

Fall 2009

Under the Dome - Fall 2009

McKissick Museum--University of South Carolina

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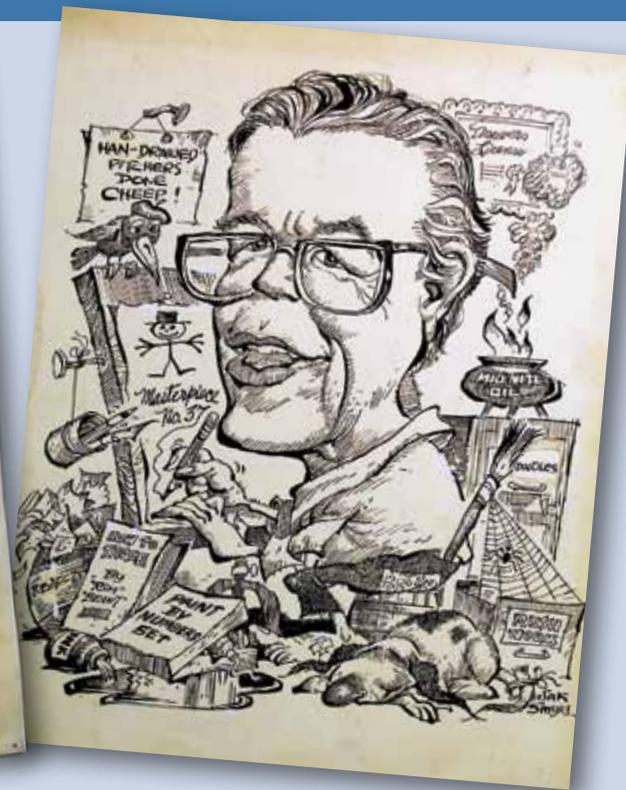
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UNDER *the* DOME

Telling the Story of Southern Life

McKISSICK MUSEUM NEWSLETTER • FALL 2009



Above left: Carolina-Clemson Rivalry; Jak Smyrl; ink on newsprint, 1974; courtesy of Betty Spires Smyrl

Above right: Self-portrait; Jak Smyrl, photograph, c. 1971; courtesy of Betty Spires Smyrl

Southern Satire The Illustrated World of Jak Smyrl

More than capturing the essence of an artist and illustrator, *Southern Satire: The Illustrated World of Jak Smyrl* captures the heart and soul of Camden native Oscar Jackson Smyrl Jr. As the staff artist and illustrator for *The State* and the *Columbia Record* newspapers, Smyrl became a household name throughout South Carolina from 1949 to 1986. His quirky and original cartoons delighted readers for 37 years.

It became evident throughout his life that Jak Smyrl was rarely without pen and paper. It was as if ink ran through his veins. Using his experiences growing up on a farm, attending college, and serving in World War II, combined with his general love for the Palmetto State, Smyrl transformed every experience into a humorous illustration. He offered newspaper readers a recognizable perspective on Southern life. Smyrl also produced illustrations for a number of

books about Southern life written by colleagues, including *Down the Creek* with Eddie Finlay and Zan Heyward's *Things I Remember*, based on Heyward's column in the *Columbia Record*.

Following his retirement from the newspapers, he created a series of whimsical maps highlighting some of South Carolina's most distinct historical locations, such as Pawley's Island, the Grand Strand, and Hellhole Swamp. His most impressive endeavor is a map of the state of South Carolina. It includes anecdotes of historical and cultural importance, as well as other fun facts.

Southern Satire includes more than 50 works by the artist, including some created during his youth and college years at USC. A collection of creations from his tour of duty in China during World War II is also on display. Smyrl died in August 2007. He left behind a legacy that includes more than 13,000 illustrations and cartoons.

Southern Satire is on display through Jan. 23, 2010, in the North Gallery on the second floor of McKissick Museum. This exhibition is made possible through support from *The State* newspaper and the *Camden Chronicle-Independent* newspaper, The Humanities Council SC, the Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties, and the Central Carolina Community Foundation. For more information about *Southern Satire* or other exhibitions, please contact Ja-Nae Epps at 803-777-2876.

Married "under the tree"; Jak Smyrl, ink on newsprint, Feb. 2, 1986; collection of Betty Spires Smyrl



Certificate in Museum Management

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2009!

The staff of McKissick Museum would like to congratulate this year's graduates from the Museum Management Program. They are:

- Charlie Goodrich
- Heather Haney
- Elizabeth Patton
- Stephanie Sapp
- Erika Schofner.

STUDENT NEWS

The spring 2009 semester was an active one for museum management students, who shined making presentations and participating in local, regional, and national conferences.



Melanie Neil

Melanie Neil presented a poster session at the South Carolina Federation of Museums' annual meeting in Rock Hill, S.C., March 4–7, 2009. She spoke about her experiences as guest curator for the exhibition *To Make a House a Home: Freedmen Living on James Island*.

Ashley Bouknight, Ruth Chan, and **Melanie Neil** received the Christopher T. Loeblein Annual Scholarship to attend the South Carolina Federation of Museums' conference in Rock Hill, S.C.



Ashley Bouknight

Ashley Bouknight was also awarded the American Association of Museums' Diversity Fellowship, a nationally competitive scholarship to attend the American Association of Museums' Annual Meeting. While in Philadelphia, Ashley was recognized at a special reception for fellowship recipients.



Helena Ferguson and Lana Burgess at Graduate Student Day, 2009

Helena Ferguson presented a poster at the University of South Carolina's Graduate Student Day on April 28, 2009. Her presentation on urban archaeology in Columbia, S.C., was based on her fieldwork at the Hampton Preston Mansion at Historic Columbia Foundation. Her research is the basis for the current exhibition, *Urban Archaeology in Columbia, South Carolina*, now on view in the third floor lobby. The exhibition and attendant programs are sponsored by a grant from the South Carolina Humanities Council.

PREPARING FUTURE PROFESSIONALS:

Museum Webinar Series

The Museum Management Program does not limit itself to classroom instruction for our current students. We are here to serve the continuing education needs of our colleagues as well. To that end, McKissick Museum is inviting you to participate with us in the American Association of Museums' Museum Essentials Webinar Series. Come join our group as we watch, listen, and participate in a discussion of today's current issues.

We meet in room 306 (classroom) on the third floor of the museum. The Webinar schedule and topics are listed below. For a full description of each program, please visit the American Association of Museums' Web site at www.aam-us.org.

Museum Essentials Webinar Series

In collaboration with the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) and AAM Standing Professional Committees (SPCs); sponsored by LearningTimes

Audience Research and Evaluation: Why it Matters Now More Than Ever

Sept. 23, 2009, 2–3:30 p.m.

Led by Christine Reich, Manager of Informal Education Research and Evaluation, Museum of Science, and Steven Yalowitz, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Learning Innovation

HR Basics: Evaluating and Coaching Employees

Oct. 21, 2009, 2–3:30 p.m.

Led by Ellen Corradini, Director of Human Resources, The Corning Museum of Glass, and Charlotte Montgomery, Director of Resource Allocation, Illinois State Museum

Project Management Basics

Nov. 4, 2009, 2–3:30 p.m.

Led by Myriam Springuel, President, Springuel Consulting, Sarasota, Fla.

MUSEUM RECEIVES CONSERVATION BOOKS

Treasured objects and artifacts held by the McKissick Museum will be preserved for future generations with help from the IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf, a core set of conservation books and online resources donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS has now awarded almost 3,000 free sets of the IMLS Bookshelf, in cooperation with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

"At McKissick Museum our collections care needs are based on the condition of our facility, our desire to better preserve our holdings, and our goal of meeting the research requests of our audience through new media and technology. We have developed a multifaceted plan with which we need technical assistance. The resources available through the IMLS Bookshelf fill that need."

–Lynn Robertson, Executive Director

Looking for Alumni!

The Certificate in Museum Management Program is looking to reconnect with our graduates. If you are a graduate of the program, please contact Lana Burgess (lburgess@mailbox.sc.edu) so we can add you to our alumni database and possibly feature you in an upcoming newsletter.

2009 Art Department Exhibition

This year McKissick will once again host the biennial art department faculty exhibition. This 30-year partnership between the museum and the art department has produced a series of exciting exhibitions that highlight the current work of faculty. This year 19 artists submitted examples of their work, from which a panel of jurors selected one per artist for the exhibition. This showing is an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about the individual interests of their teachers as well as for the public to see and purchase works by some of the state's best artists. Included are various forms of media such as painting, photography, film and digital formats, sculpture, and ceramics.

The art department faculty exhibition will be on view until Jan. 9, 2010.

Top: Mana Hewitt, Ink x 3 (triptych), Acrylic on paper with gold leaf, 2009

Left: Joan Podd, Coast of Carolina, Acrylic and hand-painted paper collage, 2008

Right: Stephanie Nace, Temptation. Handmade apple paper with stitching, 2007

Collections News

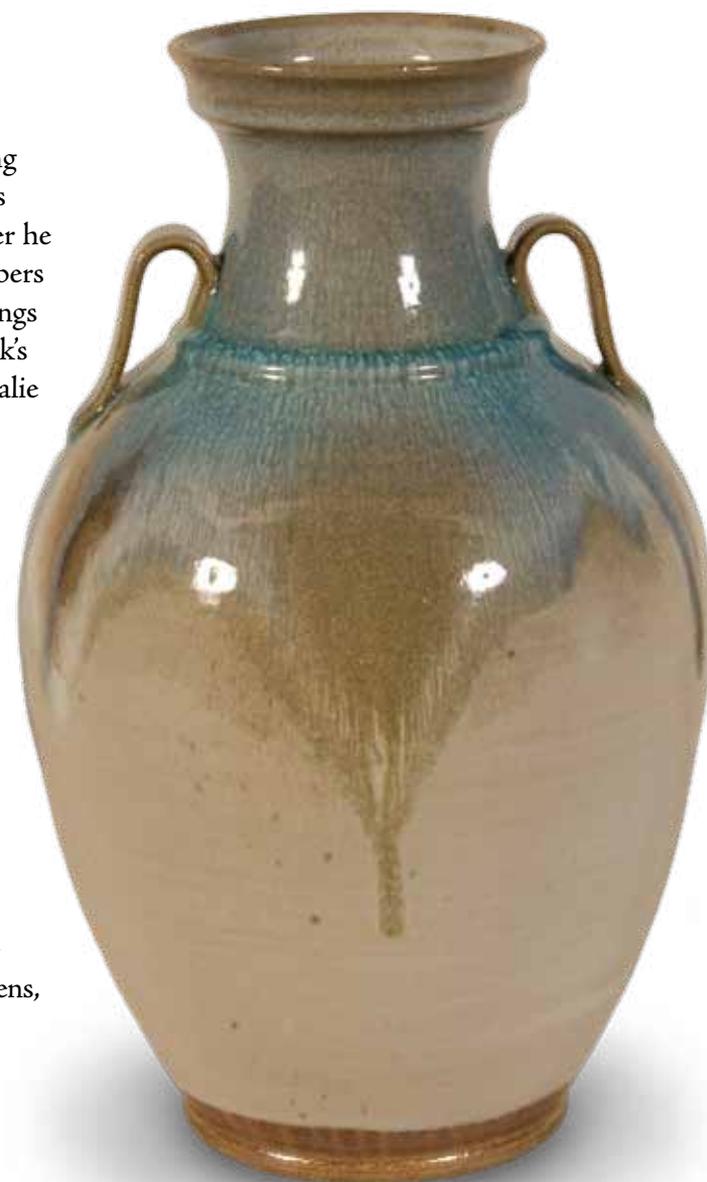
McKissick Museum has several new objects to add to the permanent collection. In May, our collections curator, Jill Koverman, successfully obtained four items at an auction of the collection of Florence and William Griffin. The Griffins were longtime students and collectors of Southern material culture, particularly items from Georgia and South Carolina. They traveled the Southeast tirelessly looking for bits of the past that they could save, and their collecting efforts served as a resource for numerous museum exhibitions.

McKissick obtained two Albany slip coffee pots from Crawford County, Ga. These provide a visible and documentable link between the potters and traditions of South Carolina and Georgia. Only a few such pots from the 19th century Southern potteries survive. A blue-and-white wool and linen woven coverlet was also purchased from the collection. This is an area in which McKissick has been hoping to expand. Woven in the "Methodist Wheel" or "Whig Rose" pattern, this was purchased by the Griffins in the Augusta, Ga., area in 1978. A small painted slab table from South Carolina was the final purchase. Made of yellow pine with a painted vine and leaf decoration on the skirt and legs, it is a perfect example of simple, handmade, utilitarian furniture.

Retired USC professor Charles Mack, a noted art historian and author of *Francis Lieber*

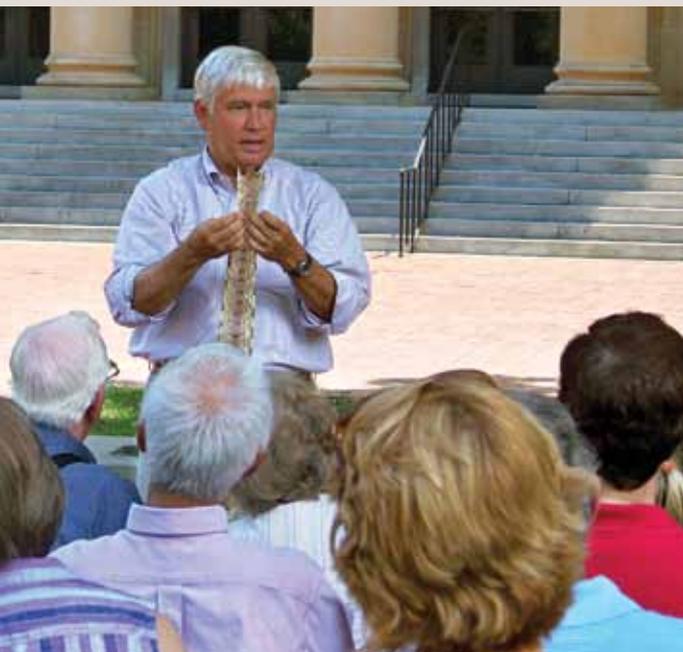
and the Culture of the Mind, helped to bring two important portraits to the University's collections. Through his research on Lieber he began a correspondence with family members and discovered the existence of two paintings in a collection on the West Coast. At Mack's request, Lieber's great-granddaughter Natalie Humphries donated the images of the famous scholar and his wife, Matilda, to McKissick Museum.

James and Susan Witowski donated three pieces of North Carolina pottery to the museum earlier this year. In working with museum staff and the institution's plan for future collections acquisitions, Mack was aware that works by young traditional potters was a high priority. While visiting the Jugtown Pottery in Seagrove, N.C., he successfully approached Travis Owens about acquiring a piece to be donated to the McKissick permanent collection. Travis, the son of master potters Vernon and Pam Owens, has been turning since he was two years old. At the age of 24, he is one of the most skilled potters of the upcoming generation. In addition to the Owens piece, the Witowskis also donated a pair of chrome green pouch vases made in the 1940s at the Cole Pottery, also in Seagrove, N.C. These large and impressive forms with elongated necks and applied "rope" handles are 24 inches in height.



Travis Owen, 2009, Jugtown Ware, Stoneware vase with Dogwood White glaze with Copper Chrome overglaze, Gift of James and Susan Witowski

The Nature of Things Fall Nature Talk



Rudy Mancke displaying one of several animal skins during the summer lecture.

Have you ever wondered why animals behave differently in the fall or noticed the change in foliage? To satisfy your curiosity, McKissick Museum created The Nature of Things with Rudy Mancke, a series of public lectures and events in conjunction with the vernal and autumnal equinoxes and the summer and winter solstices. Mancke's talks are free and open to the public. The public is encouraged to bring items—but not live animals—for him to review and discuss.

Mancke is synonymous with nature in South Carolina. He is best known for producing and appearing in SCETV's *NatureScene*, a nationally syndicated television program on which he appeared for 23 years.

McKissick Museum is well known for its natural history holdings and for the permanent exhibit *Natural Curiosity: USC and the Evolution of Scientific Inquiry into the Natural World*, which it opened in late 2007. *Natural Curiosity* explores man's relationship with the natural world through the process of collecting and displaying natural specimens and artifacts. The exhibit covers 1,200 square feet and houses more than 1,000 specimens that have been gathered during the University's more than 200 years of existence.

The lecture is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2009, at noon at McKissick Museum. Grab some lunch and join us for an entertaining and educational hour as we explore the plants and animals of autumn.

Exhibits

Natural Curiosity: USC and the Evolution of Scientific Inquiry into the Natural World

A semi-permanent installation

Southern Satire: The Illustrated World of Jak Smyrl

August 8, 2009–January 23, 2010

The Biennial Department of Art Faculty Exhibition

August 22, 2009–January 9, 2010

Urban Archaeology in Columbia, South Carolina

August 15, 2009–January 16, 2010

Grass Roots: African Origins of an American Art

February 13–May 8, 2010

SAVE THE DATE

Grass Roots Opening Reception

Friday, February 12, 2010

Please visit www.cas.sc.edu/mcks for additional details.



College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Telling the Story of Southern Life ...

Community, Culture, and the Environment



The McKissick Museum is located at the head of the University of South Carolina's historic Horseshoe in the heart of campus. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The museum is open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. McKissick is closed on Sundays. Metered parking is available on all adjacent streets and in the lower level of Pendleton Street Garage.

A number of volunteer opportunities are available at the McKissick Museum. Call 803-777-7251 for information on membership, tours, programs, and exhibits. Visit us on the Internet at www.cas.sc.edu/mcks.

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