



Searching for truth and beauty, preaching through the transforming power of the arts  
Winter 2012 E-Newsletter Volume XIV No. 1  
[www.DIArts.org](http://www.DIArts.org)

🔑 **CALIFORNIA HERE WE COME!** We West Coasters welcome you back home to the birthplace of DIA. Get your sunscreen out, sharpen up your imaginations and get yourself ready to have your life turned upside down, your horizons widened, and your senses tuned to experience the wisdom of the animals.

Our Keynote Speaker, **Janice McLaughlin, MM**, will be our guide, or in the words of the Lion King, "*Rafiki*" - *the Wisdom Keeper*.

### **DIA's 16<sup>th</sup> Gathering @St. Albert Priory in Oakland California**

(back to DIA's "Birthplace" 16 years ago)

**Save the Date**  
**July 25-28, 2012**



We need your response **ASAP by the week of Feb. 5th** to help complete our planning. Check your response below; cut and paste it in an email to Irene Mary Diones OP at: [irenemd@msjdominicans.org](mailto:irenemd@msjdominicans.org)

-OR- call her at: 510-657-2468 and leave a message.

Just paste the form below into the e-mail to Irene Mary.

☐ YES, I'm coming for sure

☐ YES, I'm coming, but commuting

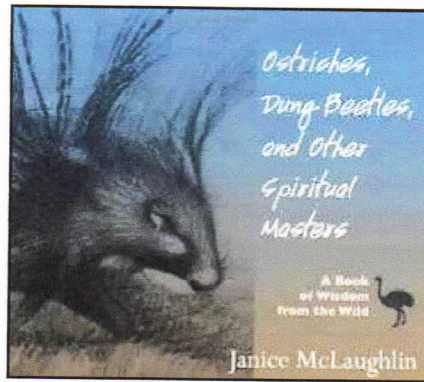
☐ NO, I am not coming

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS ARE:** Irene Mary Diones OP/Chair,  
Joeann Daley OP/Board Liaison, Kathy Rhody OPA & Carol O' Connor OPA/Members- at-large.  
*We are looking for more volunteers to be on the planning commission who can assist from afar if need be. Please contact Irene Mary Diones OP if you can help out.*

## Arts and Culture - Teachers and Wisdom: 2012 Gathering Theme

Have you ever had an experience when you felt your life turned upside down; when clearly your gifts were challenged by being “uprooted from the familiar and comfortable, separated from families and culture, food and language, and even familiar forms of prayer — then transformed into a new people with openness, humility, and willingness to learn?” Well, you need to meet, hear, and be with Janice McLaughlin, M.M. president of the Maryknoll Sisters, whose life continues to turn upside down since she lived and missioned “from the slums of Nairobi, to a prison-cell in war-torn Rhodesia, to refugees camps in the forests of Mozambique.” It was from the Shona people of Zimbabwe that Janice learned and experienced one of her favorite names for God: *Chipindijure, The One Who Turns Things Upside Down*. The word comes from *kipiduka* meaning “uprooted.”

The God who turns things upside down kept opening her eyes throughout forty years among the courageous, suffering people of Africa. It was in living the life of these people, she claims, that the Arts and Culture became her best teachers. “Drama, film, fiction, poetry, visual arts, music, and

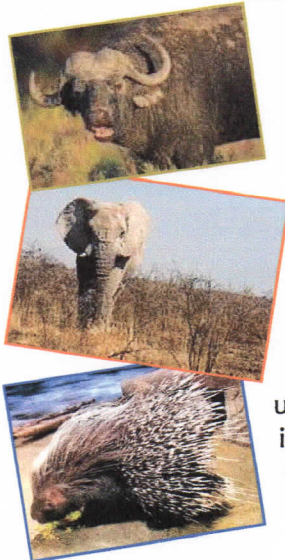


dance became my guides. Learning African dances, ancient musical rhythm and its religious roots, studying proverbs and folk tales that contain nuggets of local

wisdom embedded in cultural myth and symbols — all these and other cultural expressions continue to enrich me and my insights about our lives in mission. . . .”

As missionary and artist, Janice’s life work exemplifies the position summed up in Karen Armstrong’s *The Case for God*, “Religion’s task, closely allied to that of art, is to help us live creatively, peacefully, and even joyously with realities for which there are no easy explanations and with problems that we cannot solve.” (pp. 318, 332).

A hint of Janice’s witty and whimsical style can be found in her popular book: *Ostriches, Dung Beetles, and Other Spiritual Masters: A Book of Wisdom from the Wild*. In this volume she combines spiritual insights from Scripture with valuable lessons learned from the traits and behavior of creatures who, according to one enthusiastic reviewer, can “bring us many blessings if we are open to the invitation to transformation, or they can make us miserable if we resist.”



**You don’t want to miss the examples of *Responsible Leadership* by a Buffalo, or of *Communication and Community* by an Elephant, or of *Justice* by a Crested Porcupine.**



## A letter to Membership from Board Chair, Mary Fran Gorman OP



**D**ominican Artists –  
Who are we?  
What do we want to be?  
What can we become?

Dear DIA Members,

Happy New Year from the DIA Board!  
May the year 2012 bring you an abundance of creative blessings, good health to enjoy them and the gift of peace.

Things are well on the way for this summer's Gathering in Oakland. Joëann Daley OP and her team have great plans. It will be a wonderful opportunity to dream, create and preach. I know that money is tight for all of us. But I would encourage you to find a way to come and join us in California from July 25 to July 28. As you can tell from this newsletter, it is not to be missed. Please let Irene Mary Diones know by the week of February 5th if you are attending.

Each year, we receive reminders that our membership dues are paid in January. Did you ever wonder how those monies are used? They cover the needs that make the Dominican Institute for the Arts a viable institution:

- Because we are a national (actually, an international) board, travel and phone costs are a part of the expenses. We look for places for Board meetings that are central and that offer some Dominican support for meetings outside the Gathering.

- We have a newsletter that comes out quarterly on E-mail and snail mail for those without a computer.

- Our website, available to everyone, is another source of information and cost. It is also a source for new members to our Dominican organization. Your membership fee supports those as well.

- The annual Gathering is supposed to pay for itself and generate some extra revenue when possible through the auction/raffle. Your membership fees help us with the early planning stages before registrations begin to flow in.

The original membership fee has always been \$35. About thirteen years ago \$35 seemed like a lot. Today the Board members are finding it is not enough to meet the fiscal needs of DIA. In order to meet those needs, we are raising the membership fee to \$50. This will be hard for all of us. But it must be done. If it helps any, the raise is about one dollar per year of DIA's existence. This is the first time the membership dues have been adjusted. We ask that the membership fee be paid this month, in January if possible. Our budgets were set months ago and we will need to do some shuffling to pay this fee. In this time of economic challenge, we invite you to accept our *optional and individual payment plan* for your DIA membership and/or Gathering registration fee. If you are interested in paying your dues and fees over time, please contact Jill Poehlman OPA at 630.315.4022 or [jpoehlman@wowway.com](mailto:jpoehlman@wowway.com)

**Make your check out to DIA & mail to:  
Jill Poehlman OPA 1755 Arlington Lane  
Glendale Heights, IL 60139**

The Board of DIA works for you! We want to know what you need and want. But what can you offer that will help keep our organization vibrant, active and growing? Here are some ideas:

⊙ Have you looked at the DIA website lately? Along with all the items that Carol O'Connor, OPA, has listed there is still something missing ... You! There is a place to tell about your art, your love of art and how art helps you preach. There is a place for your name and your information so that we can share with others in the same medium or location. If you've had a show of your work lately, send Carol pictures and information. As capable as she is, she cannot read minds.

⊙ You're reading the Newsletter right now. Do you or someone you know have something you can share with all of us? It is ingrained in us to believe that our accomplishments, our work and our prayer are not important enough to share with everyone. My day will be made when Jude Bloch OP calls me to say we ran out of room in the Newsletter!

⊙ As this new year begins, I would challenge all of us who are members to begin to consider dreaming, visioning ways to make our mission statement a living document.

***Searching for truth and beauty,  
preaching through the transforming  
power of the arts.***

Like all mission statements, it both challenges us and offers us hope.

⊙ How do we, you and I, encourage other Dominicans- Friars, Sisters, Nuns, Associates and Lay Dominicans to become members?

⊙ How do we, you and I, re-contact members who have not been at Gatherings in the past several years?

⊙ Would we be willing to open DIA membership to other Dominican-related

people from our sponsored institutions? Though it is not currently in our constitutions, we can make a constitutional amendment if you the membership choose.

⊙ I would ask you to consider what DIA is for you. For me it is more than a yearly gathering. It is a network of people who love and preach with and through art. DIA takes me out of the barn where my studio is and reminds me there is a world out there that can encounter Christ through art, my art, your art. Best of all it is not something that I have to do alone. Collaboration is an area we all need to work on.

⊙ Membership is the responsibility of all members. Have you invited someone to DIA? Have you contacted others in the organization, especially those you know who missed Gatherings? (Or if you missed the Gathering have you talked to those who were there?) Membership is the responsibility of us all.

The 2012 Gathering is being held in Oakland, CA making it feasible this year for artists from the West Coast to attend. With the possibility of fewer members from the East/Midwest attending and fixed costs remaining fixed, the board is making an appeal for contribute of any amount to defray the 2012 Gathering costs. Such an offering supports the common good of the DIA and is most appreciated. Perhaps you have friends or relatives who are supporters of the arts who would enjoy assisting us. Contributions can be sent to Jill Poehlman.

The topics above all entail a big step, but as a grassroots organization it is how we have always grown. Think about and talk about these topics, and send your opinions to the board. We want to hear from you!

Mary Fran Gorman OP –Board Chair  
[mfgop@yahoo.com](mailto:mfgop@yahoo.com)

Board members' emails are listed on the last page of our newsletter. Please contact us soon!





## Montesinos 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update

### 500th Anniversary of Dominican

### Preaching in the Americas

***Check out our webpage on Domlife for Papers on history and current issues regarding the Montesinos Anniversary.***

#### **New DVDs**

Brian Pierce, OP and Jim Barnett, OP presented a re-enactment of the Montesinos Homily and provided a commentary. It is now available on DVD. Order form is attached to this newsletter.

-The DVD of the November 21<sup>st</sup> Webcast, ***The 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Dominican Preaching in the Americas*** is now available from The Center Shop in Sparkill, NY through Sr. Ann Eigenbauer, OP. Order form is attached to this mailing.

#### **Schedule the Play in the Midwest**

Alma College's (Alma, MI) Drama Department is willing to perform *The Controversy of Valladolid* at your Motherhouse or College during the

months of January through March, 2012. To schedule this event, contact: Dr. Dana Aspinall at [aspinall@alma.edu](mailto:aspinall@alma.edu) Phone: 989-463-7269.

The play takes place after Europeans invaded the land, destroyed the culture, plundered natural resources and subjected thousands of people to servitude, torture and death. The church agonized over its question of the indigenous peoples: Are they human? Are they children of God? Based on a Spanish Papal Tribunal of 1550 this drama reveals the fate of millions of American natives by bringing to light the real-life debates whose outcomes are still felt today.

#### **Webcast**

Thank you so much for participating in the Webcast on November 21<sup>st</sup>. We had 400 connections live from as far as Peru and Australia and within a week there were 2000 requests to watch it on a later date. We realize that there is great interest and energy among the Dominican Family to hear about our history and current commitments to justice. Your emails and calls have been so encouraging.

#### ***Anniversary Steering Committee:***

*Toni Harris OP, Chuck Dahm OP, Mary Sue Kennedy OP, Margaret Mayce OP, Dusty Farnan OP, Trish Buxton OPA and Lucianne Siers OP*



## DVD ORDER FORM

-**Webcast**, 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Dominican Preaching in the Americas

-**Reenactment** of Montesinos Homily  
by Jim Barnett, OP and Brian Pierce, OP

.....

TO BE SENT TO :

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**COST:** \$12.00 per DVD (plus \$5 shipping and handling)

	Number of Copies	Cost
DVD of Webcast	_____	_____
DVD of Montesinos Homily	_____	_____
Total Cost enclosed		_____

**Please mail your check with the Order Form to:**

Checks to made out to - The Center Gift Shop

And mail it with this order form to:

175 Rt. 340

Sparkill, New York 10976

Manager: Ann Eigenbauer, OP

[aeigenbauer@sparkill.org](mailto:aeigenbauer@sparkill.org)

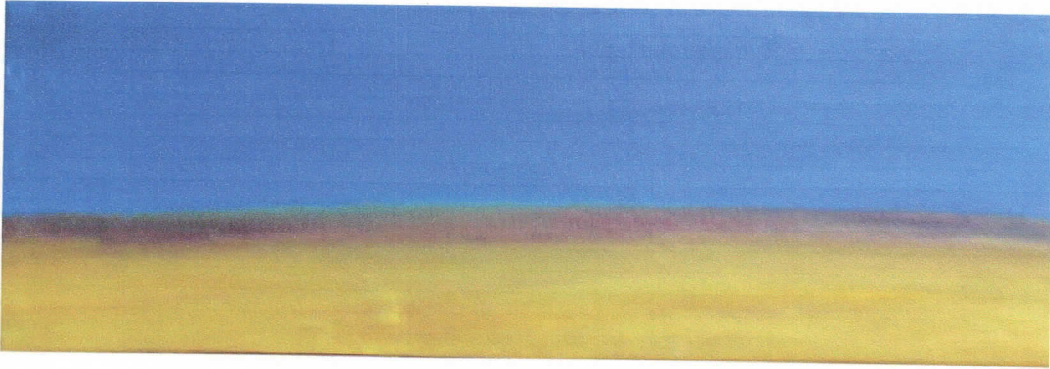
sranneny@aol.com



## FEATURE: The Artist as Preacher

### Acrylic Triptych: At the Beach

Barbara Schwarz



“Abstract art creates a visual silence for our contemplation.”

Mark Rothko

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## Wise Words from the Artists

 To my surprise,  
I had not just doodled,  
I had prayed.

 "Pray as you can, not as you cannot,"  
are the liberating words of  
nineteenth-century Catholic priest  
and theologian Dom John Chapman.  
Drawing with pen and markers is the  
way I can pray right now.

 Another . . . characteristic  
of praying in color is that it is visual and colorful.  
No words are necessary.  
Even when verbal prayer bubbles up,  
the combination of words and images  
make a lasting impression  
that the alphabet alone cannot.

 If prayer is the way humans  
rap on the door of the Creator,  
then colored markers are my brass knocker.

 Drawing is half the prayer,  
the other half is transporting the visual memories  
or actual images with you  
to pray throughout the day.

Quotations taken from Praying in Color - Drawing a New Path to God  
by Sybil MacBeth