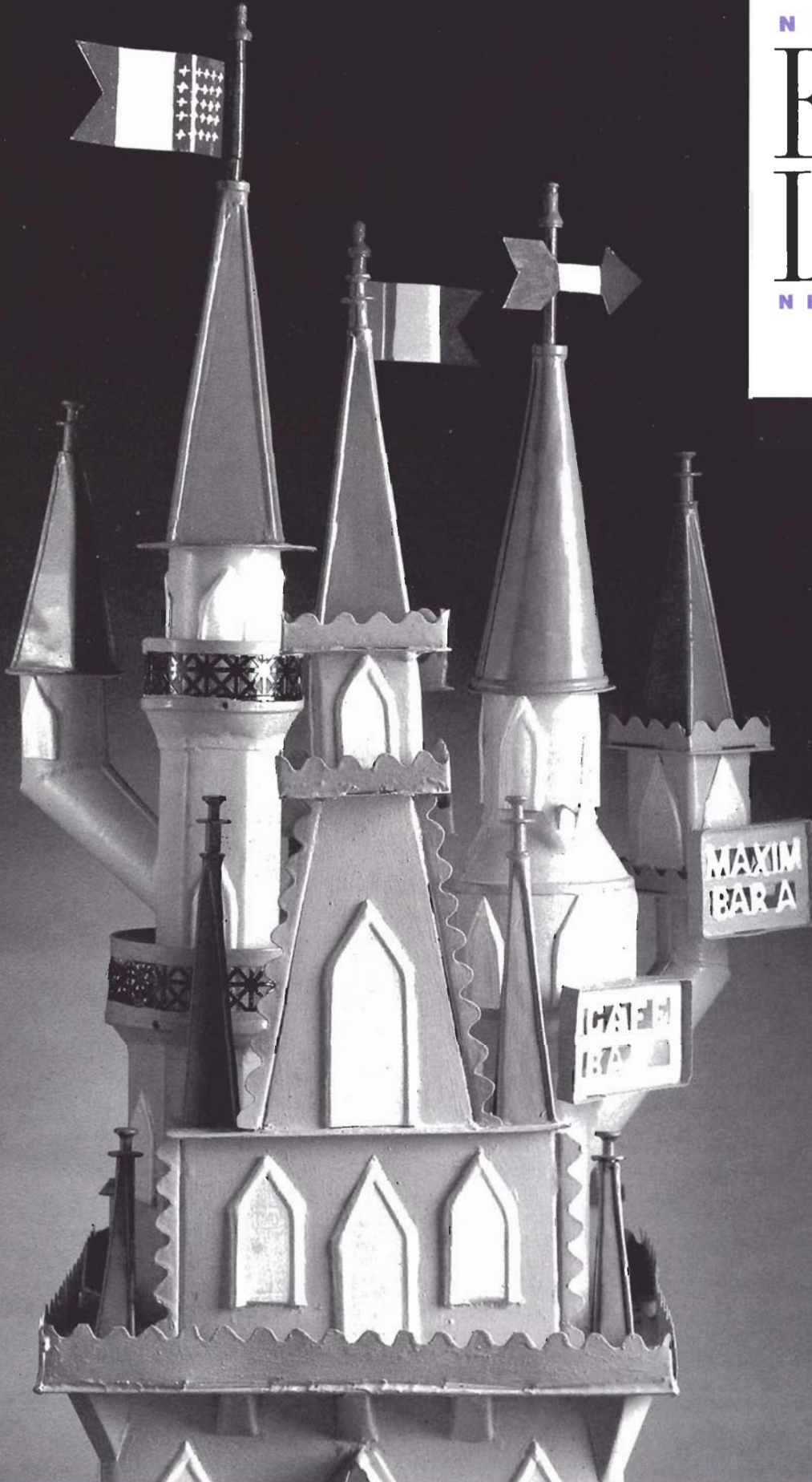


NEW YORK

FOLK LORE

NEWSLETTER



Fall 1991
Vol 12 No. 3

Coping With The Cuts

The Facts

As this issue goes to press in late August, most—but not all—of the questions about the New York State Council on the Arts 1992 budget have been resolved. On the morning of July 4, Governor Mario Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Ralph Marino and Assembly Speaker Mel Miller at long last reached a compromise agreement on the state budget that restored to NYSCA \$6.32 million of the \$28 million cut from the Council in the Governor's original budget. The total NYSCA budget for 1992, the year that began April 1, 1991, is \$28,635,000. This represents a disastrous 44% cut from the amount budgeted in 1991. On August 7, the Council itself (the board of NYSCA) met to allocate the restored \$6.32 million among the various programs (Folk Arts, Music, Special Arts Services, etc.) within the agency. They also made adjustments to grant amounts recommended at the first series of panel meetings—these amounts were based on the funds available before the restoration. The final figure for the folk arts program is \$831,000.

The NYSCA staff and the peer review panels are facing an extremely difficult and painful process of making funding recommendations to the council with so little money available. Their ability to respond to the needs of the field is further constrained by two legislative requirements. First, NYSCA is required by law to spend at least \$.55 per person in each of the state's 62 counties. This means that of the \$28.6 million available for grants, about \$10 million must be distributed according to the per capita requirement. In counties that have relatively little arts activity relative to the population size, the cuts may be relatively light. In counties where arts organizations are concentrated and NYSCA usually awards funds well in excess of \$.55 per person, the cuts are likely to be much more severe, sometimes as much as 70% below the previous year's level. Second, 50% of NYSCA funds (about \$14 million) must be granted to the 238 designated "primary organizations." Although these categories overlap some, together they leave very little room to make funding decisions based on the usual criteria of merit. Both of these mandates have been in effect for many years, but their impact on funding decisions was much less when there was more money in the pot to distribute.

NYSCA's administrative funds have also been cut 24%. This means fewer staff, less travel, fewer on-site reviews, and generally a reduced ability to communicate with and serve the field. The number of panel meetings is being reduced from five to three, with the Council funding meetings scheduled for August, October and February. Fortunately, the cuts have not resulted in a restructuring of NYSCA, and Robert Baron and Helen Marr are still firmly in place at the Folk Arts Program doing a remarkable job in the face of great difficulties.

Many jobs, programs, and organizations will not survive these catastrophic cuts. Most organizations that do will be forced to cut programs and services and make tough decisions about their priorities.

The Advocacy Effort - Looking Back

Part of that process for arts organizations throughout the state will be an assessment of the advocacy effort to date and the prospects for the future of state funding for the arts. It's too early to speculate about the 1993 budget while we're all still trying to make sense of the current situation, but we can be sure that next year will bring another intense struggle to prevent further deterioration. In the meantime, this year's campaign is worth taking a look at.

The arts advocacy effort this spring was a \$6.32 million success. It is rare that one can put a reliable dollar figure on the results of a lobbying campaign, but given the Governor's so-far-unexplained hostility to arts funding and the enormous pressures on him and the legislature to cut spending everywhere, it is likely that without the arts community's lobbying, there would have been no restoration. The direct effects of the folk arts advocacy work are harder to assess. The Folk Arts Program line item, like most other programs with separate line

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COPING WITH THE CUTS

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items, was unchanged through all the ups and downs of restorations and vetoes that preceded the final agreement.

The folk arts field came through with a consistently strong and creative response to the NYSCA budget crisis this year. We grew in sophistication about the legislative process, we made new alliances and strengthened old ones within the legislature, and we made our presence and our concerns felt to both the leadership and the rank and file of both houses. It was a difficult struggle, made more so by the demoralizing certainty that major cuts were inevitable. Martin Koenig, Steve Zeitlin, and Vaughn Ward continued to provide key leadership and come up with innovative approaches to the task. They along with Kate Koperski, Ellen McHale, Nancy Solomon, Dan Ward, and others did exemplary work lobbying in person and mobilizing support within their constituencies. Hundreds of people wrote letters, made phone calls, or visited legislators.

Governor Cuomo's deep initial cuts to the arts and his intransigent and public opposition to any restoration made it politically difficult for sympathetic legislators to provide strong support for NYSCA funding. The many senators and assembly members who did support restored funds deserve our gratitude and commendation.

Looking Ahead

As we anticipate a period of overall economic decline and reduced public support for the arts in the coming years, the time has come to think creatively and positively about our options and our priorities. The New York Folklore Society's New York State Folk Arts Forum and our needs assessment project are contributing to this process. The next newsletter will feature a full report on the forums and needs assessment to date, but here are a few preliminary thoughts.

The cuts to the Folk Arts Program will mean fewer opportunities for folk artists to share their arts and their perspectives with audiences within and outside their communities—fewer performances, exhibits, publications, recordings. After the years spent carefully building folk arts programs and increasing the visibility and stature of folk arts around the state, this will be a great loss. Nevertheless, most folk artists will continue to do their work, and for the most part the folk life of communities will weather the turbulence of the arts funding crisis.

As long as NYSCA survives with a Folk Arts Program intact, folk arts programming will continue to foster folk cultural expressions within communities and provide a vital channel of communication between folk groups and the surrounding society. But the reduced level of support means that the arts can no longer be the only rubric under which folk life and folklore activities are funded and carried out. The perspective of folklore can make important contributions to the concepts and rhetoric of heritage, cultural conservation, and multiculturalism, to name a few. And there may be untapped opportunities to build alliances with many kinds of organizations outside the sphere of the non-profit arts field. Many historical associations are already involved with folk arts programming. Others might be attracted by programs conceived and funded through different conceptual frameworks. Educational institutions at all levels are possible allies. Even some corporations and local governments might be surprising partners in programs that foster a stronger sense of identity within and understanding among local communities.

From the point of view of the New York Folklore Society, all such alliances need to be entered into carefully to assure that the goals of cultural equity and crosscultural understanding without exploitation are shared and will be furthered. But with that *caveat*, the current crisis may spawn new and exciting opportunities.

Collaborations, mergers, and

the sharing of information and resources are likely to increase as the arts field, and the non-profit field as a whole, contracts. We would like to use this newsletter to facilitate some of the information sharing. So if you have responses to these ideas or other thoughts about ways to cope with the cuts, please write to us and we will print your letters, space permitting.

—John Suter

LETTERS

To the Editor:

As a folklorist relatively new to New York State, I wanted to say that the newsletter is a great vehicle for the dissemination of information for and about New York folklore and folk art. New York Folklorists work in very different contexts because of the state's many urban centers and the vast rural areas in between. For me, it's not only interesting to know what others are doing, or what else is going on; it's also important in terms of thinking about my own work in rural Delaware County. I appreciate having the opportunity to share what I am doing with others as well. The inclusion of photographs and calendars is an especially nice addition. Thanks.

Mary Zwolinski

To the Editor:

How delighted I was to read again about Huddie "Lead Belly" Ledbetter in your winter issue after a 40 year absence. I may be dating myself, but I recall Lead Belly being reviewed in your columns by Elaine Lambert Lewis, thanks to the great work of Harold Thompson there at Cornell.

THANKYOU Ithaca for returning the folklore of Lead Belly to us through the quarterly newsletter, *The Lead Belly Letter* (Box 6679, Ithaca, NY 14851).

Keep up the good work!

John Reynolds
New York City

Artist Profile

The Tin Sculpture of Joseph Schoell

Mary Zwolinski

"What can I do in the winter? I can do this."

In 1956 at the age of 49, Joseph Schoell, his wife Agnes, and their two children left Hungary to come to America. Political conflicts were brewing in Hungary and Schoell, a one-time prisoner of war, left his home and all of his belongings for what he thought would be a temporary relocation in the United States. Thirty years later in 1986, the now retired Schoell built "The Statue of Liberty 1956-1986" to commemorate his 30th anniversary as an American citizen. Standing more than seven feet high, the sculpture is made entirely of tin except for the plastic flower yard ornament that represents Liberty's flame.

By the time Joseph Schoell left Hungary he had already completed a mandatory, and unpaid, three year tinsmithing apprenticeship and had spent several years building the usual pails, watering cans, gutters, and pipes. He settled on Long Island and worked on various projects, including hotels in Brighton Beach for Schmidt Brothers Sheet Metal and Plumbing Contractors in Rockaway, before opening his own business. In the 1960s, the couple bought a summer home in Margaretville, Delaware County, NY, and spent several years returning on weekends to make repairs. After retirement in the 1970s, the Schoell's summered at the cottage.

On one particular commute from Long Island to Margaretville, Joseph noticed a large windmill in front of a French restaurant. The windmill inspired him, and he built one for himself—standing five feet tall and painted in bright yellows and oranges. The windmill was given to his brother who also owned a summer home in Margaretville, and it was placed in the front yard.

Although Schoell had built smaller non-utilitarian objects such as ships and planes for his children and picture frames for the house, working on a larger was scale was a new challenge. Today his yard in Margaretville is a familiar guide-

post for residents who mark the return of summer with the return of his sculpture.

During the winters back on Long Island, Schoell turns his tinsmithing skills to the creation of art; making sculpture to transport to the summer home and set up in the front yard. Each year he repaints the pieces that have faded and replaces them on concrete pedestals. Many of the tin sculptures are conceived from pictures; others from memories of Hungary. The "Oeden-Burg Castle" is a replica of the original 16th century castle in his hometown, and the sculpture is accompanied by stories of the great battles that were



This whimsical tin castle by Joseph Schoell is featured in the exhibit, "Innovative Traditions: Creativity and Folk Art," curated by Mary Zwolinski at the Delaware County Historical Association, Delhi, NY. The exhibition runs through October 19. For information call (607) 746-3849. Photo by Drew Harty



Joseph Schoell at work in his shop, Margaretville. Photo by Drew Harty.

fought there. His "Fire Tower" is from the same village, later renamed Schopron.

Joseph Schoell's sculpture also reflects the whimsical nature of the maker. Watchdogs with ornate medieval crowns, floppy red tongues and fierce white fangs, and the "Dragon Family"—an eight foot post with fourteen dragon heads of varying sizes extending from it—are both playful to look at but menacing to touch because of the sharp tin pieces forming teeth, crowns, and more. "Sculpture for the Future," a round tin frame with with a circumference of six feet, contains a tin outline of the United States dotted with stars to indicate the locations of relatives. UFO's, high-tech airplanes, and flying men with backpacks are attached to the globe's exterior. Another of Schoell's sculptures, "The Columbia," is a four foot tin replica of the space craft.

Joseph Schoell and the tin sculptures he creates are good examples of a particular path of artistic de-

velopment—from traditional occupational skills to creative art-making. The mastery of skill that comes

from "on the job" experience, allow an individual to continually challenge oneself, pushing those



Joseph Schoell's front yard, Margaretville. Photo by Drew Harty.

veloped slowly, following many years of diverse kinds of work with the same genre, the ability to improvise and problem solve using not only intuitive knowledge but essential and pragmatic information gained

abilities to the limit. In essence, it allows a master of technique to "play" in a creative way with an ability and talent that has been nurtured sometimes over the course of a lifetime.

On June 1, 1991, the Rensselaer County Council on the Arts sponsored a "Self-Presenting Workshop" for twenty-three folk artists from the capital region. Conceived by Ellen McHale, former Director of Folk Arts Programs at the RCCA, the workshop's intent was to help folk artists with whom the organization had worked to hone their presentation skills. In addition, RCCA's annual Riverfront Festival serves as a "showcase" for folk artists new to the program who have been identified during the prior year's fieldwork; the workshop was designed to introduce these artists to some of the challenges of public presentation in festival, concert, and workshop settings. It also gave the artists an opportunity to share their knowledge and experience with others in the trans-cultural community of folk artists.

The day-long workshop began with an introduction by Rebecca Miller. As founder and Director of the Irish Arts Center's annual Traditional Irish Music Festival, Ms. Miller has employed community presenters for several years. She

introduced the key issues for presenting music, in particular, in festival/concert settings, issues such as traditionality, authenticity, revivalism, and immigration. Ms. Miller also assured participants that audiences are as interested in the performer as in their music—that anecdotes and personal history enrich a performer's presentation.

In that the workshop was comprised of roughly equal numbers of musicians and craftspeople, a discussion ensued regarding the differences between presenting music and visual arts. It was suggested that performers have a control over audiences in a way that craftspeople do not. Participants addressed other visual arts-oriented subjects including: how to transform an activity that usually occurs alone, one-on-one, or in small groups into a performance, and what methods, if any, are used to control the flow of interaction during hours of demonstration. The responses to these points were varied. Some craftspeople "teach" the audience while others allow the interaction to take whatever

Community Self-Presentation

Janis Benincasa

form arises. Throughout the discussion, one constant became evident—all of the participants knew what they were doing and had conceptualized creative means of conveying their art and themselves to diverse audiences.

The second half of the morning was devoted to two self-presentations by folk artists. Father Charlie Coen, a noted Irish musician and an excellent presenter, performed and talked about his experiences. Gail Turi, a rug hooker and community fieldworker with folklorist Vaughn Ward at the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council, showed examples of her work and discussed process, history, and values associated with rugmaking. She

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Las Casitas: An Urban Cultural Alternative

Betty-Sue Hertz

"We are guerilla. We did this on our own.... Ten of us worked on it. A casita in an asphalt jungle. All around us are big, tall houses. We are building back our roots."

—Casita member

"Aesthetics then is more than a philosophy or theory of art and beauty, it is a way of inhabiting space, a particular location, a way of looking and becoming."

—Bell Hooks

Betty-Sue Hertz is the Director of the Casita Project and Curator of "Las Casitas: An Urban Cultural Alternative." She is Director of Special Programs at the Bronx Council on the Arts.

For the last four years, the Casita Project at the Bronx Council on the Arts has intensely documented *casita* culture in New York City. Folklorists, architects, a cultural sociologist, a photographer, a visual artist, and *casita* members make up the core interdisciplinary team of experts providing diverse approaches to the project. The exhibition "Las

Casitas: An Urban Cultural Alternative," is an outgrowth of this research. "Las Casitas" enjoyed a successful run as the inaugural show at the Experimental Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. during the winter and spring of 1991. It will be at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, NY from September 26, 1991 through January 19, 1992.

Casitas are a vernacular architecture whose form and cultural reference come from Puerto Rico. In New York City, community members build *casitas* on city-owned land as part of gardens leased to community groups by the city or as pioneers appropriating neglected lots. *Casitas* can be found in Latino communities such as East Harlem, the South Bronx, and the Lower East Side. They are used for a variety of purposes: as centers for ecological action, social clubs, summer cottages and weekend retreats, cultural centers, places of political empowerment, and shelters for the homeless.

You can recognize a *casita* by certain common features such as a gable roof, window openings with shutters, and porches with railings. These wood frame structures are decorated in colors common to the Caribbean—turquoise, pink, yellow or red, and with artifacts imbued with Puerto Rican history, culture, and aesthetics. The transformed plot is often landscaped with *batey* (an open, non-vegetated area) and vegetable and flower gardens. A sign with the *casita*'s Spanish name is often prominently displayed, publicizing how people feel about their "little house."

The human scale of *casitas* is a striking reminder of how poor, working residents resist the hostile and often violent neighborhood conditions in which they live. The little houses are a setting where people's values, needs and concerns are expressed and realized through play, artistic expression, agricultural endeavors, cooking, protest, and laughter.

Casitas embody the creolization process of cultural production typical of places like the Caribbean. When political and economic factors such as colonization and imperialism bring together diverse peoples, languages, ideas, and objects (as has occurred in historical and contemporary Puerto Rico), a new synthesis or creole form of cultural expression emerges. In Puerto Rico, Amerindian, European, African, Caribbean, and North American aesthetics have all impacted on the vernacular cultures of the island. With the meeting of Puerto Rican culture and mass-produced North American commodities in creative and expressive ways in New York City, *casita* sites serve as yet another level of this creolization process.

The "Puerto Rican airbus" that travels between Puerto Rico and New York City, cross-fertilizes culture and symbols back and forth at an unusually clipped pace. This "airbus" distinguishes the Puerto Rican experience from other immigrant experiences in New York City in which the back and forth translations of meaning between homeland and new home are not as readily available or replenishable.

Casitas exemplify the "airbus" culture and may be the best example of fluidity of place that many Puerto Ricans experience. It may be for this reason that *casitas* have become a cultural necessity to resist the hostile geographic and political conditions of New York City. The history of appropriating land as self-empowerment and for land rights for the poor in Puerto Rico translates into an ingenious solution to similar problems in New York City.

As cultural "safe houses"—places where it is possible to regenerate identity on one's own terms, *casitas* embody Puerto Rico within the confines of a frame limited by space and economics. *Casita* members cannot afford to create entire communities like the Utopian settlements of the nineteenth century or the new suburban townships of the mid-twentieth century. Instead, they maintain community by con-



Casita, South Bronx. Photo by Martha Cooper.

structuring recreational sites, adapted from traditional codified architecture that connote homeland and class identification. At the *casita*, a process of ruralization goes beyond the typical city garden in its efforts to dislocate city images and reconstitute a rural scene.

Casitas are public displays of shared values right at sidewalk level. Just as a billboard or public sculpture challenges the viewer, so *casita* has a similar effect: to send a message; to make an impact and change the dynamics of the geographical space that surrounds it; and to make an impact on the thinking, consciousness, and value systems of passersby.

"*Las Casitas*" presents excellent examples of *casitas* and examines within an historical context. Contemporary aspirations, allegiances, and values can be understood through a reading of *casita* visual surfaces. For example, the displays of mementoes, artifacts, handicrafts, posters, photographs, and

statues inside and outside of *casitas* express cultural and political foci. They are about cultural preference as well as individual and collective desire and achievement.

Disciplines that inform the exhibition include: folklore, vernacular architecture, popular visual and performing arts, material culture, expressive culture, sociology, and urban planning. These in turn inform issues of cultural activism, cultural identity politics, urban gardens and the greening of cities, and border culture.

As a built environment, "*Las Casitas*" is a living installation as well as a set of various performances. Everything done within the space—cooking, gardening, socializing, gossiping—because it is in this remembered space of rescued images, reinforces a self-constructed idea of cultural identity. The "air bus" lands at the *casita*, suspended in both worlds. The *casita* is the physicality of this suspension.



Domino Game at El Balcon Boricua, East Harlem.
Photo by Martha Cooper.

SELF-PRESENTATION

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also discussed her modes of presentation at workshops and festivals.

After lunch, each of the participants presented a 15 to 20 minute performance. In the brief time period allowed each presenter, astounding things occurred. For example, George Hemming, veteran fly-tying teacher and demonstrator, looked at his watch and sat down to tie a fly. While we watched, he talked—and ran the gamut of fly tying contexts. When he finished, we all knew more about flies and fishing than we thought possible. It took six minutes.

In another instance, Oriental carpet maker Lucie Sunukjian realized that the demonstration apparatus she had brought was too small for such a large group. After a discussion of her own experience and gender roles associated with carpet making, she used the back of a slatted chair to demonstrate the weaving process on a larger scale.

Dave Lambert, a revival Greek musician presented himself as just that—a "revivalist." As the lead, non-Greek member of a traditional group, he was pleased to have found a term to describe himself. Mr. Lambert also expressed appreciation for the notion that it is not only possible but important to talk about the music as well as perform it.

It was a remarkable afternoon. Participants paid rapt attention to each presentation and there was a strong sense of mutual respect. People offered advice, primarily in the form of questions, suggesting additional information that might be important to convey to an audience.

Workshop evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. All of the participants proved to be expert in presenting their work. They had thought about this presentation and brought up issues that folklorists discuss year in and year out at conferences. Some talked about the need to "protect" and guide apprentices they bring to festivals in their relationship with audiences. Most talked

about a sense of isolation—from family and community, but from other folk artists. In short, each of the workshop participants, in their interactions with folklorists and cultural organizations, had acquired a new identity. As self-described "folk artists" they were already once-removed from the "natural context" of their art forms. They were self-conscious and knowledgeable about the role.

Folklorists, in inviting traditional artists to step outside their usually personal and intimate contexts of art-making in order to perform for the public, foster the artists' identity as "folk artists." This process also encourages participation in a new community—the community of folk artists. RCCA's workshop provided a setting where the role of "folk artist" could be expressed and explored among peers. As such, the self-presentation workshop is a model that other organizations who conduct folk arts programming may be able to use in their communities.

The Self-Presenting Workshop was organized and directed by Janis Benincasa, staff folklorist at the Schoharie County Arts Council.

UNBROKEN CIRCLES, TRADITIONAL ARTS OF CONTEMPORARY WOODLAND PEOPLES

Cultural Encounter Edition
Northeast Indian Quarterly, Winter 1990
Cornell U., American Indian Program
Susan R. Dixon, Special Issue Editor

by Diosa M. Summers

In a recent conversation discussing African American musicians, Quincy Jones noted that those accomplished musicians like Ray Charles, Michael Jackson, and Stevie Wonder reach the level of excellence they do because of an understanding of their past. He said, "The history of the African American is unique, emotional, and powerful. Understanding who they are through an understanding of their particular cultural history can only lead to high quality artistic expression."

Because I was reading *Unbroken Circles, Traditional Arts of Contemporary Woodland Peoples*, I found this statement to be particularly timely. In its application to Native American art there are some additional issues to consider. "Culture" supports many different aspects, or sub-areas that collectively are identified as a specific culture. Within all Native American cultures, the production and appreciation of art is of significant importance. In Northeast Woodland cultures the economic value of traditional Native American art, established very early in American history, influenced the Native American community, the individual artist, and the environment in a powerful, yet sometimes subtle way. Interaction with the dominant culture often had to do with the selling of Native made objects to the white tourist. This was the way many Native people earned their living. Additionally the creation of beautiful objects and the knowledge of the technical skills necessary to do this established high esteem for the artist in his/her home community.

These beautiful objects have normally fallen into three categories: 1) domestic, 2) military, 3) spiritual. Domestic art was created primarily by women, historically, but not exclusively, and even today men continue to create art in this category. Moccasins and other wearing apparel fall into this category, as do twined bags, fingerwoven sashes, ash splint and sweetgrass baskets, bullrush mats, birch bark containers, the many objects that are beaded, and those ob-

jects that are carved of wood, such as bowls and ladles, and of course, clay pots. Military art, carved war clubs, tomahawks, bows and arrows, and their containers historically were made by men. Spiritual art, which includes false face and corn husk masks, condolence canes, turtle rattles, elm bark rattles and more have historically been made by men, and this situation continues even today, as do the others I have mentioned. I must also add that if a woman wants to create an object that is generally created by men, it is possible.

I have been talking about objects that have generally been described as "craft" by the dominant culture. This brings me to the issues of "What is Native American art?" and "Who determines what Native American art is?" For too many years the dominant culture, through the voices of art historians, anthropologists, curators, and gallery owners, have been telling Native artists who they are, what they are doing, why, and how. They have, until recently, insisted that most objects that are created as utilitarian, are "craft" rather than "art" and are therefore not to be taken seriously or valued in the way "art" is valued. This practice served to attack the self-esteem of many Native American artists, and assure them that the results of their creative spirit had little economic value, even though the gallery owners openly sold Native American "craft" pieces for amounts that were often as much as ten times what the maker had received. A culture should be permitted to define itself, but that clearly has not been the case for Native Americans. The dominant culture has through the course of interacting with Native people insisted upon imposing its perceptions and values on all it encountered. "Art" is seen as separate, precious, and outside the culture. This is completely contrary to the Native American point of view, but then, the Native American point of view has only recently been considered. In recent years that consideration has generated a multitude of exhibitions and publications, with some having a genuine intent of presenting the Native American point of view, and others paying lip service to the current trend.

With all of this in mind I began to read *Unbroken Circles, Traditional Arts of Contemporary Woodland Peoples* with some enthusiasm and some caution. When I finished, I realized that I had some very mixed feelings about this publication.

My first question was "who was the intended audience of this publication?" Native people want and need to hear from Native artists and elders. We also

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HORSE HIGH, SHEEP TIGHT, AND HOG PROOF: THE STONE WALLS OF DUTCHESS COUNTY

By Bruce Buckley and Donald McTernan
Dutchess County Dept. of History
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
53 pages (Glossary, Bibliography)
\$18.00 plus \$2.00 shipping

by Janis Benincasa

Fences, considered gauche by many European travelers to the New World, were originally intended to protect crops from animals. Hence the traditional definition of a good fence and clever title of this publication: "horse high, sheep tight, and hog proof." Apparently, a system of common property made fences an uncommon site on the Old World landscape while a system of private landownership made fences *de rigueur* in the New.

No longer considered a blot on otherwise pastoral scenery, the story of the ubiquitous stone fence of rural New York is revealed in *Horse High, Sheep Tight, and Hog Proof: The Stone Walls of Dutchess County*. The book is beautifully illustrated with black & white photographs by Douglas Baz and features striking examples of stone work in a variety of styles. The attractive publication outlines the history of stone fences in Dutchess County and beyond as well as the values and attitudes that inspired their construction and maintenance. Derived from first hand interviews, the text includes information about contemporary stone masons and traces stylistic elements of Dutchess County walls to the makers' background and training. These personal histories are placed within the broader context of Dutchess County settlement.

Dutchess County is replete with stone walls and has the resources, knowledge and civic pride to preserve them. Local readers of *Horse High* will find themselves immersed in a local history made manifest by the existing artistry. For those outside the immediate area, *Horse High* is a beautifully crafted book about art and history that will touch anyone who has ever admired a stone fence.

ANNUAL WINTERTHUR CONFERENCE

October 3-5, 1991

The 1991 Winterthur Conference explores historical archaeology and the study of American Culture. Papers will address current research in the historical archaeology of landscape, domestic economy, and consumer culture as well as more theoretical concerns with context, meaning, and the nature of historical archaeology and material culture investigations.

Registration is \$50; \$30 for students. To be placed on the conference mailing list, and for further information, contact the Advanced Studies Division, Winterthur, DE 19753 or call (302) 888-4649.

Immediately following the Winterthur Conference, the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology holds its annual meeting at the Newark Sheraton Inn, Newark, Delaware on October 5-6, 1991. The meeting will explore historical archaeological research in the northeastern United States and Canada on the theme of "City, Town, Country: Community as Context." It will also offer its usual diverse fare of current research in the region, along with a reception and tours of local sites of historical and archaeological interest. To be placed on the meeting mailing list and for further information, contact Lu Ann De Cunzo, Department of Anthropology, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716 or call (302) 451-1854.

NOTEWORTHY

It's A Boy!

NYFS is pleased to announce the birth of its newest member, Benjamin Edward McKeeby. Weighing in at 7 lbs., 7 oz. on June 19, 1991, Benjamin takes his place as the smallest and youngest NYFS member in the society's history. Credit (and kudos) for the new membership goes to NYFS Secretary/Treasurer Ellen McHale and husband John McKeeby. Congratulations parents! We're really happy for you.

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO SEEKS SUBJECTS

Dave Isay, a producer with National Public Radio, is soon to begin production on a two year series. Funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the series will address local establishments and individuals whose lifeways are threatened in the ebb and flow of America's rapidly changing cultural landscape. The project, which will generate thirty individual 6 to 9 minute segments for broadcast on NPR's *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition*, aims to celebrate some of the most compelling folklife/ human interest stories the country has to offer.

The series producer asks your help in finding subjects for broadcast. He hopes to take listeners across the country—to luncheonette counters and senior citizen centers, smoky back rooms and street

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NEW BOOKS

The Hidden Heritage/L'Heritage Cache, by Peter C. van Lent, a study of French folk culture of Northern New York, is available through the Arts Council for Franklin County. To order write to P.O. Box 54, Paul Smiths, New York 12970, 518-327-3083. The cost is \$10.00 plus \$1.05 shipping.

Books by Master Storyteller Vit Horejs, can now be ordered directly from GOH Productions at discount prices: *Pig and Bear*, a collection of original tales, Four Winds Press/MacMillan, 1989; and *Twelve Iron Sandals and Other Czechoslovak Tales*, Prentice-Hall, 1985.

You can also order *Twelve Iron Sandals and Other Czechoslovak Tales*, and *The Fisherman's Clever Daughter and Other Czechoslovak Tales*, two 40-minute audiotape selections from the treasury of Czechoslovak folk tales by Vit Horejs, accompanied by legendary guitar player Radim Hladik.

To order, contact: GOH Productions 239 East 5th St. Suite 1-D, New York, NY 10003. tel: (212) 777-3891; fax: (212) 529-0939

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Managing Director

CityFolk, an exemplary, multi-cultural arts presenting organization in Dayton, Ohio seeks to fill the position of Managing Director responsible for the administrative and financial management of the organization. Candidates must have proven grantwriting and fundraising abilities, management experience and excellent written and verbal communication skills. Knowledge of the performing arts, particularly traditional and ethnic is highly desirable. In conjunction with the Artistic Director and the Board of Trustees, this position develops and oversees the implementation of long and short range goals and objectives of the organization. Other responsibilities include preparing and monitoring the annual budget, maintaining appropriate financial controls, negotiating contracts, supervising staff, and providing staff support to the Board of Trustees.

Salary range \$24,500-30,000 plus benefits. Send cover letter, resume and references to Personnel Committee, CityFolk P.O. Box 552 Dayton, Ohio 45402.

Staff Folklorist Position

Arts for Greater Rochester seeks to fill the position of Staff Folklorist. Located in the Finger Lakes Region of Western New York State, Arts for Greater Rochester has been an advocate, planner and funder for the arts in Monroe County since 1979. Arts for Greater Rochester has supported a folk arts program since 1987. A city of considerable ethnic diversity, Rochester includes the second largest Puerto Rican community in the state, large Jewish and Italian populations, and a growing number of Asian immigrants.

The Staff Folklorist: 1) Documents traditional arts and artist in Monroe County. 2) Designs and implements folk arts programs. 3) Provides support services to folk artists and presenting organizations. Annual programs include presentations at the Lilac Festival and Main Event Festival, as well as smaller community events based on the results of ongoing fieldwork. The Staff Folklorist

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BOOK REVIEWS

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need to have the opportunity to illustrate our own skills as writers, artists, and tradition bearers.

Roughly two-thirds of the publication is devoted to the Native American talking about the Native American. This is important. The questions that Pete Jemison asks Stan Hill are derived from a common understanding of who they both are within the context of Native American culture. The questions are pertinent and the responses have meaning to other members of the culture who also share that common understanding. Katsi Cook's interview with Mary Adams accomplishes this as well. At the same time, the specialness of both Mary Adams and Stan Hill is acknowledged through the format of publication. Process is presented in Donna Cole's article Cornhusk People, and this is also important to those Native artists who will improve their own skills through the acquisition of this information. Lynne Williamson's description of the American Indian Archeological Institute's exhibition is also pertinent for Native people. We do like to know what is being said about us, and how.

After reading all of the "Native American" articles things began to fall apart for me. Why non-Native "experts" are included in this publication is not entirely clear to me with the exception of John Suter's article at the end. Do these "scholarly" presentations validate this publication? I can only guess that this was the editor's intent, but since this practice is not original to this publication, it is a fair assumption. Content is the other issue here. The presentation of valid fact is acceptable even though I don't feel the "experts" have a place in this publication. But the presentation of personal conclusions, that are based on uninformed white perceptions represents a continuance of the old problem of the dominant culture telling us who we are and why we do what we do. In his article, Recent Considerations in the Study of Native American Art, Robert Hobbs states, "In their efforts to revive their traditions and retrench themselves in a sacred realm, many tribes, including the Zuni and the Iroquois, have expressed a desire to maintain control over the past, as well as the present, by reclaiming the war gods and the False Face masks now housed in museums and private collections. They

have also demanded that those objects which they cannot reclaim at least be withheld from public view and publication. While this act of veneration is commendable, it is akin to the Roman Catholic Church requesting museums and private collections to return all the sacred objects that were once made for the purposes of worship and veneration under the express auspices of the Church."

Here again is the comparison of the dominant culture and Native culture. And here again is the white "expert" defining the role of these specific spiritual objects in Native culture. At the same time Hobbs implies an arbitrary attitude on the part of Native people in their demands for the return of sacred objects. He conveniently forgets to state that a large percentage of these sacred objects came into the hands of museums and private collectors through questionable acts, and should morally and legally be returned to the rightful owners. Repatriation has been a hot issue for many years, and with good cause. Trivializing it seems highly inappropriate in the context of this publication. Not having knowledge and understanding of the importance of these specific sacred objects in both Zuni and Iroquois culture is forgivable, but the presentation of negative, uniformed conclusions is inappropriate. The Zuni and the Iroquois do not have to revive their traditions. They have not gone to sleep, which is what I suspect Mr. Hobbs was doing when he researched this article.

Having the Eurocentric perception in place when talking about Native Americans is tiresome. It does not apply, and seems only to be a false symbol of intellect and superiority in the context of this publication. As editor, Susan Dixon might have been a bit more consistent in her efforts for and with Native people. But then, it is to be expected that members of the dominant culture cannot restrain certain impulses when they deal with Native people. That is why Native input and control of certain situations is so important. So, what could have been a wonderful issue, consistent in its presentation of Native people, became a response to the trend, paying lip-service to Native art and artists.

Diosa M. Summers, a Native American artist and writer, is the Director of Education at Wave Hill, a 28 acre cultural institution in the Bronx, and is a faculty member at Parsons School of Design in New York City.

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

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corners—to tell the stories of ordinary people whose extraordinary traditions are on the brink of vanishing.

The series is based on piece aired last year about the Brooklyn Elite Checker Club. This group of African American men, in their 70s and 80s, gather together every Friday and Saturday night to play a game called "pool checkers": an intricate, fast-paced version of checkers developed by plantation slaves in Louisiana. The men tell endless stories about the game—of losing jobs and wives because of their devotion to it, of the day when a construction crew accidentally sent a wrecking ball through their Bedford Stuyvesant clubhouse and left them "homeless." As their members age and no young members replace them, the checker club hold onto the Pool Checker tradition with pride and resolve.

From the annual meeting of the Retired Pullman Porters society to the Florida husband and wife team who are struggling to build an exact replica of the Wailing Wall in the alley behind their Miami Beach home, producer Isay is looking for an ethnically diverse mix of stories about special men and women who are determined to "hang on."

Dave Isay can be reached at (212) 353-2548 or you can contact project consultants Steve Zeitlin, City Lore, at (212) 473-3358 or Peter Bartis, American Folklife Center at (202) 707-1732.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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ist is also working with a consortium of schools and cultural organizations to develop a folk arts-in-education strategy. Monroe County's rural regions will be the focus of new documentation and programming in 1991-92.

Candidates should have a graduate degree in folklore or a related field, and have strong fieldwork and documentation skills. Fluency in Spanish or Asian languages may be a plus. Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. AGR is an equal opportunity employer.

To apply send resume to: Ginna Moseson, Arts for Greater Rochester, 335 East Main Street, Rochester, New York 14604, (716) 546-5602

NYFS PUBLICATIONS SPECIAL OFFERS

We are offering complete sets of available back issues of the Society's journals *New York Folklore* (1975 to the present — 25 issues as of January 1991) and the *New York Folklore Quarterly* (1946-1974— 79 issues as of January 1991) at special discount prices.

Our usual single-copy price for back issues is \$10. If you take advantage of the complete back issues offer, your price per copy will be \$1.20! We are making this remarkable offer because the vital and stimulating articles in the journals need to be available to people who want to know more about their own cultures and traditions and those of their neighbors. These journals belong on your shelves, not ours!

To order, indicate your preference on the line below and enter the amount, along with your name and address, on the form below right. Back issues of certain numbers are in short supply. The sooner you order, the more complete your set will be.



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(1946-1974)
79 issues **\$100**

For a complete list of available issues and other NYFS publications, call or write us at the address listed on the order form.

The New York Folklore Society is dedicated to furthering cultural equity and crosscultural understanding through its programs serving the field of folklore and folklife in New York State.

The Society seeks to nurture folklore and folklife by fostering and encouraging folk cultural expressions within communities where they originate and by sharing these expressions across cultural boundaries. ▼ The New York Folklore Society publishes the scholarly journal *New York Folklore* and the *New York Folklore Newsletter*. The Society provides technical assistance to organizations engaged in folk arts programming and produces conferences and other programs with statewide scope that address issues concerning folklife. ▼ Members of the New York Folklore Society include folklore enthusiasts, historic preservationists, school teachers, folklorists, librarians, anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, local historians, folk artists, museum curators, students, photographers, arts administrators, and writers, among others. ▼ Our regular membership fees for 1991 are still only \$25.00 for individuals, \$35.00 for institutions, and \$15.00 for full-time college or university students. Foreign members pay an additional \$5.00 over the regular membership fee. Members receive a subscription to *New York Folklore* and to this newsletter. ▼ We welcome your involvement and support. To join us, return the membership form below with your check payable to New York Folklore Society, P.O. Box 130, Newfield, NY 14867. ▼ Thank you!

Please Join Us

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND ORDER FORM

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Please return to: **New York Folklore Society**
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Sample Irish bands at East Durham's night spots or enjoy the traditional German *schlachtfest* pork dinner followed by a Pig Parade in nearby Round Top.

ANNUAL MEETING

Members of the New York Folklore Society are cordially invited to attend the annual meeting Sunday morning at which we will elect new board members and officers, review the past year's activities and discuss plans for the future.

New York Folklore Society
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