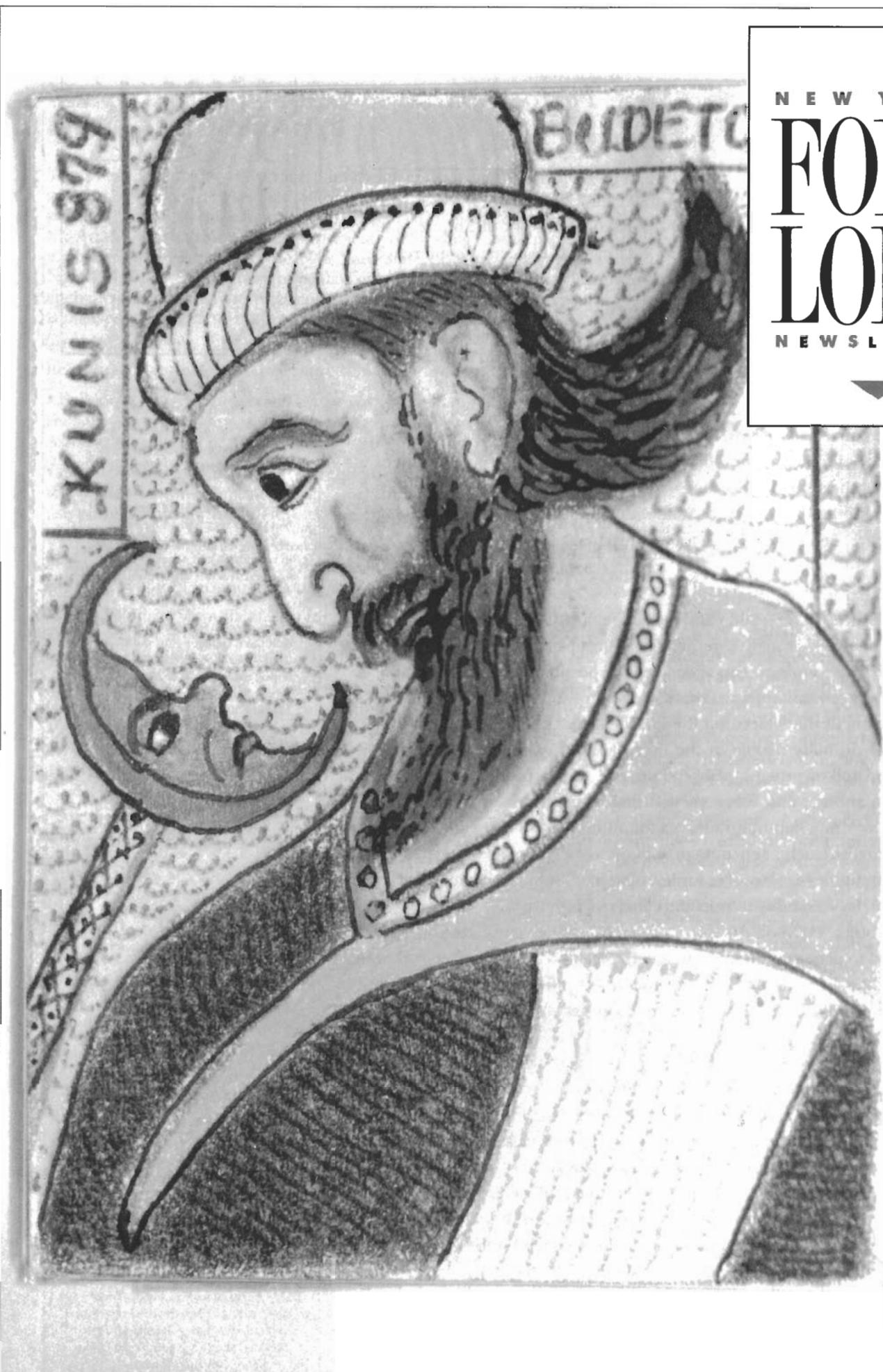


NEW YORK
**FOLK
LORE**
NEWSLETTER



Folk Arts in Education – Foxfire Plus Fall Conference

Now is the time to register for the 1993 Fall Conference. This year, the New York Folklore Society and the Foxfire Network of Empire State Teachers (NEST) are collaborating on an exciting and important conference which will explore folklore and folk arts in education, in both school and community settings, with an emphasis on the Foxfire approach. The conference will take place at SUNY Brockport outside Rochester beginning at 1:00 p.m. Friday, October 22, and ending after lunch on Sunday, October 24. Please fill out the enclosed registration form and send it in by October 1.

In recent years folklorists and others in New York State have been pursuing a number of creative and successful approaches to communicating the nature and importance of folklore and folk arts to children and adults, in and out of schools. During the same period, the Foxfire approach to education has been gaining a firm foothold in New York State with the establishment of a growing network of active, dedicated Foxfire-trained teachers.



When NYFS director John Suter and Judy Kugelmass, NEST coordinator and a NYFS board member, brought together a small group of folklorists and Foxfire teachers in Ithaca a couple of years ago to explore possibilities of collaboration, we were struck by certain principles shared by Foxfire and folklore. First among them was the high value placed on the knowledge, experience, and cultural expressions of ordinary people in the everyday lives of their communities. Folklorists and folk artists use publications and media productions, public exhibits and concerts, and folk-arts-in-education programs to validate and celebrate the evolving cultural traditions found in families and communities everywhere. Foxfire teachers encourage students to use the experiences of their lives and communities as resources for learning in all subject areas.

Building on our common interests and concerns, Judy from NEST has joined with John and other NYFS board members Earleen DeLaPerriere, Kate Koperski, and Dan Ward to plan a conference designed to bring Foxfire teachers, other educators, folklorists, and folk artists together to learn from each other and to initiate relationships that can lead to future cooperation and collaboration.



The conference will open Friday afternoon with an introductory session about folklore and folk arts. Facilitated by Amanda Dargan, it will include a videotape by Varick Chittenden, demonstrations by folk artists from different communities, and general discussion. Next, following a short performance by the Brown Brothers, an *a cappella* gospel quintet, there will be a panel featuring presentations and discussion of various approaches to folk arts in education. After dinner, "Stories, Memory, and History" will open with presentations on Native American and African American storytelling, followed by a story swap—a chance for anyone who wants to share stories about the traditions of their families and communities, perhaps using objects they have brought with them as points of departure.

continued on page 10

NEW YORK FOLK LORE NEWSLETTER



Editor: Janis Benincasa

Design: Diane Ghisone

Typesetting by Creative Types

Printed on recycled paper by
Weidenhammer Printers

The New York Folklore Society Newsletter is published quarterly and provides information and services to individuals and organizations involved with folk arts. Advertising space is available at affordable rates.

Please observe the following copy deadlines: October 1 for the Winter issue (Dec. 1 to Feb. 28); Jan. 15 for the Spring issue (Mar. 1 to May 31); April 1 for the Summer issue (June 1 to Aug. 30); and July 1 for the Fall issue (Sept. 1 to Nov. 30). For information, contact the Editor.

New York Folklore Newsletter
Janis Benincasa, Editor
PO Box 173
Arkville, NY 12406
(914) 586-3112

Publication of the Newsletter is supported in part by general operating funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

New York Folklore Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 130
Newfield, New York 14867

John Suter, Executive Director
(607) 273-9137
Fax: (607) 273-8225
e-mail: FLSX@cornell.cit.cornell.edu

New York Folklore
Egle Zygas and Ray Allen, Editors
P.O. Box 48, Lenox Hill Station,
New York, NY 10021
(212) 249-5574, (718) 857-7024

Board of Directors:
Daniel Franklin Ward, President; Kate Koperski, Vice President; Peter Voorheis, Secretary/Treasurer; Charles Briggs, Amanda Dargan, Todd DeGarmo, Earleen DeLaPerriere, Juan Gutierrez, Judy Kugelmass, Ellen McHale, Mary Kay Penn, David Quinn, Benjamin Salazar.

MENTORING PROGRAM MAKES FIRST 1993 GRANTS

The NYFS Mentoring Program panel met in June and agreed to support five consultancies that will provide assistance to individuals or organizations with their folk arts work. The National Endowment for the Arts Folk Arts Program has provided major funding for this project, with matching funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. NYFS pays the mentor for up to two days of consulting plus expenses for each project funded. In its first round of funding this year, the Program is pleased to be able to support the following projects:

- The Chinese Theater Workshop will work with a graphic designer to help them plan the graphic presentation of their organization.
- Folklorist Janis Benincasa will lead a workshop on self-presenting for six folk artists who are participating in the Mohawk Valley Library Association's Fall Folk Arts Series.
- Photographer Martha Cooper, a frequent contributor to this newsletter, will lead a two-day photography workshop for five folklorists who use photography in their fieldwork and folk arts programming.
- Michael Sergeant, a model boat builder featured in the South Street Seaport Museum's exhibit and festival, will get advice and assistance with marketing of his models from folklorist Ralph Sessions.
- Staff folklorist Shan Jia at Arts for Greater Rochester will visit Steve Zeitlin at City Lore and Amanda Dargan at Queens Council on the Arts to learn about folk arts in education programs.

In the Winter Newsletter, we will announce the results of the August panel meeting and, contingent on continued NEA funding, the 1994 application deadlines. If you are interested in learning more about the program, contact us and we will send you the 1994 guidelines and application form.

UPCOMING 1993 FOLK ARTS FORUMS

Folklore and Local History

September 10, 10:00-4:00, Ste. Marie Among the Iroquois, Liverpool and the Salt Museum, Syracuse, hosted by Daniel Franklin Ward

October 1, 1:00-4:00, Brooklyn Museum, hosted by Erika Sanger and BACA folklorist Justine McGovern

October 8, 1:30-4:30, Saranac Lake Free Library, co-sponsored by Traditional Arts in Upstate New York and hosted by Varick Chittenden

Folklore and Storytelling

November 3, 11:00-5:00, Greenfield Grange in Greenfield Center, near Saratoga Springs, hosted by Vaughn Ward

November 12, 1:00-4:00, Bank Street College of Education, New York City, Cosponsored by City Lore/Bank Street Folk Arts in Education Collaborative and hosted by Nina Jaffe

November 19, 1:00-4:30, Cosponsored by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society and hosted by Nancy Piatkowski

RUTH MOTT FUND SUPPORTS NEW NYFS PROJECT

The Ruth Mott Fund has generously provided \$7,000 in planning funds for the Community Partners Traditional Arts Project, an innovative NYFS pilot project which will be launched in Buffalo in 1994.

In many urban ethnic communities, people have lost confidence in their own traditions and are often overwhelmed by the power (political and economic) of mass or elite culture. In addition, communities tend to be isolated from one another, and often their mutual lack of understanding and fear allow them to be played off against one another in inter-community strife, rather than cooperating in common struggles.

Community Partners will pair organizations in adjacent ethnic communities in Buffalo who will design and produce together cross-cultural folk arts projects that will serve both communities. For example, a Polish organization and an African American one might decide to work together. Once they had gotten to know each other's organizations and communities, they might decide to produce a joint folk arts exhibit representing both cultures that would move from one community to the other; or perhaps a concert or a mural would be better suited to the skills of the artists and needs of the communities.

The goals of the project are to use the process of collaboration and the resulting public programs to highlight traditional arts and artists in each community and to stimulate dialogue and ongoing relationships between the communities.

Traditional artists—and other artists who are aware of their connections to the traditions of their communities—can be effective communicators and builders of bridges across borders. When artists of different backgrounds meet, they often forge artistic links as they learn about each other's art forms. This process can lead to cross-fertilization of artistic mate-

continued on page 10

Artist Profile:

The Art of Joseph Mender

Karen Taussig-Lux



Joseph Mender's painting of "Budetojas," legendary hero

This is my prayer." Joseph Mender held out a walking stick. Words, sentences, spiraled closely down the length of the stick in quarter-inch print. "I pray to be good in this world." At the top of the stick was the brilliantly painted face of an old bearded man. Over his head, a golden triangle of stars made a halo. "This is God Father," he told me. Below the figure was the radiant face of a woman, and before her, the globe of the world. "God Mother," he explained. "If there is a Father there must be a Mother!" With these words, early into my first visit with him, Joe provoked my curiosity.

I met with Joe while curating a regional folk art exhibition for the Schweinfurth Memorial Art Center in Auburn, NY. He lived alone in a small house, the old schoolhouse in Harford Mills. On this visit he showed me the twenty or so sticks he had carved and painted and the small, brilliantly painted pictures which he had organized into a six-inch-thick book. Our friendship developed over the next six years until Joe's death in 1991.

Joe was born in Lithuania in 1896, into a poor rural family. He learned to make walking sticks, he told me, from his maternal grandfather, to pass the long summer hours in the fields while tending cattle as a boy. He was close to his family, particularly his mother. He recalled fishing in the summer and ice fishing in the winter to supplement family meals. He caught crayfish from the lake and sold them to vendors for small sums of money. His mother and sisters hung flax by the fire and wove it into linen for the household. The family used a sauna once a week for Saturday night baths. Joe played polkas on the violin and accordion, accompanied by other members of his family.

Joe's mother was a devout Catholic and prayed each morning to the morning star, which she believed was "God's Mother" (Mary). Her beliefs had a great deal of influence on Joe's later faith and art work.

Joe immigrated to Brooklyn in 1913 to escape the Russian draft. A Lithuanian community had long been established there, with taverns, a church, an athletic club, and several newspapers of various political slants. Joe was an active participant in the political and social activities of his community. He found work as a tailor and became passionately involved in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union and Lithuanian nationalist movement. He belonged to the Lithuanian Athletic Club and took girlfriends to formal dances there. He subscribed to five different Lithuanian newspapers, ranging in orientation from Catholic to nationalist to socialist, and he took a keen interest in the political debates of his community. His later art work reflected his interests: Lithuanian church figures, historical heroes, famous nation-

world wars, Lithuania attained independence for the first time in centuries. Joe saved his money to return to Lithuania, buy a small farm, and retire there. The Soviet occupation of Lithuania during World War II came as a traumatic blow to Joe and other Lithuanians. It thwarted Joe's dreams of retiring in his homeland.

As Joe approached old age, he withdrew from social life and political activism and turned to religion. Drawing from his earlier ideals and his memories of his mother's spirituality, he reinterpreted the Catholicism of his youth into a new faith, at once radical, nationalistic, and mystical. It was based on a world view, rooted in Joe's rural Lithuanian upbringing, which saw the universe and all of nature being in balance with male and female. Joe believed that Mary was also a God, equal to God the Father, and, in fact, his mate. He regarded Jesus as the "poor people's protector," the first to fight for the working poor. He considered it God's will that people educate themselves and struggle against political and spiritual oppression. His religion was intended for the liberation of Lithuanians.

He expressed his faith in journals and in vivid artistic forms: carved and painted walking sticks and nearly two hundred small paintings. Lamenting the fact that Lithuania could no longer teach its own history in its schools and



Currency for a future, free Lithuania, featuring two Lithuanian icons of Mary, Ausros Vartai and Siluva, famous for their miraculous healing powers.

alists, and socialists are all represented in his paintings and walking sticks. However involved he was in the Brooklyn community, he did not intend to spend the rest of his life there. Between the two

no longer had its own currency or stamps, he designed money, stamps, and even a deck of playing cards, illustrated with the kings, religious figures, writers, patriots, and national symbols of Lithuania.

Photographs by
Karen Taussig-Lux

Karen Taussig-Lux, author of *Folk Arts Programming in New York State*, has just completed her dissertation on Joseph Mender at the University of Pennsylvania. She lives in Troy, New York.

He painted a series of portraits of the rulers and heroes of the country, from the legendary past to the mid-twentieth century. He expressed his longing for his homeland in paintings of his family farm there. Self-portraits and images of family members and friends appear throughout his work. Similar images are found on his walking sticks. On some of the sticks, human and animal faces are carved into handles and knots. Many sticks are textured with geometric patterns inspired by his mother and sisters' weaving. Daisy and *ruta* (Lithuanian national plant) patterns, identical to those found on Lithuanian Easter eggs, decorate other sticks.

Joe's art work was at once inventive and traditional. He designed new forms to convey a personal message, yet he employed traditional Lithuanian artistic motifs and styles to address his community on the most traditional of themes: its spiritual life and its national glory. Joe's art shares many of the characteristic elements of Lithuanian folk art: celestial motifs (stars, suns, moons), plant motifs, and geometric patterning. In both imagery and theme, Joe's art reveals its roots in the folk art of his homeland.

Joe left Brooklyn after retiring because he could not afford to buy a house in the New York City area. He moved to Harford Mills, a small rural town in the Finger Lakes region where he had vacationed for years.

Eventually I found a house, a sturdy one, and not too expensive. But far way, in a cold area and among strangers in a not-too-comfortable town. It wasn't easy living without electricity, without gas, just like an old Lithuanian farmhouse. Only in the summer months was it nice.

(Journal 1965, p.8)

Joe lived the rest of his life as a lonely man, rarely speaking Lithuanian to anyone. Others in the town were friendly, but Joe never learned English well, and his self-consciousness about his language remained a barrier to close friendships. He writes, "Because of my difficulties with English, I suffer a lot of ridicule. Some



Joseph Mender with his book of paintings.

even think I am retarded or crazy." (Journal 1977, p.81) He was not assimilated into American culture. He read only Lithuanian newspapers. He immersed himself in Lithuanian history and culture. Never having married, he lived alone as a near-recluse for the rest of his life.

Joe longed for Lithuania throughout his life. He wrote in his journal:

It's still the dearest corner in the world, where the rooster first crowed for me, where the blossoming apple trees were so fragrant, where the thorns like arrows stuck out from the bushes on the hill and beyond the lake. Even now it all stands out in my mind. And that land all comes to my bedside when I am sleeping, and how sad I am when I awake.

(Journal 1977, p.54)

In many ways Joe was an exile: barred from Lithuania by the Soviet occupation and isolated from his Lithuanian-American community in Brooklyn by his move to upstate New York. It was in this exile, in an area of farms and rolling hills, in a house reminiscent of his home in Lithuania, that Joe

expressed his heart's desires—his memories of his homeland and his family there. People shape and are shaped by their environment from birth to death. Joe's journals and art encompass the whole of his life experience from his youth in Lithuania, through his participation in the early twentieth century labor movement, to his retirement in Harford Mills. Joe's art is rooted in Lithuanian peasant traditions because he spent the formative years of his youth living in a rural Lithuanian village. Joe's art differs from Lithuanian peasant art because he left Lithuania in his teens. The impact of the communities in which he spent his life can be read in his art work. His removal from community in his old age, when he did the bulk of his art and writing, does not make these expressions less traditional. His isolation is one more factor to consider in understanding his art work and the nature of creativity in relationship to the life cycle.

The authors of *The Grand Generation* discuss a process of life review and re-evaluation triggered



Prayer cane with images of God Father and God Mother, prayer spirals below.

continued on page 10

Artist Profile

Beyond Mobility: Tony Colasurdo's Fish Mobile

Karen Frick

Photographs by
Karen Frick

Karen Frick is a freelance writer and photographer living in Spencer, NY. She recently opened a gift, art, and antique shop there called "The Downstairs Attic." A small sample of Tony's work may be found there. The Fish Mobile may be glimpsed en route one half hour to the north in Ithaca.

According to the Los Angeles based folk art preservation group SPACES (Saving and Preserving Arts and Cultural Environments), folk art environments are "handmade, personal places containing large-scale sculptural and/or architectural structures that generally contain accumulated objects, often those discarded by society. The sites tend to be immobile, monumental, and motivated by a desire for personal satisfaction rather than marketability...." (Bernie Ward, "Magnificent Obsessions," *Sky Magazine*, November 1992, p. 34).

"Tend to be immobile" refers to an environment being at a fixed location. Vehicular mobility, it seems, was not considered in formulating the definition. And then there is the "Fish Mobile"—a one quarter ton Mazda pickup truck that has been transformed into a roving sculpture of steel, paint,

and verse, as well as children's toys, mannequin parts and assorted found objects.

Meet 51 year old Tony Colasurdo, the Fish Mobile's owner and operator, and nine year old Joe Lehman, the son of Tony's friend who has become his cohort in creation. They began the truck's transformation in May of 1992. Although it was spurred by a series of events around that time, the seeds for its beginnings were probably planted much earlier.

It may have started nearly twenty years ago when Tony's young son, Brian, began calling him "Tony Tuna Fish," after the Charlie the Tuna commercial. The nickname eventually shortened to "Fish," which suited Tony just fine as he had always had a penchant for the sea and its creatures.

Twenty years ago, Tony had been sculpting in metal for over ten years. Working as a welder, he

became fascinated by the potential flexibility of metal. Turning occupational skills to more directly artistic use, he began to experiment, making small household gadgets and implements. Later he moved from birds, fish, and other forms of nature to abstracts ranging in size from several inches to over eight feet. It was then that Tony met his greatest inspiration, the late abstract metal sculptor David Smith. "That's when I decided to do my art full time," Tony reflected.

His sculpting consumed all his time and energy. He felt compelled to go where he could concentrate on his work—he travelled and sculpted. Living in run down factory districts in Texas, the coastal towns of Florida and places in between, Tony left behind a trail of his work. Finally, he came home to Ithaca, New York, not twenty miles from the Cortland suburb where he grew up.

So, it was in the fall of 1992 that Tony decided to paint a version of his namesake—a fish—on the back of his truck. Not satisfied with just one fish, he decided to paint the entire truck with aquatic life and scenery. Around this time, Tony went to see a documentary about decorated cars called *Wild Wheels* at the Cornell University Theater. Inspired and fomented, he set out to create his own wild wheels. He proceeded to paint, glue, and weld sculpture to his truck. Naturally, the interest of his young friend Joe was piqued, and the two began to collaborate. "Tony glues the stuff (toys) on the hood on, but I've been doing a lot of drawing and telling him where to put stuff," Joe reported authoritatively. "We don't mind if anything falls off really because we can put more stuff on."

"It changes from week to week," Tony added. "It's never going to end. It's an ongoing art project I guess." Ongoing and everchanging it is. If the Fish Mobile is not being worked on daily, it is being thoughtfully considered. Joe and Tony have a notebook that they use to sketch their ideas. They also draw inspiration from daily doses of a favorite television show—*Inspector Gadget*.



Tony Colasurdo and Joe Lehman



Tony Colasurdo in his studio.

The cartoon is a primary source of ideas for the vehicle's larger mechanical sculptures. In the show, the wily Inspector employs various coiled and/or hinged armature as investigative aids in his endless adventures. Tony has created and modified such apparatus out of steel, forming the pivotal bases for some of the more prominent designs and characters and lending height and movement to the Fish Mobile's features.

Inspector Gadget inspired a steel coil that is welded above the cab. Atop the coil, at about two feet, rests a somber-looking mannequin head sporting antlers and a hand. Other mannequin hands extend from steel rods that form a large spider's web, next to the five foot swordfish that occupies the truck's bed. "I like the hands waving and the head moving," Tony explained. "Almost everything on the truck moves."

Asked if he would ever sell the truck, Tony said, "No way. I was offered \$8000 for it on the spot. I won't sell it. That's going to be (Joe's) truck." He admits that at first he was a little self-conscious about driving the Fish Mobile but, as his only means of transportation, necessity got the better of invention: "I like what I'm doing now because everybody gets to see it—street people, lawyers, students, kids. The kids really like it. I have a lot of fun with it."

The Fish Mobile is definitely a piece that demands attention. Being mobile brings a lot of exposure and drawing as it does from the integration of traditional occupational skills, and the dual inspiration of a fine artist and a popular cartoon show, the fish has something for everyone.

Though we are all driven (no pun intended) by creative energy, some us choose to drive away from that fire in our hearts and take a safer, more conservative route. Asked about future plans, Joe, with a child's glorious sense of time, described plans to attach hands to the truck's wheels. Tony the Fish pondered a moment: "I just want to do my art; that's all I want."

Loved For The Love of It

Gail Turi

This spring I attended a two-day conference at the Albany Institute called *For the Love of It: Traditional Arts in the Community*. I appreciated the work and planning that the institute staff put into the conference and came away stimulated and renewed.

The keynote address, *Keeping Folk Arts Alive* by Betty J. Belanus, addressed collaborations or partnerships between cultural and other community organizations and folk arts programs. Especially in this time of funding shortages, partnerships are a natural—a way of alleviating some of the strain while continuing productivity. A carefully planned partnership, it was suggested, can be beneficial to both parties, promoting the goals of each.

The musical performances that followed were great. Each performance displayed a sharp contrast in style while sharing similarities in the enthusiasm and joy expressed in the playing. We witnessed first-hand the transmission of tradition in the reactions of the children to the performances of their gospel-singing parents.

I found a subsequent panel discussion on collecting living traditions to be particularly helpful and interesting. Intended to investigate the problems with and solutions for gaining trust between collector and interviewer, the experiences of urban folklorists in their work with children and ethnic groups was enlightening.

Another presentation elucidated problems with the presentation of traditional arts. Hearing from artists and performers was extremely useful, giving another angle—another point of view.

After small group discussions that delved deeper into difficult experiences and innovative solutions, I had to choose between sessions of *Traditional Arts Sam-*

Gail Turi is a community fieldworker with the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council's Folk Arts Program in Glens Falls.

continued on page 10

Public Programs

HINCKLEY MUSEUM OPENS FOLKLIFE EXHIBIT

The Hinckley Museum in Ithaca has mounted a new exhibit, Northern Appalachian Folklife: Artists of the Southern Tier, Past & Present. For the purposes of this exhibit, the Appalachians are defined as inclusive of southern New York State. The exhibit and accompanying programs will include traditional and non-traditional arts including Finnish embroidery, storytelling, wood carving, fly tying, and quilt and basketmaking.

Northern Appalachian Folklife runs through December 18. For further information contact the Hinckley Museum (607) 273-7053, open Saturdays from 10-4.

CELEBRATIONS ALONG THE MOHAWK

The Mohawk Valley Library Association is sponsoring a series of nine traditional arts programs to take place from August through October at member libraries in Canajoharie, Northville, Fort Plain, Gloversville, Johnstown, Amsterdam, Fort Hunter, Fonda, and Palatine Bridge.

Celebrations Along the Mohawk: Traditional Arts of the Mohawk Valley will feature such Mohawk Valley masters as Anthony Simiele, Amsterdam basketmaker, the ever-popular Adirondack Liars Club, and Art Bergstrand, wood carver and master cabinet maker from Norway.

Other traditional artists in the series include Domna Swidersky who will demonstrate Ukrainian egg coloring; Stanley Ralys who creates miniature replicas of Lithuanian shrines; and decoy carver Grant VanLoan.

Musical performances also highlight the series. Singer and raconteur from Aberdeen, Scotland, Norman Kennedy will appear in Gloversville and "The Bog People" will feature master concertina player Fr. Charlie Coen. The series finale will feature Adirondack fiddler Vic Kibler accompanied by son Paul on piano.

For schedule and information, contact the Mohawk Valley Library Association at (518) 355-2010.

ADIRONDACK FIDDLER RECOGNIZED BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Sampler Records Ltd. of Rochester is proud to announce that its recording *Vic Kibler: Adirondack Fiddler* has been selected for inclusion in the American Folklife Center publication *American Folk Music and Folklore Recordings 1992: A Selected List*. The booklet is published by the Library of Congress with partial funding from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences. "This is a tremendous honor for our small company," said Sampler President Mitzie Collins.

Vic Kibler: Adirondack Fiddler is the first of Sampler's Traditional New York Music Series. The hour-long cassette and 55 page companion booklet presents the music of Vic Kibler of Vail's Mills. He was born in 1918, and has spent his life in the Adirondacks, absorbing the strong musical heritage of the region, preserving it in his playing, and passing it on to future generations through his teaching and performing. He learned to play fiddle from his uncles and his mother and still plays on an instrument bought for \$5 in 1931. Vic, a retired automobile mechanic, has always been on the look-out for good tunes, and counts at least 400 tunes in his repertoire.

Mitzie Collins first met Vic Kibler at a music conference in Saranac Lake in 1982. "We were flattered when George Ward, folklorist from Albany, approached us to collaborate on this project, which was partially underwritten by the New York State Council on the Arts Folk Arts Program and the Saratoga County Historical Society." *Vic Kibler: Adirondack Fiddler* features Kibler with son Paul Kibler on piano, George Ward on guitar, and Paul Van Arsdale on hammered dulcimer. The companion book was edited by Tom Bohrer with an essay by Jim Kimball, ethnomusicologist on the faculty of the State University at Geneseo, as well as transcriptions of 31 tunes.

The recording and companion book are available from Sampler Records Ltd., PO Box 19270, Rochester, NY 14619. The 1992 folk recordings list will be available this fall, free of charge from the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540.

TWELVE TIES TO TRADITION

Twelve Ties to Tradition: Model Making in New York City is an exhibition of over 400 objects, including sixty ship models made by twelve New York City area model builders, and their tools, source materials and personal mementos on view at the South Street Seaport Museum through March 1994.

The exhibition explores the diversity, excellence, and unique approaches to the tradition of modelmaking in the New York City area. A dozen contemporary modellers also featured in photographic portraits represent the wide spectrum of New York's cultural and ethnic mosaic. Through these craftsmen, the exhibition examines the range of motivations, subjects and techniques used in modelmaking.

The finished models on display vary from exacting scratch-built replicas to personal interpretations by the builders. They also range in size from about five inches to over six and one half feet—from square riggers to submarines. Through static displays, video presentations, and interactive opportunities, the exhibition demonstrates that a tremendous unity of spirit exists within the overarching tradition of crafting marine vessels in miniature.

An integral part of the exhibition are portraits of the modellers by respected documentary photographer Harvey Wang, noted for his work with New Yorkers engaged in vanishing occupations.

Twelve Ties to Tradition is housed in the Museum A.A. Low Building at 171 John Street and is funded in part by a grant from the Folk Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts.

CALL FOR AUTHOR

The New York Transit Museum invites applications from writers for a book about the folklore and work experiences of mass transit workers in New York City. The book will draw from oral histories gathered from transit workers.

Interested writers should send cover letter, along with resume and writing samples, to Gabrielle Shubert, Director, NY Transit Museum, 130 Livingston Street, Room 9001, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

LI TRADITIONS

Long Island Traditions is a non-profit organization dedicated to researching and presenting programs about family, ethnic, and occupational traditions of Long Island residents. Folklorists Nancy Solomon and John Eilertsen began the organization to help promote understanding of the living traditions that sustain and nurture us.

As the island undergoes significant changes, the lives and traditions that hold meaning for us are also changing. The jobs we hold, the things we make, the foods we enjoy, or the stories we tell are just a few examples of the traditions that are important to us. By documenting and celebrating the heritage of Long Islanders, we can break down the barriers that separate us and truly appreciate our own, and our neighbor's, culture.

LI Traditions will be participating in two well-known events this fall: the Long Island Fair at Old Bethpage Restoration (October 8-17) and the Hempstead-by-the-Sea Festival in Lido Beach (September 18-19). Funded in part by the NYS Council on the Arts and the Nassau County Office of Cultural Development, we will present demonstrations by maritime folk artists including trap and boat building, fish smoking and decoy carving.

LI Traditions is also a co-sponsor of *Long Island Culture: Ethnicity, Gender, and Multiculturalism*, a conference at SUNY Stony Brook, Saturday, November 20.

LI Traditions publishes a quarterly newsletter that is free to all members. The premier issue, out this summer, includes news of upcoming events, articles on maritime and ethnic folkways, and a discussion of who we are and the goals of the organization. Future issues will feature a regular column on folk artists and other tradition bearers. And if you're a Long Islander, please write us! We would enjoy hearing about your job, ethnic background, recreational activities, or interesting experiences that are unique yet typical of Long Island. If there is someone you know who you think we should know, please tell us.

As an emerging organization, we desperately need office supplies and equipment, including but not limited to a four-drawer steel file, laser printer, modem, fax, telephone, and desktop publishing computer program. We will arrange for pick up. We also welcome volunteers to help us develop programs. Anyone who likes to take photographs,

summarize interview tapes, or help around the office is especially welcome.

For membership, information about upcoming events, or to volunteer contact: LI Traditions, 619 Brooklyn Avenue, Baldwin, NY 11510; (516)623-5099 during regular business hours.

TAUNY NORTH COUNTRY HERITAGE AWARDS

The Board of Directors of Traditional Arts in Upstate New York (TAUNY) is pleased to announce the establishment of an awards program to recognize exemplary masters of folk arts traditions in the North Country region of New York State.

Recipients of 1993 North Country Awards include: the Big Moose Community Chapel Balsam Bee, Big Moose Lake; Alice Clemens, traditional fiddler and founder of the North American Fiddlers Hall of Fame, Osceola; Ray Fadden, Iroquois elder and founder of the Six Nations Indian Museum, Onchiota; Hamilton J. Ferry, Sr., Adirondack storyteller, Childwold; Willima B. Massey, St. Lawrence decoy carver, Waddington; and Veronica Terillion, sculptor and painter, Indian River.

In announcing the awards program, TAUNY Director Varick Chittenden of Canton said: "We would like to honor a select number of people each year for their contributions to our living heritage. Too many times artists like these work quietly, without any recognition and, if it comes, it's likely to be after they die. We want to change that in the North Country. Here, their friends and neighbors can join them in celebrating their distinction."

Noting that this year's recipients represent a wide variety of communities in the region and the diversity of traditional expressions, Chittenden emphasized that each of them is a "living treasure" and their lifetime achievements are major contributions to the quality of North Country life.

An awards ceremony, concert of local traditional storytellers and musicians, and public reception are planned for Saturday, September 18, SUNY College of Technology at Canton.

NEFA SEEKS DIRECTOR OF TRADITIONAL ARTS

The New England Foundation for the Arts links the public and private sectors in a regional partnership to support and strengthen the arts in the six New England states. The departure of Betsy Peterson leaves open the position of Director of Traditional Arts, a senior-staff position with overall responsibility for planning and management of the regional Traditional Arts Program and other agency-wide initiatives. Qualifications include an advanced degree in folklore or an equivalent field and substantial experience in public folklore. The application deadline is October 1, 1993. For a complete job description, contact the New England Foundation for the Arts, 678 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139 (617) 492-2914.

EFAC SEEKS DIRECTOR OF PRESENTING PROGRAMS

The Ethnic Folk Arts Center seeks an individual with substantial experience in event and stage production to produce ongoing presentations (primarily concerts) of traditional music and dance. Candidates should have a strong background in folklore, ethno-musicology, or anthropology, or have relevant experience. They must have an ability to approach programming creatively and with sensitivity to the needs of artists of diverse communities.

They must be skillful at working collaboratively with community-based organizations and cultural institutions in presenting traditional performers in their own communities and in general audience settings. The position will also involve providing technical assistance to help communities develop their own folk arts programs.

The Director of Presenting Programs is responsible for promoting and marketing events and should be able to develop proposals, project budgets, and narrative reports. Good computer and writing skills are essential.

Annual Salary Range: \$35,000-40,000 plus benefits. Please send cover letter and resume to: Search Committee, Ethnic Folk Arts Center, 131 Varick Street, Room 907, New York, New York 10013.

RUTH MOTT

continued from page 3

rial, and it can also spark collaborative projects that challenge the cultural barriers. The friendships and partnerships that develop can become visible and potent images of the possibilities for cross-cultural communication and cooperation.

The New York Folklore Society will facilitate the coming together of the partner organizations and the process of their getting to know each other and their communities and planning the project. But the joint projects themselves will be conceived and carried out by the partnering organizations in response to their own needs and interests.

We are very grateful to the Ruth Mott Fund for taking the lead in support of this unusual, process-oriented approach to folk arts programming.

FOXFIRE PLUS

continued from page 2

Saturday morning, Judy Kugelmass will lead an experiential workshop, "Foxfiring Folk Arts in Education," that will explain and demonstrate the theory and practice of the Foxfire approach to education. The afternoon will be devoted to sessions that encourage folklorists, folk artists, and educators to exchange ideas and explore possibilities for future collaboration. In the evening, everyone is invited to take part in a specially arranged traditional community dance in nearby Genesee County, cosponsored by the Genesee-Orleans Regional Arts Council.

On Sunday, all New York Folklore Society members are encouraged to attend the Society's annual membership meeting, which will be followed by a NYFS board meeting. For the other participants, the morning will be free. The conference will close after lunch with a field trip to the Ganondagan State Historic Site, the only New York State site devoted to educating the public about Native American history and traditions.

The total cost for the conference is \$150, which includes accommodations for two nights at the Conference Center on campus, all meals, and the full conference program including evening activities. Please return the registration form by October 4 to avoid a late fee. If a form is not included in your newsletter, contact us and we will send you one right away.

LOVED FOR THE LOVE OF IT

continued from page 5

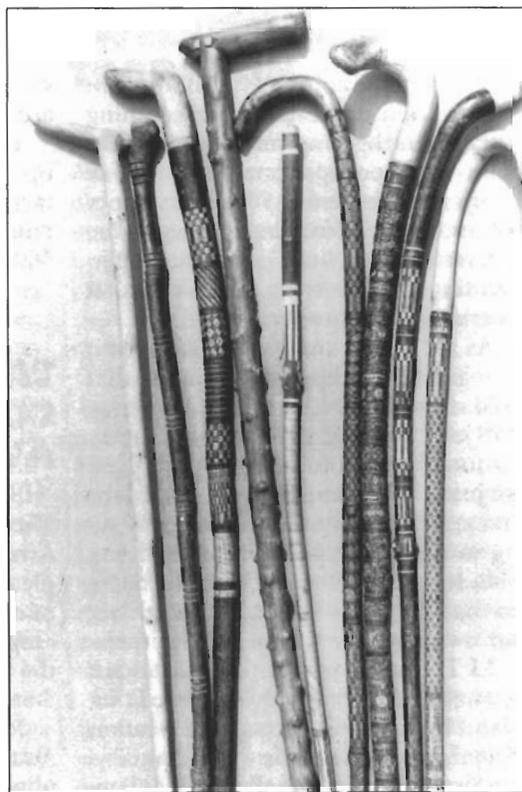
plers. The choice was difficult because I knew I would miss something important, but the storytellers I settled on hearing were spellbinding. I noted the differences between both the manner in which tales are told as well as the tales themselves. Some some expressed a warm, gentle humor, others deviltry; some were tongue-in-cheek, while others were, well, downright weird.

The final day, Friday, was a long, full day. Given the heavy schedule, I was disappointed to find Vic and Paul Kibler playing to less than the full house they deserve.

In sum, the exposure to ideas, programs, and problems of others involved in the field of folklore and traditional arts was informative—the performances excellent. I wish there had been more representation from cultural and community groups, and that the list of attendees had identified their affiliations because promoting better understanding between cultures should be a common goal. Folklore is an excellent medium through which to achieve this goal, and collaboration is one way to proceed.



Two of clubs with portraits of Joe's mother and father



Carved walking sticks, by Joseph Mender

MENDER

continued from page 5

in many of the book's elderly artists as they faced the end of their lives. Gerontologists and others who work closely with the elderly have come to appreciate this process as crucial for self-integration during aging. Joe turned to his journals and his art work to reconcile his past with his present and to prepare for an uncertain future in which he faced old age alone. Like the artists of *The Grand Generation*, he created objects to connect with the past. The act of carving evoked days spent with his grandfather in the fields. The geometric patterns he made recalled the long hours of weaving he witnessed at home. His pictures of the family farmhouse recorded his childhood home. As his paintings of kings and poets document and recreate Lithuanian history, so do Joe's pictures of himself, his family and his childhood home commemorate his life. His work is simultaneously a creation and presentation of self and nation.

An exhibition of the art work of Joseph Mender will take place at the Schweinfurth Art Center from late March to mid-May, 1994.

NEW YORK FOLKLORE SPECIAL ISSUES

This year, the New York Folklore Society will release landmark special issues on African American culture and traditions and gay and lesbian folklore. We encourage you to either become a member or order your copies now using the order form on this page.



Through African-Centered Prisms Vol. 18, Nos. 1-4, 1992

This special issue, guest edited by ethnomusicologist Barbara Hampton of Hunter College in New York City, brings together important scholarship and reflection by fifteen leading African American scholars and activists representing the disciplines of folklore, history, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, film, music, and literature.

Topics range from "Modernity and African American Intellectual Tradition" and "African American Folklore in a Discourse of Folkness" to "Hip Hop Music and Popular Music Criticism" and "The Dynamics of Cultural History and Folklore in the Films of Spike Lee". The writing is varied and challenging.



Prejudice and Pride: Lesbian and Gay Traditions in America Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2, 1993

New York Folklore is devoting an entire special issue to the study of lesbian and gay traditions and culture. Edited by outgoing New York Folklore editors Deborah Blincoe and John Forrest, this is the first journal issue in the field of folklore to focus exclusively on gay and lesbian matters.

"Prejudice and Pride" brings together pioneering humanistic scholarship and grass roots writing and imagery. Artists, musicians, activists, folklorists, anthropologists, historians, and literary critics explore such topics as gay spirituality, lesbian self-made myth, the social significance of drag, Amazon rage, and queer politics. The articles are risky, passionate, reflective, and readable.

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 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!

Please Join Us

Become a Member ▼ Subscribe to the Newsletter ▼ Order NYFS Publications ▼ Notify Us of Your Change of Address

Yes!, I would like to become a member, or renew my membership for 1993. I will receive this quarterly Newsletter and *New York Folklore* as benefits of membership.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	U.S.	Foreign
Basic	_____ \$35	_____ \$40
Student (full time)/Senior (65 or older)	_____ \$20	_____ \$25
Joint (two or more share a membership)	_____ \$50	_____ \$50
Supporting	_____ \$60	_____ \$60
Sustaining	_____ \$100	_____ \$100
Institutional	_____ \$50	_____ \$55

Membership dues for 1993

Check one: _____ New Membership _____ Renewal
 Newsletter subscription (\$10) for 1993 \$ _____
(If you are a member, you don't need to subscribe to the newsletter)

New York Folklore *special issues*. Members will automatically receive the special issue for any year in which your membership is current. Non-members may order individual copies here. Your order will be shipped immediately following publication.

Through African Centered Prisms (1992). _____ copies (\$12.95 each) \$ _____
 Prejudice and Pride (1993). _____ copies (\$12.95 each) \$ _____
 Shipping (\$3.00 for first item, \$.75 for each additional) \$ _____

Total amount enclosed. (check payable to New York Folklore Society) \$ _____

Address Change? _____ Yes _____ No

Name/Title _____

Organization _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Return to: New York Folklore Society, PO Box 130, Newfield, NY 14867 (607) 273-9137

**NYFS
1993 Fall
Conference
October
22-24!**

*At the SUNY
Brockport
Conference Center
near Rochester*

**Register
Now!**

*Send in the enclosed registration
form and payment by October 4.*

See the story on page 2.

FOLK ARTS IN EDUCATION: FOXFIRE PLUS

Cosponsored by the Network of Empire State Teachers—Foxfire Teacher Outreach, this year's conference will bring teachers, folklorists, and folk artists together to explore different approaches to folk arts in education, with an emphasis on the Foxfire approach to learning and teaching. It will be participatory, interactive, and fun.



The Conference will feature Folk-Arts demonstrations, a gospel quintet performance, a community square dance, a story swap, presentations and discussions on Foxfire, folk arts, and education in schools and other settings.



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

Join us to learn, exchange ideas, make friends, plan, and play.



**Tony Colasurdo and Joe Lehman with the "Fish Mobile."
Story page 6. Photo by Karen Frick.**

New York Folklore Society
P.O. Box 130
Newfield, NY 14867

Address Correction Requested

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Ithaca, NY
Permit No. 40