

Austin Friends of Folk Art 2009 Annual Report

Record Giving, Administrative Success & Varied Programs

\$4,000 in AFFA grants make things happen

One way we promote folk art is by putting our money where our heart is. In 2009 we helped fund these projects:

◆ **Curtis Craven, \$1,000 toward completion of the documentary, "Vanilla: the Sacred Orchid."**

For centuries, the orchid that produces the vanilla bean grew wild in the jungle of Veracruz and was an integral part of the indigenous Totonaco culture. This 30-minute documentary, to be distributed via PBS, traces the history of vanilla in Mexico and



follows the orchid's 9-month lifecycle, from hand-pollination to the harvest and drying of the vanilla beans.

◆ **Lisa Orr & Troy Lanier, \$500 for their documentary about the pottery of Ocumicho, Michoacán.**

To complete the second film in their series about the pottery techniques of Michoacán, Lisa and Troy needed photographs of the ceramic works of Marcelino Vicente Mulato, photos held in INAH Museos del Arte Popular in several Mexican cities. AFFA's grant funded a trip to find the photos, gather documentation needed for other films in progress, and search for photos of the artist himself in the Mexican photo archive of Pachuca.

◆ **Feria Maestros del Arte, \$1,000 to help develop new markets to keep Mexican folk arts alive.**



For the 3rd year, AFFA helped transport artists to the annual 3-day Feria of indigenous and folk art, held in Chapala. The non-profit Feria is organized by an army of volunteers who know that these arts will disappear if artists cannot find outlets to sell their work. Feria provides selected artists with room and board, help with transportation, a place to sell their work, and effective marketing—and charges no fees or commissions. For many of the artisans, sales at the Feria are their main source of income.



◆ **Mexic-Arte Museum, \$1,000 to support the exhibition, *Imagining Mexico: Expressions in Popular Culture*.**

As part of the 2010 Bicentennial Celebration of Mexico's Independence and the Centennial of its Revolution, Mexic-Arte Museum is presenting an exhibition drawn from popular-art collections in Central Texas. The exhibit, which opened January 29, 2010, showcases art that incorporates symbols and images tied to Mexico's national identity.

◆ **Mobile Art Program, \$500 for the Durwood Senior Center courtyard enhancement.** The Mobile Art Program takes art materials into local nursing homes and senior activity centers to foster self-awareness, develop social skills, reduce anxiety and increase self-esteem. The Program provided seniors at Durwood Senior Center with materials and guidance to make mosaics, collaborate on a mural and paint benches, all incorporating imagery that reflects their mix of cultures. Seniors originally from Pakistan, Nigeria, Ecuador, Mexico and other Latin American countries turned a barren spot into a pleasant gathering place and a source of pride.

Bravo! Online member directory



Thanks to our new membership coordinator, Alexandra Landeros, any member can now find contact information about other members on our website. For the password to that protected information, please email alexandra@alumni.cmu.edu.

The database she set up of members and other interested people is a huge administrative improvement. She and her efforts are dreams come true.

Fund honors passing of AFFA members

The board recently created the Helping Hand Fund as a way to honor the passing of some members



while extending a hand to others—especially junior members—who are having difficulty paying event fees. Recipients of small gifts (\$10-\$50) from the president's discretionary fund will know the names of those in whose memory the funds were given.

In 2009, AFFA made contributions to the Helping Hand Fund in memory of:

Jean Cornelius
James McPhail
Jeanne List

Anyone wishing to make a gift to the Helping Hand Fund in memory of or in honor of a friend of folk art may send a check in any amount to:

AFFA
Attn: Terry Tannert
P.O. Box 28085
Austin, TX 78755

Please write "Helping Hand Fund" and the name of the person being remembered on the memo line of your check, and give us the name and address of anyone you would like AFFA to notify about your gift.

An event-filled year

From scholars to belly dancers, 16th century maps to 21st century art installations, AFFA dished up it, and members ate it up.

Jan. 10. Volkskunst: German-American Folk Art from Pennsylvania & Texas, at San Antonio Museum of Art. This exhibit featured charming examples of the artistic contributions made by Germanic people who settled in Pennsylvania and Texas from the 18th to the 20th centuries. After a German lunch at Schilo's we went to COSAS in Boerne, where owners Bob & Amy Niederhauser treated us to coffee and cookies in a store chock full of Mexican "cosas."

Feb. 7. Membership Party at Mexic-Arte. Cienfuegos provided lively Latin music, Candela provided a dance demo and a cumbia lesson, and AFFA members provided appetizers, salads and desserts. It was a fun way to renew, and recruit, members.

March 8. *Insects in Folk Art, presentation by Barrett Klein & Bug-o-Rama Members' Show & Tell.* The enthusiasm of this Ph.D. candidate in Ecology, Evolution & Behavior made us wish every teacher was like him. He took us around the world and through human to see examples of the impact insects have on artistic expression. Barbara von Merz hosted in her folk-art filled home and lovely garden.

March 29. *Forgotten Gateway: Coming to America through Galveston Island, with Suzanne Seriff, Phd, guest curator.* This exhibit at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum explored Galveston's role in admitting millions of immigrants to America. It featured stories of contemporary immigrants and voices of those who came before, discussing the decision to leave their homes, the dangers of the journey, navigating the bureaucracy, facing racial profiling, and learning a new language and a new way in a new land. The exhibit travels nationally in 2010 and 2011.

April 19. *Pose & Puff: Middle Eastern Fest at Las Casitas.* The



Westlake estate of architect Marc Brewster was the site of this multi-sensory experience: pulsing music by Los Klezmeros, whirling belly dance with instruction by

Twyla Grace, tasty tidbits from Sarah's Mediterranean Grill, a hookah with fruit and mint flavored tobaccos, and five hillside acres with ponds, a waterfall, and sculptures. Here Gayle Anglin perfects her moves.

May 2. *Relaciones Geográficas: Rare Maps of Mexico & Guatemala.*

Adán Benavides spoke to us about the rare maps produced in the 16th century for King Philip II, who wanted to inventory Spain's holdings in the New World. We got a fascinating close-up look at the maps, many drawn by indigenous people with their own representational approaches. Of the 191 responses to the King's order, 167 are known to exist, and 43 are in UT's Benson Latin American Collection.

June 14. *AFFA Movie Night: Mexican Double Feature with Curtis Craven.* This local filmmaker showed us two short documentaries about Mexico—*Burning Judas* (Easter eve in San Luis Potosí) and *La Tamalada* (celebrating the Immaculate Conception in Atotonilco el Alto, Jalisco). We loved hearing about his work and he loved finding such an enthusiastic audience. Barbara Jackson hosted us for the movie and snacks—tamales, of course.

July 12. *AFFA Movie Night: Golden Door.* Sylvia Guyton and

Ernie Fortenberry welcomed us to their home for this Italian movie about a widower who decides to make the difficult voyage to America with his two sons, one of whom is deaf and mute. This beautiful movie won six awards at the Venice Film Festival in 2006, including best film.

September 20. *San Antonio River Outing & Colors on Clay, with Susan Frost.* On a private cruise with a guide from the San Antonio River Foundation we appreciated the new River Walk extension and the art installations under each bridge. It was satisfying to see the Maverick tile mural, which Susan Frost rescued and which AFFA grants helped install. We lunched at La Fonda, then went to the Witte Museum for the *Colors on Clay* exhibition and Susan's talk and book signing.

Sun. Oct. 25. *Day of the Dead ofrenda, potluck dinner & tour of Doug Rodenbaugh's collection.* A poignant event in a wonderful Central Austin home. We decorated an altar with photos and mementos of loved ones who have passed away, we shared a meal, and we oohed and aahed over Doug's collection. Then he invited us to do it all again next year!

Sun. Nov. 15. *Links Between Mexican Folk Retablos and the Art of Jose Guadalupe Posada, Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo, by Jim Luedeke.* Jim and Kelly Luedeke, owners of Mi Casa Gallery, at 1700 S. Congress, hosted us for an open house and presentation. We enjoyed Jim's talk, their very impressive collection of retablos, Kelly's Peruvian cookies, and discounted shopping.

Sun. Dec. 6. *Holiday Party & Auction.* Friends partied in the beautiful home of Nilda de la Llata. Spirits ran high with delicious food catered by El Sol y La Luna, lively music by Grammy-nominated Sister Sister y los Misterys, and an excellent auction put on by Terry Tannert and her committee, which raised \$3,179.

Be a friend of folk art!

Curious about folk expression? Join AFFA! Print the membership form from our website or call Alexandra Landeros at 517-0394. Click on "Join Us" at the bottom of our home page:

austinfriendsoffolkart.org

On our site, you'll find:

- a calendar of events
- photos of past events
- our member directory
- membership forms
- links to business members
- a gallery of members' folk art
- portfolios of AFFA artists
- and more!

Those pages have info about how to be included. Don't be shy; you're among friends!

REPORT ON AFFA FINANCES 2009

What We Took In	
Membership Dues	\$ 4,225
Programs	2,813
Trips	2,815
Holiday Party	6,066
Investment Income	168
	\$ 16,087
What We Spent	
Grants	4,000
Operating Expenses	2,130
Program Expenses	8,024
	\$ 14,154
Receipts Exceed Expenditures By	\$ 1,933
Helping Hand Fund Transactions	\$ -95
We Started the Year With	
Checking Account	7,648
Certificates of Deposit	19,018
Returned Check	50
	\$ 26,716
We Ended the Year With	
Checking Account	9,536
Certificates of Deposit	19,018
	\$ 28,554

About our mission

Since 1987 AFFA has promoted folk art and an appreciation of the cultures that create it. We welcome your ideas about how to use our funds, which are designated for:

- ◆ **regular programs** for members and the public.
- ◆ **grants and donations** to support folk art and artisans and to increase knowledge about them.
- ◆ **visionary funds** for unusual and significant undertakings: bringing well-known artists or experts to town, sponsoring seminars, partnering with other groups to underwrite special exhibits, or giving items to institutions as permanent records of a culture.

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