

Doug Simay narrative Arts CV January 2009:

Over 5 years ago, I retired from the practice of medicine. For 23 years I was a family practitioner in La Jolla. In addition, in the first 13 years of my medical career I practiced emergency medicine at Paradise Valley Hospital in a high trauma, high acuity setting.

I started collecting art in 1978. My interest has always been in art of this region, meaning San Diego, Orange, and Los Angeles counties. Almost all the works I have collected I bought in the year of their production. I also have a personal relationship with most of the artists who are in my collection. Finally, I have very close relationships with most of the art dealers in Southern California. I have a 30 year history of being very active in the contemporary art scene of Southern California.

My collection currently numbers around 500 pieces of art. Again, this collection is very strictly a Southern California regional collection. I collect painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, and photographic monographs. I have a very significant and comprehensive modernist and contemporary art library.

Many works in the collection have traveled worldwide and have been exhibited extensively both publicly and privately. As one of San Diego's more recognized collectors of contemporary art, I have been asked to speak publicly over the years about the specifics of this collection. In addition, I have been interviewed about the process of collecting art and the way in which relationships with artists, dealers and collectors are built over the years.

Concurrently with practicing medicine and being a very active art collector, I have developed and managed endeavors in downtown San Diego with the primary goal of fostering the visual arts in San Diego. Since 1982, I have had a physical presence at the corner of 9th and G Streets downtown.

For the initial three or four years I developed a shared gallery space with the art dealer Mark Quint (now of La Jolla). That was followed for 10 years by Java Coffeehouse Gallery at the southwest corner of 9th and G streets. At Java we introduced European-style café society to San Diego. Java is considered a progenitor of the contemporary coffeehouse scene in San Diego. Through Java I also introduced at least 45 artists to the San Diego arts community.

After Java, I converted that space into a 4000 square foot contemporary art gallery called Simayspace. For five years, I regularly presented three simultaneous solo exhibitions, predominately showing Southern California contemporary artists, architects, and designers.

In 1999 along with two other partners, we moved across G Street to the northwest corner where we established and developed the Art Academy of San Diego. The Academy is an avocational art school where our faculty teach hands-on art making in painting, drawing, sculpture, stained glass and printmaking. In the center of the Academy is Simayspace Gallery which I curated and managed with the sole purpose of presenting contemporary visual art exhibitions by Southern California regional artists. These exhibitions have been met with significant critical response and appreciation. This endeavor has just downsized to its educational core with Stuart Burton carrying on without me. As of January 2009 I am totally retired.

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I travel extensively and look at more art than any other person I have ever met. It would be fair to say that, for me, every day is an art day. What I most enjoy now is looking at art and then reflecting on its purpose and significance. I find that writing about art fulfills a wonderful closure of the circle of my understand of art and its history. The next 30 years of my experience in the arts will be very different from the last 30 years. They will be no less provocative nor challenging.

Doug Simay
1/27/2009