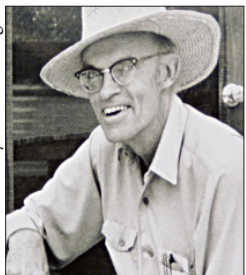


SEPTEMBER HOTY WEBINAR RECAP • MONTHLY GARDEN SHARE

In September, the SCHS presented its annual Horticulturist of the Year Award Program as a virtual event. While we were saddened not to enjoy the evening in the company of friends, and missed our wonderful Silent Auction, we were very pleased to posthumously honor three recipients who had not been awarded in years past.

SCHS Vice President Steve Gerischer provided a brief history of the Horticulturist of the Year Award and introduced the presenters who would be speaking about the evening's honorees.

Photo courtesy of SBBG.org.



Board member and former HOTY recipient Carol Bornstein spoke about her former mentor and colleague, Dara Emery. He served as the

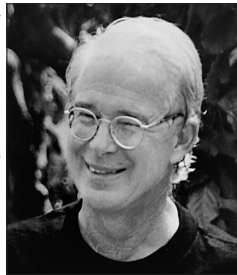
first horticulturist for the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden from 1955 until his death in 1992 and is widely recognized for his contributions to the advancement of native plant horticulture throughout California, and as a plant breeder.

Bornstein spoke about how he inspired people directly and indirectly through his extensive work, and she shared through words and pictures how Emery "wore many hats", both literally and figuratively, in his many roles at SBBG. An avid plant collector and propagator, Emery introduced numerous plant selections to the trade, launched the garden's Fall Plant Sales in 1962, and also started the Garden Growers Retail Nursery and their Plant Introduction Program. In 1988 he authored the still popular book, *Seed Propagation of California Native Plants*, recently reprinted by SBBG.

In addition to reflecting on her own memories of Emery, Bornstein shared quotes about him from colleagues Mike Evans, Dave Fross, Nevin Smith and Randy Baldwin and shared photos of some of his 21 native plant introductions, some named for him. To honor his work as a teacher and mentor, the SBBG created the annual Dara Emery Memorial Lecture Series in 1992, which continues to present day.

Emery's remarkable contributions to horticulture in general and California in particular have already influenced multiple generations, and will continue

Photo courtesy of Kurutz family.



to inspire future gardeners as well. The evening's second honoree was Denis Kurutz, an award-winning SoCal landscape architect, who passed in 2003.

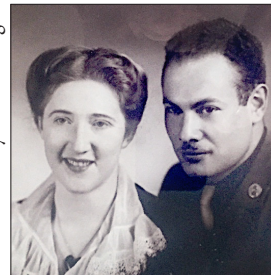
He studied at USC and gained fame during the 1970s for his re-creation of the AD 79 Villa of Papyri at the Getty Museum in Malibu, while working for Emmet L. Wemple and Associates. He was also known for his meticulous research, beautifully rendered plan drawings and detailed sketches.

Selections from Kurutz's body of work were presented by his former colleagues, landscape architects Matt Randolph and Steven Ormenyi (the latter currently serving on the SCHS board). While much of the presentation was centered on the Getty project, they also shared other examples of his many drawings as well as completed installations.

By juxtaposing images of Kurutz's initial Getty project sketches and detailed plant lists (which were selected to be as true as possible to the ancient culture he was representing), with photos of the finished gardens, his architectural talent was evident throughout. Slides showing Kurutz's drawings of columns, tile mosaics and other details on construction documents - later brought to life by tradesmen - further showcased his many artistic gifts.

In addition to sharing behind-the-scenes work Kurutz did for the Getty, his family also made available a few renderings and several beautiful ink drawings and pencil sketches of architectural details for other projects. It is in these last images that Kurutz's vision is most apparent and which

Photo courtesy of Lili Singer.



will preserve his artistic legacy.

The final presentation was made by SCHS board member and past HOTY

recipient, Lili Singer, who was honoring her parents, Bert and Manny Singer, who were well-known and respected for their work in the nursery trade and as avid growers of rare succulents.

Singer's presentation was a personal history of her family's business from the early years in Reseda where it began in their backyard, through the establishment of the San Fernando Valley-based Singer's Growing Things in 1972, where the business quickly became a popular destination for plant collectors. Additionally, their nursery catalogs, which featured photos and illustrations of rare and unusual succulents, as well as the caudiciforms they specialized in, have become quite collectible.

Despite not having any formal botanical training, the Singers learned by doing what they loved, and became active members of local gardening groups such as the L.A. Cactus and Succulent Society, the Bromeliad Society of the San Fernando Valley (co-founded by Manny) and the SCHS. They were influenced to grow and sell rare succulents after seeing these plants on trips to Baja California, and from their many associations with notable horticultural figures such as Charlie Glass and Paul Hutchison.

Randy Baldwin of San Marcos Growers named a *Sansevieria trifasciata* 'Singer's Silver' in their honor, and their 2020 HOTY award is also well-deserved. Hearing about the Singers' impact on horticulture in Southern California and beyond was a worthy tribute to a

To watch this presentation on SCHS's YouTube channel, click on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr87AO3bDmw>

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