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Under the Dome - January 1999

McKissick Museum--University of South Carolina

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UNDER *the* DOME

JANUARY 1999

South Carolina art instructor and artist, Catherine Rembert Phillips. Just in time to be included in the *"I made this jar"... The Life and Works of the Enslaved African-American Potter, Dave* exhibition, two rare examples of historic Edgefield face vessels were also donated to the Museum.

The Collections Increase in 1998

Taking advantage of a beautiful afternoon and a "Horseshoe" full of regional craftspeople, the McKissick staff added many wonderful objects to the Museum's collections during last year's Fall Folklife Festival. The Folklife Festival always provides an excellent opportunity for Museum visitors and McKissick staff to meet and talk with local potters, basket makers, quilters and woodcarvers. People often think of museums as only collecting 'old' things but as part of McKissick's mission to encourage the continuation of traditional crafts, it is important for the Museum to collect works by southeastern artisans and to document how they make these objects.

Among the objects acquired for the permanent collection are a large face vessel from King's Pottery in Seagrove, North Carolina; a pair of "Greenwing teal" duck decoys from decoy carver Tom Boozer, a South Carolina Folk Heritage Award recipient; an incised earthenware bowl by Cherokee potter Melissa Maney; and a slip-decorated, alkaline-glaze jar by Edgefield potter, Stephen Ferrell. We also added two intricately carved wooden canes, one by Charles Williams, a Heritage Award recipient, and the other by Vernon Edwards of Savannah, Georgia. In past Folklife Festivals, the Museum has taken the opportunity to build its collections of sweetgrass baskets, quilts and Catawba pottery.

While it does seem like the Museum collection grew quite a bit in one day, McKissick actively collects throughout the year. Many of these acquisitions come from donations. Just in the last six months, the Museum received a very large collection of political memorabilia primarily from the presidential campaigns of Richard M. Nixon and a political whisky flask commemorating the 1849-1850 presidency of Zachary Taylor. McKissick staff, including our volunteers, have also recently donated items to the collection. Upon her departure for another museum position, curator Jane Przybysz gave the Museum a circa 1930s ring-variation quilt that has a unique color scheme of coral, yellow and green. Special events coordinator, Robert Kennedy, presented the Museum with two pieces of his own pottery and collections volunteer, Jeannie Castle, graciously donated a collection of beautiful "crazy" quilt squares embroidered by members of her family. Other recent gifts include one of North Carolina potter Billy Ray Hussey's famous earthenware lion figures and three early landscape paintings by the former University of

One or both of these newly acquired face vessels will also be featured in another upcoming McKissick exhibition tentatively titled *Making Faces: Demystifying the Southern Face Vessels*. Scheduled to open July 2000 this exhibit will explore the regional "face jug" traditions against the backdrop of the universal face vessel morphology. Once again, guest curator Jill Beute Koverman will team up with McKissick staff to research the subject and plan the exhibit. In February, McKissick will submit a grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund a major portion of the exhibit fabrication and the accompanying educational programming. ♦

Ceramic lion figure, donated to McKissick by potter Billy Ray Hussey.



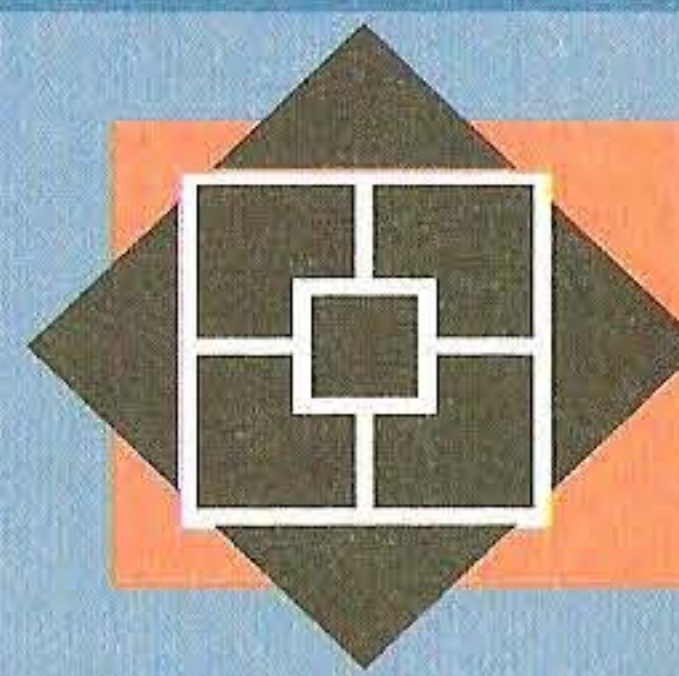
McKissick Museum proudly announces our seventh annual fundraiser, *The Splendor of the Box*. This unique event combines individual imaginative artistry with the simplistic or elaborate interpretation of our theme. The fundraiser will be held on Friday, April 23, 1999 from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. at the Museum. The evening gala includes a cocktail buffet and auction of "box" themed artworks by local artists. Join us in honoring gala hosts Sam and Toni Elkins as we celebrate this festive evening of art, music, food and fun.

We are also lucky this year to have the time and talent of many people from the community helping. This year's Art Committee Chair is R. Scot Hockman. Scot is a local school teacher and artist. Ellen Woodoff is creating the invitation. A select group of local, regional and national artists are

being invited to share their artwork. The box theme can be incorporated into a painting, photo, drawing, sculpture, or jewelry — any medium the artist chooses. An exhibition of all the entries will be on view from March 21 to April 23, 1999.

The art works will be offered for auction during the evening gala on Friday, April 23, 1999. Bidding will take place on individual bid sheets. Artists will receive 25% of the realized amount from the sale of each piece. 75% will go to the McKissick Endowment Fund to support acquisitions and exhibitions.

Woodworker Clark Ellefson's "box" from the 1998 exhibition



The Splendor of the Box

All monies raised will benefit McKissick's endowment which assures that the Museum will be able to continue providing educational programs and cultural exhibitions for the public. Over the past six years the Museum endowment has grown from a modest first donation of \$500 to now just over \$100,000. Much of this has come from the annual gala and other fundraising activities undertaken by the McKissick staff and Advisory Council. As McKissick continues to grow and serve the arts in South Carolina your participation is essential to our success.

We will be making some changes in the gala. In past years, the auction was held at the beginning of the exhibition. This year, the gala will be just before the show closes. This decision was made for many reasons. Having the exhibit up first will allow guests to view the artwork beforehand and fall in love with pieces. Guests who purchase pieces will be able to take them home the night of the auction. And separating the receipt of the artwork and setting up for the party will be much easier on the staff. Another change is that participating artists will now receive a complimentary one year membership to the Museum in addition to two complimentary tickets to the gala.

Last year's gala was hosted by Ken and Lucille Winger and was our most successful fundraiser in the Museum's history. The 1999 gala promises to be just as successful. The Council, staff and volunteers at McKissick hope you will be able to join us. Tickets for *The Splendor of the Box* are \$40 per person and \$75 per couple. Please contact Ethyl at 777-7251 with any questions or for further information. ♦

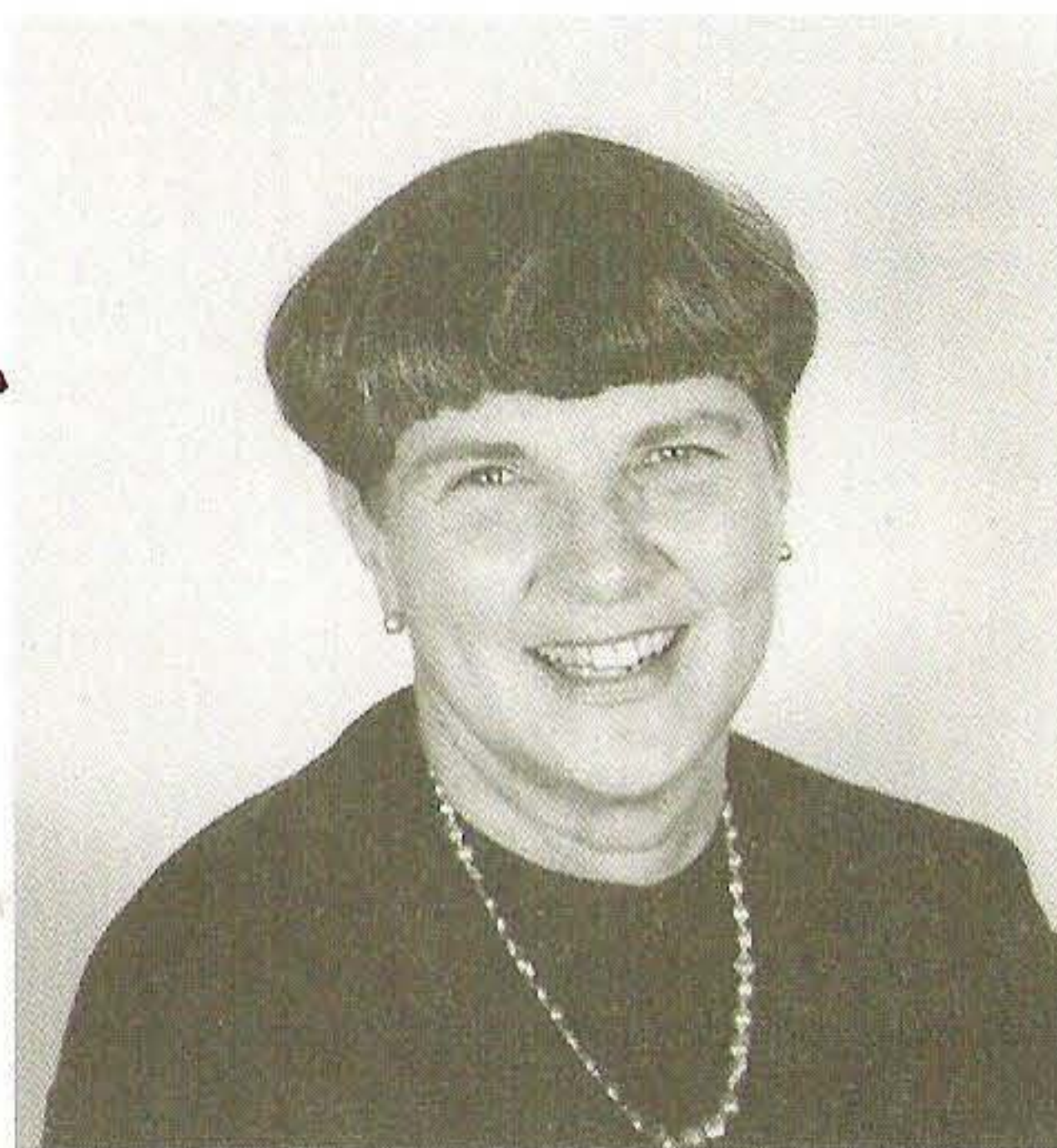
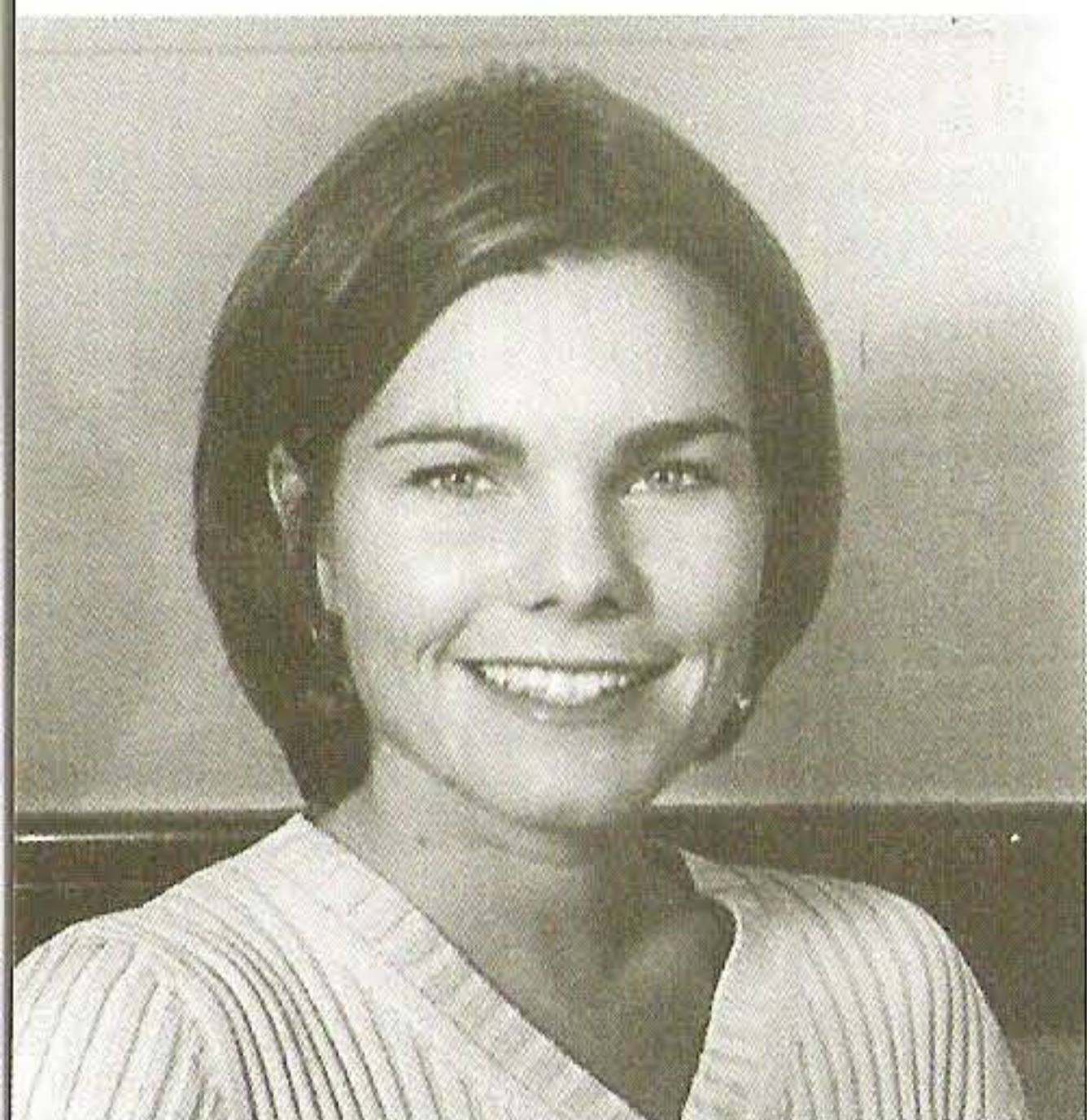
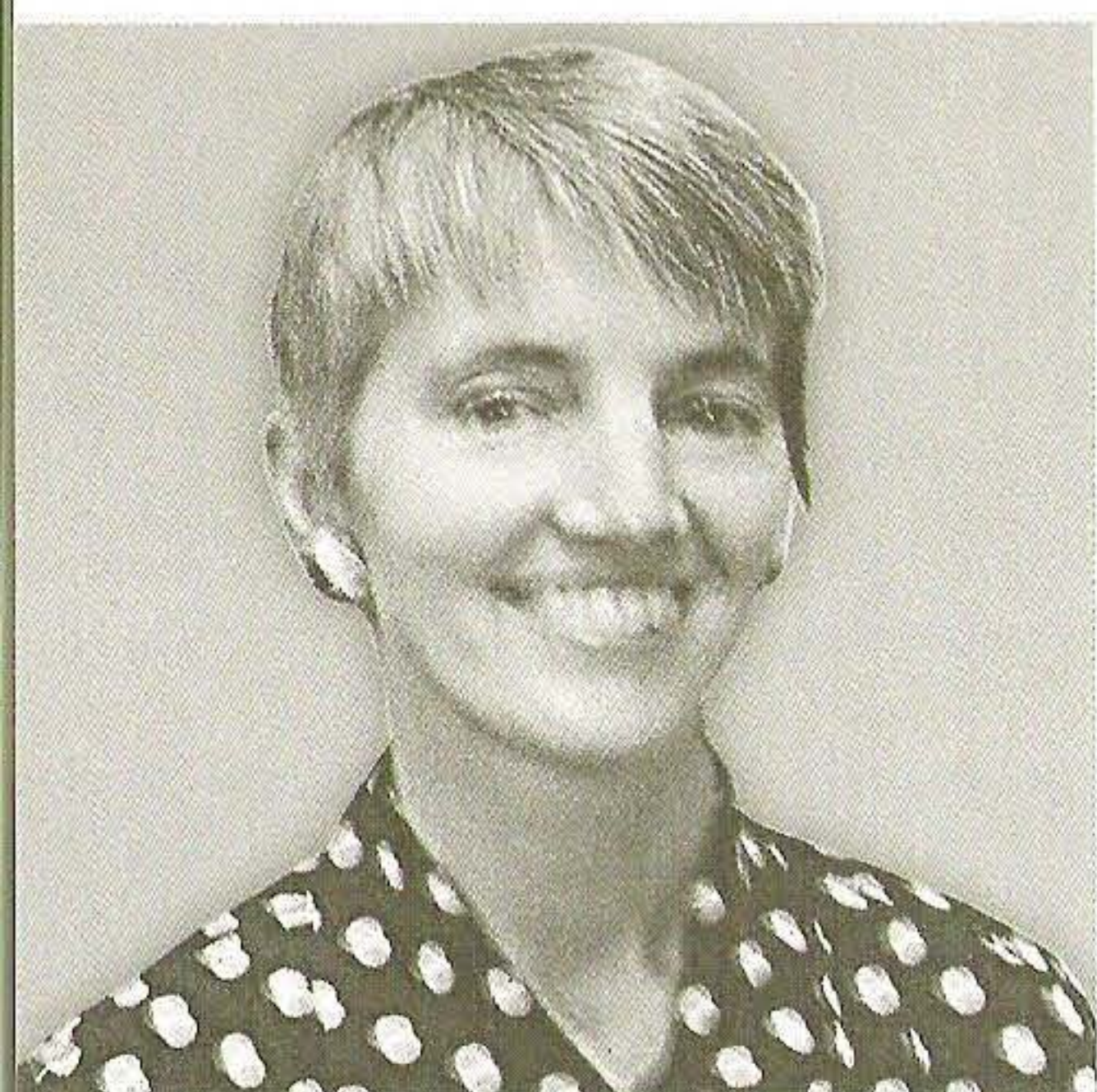
McKissick's Comings & Goings

A number of significant staff changes have occurred at the Museum over the past three months.

Jane Przybysz, who has served as the chief curator for research and folklife, has been named as director of the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles. Her departure for California last October came after working at McKissick for six years. Jane came to the Museum as the first principal investigator on the Crafts Revival Project. After spending a year conducting research at archives and museums throughout the South, she stayed to replace Doug DeNatale as the head of the Folklife and Material Culture Program at McKissick. She most recently directed the museum's segment of the Jewish Heritage Project to document and exhibit 300 years of Jewish history and folk arts in South Carolina. Jane's enthusiasm, intellect and dedication will be greatly missed by all. Her deep knowledge of quilting and women's history will serve her well in her new position and everyone wishes her continued successes.

Robert Kennedy, the coordinator for the museum's advisory council and the membership development program moved to Atlanta following the completion of his MFA degree in creative writing. His career at McKissick for the past two and a half years was marked by his keen sense of how to organize Council events. Good food, great decorations and people having fun was always the mark of one of his projects, whether a serious event or a celebration. He coordinated last year's annual gala and the foodways segment of the 1998 Fall Folklife Festival. We are pleased to welcome aboard Ethel Bunch, who will be taking over Rob's responsibilities.

Another new face at McKissick is Mary Evans, docent coordinator. Mary takes over the docent corps from Rhonda Melogy who has accepted a graduate assistantship as she completes a degree in Art Education. An experienced museum volunteer and educator, Mary will also oversee museum tour services as well as provide public information to media on the many programs and events at McKissick. ♦





The project on face vessels prompted the generous donation of two exemplary examples of these to the Museum by James and Jean Barrow. Made in Edgefield, South Carolina, during the 19th century, these two objects are significant additions to the McKissick ceramics collection. Another important addition to these holdings was the purchase of a large jar by Dave inscribed to "John Monday" and made in 1857. Over a dozen other new works were purchased or donated. Two paintings by Jonathan Green featured in "I made this jar..." were added to the permanent collection as well as a lithograph from *The Middle Passage* by Tom Feelings.

In addition to exhibition-based collecting, Museum staff worked to expand the holdings in contemporary folk art, and especially document those South Carolina artists who have been awarded the State's Folk Heritage Award. These include works by Billy Ray Hussey, Charles Williams, Tom Boozer, Melissa Maney and Stephen Ferrell.

A large number of public programs were presented throughout the year. There was a strong emphasis on participatory events. A new series of traditional craft workshops provided instruction on making gourd bowls, straw brooms, sweetgrass baskets, and Kudzu paper. The major traditional arts presentation of the year, however, was the fifth annual Fall Folklife Festival. Attracting about 2,500 people on a sunny October day, this event celebrated the ingenuity and preserving spirit of Southerners who have found so many ways to have their say. The festival presented 38 visual artists, musicians, food producers, storytellers and demonstrators. This event provided an opportunity for face

to face interaction between visitors and presenters, who learned from each other and explored common interests. It was heavily attended by many family groups as were the Scarecrow Making Workshop, the Children's Holiday Craft Workshop and the summer camps. A symposium featuring several national scholars was staged in conjunction with the "Dave" exhibition. It explored issues of race, history, language and creativity. Not all educational programs focused on traditional crafts, however, the 1998-1999 Southern Circuit Film Festival

got underway in September. This partnership project with the Columbia Film Society is now in its third year.

The past year was another eventful one for the Museum's advisory council. In the spring boxes took the place of sea shells for the annual gala fundraiser. *The Splendor of the Box*, hosted by Ken and Lucille Winger, raised a record amount for the Museum's endowment account. Over 400 people attended the event and bid on boxes and artworks created by donor artists. The Council cookbook *Fanfare: Tailgating with the Gamecocks* entered its second printing.



As an academic unit within the University of South Carolina, McKissick serves as a teaching facility for students. The graduate-level program in Museum Management continued to expand with enrollment increasing by twenty percent. Students received research and travel grants as well as served in internships at such institutions as the Smithsonian and Colonial Williamsburg. Graduates of this program are now working in museums throughout the eastern United States and a few as far away as Utah and California.

Many of the activities undertaken by Museum staff during the year were supported by a general operating support grant from the Institute of Museum and Library services, a federal agency. A generous award for 1998 and 1999 has supported important projects that would have been beyond the budgetary limitations of McKissick. These include collections computerization and the creation of a web site for the "Dave" project, a new security system and enhanced collections storage. ❖



FALL FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL

The past year was one in which both folk and fine art excelled at

McKissick Museum. Starting in January with the opening of *Painting An American Eden* featuring the works of visionary and landscape painter Earl Cunningham on loan from collectors Michael and Marilyn Mennello, 1998 presented a strong line up of varied exhibitions culminating in USC alumni Tom Stanley's *en route to hamlet* a painting series derived from Southern roadside imagery. Other presentations included a vivid display of *Mexican Folk Masks* from the collections of Jean and Richard Kellaway as well as German and American folk pottery in *Two Traditions in Transition*.

Three major exhibitions drawn from museum research opened during the year. "I made this jar: "

The life and works of the enslaved African-American potter, Dave contained 25 works by the poet and potter we now know as David Drake.

Among the ceramics exhibited were several that had not been seen in a public presentation. "Dave" is traveling to museums in Atlanta, Detroit and Winterthur in 1999.

An Elegance Rediscovered: The Figurative Paintings of Henry Salem Hubbell was the product of over six years of work by curator Jay Williams to identify and assemble a comprehensive selection of this forgotten American Impressionist. A member of the artists' colony at Monet's Giverny, Hubbell returned to the United States. He established a studio in Miami, Florida which was then one of America's newest self-made resort cities. In conjunction with the exhibition, noted author and scholar William Gerds spoke to an enthusiastic audience on the fa-

mous French art colony. Another Florida artist, Maybelle Stamper, was also the focus of an exhibition. Her complete "songs," a series of intricate and deeply self-revelatory graphic works were publicly presented for the first time.

The Museum's traveling exhibition program circulated two McKissick projects to other museums. Tom Feelings' *The Middle Passage*, his powerful renderings of the Atlantic slave trade, entered its second year on national tour.

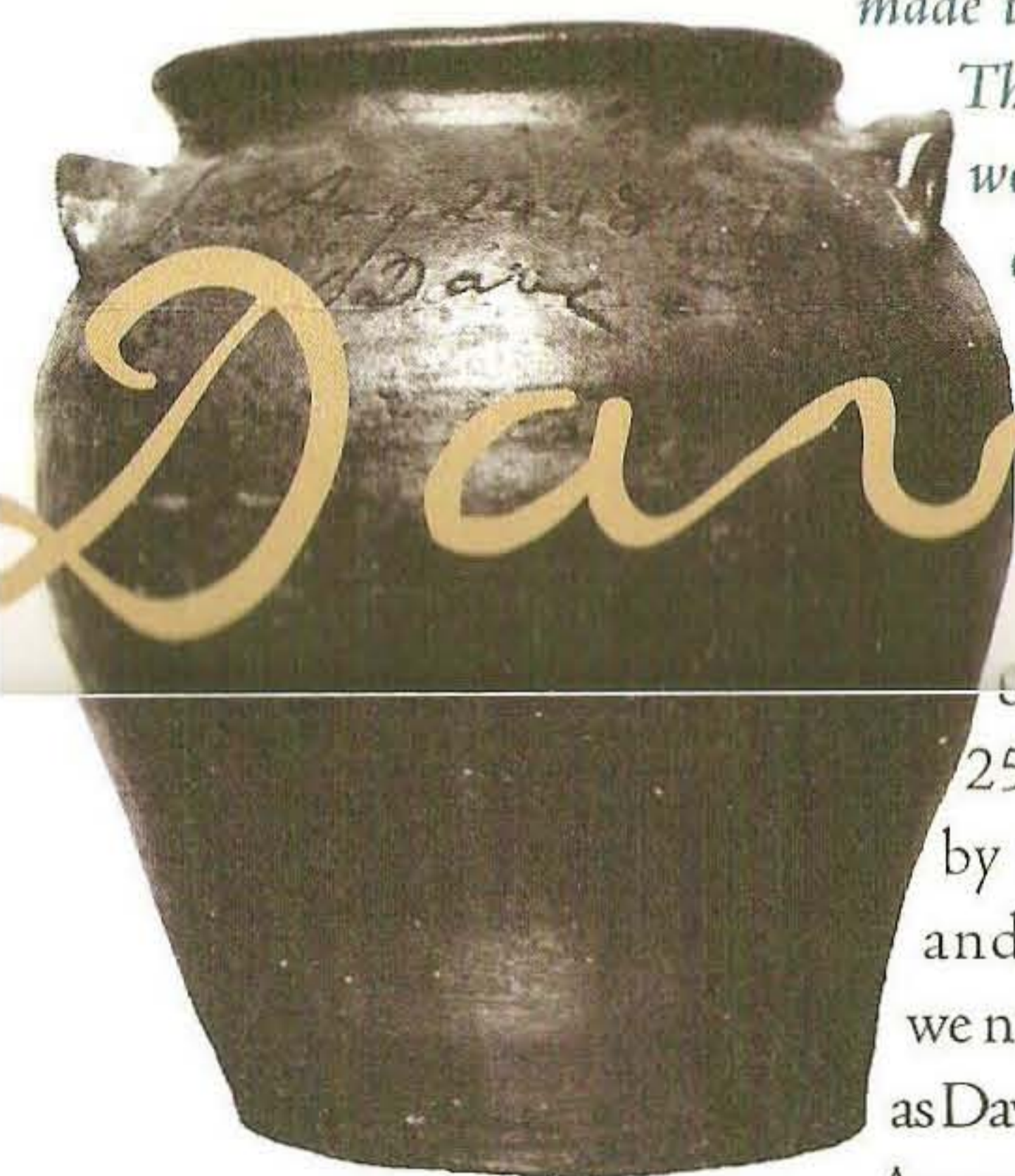
Roman Remains: John Izard Middleton's Visual Souvenirs of 1820-1823 was on view at the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston during the fall.

Each of these major exhibitions originated by the Museum staff was the result of extensive research. A number of important research projects that will lead to future exhibitions are now underway.

The Jewish Heritage Project was funded for a second year by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Based on what is now four years of fieldwork by curator and researcher Dale Rosengarten, over 100

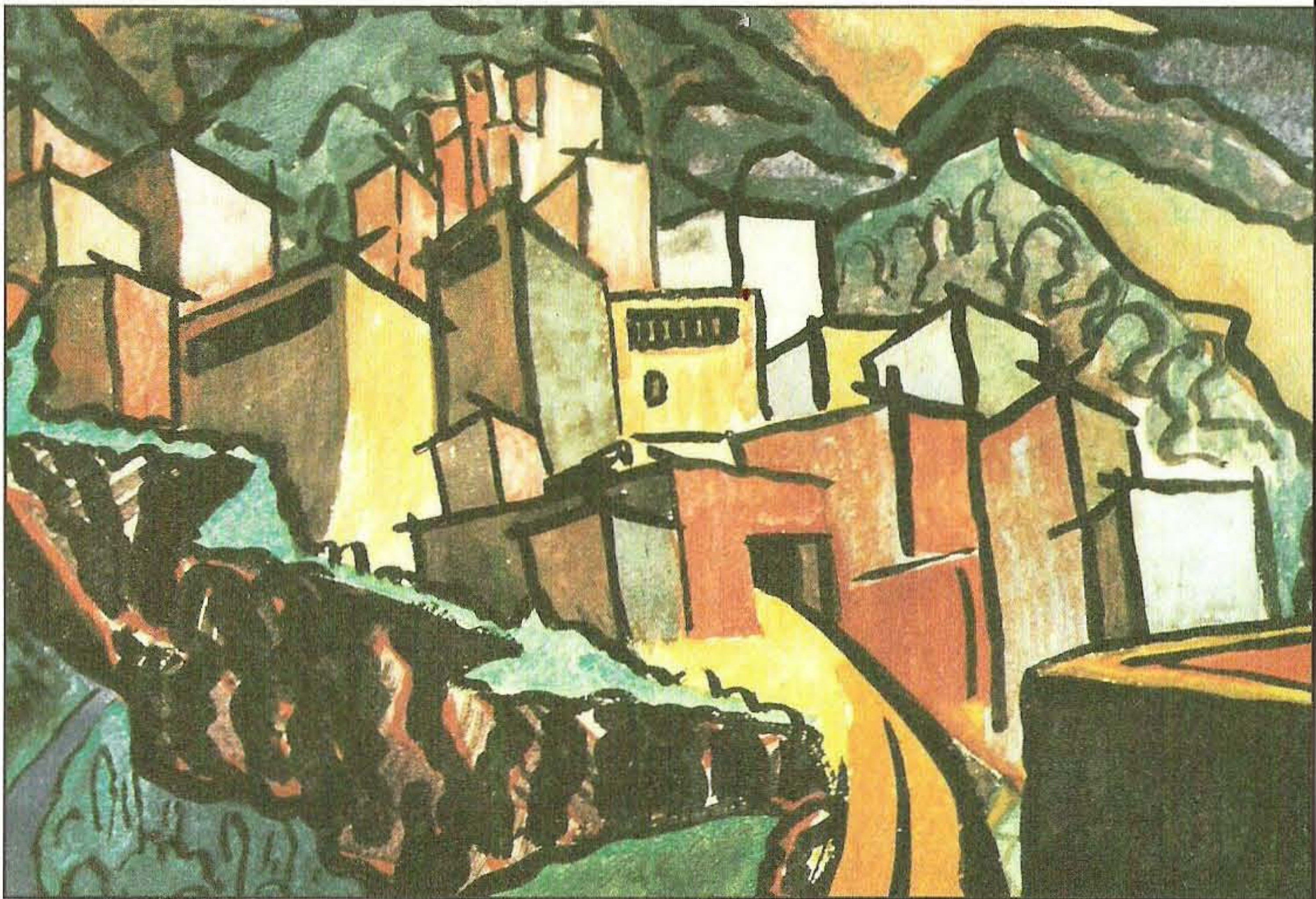
oral histories, and assistance from a team of national consultants, the resulting exhibition will chart 300 years of Jewish life in South Carolina and open in 2000. This has been a challenging and rewarding joint project undertaken by McKissick, the South Carolina Jewish Historical Society and the College of Charleston.

Another research effort that will premier in a 2000 exhibition has involved tracing the origins and evolution of American ceramics called "face jugs." These anthropomorphic oddities have long been associated with the South and linked to African origins. Collections manager Karen Swager and guest curator Jill Beute Koverman have been working to identify historical examples of this form and establish an evolution of its style and places of manufacture.

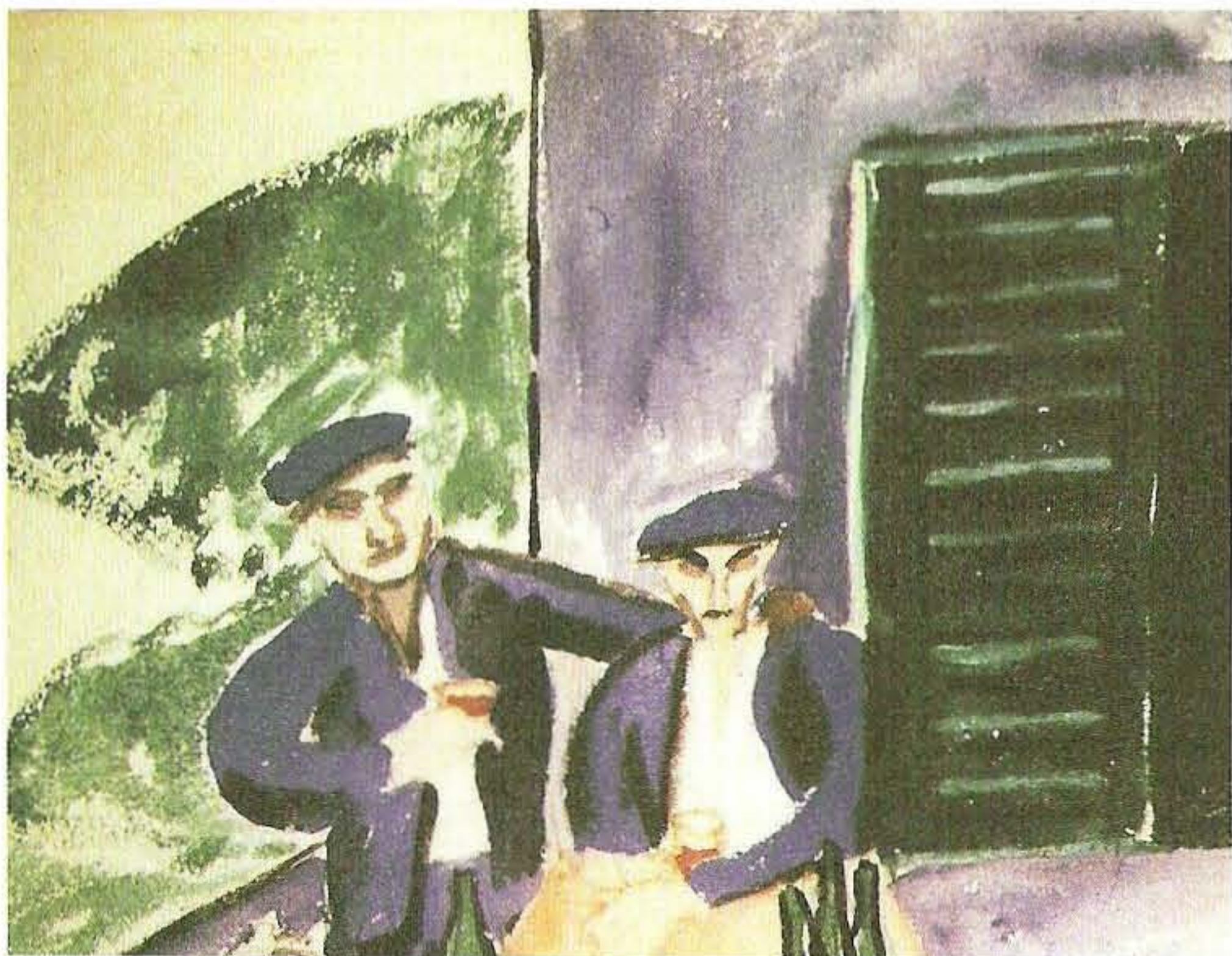


COLORS THAT WILL NOT FADE: WATERCOLORS BY JOHN DOS PASSOS

Novelist John Dos Passos created vivid modernist watercolor paintings throughout his lifetime. Previously unknown, they will be shown at McKissick from March 14 through April 4, 1999—the first exhibition of these works outside New York City. Best known for his *U.S.A. Trilogy* (1930, 32 and 36), Dos Passos is acknowledged to be one of the most important 20th Century American writers. The exhibition will include 50 of his finest colorist works, exploring the forms of Constructivism, Surrealism and Expressionism. The paintings have been selected from Lucy Dos Passos Coggins' collection of her father's art work.



Above: John Dos Passos, *Untitled (Landscape with Buildings)*, ca. 1927. Left: *Untitled (Figures)*, ca. 1927. Photographs courtesy of Lucy Dos Passos Coggins.



Dos Passos' interest in visual art had been fueled by an encounter with Renaissance Italian painting in Italy, while he served as an ambulance driver during World War I. In Paris after the armistice, he discovered the works of Picasso, Cezanne and other Modernists. During his fifty-year career as a professional writer, Dos Passos completed 42 books and also created around 400 works of visual art.

Although the public knew Dos Passos primarily as a novelist during the 1920s and 30s, Dos Passos achieved some fame as a visual artist in his lifetime. His works were shown at the National Arts Club in New York in 1922, at the Whitney Studio Club in 1923, and in group shows of the Salons of America at Anderson Galleries in 1924, 1925, 1927 and 1928, and at Rockefeller Center in 1934.

Richard Layman, who organized the recent New York exhibition of Dos Passos' watercolors, wrote in the exhibition catalog: "For Dos Passos, art was an obligation fueled by passion. It was his duty as an artist, he felt, to record both the objective and subjective reality of specific moments and to express them in a form that conveyed the spirit of his time." ❖



1999 Faculty and Student Art Exhibitions

From January 31 through February 28, 1999, members of the teaching faculty of the Art Department will once again be exhibiting their recent works at McKissick Museum. Dedicated to teaching as well as their own disciplines these faculty members create wide-ranging studio works, and exhibit research products in art education and art history. Included, of course, are members of the Media Arts division, whose works add a non-traditional dimension to the media represented.

Faculty exhibitions have a long tradition in the art world where the instruction of students and the pursuit of professional accomplishment often have been the dual duties of master artists. In the 19th Century Academies of Europe, professional artists of the highest quality were given the security of state support that allowed them to pursue their creative work, with the expectation that they would take on promising students free of charge. All of the greatest academic artists of France for example—artists such as Thomas Couture, Jean-Leon Gerome, and Leon Bonnat—gave instruction to pupils in their teaching studios, viewing their roles as teachers with the utmost sincerity. No French Academician, even the most well known such as Adolph-William Bouguereau, shunned teaching as a role and responsibility. From their ateliers emerged several generations of artists, among them many Americans, whose skills and achievements were of the highest quality.

Even though the contemporary American system of supporting artists and art instruction differs from the European model of the mid-19th Century,

university faculty members carry on the tradition of linking professional achievement in the visual arts with the training of the next generation of professional artists. Please attend this year's faculty exhibition to help celebrate this high calling.

Once again museum visitors can look forward to seeing new and exciting work which takes place within our University art department. The Student Art Exhibition showcases some of the finest work produced by advanced undergraduate and graduate students in the studio art department. As always the student show is a gift of innovation, experimentation, surprise, concept and skill. Indeed, it demands the observer's total engagement. This year's show is no exception and presents works ranging in style and media from traditional to cutting-edge.

Included are paintings, drawings, sculpture, photography, ceramics, jewelry, fiber arts, printmaking, graphic design and illustration, as well as large scale ceramic sculpture and computer generated photographs. Performance, environmental, video and/or conceptual works can also be counted on.

The Student Art Exhibition, organized by faculty coordinator Virginia Scotchie, comprises faculty-selected works by undergraduate students, and self-selected works by the Master of Fine Art candidates. A public reception for the artists will be held at McKissick from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, February 25. ❖

✿Just For Kids✿

February 6 / Valentine's Workshop for Kids
1:00-3:00pm
\$5 per member child, \$7 per non-member child
All materials provided
Pre-registration suggested
Ages 6 and up

March 20 / Junk Birdhouse Making Workshop
1:00-3:00pm
\$8 per member child, \$10 per non-member child
All materials provided
Advance registration limited to 20, ages 8 and up

April 10 / USC Showcase
The Splendor of the Box for Kids (all ages)
1:00-3:00pm
All materials provided, Free

May 1 / Back to the Past: Hunter-Gatherer Skills
Led by Tom Mancke
12:00-4:00pm
\$8 per member child, \$10 per non-member child
All materials provided
Advance registration limited to 20, ages 10 and up

✿For Everyone✿

January 24 / Talk, Book Signing and Tea
by Anne Carter Zimmer, author of
The Robert E. Lee Family Cookbook and Housekeeping Book
1:00-3:00pm
Free, Cookbooks will be for sale

March 4 / Muse's Night Out: Fiction Reading
6:00-8:00pm
Cash Bar

April 8 / Muse's Night Out: Blues Concert
7:00-9:00pm
\$5 per member, \$8 per non-member, Cash Bar

✿Traditional Craft Workshops✿

February 20 / Decorative Gourd Bowl Making
Led by Elizabeth Ouzts
1:30-4:00pm
\$15 per person
Advanced registration limited to 20

March 13 / Braided Rug Making
Led by Lydia Marvin
1:00-5:00pm
\$15 per person
Advanced registration limited to 20

April 17 / Sweetgrass Basket Making
Led by Leola Wright
1:00-5:00pm
\$45 per person
Advanced registration limited to 12

✿Elegant Evenings✿

February 4 / USC Faculty Art Exhibition Reception
6:00-8:00pm
Free, Hors d'oeuvres and Cash Bar

February 25 / USC Student Art Exhibition Reception
6:00-8:00pm
Free, Hors d'oeuvres

✿No need to sit at home and watch the grass grow... Spring at McKissick is bursting with educational opportunities for adults and children of all ages! We are happy to announce the continuation of our very popular Traditional Crafts Workshop series and Muse's Night Out events, while adding a few new programs for kids. Take a look, we're sure you'll find something that's just right for you! For more information about any of these events or programs, please call Holly Mitchell at 777-7251.

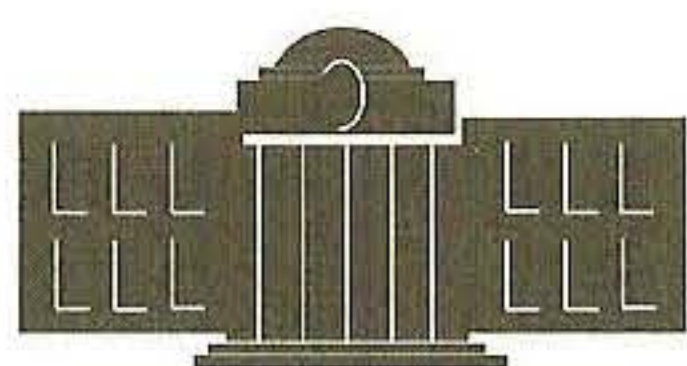
March 17 / John Dos Passos: Colors That Will Not Fade Reception
6:00-8:00pm
Members free, \$5 non-members
Hors d'oeuvres and Cash Bar

April 2 / USC International Digital Works on Paper Reception
6:00-8:00pm
7:00pm Gallery Talk by Charles Stainback
Free, Hors d'oeuvres

April 23 / The Splendor of the Box Gala Reception
7:00pm
\$40.00 per person, \$75.00 per couple
Over 100 participating artists
Bidding is from 7:00-9:30pm
Cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres

McKissick Museum

University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina 29208



The 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 9 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday, and weekends, 1 to 5 pm. Metered parking is available on all adjacent streets as well as in the lower level of the Pendleton Street Garage.

A number of volunteer opportunities are available at the museum. Call 777-7251 for additional information on membership, tours, programs, and exhibits. Visit our home page on the internet at: <http://www.cla.sc.edu/mcks/index.html>

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