

Artworks

Spring 2007

Sculpting the Ladies: An Interview with Joanne Gelin By Jeff Pierson

Doll maker Joanne Gelin from Huntington has just begun to create a series of dolls based on the First Ladies of West Virginia from Shelley Riley Moore to Gayle Manchin. The series is a continuation of a project that ceramic artist Edna Henderson launched in 1976. Gelin will continue the series working backwards starting with Gayle Manchin. Recently Joanne gave a lecture at the Governor's Mansion to legislative spouses about her career in the arts. After the lecture I sat down with Joanne to discuss her experiences with the First Lady doll series.



First Lady Gayle Manchin doll by Joanne Gelin with David Husband, mixed media, 2007.
photograph by Mike Keller

JP: What was your first experience in art?

JG: As a teenager, my father had been a pastel portrait artist. He dabbled in art with aspirations of becoming a professional artist. After serving in WWII, he discovered that the art world was focused on Modern art trends. Being a realist, it was difficult to make a living in art. He became a design engineer. As a child, I grew up drawing with him. There were always art materials available. My interest and ability, I feel, were enhanced by my early exposure to the creative process. I was always happiest with a scrap of paper and a new box of crayons, glue, Popsicle sticks and a shoebox.

My undergraduate degree is in Fine Arts. My graduate degree is in Art Education. My first professional art endeavor was as a bread dough sculptor: flour, salt and water. I began making Christmas ornaments for sale at regional arts and crafts festivals and museum shops. This sustained business continued for 14 years.

JP: How did you start your doll making?

JG: In 1991, I walked by an antique doll shop, Mimmi's Dolls, in downtown Huntington. Something compelled me to go in. When I inquired as to the price of a small tattered composition baby doll, the proprietor, Mimmi Mannon, replied, "It's free. He just needs a lot of love and a new home."

My insisting to pay was fruitless. "You don't understand," she said. "'Doll people' do things like this." To repay her kindness, I repaired the doll without jeopardizing the integrity of the piece. I left as much of the original surface as possible untouched by a new coat of paint. I returned the doll to Mimmi so she could sell it.

Mimmi was shocked. She refused to take the doll back. I was asked to return in a few days for a surprise. I was presented with a huge garbage bag filled with every challenge in doll repair. There were celluloid, composition, porcelain, rubber and plastic dolls. Limbs, fingers and eyes were missing. Cracks of all sizes and shapes and every possible problem were waiting for my attention. I was to repair as many as I could. The dolls were to be mine upon completion.

I jumped at the chance and challenge. Upon my return, Mimmi hired me to repair dolls as a service to her patrons. During this time, Mimmi shared her vast knowledge of dolls with me. One day, she informed me that there are artists who design their own dolls, "Artist Dolls." She provided me with doll trade magazines and encouraged

Sculpting the Ladies: An Interview with Joanne Gelin continued



Joanne Gelin with her creation just before speaking at the Governor's Mansion
photograph by Jeff Pierson

me to make my own doll. I made four perfectly horrible dolls that, at the time, we thought were WONDERFUL! I read profusely, attended doll shows in Cincinnati and Columbus. I found a doll artist agent in Chicago, Thomas Boland. I sent him pictures of my work. He advised certain changes for improvement. I had developed recognizable signature features in my style from the beginning. I sculpted the hair and shoes. There was something about the faces that distinguished them from others on the market at the time. I can't really explain it. I just stayed true to my instinct.

Within two months, Thomas Boland introduced my dolls at the International Toy Fair in New York. I was one of approximately 20-25 doll artists from the U.S., Europe and Australia represented by Thomas Boland and Co. We traveled annually with the group to shows in Chicago, Washington, DC, Santa Fe, and NYC. I remained with an agent for six years after which I represented myself. Many of us began exhibiting at private doll shows during Toy Fair week. We followed the show circuit.

JP: Can you talk about your first major project and how it affected your career?

JG: I was very fortunate to have had my dolls published in the trade magazines from the beginning of my career. The magazines published my work and shows 60 times in a 15-year period. Their support was really the catalyst for the sustenance of my career.

The first major professional accomplishment was a 1995 commission to design the cover of *Contemporary Doll Collector Magazine* with a feature article on my work. CDCM was one of the magazines

that Mimmi had given me to study. It was CDCM's first multi-cultural cover. I had become known for creating dolls of children of multi-racial and ethnic backgrounds. My dolls first appeared in publication in *Doll Reader Magazine*, 1993.

Doll collectors are faithful trade magazine followers. Exposure to the market through trade magazines places one's work immediately in an international market. Continuing publication in trade magazines was the most value component in establishing recognition in the field, thus had the greatest impact on sustaining my career.

In 1999, I was one of three WV artists invited to create an ornament for the White House Blue Room Christmas Tree Project. The challenge for doll artists was to create a doll of the historical character of our choice. I created a Charles Lindbergh portrait doll.

This was my first attempt at portrait/likeness sculpts. All previous dolls had been imaginary characters. The magazine published my article and photos of the experience of seeing the doll at the White House.

I was one of 13 artists invited by *Contemporary Doll Collector Magazine* to write an article in a series titled, "Inspiration to Creation" describing our individual approaches in the doll-making process.

Marie Osmond Doll Company purchased three of my designs for production. One has been produced but, as yet not officially introduced. They appear in her 25th anniversary book.

Commercial pieces are frowned upon by most one-of-a-kind collectors. Most of them began their collections with commercial dolls from their childhood. Artistically, they are not in the same category.

JP: What has been the most interesting doll that you have created?

JG: The last doll to have appeared in publication is Ivana, an artist's model. I began the doll while I was in graduate school. I took it into class periodically to let the other students see it as it developed. I no longer felt the pressure of a show or magazine deadline. I didn't care if it sold.



Joanne Gelin and David Husband discussing their collaboration on the doll.
photograph by Jeff Pierson

I took more time with it than I have ever allowed myself. I made it more challenging by creating a partially nude, full body sculpts. It has appeared in a magazine, but I have no desire to sell it.

Everyone who sees it says, "There is just something about it" that makes it special."

JP: This series of First Lady dolls are in a category of dolls which, in the "Doll World", are described as "Artist Dolls." What is an Artist Doll?

JG: An "Original Artist Doll" is a one-of-a-kind (or very small limited edition) doll sculpted or created by the artist who designs it. Generally, all aspects of the doll's production from sculpt to clothing design and props are executed by the artist... A "one-of-a-kind" designation guarantees the integrity of the piece just as it is implied with reference to an original oil painting. The descriptive phrase used to qualify these dolls is "the celebration of the doll, as art". They are high-end collectibles that ideally represent the ultimate in quality and refinement in the field.

JP: How do you capture someone in a doll?

JG: I don't know how others do this because in the past, I have avoided portraiture for many reasons, primarily because the subjects do not see themselves as others see them. Each of us has a visual impression of how we appear, and it is human nature to assume that others "see us" as we see ourselves.

It has been my observation over the years, that portrait artists have a particular insight and "gift" for capturing the essence of their subject. I never really



Ivana, artist-model, stone clay, one-of-a-kind.

felt that I had that gift, so I created imaginary characters. It was a safety net. Charles Lindberg was easy because it was a posthumous rendering! I relied on anecdotal materials in my research to capture a sense of his personality. It is very different when the subject is a living human being! I couldn't have had an easier subject than First Lady Manchin. She exudes personality and accessibility. I instinctively visualized the pose and expression in the first few moments of our first meeting. Posing the arms in an open position psychologically implies these traits. Gesture speaks louder than even facial expression. I was always impressed with Japanese dolls. Traditionally, they have no facial features and rely on gesture alone to "speak" their intended message. I incorporate this technique in my sculpture, and I think that it is instrumental in breathing "life" into my work.

JP: You worked very closely with the first lady, how did the direct communication with the first lady help the process?

JG: Having had the opportunity to work with First Lady Manchin has been wonderful. She has truly made this project so easy. We consulted at various stages to develop an image that she would feel truly comfortable about representing her personality, her legacy. The staff personnel of the Museum and the First Lady have gone above and beyond to provide the research materials necessary to complete this endeavor.

This commission has afforded me the opportunity to continue as a production artist while teaching. I think that the opportunity to continue to produce my own art while teaching art enhances my ability to be a better teacher. I have discovered that it is possible to pursue both passions. I know other artists do both, but I never thought that to be possible. I was wrong. It is the best of both worlds!

The best part of this project is that I was able to include my students in this project. The First Lady generously took the time to visit me and my students at Salt Rock Elementary for her first critique! We were all thrilled! I had taken the doll into the classroom at various junctures to allow them to witness this venture. They have been ardent task masters. The journey will come full circle this month when my fifth grade students from Salt Rock Elementary will accompany me to Charleston to see the First Lady Manchin doll on exhibit at the Cultural Center! I can't wait to see their eyes.

JP: Each doll will include fashion. How do you select the costuming of the individual First Ladies?

JG: It is my impression the original intent was that the first ladies, should they so choose, donate their inaugural gowns to the West Virginia State Museum Collection. (First Lady Manchin did.) In conjunction with this donation, the dolls would be depicted wearing the replicas of their gowns on exhibit. Though this would add continuity to the overall exhibit, I feel that the first ladies should have a choice in the attire in which they choose their sculpted likenesses to appear. That decision is entirely up to the museum and the first ladies or their surviving families.

JP: On this project, each doll will be placed in an environment. How will you select the environment?

JG: Instead of "environment, I would describe it as using a "prop." The prop would reflect some aspect of each personality or an interest they supported while in the role of first lady. First Lady Manchin presently resides in the mansion. Her personality fills a room when she walks in. The welcoming grace and warmth of her demeanor is best reflected as we chose to portray her. The original suggestion was that of Commissioner Reid-Smith and I feel that it was a great idea. It just seemed the logical means of display for the first in the series. Since she is a former educator, I could have used an educationally-oriented theme as well to exemplify her endorsement of the 21st Century Learning Initiative

(something near and dear to my heart as an educator).

JP: Working on this project, will you be collaborating with David Husband of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History? How did this process work for the First Lady doll? How will David's talents be used in the series?

JG: David is unbelievably talented! It has been a joy working with him. David will be building all of the "environmental" props for the placement of the dolls on exhibit. He built a magnificent, exactly to scale model of the mansion staircase on which to place my rendering of First Lady Manchin. I knew from the first moment we spoke about this project that I had found more than my match in "stickler for detail." David's task will be to create the accessories that make my effort look good! I am used to executing all aspects of each of my dolls including the accessories and presentation props. I couldn't come close to the perfection found in his work. One of the greatest compliments that I have ever received about my work came from David who said that the First Lady Manchin doll is in good proportion!



David Husband of the WVDCH working on a scale replica of the Mansion stairs.



First Lady Gayle Manchin with her doll. photograph by Tracy Toler

"It was like capturing a moment in time in your life that was a wonderful experience, and to think that that moment has somehow been captured in history is pretty awesome."

– Gayle Manchin

Tribute to June Kilgore 1927- 2006

In December the West Virginia arts community lost one of its most treasured members. Charleston painter June Kilgore, died at age 79. Her influence as both a painter and teacher will live on through the artists that she has affected.



Black Garden Stone For Mediation (With Guardians): Transcendence

Mark Tobin Moore

I first knew June Kilgore as my graduate painting teacher at Marshall University, then as an artist during the year-long production of *June Kilgore: A Retrospective* at the West Virginia State Museum and, later as a friend and supporter of my own painting and academic efforts. During each stage I experienced a different person, but always a fair and giving one. June was not perfect. It is not my intention to portray her that way. If I tried to she would laugh out loud - of that I'm sure.

I began to know her better during my curatorial visits to her home when we would discuss and select so many of her works for the pending retrospective exhibition. Over coffee and obligatory pound cake or brownies she would often talk to me about her philosophy of life - just doing your best, having faith, and working... no matter what. And, as I would leave, she would often hand me expensive five-pound coffee table art books and say, "Take this for a while and just look at it for a few minutes a day. Then return it in a few months and I'll give you another one." Of course, a kind of knowing smile would follow - always the teacher. I would see that same smile when I asked her how she managed to keep such arduous studio hours. The simplest and most obvious answer to me was that June Kilgore was an artist, the real deal, and she breathed and painted simultaneously. She would never admit to such lofty praise, though.

I can only imagine her painting in her home studio. Not many of us ever actually get to see an artist "in the act" of applying paint to canvas. When I have tried to imagine June working on her large and intimidating



photograph by Mike Keller

canvases, I have envisioned not only the layering of her spectacular colors and the mystery of her unfolding images, but also the strain and pain caused by years of engaging in such labor. Painting is a physical act that demands more of artists as they age. Sometimes it just plain hurts. It takes guts to carry on and June had plenty. I will always be in awe of her stamina and courage. The famous "kings" of abstract expressionism - de Kooning and Pollack - have nothing on her.

I miss June, but it helps me now to also imagine her thriving in "Expressionist Heaven" with her husband, Ken, reliving past road trips, camping, painting, and still smiling that special smile...always the teacher.

Susan Poffenbarger

For a number of years I had heard much about June Kilgore's teaching abilities and I was familiar with her work in numerous exhibits.

Although my work differed from June's, I knew she had much to offer students. Her approach was abstract and mine realistic. However all art work encompasses the same elements: color, value, line, shape and space.

In the mid 1980's I enrolled at Marshall University for the sole purpose of studying with June. I was particularly interested in learning how to manipulate space. I stayed for several years and was never disappointed for a moment. June was a very giving person with a wonderful dry sense of humor. In subsequent years I studied in New York for a month at a time and I credit June with giving me the encouragement and confidence needed.

Thank you, June.

Caryl Toth

June's philosophy of painting, creation and life's joy of work in art were melded with my own philosophy, and enriched my development as a painter over many years. She was and still is my inspiration and mentor. As a teacher, June insisted that her students know and explore the rudiments of all basics of drawing, structure and color. Beyond that, she always pushed for continued growth and openness in all forms of art, search for the self in one's work and the importance that "not-knowing" plays in the perpetual journey of painting. And her standards were alive in her beautiful works; June practiced what she lived and taught.

West Virginia's gift to the world on exhibition



Richard Blenko speaking on the history and process of Blenko glass. photograph by Mike Keller

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History is celebrating a new exhibition, Blenko: West Virginia's Gift to the World. The exhibit will be on display in the Lobby Gallery and the north wing of the Balcony Gallery and consists of more than 100 pieces from the West Virginia State Museum Collection and the Huntington Museum of Art Collection. In addition, the company has several special edition pieces incorporated into the show.

This exhibition is a result of a partnership with Richard Blenko. Blenko is the fourth generation of the Blenko family to practice the art of antique glass making. Blenko Art Glass Company was founded in 1893 by William J. Blenko in Kokomo, Ind. William had worked in London glasshouses from the age of 13 and moved to the U.S. with the intention of starting the first glasshouse outside of Europe that could supply mouth blown sheet glass for stained glass windows. In 1921, he settled in Milton, W.Va., where the company is located today. Blenko Glass remains the only American antique glass producer.

Blenko created 100 limited edition vases especially for this exhibition. At the opening the vases went on sale for \$120. Photographs of the limited edition vase and pieces from the exhibition can be downloaded from our website at www.wvculture.org/agency/press/blenko070308.html. This exhibition will remain open until July 1, 2007.

For more information contact Charles Morris, collections and exhibits manager for the Division, at (304) 558-0220, ext. 704.



Communities LinkUP! by Rebekah Foster

Communities LinkUP! is part of a national music education program provided by Carnegie Hall in New York. The program is intended to make Carnegie Hall's (NY) education programs accessible to nationwide audiences, by bringing programs like this one—that can be replicated and adapted to local needs—to arts organizations, orchestras and school districts across the country. This program reaches every fourth grade student in Greenbrier County Schools, and gives them an incentive to practice discipline—a skill vital to their future development. That incentive is a culminating concert, during which every student becomes part of the orchestra by playing along with music studied throughout the year on soprano recorders. This program offers students the opportunity to use the arts in a tangible way, while offering the perfect segue to fifth grade band. The program achieves its educational goals on many levels, and the outcome is as moving as it is meaningful for everyone involved. It has helped Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg deepen its relationship with the neighboring school system and to further develop its education offerings.

Communities LinkUP! assists presenting institutions and symphony orchestras in adapting the LinkUP! curriculum for the schools served in their communities. The primary goals of the Communities LinkUP! Program are to:

- (1) teach fundamental musical concepts to students in grades 4-6;
- (2) expose students to the symphony orchestra in their community;
- (3) foster existing relationships and build new relationships between arts organizations, symphony orchestras and surrounding public schools;
- (4) provide professional development opportunities for all participating members; and
- (5) support related classroom workshops by musicians

Part of Carnegie Hall's role in meeting these goals is to identify the partner (arts organization, school system, arts council, symphony orchestra, university) to be the main liaison within a community; to help that partner forge relationships with local schools; and to find a local orchestra and concert venue in preparation for the culminating concert. After two successful years of piloting this structure in West Virginia, Carnegie Hall in New York has expanded the program so that it now serves 30,000 students in 10 states. At the concert held at Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg, close to 500 fourth graders will have the opportunity to play along with the James Madison University School of Music's Orchestra.

Locally, the program is supported through financial assistance from the West Virginia Division of Culture and History and the National Endowment for the Arts, with approval from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts; Carnegie Hall Corporation; Bob and Cindy Jones; Miriam W. Knight; Sam and Tate Hudson; Frank and Susan Adkins; and Janice Centa and Bill Dukart.

For more information go to www.carnegiehallwv.com



Students participating in LinkUp! program

About the Author
Rebekah Foster is the Education Director at Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg, WV.

A View of the Greenbrier Valley: An Interview with Josh Baldwin

By Belinda Anderson



Josh Baldwin

Can-do attitude barely begins to describe Josh Baldwin. Take, for instance, what he says about being diagnosed with cancer: "I couldn't have gotten it at a better time."

That attitude helps explain how two years ago, a 26-year-old English major successfully launched his own magazine. He had just completed the last issue for 2006 of the *Greenbrier Valley Quarterly* when he underwent surgery, followed by a month of radiation treatments.

The manner in which folks pitched in to help the amiable Baldwin is a testament to the way he conducts himself as a businessman. His sales representative at Progress Printing in Lynchburg, Va., drove the printing job to Baldwin's house, saving him \$500 in shipping. Aaron Maxwell of Lewisburg's Harmony Ridge Gallery, one of Baldwin's advertisers, stepped up, too. Literally. "He loaded all the magazines on a dolly and distributed them for me, because I couldn't walk."

The Huntington native, married to Carnegie Hall marketing director Mary Baldwin and the father of two year-old Stella, tackled cancer with the kind of determination he used in starting a new business. "I went through all the fear, anxiety and anger for one day," he says. "When I went in for my surgery, I woke up and put all that behind me. I kind of treated it like a competition. I said, it's me vs. it."

Now Baldwin is back to work at the artistic outlet that he created for himself. His magazine, noted for its lush design, often highlights the area's artistic endeavors. The spring issue, for instance, includes profiles on the Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys, potter Gary Roper, photographer Ellen Broudy and watercolorist Jeanne Brenneman.

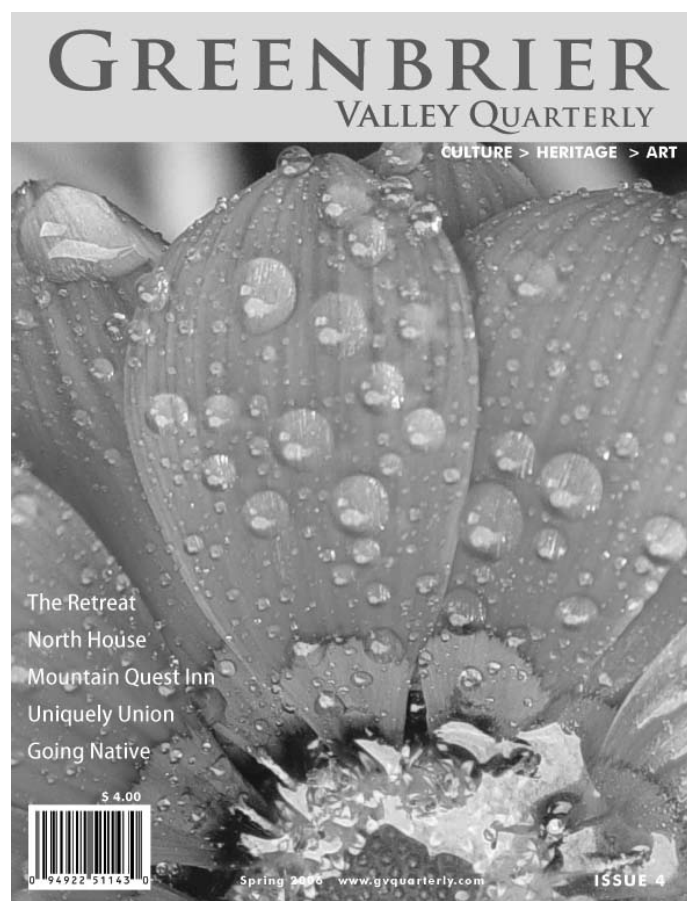
In the following interview for *ArtWorks*, Baldwin discusses his path as a publisher:

What prompted you to start a magazine? Why West Virginia? And why a focus on the Greenbrier Valley?

The origins of the magazine can be traced back to the summer of 2004 when my father and brother and I were working on our farmhouse between Fort Spring and Sinks Grove. There is a beautiful bend in the Greenbrier River in Fort Spring and in the evenings the way the sun reflects off the water downstream is meditative. I remember looking down that valley and the idea just popping in my head. I talked about the idea all week with my family, brainstorming ideas while hammering nails. I was also starting work on my thesis, which dealt with a cultural sense of place in southern Appalachia. The goals of the magazine came out of that work. We wanted to celebrate the identity of our place in the world.

You just graduated high school in 1996 - how did you marshal the resources to found a magazine?

I never had any real training or experience in publishing per se, but I have two degrees in English and worked in the book industry for three to four years. My education gave me the tools to handle the editorial part of the magazine and my experiences in the retail world of books provided me the ability to keep a finger on the pulse of what works and what doesn't work. People my age usually have great ideas, but the fear of implementing those ideas impedes the execution of them. I was 26 years old when I started the magazine, and I figured, "If I'm going to do something, I better do it now." Plus, when you get a master's degree in English and you don't want to be a college professor, you have to create your own opportunities sometimes. I should also note that a large



Spring 2006 issue of *Greenbrier Valley Quarterly*

part of the success of the magazine is due to Erica Bell's fantastic design work. Her instincts and creativity give the magazine a look unto its own.

Your magazine also creates opportunities for area artists through exposure in your magazine. Why do you highlight the arts?

Besides the fact that this area is full of artistic talent, I also have strong convictions about the nature of art and the kinds of meaning it appropriates to our lives. Those meanings are experienced not only by those who produce art, but also by those who consume art. I think it's a shame that schools are continually forced to abandon their arts and music curriculums. The appreciation and understanding of all art forms are what give us the tools to become better stewards of our time here. If we can introduce a reader to an artist that affects them in a positive way, then I feel like we've made some kind of contribution.

What is your vision for the future of your magazine?

That it's still around by the time my daughter is ready for an internship.

Greenbrier Valley Quarterly can be contacted at info@gvquarterly.com or by calling (304) 645-4187. Subscriptions can be ordered at www.gvquarterly.com.

About the Author

Belinda Anderson is the author of two short story collections, *The Well Ain't Dry Yet* and *The Bingo Cheaters*, published by Mountain State Press. She'll be conducting a writing retreat at Creek-side Resort in May and presenting writing workshops at the West Virginia Writers Conference in June. Visit her web site at www.BelindaAnderson.com.

How will the public know?

by Rose McDonough


After completing my first year as the Accessibility Coordinator with the Division of Culture and History/WV Commission on the Arts, I have been able to discover a trend in the accessibility information that is required as part of our application process. The discovery is, in part, positive but also something that needs improvement. The positive trend is that there is a better understanding of how to better serve individuals with disabilities. What I see that could use some improvement is getting the message out to the community. If the organization does all the work to be accessible in both the programmatic and physical sense, why not let your community know?

If you hire a sign language interpreter, do you tell anyone? If so, how do you let your community know? Is the site wheelchair accessible? Are there assistive listening devices available? Are alternative formats for programs/educational material available? If so, is this communicated to the public or merely recorded in a document for a grant application? Are the disability symbols used on flyers, programs and support materials? Are they visible on your organization's website? Have you contacted social service organizations in your area to collaborate?

Moving towards a more universally accessible environment and being able to reach out to all members of your community is a goal for everyone. Utilizing disability access symbols on websites, promotional materials and appropriate signage can and will increase the usage of the available services and number of individuals served.

Copies of the brochure, "Disability Access Symbols Project" produced by the Graphic Artists Guild Foundation with support and technical assistance from the Office for Special Constituencies, National Endowment for the Arts, can be requested from our office by emailing rose.mcdonough@wvculture.org. To download, visit <http://www.gag.org/resources/das.php>. To obtain a disc please send \$12.95 plus \$3.50 shipping/handling to Graphic Arts Foundation, 11 West 20th St, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10011-3704 or call 212.463.7730.

Visit the National Endowment for the Arts website at www.arts.endow.gov for additional resources on accessibility.



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The U.S. Department of Justice provides information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) through a toll-free ADA Information Line. This service permits businesses, State and local governments, or others to call and ask questions about general or specific ADA requirements including questions about the ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

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A service for persons who are blind or have low vision that makes the performing arts, visual arts, television, video, and film more accessible.



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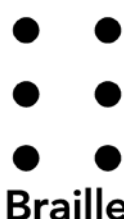
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Braille Symbol

This symbol indicates that printed material is available in braille, including exhibition labeling, publications and signage.

Focus on the Fellowships: An Interview with Matthew LaRose

By Jeff Pierson



Matthew LaRose breaks from painting in Studio

JP: When did you know you wanted to be an artist?

ML: I was one of those few who knew early about their general direction in life. My siblings could draw very well and I had constant encouragement from my mother. In my family painting was an admirable profession. I've drawn since childhood. I experimented a lot with paint in high school and became serious about it in college. I can't remember not being involved with art.

JP: You emphasize a wider view in your landscapes that may have some affinity with a fish-eye type lens. Do you think your vision is influenced by photography?

ML: I think society's way of seeing the world has been influenced by photography since its inception. Now with digital manipulation, a greater number of people can personally interact with images more directly. Images are more accessible... but what one does with the image is the thing.

JP: How is that reflected in your work?

ML: The snapshot reveals very little. The panorama is very small compared with our cone of vision. By assembling many images pieced together one can use that to more specifically mimic the wider view. This is not about a particular type of lens but more specifically the curvature of our own eye. I am much more interested in photography as a tool in the act of seeing. Certainly Hockney was doing that. I have found that Photoshop is also fun.

I remember a quote from painter Wayne Thiebaud, "One creates their own art history." One may find that statement curious but I believe that is a fundamental challenge in the personalization of the subject of art. Art history doesn't have to be linear nor historically sequential. My studio explorations have led me through a changing motif but the issues of my paintings, in hindsight, remain quite consistent. Those include: how one looks at the painting, how the eye travels across the painting and the charged space between the forms. My art has represented imagery that was both general and personal with portraits and landscape. I am currently working non-objectively.

I am renewing my interest in painting by asking the question, what sustains my vision? The 'game' of assessing, assembling, connecting and charging the negative spaces continues to hold my interest. Perhaps this is what I may answer to my students when they turn my own question upon me..."what is the art part?"

"I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all the kinds of things you can't see from the center."

-Kurt Vonnegut

Focus on the Fellowships: An Interview with Caryl Toth

By Jeff Pierson

JP: What was your first experience with art?

CT: As far back as I can remember I have been creating art. Not just paintings or drawings. I have always played music, danced and even written poetry. When I went to college I majored in Elementary Education knowing that I would have the opportunity to witness children's first experiences every day.

JP: Your work is very expressive, how did you move into the abstractions that you are currently painting?

As an artist, it is so important to not only have an understanding of fundamentals but to

really master them before moving into abstractions. You must be able to paint representationally before you can paint abstractly. I use my knowledge of reality to paint abstractly.

JP: How does your environment influence your work?

CT: I am heavily influenced by my environment. In West Virginia I have developed a bond with other artists that has affected my work. The landscape here has also played a big part of my work. I choose my color palette often by where I am. For example when I was in Greece my color palette was much different than paintings I was doing here and Tuscany was the same way. I never really know where the painting is going to go. When I start a painting it becomes who I am at that moment.

JP: What artists influence your work?

CT: So many artists influence my work. I look at art all the time. DeKooning, Roko, Rothenberg, and of course June Kilgore. I look at artists with expressive



Caryl Toth in Greece. photograph by Powell Toth

2007 West Virginia Artist Fellowships



Betty McMullen. *Yes I Can*, fiber, 2006

The West Virginia Commission on the Arts of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History has awarded \$28,000 to a group of Mountain State artists who were selected as recipients of the 2007 West Virginia Artist Fellowship Grant Awards.

Eight Artist Fellowship Awards of \$3,500 will be made to artists from Cabell, Jefferson, Kanawha, Mercer, Monongalia, Randolph and Wood counties. Works were chosen in the categories of visual arts/crafts/photography, literary arts/fiction/playwriting, and performing arts/choreography/music composition.

The fellowships are intended to support working artists for the purpose of artistic development. Use of funds is up to the recipients' discretion including, but not limited to, creating new work, purchasing supplies and materials, travel, research, and defraying expenses incurred in the presentation of work or documentation.

Visual Arts

Craft:

Betty McMullen of Charleston

Photography:

Aleta Cortes of Pipestem

Benita Keller of Shepherdstown

Literary Arts

Fiction:

Patsy Pittman of Vienna

Sara Pritchard of Morgantown

Playwriting:

Missy Armentrout McCollam of Elkins

Performing Arts

Choreography:

Jessica Fox of Huntington

Music Composition:

Mark Zanter of Huntington

brushwork. I used to tell my students "We are not trying to be perfect; we are trying to be imperfect." I think when an artist tries to be perfect in their work they lose creativity.

JP: What are you working on now?

CT: I am making paintings on paper. The pieces I am working on now are based on recent memories and the passing of a good friend of mine. I have been thinking about the influence June (Kilgore) has had on my work as a painter. I am exploring that rather literally in my most recent work. I have decided to make it my focus; I will have her with me when I paint. I have completed two paintings, one of which is in the 280 Juried Exhibition at Huntington Museum of Art. (the other has sold).

Matthew LaRose and Caryl Toth recently received fellowships from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. These interviews are part of a series featuring fellowship recipients.

"The only thing I know is that I paint because I need to, and I paint whatever passes through my head without any other consideration."

-Frida Kahlo

2007 Poetry Out Loud West Virginia State Finals

by Gregg McAllister photos by Jeff Pierson



2007 winner Liz McCormick of Capital High

The 2007 Poetry Out Loud West Virginia State Finals were held on March 24, 2007 at the Norman L. Fagan State Theater in the Cultural Center. Twenty finalists competed for the opportunity to represent the mountain state at the National Finals in Washington, D.C. on April 30 and May 1.

This year's winner is **Liz McCormick** from Capital High School. Her renditions of Tony Hoaglund's "Beauty," Mary Howitt's "The Spider and The Fly," and Robert Frost's "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening" earned the top prize of \$200 and an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete against the other state winners. Capital High School also will receive \$500 towards the purchase of poetry books.



Gyasi Heus of Summers County High



Jared Bennett of Richwood High

Other top finalists included runner-up **Francesca Wesley** of Richwood High School who will receive \$100 and \$200 for her school's library. Additional finalists include Ciara Bennett—Sissonville High School; Jared Bennett—Richwood High School; Kacy Bogges—Sissonville High School; Candace Bonecutter—Point Pleasant High School; Tamara Caul—Capital High School; Sara Crews—Cabell County Public Library; Zach Davis—Spring Valley High School; Alexis Emch—Magnolia High School; Jessica Fink—Wahama High School; Zachary Fox—Magnolia High School; Carolyn Garcia—Notre Dame High School; Gyasi Heus—Summers County High School; Sarah Horemeyer—Cabell County Public Library; Brook Johnson—Sissonville High School; Darrell Rae Shawn Johnson—Huntington High School; Jasmine Lewis—Spring Valley High School; Elizabeth Ochoa—Roane County High School; Emily Sears—Summers County High School.



2007 Runner Up Francesca Wesley of Richwood High



Carolyn Garcia of Notre Dame High

Poetry Out Loud is the national poetry recitation contest sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. It encourages memorization, recitation, appreciation and preservation of our literary heritage. This is the second year West Virginia has participated in this program. West Virginia's 2006 winner was Brook Johnson of Sissonville High School. This year's event was hosted by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History with the support of the West Virginia Department of Education and the West Virginia Library Commission and coordinated by Gregg McAllister.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

A great nation
deserves great art.



Candace Bonecutter of Point Pleasant High

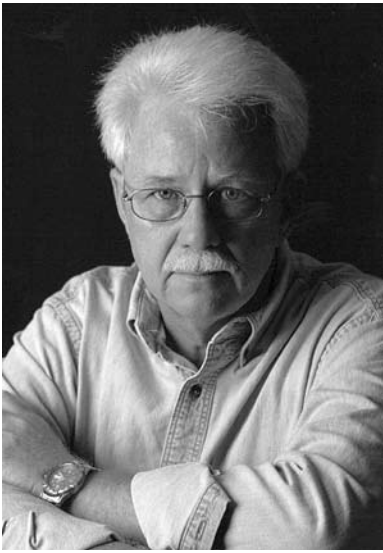


Darrell Rae Shawn Johnson of Huntington High



Tamara Caul of Capital High

Arts in Education Roster Updates



Visual Arts

Gary J. Smith

Gary has been photographing the world around us for 48 years. Recently ending a career of 35 years in marketing to pursue his love of the photograph professionally, he encourages students to educate themselves now for a career in the arts. Giving each student the hands-on experience of generating an image to take home with them goes a long way to impact that choice. Gary is the co-founder and partner of Potomac Studio in Points, and the recipient of numerous awards.

Programs Offered:

"Introduction to Digital Photography"—Takes the student through a digital photography course from an introduction to the art of digital photography, and its impact on our world, to the completion of their own digitally photographed and printed 8X10 image. All cameras, lighting, studio equipment, computer, printer and photo paper are provided by Smith.

Gary J. Smith is available statewide for grades 6-12. Class size is limited to six students for a four-hour course. He is available for up to two classes a day. Fee is \$500/project, plus travel expenses.

Contact:

Gary J. Smith
HC 60 Box 113-5
Points, WV 25437
304.492.5915
gary@potomacstudio.com
www.potomacstudio.com



Dance

Ray C. Shaw

Ray C. Shaw has been creating and exploring the art of dance for more than 20 years. With an MFA from Arizona State University and 16 years of teaching experience he has developed programs that work for dancers of all levels. He offers students a wonderful experience of dance, creativity, and expression of movement and provides historical and social context and curriculum.

Programs Offered:

"The History of Modern Dance"—30-minute stage show of modern dance and comedy with an optional post show question and answer segment

"Dance In Movies"—One-hour Lecture/Demonstration

"Dance In Pop Culture"—One hour Lecture/Demonstration
 Master Classes—Modern dance technique and somatic science
 Choreography—From conception to production

Fieldwork Workshops—Certified to facilitate informational and practical workshops utilizing the principles of fieldwork feedback processes

Available for artist visits in a 200-mile radius of Martinsburg, WV for grades K-12 and adult. Short- and long-term residencies, special projects,
 Fees are \$300/day and negotiable for performances and residencies.

Contact:

Ray C. Shaw
134 Georgetown Square
Martinsburg, WV 25401
602.288.8955; 602.743.6137
ray@marykay.com
ray_c_shaw@hotmail.com



Ohio River
 Border Initiative
 Arts Network

Ohio River Border Initiative honored with Bayley Award

The Ohio River Border Initiative was the 2007 recipient of the Actors Guild of Parkersburg's Bayley Award. The Bayley Award was first presented in 1983 in recognition of Actors Guild supporters in recognition of their exceptional and continued support. The award is named for Suzanne Bayley, one of the founders of the Guild and an influential member for many years. Past recipients include corporate supporters such as Borg Warner Chemicals, the Parkersburg Sentinel, United Bank, individuals, Camden Clark Hospital and the Parkersburg Area Foundation.

The Award was given to ORBI for its nearly continuous support of the Guild's children's program, Guild Builders. Guild Builders' volunteer director Linda Buchanan has written some of the best grant proposals ORBI has ever reviewed. Guild Builders has been successful every year in ORBI's grant program since they first applied in 1998. So the real credit for ORBI's 2007 Bayley Award goes to everyone connected with ORBI's support of Guild Builders: Linda Buchanan for her excellent grant proposals, all the Guild Builders' volunteers for creatively sustaining this program for ten years and the West Virginia Commission on the Arts and the Ohio Arts Council for creating ORBI to serve arts organizations and communities in the Ohio River Valley.

West Virginia Dance Company takes on the World

by Audrey Stanton



WVDC dancer performing in production.

The first time West Virginia Commission on the Arts Chair Susan Landis saw “Where in the World Is ...?” she kept her eyes on the dancers.

The second time she saw it, she watched school students fix their gazes, “with rapt attention,” on members of the West Virginia Dance Company (WVDC).

Like spirits released from the rock paintings that once held them, dancers Donald Laney and Jaymez Anderson move and shape themselves through an energetic tale of earth, creatures and celestial bodies.

Their display of Aboriginal spirituality,

set to the droning sound of a didgeridoo, is more than entertainment. It is a lesson in one of the most fundamental beliefs of Australia’s native people.

Yet, it is only one stop on this world tour brought to area students and audiences by the WVDC.

“Where in the World Is ...?” is an educational arts program that takes audiences on a seven-continent field trip. Its dances bring to life the people, the concepts, the culture and even the geography of the world.

Founded in 1977 by Toneta Akers-Toler, the WVDC has been providing extensive arts education in West Virginia schools as well as performing in public and university venues.

They’ve also performed in 14 other states and in South America, and last season the company performed its Concert Dance Series for the Tug Valley Arts Council, Arts Link, Bridgeport Arts Council, Beckley Community Concerts, West Virginia Wesleyan Arts Series, Soldiers Memorial Theatre, West Virginia Department of Culture and History Arts Education Series, James Madison University, Shepherd University, West Liberty State College, Glenville State College, and Strand Preservation Theatre.

It is WVDC’s mission to act as an ambassador for West Virginia when performing outside the state and to use West Virginia’s rich cultural heritage as the foundation and inspiration for much of the company’s choreography. But in the case of “Where In the World Is ...?,” it is the West Virginia dancers who are ambassadors of other places, reaching an average of 40,000 West Virginia students each touring season.

Cross-curricular concepts

For instance, the dance representing Africa, titled “Taken,” hails from a Nigerian wedding ritual. Masked dancer Stephanie Nerbak simultaneously portrays a cultural ritual and one of that region’s most graceful animals — the gazelle. Additionally, the dance, choreographed by Carli Mareneck, lends itself to classroom discussion on symbolism and artistic interpretation.

In an accompanying 30-page study guide intended for use before and after seeing the performance, teachers and students are guided through cross-curricular activities that relate directly to the dances in this one-

hour educational arts program. The study guide is written by Pat Edwards.

For example, the section on Africa includes a half-page of background on the continent’s geography, people, animals and culture. Then, in keeping with the theme from “Taken,” the study guide explains how some people in the African nation of Cameroon are known for making masks to symbolize their personalities and stories from their history.

Because Nerbak’s gazelle mask was made by West Virginia artist Jude Binder, suggested activities include using plaster of Paris — or construction paper for younger students — to create masks. Students are also asked to create five shapes, with their own bodies, that resemble an animal, and then connect those shapes at various speeds and dynamics.

Social studies is also incorporated into the lesson, as students are asked to select an African country and answer a series of questions about it. There are even writing assignments and special suggested activities for students in arts classes.

And teachers of special education classes will find lesson plans, written by Donald Laney. Those plans are adapted to the needs of special education students — on each of the seven lessons.

Other destinations

Laney, with his own choreography, solo dance and costume, epitomizes Antarctica through a dance that — through movement — exhibits all four states of matter. The accompanying science lessons allow students to see the subjects of his artistic interpretation.

Asia’s dance — choreographed by Heather Taylor-Martin — uses six dancers to abstractly represent three Asian influences in China — rice fields, a Chinese puzzle game called Tangram, and the ancient martial art of Tai Chi. Geometric shapes become the focus of the accompanying classroom materials.

North America comes to life with dances close to home for West Virginians, with traditional songs performed by local musicians Everett Lilly, Ron Perrone and Hazel Dickens. Choreography from company director Toneta Akers-Toler explores the coal mine wars made famous by the movie “Matewan,” has Anderson bringing to life folk hero John Henry, and uses the entire company to stress the importance of immigrants in the state’s history as well as the region’s early social dances, including square dancing and clogging.

Ballet is the focus of the company’s dance representing Europe. Choreographed by Laney and set to Handel’s “Water Music,” students may see how that classical form of dance has evolved into the company’s more contemporary modern dance.

The big picture

The performance as a whole delivers a much larger lesson, said Toler.

“Through viewing the dance art works that could only have been created from learning about different cultural contributions, the company hopes to stimulate a genuine respect and curiosity in connecting to the knowledge of our global family,” she said. “It is pertinent for the student to understand that technological advancement ... has now, more than ever, made the global family dependent on both the similarities and the unique differences of people everywhere.”

That lesson becomes abundantly clear in the show’s final dance, “Black Beans with White Rice,” which represents South America. Choreographer Dr. Eluza Santos based it on a Brazilian philosophy and cultural custom.

The philosophy of the popular Brazilian meal of black beans and white rice, based on the theory of French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, emphasizes two common conditions in human nature — raw and cooked, or food and meal. Food is what can be consumed to keep a human alive; meal, however, has to do with the socially elaborated universe that every society defines as their culture and ideology.

So, since black beans with white rice is a cooked meal, made by mixing the two ingredients, the mixture achieves synthesis. Black beans are no longer strikingly black, and rice is no longer strikingly white.

"It's about mixing together," Akers-Toler explained.

Dancers stress that idea by exchanging parts of their costumes, visually displaying the blending of differences.

"It's the perfect way to communicate what we want to say about the world," Akers-Toler said.

The West Virginia Dance Company, based in Beckley, began this tour with contributions from the Ruby Carter Foundation; Allay Home Care; Beckley Area Foundation; the West Virginia Division of Culture and History and the National Endowment for the Arts, with approval from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts; Dr. James and Kimberly Paine, City National Bank, Sam's Club, and Wachovia Securities.

For more information on WVDC, call (304)252-0030.

"The creation of art is a continuous journey of self-discovery and learning the craft of illusion. Perfecting it, we only discover there's more to it than meets the eye."

- Alfred Muma

Arts Day 2007 a success!!

Arts Day at the State Capitol was a success! More than 60 artists and arts organizations from all around West Virginia descended upon the State Capitol to share their talents with colleagues and government officials. The event was held on the last Thursday of the legislative session which meant that the impact of networking and advocacy would shift from representative focus in session to new relationships in the delegate's home districts.

The event was well attended including lobbyists, government employees, delegates, and Capitol patrons. We were very lucky to have special guests with us as well including WVCA members (Susan Landis, Elaine D'Alessandri, Jeanne Mozier, Cindy McGhee, Steve Hopta, Marilyn Cooper and Sam Winans.); Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith, Secretary of State Betty Ireland, Secretary of Education and the Arts Kay Goodwin, and Governor Joe Manchin, who spoke to several of our artists.



Artists from Rif Raf Arts Collective picking and potting. photograph by Mike Keller

WVCA welcomes Cindy McGhee



Cindy McGhee of Charleston is a member of A & F Financial Advisors, LLC. Cindy is a board member of various community organizations including the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and Charleston Rotary. "Cindy's passion for arts, coupled with her extensive experience in financial management, will bring an important and much needed skill to the West Virginia Commission on the Arts."

- Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith



The West Virginia Commission on the Arts, established in 1967, works with artists, arts organizations, schools, and community groups to foster a fertile environment for the artistic, cultural, educational and economic development of the state.

Upcoming Grant Deadlines

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Accessibility Coordinator
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Kelley French
Arts Section Secretary
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West Virginia Commission on the Arts

Chair
Susan Landis
Daniels

Vice Chair
Jennifer Francis Alkire
Morgantown

Marilyn Cooper
Lewisburg

Elaine D'Alessandri
Morgantown

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Petersburg

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Milton

Rosa Lee Vitez
Huntington

Penny Watkins
Huntington

Sam Winans
Parkersburg



WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE & HISTORY

MID ATLANTIC
ARTS FOUNDATION



Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation

www.midatlanticarts.org

USArtists International: Round II May 7, 2007



West Virginia Development Office

www.sbdcwv.org

Ongoing deadline for reimbursement grant for web site design and maintenance training. Group training preferred. Click on "Small Business Work Force Training Grant Application." For more information, contact Kimberly Donahue at kdonahue@wvdo.org or call 304-558-2960 or 888-982-7232.



West Virginia Division of Tourism

www.wvtourism.com

The Cooperative Tourism Promotion Fund offers up to 50% matching reimbursement program to assist tourism Destination/Attractions to use direct advertising to attract visitors to the state of West Virginia. Grants will be given in three categories: \$10,000+, \$5000 Fairs and Festivals and up to \$2,500.

Deadlines are January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

National Endowment for the Arts

www.arts.endow.gov

Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth June 11, 2007

Access to Artistic Excellence: August 13, 2007

Challenge America Fast Track June 1, 2007

The Arts on Radio and Television: September 7, 2007



WV Humanities Council

www.wvhumanities.org

June 1, Aug. 1, Oct. 1 and Dec. 1

February: Mini Grants

Travel Assistance Grants: Ongoing deadline

September 1 and February 1: Major Grants

Media Grants, Publication Grants and Teacher Institutes: September 1



PENNSYLVANIA PERFORMING ARTS
ON TOUR

Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour

www.pennpat.org

Presenter Deadlines for Fee Support and New Directions Grants:
June 15, 2007 for projects requesting \$1500 or less for events
scheduled between September 1, 2007 and August 31, 2008

October 15, 2007 for events scheduled February 1, 2008 and May
31, 2009

Rolling Deadline: Tour Planning Program (until program funds have
been expended)



From the Collection: A spotlight on the collection of the West Virginia State Museum

Dow Benedict
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
When my Eyes are Closed (All is Well)
Wood
Award of Excellence, 1997 WV Juried Exhibition.

Proctor Appointed Deputy Commissioner

Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History announced that he has named Jacqueline A. Proctor deputy commissioner and communications manager of the agency, effective January 16. A resident of Huntington, Proctor has worked as director of the Arts Section for the division since September, and will serve as acting director of the section until a replacement is named.

"Jacqueline Proctor's management background and communications expertise will serve the division well as she moves into her new role. I'm very pleased to have someone with Jacqueline's confidence and focus along with her arts administration experience," said Reid-Smith. "Her talents continue to be a most welcome addition to the division and the state."

"It is tremendously important to cultivate, share and protect the artistic, cultural, and historic interests of the state," said Proctor. "I am delighted to have this new opportunity to serve the agency and the people of West Virginia. I am also deeply appreciative of Commissioner Reid-Smith's confidence and the trust he has placed in me to assist in fulfilling the mission of the agency."

Proctor previously served as general manager of the Huntington Symphony Orchestra. Prior to that, she worked as a communications consultant and trainer in New York and as the director of operations and new media for Disney/ABC-TV Inc. She also taught communications at Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, N.J.

Proctor has a degree in television, film and radio from the University of Maryland, and has taken continuing education courses through both the Simmons School of Management in Boston and New York University.



photograph by Mike Keller

ArtWorks Spring 2007

State of West Virginia
Joe Manchin III
Governor

Department of
Education
and the Arts
Kay Goodwin
Cabinet Secretary

Division of
Culture and History
Randall Reid-Smith
Commissioner

Jacqueline Proctor
Director of Arts

www.wvculture.org

ArtWorks welcomes proposals for non-fiction articles of 500-750 words. Articles should focus on West Virginia artists, arts organizations and the performing, visual or literary arts. Of special interest are unique and successful community arts projects and new trends in West Virginia's arts scene. Artist profiles must also reflect some activity of significance to West Virginia or some enlightening aspect of their work. Photographs and other illustrations may accompany submissions. For submission guidelines and terms of payment contact: **ArtWorks**, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd., East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300.

ArtWorks does not publish advertising for commercial services or businesses, but welcomes announcements which may be of interest to the state's arts community.

All publications and application forms are available in alternate formats. Contact Rose McDonough, (304) 558-0240 ext.152, (voice) or (304) 558-3562 (TDD).

West Virginia Juried Exhibition Update



Entries submitted by slide/digital image
May 21 through June 22

Exhibition Dates: **October 19, 2007** through
February 8, 2008 at Parkersburg Arts Center

For more information contact Adam Hodges, director
of the Museums Section at 304.558.0220 ext 127.

ArtWorks is free!

If you would like to have your name added to the mailing list for *ArtWorks*, please call (304) 558-0240 or e-mail jeff.pierson@wvculture.org.



NATIONAL
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FOR THE ARTS

A great nation
deserves great art.

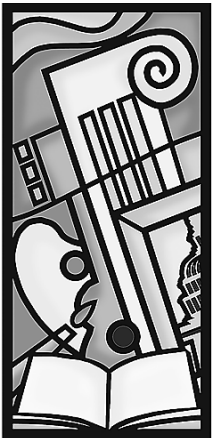


WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF
CULTURE AND HISTORY

Spring 2007

West Virginia Art Works

A free quarterly newsletter from the Division of Culture and History and the West Virginia Commission on the Arts



West Virginia Division of Culture and History
The Cultural Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd., E.
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

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