



WHAT'S UP? MAY 2026

Happy Mother's Day! Feliz día de las Madres!

A day to honor and celebrate our mothers! Mother's Day is May 10th, and falls on the same day in the US, Mexico, and several other Latin American countries this year.



New Design

Welcome to our newly re-designed What's up Newsletter! This month's version allows you to be more interactive with embedded videos you simply click to view stories, event information, etc., and can easily be printed on standard paper if you prefer a hard copy. We hope you will enjoy the fresh look and added features.

Congratulations to Marcia!



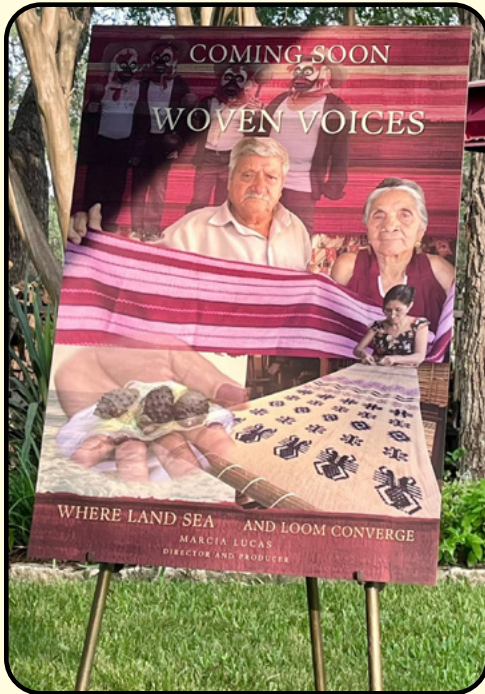
[Woven Voices: Preserving Beauty and Tradition in Oaxaca, Mexico - Teaser Message](#)

AFFA founder Marcia Lucas has embarked on a new creative venture! A documentary film titled **WOVEN VOICES**. The one-hour documentary follows weavers in Oaxaca as they work to preserve the beauty, skill and cultural traditions of their

ancestors. The film is still in production and we previewed film clips at a recent fundraising event at the historic I.V. Davies' home built in 1875, hosted by AFFA member Laura Josef.

If you would like to support **WOVEN VOICES**, please contact Marcia at marciaruthlucas@gmail.com for more information.

Congratulations and best wishes on this amazing project!



AFFA members: Marcia Lucas, Amalia Rodriguez-Mendoza, Carmen Guerra, host Laura Josef.
Guests: Edna Santos and Rosie Reyna.

A Fond Farewell to Jim Huff for a Job Well Done!

After more than 12 years of dedicated service, AFFA bids a heartfelt farewell to our Vice-President and Treasurer, Jim, as he retires from his board positions.

Jim has guided us through many phases of growth and transition. As the Treasurer, he was a good steward of our finances and performed his duties with diligence and integrity. We express our thanks for his guidance. We are deeply grateful for his contributions of time, resources and support.



Jim, thank you for your years of service and dedication to AFFA. We wish you the very best in your next chapter. We hope you and Sue enjoy your upcoming travels, especially during the hot summer months away from Austin!

With Gratitude

We express our thanks to Julie Valentine for her generous recent donation of folk art for our collection.

We also thank Jacquelyn Lacy-Amerman, Lonnie Dillard and Sandi Sain for their recent donation of a vintage wooden Carousel Horse (1870).

Contributions from folk art collectors allow us to share and preserve the beauty of folk art traditions.

Current IBC Exhibit on View

A new folk art display is in the lobby of [IBC Bank downtown](#) which brings folk art into the community. The display, titled, "A Spinning World: Horse, Wheel & Flight", features a variety of pieces from Mexico: a wooden Ferris wheel from Oaxaca donated by Ed Jordan; a wooden horse costume donated by collector Eden Box; a Voladores model which was graciously donated by Board member Carol Hayman and a painted glass vase. Stop by. Exhibit will run from May 4th - July 6, 2026



Looking Ahead

We have several exciting exhibits and programs in the coming months:

- Plans are underway for a special dedication and tribute to renowned folk artist, Josefina Aguilar, RIP. We will showcase some of her figurines from our permanent collection. More information to follow.



- An exhibition at the Patrick Heath Public Library in Boerne, Texas (September-November '26) allows us to branch out to neighboring communities.

Recently someone asked me “what is folk art?” I hope the accompanying article in this newsletter by Audrey Selden, offers insight and helps to define the meaning and significance of Folk Art in its many forms.



KUDOS:

To Audrey Selden, AFFA Board Secretary, for her recent award from the National Alliance for Partnership in Equity. We're proud of ya!



You're Invited:

YOU'RE INVITED!

AFFA
Austin Friends of Folk Art

HAPPY HOUR

Thursday, May 28
Mama Betty's
7001 Burnet Rd
4:30 - 6:30

Mama Betty's
Tex-Mex Cantina

Celebrate Connect Support Folk Art Cash Bar

Bring your family and friends.
Everyone is welcome!

Mark your calendar for our Happy Hour May 28th at [Mama Betty's](#). We encourage you to attend and become a member, renew your membership, get involved and help us grow.

If you would like to volunteer, serve on our board, contribute to our folk art collection or become a business sponsor, we would love to hear from you. Thank you for being part of our community!

RSVP: cg1203@aol.com

Divine DIY

The Visionary Art of Everyday Things Step aside, marble statues and oil paintings. This story begins in a chilly garage and stars a pile of castoffs. At the Smithsonian American Art Museum, one of the most dazzling works on display didn't come from a grand studio or a wealthy patron. It came from faith, patience, and a whole lot of everyday objects most people would toss without a second thought.

Meet James Hampton, a janitor by day and a visionary creator by night. Starting in 1950 and continuing until he died in 1964, Hampton quietly transformed a drafty Washington, D.C. garage into a sacred workshop. Armed with little more than glue, tacks, and unwavering belief, he built what he called The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations' Millennium General Assembly, a name as grand as the piece itself.

But here's the magic: this heavenly throne wasn't carved from marble or cast in gold. It emerged from everyday objects. Old armchairs and wooden scraps



became the bones of a celestial tubes rose like columns in a holy temple. Coffee cans, jelly jars, wine bottles, and even burned-out light bulbs found new purpose, wrapped lovingly in shimmering foil. What once held groceries or lit a room now shines as sacred objects of devotion.

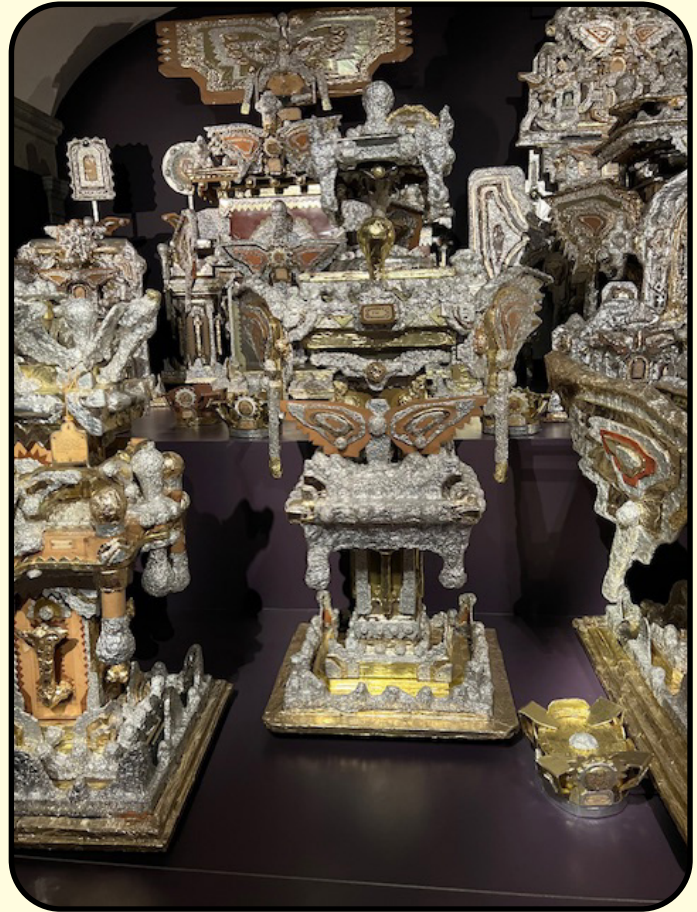
Look closer, and the transformation becomes even more enchanting. Cardboard blossoms into angels' wings. Seven-pointed stars shine where scraps once lay forgotten. Mirror shards catch the light like fragments of divine presence. Nearly every surface glimmers in gold and silver, much of it fashioned from something as ordinary as Reynolds Wrap. It's a reminder that beauty and holiness don't require luxury. They require vision.

Hampton's work sits at the very heart of folk art: resourceful, deeply personal, and rooted in belief. Inspired by religious visions that began in 1931, he saw promise where others saw trash. In total, he assembled around 180 individual pieces, binding them together with tape, glue, pins, and determination. No fancy tools. No formal training. Just devotion and imagination.

And maybe that's the lesson Hampton leaves us: the sacred isn't separate from the everyday. It's woven into it. A coffee can can be a column. A light bulb can be a beacon. A scrap heap can become a sanctuary.

So, the next time you hold something destined for the trash, pause for a moment. In the spirit of James Hampton, you might just be holding the beginning of something extraordinary.

Visit [Smithsonian](#) video about this folk art.



Until next month,
With Appreciation,

Amalia Rodriguez-Mendoza
AFFA Board President

Board Members:

Amalia Rodriguez Mendoza, President
Jim Huff , Vice-President/Treasurer
Audrey Selden, Secretary
Carmen Guerra, Director of Membership

Director Members:

Carol Hayman
Janet Hutchison
Charles Peveto
Rosa Rios Valdez

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AFFA

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Join AFFA
Today

Membership Information: <https://austinfriendsoffolkart.org/join/>



Senior/Student
Membership - \$25



Individual
Membership - \$30



Couple/Family
Membership - \$40



Business
Membership - \$50

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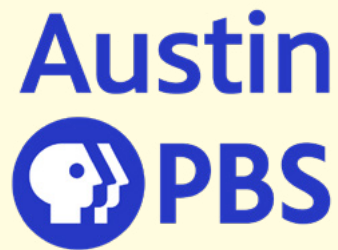
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