



# AIA-LA

## SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIVITIES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Dear AIA-LA Society Members,

January 2024



Happy 2024! We hope everyone's year is starting off well and that you are looking forward to an exciting slate of spring programming, both via Zoom and in-person.

Events: We will host at least four sponsored lectures this spring, starting with Dr. Elspeth Dusinberre giving the Rodney S. Young Memorial Lecture titled "King Midas of the Golden Touch in Context: Death, Belief, Behavior, and Society in Ancient Phrygia" on Sunday, February 4th at 2pm at 1201 9th St. (and via Zoom). Next up will be Dr. Douglas Kennett's National AIA Lecture "Drought-Induced Civil Conflict Among the Ancient Maya" on Sunday March 3rd at 2pm also at 1201 9th St. and via Zoom. We will keep you posted about our additional lectures via the Weekly Round-Ups.

Scholarships: Thanks to the generosity of our local members, we will be able to sponsor two undergraduate fieldwork scholarships again this summer, and will be raising the amount of each scholarship to \$1,500-2,000. We are very happy to announce that we will also be able to fund a graduate student fieldwork scholarship this year, also in the range of \$1,500-2,000. More details will be available soon. The call for applications for the 2024 research season will go out in mid-February, with applications due in early April.

Membership Perks: We hope you have continued to receive your subscription to Archaeology magazine. If you are not receiving it, you may need to renew your membership, which can now easily be completed online. Please also consider inviting friends and neighbors to join by pointing them to our website and/or forwarding them this newsletter. We will be offering a series of opportunities available only to AIA-LA members this year, including private tours of upcoming museum exhibitions and a series of mini-lectures about recent advances in archaeological technologies. You can also look forward to getting to know the AIA-LA community through Sanford Holst's nationally-recognized Member Spotlight Series.

Website and Weekly Roundup: Our website and weekly email roundups remain the principal gateways to stay updated regarding our archaeological programming. Our Social Media Coordinator Dr. Alba Mazza is continuing to expand our online presence and make it as user-friendly as possible. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to email her at [alba.mazza@gmail.com](mailto:alba.mazza@gmail.com).

Lastly, we want to encourage you to reach out to any of our board members with any questions, concerns, or interests you may have. We sincerely look forward to seeing you all soon.

With best wishes and gratitude for your continued support!

The AIA-LA Board

[aia-la.org](http://aia-la.org)



# Brief Fall 2023 Recap



## The Fall 2023 AIA-LA Garden Party

was a huge success! (Sept. 24th)  
(but next time, we need to remember to take more photos)  
Thank you so much to Charlie and Weezie Steinmetz for being our ever-generous hosts and to the 80+ members who joined us in person!

## Ancient Methone 2003-2013 Book Talk (Oct. 8th)

Drs. Sarah Morris and John Papadopolous of the UCLA Cotsen Institute of Archaeology gave AIA-LA Members and Cotsen supports a sneak peak of their new Edited Volume.



## AIA-LA Fall

Ahmanson Lecture (Oct. 22nd)

## Dr. Kara Cooney of UCLA

regaled our members with stories from her investigation into the coffins of Thutmose III and other Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs.



## Dr. Sara Cole of the Getty Villa (Dec. 2nd)

gave an AIA-LA Members-only tour of the *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* Exhibit at the Getty Villa.





# AIA-LA Member Spotlights

## (Fall 2023)

In fall 2023, we introduced the AIA-LA Member Spotlight series, written by long-time AIA-LA member Sanford Holst. Our members come from a wide range of backgrounds, tend to be well-traveled, curious about things, and genuinely interested in discovering something new. The member spotlight series, which will include new installments every couple of weeks, will help to continue to build our community by providing the opportunity to get to know a little more about your fellow members.

The initial round in fall 2023 included spotlights on Sanford Holst, Aaron Burke, Carolina Zensen Simoes, John Cameron, Alba Mazza, and Charlie Steinmetz. In case you missed them, they are all available on our website.



Sanford Holst



Carolina Zensen  
Simoes



Aaron Burke



Charlie Steinmetz



Alba Mazza



John Cameron

Get ready for your own spotlight, and stay tuned for more in 2024!

# Schedule of SoCal Events: Spring 2024

For additional information about society events, contact Ken Seligson (kseligson@csudh.edu). Consult our web page for updated information. More events will be included in our weekly round-ups.

## **Sunday, February 4th, 2:00pm PT**

1201 9th St., Manhattan Beach  
Rodney S. Young Memorial Lecture  
Dr. Elspeth Dusingberre  
“King Midas of the Golden Touch in Context: Death, Belief, Behavior, and Society in Ancient Phrygia”

## **Sunday, March 3rd, 2:00pm PT**

1201 9th St., Manhattan Beach  
AIA-LA National Lecture  
Dr. Douglas Kennett  
“Drought-Induced Civil Conflict Among the Ancient Maya”

## **Sunday, April 7, 2:00pm PT**

Richard Steffy Lecture in Underwater Archaeology  
Dr. Alba Mazza  
“Pushing the boundaries of underwater archaeology. Machine learning, deep water robotics and bioinformatic. The innovation initiative of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency”

## **Early May (TBD)**

AIA-LA Spring Ahmanson Lecture

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## Local Exhibitions

### **Getty Villa**

Sculpted Portraits from Ancient Egypt (Until Jan. 25, 2027)

*Upcoming:* Picture Worlds: Greek, Maya, Moche Pottery (April 10–July 29, 2024)

*Upcoming:* Ancient Thrace: Treasures from the Classical World (November 6, 2024–March 3, 2025)

### **Fowler Museum**

The House Was Too Small: Yoruba Sacred Arts from Africa and Beyond (Until 6/2/24)

Dr. Mary Miller, Director of the Getty Research Institute, will lead a tour of the Getty’s “Picture Worlds” exhibit later this spring - stay tuned for more details!

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## Additional Programs and Lecture Series

[AIA Orange County Lectures](#)

[Getty events and talks](#)

[Pourdavoud Center](#)

[Stavros Niarchos Hellenic Center, UCLA](#)



AIA-Los Angeles Society  
Rodney S. Young Memorial  
Lecture 2024

# King Midas of the Golden Touch in Context

Death, Belief, Behavior, and Society in Ancient Phrygia



Photos Gebhard Bieg. © Gordion Archaeological Project

In this talk, Dr. Dusinberre will present her work on the spectacular burial tumuli at Gordion (Türkiye), the capital of ancient Phrygia and seat of the legendary King Midas of the Golden Touch. This talk will consider material ranging from ca. 850–525 BCE. It will begin with Gordion's oldest burial tumuli and look at the largest, the so-called Midas Monument, but it will focus ultimately on the last century or so of tumulus construction. The later tombs, which include both inhumations and cremations, display radical changes that reflect Gordion's complex and shifting society. This talk will use mortuary remains to investigate such issues as power structures and display, gender, burial customs, belief in an afterlife, shifting populations, and developments in society overall in ancient Phrygia.

**Dr. Elspeth R. M.  
Dusinberre**

Professor of Distinction  
President's Teaching Scholar  
Classics Department  
University of Colorado

Getty Villa Visiting  
Scholar 2024

**Sunday, Feb. 4th, 2:00pm PT**  
1201 9th St., Manhattan Beach  
and  
[Simulcast Via Zoom](#)



# Drought-Induced Conflict Among the Ancient Maya



<https://news.ucsb.edu/2022/020684/climate-and-conflict>

Dr. Douglas J. Kennett  
Professor, Dept. of Anthropology  
UC Santa Barbara

The influence of climate change on civil conflict and societal instability in the premodern world is a subject of much debate, in part because of the limited temporal or disciplinary scope of case studies. Kennett will present a transdisciplinary case study that combines archeological, historical, and paleoclimate datasets to explore the dynamic, shifting relationships among climate change, civil conflict, and political collapse at Mayapan, the largest Postclassic Maya capital of the Yucatán Peninsula in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries CE. Multiple data sources indicate that civil conflict increased significantly and generalized linear modeling correlates strife in the city with drought conditions between 1400 and 1450 cal. CE. We argue that prolonged drought escalated rival factional tensions, but subsequent adaptations reveal regional-scale resiliency, ensuring that Maya political and economic structures endured until European contact in the early sixteenth century CE.

Sunday, March 3rd, 2:00pm PT  
1201 9th St, Manhattan Beach  
and via Zoom

# PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

RICHARD STEFFY LECTURE IN  
UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY



Machine Learning, Deep Water Robotics and Bioinformatics: The Innovation Initiative of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency



**Dr. Alba Mazza**

Partnerships and Innovations  
Directorate, Defense POW/MIA  
Accounting Agency, Henry M.  
Jackson Foundation (CTR)

81,000 Americans are still missing-in-action, and about 41,000 of them were lost at sea. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's (DPAA) mission is to search, recover and identify remains of missing personnel from World War II to recent conflicts. DPAA developed a multi-year, multi-objective underwater innovation study aimed at testing and evaluating emerging technologies, techniques and procedures for underwater losses. This unique cooperative project involves the participation of several universities and research institutes across the globe with a combination of cross-disciplinary expertise and skillsets. DPAA and supporting partners worked on the three interrelated innovation tasks implemented in several testbed locations across Europe and the Pacific Region. This paper presents the preliminary results of this study that tested evolving technologies such as machine learning, deep water robotics and in-field bioinformatic. Challenges and limitations, efficacy and opportunities will be discussed along with the applications of these technologies and their potential to fulfill DPAA's mission objectives.

Sunday, April 7th 2:00pm PT  
1201 9th St., Manhattan Beach  
AND [Live Via Zoom](#)



# VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

I enclose:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the 2023–2024 programs of the Los Angeles Society of the AIA.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution to the Undergraduate Fieldwork Scholarship

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution to support a new Graduate Student Fieldwork Scholarship

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution to support: \_\_\_\_ National lecture; \_\_\_\_ Book talk; \_\_\_\_\_ social event

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (strongly recommended for current updates): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ This is a new or corrected address

Please make your check payable to the AIA LA Society and return it in the enclosed envelope to our treasurer:

John Cameron, PO Box 261, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274.

**DONATIONS ARE FULLY TAX-DEDUCTIBLE**

## AIA LOS ANGELES COUNTY SOCIETY GOVERNING BOARD

	Official Position/ Interests	Officer	Term	Contact
Officers	President	Ken Seligson	2022-2025	kseligson@csudh.edu
	Vice President	Charlie Steinmetz	2022-2025	charlie.steinmetz@gmail.com
	Treasurer	John Cameron	2020-2023	johnjcameron77@gmail.com
	Membership Secretary	Caroline Smith	2023-2026	caroline@me.com
Additional Board of Governors	<i>Prior President</i>	Aaron Burke	2019-2022	aaburke@ucla.edu
	<i>Graduate student liaison</i>	Luis Rodríguez Pérez	2022-2025	lrodriguezperez@g.ucla.edu
	<i>Undergraduate liaison</i>	Maria Carolina Zensen	2023-2025	zensensi@usc.edu
	<i>Getty liaison</i>	Sarah Cole	2020-2023	scole@getty.edu
	<i>K-12 school liaison</i>	Dawn Cox	2022-2025	cdawn29@yahoo.com
	<i>Ex Officio Member</i>	Owen Doonan	2020-2023	owen.doonan@csun.edu
	<i>Ex Officio Member</i>	Paul Scotton	2022-2025	pscotton@csulb.edu

General concerns or interests? Email us at: [losangeles.archaeology@gmail.com](mailto:losangeles.archaeology@gmail.com).