

ASIAN ART MUSEUM  
Chong-Moon Lee Center  
for Asian Art & Culture  
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**Asian**

**News**



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**PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

**The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia: A New Beginning**

SAN FRANCISCO, July 18, 2013—The Asian Art Museum presents a variety of public programs to accompany the exhibition *The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia: A New Beginning*, on view Aug. 9–Sept. 22, 2013. Highlights include a panel discussion with John Curtis, keeper at the Department of the Middle East, British Museum; a lecture on new discoveries of the Cyrus Cylinder by renowned archaeologist David Stronach; and an evening event focused on the Cyrus Cylinder with contemporary artist Ala Ebtekar.

**Cyrus the Great of Persia: Seen through the Art & Architecture of His Capital, Pasargadae**

Saturday, Aug. 3, 2–3:30 p.m.

Education Studios, \$15 (does not include museum admission); register at [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org)

In 539 BCE Cyrus the Great, an exceptional ruler, took peaceful possession of Babylon—a remarkable event that is recorded in both the Babylonian Chronicles and on the Cyrus Cylinder. Dr. Sabrina Maras supplements what is known of one of the most interesting rulers of the ancient world through a look at the elegant art and architecture of his capital and last resting place, Pasargadae. Co-presented with the Society for Asian Art.

**Summer Art Activity**

Daily, Aug. 9–Sept. 1, noon–4 p.m.

North Court, free with museum admission

Make art inspired by exhibition *The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia: A New Beginning*.

**The Cyrus Cylinder: Uses, Misuses, and Contemporary Iran**

Friday, Aug. 9, 3–5 p.m.

Samsung Hall, \$20 for museum and Asia Society members, \$25 non-members (ticket includes museum admission); advance tickets only purchased at

<https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=3afd75>

MORE

Jay Xu, director of the Asian Art Museum, moderates a panel discussion featuring Trita Parsi, Dr. Abbas Milani and others in a conversation about the Cyrus Cylinder and its role in shaping the narrative of Iran, from ancient Persia to the present. John Curtis, keeper at the Department of the Middle East, British Museum, provides the keynote address. Co-presented with Asia Society, Northern California.

### **The King Cyrus Symphonic Suite: From Birth to the Proclamation of Human Rights**

Saturday, Aug. 10, 7–10 p.m.

Nob Hill Masonic Center, \$38–\$253; purchase tickets at [www.livenation.com/venues/14758](http://www.livenation.com/venues/14758)

The Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA) is proud to announce its presentation of *The King Cyrus Symphonic Suite: From Birth to the Proclamation of Human Rights* for a one-night-only world premiere performance on Aug. 10, 2013, at 7 p.m. This landmark musical event is presented in association with the Asian Art Museum's special exhibition, *The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia: A New Beginning*.

Composed and conducted by Maestro Loris Tjeknavorian and performed by the San Francisco Philharmonic Orchestra—a specially assembled 77 piece orchestra—the symphonic suite features performances by soprano Raeeqa Shehabi-Yaghmai, pianist Tara Kamangar, with narration performed by Houshang Touzie. The King Cyrus Symphonic Suite provides the listener with a musical portrait of King Cyrus. Maestro Tjeknavorian composed the first version of the King Cyrus Symphonic suite in 1972 for the 2,500th anniversary celebration of the Iranian empire. It was performed in the presence of kings, queens and heads of state from across the world at the ancient Persian city of Persepolis. A few years ago, he revised and expanded the composition into a symphonic suite in three movements, portraying important episodes in the life of Cyrus the Great based on writings by Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon.

### **Teacher Workshop**

#### **The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia**

Saturday, Aug. 10, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Museum-wide, \$10 (includes museum admission); pre-registration required at <http://education.asianart.org/>

Educators dive into the world of Ancient Persia and the legacy of Cyrus the Great through a talk by historian Dr. Touraj Daryaee and a tour of the special exhibition *The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia: A New Beginning*. The workshop includes a continental breakfast and curriculum materials.

### **Cyrus the Great in Western Imagination**

Friday, Aug. 16, 10:30 a.m.–noon

Samsung Hall, \$15 (does not include museum admission); register at [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org)

Asian Art Museum chief curator Forrest McGill discusses Cyrus—as he is shown in the Bible, medieval art, 18th-century England and America, and modern graphic novels, as

well as shown in Handel's *Belshazzar*, of which Cyrus is the hero. The talk considers how Cyrus has been seen in popular imagination and why Handel would choose this subject in mid-eighteenth-century England. Co-presented with the Society for Asian Art.

### **New Light on the Cyrus Cylinder**

Sunday, Sept. 8, 2–3:30 p.m.

Samsung Hall, free with museum admission; register at [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org)

New discoveries related to the Cyrus Cylinder continue to be made more than 130 years after its discovery in the ruins of Babylon in 1879. The ongoing discoveries shed fresh light on the character and concerns of Cyrus. Professor David Stronach, who has worked on and studied this archaeological site, will explore the gardens and monuments of Cyrus. He will also discuss the Oxus Treasure, focusing on a gold armlet in the exhibition, which exemplifies the rare quality of Achaemenid Persian jewelry from the 6th to 4th centuries BCE.

David Stronach is professor emeritus of Near East Studies at UC Berkeley. A renowned archaeologist specializing in ancient Iran and Iraq, he is a leading expert on Pasargadae, the capital city of Cyrus. Co-presented by the Society for Asian Art.

### **Cylindr.us with Artist Ala Ebtekar**

#### **Part of Artists Drawing Club**

Thursday, Sept. 12, 6:30–9 p.m.

Samsung Hall, free with museum admission

Artist Ala Ebtekar will work with a number of collaborators to present Cylindr.us, a night of events surrounding *The Cyrus Cylinder* exhibition and incorporating performances, readings and art in the museum. The night draws connections between the legacy of this ancient object and the contemporary moment.

About the Artists Drawing Club: Each month, this new series invites a local contemporary artist to use the museum as a project platform—drawing inspiration from the museum's offerings to direct a unique experience for the visitor. The Artists Drawing Club provides a new perspective on the museum, its collection and the world around us through the unique outlooks of eight contemporary artists.

### **SPECIAL EXHIBITION DOCENT-LED TOURS**

Daily starting Saturday, Aug. 10–Sunday, Sept. 22 (except Sunday, Sept. 1), at 1:30 p.m. Approx. 30 minutes. Space is limited to 10 people; pre-registration is required. Sign-up in advance the day of at the Information Desk; no online or telephone reservations can be accepted. Free with exhibition admission. Meet at the Information Desk for all tours.

### **EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION**

This exhibition was organized by the British Museum in partnership with the Iran Heritage Foundation and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. The exhibition at the Asian Art Museum is generously supported by Tina and Hamid Moghadam, Bitra Daryabari and Dr. Reza Malek in collaboration with the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans.

**ABOUT THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM**

The Asian Art Museum—Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture is one of San Francisco's premier arts institutions and home to a world-renowned collection of more than 18,000 Asian art treasures spanning 6,000 years of history. Through rich art experiences, centered on historic and contemporary artworks, the Asian Art Museum unlocks the past for visitors, bringing it to life while serving as a catalyst for new art, new creativity and new thinking.

Information: 415.581.3500 or [www.asianart.org](http://www.asianart.org)

Location: 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Hours: The museum is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. From February through September, hours are extended on Thursdays until 9 p.m. Closed Mondays, as well as New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

General Admission: FREE for museum members, \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors (65+), college students with ID, and youths (13–17). FREE for children under 12 and SFUSD students with ID. Admission on Thursdays after 5 p.m. is \$5 for all visitors (except those under 12, SFUSD students, and museum members, who are always admitted FREE). Admission is FREE to all on Target First Free Sundays (the first Sunday of every month). A surcharge may apply for admission to special exhibitions.

Access: The Asian Art Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information regarding access: 415.581.3598; TDD: 415.861.2035.

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