

# DIANA'S FINDS at Bistango

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JULIE LEAH, ARTS AND CULTURE CORRESPONDENT

**T**here is an artist I know, who in her own words, “paints with her lens.”

Few artists have the gifted aesthetic and sensitivity and vision for not only her own art, but the art world at large as does Diana Ghoukassian. She often begins her own art pieces by taking photographs from a moving vehicle. Her art photography is a bending of reality, that is at all times dreamlike, but it is more transformative than mere dreams, for it is visible in the daylight. It is like “The Red Building” with windows into the sky.

In 2020, Diana began curating the art exhibits at Bistango Restaurant in Irvine, continuing the dedication to the arts established by her late husband, John Ghoukassian.

In September, Bistango hosted a private art show in conjunction with the Newport Arts Foundation. This highlighted work in Diana's private collection that includes five Orange County artists including Chris Gwaltney, D.C. Niehaus, Monica Ratliff, Michael Tienhaara and Diana Ghoukassian. Other art in the exhibit is composed of primarily European artists.

While Diana has spent a lifetime collecting and surrounding herself with the arts, when describing her own style of collecting, she simply said, “I just like it!” They are “Diana's Finds”.



“The Red Building” by Diana Ghoukassian



“Chefs” by Marques De Jadraque



“Coffee Cup” by Marques De Jadraque

My favorites in this exhibit include “The Chefs and Coffee Cup” paintings by Marques de Jadraque. I am also quite enamored with Joao Veliz's painting of fashionable women that is reminiscent of turn-of-the-century French poster art albeit with a modern twist.

Diana also has rare, limited edition works by French artist Fernand Leger, one by African-American artist Herman Kofi Bailey, and another by Austrian artist Egon Schiele and three by Irving Amen.

For more information on this exhibit please contact, [dianasfinds@gmail.com](mailto:dianasfinds@gmail.com), or [dianaghokassian.com](http://dianaghokassian.com) and to view the collection visit, Bistango Restaurant at 19100 Von Karmen Avenue, Irvine, CA 92612.



Poster Art by Joao Veliz

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in the Making”*



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