

# The Post Serial

Volunteer Newsletter of Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens

Volume 22, Issue 2

Spring 2016



*Estella Chung, Curator of American Material Culture & Historian*

This June, Hillwood will host *Deco Japan* in two spaces—the dacha and the Adirondack building. Japanese art deco celebrates upbeat modernity, nightlife, Hollywood movies, and consumer culture. Stage set motifs, urban water fountains, and a multitude of leggy dancing girls embellished Japanese textiles, home décor, and posters. Dating from 1920 to 1945, these visually compelling objects exhibited a new artistic direction intermingling with the progressive art movements of futurism, expressionism, cubism, and constructivism. Symmetry, geometric forms, sleek shapes, and the luminous colors of the deco mode penetrated every artistic field.

A significant theme throughout *Deco Japan* is the modern woman. Perhaps the “flapper” or the “modern girl” are the most widely known. However, the modern girl who frequented dance halls was just one incarnation of the various types of women venturing the streets of Tokyo and major cities such as Paris and New York. Along with her were schoolgirls, striking textile workers, suffragists, and educated housewives. This context of women’s history is very much aligned with the realm that Marjorie Post encountered. In one instance Post was a suffragist along-side other like-minded women, and in another a well-heeled philanthropist. She was many incarnations of the modern woman, and also a devoted collector of decorative art. *Deco Japan* presents many exquisite examples of decorative art.



*“Manners of Beauties of Shōwa”*

Imagine perfect origami “paper” cranes “folded” in shiny silver. Or, think of a “traditional” kimono with bold, striking modern patterns. As the Hillwood curator for this traveling exhibition, I had the pleasure to see how the Japanese interpreted the deco mode and transformed it through their own rich art and craft traditions. And with our exhibition team, we had the gratification of planning how to display these unique pieces in two galleries. The installations are accompanied by short in-gallery films including period news reels of Tokyo, and a few highly entertaining movie clips from both American and Japanese cinema.



*Pair of Ornaments of Origami Cranes*

You will be happy to learn our team designed *Deco Japan* to be experienced in any order. Our guests can start at either the dacha or Adirondack building. And with the Japanese subject matter, a stroll through our Japanese-style garden is appropriate. For the first time, there will be banners along the pathway between the dacha and Adirondack building to help visitors find both exhibition locations. I hope you will follow the banners as well to enjoy our latest exhibition opening on June 11. To learn more, visit the [Deco Japan exhibition page](#) on Hillwood’s website.

## **SAVE THE DATE: JUNE GALA**

*Judith Paska, Director of Development*

Hillwood's annual gala will be held on the evening of June 7. This year's [gala](#) will feature the first preview of our new exhibition, *Deco Japan*, and celebrates the swinging fun of the roaring twenties along with the elegance of Japanese culture. The Ikebana Society of Washington has graciously agreed to create

arrangements to display at the cocktail hour, where some 340 guests will enjoy jazz, '20s style signature cocktails, and passed hors d'oeuvres. Guests will then proceed to the Lunar Lawn for a seated three-course meal where Hillwood's Japanese-style garden will be aglow with special lanterns.



*Save the Date Postcard for June 7 Gala*

Tickets for the evening are \$350 or \$1,000 per person with tables of ten available at \$10,000 and \$15,000. Additional table and ticket packages are available at the following levels: \$2,000, \$4,000 and \$6,000. Please contact Adrienne Starr in the Development Office at 202.243.3974 or [astarr@hillwoodmuseum.org](mailto:astarr@hillwoodmuseum.org).

His Excellency Kenichiro Sasae, Ambassador of Japan to the United States serves as Honorary Chair along with Co-Chairs Jocelyn Linke, Mark Lowham, and Joan Mulcahy.

## HILLWOOD HAPPENINGS

All Hillwood volunteers are invited to take advantage of the educational offerings listed below.

### Coming Soon: Volunteer Events Posted on Hillwood's Website

We are thrilled to announce that all volunteer happenings will soon be listed via the [calendar page](#) on Hillwood's main website. This new feature will allow volunteers to view all Hillwood's programming, such as public lectures, member events, and volunteer trainings, in one easy location.

Events/programs can be searched on the calendar page by either selecting a date on the calendar or "find by type" filter found on the left hand side of the screen.

**Please register in advance:** on the sign-up sheets on the clipboard in the Horticulture Building hallway or contact Bill Johnson at (202) 243-3927 or [bjohnson@HillwoodMuseum.org](mailto:bjohnson@HillwoodMuseum.org). Advance registration is not necessary for continuing education events in the visitor center theater unless otherwise noted.

### A Day of Horticulture April 18 (Monday), 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Visitor Center Theater

We will have Carol Ottesen, garden writer, and Holly Shimizu, former executive director of the U.S. Botanic Garden as our guest speakers. Members of the horticulture staff will also be presenting on topics about the plants at Hillwood.

### Shrub Tour April 19, 20 & 21 (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday), 12 Noon

Join Drew Asbury, Head Grower, for a walk in the gardens. The one-hour tour will focus on Hillwood's collection of flowering shrubs planted throughout the property. All volunteers are invited to attend. Meet in the horticulture break room.

### Plant ID Walk May 12 (Thursday), 9 a.m.

The May plant walk will have an emphasis on the flowering shrubs in the garden as well as other flowering plants. Meet in the horticulture break room.

### Volunteer Appreciation Reception May 16 (Monday), 5 – 7 p.m.

Please join your fellow volunteers and Hillwood staff for the annual spring reception in your honor on Monday, May 16. You will receive an online invitation via Paperless Post this week. Please watch your inbox for the invitation. We are looking forward to toasting you next month!

### Mixed Container Workshop May 17 (Tuesday), 10:30 a.m.

Head gardener, Jessica Bonilla, will provide inspiration to help you create your own patio container of summer-flowering plants. A \$15 fee covers the cost of materials. The session is limited to 10 participants; please meet in the horticulture break room.

### Hanging-Basket Workshop May 18 (Wednesday), 10:30 a.m.

Join Drew Asbury, head grower, in the greenhouse workroom to create your own summer-flowering hanging basket. There will be a selection of trailing foliage and flowering plants. A \$15 fee covers the cost of materials. The session is limited to 10 participants; please meet in the Greenhouse workroom.

### Rose Garden Tour Depending on the bloom time: Last week of May or First week of June, 12 noon

Meet Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, in the rose garden for a short tour and lecture. The tour will start at noon on Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. All volunteers are welcome to join and share the beauty of the roses. We will send an e-mail closer to the date to let you know when the roses will be at peak.

## **Deco Japan**

**June 13 (Monday), 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.**

Volunteers are invited to join exhibition curator Estella Chung for a presentation on Hillwood's new exhibition *Japan Deco: 1920-1945*. Following the lecture, Estella will be available on-station in the Adirondack building to answer questions.

## **Plant ID Walk**

**June 14 (Tuesday), 9 a.m.**

In this session, we will focus on the plants in and around the Adirondack building, including many native plants. Meet in the horticulture break room.

## **NEW MEMBERSHIP PRICING**

*Kara Hershorin, Membership & Development Operations Manager*

Hillwood has undergone many exciting changes in recent years, including improvements to the estate and gardens, record-setting attendance, and a rapidly growing base of supporters with more than 3,600 member households. This year, Hillwood embarks on enhancements to the visitor center and museum shop that will directly and favorably impact our visitors' experience of the estate. We are offering three exciting special exhibitions beautifully contextualized through a range of programs and activities for young people and adults.

Membership fees have increased modestly for the first time in seven years. These adjusted prices will help keep the member experience extraordinary, while at the same time ensuring that necessary funds are in place to sustain Hillwood's world-renowned collections, gardens, special exhibitions, and a wide range of public and educational programs. Listed below is benefit information for the Individual, Family and Contributor membership levels along with the new prices.

### **All Members Receive**

- Free admission to visit the estate during regular operating hours
- Four complimentary guest passes

- Opportunity to reserve docent-led tours of the Mansion
- 10% discount in the Museum Shop, plus an additional 10% discount the first Saturday of every month
- Sunday Dog Walks exclusively for members and their four-legged friends
- Reduced pricing on public programs and festivals
- Invitations to member-only events

### **INDIVIDUAL | \$60**

- Includes the standard membership benefits for one adult

### **FAMILY | \$85**

- Includes the standard membership benefits for one household, including children (under the age of 18)

### **CONTRIBUTOR | \$150**

- Includes the standard membership benefits for one household
- Two additional guest passes per year (6 total)
- Invitations to special member events and receptions throughout the year

\*Upper level memberships (\$250+) have remained the same.

## **NEW LOOK FOR THE POST SERIAL & VOLUNTEER WEBSITE**

In the previous issue, we announced that a new look and format will be coming soon to *The Post Serial* using an email-based platform, Wordfly. The volunteer website will also be receiving a fresh, new look in the coming months as well. These new changes will provide a cleaner, streamlined look with an easy-to-view layout both on your desktop and mobile devices. We hope the new formats will enhance your volunteer experience by creating a more efficient and dynamic means of communication.

We will notify volunteers when the new formats are ready to launch – stay tuned!



## MUSEUM SHOP NEWS

*Lauren Salazar, Head of Merchandising*

I'm pleased to announce the arrival of two new sales staff. Masha Schildkraut is Russian by birth, and speaks both Russian and German fluently. She is a museum fan, and a long-time fan of Hillwood, in particular. She has 10-years of work experience in museums and arts organizations, including three years at Dumbarton House Historic Museum. Nina Kaull is also an enthusiastic fan of Hillwood, and comes to us with experience as varied as a real estate house-stager, an antique store owner, and sales associate at the Preservation Society of Newport, Newport, RI. We're thrilled to have both Masha and Nina join our museum shop team. Please stop by and welcome them to Hillwood.

As visitation increases for the spring, we see new and returning volunteers in the Museum Shop. I'd like to remind everyone that the shop extends a 20% discount to volunteers and their families. As happy as we are to see you, and as hard as we try, we don't always know your names or faces. So please identify yourself as a volunteer when you bring merchandise to the register so we can make sure you receive your discount. And please note that your discount is solely for you and your family, and may not be extended to friends and other guests.

The museum shop is stocked up with gifts, apparel and books with more spring merchandise arriving daily. Some of my favorites include...



*Louis Sherry Truffles – perfect for Mothers' Day*



*Christian Lacroix stationery*

Hillwood's upcoming exhibition, *Deco Japan*, opens on June 11. Look for gifts, books, apparel and accessories related to Art Deco and Japan, including this Kutani porcelain vase.



*Kutani porcelain vase*

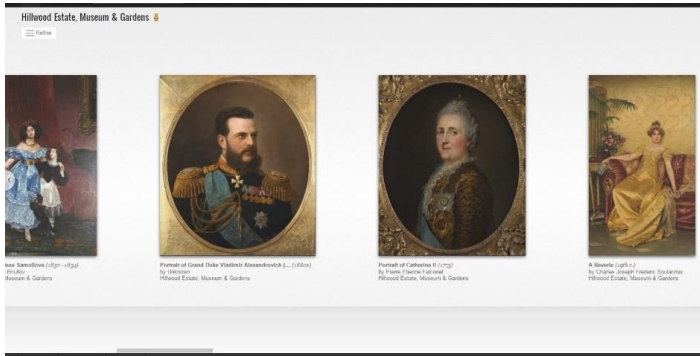
### **Upcoming Events: May 20 - 22 Spring Pop-Up Shop Visitor Center Second Floor**

Look for fresh, new styles in apparel, bags and other gifts.

### **NEW ULTRA-HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES**

*Jaime McCurry, Digital Assets Librarian*

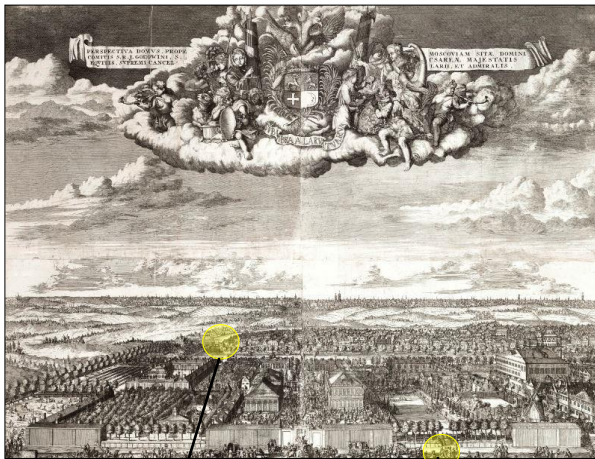
In August of 2015, a team from the Google Cultural Institute visited Hillwood to photograph select paintings in the collection in ultra-high resolution. During this photography shoot, a total of 15 works of art were captured. The resulting digital images, similar in quality to Hillwood's gigapixel capture of Makovsky's [A Boyar Wedding Feast](#) (featured prominently in the *Konstantin Makovsky: The Tsar's Painter* exhibition and publication) are now available on [Hillwood's Google Art Project site](#).



A screenshot of Hillwood’s new offerings on the Google Art Project website

Captured pieces include recent acquisition [Portrait of Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich](#), [Portrait of Catherine II](#) by Pierre Etienne Falconet, a stunning (never-before-seen) eighteenth-century engraving of [Russian Capital Moscow](#) from the Hillwood Archives & Special Collections, and [Portrait of Countess Samoilova](#).

Enjoy browsing and don’t forget to zoom in!



*Russian Capital Moscow  
(Old Print from an Album of Prince Konstantine Belosselsky-Belozersky)  
Hillwood Archives & Special Collections  
Library  
Call Number: NE4025.S69 B34 1800*

## PUBLIC PROGRAM UPDATE

*Rebecca Singer, Youth Audience Manager  
Erin Lourie, Adult Audience Manager*

This spring, immerse yourself in Hillwood’s enchanting gardens with a rich variety of program offerings including hands-on workshops, guided tours, and festive events.

New this year, the [Gardener’s Focus: Seasonal Designs](#) tour is offered on select Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays in April, is led either by Jason Gedeik, head of design operations, or Jessica Bonilla, head gardener. Part of Hillwood’s magic is the constantly changing seasonal plant displays. This tour allows visitors to get an intimate look at Hillwood’s garden and to learn about the design process that went into creating these beautiful displays, including first-hand stories and practical gardening lessons.

Annual favorite garden programs return this spring, as well, with a variety of hands-on workshops, including [Spring Floral Design Workshops](#) on April 16, [Hanging Basket Workshops](#) on May 7, [Container Garden Workshops](#) on May 14, and new this year, [Herb Garden Container Workshops](#) on May 21.

Family-friendly programs also highlight the gardens this spring, with the April and May [preschool series](#) programs exploring a new garden each week through make believe, art projects, and imaginative play.

[Girl Scout Day](#) on April 16 is a fun-filled, festive day. Girl Scouts explore enchanting gardens and discover glittering treasures in the mansion, while participating in activities related to Marjorie Post’s healthy lifestyle and reputation as a gracious and welcoming hostess, such as putting on the putting green, playing lawn games, and creating their own artwork.

[Family Movie Night](#) on May 13 gives families the chance to relax in the gardens on a spring evening before heading indoors to enjoy a selection of award-winning, fun, family-friendly short films. The evening also includes

opportunities for families to explore the treasures in the mansion and to create their own works of art.

In addition to garden programs, we continue to highlight the special exhibition, [Konstantin Makovsky: The Tsar's Painter](#), with an upcoming lecture recital, [The Birth of Russian Nationalistic Music](#), presented in partnership with [Levine Music](#), on April 27. Curator Dr. Wilfried Zeisler will set the stage by discussing the exhibition and music historian Carl Yaffe will explore the development of Russian Nationalistic composition and the influence music and musical subjects had on Makovsky's paintings. The program will also include live performances by Vasily Popov (cello) and Ralitza Patcheva (piano).

We appreciate your efforts spreading the word about our upcoming programs and we hope that you'll join in the fun!

As always, the best way to keep up-to-date on upcoming programs is to visit the [Calendar](#) page on [Hillwood's website](#).

## **TESSITURA: NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR HILLWOOD**

*Lynn Rossotti, Director of Marketing, Communications & Visitor Services*

Just in time to support our strategic goals aimed at deepening visitor engagement, Hillwood has implemented a new ticketing, fundraising, and customer relationship management system that will support these efforts and make them measurable.

In 2014, news that we would need to replace our longstanding ticketing system revealed an opportunity to explore tools and products that would enable us to work smarter and more efficiently. If we had to replace our system, why not choose one that could enhance all aspects of customer interaction, not just the ticket purchase. Since June of last year, we have been using a new system, Tessitura, to handle our ticket sales and

constituent contacts. Development launched their work with the new tool in January.

Tessitura is a fully integrated software system for arts and cultural organizations that offers complete ticketing, customer relationship management, fundraising, membership, and reporting functionality. It is a single database system that allows us to track all contacts with our constituents, from reservation, to ticket purchase, to membership, to donation. Every touchpoint that we have with each constituent can be captured and acted upon. The implementation of this complex new tool is timed perfectly with the advent of the re-envisioned strategic goals, focused on deepening engagement. Each department has written measurable goals related to Tessitura that ensure we are undertaking tactical efforts to meet our goals.

In visitor services, all of our associates are tasked with collecting email addresses for at least fifty per cent of all new customer records they create in Tessitura. With this data in store, both the marketing and development teams will be able to work toward building visitor loyalty by maintaining meaningful communication with each and every customer. By capturing every data point about each visit—the program attended, the time of year, what prompted them to visit, how many visits in a year—and using a new email marketing program that interfaces directly with Tessitura, we will be able keep in touch with visitors in a targeted way. Using these targeted methods, marketing is tasked with converting at least ten per cent of email recipients to repeat visitors or program attendees. Together, marketing and development are tasked with converting three per cent of repeat visitors to Hillwood members.

Robust reporting features will also allow all staff to analyze and report on their efforts. By gaining a clearer picture of our visitors and a better understanding of how our efforts are succeeding in building loyalty, we will ensure that we continue to use this complex new system to its best advantage and successfully



engage and cultivate a new generation of Hillwood fanatics.

## THE FOUR SEASONS

For the first ever installation of art in the gardens, Philip Haas's sculptures bring a monumental interpretation of Giuseppe Arcimboldo's famous botanical paintings to Hillwood this fall. The lush foliage, colorful blooms, and vegetation native to each of the seasons are spectacularly transformed into four larger than life, three-dimensional portrait busts for the special exhibition *The Four Seasons*, on view at Hillwood from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017. For more information on this exciting installation, visit the [Four Seasons exhibition page](#) on Hillwood's website.



## SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

*Jessica Bonilla, Head Gardener*

As I'm writing this, we've just reached the freezing mark this morning. Even so, the tulips are blooming and the azaleas are coming on fast. Spring is really in motion and so is the Horticulture staff. We have three major projects in the works besides our typical garden care: the implementation of a plan to minimize sediment in Soapstone Creek from Hillwood, the addition of a new garden path connecting to the woodland trail, and an updated version of our Plant Resource Guide.

In the fall, Hillwood was awarded a grant from the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F

to reduce sediment entering Soapstone Creek by way of Hillwood's storm water outlet. The storm water from the property is directed to a sand trap filter under the lower parking deck and discharged down a channel filled with rock where it enters Soapstone Creek. Time has taken a toll on the channel and some maintenance has been needed to reduce erosion concerns. A plan was created to address the top and bottom of the channel where most improvement could be made. So far, the Horticulture staff has spent a full day at the top, moving stone to create spillover ponds to slow down the water and a full day at the bottom putting in sediment filters and installing plant material to reduce erosion. One more work day is needed to finish the plant installation at the top. Upon completion, 46 woody plants and 420 sedge grasses will have been planted. Our work at the bottom can be viewed from the Soapstone Valley hiking trail.



*Staff installing shrubs to reduce erosion*

Also in the works is an additional path that will connect the lower drive, near the top of the hill, to the woodland trail. Senior gardener Marshall Paquin, with staff and volunteers, has already started grooming the area and we are anxiously awaiting the landscape design of Allan Summers of Robinson Anderson



Summers (formerly Rodney Robinson Landscape Architects).

Lastly, we will be unveiling a new version of Hillwood's Plant Resource Guide. This is a document that highlights important plants along the docent-led tour routes. The new format includes maps, expanded information on each plant, and a ton of photos. Please look for a print copy in the horticulture break room and the mansion volunteer lounge and an online version coming soon to the volunteer website.

Spring's a busy time and I look forward to seeing you out in the garden.

## PROMOTIONS

*Liana Paredes, Chief Curator/Co-Chair of Exhibitions/Director of Collections*

I am thrilled to announce that Wilfried Zeisler has been promoted to Curator of Russian & 19th Century Art! Wilfried first came to Hillwood in early 2013 as the museum's first curatorial fellow. His contributions to Hillwood have been manifold since he joined us. He has advanced the research on several collections objects, travelled to Russia representing Hillwood in many museums lecturing on our collections. As for exhibitions, in his short tenure at Hillwood he contributed to the curating of *Splendor and Surprise: Elegant Containers, Antique to Modern* in 2015 and *Konstantin Makovsky: The Tsar's Painter*, currently on view in the mansion pavilion and dining room. Please join us in congratulating Wilfried on his new position!

I am also pleased to announce the promotion of MJ Meredith from Registrar to Collections Manager/Registrar. MJ has made great strides with the database which you all have had a chance to use to search the collection, and has kept the movement an inventory of objects to exacting standards among several other duties. Going forward MJ will oversee loans, art conservation, maintenance and upkeep of the mansion, and supervise the work of our two museum technicians. Join me in congratulating MJ on his new position!

## NEW STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

We are delighted to welcome 11 new volunteers and six new staff members! Please join us in welcoming our newest members to Hillwood:

### Joining the Hillwood staff:

- James Brawner, Special Police Officer
- Meredith DeSantis, Group Sales, Special Events & Tourism Manager
- Monica Diaz, Special Police Officer
- Nina Kaull, Museum Sales Shop Associate
- Masha Schildkraut, Museum Sales Shop Associate
- George Sokol, Network & Systems Administrator

### Joining the Interpretation volunteer corps:

- Sharron Caplan
- Maria Chernov
- Nicole Hamilton
- Wade Kness
- Maddie Scherer
- Yelena Sokolov
- Gail Trousoff Marks

### Joining the Horticulture volunteer corps:

- Leslie Getzinger
- Tracy Linden
- Steve Mann
- Patricia Pileggi

## IN MEMORIAM: JOHN HIBBITS

*Lisa Leyh, Volunteer Manager*

It is with a heavy heart that I write to inform you that John Hibbits, Tuesday afternoon Visitor Services Volunteer, passed away on March 17. John experienced a stroke a week after his aneurysm rupture and the two traumas were just too much to overcome.

John's wife, Mary, wrote "John so valued and enjoyed his involvement with Hillwood and was proud to be part of it. He loved studying Marjorie Post's life and treasures in

depth and enthusiastically sharing his information with the visitors. He especially enjoyed interactions with Russian guests and the opportunity to use his language skills with them.”



*Hillwood Volunteer John Hibbits*

We were very proud to have John on our volunteer team -- he will be greatly missed. [Click here](#) to read John's obituary.

The *Post Serial* is published quarterly for Hillwood volunteers by Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, 4155 Linnean Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. It is edited under the direction of the volunteer management team of Bill Johnson, Lisa Leyh, and other Hillwood staff members. Copyright 2016 by Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens.

**HILLWOOD**  
ESTATE, MUSEUM & GARDENS