

NEW YORK  
**FOLK  
LORE**  
NEWSLETTER



Spring 1993  
Vol 14 No 1

## 1993 Fall Conference Dates Set

**T**he 1993 Fall Conference will take place Friday, October 22 through Sunday, October 24 in the Conference Center at SUNY Brockport outside Rochester. This year, we will focus on the vital area of folk arts in education; the conference is being planned in collaboration with the Empire State Foxfire Teachers Network, a statewide group of dedicated and creative public school teachers with whom we hope to build a dynamic and lasting partnership. It will be an innovative and important conference. Look for the details in the summer newsletter, and save the dates now!

## Mentoring Program Guidelines Ready

**A** new brochure and guidelines are now available for the Mentoring Program for Folklife and the Traditional Arts, which funds technical assistance consultancies to help individuals and organizations with their folk arts programs. Application deadlines for this year are April 15 and August 1. In evaluating project requests, we will give highest priority to projects that directly benefit: 1) folk artists or 2) community based organizations in African American, Asian, Latino, Native American, rural or other underserved communities of the state. If you think this program might be able to help you, please give us a call, or write for the brochure and application form.

In connection with this project, we are also developing a roster of people who are able to provide technical assistance as consultants, either through the Mentoring Program or through other referrals. If you would like to be on our roster, call or write us for the Technical Assistance Roster Questionnaire.

## Advocacy Time! NYSCA Faces More Cuts

**I**t is time once again to begin visiting your state legislators, writing to them, sending letters to the editors of your local papers, and making phone calls to ensure that the legislature and the powers that be in your community are aware of the importance of state support for the arts, and especially folk arts. Here's the situation:

▼ The governor has proposed a 12.1% cut to NYSCA for programs, and additional cuts as well to the administrative budget. The program cuts to folk arts are somewhat less (10%), but still grave. These cuts represent a 62.7% reduction since 1989-90.

▼ The legislators are again under enormous pressure to cut wherever they can. But there is reason to believe that there may be more money available this year than last. Only if the legislators hear from us in large numbers will they be able to muster the political will to restore funding to the arts.

# NEW YORK FOLK LORE NEWSLETTER

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New York Folklore Newsletter

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## NYFS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

### *Planning Under Way*

The New York Folklore Society was founded on October 6, 1944 at a meeting of the New York State Historical Association in Albany. Louis Jones, Harold Thompson, and others had decided that New York State needed an organization devoted to the collecting and study of the state's rich folklore. The new Society published its first issue of the New York Folklore Quarterly in 1945. From its early days when it rode an extraordinary wave of popular interest in folklore, through the increasing professionalization of the discipline, to the current proliferation of public folklore activity and loss of academic folklore positions in the state, the New York Folklore Society has both reflected and helped shape developments in the field as a whole.

Our 50th anniversary offers us an opportunity to take a reflective look at both the history of the Society and the broader history of folklore in New York State during the post-war period. During recent months, in a series of prelimi-

nary planning meetings that have involved more than 50 people to date, we have begun planning a multi-year project that will begin in October, 1994. It will be designed to examine with a celebratory tone and a critical eye the history of folklore studies and programming in New York State since 1945, raise the awareness and appreciation of folklife and traditional arts in communities throughout the state, and develop an agenda for the future evolution of the field in New York State. We envision a range of programs, including research projects, publications, conferences, lectures, performances and other public programs. Some we will produce ourselves, others will be collaborations.

Programs will be designed to bring together on a local or regional basis academic and public folklorists, academically trained people from related disciplines, folk artists, folklore enthusiasts, and educators.

We are also interested in involving folklorists who have worked in or written about New York State over the years but who are no longer here. To that end, we hope to convene a gathering at the 1993

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## NEW FOLKLORE AND ETHNOMUSICOLOGY SEMINAR IN NYC

Many scholars in folklore, ethnomusicology and related fields in the New York City metropolitan area have long wanted local opportunities to present their work to one another and hear presentations from visiting scholars. Last fall, Ray Allen, Robert Baron, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, and Kenneth Moore decided to do something about it. The Greater New York Folklore and Ethnomusicology Seminar got under way on November 16 at the New York University Department of Performance Studies with a stimulating presentation by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett entitled, "Making Difference: Eight Types of Multiculturalism." More than 80 people turned out for the first seminar in the series—a most encouraging beginning.

The organizers have planned two more seminars for the spring. On March 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, Gisela Welz, a folklorist from Tübingen University who is look-

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## ADVOCACY

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During this time of recession in New York State the arts community can't expect special treatment. But we can expect fair treatment. In recent years, we haven't gotten it from the governor, but the legislature has usually restored some of the funds cut in the governor's budget. They've helped us because we have made the case for the arts and asked for fairness insistently and clearly.

We must continue. This year the New York State Arts and Cultural Coalition, which coordinates the statewide arts lobbying effort, has determined that rather than lobby for the NYSCA budget as a whole, which can seem abstract to legislators, our focus should be on the effects of arts funding—and funding cuts—on the particular organizations in legislators' dis-

tricts—how will their constituents be hurt if funds aren't restored. **Here's what you can do:**

- ▼ *Write your legislators*
- ▼ *Telephone their offices* at home or in Albany
- ▼ *Visit your legislators* at their local offices. If you can, bring friends or family who care about the arts. This is our highest priority this year.
- ▼ When you have their attention, tell them what the NYSCA-funded programs have done for **their communities**, and let them know the damage that further cuts can inflict on **their constituents'** lives. Thank them for their support in the past, and ask them to actively support folk arts, and the arts in general, in this year's budget deliberations.

In every corner of the state, the arts contribute both to the quality of life and to the economy. In fact, it has been the vibrant cultural life of New York that has made it an attractive place to live and work and visit. Without a healthy cultural life here, the economy of the state would be damaged far beyond the already devastating losses suffered by artists and arts organizations themselves.

So please act. If you don't know who your legislators are, call your local League of Women Voters. If you have questions—what to say, when to call, etc.—or you would like to help with the effort, please call us (607-273-9137). We'll be delighted to work with you or put you in touch with someone in your area who is experienced and already working on the lobbying effort.

# Beyond the Ring: The Art & Culture of Boxing

Mary Zwolinski

**N**orman Mailer called it “a dialogue between bodies.” Screenwriter Bud Schulberg described it as “show business with blood.” And in the 1820s writer Pierce Egan dubbed it “The Sweet Science.” It’s boxing.

*Beyond the Ring*, a project of the Rensselaer County Council on the Arts Folk Arts Program in Troy, is a series of programs that explore the rich folk and popular traditions associated with the sport. Over several months beginning in March, a series of readings, films, speakers, and demonstrations will explore the history and culture of boxing in the United States.

Early European Immigrants chose boxing as a means of gaining entry into American society. “Bare knuckle boxing,” the sport’s first form, is full of names like Ryan and Sullivan, Morrisey and Heenan. Boxing attracted Italian, Hispanic, and African American fighters as well. But, despite this seemingly integrated profession, boxing reflects this country’s xenophobia and reluctance to change. It wasn’t until well into

the 20th century that black boxers were allowed to fight in public events against white boxers. It was longer still before blacks could go for the large prizes.

Boxing is a sport that creates heroes, and kids from lower class neighborhoods continue to look to boxing’s champions as stars worth emulating—despite the reality of the sport. Fighters like Joe Lewis and Mohammed Ali found widespread support from the black community, not only for their fighting prowess, but for their symbolic importance within the community.

On a more intimate level, however, local boxing clubs provide a haven for neighborhood kids. Often located in rough neighborhoods, the clubs stand in complete opposition to their chaotic surroundings. Inside a boxing club there is order and discipline. Most of the training at the club involves working out: stretching, working the speedbag and the large bag, and doing the “pads.” And the language of boxing is full of descriptions like “bum” and “heart” that have more to do with an out-

of-ring personality than actual fighting ability.

*Beyond the Ring* begins with a film series and a reading/discussion series and culminates in a day-long symposium on May 8. The film series kicks off on March 19 with Martin Scorsese’s *Raging Bull*, about heavyweight champ Jake LaMotta, and continues the following day with *City for Conquest*. The 1939 film features James Cagney whose character enters boxing in order to send a younger brother to school to become a piano virtuoso. On March 27, *The Great White Hope* gives a fictionalized account of Jack Johnson, the first black fighter to compete for the heavyweight title. The film series continues on April 17 and 24 with two more films about boxing as a means of social advancement. *Body and Soul*, with John Garfield, about a Jewish fighter is followed by *Rocco & His Brothers*, an Italian film by Visconti about a family trying to rise above poverty.

The reading/discussion series will take place over four Saturdays at the Troy Public Library. Discussion group leaders will be drawn from a pool of journalists, sports writers and authors with an interest in and knowledge of the sport. Four contemporary fiction and non-fiction books about boxing will be made available to discussants at the library. The first of these, *The Sweet Science*, is a compilation of essays by A.J. Leibling. The second reading, also non-fiction, is Tom Hauser’s biography *Ali*, about the heavyweight champ Mohammad Ali. *Requiem for a Heavyweight*, a teleplay by Rod Serling, is third in the series. The final reading is *The Manly Art: Bare Knuckle Boxing*, by Eliot Gorn, Professor of American Studies at Miami University in Ohio.

On May 8th, a day-long symposium caps off the series with a variety of events. The Uncle Sam Boxing Club will have ongoing demonstrations throughout the day in Washington Park on 2nd Street in Troy while across the street at RCCA an exhibition of boxing photos by Nicole Keyes sets the stage for a number of speakers: Eliot Gorn has researched and taught the history of bare knuckle



Uncle Sam Boxing Club owner and trainer Bob Miller preparing a young fighter for a sparring match at the club. Photo by Nicole Keys.

boxing. Mark Workman, a folklorist and professor at Rochester University in Michigan, has written about wrestling as drama and will discuss boxing as a dramatic art. Jeffrey Sammons, Professor of History at New York University, gave the series its name. Author of *Beyond the Ring*, a history of boxing



**Vernon and son at the Uncle Sam Club. Photo by Nicole Keys.**

from the 1800s to the present, Sammons will address racial issues associated with the sport. Finally, Vernon Boggs, Sociologist from the City University of New York and contributor to the collection *Bright Light Zone* about Times Square, will discuss boxing clubs and male identity.

A local Troy boxing panel will include Bob Miller, owner of the Uncle Sam Boxing Club as well as Kevin Pompey, Collar City's own welterweight national contender. They will be joined by other local boxers who will share memorabilia and reminiscences of their boxing experiences.

*Beyond the Ring* is supported by funds from the New York Council for the Humanities. For information on the series and symposium or for a brochure, contact RCCA, 189 2nd Street, Troy; (518) 273-0552.

## Bridging Eastern Parkway

Three Brooklyn cultural institutions announced a major collaborative project whose aim is to increase understanding between African American, Caribbean Americans, and Lubavitcher Jews in Crown Heights. Based on the belief that education about other people's histories and cultures is essential to the process of building trust between different groups, the Brooklyn Children's Museum, the Brooklyn Historical Society, and the Society for the Preservation of Weeksville and Bedford-Stuyvesant History (a historic site of a 19th century black settlement in Brooklyn) will collaborate on *Bridging Eastern Parkway*, a groundbreaking educational and documentary project on the contemporary issues and history of the area.

The institutions, which organized the project following six months of planning and discussions with members of the community, will develop public programs, community forums, a video, and interpretive exhibitions opening simultaneously next year at all three institutions. The exhibitions, which are being planned in cooperation with the African American, Caribbean American and the Lubavitcher communities in Crown Heights, will explore the diverse cultures, the history and the hopes for the future of the area.

"A major problem facing this community is that many people know very little about their neighbors," said Mindy Duitz, Director of the Brooklyn Children's Museum. "By enabling people to learn about each other, we will be working towards eliminating the

animosities and misunderstandings that can result from lack of communication."

The project is being undertaken under the guidance of the New York Tolerance Committee, which was organized last year by the New York Times Foundation in an effort to rebuild communion between blacks and Jews in New York City.

The Crown Heights project is supported by grants from the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The New York Times Foundation and the Fund



**The original Brooklyn Children's Museum, circa early 1900's, located in Brower Park, Crown Heights.**

for the City of New York. A number of other foundations are considering funding the project.

To achieve their goal, the sponsoring organizations are calling upon the know-how of two highly regarded national conflict resolution organizations—*Facing History and Ourselves* and *Educators for Social Responsibility*. Both of these organizations have had excellent results in exploring issues of tolerance with school children and their teachers in various parts of the country.

The focus of the collaboration is to make community involvement

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# UNESCO & the Global Conservation Culture or, I Found the Child Ballads! Part II

Kathryn M. Kimiecik

In 1989, the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted a *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*. What follows represents my reactions to the document as a whole and, in particular, to the sections regarding con-

servation, preservation, and protection. The *Recommendation* serves as a focus for part two of a larger essay (*Heritage, Folklife, Cultural Conservation & Policy or, Whatever Happened to Child Ballads? Part I*. Winter 1992), a reflection on cultural conservation and heritage.

While I commend the authors of the UNESCO document and

these resources, I begrudge our invisibility. Simply, the recommendation is a most excellent beginning for the end products, i.e., lore. However, the document itself is grossly mistitled and includes almost no reference to individuals, people, or even the "folk" in folklore, except as background sources for potentially archivable materials. Essentially, the document addresses the global infrastructure of the discipline, albeit the university wing. In many ways it reads like a plan for one giant historic-geographic project and is more self-perpetuating for the discipline than for the cultures, individuals, or groups from whom folklore is "gathered."

Everyone working in the public sector should be aware of the kinds of recommendations the UNESCO document proposes. Most of the major sections concern identification, conservation, preservation, dissemination, and protection of lore (both material and intangible) that can be placed in an archive or museum. Intangible items of folklore must be turned into tangible items via surveys or some form of documentation so that they may be preserved. One might think that the concerns of some of the more public dimensions of the field would show up under "conservation" or "protection" but that never happens. "Conservation" issues are exclusively curatorial, or relegated to the presentation of folklore. "Preservation" fares a bit better: "Measures must be taken to guarantee the status of and economic support for folk traditions both in the communities that produce them and beyond." One wonders what happens when folk traditions are work traditions or lifestyles closely tied to an eroding or changing physical or economic environment.

Recommendations for "Protection" refer primarily to the protection of the collector and the ensuing materials; only one reference is made to the informant. There is almost no attempt to address the safeguarding of traditional cultures as opposed to the cultural products of any given society. For me, the global call for the organization, identification, and protec-

## EXCERPTS FROM RECOMMENDATION ON THE SAFEGUARDING OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND FOLKLORE

*Adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 25th Session in Paris, 1989*

### Identification of Folklore

- Develop a national inventory of institutions
- Create identification and recording systems
- Stimulate the creation of a standard typology

### Conservation of Folklore

- Establish national archives
- Establish a central national archive
- Create museums or folklore sections at museums
- Present traditional and popular cultures
- Harmonize collecting and archiving methods
- Train collectors
- Make secure & working copies of all materials

### Preservation of Folklore

- Design formal & out-of-school curricula
- Guarantee access of communities to their own folklore
- Set up a National Folklore Council
- Provide support for studying folklore

### Dissemination of Folklore

- Encourage the organization of events
- Encourage coverage of folklore material in media
- Support the production of educational materials
- Establish full time jobs for folklorists
- Ensure the availability of information on folklore
- Facilitate meetings
- Adopt a code of ethics

### Protection of Folklore

- Protect the informant
- Protect the interest of the collector
- Safeguard materials against misuse
- Monitor use made of materials

### International Co-operation

the delegates who voted for its adoption, the policy seems not to reflect the concerns or perspectives of folklorists who are working in the public sector. I think that a document of this stature, coming from an institution as public as UNESCO, demands the input of public sector folklorists. Perhaps I am left wanting by the recommendation because I assume that public folklore is an important part of the entire discipline of folkloristics; that folklorists inside the academy recognize that some folklorists work outside the academy with different needs and different results. Disciplinary naivete is always something of a shock.

After six years of steady work in the public sector I had forgotten that there are folklorists who have the time and resources to not only "collect" folklore but to think about classification systems and archive development. I do not begrudge

tion of folklore is only half the story and puts the cart before the horse.

My understanding of cultural conservation undoubtedly reflects a particular orientation based on folklore education and work in the United States. As I see it, cultural conservation is an attempt to "safeguard and promote the community life and values of ethnic, occupational, religious, and regional groups by recognizing and protecting the treasured patterns that arise from their ways of life" (Ormand Loomis, *Cultural Conservation*, 1983). While I don't always support the way that this has been interpreted, it does reflect some attention to the cultures with whom folklorists in the U.S. have traditionally worked, and theoretically it addresses more than their lore.

The authors of the UNESCO document are probably fully aware of the distinction between a focus on people and a focus on "items of folklore," but it certainly doesn't come through in the language of the document. How does one collect "treasured patterns" from unemployed steel workers? How does one "safeguard" community life when plants shut down? How does one document altar displays when the altars have crumbled from lack of resources or because the neighborhood has disintegrated? In two or ten or twenty years should we be content to have simply collected narratives? Should UNESCO be content to have authorized a document that doesn't really safeguard traditional cultures at all?

Of course the conflict is inherent in cultural conservation. Unless approaches to cultural conservation go beyond presentation and collection, the result of "safeguarding" will either be documentation in its purest, most scientific form or the further fetishization of those cultures we are trying so hard to conserve.

The Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore is not some huge mistake or dangerous document. It is designed simply and clearly to deal with the creation of global networks of folklorists and the objects of their research. I suspect,

however, that when folklorists from western cultures begin to work closely with researchers and government agencies across the globe, the inadequacy of approaches designed primarily to create archives will make itself apparent. It is my hope that Part II of the Recommendation is in the works.

*Kathy Kimiecik coordinates public programs for the Folklife Division of the American Industrial Heritage Project in Johnstown, PA.*

## LETTERS

### *United We Bargain! A Reply*

In *Heritage, Folklore, Cultural Conservation & Policy or, Whatever Happened to Child Ballads* (Winter 1992), Kathy Kimiecik situates herself historically, politically and culturally in the world. However, the "shock" she finds with her profession's "old notions of cultural conservation" may empower her to act but shouldn't lead to more labeling and romanticizing of "traditional" people nor, using Paulo Freire's term, "unreflective activism." She's right: Elitist professions, like folklore, and academic departments, too, need plans to confront dominant cultural and economic systems that most of us find in our own homes, neighborhoods, workplaces and communities. Destroying and subverting "hegemonic" and colonial relationships are things that most people do all their lives. However, rather than always looking at what other people do, maybe we could start to assess what *we can do*, individually and collectively. One suggestion: Unionize "the profession."

Why would some "cultural workers," in order to find their voices of outrage, gaze at and study "the Other"? Instead, focus on one's own situation and relationship with the world (and employer). Moreover, why do some "cultural workers" appear in documentary landscapes as non-union and migrant-like laborers while simultaneously

studying organized laborers and advocating "union" and "solidarity" in their interpretations, exhibits and writings. Are rules of professional conduct or protocol stopping anyone from unionizing? When full-time, non-union folklorists labor for public and private agencies, what's stopping them from organizing and collectively bargaining over wages, hours and working conditions?

It will be a hard fight, even in New York State, the home of public-sector labor relations legislation. New York's SUNY system, for example, has fiercely contested graduate student unionization; but graduate student employees will become a bargaining unit of the Communications Workers of America. They will negotiate wages, hours and working conditions with SUNY central. A unionizing drive is the toughest battle that most professionals will endure in their entire lives. Imagine the folkloristic potential for the re-telling of such an endeavor!

I don't know how to resolve: 1) the survival of folklore "into the twenty-first century" (a statement revealing a lot about one's sense of time, logic and job security in 2001) and 2) creating environments which make desirable social consequences more likely. However, one's demands for self-determination raise one's sense of self-importance and heighten the meaningful expectations of one's personal and professional communities. As Mother Jones said, "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living!" Folklorists might collectively fight for themselves in public arenas; I bet some of "the Folk" would support the effort, too. The unionization of "professional" workers would be one step toward individual and collective, personal and community solidarity, if not liberation. Remember: United we bargain, divided we beg.

Stephen W. Keller

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Graduate Group on  
Industrial Heritage Policy

The author is finishing his doctoral dissertation in American Studies on "post-industrial" history-making, memory, and policy in Western Pennsylvania. He holds a BA in History and an MA in Industrial and Labor Relations, both from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

### MAJOR FOLK ARTS AWARD TO GANYS FROM THE LILA WALLACE-READER'S DIGEST FUND

The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund recently awarded the Gallery Association of New York State a major grant in support of the touring exhibition *Out of the Ordinary: Community Tastes and Values in Contemporary Folk Art*. The three-year, \$160,000 grant is among the first made by the fund as part of a new \$4 million initiative to promote the vitality of folk arts in the United States. This new initiative seeks to build audiences for folk arts outside their traditional communities while also making an effort to preserve their practice.

As George Gruen, chairman of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund notes, "The folk arts celebrate everyday life in communities across America. They are a vital part of our national heritage and deserve more support and involvement so they can flourish."

The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund promotes the vitality of the arts nationwide by encouraging interactions between artists and communities. With annual grants of more than \$30 million, the fund is one of the largest private funders of the performing, visual, and literary arts in the United States.

The Fund's grant to Gallery Association will support costs associated with mounting and touring *Out of the Ordinary*, including an illustrated gallery guide, video programs featuring interviews with folk artists, and consultancies for education and outreach programming at sites on the exhibit tour.

*Out of the Ordinary* has also received partial support from the National Endowment for the Arts' Folk Arts Program and from the New York State Council on the Arts.

The exhibit will open in the fall of 1994 and tour nationally through 1997. *Out of the Ordinary* will explore the dynamic relationship between folk artists and their communities. The exhibit will include approximately 75 works by folk artists from urban and rural New York State, selected by curator Varick Chittenden. Through contextual photographs, videotaped interviews with artists, and commentary, the exhibit will examine how folk artists perpetuate and reinterpret the traditional values

and aesthetics of diverse ethnic communities.

The Gallery Association is a non-profit cooperative of 250 museums and other exhibiting institutions in New York State and the surrounding region. Gallery Association's services include touring exhibitions, art transport, fine art insurance, exhibit design and fabrication, and technical information.

For more information about this exhibit, please contact the Gallery Association, Box 345, Hamilton, NY 13346-0345; (315) 824-2510.

### ALBANY INSTITUTE FOLK ARTS CONFERENCE

The Albany Institute of History & Art has been awarded \$12,200 from the National Endowment for the Arts to support *For The Love Of It: Traditional Arts in the Community*, a conference focused on community folk arts and local culture. Planned for May 13 and 14, 1993, the conference will involve "community scholars," people who have been engaged in collecting and presenting folk arts in their home communities, as well as professionally trained folklorists. The conference will include performances, panel discussions, and small-group discussions.

"Albany County is the only county in the region where extensive folk arts research has not taken place," says Ted Lind, Director of Education of the Albany Institute. "Other counties of the region are active in preserving local cultural customs through their league of arts or arts councils. There are a lot of folk arts taking place that we don't know about; they haven't been documented. One goal of this conference is to inspire people to get together to begin talking and documenting."

Folklorists participating in planning the conference include: Keynote Speaker Bety Belanus, Ellen McHale, Director of the Schoharie County Historical Society; Varick Chittenden, Director of Traditional Arts of Upstate New York; Druis Knowles, Hamilton Hill Arts Center and Russell Sage College; Todd DeGarmo, Crandall Library, Glens Falls; and Vaughn Ward, Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council.

For further information contact the Albany Institute at (518) 463-4478.

### BRUCE KAPLAN, 1945-1992

Bruce D. Kaplan, founder and president of Flying Fish Records, died recently of meningitis. He was 47.

Long time friend and colleague Robert Baron, described Kaplan as someone of "rare vision who inspired a number of people in the field and was warm and supportive of the artists with whom he worked." Kaplan created Flying Fish, a spin-off of the Rounder collective of which Kaplan was also a founding member, in 1974. Since that time, the company has produced over 500 recordings ranging from bluegrass, folk, Cajun, country, and jazz to old timey, new age, reggae, and rock. Eighteen of Kaplan's recordings have been nominated for Grammy awards.

Kaplan brought an academic background in anthropology to his work. He held a master's in anthropology from the University of Chicago and had an expertise in southern Indian narrative. He served as a panelist at the Illinois Arts Council, was on the board of *Sing Out!* and the National Council for Traditional Arts, and served as advisor the Chicago Blues Fest.

With his passing, the world of traditional music lost one its most important influences.

### SPIKE LEE DONATES "X" CAP

On time for the opening of Spike Lee's movie *Malcolm X*, The Brooklyn Historical Society installed an autographed "X" baseball cap that Lee donated to the society. The cap is displayed in its own case outside the society's gallery.

The society prides itself on collecting and exhibiting contemporary material on Brooklyn's diverse communities, especially groups that have been traditionally under-represented in museums. African American materials are incorporated into the society's permanent exhibition, and such topics as *Black Women of Brooklyn* and *Brooklyn's Black*

## EARTHWATCH SPONSORS ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

*From a letter to former New York Folklore editors Deborah Blincoe and John Forrest:*

*"The article written for New York Folklore on French architecture in northern New York has born fruit. Earthwatch has given me a grant and volunteers to continue my research on the houses. Isn't that happy news? I thought that a notice in New York Folklore might be appropriate since the article you so carefully edited really gave my work a boost."*

The non-profit organization Earthwatch (Watertown, MA) has agreed to sponsor an architectural research project in Jefferson County, New York, under the leadership of Claire Bonney, independent art historian and Jefferson County native, for the summer of 1993. The project's goal is to document a group of blue limestone farmhouses built by early 19th-century French immigrants to the area in order to complete the survey begun by Dr. Bonney in her book *French Emigre Houses in Jefferson County* (1985). It is hoped that the research data generated by this expedition will be able to establish building patterns on lands that were sold by James D. LeRay and John LaFarge to French natives. To this end, twelve volunteers based at the historic Tibbetts Point Lighthouse in Cape Vincent, New York, will spend their summer vacations drawing plans, photographing homes, and documenting construction methods.

## THIRD ANNUAL FOLK ART & CRAFT SHOW

The third annual Folk Art and Craft Show opens April 1, 1993 and continues through May 22 at the Very Special Arts Gallery, 1331 F Street, NW, in Washington, DC.

The American Folk Arts and Craft Show features more than 200 works of art from all over the country in a variety of media including paintings, wood carvings, art quilts, handblown glass, ceramics and precious medals. Artworks on exhibit include those created by artists with physical and mental disabilities.

The Very Special Arts Gallery is non-

profit and primarily represents professional artists with disabilities. The Gallery features rotating exhibitions of paintings, prints, crafts, jewelry, sculpture and folk art by emerging and recognized artists. Proceeds from art sales benefit exhibiting artists and the programs of Very Special Arts.

For more information about the Very Special Arts Gallery call (202) 628-0800 or (800) 933-8721.

## CALL FOR SHIP & BOAT MODELERS!

Over one hundred model boat builders will descend upon Pier 16 for the South Street Seaport Museum's 3rd Annual New York Model Ship and Boat Festival on Saturday and Sunday, August 7-8. This festival, known for its size, quality, and diversity, will include demonstrations and displays of both working and static models from across the nation. Visitors will see working models in action in the festival pond. Future model builders will not be overlooked: between 2 and 4 pm, children can make their own fanciful, floatable mini-ships.

To display a model you've constructed yourself, call or write for a registration form: Kathleen Condon, Adult Program Coordinator, South Street Seaport Museum, 207 Front Street, NY, NY 10038; (212) 669-9400.

No direct commercial sales are allowed at the festival. However, participants may distribute business materials. Those interested in selling models through the museum shops at the festival should call Joe Meny at (212) 669-9495.

The New York Model Ship and Boat Festival will take place August 7-8, 1-5pm, Pier 16. It is supported in part by funds from the Folk Arts Program of the New York State Council on the Arts. Collaborating model clubs include: Central Park Model Yacht Club, Empire State Model Mariners, Ship Lore and Model Club of New York, Ship Model Society of Northern New Jersey, and the South Orange Seaport Society.

## BOOK RELEASE

### ON THE BAY

*By Nancy Solomon with Paul Bentel and Martha Cooper*

Folklorist Nancy Solomon has been conducting research and public programs connected with the baymen and bay houses of the Long Island shore for several years. Now her 40 page book *On the Bay*, with a chapter by Paul Bentel on the architecture of the bay houses and photographs by Martha Cooper, has been released.

Bay houses, which stand on land leased to individuals by the Town of Hempstead, have been part of the fishermen's way of life on Nassau County's south shore from the early 1700s to the present day and are linked with many aspects of Long Island's maritime history and folk culture. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, baymen guarded their oyster and clam beds from the houses. Rum runners hid their booty in the shacks during the 20s, and they have been the homes of sportsmen of all kinds. Accessible only by boat, the bay houses affirm the traditional baymen's inseparable connection to the water, and their separation from other Long Islanders. Since the 1940s, non-baymen also have built bay houses. These families have learned from the



Tom Goss and Larry Morelli at the Gertrude Jankowski bay house. Photo by Martha Cooper.

baymen and continue Long Island's maritime traditions. Only thirty-one bay houses remain today; their lease

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## NYFS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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American Folklore Society meeting to discuss the project.

At the planning meetings, we have been thinking about topics and themes we might address, and about individuals and organizations who have been part of the history or know about it.

The range of subjects and issues for research or public programs is vast, as is the range of scholars, folk artists, organizers, advocates, and ordinary people who have helped shape the history. We won't be able to cover it all, but enthusiasm is bubbling already for a manageable project that will make an exciting celebration of our anniversary and a significant contribution to the field.

If you would like to contribute to the planning process, if you know of people who we should be talking to, or if you have documents or tidbits of history in your head that would contribute to the project, please call or write John Suter at the New York Folklore Society.

## ON THE BAY

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holders are battling the Town, which plans to remove the remaining bay houses in 1993.



Cover photo by Martha Cooper. Children often play on the docks and walkways near bay houses.

*On the Bay* is available for \$9.95 plus \$4.50 shipping from Friends of Long Island Heritage, Old Bethpage Village Restoration, Round Swamp Rd., Old Bethpage, NY 11804; (516) 572-8401.

## BRIDGING EASTERN PARKWAY

Continued from page 7

paramount in achieving its goals.

To ensure this, project organizers have set up a Community Advisory Committee, which includes leaders from Crown Heights' Lubavitch, African American, and Caribbean American communities. Scholars, representatives of churches, synagogues, civic and educational organizations and elected officials, among other members of the community, have come together to serve as agents and guides in the development of the initiative's goals.

In the project's planning stages there will be community forums, oral history interviews, walking tours and other public programs to help shape the exhibitions. Programs will be designed to help teach people how to start new bridges and help reduce intergroup conflicts.

"In designing an inclusive planning process, our intention is twofold: we hope to create exhibitions that are truly representative of the people in the neighborhood and to establish new channels of communication that will endure long after the project is complete," said David M. Kahn, Director of the Brooklyn Historical Society.

When completed, the exhibitions will encourage the visitors to explore and learn about the overall history of Crown Heights and to respect the rich cultural traditions that thrive there. The exhibitions will incorporate the thoughts, stories, feelings, and aspirations of the adults and children of Crown Heights as expressed during the development phase.

Educational components will include related public programming, workshops for educators around the city where community representatives will discuss methods of teaching students to understand and appreciate the neighborhood and its residents, and a video which will consist of a "kid's-eye-view" of the situation in Crown Heights. The video will be presented to school groups in the area and other parts of Brooklyn, as well as to children of all ages who visit any of three cultural institutions working on the project. A lesson plan for teachers will be developed to accompany the video.

"We hope that by aiming our programs at young people, we can be part of the process of creating a generation that grows up without the misunderstandings that previous generations experienced," said Joan Maynard, Executive Director of

the Weeksville Society, and a member of the Brooklyn Borough President's Ethnic Advisory Council.

The three sponsoring organizations have a history of coordinating and establishing challenging community projects. The Brooklyn Children's Museum and The Weeksville Society, are located within Crown Heights.

## SPIKE LEE

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*Churches* have been the subjects of rotating temporary exhibitions. The society hired an African American Chief Curator, Dwandalyn R. Reece, this month.

In addition, the society recently ran a one year exhibition on Brooklyn's Latino communities, and is currently working on creating exhibitions on the following topics: the impact of AIDS in Brooklyn, Sunset Park's Chinatown, relationships between different ethnic groups in the area, and lesbian and gay history in New York.

The society has developed a class and related curriculum guide for visiting school groups called "Many Faces, Many Ways," which teaches acceptance and understanding of Brooklyn's diverse cultures via the examination of contemporary and historical multicultural artifacts.

## NEW FOLKLORE AND ETHNO-MUSICOLOGY SEMINAR IN NYC

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ing at United States approaches to urban folklore, will present, "Putting a Mirror to People's Lives? Cultural Brokerage in the World City."

On April 26, Peter Manuel, an ethnomusicologist who teaches at John Jay College and the City University of New York Graduate Center, will talk on: "Music as Symbol: Music as Simulacra: The Interaction of Post-Modern, Modern, and Pre-Modern Realms of Meaning." The time and place are to be announced.

The seminar series is cosponsored by the Department of Performance Studies at New York University, the New York Folklore Society, and City Lore. If you have not been receiving announcements of the program and would like to be on the mailing list, call or write us at the New York Folklore Society.

## ARCHIVES REPORT AVAILABLE

*Folklore Archives and the Documentary Heritage of New York State*, the final report from the New York Folklore Society's 1991 Folk Archives Project, is now available. The 54-page publication contains consultant Fred Stielow's report and recommendations, Bruce Buckley's excellent keynote address from the September Folk Archives Conference, and a summary of the conference proceedings.

To obtain copies of the report, send your request with a check for \$6.50 per copy to our office.



## 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 1992) and the *New York Folklore Quarterly* (1946-1974—79 issues as of January 1992) at special discount prices.

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**T**he 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 Society publishes the scholarly journal *New York Folklore* and the *New York Folklore Newsletter*. You will receive subscriptions to both as benefits of membership. ▼ We provide technical assistance to organizations engaged in folk arts programming and produce conferences and other programs with statewide scope that address issues concerning folklife. ▼ We welcome your involvement and support. ▼ Thank you!

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on page 11.**

**R**ecession has hit the New York Folklore Society. Unfortunately, we can no longer afford to send this newsletter free to 3,000 people. So beginning this year we are offering a \$10.00 newsletter subscription to non-members (NYFS members receive the newsletter as a benefit of membership). If you enjoy reading the New York Folklore Newsletter, make sure you continue to receive it—please subscribe now for 1993.



**From *On the Bay* – Laura and Warren Smith in their bay house on Long Island. See page 9. Photo by Martha Cooper.**

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