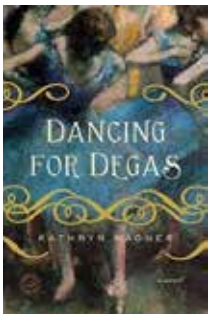
Art Lovers Book Club

A program organized and hosted by the Figge Docents

Expand your understanding and appreciation of art by joining other art lovers in the Figge Café for lively discussions about artists. Each program includes a short introduction and group discussion facilitated by Figge docents (volunteer tour guides). Because this program meets around the lunch hour, feel free to bring a brown bag lunch. This program is free, and no registration is required, but participants must be Figge members. (Learn more about Figge membership at www.figgeartmuseum.org.) For more information about the Art Lovers Book Club, please contact the education department at 563.326.7804 x2045.

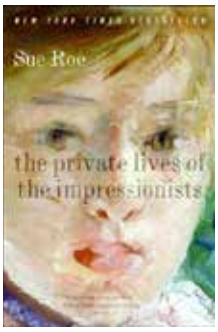


Dancing for Degas by Kathryn Wagner

1 pm Wednesday, May 1, 2013 • Figge Café

In the City of Lights, at the dawn of a new age, an unforgettable story of great love, great art—and the most painful choices of the heart—begins.

With this fresh and vibrantly imagined portrait of the Impressionist artist Edgar Degas, readers are transported through the eyes of a young Parisian ballerina to an era of light and movement. An ambitious and enterprising farm girl, Alexandrie joins the prestigious Paris Opera ballet with hopes of securing not only her place in society but her family's financial future. Her plan is soon derailed, however, when she falls in love with the enigmatic artist whose paintings of the offstage lives of the ballerinas scandalized society and revolutionized the art world. As Alexandrie is drawn deeper into Degas's art and Paris's secrets, will she risk everything for her dreams of love and of becoming the ballet's star dancer? Available on Amazon Kindle.



Private Lives of the Impressionists by Sue Roe

1 pm Wednesday, June 5, 2013 • Figge Café

Though they were often ridiculed or ignored by their contemporaries, today astonishing sums are paid for their paintings. Their dazzling works are familiar to even the most casual art lovers—but how well does the world know the Impressionists as people?

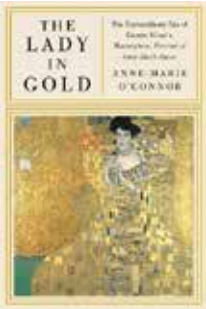
Sue Roe's colorful, lively, poignant, and superbly researched biography, *The Private Lives of the Impressionists,* follows an extraordinary group of artists into their Paris studios, down the rural lanes of Montmartre, and into the rowdy riverside bars of a city undergoing monumental change. Vivid and unforgettable, it casts a brilliant, revealing light on this unparalleled society of genius colleagues who lived and worked together for twenty years and transformed the art world forever with their breathtaking depictions of ordinary life.

Inside the Painters Studio by Joe Fig

1 pm Wednesday, July 10, 2013 • Figge Café

Inside the Painter's Studio collects twenty-four remarkable artist interviews, as well as exclusive visual documentation of their studios. Featured artists were asked a wide range of questions about their day-to-day creative life, covering everything from how they organize their studios to what painting tools they prefer. Artists open up about how they set a creative mood.

563.326.7804
Davenport, Iowa
www.figgeartmuseum.org
FIGGE ART MUSEUM



The Lady in Gold by Ann-Marie O'Connor

1 pm Wednesday, August 7, 2013 • Figge Café

Considered a masterpiece and one of the 20th century's most recognizable paintings, this portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer, the beautiful, seductive Viennese Jewish salon hostess, made headlines when Ronald Lauder bought it for $135 million a century after it was completed by Gustav Klimt, the most famous Austrian painter of his time.

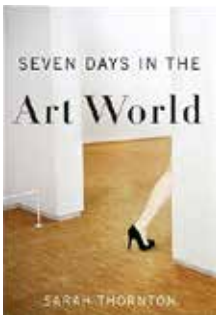
This book describes how Byzantine mosaics inspired the painting, and how the Nazi's confiscated the portrait, giving it the name The Lady in Gold. It was exhibited in Vienna's Baroque Belevedere Palace and was consecrated in the 1930s as a Nazi institution. It finally became the subject of a decade-long litigation between the Austrian government and the Bloch-Bauer heirs with the U.S. Supreme Court getting involved. Available on Amazon Kindle.

De Koonig's Bicycle by Robert Long

1 pm Wednesday, September 4, 2013 • Figge Café

Willem de Koonig rode his bike every day between his studio in the East Hampton woods and Gardiners Bay, where the light informed every brushstroke he put to canvas from the early 1960s on.

Some of the most important artists and writers of the 20th century—from Pollock to Steinberg, Frank O'Hara to Jean Stafford—lived and worked on the East End of Long Island. The home they made there, and its effect on their work, is the subject of these searching, lyrical vignettes.



Seven Days in the Art World by Susan Thornton

1 pm Wednesday, October 2, 2013 • Figge Café

The art market has been booming. Museum attendance is surging. More people than ever call themselves artists. Contemporary art has become a mass entertainment, a luxury good, a job description, and, for some, a kind of alternative religion.

In a series of beautifully paced narratives, Sarah Thornton investigates the drama of a Christie's auction, the workings in Takashi Murakami's studios, the elite at the Basel Art Fair, the eccentricities of *Artforum* magazine, the competition behind an important art prize, life in a notorious art-school seminar, and the wonderland of the Venice Biennale. She reveals the new dynamics of creativity, taste, status, money, and the search for meaning in life. A judicious and juicy account of the institutions that have the power to shape art history, based on hundreds of interviews with high-profile players, Thornton's entertaining ethnography will change the way you look at contemporary culture.

Stealing the Mystic Lamb by Noah Charney

1 pm Wednesday, November 6, 2013 • Figge Café

Jan van Eyck's *Ghent Altarpiece* is on any art historian's list of the ten most important paintings ever made. Often referred to by the subject of its central panel, *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, it represents the fulcrum between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It is also the most frequently stolen artwork of all time.

Since its completion in 1432, this twelve-panel oil painting has been looted in three different wars, burned, dismembered, forged, smuggled, illegally sold, censored, hidden, attacked by iconoclasts, used as a diplomatic tool, ransomed, hunted by the Nazis and Napoleon, rescued by Austrian double-agents and stolen a total of 13 times.

The author unravels the stories of each of these of these crimes. He encounters renegade vicars, criminal art dealers, heroic priests, Humanist forgers, as well as some of history's most famous figures. Along the way, he illuminates the whole fascinating history of art crime, and the psychological, ideological, religious, political and social motivations that have left six centuries of art lovers, detectives, and thieves to covet this one masterpiece above all others.