they looked and saw the ndwango—the captivating beauty of the beads—they read about the inspiring, unbelievable-yet-so-believable stories of the artists, and they listened as the women of Ubuhle used their ndwango to communicate with the world. The audience needed no translation. The stories portrayed in beadwork were tantalising in their honesty and truth. The art was simply beautiful, its integrity beyond question. I believe it was this honesty that captured America and still does.

Ten years on Ubuhle faces new challenges. As the art grows in prominence, we understand that it will attract people with an agenda of their own. Ubuhle survived the impact of COVID, her exhibitions on hold, her works in storage, her ambition curtailed. We have woken to a new world. A world that is so often about them and us. A world that is poorer for its judgement and division. We need to hold true to our original values. We need to listen once again to our own story, to see it through the eyes of the American audience, as we realise some of our ambitions and hold true to the core of Ubuhle.

In revisiting our exhibition, we are gently reminded, in this chaotic world, of our original values and mission. We are reminded of all of those that have invested in us, our art and story, at a time when there was so much at risk. The Ubuhle story has never been about them and us; it has simply been a journey where people have worked together, combining resources, enabling the artists to achieve an impossible success. As our exhibition opens at your museum, we once again witness the time and effort that people have invested in this exhibition. We need to acknowledge all who have been part of this journey, not least of all you, the American public. Thank you for honouring us by honouring our art and, by doing so, realising our Hope.
112th ANNUAL GOLD MEDAL EXHIBITION
JUL 9 – SEPT 10
This summer, the Bowers Museum and the California Art Club will collaborate for the second consecutive year to present the historic art organization’s highly anticipated 112th Annual Gold Medal Exhibition.

Unveiling on Sunday, July 9, the exhibition is one of the nation’s premier events spotlighting Contemporary-Traditional fine art and will feature approximately 200 paintings and sculptures inspired by subjects from life, created by both nationally renowned artists and rising stars.

During the two-month exhibition, there will be multiple opportunities to meet the exhibiting artists and learn about their inspiration and creative processes that developed the works on view. Related educational programming will delve into the multi-faceted pursuits of representational artists, whose classically trained skills are well suited for telling stories and garnering attention about a topic.

Even before the founding of the California Art Club in 1909, many of its early artists were employing their talents to create not just fine art, but also artwork for a variety of applications that beautified and enhanced everyday life—from fine china and illustrated books to mural paintings, public sculptures and more. Many had their works featured in print advertising—notably those commissioned by railroad executives around the turn of the 20th century with breathtaking landscapes that romanticized the Golden State’s natural beauty to promote passenger travel by train.

Then beginning in the 1920s, with the Golden Age of Hollywood, the lure of Tinseltown attracted a growing number of visual artists to bring stories to life for film, and later for television. As moviemaking technologies evolved, demand for the incredible and diverse talent of representational artists increased exponentially for both live-action and animation projects. Numerous CAC artists have been bestowed with honors for not only their fine art, but also their entertainment work—with awards including Oscars and Emmys.

Be sure to visit the Gold Medal Exhibition page at bowers.org/gold for up-to-date information on the exhibition and its full slate of captivating programming, which will explore the creation of traditional fine art as well as the other contributions for which representational artists have employed their skills and extensive training to beautify our world and stimulate our minds.

The California Art Club’s 112th Annual Gold Medal Exhibition is organized by the California Art Club in conjunction with the Bowers Museum.
Dine at Tangata Restaurant at the Bowers Museum for a full day of memories!

tangatarestaurant.com

Tuesday-Friday 11AM-2PM
Saturday & Sunday 11AM-3PM

Also available for private events
bowersevents@patinagroup.com
1. JC Culture Foundation performs a dragon dance at the Noodle Festival in October.
2. Family and friends gather for a picture after touring the Sacred Realms exhibition.
3. The CCAC gather around their floral arrangements made for the Museum.
4. Our youngest visitors enjoy KUSC Kids Discovery Day at the Bowers in December.
6. Danny Shih, Elizabeth Nitta Maxson, Ginny Davies and Rod Maxson enjoying our lovely 2022 Holiday Celebration.
7. Dr. Laurie Marker with the Cheetah Conservation Fund smiles for a picture with Bowers Museum’s Chairwoman of the Board of Governors, Anne Shih, after her presentation in October.
8. East Meet West II musicians, Bin He and George Ko, along with Chairwoman Anne Shih and Flora Ko (mother of George Ko) enjoy a private reception with Museum Fellows after a successful performance.
9. Dee Dee Anderson along with family members: Heather, Connor, and Kylie Gaughan pose for a picture with “Santa Tim” at our 2022 Holiday Celebration.
10. Xipe Totec Danza Azteca dancers prepare for a performance at the Day of the Dead Festival in November.
11. An ofrenda designed by our Director of Community Programs, Genevieve Southgate, for visitors in honor of Dia de los Muertos.
12. Members explore the newly opened Guo Pei: Art of Couture at our November 2022 Member Opening Night!
Bowers’ Fellows Travel to See the Northern Lights

This past January I had the great pleasure of starting the New Year off with a bang, travelling to see the northern lights (or the aurora borealis) with Bowers’ Fellows. Starting in Oslo, Norway, we took in local cuisine during a private food tour and then finished with a tour of the Munch Museum. It was very different from our home at the Bowers Museum but wonderful, nonetheless.

We then travelled by train and ferry making our way to Bergen, on the coast, where we enjoyed a private city tour and delicious group dinner. It’s always wonderful getting to know our members, and there’s no better way to get to know someone than to share a meal.

Eventually, we made our way to the northernmost point on the European mainland, the North Cape plateau. Rising almost straight out of the Arctic Sea, this was truly a breathtaking experience. The next day we were off to Kirkenes Snowhotel, then an Arctic King Crab Fishing Safari, and finally we finished the night by hunting for the northern lights by snowmobile. It was a wild but rewarding adventure, to say the least.

The final days of our trip were filled with many more one-of-a-kind experiences, including a reindeer safari and snowshoeing under the aurora borealis. I am so grateful to our Fellows, who give at some of the highest levels to the Museum, and I cherish these trips where we bond through our common sense of adventure. Thank you to our Fellows, and all our members, for your ongoing support. And special thanks to our late President, Dr. Peter C. Keller, for planning this trip and to his wife, Signe Keller, for leading it.

—Anne Shih
Chairwoman of the Board of Governors
Bowers’ Fellows play an integral role in our devoted museum community, and their investment truly makes a difference. Join today and help us continue our mission to enrich lives through the world’s finest arts and cultures.

As one of the museum’s strongest advocacy groups, Fellows enjoy a variety of exclusive, one-of-a-kind opportunities all year long. Intimate gatherings following expert-led presentations, elegant receptions celebrating remarkable exhibitions, and international trips of a lifetime are just some of the ways Fellows explore all things rare and exciting.

For further information about the Fellows program and to be notified of upcoming travel opportunities, please contact us at 714.567.3639 or membership@bowers.org.

**Fellows Trip to Madagascar | STAY TUNED!**

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For more info visit [bowers.org](http://bowers.org)  
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**JULY**

**Save the Date for Our Docent Recruitment Event**

Share your spirit and passion for experiencing world cultures—become a Bowers Docent! Join us for an Orientation Recruitment Event Tuesday, July 18, 2023, 10:00-12 noon. For more information or to RSVP:

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Photo by Eric Stoner
TIFFETS

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*Must be accompanied by a paying adult
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