



“The secret of happiness is freedom,  
and the secret of freedom, courage.” Thucydides



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## DIVA VISIONARIES

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### Jane McIntosh Is Jane's Smart Art Guides™ By Tango Diva

Jane's love of art and travel goes back to childhood. Raised in South America and Europe, she was exposed at an early age to diverse cultural and artistic traditions. Decades later, she still has a bright visual memory of her first visit to an art museum at age 7.

In high school she passed the Oxford University Ordinary and Advanced Level art history examinations and went on to study art history at Northeastern University in Boston, combined with French and Spanish language studies.

While still in college and after graduation, Jane worked as a tour guide and coordinator of art exhibits for the City of Boston Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs. But her career path took a different turn when, in 1980, she earned an MBA from Columbia University. This was followed by two decades of new product and new business development in Fortune 100 companies and, subsequently, various entrepreneurial ventures.

But something was missing. She was so busy working that she seldom had time to read a book, go to a museum, or travel for pleasure. Something had to give! In the mid-1990s she cut back to part-time work, became a voracious reader of history, and began to travel again. Her intellectual curiosity and love of art was rekindled.

Jane likes to know what she's looking at, and it was her personal frustration with the inadequacies of guide books and tour guides that led her to start a company to produce audio art guides for travelers. Merging her passion for travel, art, and history with her business experience, she founded a publishing firm, Context Audio Guides, LLC (CAG), to produce Jane's Smart Art Guides™, in-depth, audio travel guides to the remarkable art sites of Europe.

Drawing on research in a variety of fields, Jane gathers and synthesizes scholarly (and not-so-scholarly) writings, then creates lively scripts that are edu-taining and compelling for curious travelers—for people like Jane who like to know what they're looking at. Jane oversees every aspect of the production of each new title to ensure a reputation of consistently high quality for the Jane's Smart Art Guide brand. It does have her name on it, after all!

#### Diva Visionary Questions:

##### 1. What was the best decision you made in your life?

Leaving the corporate world. The events that followed that decision eventually lead me full circle back to my passion for art and travel—the things I loved most in my teens and early twenties! Now my life is a joy!

##### 2. What is your most memorable travel moment?

The day I arrived in Rome more than fifteen years ago, after not having been in Italy for 20 years. We spent the day walking, rather zombie-like from jet-lag, tossing down an occasional espresso to stay awake. The weather was perfect and we just followed our wandering instincts. At dusk we found ourselves on the Pincio overlooking the city, and then later we discovered that the one restaurant in all of Rome that we knew we wanted to go to was just steps from our hotel! The carciofi (artichoke) ravioli was out of this world!

##### 3. What was the worst travel experience you had?

Traveling with someone who complained about everything.

##### 4. What have you learned about yourself through traveling?

I now know I can enjoy traveling alone, but I still much prefer to travel with a like-minded companion. I've also realized that one of the reasons I'm a Europhile is that I like to be able to communicate with the locals in their language, so I'm most comfortable in Britain, France, Spain, Switzerland and Italy.

##### 5. If you could choose your ultimate travel companion, living or dead, real or imaginary, who would it be?

A few years ago I asked a woman whom I didn't know very well if she'd like to meet me in Rome to share the rent on an apartment. We turned out to be extraordinarily compatible. Our natural sleep-wake cycles were the same so we enjoyed being on Roman time: late dinners lingering over a bottle of wine, followed by a midnight quest



**Girl to Travel Alone**

Tango Diva's first travel book by founder Teresa Rodriguez Williamson releases February 2007!!

for the best gelato!

She was interested in the same things I was interested in, always ready to pop into another church and walk another mile. She was comfortable being on her own when I was working, She was almost the ultimate travel companion—if only she'd had an encyclopedic knowledge of history and been a charming, urbane gentleman!

**6. What moment in your life did you feel the most alive?**

I adore Rome and always feel more alive there than anywhere else! But reaching the top of Dun Caan on Scotland's Raasay (Norse for Isle of the Red Deer), a ferry ride from the Isle of Skye, was an extraordinary moment! It had taken some serious self-talk to energize myself to go all the way, but WOW, what a payoff! It felt like the top of the world.

**7. If money and time were no object, where on earth would you go?**

I'm a Europhile. I'd buy an apartment in Rome with a rooftop terrace and extra bedrooms for guests. With that as my base I'd travel all over Europe (and Turkey and Egypt) visiting art sites, both the major sites (as subjects for new audio guide titles) and lesser known sites that are remarkable in some way. I'd also love to cruise the Mediterranean on a yacht with a few close friends.

**8. Who is your hero?**

I can't claim a single person as my hero. So many of the people I know are exceptional in one way or another, I prefer to think in terms of what I especially respect and admire about each of them. I like to think everyone has a bit of heroism in them.

**9. Name a place in the world that you know a lot about and would make a great resource for our Divas. Tell us about it.**

I'm tempted to say Rome, because I really do know it pretty well. But for a change of pace, let me sing Antwerp's praises:

Antwerp is a little gem of a city, known to Europeans as a wonderful weekend destination, but it's pretty much undiscovered by Americans and other non-Europeans. While it's no longer "the Metropolis" of Northern Europe that it once was, it has a major port, a notable diamond industry, exceptional art and shopping, and an active night life. It's become an important design center, so much so that it's been called the Milan of northern Europe! Since so few people in the world speak Flemish (Dutch), a substantial portion of Antwerpans speak other languages, and English is pretty widely spoken.

The mediaeval and gothic architecture has been preserved, so it's a great place to walk and explore. I recommend 'sensible' shoes for negotiating the old cobbled streets! Antwerp was Peter Paul Rubens' home town, and a visit to his beautifully-maintained house and garden is a must. Museums and art-filled churches abound. And the food is fabulous ... not to mention the hundreds of different Belgian beers.

Belgians claim that French fries are a misnomer -- that "frites"? originated in Belgium and are to be eaten with mayonnaise. And of course there's the chocolate! There are chocolate boutiques all over town, each featuring a fabulous selection, either hand-made or the almost-as-delectable machine-made brands. Of the machine-made, Neuhaus gets my vote, but Leonidas is a strong—or I should say, "sweet" contender.

The beautiful late-Gothic cathedral isn't as widely known as Notre Dame in Paris, for example, or Chartres, but it's a glorious repository of six centuries of Flemish artistic development. For starters, Our Lady Cathedral houses no fewer than four works by Peter Paul Rubens, an elegant marble Madonna of the 14th century, stained glass windows dating from as early as 1503, and some exceptional 17th century sculpture!

It took more than 200 years to build, and during the course of its history it has endured a catastrophic fire, the Calvinist iconoclasm of 1566 and subsequent gutting by French revolutionaries in the 1790s. In the 20th century it faced neglect and wartime bombings. But entering Antwerp's restored Cathedral today will take your breath away!

**10. And finally a word from our Featured Diva, you in your own words—give us a stirring, Diva-worthy battle cry for women everywhere to hear!**

It's never too late to find your joy!

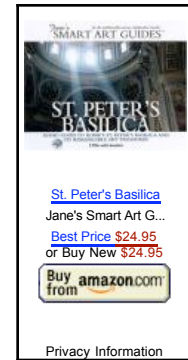
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**For more information:**

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**New News from Jane Smart!**

She has recently acquired exclusive audio rights to George Braziller's Great Fresco Cycles series. Each volume is written by a leading scholar specializing in the featured artist and explores these outstanding frescoes within the context of their cultural,

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political and artistic history.

"I'm pleased that the work of our highly-regarded authors will now be available in a format accessible to travelers," George Braziller said. "I applaud Jane's vision in producing specialized audio guides for travelers who are interested in art."

"Having developed our first three audio titles in-house, we are delighted to now be able to adapt the work of renowned art scholars," McIntosh said. "This agreement will enable us to more quickly add new audio guides to our title list, and our customers will be pleased with the high quality of the content."

Jane's first three titles (St. Peter's Basilica and Sta. Maria del Popolo, both in Rome, and Antwerp's Our Lady Cathedral), represent a uniquely new concept in the rapidly-growing audio travel guide arena. Each investigates, in-depth, the art and architecture of a single site in the context of its history.

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