



President's Message

LOCALLY SOURCED

When singer-songwriter Toshi Reagon took the stage in The Huntington's Rothenberg Hall earlier this year in celebration of the writer Octavia E. Butler, she told a packed auditorium how excited she was to spend time in nearby Pasadena and feel connected to Butler's home. "This is holy ground to me," she said. The crowd responded with a rousing cheer. Butler was born and raised in Pasadena, attending John Muir High School and Pasadena City College. Her roots here run deep, and we were honored to have some Butler family members in our audience. Her writing also reflects a strong sense of connection to this place—in fact, such local freeways as the 101 and 118 actually appear in Butler's futuristic novels, anchoring us in an otherwise drastically altered terrain.

Reagon came to The Huntington as part of a series of presentations we are hosting related to Butler's work (two other events are scheduled this spring, in March and May). Separately, Reagon has adapted Butler's *Parable of the Sower* for opera, to be presented at UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance on March 7.

During our Centennial Celebration, much has been said about The Huntington in the context of the history of Los Angeles and the significance of Henry E. Huntington in the development of this region. In the present, too, we are deep into an exciting collaboration with the Hammer Museum on the west side of the city, creating the two-venue exhibition "Made in L.A. 2020: a version," which opens at both institutions in early June and fosters an east-west dialogue.

But our Pasadena roots run deep as well. Our historical connection to neighboring Caltech is well documented: It was Caltech's George Ellery Hale who wrote letter after letter to Henry Huntington in the decade before Huntington's death, working to convince him that a humanities institution assembled out of Huntington's vast collections was critically important to balance and augment the scientific perspective. In the

present day, we have partnered again with Caltech to form the Research Institute for the History of Science and Technology at Caltech and The Huntington.

With its world-class cultural and educational institutions, the intellectual firepower of this mid-size Southern California city is both embedded in our history and preparing us for the future. Charles Elachi, former director of neighboring Jet Propulsion Laboratory, recently hosted The Huntington's senior team on a tour that provided us with a thrilling overview of the new Mars 2020 mission and a peek into Mission Control. As we walked through the corridors of JPL, we noted that The Huntington holds and exhibits important collections on the history of aerospace, prominently including JPL.

This sense of community and vitality was brought home to me as I sailed down Pasadena's Colorado Boulevard aboard the Huntington's Centennial Rose Parade® float on New Year's Day. During this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, it was a treat to engage with people along the route who waved and called out with enthusiasm, "We love The Huntington!" Along with the other float riders—four youngsters from our community partner programs, two other staff members, and one member of our Board of Governors—I was proud to represent our institution and see the delight on the faces in the crowd as they recognized The Huntington's familiar features, from the Chinese Garden's Pavilion of the Three Friends to Mary Cassatt's *Breakfast in Bed*. Gliding along the parade route, I was immensely proud as well that The Huntington, with its unique locality, is at once a local, regional, national, and international treasure. Our connections honed over the decades—with the Norton Simon Museum, ArtCenter College of Design, the Carnegie Observatories, Pasadena City College, and Pasadena Unified School District, as well as all our members, visitors, and volunteers—contribute richly to the extraordinary, even hallowed place The Huntington has become.

Karen R. Lawrence, President