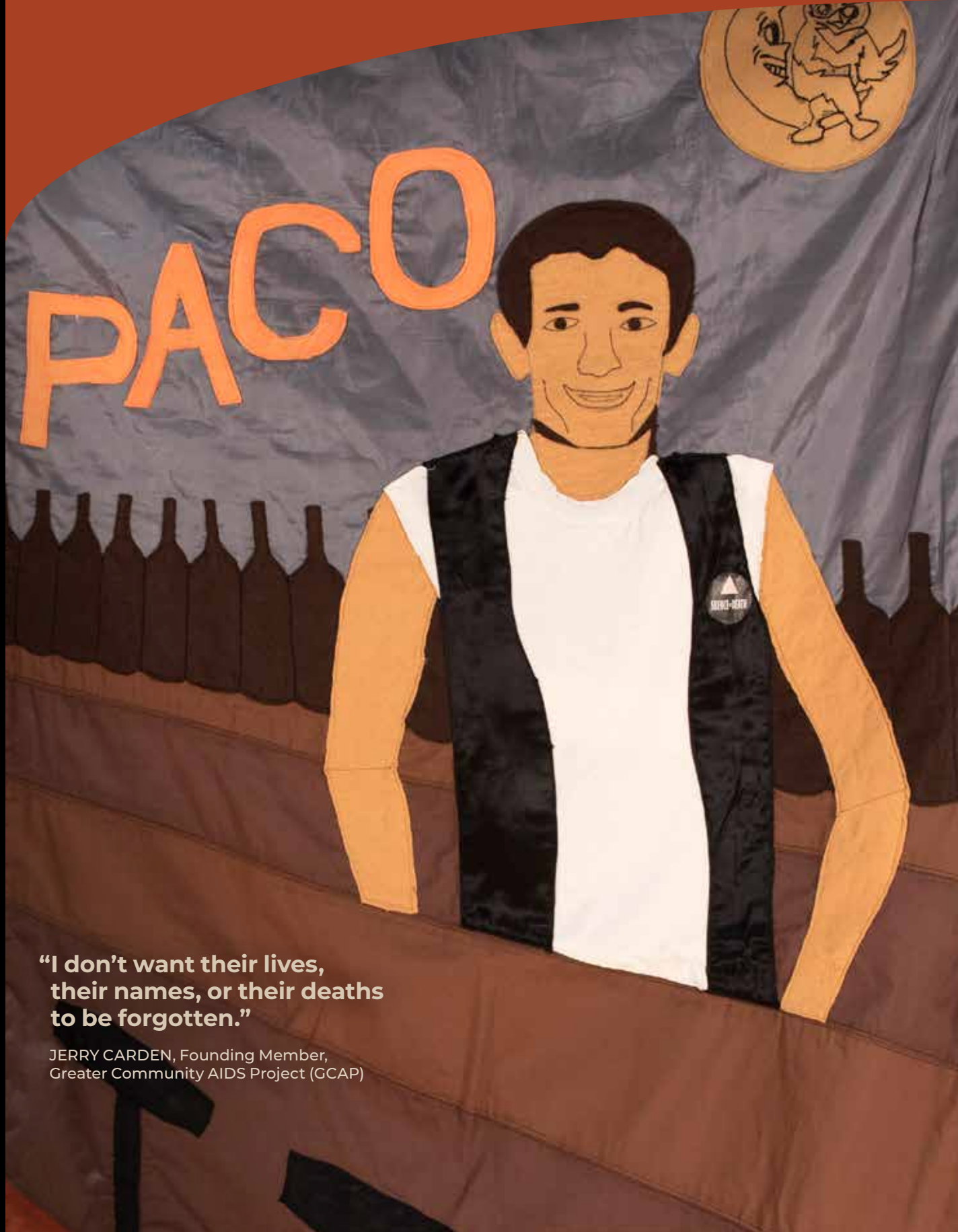


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SPURLOCK

MUSEUM

THE ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE WILLIAM R. AND CLARICE V. SPURLOCK MUSEUM
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



**“I don’t want their lives,
their names, or their deaths
to be forgotten.”**

JERRY CARDEN, Founding Member,
Greater Community AIDS Project (GCAP)



SPURLOCK MUSEUM MAGAZINE

Editorial Team: Katya Reno, Travis Stansel,
Elizabeth Sutton, Beth Watkins

Produced for the Spurlock Museum by the
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Office of Communications and Marketing

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On the front cover:

Sewn in memory quilt panel.

In Memory of Paco Arbogast,
Artist Unknown, circa 1988-1996.
Property of GCAP, Urbana, IL.



Detail from the Great ARTdoors exhibit:
EKAH, **Entre Chien et Loup**
(Between Dog and Wolf),
South Ridge Park.



Elizabeth Sutton, Director

DEAR FRIENDS,

When I am asked what I like most about the Spurlock Museum of World Cultures, I always answer, “It’s the people.” And whenever I think about the Spurlock, I am never picturing a building or gallery in my head, but instead the faces of visitors, staff members, students, and collaborators. And although we have entered yet another year of living with a global pandemic, we continue to feel very much connected to and supported by our community.

We have all experienced losses during this time. We continue to lose loved ones; we have all been touched by economic uncertainty; and many of us are still physically separated from friends and family. And while I realize it is inevitable that we feel isolated at times, I have found some solace in the knowledge that I am not alone in my feelings. Around the world, we are all facing loss, upheaval, and uncertainty. But there is always hope.

Over the past few years we have done what we could to adapt. In creating The Great ARTdoors with our collaborators, 40 North, Urbana Arts and Culture, Champaign Park District, and Urbana Park District, we have had the opportunity to financially support local artists by bringing their work into local parks, where we can explore themes of loss, hope, and uncertainty together in a socially-distanced space. We have continued to support our artists, musicians, and cultural experts in developing virtual and in-person programming and exhibits. We have also continued to partner with local teachers to transform our in-person experiences into new programs that thrive in virtual classrooms. We have transformed one of our galleries into a new learning and collaboration space that allows for small gatherings and classes to meet, while maintaining proper distancing.

This year, we will focus on issues of health and wellness. We opened *Sewn in Memory: AIDS Quilt Panels of Central Illinois* in November. Along with our collaborators, we are honored to host this exhibition, which remembers the lives of these special people our community lost too soon. Now, almost 30 years after the panels were originally displayed, we are again living through a pandemic that has produced stigma and highlighted inequities. By displaying these panels, we hope to ignite new discussions about health, fear, and hope.

On February 1, 2022 we opened the exhibit, *Bodies in Crisis*, curated by faculty member Dr. Clara Bosak-Schroeder. This exhibit looks at how ancient cultures navigated death, illness, and disability through art and will highlight pieces from the Spurlock’s extensive holdings of ancient Mediterranean artifacts. Through these objects, we note that human bodies have always been beautiful, fragile, and ever-changing.

We hope you recognize that the Spurlock Museum is not a building or a collection of artifacts. We are a community of sharing. We share a love of culture, art, stories, music, and knowledge. Thank you for your continued support.

With gratitude and hope,

Elizabeth A. Sutton, PhD
Director

AWARDS & NEWS

Great ARTdoors Named Best New Arts Programming by *Smile Politely*

Smile Politely, Champaign-Urbana's online culture magazine, honored the Great ARTdoors with their Best New Arts Programming award. The Spurlock Museum launched the Great ARTdoors in collaboration with 40North, Urbana Arts and Culture, Champaign Park District, and Urbana Park District. Ten local artists were selected and given honoraria to install their art in parks and community gardens. You can read more about the two iterations of the program in this issue.

Buzz Magazine Names Spurlock 'Best Museum' in C-U

Buzz Magazine (Illini Media) named us the Best Museum for the third year running, as part of their "Best of C-U" voting and awards.

New Community and Collaboration Gallery (CCG) Opens

We transformed part of our former European Gallery into a new Community and Collaboration Gallery (the CCG). We have used the space to host University class visits, where students can handle the collections. We also hosted a poetry reading at the CCG for the Pygmalion Arts Festival 2021. We will be able to host many more community events, workshops, and University and K-12 classes.

Director Elizabeth Sutton Teaches Class on Global Monuments

The undergraduate course for Classics, titled, *Building Up and Tearing Down: Monuments in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Spring 2021), incorporated Museum collections into course content and gave students the opportunity to virtually meet with heritage professionals from the Bears Ears Coalition, Cesar E. Chávez National Monument, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, and other important heritage organizations.

Christa Deacy-Quinn and John Holton Teach Graduate Class on Museum Collections Preservation

Museum Collections Preservation, located in the School of Information Sciences (iSchool), ran during Spring 2021. This in-person class met in the new Community and Collaboration Gallery (CCG) space and utilized the Museum's collections for coursework. This course is currently being taught in Spring 2022 in the CCG.

First Faculty Guest Curator, Professor Clara Bosak-Schroeder, Curates New Exhibit

In partnership with the College of LAS, our first faculty guest curator started a one-year appointment in January 2021. Professor Bosak-Schroeder of the Classics Department developed an exhibit on death and illness in the Ancient Mediterranean world. The exhibit, *Bodies in Crisis*, opened February 1, 2022.

Collections and Exhibitions Coordinator Melissa Sotelo, Wins Award

Melissa Sotelo, Spurlock's collections and exhibitions coordinator, was awarded the prestigious Forty Under 40 Award by *The News-Gazette's Central Illinois Business* magazine. Winners were nominated by peers and selected by a panel of judges, based on achievements, experiences, innovations, leadership, and community involvement. Melissa has designed and crafted many exhibits during her 14 years at the Spurlock, including her favorite, *In Her Closet: How to Make a Drag Queen*.

"Melissa is humble and content to stay in the background and let others occupy the spotlight. But don't let this fool you," says Director Elizabeth Sutton. "She is intelligent, incredibly creative, generous, and courageous. Occupying a 'behind the scenes' position at the Museum allows Melissa the latitude to mentor, improve accessibility, bring more life into our space, and help the Museum highlight and amplify community voices. She fights for what she believes in and works daily to create lasting, positive change, both at the Spurlock and in the museum field."



Monica Scott, Public Programs and Volunteers Coordinator Accepted to Fulbright-Hays Seminar

Monica was selected to participate in the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program in Argentina. Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Education and the Fulbright Program. The program provides short-term study and travel seminars abroad for U.S. educators in the social sciences and humanities, for the purpose of improving their understanding and knowledge of the peoples and cultures of other countries. Monica will be developing projects that make connections between Argentine culture and Spurlock Museum collections.

Christa Deacy-Quinn, Collections Manager, Gives Workshop at American Alliance of Museums

Christa was invited by American Alliance of Museums to provide a workshop for members of Integrated Pest Management. She is a national expert in this area of museum management and recently published a book on pest management that she provides free of cost to anyone who is interested. As of the end of 2020, *Integrated Pest Management* had been downloaded over 660 times by people in 48 countries.

John Holton, Assistant Collections Manager, Wins LAS Staff Award

John has won a Staff Award from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (LAS). He also recently participated in the Academic Professional Leadership Program.



Abigail Padfield Narayan Joins Staff as Academic Programs Coordinator

Abigail holds a bachelor's degree in History from the College of Wooster, a master's in Early Modern History from the University of York, and a master's in Communication and Leadership Studies

from Gonzaga University. She is completing her doctorate in Texts and Technology, with a concentration in Public History, at the University of Central Florida. She previously worked for Museo de las Americas, in Denver, Colorado, and has a wealth of experience in teaching and research. In her new role, Abigail will collaborate with faculty and instructors to design experiences that engage students with collections and exhibits, enhancing curriculum and learning opportunities. Additionally, Abigail will develop resources, materials, and exhibits for University audiences.



Katya Reno Joins Staff as Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Katya has worked widely across many media and communications arenas. She began her career in book publishing, at Oxford University Press, in New York City. She has also worked as an editor and writer for several magazine

publishers and as an English professor. Most recently, she taught technical writing, editing, and creative writing at Knox College. She received an MFA in creative writing from Texas State University and studied Rhetoric and Composition, focusing on digital and visual rhetorics, at Illinois State University.

Beth Watkins, Education and Exhibits Coordinator, Publishes Article on Bollywood Film

Beth Watkins has a chapter that appears in a new book, *Bollywood Horrors: Religion, Violence, and Cinematic Fears in India* (Bloomsbury). The title of her chapter is "Mardaani: The Secular Horror of Child Trafficking and the Modern Masculine Woman." Learn more about the book by visiting bloomsbury.com/us/bollywood-horrors-9781350143159.



Grant Awarded for Ethnic and Folk Arts Programming

A team of Spurlock Education and Administration staff members Beth Watkins, Monica Scott, Karen Flesher, and Kim Sheahan Sanford successfully wrote a grant for Ethnic and Folk Arts Programming with the Illinois Arts Council. This year's award was over \$17,550 and will support public and school programming this fiscal year.

LAS Impact Award

Recognizing inspiring efforts during COVID-19

Spurlock Wins Several LAS IMPACT Awards

We are thrilled to announce that we have received several LAS Impact awards for our work in 2021. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UIUC recognized us for our outstanding performance during a difficult time.

Christa Deacy-Quinn, John Holton, Gavin Robinson, and Melissa Sotelo of the Collections Team won for "moving quickly to share PPE with area hospitals, completing a deep clean of the Museum and checking ventilation, carrying on with plans to install a new show, and reorganizing space to create a safe classroom within the Museum."

Kim Sheahan Sanford, Monica Scott, Jack Thomas, and Beth Watkins, from Education and IT, were awarded "for quickly pivoting to online events and hosting dozens of them during the pandemic."

Director Dr. Elizabeth Sutton was honored for being "incredibly supportive of the Spurlock team, while keeping them on track for some big goals, and for her progressive visioning for the future of the Museum post-pandemic."

las.illinois.edu/covid19/award#staff

SPURLOCK ONLINE

Spurlock.illinois.edu

If you haven't already, be sure to follow us on social media. You'll find frequent updates on events, news, and artifact features. You'll want to visit our website frequently, as well, for updates and in-depth stories on our blog.



Join us @spurlockmuseum



a vibrant resource at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



NEW PROMO VIDEO RELEASED

Make sure to check out our new promotional video about the Museum on our YouTube channel ([youtube.com/c/SpurlockMuseum](https://www.youtube.com/c/SpurlockMuseum)). We think you'll see that it does a good job of capturing what makes the Spurlock such a special place.

You'll also find plenty of videos of virtual events to catch up on! As part of our response to the pandemic, we're creating more and more digital content every day.



Dog and Puppy
(2020.06.0272),
Japan, 26 x 18cm.
Carved Wood.
Fred A. Freund Collection.

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Janie Jerch	Lisa Wilson
Liz Jones	Joyce Wright
James S. Lowers	

Honorary Members

Clark E. Cunningham <i>(in memoriam)</i>	Anna J. Merritt
Peggy Anderson	Wayne Pitard
Henry Blackwell	Richard Pyatt <i>(in memoriam)</i>
Douglas Brewer	Grover L. Seitzinger <i>(in memoriam)</i>
Allan Campbell	Charles R. Shepardson
Robin Fossum	Claire Skaperdas
Bernie Freeman	Pola Fotitch Triandis <i>(in memoriam)</i>
John Heiligenstein	Ruth Watkins
Janet Dixon Keller	
Jill Knappenberger <i>(in memoriam)</i>	
Martha Landis	
Sara de Mundo Lo <i>(in memoriam)</i>	

“We see in the Spurlock Museum a highly collaborative effort; excellent documentation that sheds light on **sustainability as a long-lasting legacy.**”

— *Joyce S. Lee, jury chair*

Spurlock Wins GREEN AWARD from American Alliance of Museums

In late 2020, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), which represents more than 35,000 US institutions, awarded four museums with a Sustainability Excellence Award. Spurlock Museum took home the top prize in the Existing Facility category.

AAM applauded our “ambitious yet realistic approach” to creating a greener museum, noting our efforts at “directing... resources toward meeting the goal of creating a carbon-neutral campus by 2050,” and stating that we “effectively demonstrated that rigorous analyses, coupled with innovative funding and resource allocation, ultimately pay off in significant reductions in energy use and carbon emissions.”

Christa Deacy-Quinn, collections manager, and John Holton, assistant collections manager, engineered and implemented these impressive initiatives. According to Holton, “We started small by monitoring room temperatures and replacing lights. Next, we used the University’s Revolving Loan Fund and Energy and Conservation Incentive Program to evaluate our

energy usage.” Holton says that this information allowed the Spurlock team to modify many of the building’s systems for increased energy efficiency, including upgrading the HVAC systems, improving steam pipe insulation, and changing lighting for energy-efficiency. These efforts also saved the museum \$750,000 over ten years.

Jury Chair for the Facility Award, Joyce S. Lee, endorsed our efforts, saying, “We see in the Spurlock Museum a highly collaborative effort; excellent documentation that sheds light on sustainability as a long-lasting legacy.”

Holton notes that the award was only made possible because of the efforts of the Spurlock and campus communities: “We are deeply grateful to University Facilities and Services for their help, especially the Retro-commissioning Team, the Re-commissioning Team, and Electricians. Their combined expertise, collaboration, and efforts made this achievement possible.”



Electricians, Brad Eveland and Doug Dahl, prepare conduit to install an LED light fixture in the Artifact Preservation Center. Sixty-three florescent fixtures were upgraded to LED during this process.



Student employee, Scarlett Andes, installs LED bulbs in light fixtures to be installed in gallery track lights. A total of 1,140 gallery lights were upgraded during this process, both inside cases and in room-ambient light fixtures.



Re-commissioning crew member, Corey Evans, measures air flow through a major duct line to confirm the return fan is properly working. Air ducts for all four of the museum’s air handling units were evaluated, and fan adjustments were made as needed.

SEWN IN MEMORY:

AIDS Quilt Panels from Central Illinois

By Travis Stansel

In October of 1987, 1,920 fabric panels covered an area larger than a football field on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Each of the panels was the approximate size of a grave — 3 by 6 feet — and commemorated an individual who lost their life to AIDS.

This was the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt. Its beginnings were humble: in 1985, activists taped placards to the side of San Francisco’s City Hall. Written on each placard was the name of one of 1,000 San Francisco residents who had died of AIDS. Gay rights activist Cleve Jones saw these cards and thought they resembled a patchwork quilt. Thus, the idea for the AIDS Memorial Quilt was born.

GCAP Forms in Champaign-Urbana

In the early 1980s, AIDS was thought to be confined to large cities, but within a couple years, it was taking the lives of people in smaller communities as well. As a response, in 1985 members of the Champaign-Urbana LGBTQIA+ community founded the Gay Community AIDS Project, now the Greater Community AIDS Project, or GCAP.

Spurred on by the national quilt project, GCAP activists, partners, parents, and volunteers began sewing AIDS quilt panels in Champaign-Urbana to honor and remember friends and family members that they’d lost. Jerry Carden, a founding member and the first chairperson of GCAP, described the process of making quilts “to commemorate their loved ones” as a “healing” process that focused on the lives of the remembered.

According to Carden, some of the panels from Champaign-Urbana made their way to the National Quilt Project, while others stayed with GCAP. Still others were made in duplicate — with one version staying here in Champaign-Urbana, and the other traveling to Washington, D.C., to be a part of what is now called the National Memorial AIDS Quilt.

The Spurlock Museum is honored to show 21 of these panels made in the late 1980s and early 1990s. *Sewn in Memory: AIDS Quilt Panels from Central Illinois* opened in the Campbell Gallery on November 2, 2021, and closes July 10, 2022; the timing of the exhibit aligns with the 40th anniversary of the identification in 1981 of AIDS as a disease. And

according to current GCAP Executive Director Mike Benner, this is the first time these panels have been shown together since the mid-1990s.

History Harvest

The origin of *Sewn in Memory* was a class project led by Professor Kathryn Oberdeck, Associate Professor of History at Illinois. The project, called History Harvest, collaborates with community members who share documents and items of personal and historical interest; students in the class then digitize the materials and display them in an online archive.

The 2019 iteration of History Harvest focused on changing urban spaces in Champaign-Urbana. Through its research, the class became aware of the 2017 closing of Champaign’s Chester Street bar; Chester Street had been a hub for the local LGBTQIA+ community for decades.

Professor Oberdeck said that when that class ended, she and her students had a desire to keep the project going. “We discovered there was a real interest in collecting and displaying this community’s history.” They then “planned a second course that would focus more specifically on LGBTQIA+ history in Champaign-Urbana, using the year in between the two courses to develop networks of interested donors in the community.”

Two of the people the class contacted were Jerry Carden and Mike Benner. The Spurlock Museum became involved when Exhibit Committee Member Beth Watkins met with Benner and Professor Oberdeck about photographing the panels, both for History Harvest and GCAP’s documentation and archives.

Carden said that because the panels had been in storage and out of sight for so many years, he had an unexpectedly strong emotional response to their unveiling. Carden himself worked on some of the panels, including a few dedicated to close friends of his.

Benner says he recognizes the importance of the exhibit as a memorial, but also hopes it will help GCAP in its research; in particular, he hopes the exhibit will help GCAP and others gather information about some of the people commemorated in the panels, those about whom very little, or even nothing, is known. He encourages anyone who may have information about them, as well as about any unidentified quilters, to reach out to GCAP or the Spurlock Museum at spurlock-museum@illinois.edu.





Short Videos Created By Illinois Public Media and the College of Media

The last piece of the exhibit came in January, when short videos were added to the exhibit alongside the quilts. These videos were created by a cross-disciplinary group of UIUC students, led by Illinois Public Media’s Director of Community Content & Engagement, Kimberlie Kranich, and University of Illinois Associate Professor of Journalism Charles Ledford. The videos document the stories behind some of the panels, and include interviews with friends and family of some of those memorialized in this exhibit.

Private tours of the exhibit are available, given by curators and community leaders (advance registration required).

Be sure to follow us on social media ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)) for updates and announcements about events related to the exhibit.

We look forward to seeing you at the Exhibit!

Images from top: **In Memory of Dr. Ronald Steinhoff**, Artist Unknown, circa 1988-1996. Property of GCAP, Champaign, IL.

In Memory of Merrill Eskew, by Eskew’s Family, circa 1988-1996. Property of GCAP, Champaign, IL.

In Memory of Stephen Gallagher 1948-1991, by Jerry Carden and Steve Otto et al., 1993. Property of GCAP, Champaign, IL.

Sewn in Memory event image.

In Memory of Paco Arbogast, Artist Unknown, circa 1988-1996. Property of GCAP, Champaign, IL.

In Memory of Mike Hyman, by Stephen Gallagher, circa 1993. Property of GCAP, Champaign, IL.

The **Spurlock Museum of World Cultures** and our community partners 40North, Urbana Park District, Champaign Park District, and Urbana Arts and Culture premiered the Great ARTdoors, a new public art initiative in August of 2020. With in-person events canceled, and with a will to help the community during the pandemic, we were able to shift funds in support of our local artists. Our goal was to help artists who had lost their usual venues and to bring solace — and maybe even a little joy — to the C-U community at large.

“The Great ARTdoors represents what is invaluable at this time of great transformation — a continued partnership across our twin cities and the University,” says Rachel Lauren Storm, arts and culture coordinator at Urbana Arts and Culture. “By focusing on our neighborhood walkways and community gardens, the Great ARTdoors amplifies creative and resilient spaces and brings art to our cities in ways most safely experienced during the pandemic. One thing is for certain, the more we continue to grow the ways in which we work together, the stronger our arts and culture scene is for it.”

Among community members, some appreciated the chance to get to know area parks they hadn't yet visited. Others thanked us for providing outdoor destinations that were safe, when many other forms of entertainment were unavailable. Teachers took their classrooms to visit the installations, and students made art and writing projects based upon their favorite pieces. The Great ARTdoors was also named by *Smile Politely* as Best New Art Programming of 2020.

Although the pressures of the pandemic had started to wane somewhat in 2021, we decided to continue with an annual installment of the Great ARTdoors. Its success and clear service to the community were a benefit to all and in line with the missions of each of our organizations. Once again, we awarded ten stipends to area artists in an open submission contest, and placed their works in area parks, giving precedence to locations in underserved areas. The works were on display from May 2021 to early November 2021.

What follows is a short introduction to some of the artists and pieces from the Great ARTdoors 2021. ○

Finding Hope, Healing, & Community in **The Great ARTdoors**

By *Katya Reno*

“[T]he more we continue to grow the ways in which we work together, the stronger our arts and culture scene is for it.”

— RACHEL LAUREN STORM,
URBANA ARTS AND CULTURE COORDINATOR



GARY BEAUMONT
Planetary Platters
Beardsley Park

Beaumont’s “planetary platters” is an abstraction in clay and glaze depicting planetary objects. The plates are made of high-fired porcelain and are affixed to a pole, around which they appear to rotate. According to Beaumont, “My art offers people in this fast-food culture a reason to stop and notice how something looks and feels... Something that conveys a sense of the spirit of humanity.”



MICHAEL DARIN
Sprout
Citizen Park

“A totem of sorts,” is how Darin describes his ringed, multicolored tower, which also evokes something out of a Dr. Seuss book. “Though solidly based in the ground, SPROUT stretches upward, highlighting the passage of time, symbolic legend, lineage, and notable events,” says Darin, an artist with a BFA from UIUC, who works as an education and engagement coordinator at Japan House.

KIM CURTIS
Harvest
Weaver Park

Kim Curtis is a former costume designer for the San Francisco Opera. Currently, she works for the Theatre Department at UIUC and creates illustration and fine art from her home studio in Urbana. *Harvest* evokes the structure of a mausoleum bedecked with a silver deer and brightly-colored plastics, holiday lights, Styrofoam, and “selectively-culled refuse,” which Curtis salvaged for the piece. Even the deer, a Christmas lawn decoration, was one she found on the curb in front of her house. According to Curtis, the title “Harvest,” derives from the saying, “We reap what we sow.” She describes her installation as a “monument” that warns rather than commemorates. The warning here is about the consequences of our insatiable plastic consumption. While plastics have drastically degraded our environment, she reminds us that Big Plastic is expected to continue to grow, further damaging our ecosystems — a dire harvest, indeed.



KEENAN DAILY
Black Love
Skelton Park

“Black Love. In a White. Obscurity.” So read the three inter-locked door panels in this compelling piece by Keenan Daily. Daily describes the piece as being about “the concept of Black love.” He points out that the characters are depicted in flowing red cloth, in a gesture to Renaissance paintings. The figures are sleek and sexy, and yet truncated and boxed in — suggesting the difficulty of love in a culture of white hegemony. The abstracted figures also allude to the science fiction genre and to his interest in afro-futurism. In a 2019 interview with *Smile Politely*, Daily described his work as addressing African American trauma through a style he developed from reading science fiction and graphic novels. Daily studied Graphic Design as a graduate student at UIUC.

EKAH
Entre Chien et Loup
(Between Dog and Wolf)
South Ridge Park

EKAH, also known as Steampunk Grub, was born in Seoul and grew up in NYC. She studied at Parsons School of Design and has worked in graphic design, broadcast animation, and video games. She says the title of the piece comes from an old French saying that refers to dusk or twilight: so called because twilight is the time of day when it is difficult to tell the difference between a dog and a wolf. Her haunting installation depicts the mysteries of sundown and “creatures of mistaken identity” in 50 lenticular blocks.



K. HIERONYMUS W
Pod No. 7 (pictured opposite)
Lierman Neighborhood
Community Garden

According to the artist, K. Hieronymus W, her piece of overlapping translucent circles evokes a quarantine pod. “As people move around my piece, I want them to see how I experienced quarantine, brief moments in time where my world was still confined but didn’t seem so small.” The artist grew up in C-U and studied art at the International Academy of Design and Technology, Chicago. She is also owner of the popular bakery, Hopscotch.



JUDY LEE
(C3H4O2)n
Douglass Park

Lee studied at the School of Art + Design at UIUC. During the pandemic, she had to close her new business, Nifty Nook, a local shop where artists could sell their work. But she was able to pivot to e-commerce and 3d printing projects. Her piece resembles a life-size pinwheel toy in the shape of a flower. Lee says she wants her sculpture to “inspire people to think creatively, by showing them how simple plastic pieces can move kinetically.”



GREG STALLMEYER
Melt
Chief Shemauger Park

Stallmeyer teaches welding and repair at Parkland College’s automotive program. He is a master of non-traditional materials and techniques. Stallmeyer says he discovered he “has an affinity for the fluid process of working with a combination of resin and paint.” *Melt*, in an electric shade of blue, resembles a Greek column, damaged but still standing strong, with a form that is both organic and industrial.



Great ARTdoors
2020 Artists

BARRY ABRAHMS
Tensegrity
MLK Trail, Champaign

EKAH
Points of View
Lierman Neighborhood
Community Garden, Urbana

GREG STALLMEYER
Rainbow Connection
Kaufman Lake, Champaign

JA' NELLE DAVENPORT PLEASURE
Seeds of Injustice
Randolph Street Community
Gardens, Champaign

KEENAN DAILEY
Unchained
Douglass Park, Champaign

KINSEY FITZGERALD
Mother & Child
Chief Shemauger Park, Urbana

LISA KESLER
Prairie Dance
Sunset Ridge Park, Champaign

MICHAEL DARIN
Catapult Earth
Anita Purves Nature Center,
Urbana

NATHAN WESTERMAN
Transfiguration
Victory Park, Urbana

SIERRA MURPHY
Bread and Roses
South Ridge Park, Urbana



MOHAN TRACY
Waiting to Fly
Crystal Lake Park

Mohan Tracy is a fabric art quilter. Her work has appeared at the Asian American Cultural Center at UIUC, the Vermilion County Museum, The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show, and at local quilt exhibits organized by the Illinois County Stitchers. This piece is made up of three colorful kites of varying designs, attached to a freely rotating triangular framework elevated above the viewers, moving in the wind. Currently, one of her art quilts is on display at the Gertz gallery at Parkland College. Her husband, David Tracy, assisted in designing and building the infrastructure for the kites.



CHARLIE WISSEMAN
Prayer Wheels
Randolph Community Gardens

Wiseman’s meditative piece takes inspiration from Tibetan Buddhist prayer wheels, in which rotating the wheel drum acts as a form of prayer. Wiseman, who lost friends and family in the last year, says he needed to process these feelings of grief by working with his hands. Upon the prayer wheels you can find song lyrics, poems, and words of hope. Some inscriptions for this piece were in Braille. Visitors were encouraged to deposit messages in a hollow drum or write with chalk. According to Wiseman, “Everyone has missed touching people and things, so I would like these rotating drums to be an indirectly shared tactile experience and an act of shared prayer.”

The artist information here was partly adapted from information available on the 40North Website at 40north.org/programs/thegreatARTdoors. We encourage you to learn more about these artists and their works by visiting the 40North website.

Bodies in Crisis

By Professor Clara Bosak-Schroeder

This Spring 2022, the temporary exhibit, *Bodies in Crisis*, curated by UIUC Classics Professor Clara Bosak-Schroeder, opened at the Spurlock Museum's Central Core.

Drawing from our extensive collection of Ancient Mediterranean artifacts and modern reproductions, *Bodies in Crisis* explores how ancient cultures navigated bodily crisis through art. By representing the human body at important moments of change, ancient people investigated, remembered, mourned, celebrated, and protected themselves from harm.

Our bodies are constantly changing. From birth to death, through illness, disability, and pregnancy, we can't always control our embodied experiences of the world. This fragility makes the human experience incredibly variable; our differences are wondrous.

"Crisis" is an ancient Greek word meaning *decision or judgment*. It is a turning point, a knife's edge, a moment in time in which many possibilities exist simultaneously.

The word "crisis" has negative connotations in English, but the threat of crisis is subjective. Not all the ancient peoples represented in the exhibit would have experienced their embodiment as a crisis. Instead, their bodies often pose a crisis for others — how to respond to the body and how to interpret it.

The Mediterranean connected ancient peoples from across Asia, Europe, and Africa through war, trade, and immigration. Spanning two millennia and numerous cultures, this exhibit helps us to see cultural exchange in action.

Plaster burial portrait (1926.02.0234)

Though now a bright white, this plaster portrait was once painted in vivid colors; traces of orange-red pigment inside the nostrils indicate the rich tone of the portrait's skin. Over the centuries, ancient sculptures often lose their eyes; in this one, delicate stone inlays remain.

The woman's face combines idealized features with an individual expression and striking hairstyle.

Roman Egypt, Faiyum Oasis or Abydos; 100-150 CE. Plaster, stone, and pigment. 1926.02.0234 Egyptian Exploration Society.



Roman period Greece (Epidauros) 100 BCE-100 CE. Plaster cast; original held by the National Museum of Athens. 1900.12.0090 Classical Museum Purchase.

Figurine of young man with curved spine (1948.01.0034)

A young man strides forward with his left leg while emphasizing a curved spine with his right hand. Figures with curved spines are common in ancient Egyptian art, where they are often depicted as gardeners or craftspeople. This may reflect the actual occupations of people with this disability.

Ancient Egypt, 2500-2250 BCE. Plaster cast; original held by the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. 1948.01.0034 Larado Taft Collection.

Votive tablet (1900.12.0090)

This plaster cast of a tablet from Roman occupied Greece thanks the god Asclepius for the healing of Cutius Gallus' ears. People across the ancient Mediterranean dedicated representations of body parts including eyes, breasts, limbs, hair, and genitals to thank the gods for healing. Anatomical votives are still used by religious practitioners in many parts of the world.

The Latin inscription reads: Cutius has auris Gallus tibi voverat olim Phoebigena et posuit sanus ab auriculis

Cutius Gallus once vowed these ears to you, son of Phoebus [i.e. Asclepius] and dedicates them to you now that his ears are healed.

Phoebus is another name for the god Apollo.

Curated by Clara Bosak-Schroeder, Department of Classics





Indigenous Women of Canelos Quichua culture

of Ecuador make some of the finest hand-coiled traditional ceramics in Amazonian South America. Moreover, these master potters combine their ceramic skills with the telling of mythology and the singing of songs to depict the deep-rooted cultural system of their vibrant lifeways. As such, they are known as *sinchi muscuyuj*, strong visionary, the feminine counterparts to male shamans. We are privileged to feature their pottery in the South American Gallery of the Spurlock Museum of World Cultures. And the gallery is at the forefront of modern museology in presenting not only the objects, but also the names of the women who made the pottery, and the context and meaning of the pottery in ritual and quotidian life.

Doctoral candidate Jenny García Ruales sharing with potter Erlinda Maglla, the book *Puyo Runa*, in which Erlinda's pottery appears.

On Pottery & Remembrance: Potter Erlinda Maglla

By Professor Norman E. Whitten, Jr,
Curator

Dorothea Scott (Sibby) Whitten and I began research with Canelos Quichua Indigenous people of Amazonian Ecuador in 1968, and we continued together annually until Sibby passed in August 2011, after which, I continued this research through 2019. As Sibby and I began our work in the Upper Amazon, we soon learned of the stories of the mythical woman, *Jilucu*, (*Hilucu*) whose living manifestation is the Common Potoo bird, related to the North American Whippoorwill. We also learned that a font of Indigenous knowledge, embedded in sophisticated ceramic making, could be found in the women of Sarayaquillu, a settlement in the northwest sector of Sarayacu, an Indigenous community on the Bobonaza River. In 1971, I traveled there again, bringing with me desirable trade goods, and met, for the first time, the potter Erlinda Maglla. After receiving some of my goods, she presented me with a ceramic image of *Jilucu*, the finest I had seen to that time, and the finest I have seen since. Later, Erlinda also made figurines of *Manduru warmi* “red woman,” and *Widuj warmi* “black woman,” the two mythical women who bring, respectively, color and beauty to the world. These two pieces are also housed in our museum collections.

The mythical woman *Jilucu* is highly salient in the rich myths that spiral through the tellings of Beginning Times Places. In one variant of the story, *Jilucu* paints Moon Man with *widuj* (*Genipa americana*) and thereby identifies him as the male progenitor of the contemporary people. In another variant, her squabbles with Moon Man lead to the origins of pottery clay. Erlinda's ceramic image of *Jilucu* is featured in the Spurlock South American Gallery in the case entitled “Sustaining Life,” and she featured in the books Sibby and I wrote: *From*

Myth to Creation: Art from Amazonian Ecuador (University of Illinois Press, 2016) and *Puyo Runa: Imagery and Power in Modern Amazonia* (University of Illinois Press, 2007).

Unlike our relationships with most of the women with whom we worked over the decades, we unfortunately lost touch with Erlinda by the mid-1970s. So, I was greatly surprised and pleased when I received an email on 25 February, 2021, from Jenny García Ruales, a PhD candidate in Cultural and Social Anthropology at the Philipps University of Marburg, Germany, and associate researcher at the fellow group, Environmental Rights in a Cultural Context (Max-Planck-Institute for Social Anthropology) and doctoral fellow of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation. Jenny has been doing collaborative anthropology in the Ecuadorian Amazon, studying ways of translating the animist perceptions of the Kichwa people of Sarayacu into a framework that would provide legal protections for their sacred natural spaces.

Jenny wrote, “I found Erlinda Maglla... She saw the picture of her ceramic [made] fifty years ago with joy and happy tears.” Jenny found Erlinda by showing the book *Puyo Runa* to her host family in Sarayacu, and they knew who made the *Jilucu* effigy and took Jenny to her. Jenny asked Erlinda for permission to take the photo, was granted permission, and sent me the photo of the two of them. Hopefully, Jenny and Erlinda will see the photo again when this article is published.

Norman E. Whitten, Jr., is professor of anthropology and Latin American studies, past director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, curator of the Spurlock Museum, affiliate of Afro-American studies, and Senior University Scholar at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Canelos Quichua Pottery and Mythology

This distinctive pottery is the domain of visionary Indigenous Canelos Quichua women. They create in two styles, using traditional coiling, shaping and firing techniques. The smoke-blackened ware is used to cook and serve food and drink. The decorated polychrome ware is made to store and serve *asua*, a fermented food-drink, which has daily, festive, and ceremonial use. The polychrome ware is a mix of traditional and contemporary designs that incorporate three overarching master symbols: the anaconda and the water turtle, the land tortoise and iguana, and the coral snake. A myriad of images incorporate these master symbols, including especially the powers of mountains and rivers.

The three master spirits are:

- 1 **Sungui**
Spirit master of the water domain
- 2 **Amasanga**
Spirit master of the rainforest domain
- 3 **Nungui**
Spirit master of garden soil and pottery clay



Above: **Erlinda's jilucu festival effigy** (1997.15.0122). Sarayaquillu, Ecuador. Canelos Quichua Culture. Ceramic stoneware and pigment. Gift of Norman E. and Dorothea S. Whitten.

Left: **Nungui Effigy** (1997.15.0135) by Santa Gualinga. Sarayaquillu-Sarayaqu, Ecuador, 1983-1984. Canelos Quichua Culture. Gift of Norman E. and Dorothea S. Whitten.

Middle: **Manduru Warmi, Red Woman effigy** (2015.08.0008) by Erlinda Mangllia. Sarayaquillu, Ecuador. Canelos Quichua Culture. Gift of Norman E. and Dorothea S. Whitten.

Below: **Widuj Warmi Woman effigy** (1997.15.0137) by Erlinda Mangllia. Sarayaquillu, Ecuador. Canelos Quichua Culture. Gift of Norman E. and Dorothea S. Whitten.





The Boy Orator of the Platte, *on a Plate*

By Professor Nathan Tye, Curator

Among the most interesting objects I find in the People's Collection and a display item in the recent exhibit, *Debates, Decisions, Demands: Objects of Campaigns and Activism*, is this simple tin tray printed with **William Jennings Bryan's** portrait. It hardly stood out among the other objects in the exhibit, yet it embodies a transformational presidential candidate, whose campaign reshaped the way politicians sought the presidency.

Bryan was born in Salem, Illinois, and attended school at Illinois College, in Jacksonville. However, he is more closely associated with his adopted home of Lincoln, Nebraska. It is in Lincoln where he launched his political career as a Democratic congressman in a deeply Republican state. Lauded for his oratorical skill and youthful energy, Bryan was deemed the "Boy Orator of the Platte," after the river that crosses Nebraska.

Nebraska author Mari Sandoz captured the energy Bryan's rhetorical skills unleashed in her classic biography of her father, *Old Jules*. "[Bryan] established the issues, swung into the tariff and ended on free silver, and when he sat down the crowd was still as a lull in a dry-land thunderstorm. Then in a frenzy of applause the audience arose, climbed to the benches, and swept forward upon the prophet come to them" (113).

Eventually, Bryan clinched the Democratic presidential nomination three times (and lost every election), served as Woodrow Wilson's first secretary of state (before resigning over his criticism of Wilson's war policy), and garnered renewed attention in the 1920s during the Scopes Monkey Trial. In one of history's small coincidences, the educator on trial for teaching evolution, John T. Scopes, was also born in Salem, Illinois, and briefly attended the University of Illinois (as seen in the *Urbana Daily Courier*, June 3, 1925).

Bryan's 1896 presidential campaign, to which this plate likely dates, transformed American politics. Although Bryan lost, "he voiced a romantic, class-aware protest against an order increasingly being governed by the intellectual assumptions and material might of big corporations, in both finance and manufacturing," according to his biographer Michael Kazin in *A Godly Hero: The Life of William Jennings Bryan*.

Bryan fought for "the people," as he understood them — farmers, wage workers, and overlooked rural voters. (45)

Bryan ascended to the Democratic and Populist Party nomination (he ran as a Fusionist candidate with the support of both parties) as a two-term congressman from Nebraska. Making the leap from rural Representative to presidential candidate was nearly impossible, but Bryan's rhetorical skill and support for the unlimited coinage of silver drove his popularity. The type of metal used in the national currency standard was one of the most important issues in the 1896 campaign. Bryan also called for a progressive income tax on wealthy Americans, a right to unionization, and stringent banking regulations. Silver remained the keystone of Populist thought. Silver supporters, often called "silver bugs," believed its use (at a ratio of 16 ounces of silver to one ounce of gold) alongside the gold standard would improve the economic lot of Midwest and Western populations through increased inflation, which, it was hoped, would raise crop prices and ease farmers' debts.

With the Democratic nomination and support of the Populists, Bryan crisscrossed the nation. He spoke in communities big and small, including here in Champaign, Illinois, on July 13, 1896 (documented in *The Champaign Daily News*, Volume 1,



Number 295, July 14, 1896). Bryan challenged established campaign norms. At the time, many believed that actively campaigning on one's behalf for the presidency was unseemly, rather "the office should seek the man." With his travels and big personality, Bryan transformed campaigning. In doing so, "a politics of character thus blended into a politics of celebrity as Bryan's voice became known throughout the land," (Kazin 49).

Bryan's candidacy and the debate over silver and gold produced an unprecedented amount of campaign paraphernalia for both sides. Hundreds of different types of objects, from buttons and ribbons, to bug-shaped pins, soap figurines, and tin trays, appeared. Examples of the latter three were included in the exhibit. The simplicity of this tray belies the ferocity of the monetary standard issue and the then radical campaign tactics of William Jennings Bryan.

Left: William Jennings Bryan **servicing tray** (2017.06.0158). 1896, metal, 43.6 x 31.1cm, The People's Collection, Spurlock Museum of World Cultures, Urbana.

Below: Pughe, J. S., artist. **"Blowing" himself around the country**, 1896, NY: Published by Keppler & Schwarzmann. Library of Congress.

Professor **Nathan Tye** was curator of our recent exhibit **Debates, Demands, Decisions: Objects of Campaigns and Activism**. Tye is an assistant professor of history at the University of Nebraska Kearney. He holds a BA from Creighton University and a PhD from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Tye specializes in Nebraska History, the history of the American West and Midwest, Labor History, Gender and Sexuality History, as well as Digital and Public History. His research documents the fascinating but misunderstood lives of hobos, tramps, and other transient workers who traveled across the West and Midwest by hopping trains from the 1870s through the 1930s.

The recent exhibit **Debates, Decisions, Demands: Objects of Campaigns and Activism** featured campaign objects from our People's Collection, along with historical photographs and objects from voter rights movements like abolition and suffrage, and from contemporary protest movements.

If you missed the exhibit, Professor Tye's tour is now available on the Spurlock's Youtube channel: youtu.be/N-NabmGmb8w



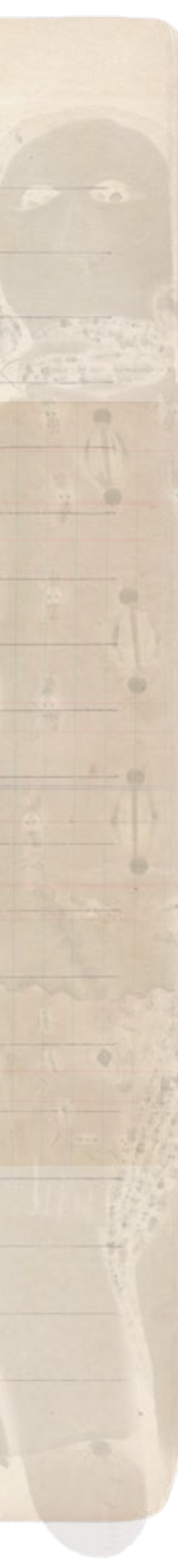
This **Dakota doll** was made by Rebecca Bluecloud and her family for the tourist market in the early 1900s. [Credit:] Dakota Doll, (2009.08.0001A-B) by Rebecca Bluecloud and family, circa 1930. Dyed textile, metal, plastic, animal skin, chicken feather. Gift of Curt and Janice Wilson.



DISCOVERING
NEW ARTIFACT
MEANINGS
& CONTEXTS

FROM OUR
ONLINE VISITORS

By Jennifer White



Traditional research methods have their place, but just as (if not more) valuable are the stories and memories that come to us from people who have **PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE** of an artifact.

Museums often find themselves with objects that have incomplete cataloguing information. At the Spurlock Museum, too, unfortunately, some of our artifacts lack complete information. We have objects that date as far back as 400,000 BCE, but even those from more recent times might have traveled through many places and hands before they made it to our museum.

For instance, a donor might find a piece in their grandmother's attic or they might have purchased an object at a marketplace while on vacation. They might not know in such situations who made the object, where it came from, or how it was used or perceived by a source-culture. In addition, standards of record-keeping have changed over the century-plus since Spurlock has been collecting. And, unfortunately, sometimes, due to the complex nature of our work and the depth of our collections, an object might have become disconnected from its original paper trail over time. Today, with the help of new technology, we do a better job of vetting acquisitions, gathering a complete history of the artifact, and recording this information.

While our staff, students, interns, and researchers work very hard to connect information to objects, that information is, by the nature of the enterprise, always limited. That is why we very much value information that is shared with us by people who have a personal relationship with an artifact. Traditional research methods have their place, but just as (if not more) valuable are the stories and memories that come to us from people who have personal knowledge of an artifact.

Below are a few of the fascinating stories that people have shared with us about objects they know about, have used, or remember as having a place in their own cultural communities. Many of these stories have come to us directly through a feature on our publicly available digital database.

You can search our collection at www.spurlock.illinois.edu/collections/search-collection by entering a key word for a type of object, subject, place, etc. Then choose an artifact from the list and add your comments in our **'Share What You Know!'** feature at the bottom of page.

Dakota Dolls

Leah Bowe recognized the similarities of these dolls to those made by Rebecca Bluecloud of the Upper Sioux Indian Community, in Granite Falls, Minnesota. Bluecloud (1883–1944) was the granddaughter of Taoyateduta, Chief Little Crow, of the Mdewakanton Dakota. She produced dolls for the tourist market during the 1920s through the early 1940s. The dolls were sold simply as “Indian” dolls, without noting the artist's name or tribal affiliation. Bluecloud's dolls are unique for many features, including the inset black, faceted-glass bead eyes; the pieced-leather, triangular nose; the lack of a mouth, clothing with an attached panel on the front of the shirt, and the style of beadwork and fringe.

Illinois Sales Tax Tokens

Jacob Ulvila, an alum of UIUC, recalls tokens similar to these sales tax tokens in Spurlock’s collections. The tokens were used in Illinois between 1935 and 1947 in order to offer exact change for sales tax. They were issued in multiples of 1 mill, or 1/10 of a cent. This allowed the merchant to avoid having to charge the customer a full cent on small purchases, with a tax less than one cent. Jacob inherited the tokens from his maternal grandfather, who founded the Vanderbilt Flour Company in Chicago. Jacob says that he and his brother would play with the tokens as poker chips when they were kids.



Tax tokens like these were used during the Great Depression so that consumers could avoid being charged full sales tax for low-cost purchases. [Credit:] Illinois Sales Tax Token (1971.29.0003), 1935, aluminum, 1.48 x 1.48cm, Gift of Mary Lois Bull.



Jiao Bei (Moon Blocks)

David Badagnani pointed out that these small, carved boxwood semi-circles, which were originally labeled as musical instruments, are actually fortune-telling devices. The term *kwa*, in the Museum’s records, may have been a reference to *gua* (卦), meaning hexagrams, which would connect them to the *I-Ching*, or *Chinese Book of Divination*, and the *yin-yang* (thus their shape), representing the duality of the universe. They are known as *jiao bei* (筊杯), or “moon blocks.”

Furthermore, Dr. Goh Kiah Mok, tells us her grandmother, who was from Canton, Illinois, but who immigrated from Singapore, called them *Win Cups* (胜杯). Dr. Goh Kiah Mok described how her grandmother and her family would ask a question and pray, holding both blocks close together. They would then throw the blocks on the floor. If both blocks landed face down, then the answer was “no.” If one block landed up and another down, then the answer was “yes.” If both blocks faced up, the blocks would be thrown again. According to Dr. Goh Kiah Mok, this method is still practiced in Taoist temples in Singapore, China, Taiwan, and Vietnam.



Jiao Bei, representing the ying-yang, are used for divination. [Credit:] Jiao Bei, (moon blocks) (1900.43.0031A). Late Qing Dynasty, 1644-1911, China, wood, 13.5cm x 4.4cm, Found in Collection.

Utharina, Ritual Spoon

As we discovered from Sri Navuluri, an object we thought was maybe used as a candle snuffer, turns out to be an *utharina/udharina*, a spoon used in Hindu worship (during a puja/pooja ceremony) for ritual offerings of water and cleansing. The *utharina* is used with *panchapatra*, a vessel or set of vessels.



An **Utharina** is a spoon used in a Hindi ceremony, or puja. [Credit:] Utharina/Udharina (1944.03.0108), circa 1920, India, brass, 15.8 x 2.8cm, Gift of Mrs. J. J. Parry.

A “**scrimshaw**” is a piece of engraving or carving done on bone or ivory. [Credit:] Scrimshaw Carving (1977.01.0272), Chukchi, circa 1971, walrus tusk, 43.6 x 6.1cm, Avery Brundage Collection.



Chukchi Scrimshaw

This scrimshaw had mysterious origins, but we have since learned from Dr. Stuart Frank that it was probably made by the Chukchi, an Indigenous people of the Chukotka Peninsula, in far Northeastern Siberia. According to Dr. Frank, the style of the carving, the colors used, and the way it was manufactured — using a bow-drill — are consistent with Chukchi work. Similar pieces were marketed in Moscow in the 1960s and 1970s, dates that are consistent with when this scrimshaw was collected.

Agricultural Exposition Medal, Egypt

Didier Frenkel recalled how his grandfather kept a medal from Egypt’s Agricultural Exposition of 1936, similar to this medal in the Museum’s collection. Frenkel’s famous grandfather, Hershel, was a Jewish filmmaker who had come to Cairo, then the Middle East’s film capital, from Russia, escaping persecution. In Cairo, he and his two brothers started their own cartoon studio. Their cartoon hero, Mish-Mish Effendi, as seen in their 1936 film *Mafish Fayda*, (translated as “It’s Useless”) was inspired by Walt Disney’s Mickey Mouse, and became instantly famous throughout Egypt and the Arab world. The medal was awarded to the family for this early and stunning achievement in film, and the Frenkels would go on to make many more films, both in Egypt and France.

A high-honor medal given at Egypt’s National Agricultural Exposition, of 1936. [Credit:] Agricultural Exposition Medal (1971.15.3548), 1936, Egypt, metal, 5.572 x .33cm, The Seymour and Muriel Yale Collection of Coins of the Ottoman Empire and Other Middle East States.



Director Sutton Teaches New Class on Historic Monuments

Director Elizabeth Sutton, PhD, taught a new class in Spring 2020 for Classical Civilization 120 called **Building Up and Tearing Down: Monuments in Cross-Cultural Perspective**. During the course students were exposed to a survey of monuments from antiquity to the present. According to Sutton, the course “examined the life histories of public works, including construction, restoration, preservation, repurposing, and destruction in distinct cultural contexts.”

The class learned about both Western and Nonwestern monuments and in addition met with heritage professionals and source community members in the process, learning about “politics and power structures involved in determining what and who is remembered.”

For one of the early assignments, students were asked to analyze a statue or replica statue at the Spurlock Museum, considering how the piece might have been perceived and regarded in its own time and in its original cultural milieu and comparing that with how the statue might be considered using the standards of today.

Plaster Cast of East Parthenon Frieze Panel — a Marshal. (1911.03.0033) 107.8 x 52.1 x 6cm. Classical Museum Purchase.



ORAL HISTORIES SHED LIGHT ON

Black Culture & Blues Dancing at UIUC

By *Katya Reno*

As part of our temporary exhibit, *Blues Dancing and Its African American Roots*, we interviewed alumni from UIUC and people connected with the C-U community to learn more about the social dancing they experienced in the late 1960s through the early 1990s. Here, we introduce you to four of them. You can discover more stories and experience their audio or video recordings by visiting our website, spurlock.illinois.edu/exhibits/online/blues-oral-history.

Turntable photo credit:
Randall R. Stuken, the *illio* yearbook 1983.
libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/OCA/Books2012-12/illio/illio198390univ/illio198390univ.pdf

Larry Lawrence on Activism and Sharing Social Dances from Across the Country



Larry Lawrence was born in East St. Louis, Illinois. He studied at UIUC, and in 1972, earned his bachelor's in Political Science. Lawrence came to campus as part of a program called Project 500, which was designed by the University to bring underserved students to campus. Project 500's official name was The Special Educational Opportunities Program (SEOP). It had a fraught history, especially in its first year, when the University had over half of the 565 students brought in through the program arrested and held in a makeshift jail at Memorial Stadium. The students had been protesting treatment by the University and were arrested for occupying Illini Student Lounges.

Lawrence remembers that Project 500 recruited Black students from all over the country: Philadelphia, New York, Puerto Rico, and more. But most of the students, he says, came from Central Illinois and East St. Louis. Encountering Black students from all over the country, created a rich space for sharing dance cultures. "You learned different dances and different styles," he says. "I especially remember the 'Philly.' It was a Slow Dance, really, but they called it the 'Philly Drag.' The gals from Chicago did what they call the 'One Step.' In East St. Louis, we slow-danced, but we did the 'Two Step.'" Lawrence remembers how this could create challenges when you were out at a social dance. "If you are out at a dance and you asked the young lady to dance, you had to determine whether she's from Central Illinois or from Chicago, because then you have to know which way to go!"

As a student at the University in 1968, Lawrence remembers a tumultuous time. Most of the dances he went to, he says, were populated by African American students. "You have to look at

the time period," he says. "In '68, you know, you just had the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War — there was not a lot of socializing going on among Blacks and whites. There was very little outside of the protests we did. We did work together during the protests, especially the Vietnam War Protests." Lawrence remembers that students would protest behind the Student Union. He also remembers that activists had created an "underground network," which helped students who got drafted escape to Canada.



Stan West on the Political Nature of the Blues

Stan West is an author, journalist, and oral historian, who came to UIUC from Chicago. He earned his Journalism degree in 1973. West also came to UIUC in what he calls "the second wave of the Project 500." West says when he

was first exposed to Chicago Blues music, he liked the music, but not the lyrics, which he thought were "rather depressing and apolitical." He says that later he came to realize that "Blues was *very* political." For instance, he says, "Muddy Waters's famous song, 'I'm a Man,' was not just swaggering braggadocio — but he was talking about how white guys in the South referred to grown African American males as 'boy.' That was his declaration. That was a political statement." West says that many of the early Blues artists were not only singing about racism, they were also singing about feminism. He points out that many of these artists were women, who were "decrying sexual harassment and were talking about sexual freedom on lots of levels."





Left: First two covers of **irepodun**, the first African American yearbook to be published at the University of Illinois (1972 and 1973), by the Black Students Association. Above: Pages 86-87 from **irepodun**, 1973 edition. Both from Project 500, project500omeka.net/items/show/49



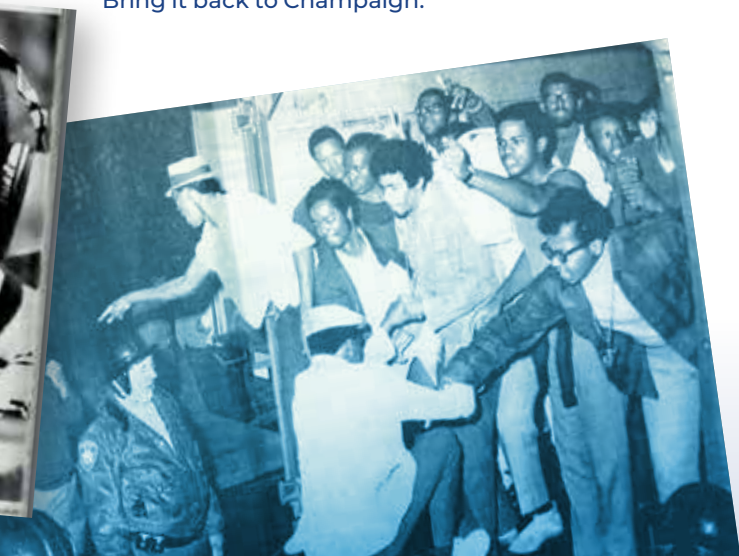
Victoria Bostic on Bringing East Coast Dance Styles to Champaign

Victoria Bostic grew up in Philadelphia, where she was part of a musical family. In 1972, she earned her bachelor's in Social Welfare. She describes how even as a kid, dances were shared

across groups and state lines. "The music kind of dictated the dancing. So, I wouldn't even know who invented the dance. It was like, 'this is the new dance.' ... One of my girlfriends had family in another part of the country, and she would come home [and say], 'Oh, this is how you do the ...' And we all learned the dance on my block — on my street — we'd get in the middle of the street or on the sidewalk, put the music on, and dance!"

Bostic remembers how the cultural mix on campus created a rich dance scene, filled with different dances and different riffs on familiar dances. "The dancing was different for us from the East Coast," she says. "Because, you know, we were mixed in with people from the Midwest. We were saying, 'What the heck are these people doing?' Because they didn't dance like us. They had this dance in Chicago called 'The Walk.' They would start off as partners, and then they would separate. And one person will go over here, and the other person will go over there, and then they would come back together. And we were like, 'Really?! Is that it? Oh no, uh-uh.'" She laughs, remembering this culture clash. She and other students from the East Coast enjoyed learning new dances back home and bringing them back to campus:

"When we would go home to visit, we'd go, 'What are they doing? Okay, let's get that. Bring it back to Champaign.'"



Lisa Vernon on the African American Cultural Center

Born in 1968 in Harvey, a suburb of Chicago, Lisa Vernon received her bachelor's degree in Social Work from UIUC, in 1999. While a student at UIUC, she also danced with the Omnimove Dancers. She became a

social worker at Centennial High School in Champaign and created a dance program for low-income children through her Protégé Dance Conservatory. At Protégé, she taught jazz, hip-hop, African, ballet, modern, lyrical, and praise/spiritual dance styles.

In her interview, Vernon talked about the UIUC radio station WBML — Where Black Music Lives and the role of the African American Cultural Center (now the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center), which served as a haven and a second home to her, and other students, through her schoolwork between the late 80s and early 90s. There were not many African American students on campus, so Vernon says the Cultural Center was a very important place where you could find community:

"The African American Cultural Program was a place where you could kick off your shoes, where you could receive tutoring, where you could receive resources, where you could go and cry, where you could go get support, where you could go take a nap."

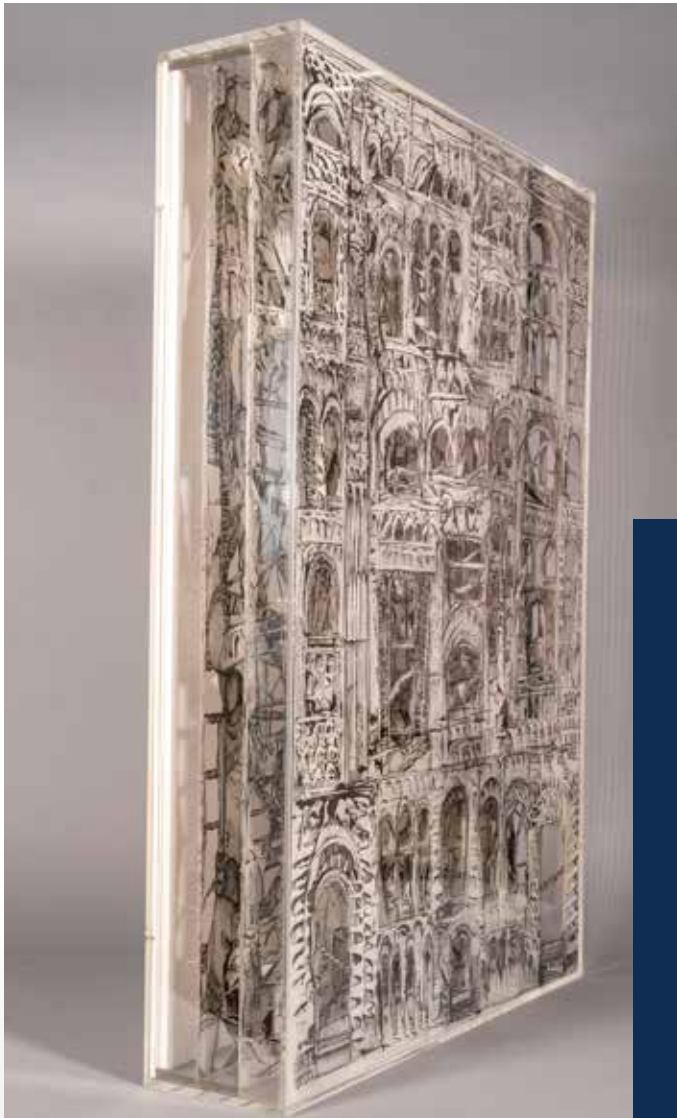
Vernon says that despite the fact that the University underfunded the Cultural Center — "where the floor squeaked, where the lights were dim... kids were sleeping on old dilapidated furniture" — it was a place rich with character and meaning. Barbecues happened on the back porch, you could get groceries and amenities there. And "meetings for fairness and equality were planned there." She points out that "In that time, in that space, it was a safe haven for black and brown people."

Left: Disc jockey, **Lamont Young**, at the WBML studios in 1983. Photo credit: Randall R. Stuken. From the **Illio** yearbook 1983. University of Illinois Digital Library, libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/OCA/Books2012-12/illio/illio198390univ/illio198390univ.pdf

Right: African American students from **Project 500** protesting their living conditions on campus. From project500.omeka.net/exhibits

NEW ACQUISITIONS

By Dery Martínez



The past year has been very busy in Registration. We have been able to finalize several important acquisitions that were put on hold while the museum was closed due to the pandemic. Below are just some of the new artifacts that are now part of our permanent collection. These include a purchase, bequests, and donations.

Kevork Mourad's *A World Through Windows*

Artists have long memorialized important historical figures, places, and events. The year 2020 was one of these pivotal times, as plans and projects were upended across the globe as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The artist Kevork Mourad was scheduled to visit the University during the Spring 2020 semester and participate in various programs across campus, including creating an artwork onsite at the Spurlock. However, when these plans and programs had to be canceled, a new project was born, and Spurlock commissioned an original work by Mourad in response to the pandemic. The result, *A World Through Windows*, is a multilayered work that uses monotype and ink drawing between plexiglass. The piece explores some of the feelings and emotions felt as much of the world went into extended periods of isolation.

According to Mourad, "In the piece, each window opens onto the world of a household, each household isolated from the next... [W]ith Covid-19, every home has become a sealed entity. Only for a viewer stepping back and looking at the whole of the building is it possible to get a sense of community — community being the sharing of happiness and suffering, the sense of the communality of the emotions and experiences that make us human."

Mourad worked on *A World Through Windows* in his Brooklyn studio during the early months of the pandemic.



2020.05.0001.
Kevork Mourad, *A World Through Windows*. 2020.
83cm x 60cm x 13.5cm.
Plexiglass, Linen, Acrylic.

Billy Morrow Jackson Lithographs

We received a set of eight lithographic prints created by Billy Morrow Jackson. Jackson, a graduate of the University of Illinois who taught in the school of Fine and Applied Arts for more than 30 years, is best known for rural landscapes, farmhouses, and portraits of friends and family. However, in the mid-1960s, he created a series of prints to support the civil rights movement. The prints were specifically in response to the 1963 Birmingham, Alabama, church bombing and the 1964 killing of civil rights workers in Mississippi.

Each print is imbued with symbolism and depicts some of the major protagonists, settings, and events related to the movement; others scathingly satirized some of those who stood in opposition. Jackson created the prints to raise proceeds for the civil rights movement, and this set was donated by Jackson's widow, Siti Mariah Mansoor-Jackson.



Left: 2020.03.0001. Billy Morrow Jackson, **The Tattooed Man**. 1965. Lithograph With Color Overlay. 74cm x 56cm. Gift of Siti Mariah Mansoor-Jackson.

Detail below left: 2020.03.0006. Billy Morrow Jackson, **X's Diary**. 1960s. Lithograph With Color Overlay. 73cm x 57cm. Gift of Siti Mariah Mansoor-Jackson.

Detail below: 2020.03.0008. Billy Morrow Jackson, **Stars and Bars**. 1965. Lithograph With Color Overlay. 74cm x 56cm. Gift of Siti Mariah Mansoor-Jackson.



Fred Freund Collection

For more than twenty years, Spurlock has received an annual donation of Japanese and Chinese wood carvings from Fred Freund. Freund passed away in February, 2020, and bequeathed his remaining collection to the Museum. In the fall of 2020, we received 429 objects, including the piece that started his collection, a wood carving of a boy sitting on a water buffalo. This piece was a fixture on Freund's mantel for decades.

Other artifacts include striking figural carvings representing gods, intellectuals, and animals (both real and mythological); people partaking in day-to-day activities; exquisitely carved flowers; and pastoral scenes and landscapes. Along with the carved pieces came brushes and brush pots, pens, tobacco and opium pipes, incense containers, a book stand, and scroll weights.



Above: 2020.06.0001. (Artist Unknown) **Carving of a Fish with Two Crabs and Crayfish.** (Date Unknown). 23cm x 22cm x 8.5cm. Wood. Fred Freund Collection.

Top right: 2020.06.0009. (Artist Unknown) **Carved Scene in Box.** (Date Unknown). 42.7cm 21.5cm x 8.2cm. Wood. Fred Freund Collection.



Above: 2020.06.0072. (Artist Unknown) **Foldable Bookstand.** (Date Unknown). 29.5cm x 13cm x 9cm. Wood. Fred Freund Collection.

Middle: 2020.06.0102, 2020.06.0103, and 2020.06.0104. (Artist Unknown) **See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil.** (Date Unknown). Each Figure 9cm x 7.3cm x 6cm. Wood. Fred Freund Collection.

Above right: 2020.06.0086. (Artist Unknown) **Carving of a Male.** (Date Unknown). 13cm x 5.8cm x 2.5cm. Wood. Fred Freund Collection.

Right: 2020.06.0007AB. (Artist Unknown) **Boy Sitting on a Water Buffalo.** (Date Unknown). 34.5cm x 18.7cm x 18.2cm. Wood. Fred Freund Collection.





Left: 2020.04.0004. Serafín Marsal, Clay Figurine: **Iva Vendehá (Woman with Fruit Basket on Her Head)**. Mid-20th Century. 21.7cm x 8.9cm x 7.7cm. Courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. Jean F. Rogier.



Middle: 2020.04.0006. Serafín Marsal, Clay Figurine: **Ycuape (Woman with Clay Pot on Her Head)**. Mid-20th Century. 22.2cm x 7.5cm x 5.9cm. Courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. Jean F. Rogier.



Below: 2020.04.0011. Serafín Marsal, Clay Figurine: **Caahí Jhá Ñeengatú (Three Women Sitting/Visiting)**. Mid-20th Century. 22.5cm x 14.5cm x 8.9cm. Courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. Jean F. Rogier.



Above: 2020.04.0010. Serafín Marsal, Clay Figurine: **Recocagüi (Woman on a Donkey)**. Mid-20th Century. 20.2cm x 17.4cm x 11.3cm. Courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. Jean F. Rogier.



Right: 2020.04.0007A, 2020.04.0007B, 2020.04.0007C. Serafín Marsal, Clay Figurine: **Loritero (Man with Parrots)**. Mid-20th Century. 19.6cm x 9.4cm x 6.6cm, 7.8cm x 3.4cm x 3.5cm, 7.5cm x 3.4cm x 3.4cm. Courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. Jean F. Rogier.



Serafín Marsal Figurines

We received eleven clay figurines from Paraguay, made by Serafín Marsal. These figurines were donated by Suzanne Lowers, whose parents, Dr. and Mrs. Jean F. Rogier, purchased them from Marsal's studio sometime between 1945 and 1950, while they lived in the capital Asunción. Born in Spain, Marsal moved to Paraguay in 1907, where he became well known for figurines that depict Paraguayans in their day-to-day life.

The figurines represent people and activities that one might find in an Asunción market in the mid-twentieth century. Each figure was created using a mold and then finished by hand, which makes each of the more than 50,000 figurines Marsal created unique. The figurines are signed by the artist and titled in both Spanish and the Indigenous language Guaraní, the second official language of Paraguay. Marsal's work can be found in private collections and museums throughout Latin America, Europe, and Asia.

Right: Melissa Sotelo, collections and exhibitions coordinator. The 2019-2020 exhibition, *In Her Closet: How to Make a Drag Queen*, is one of many exhibits designed by Melissa during her 14 years working at the Spurlock Museum.



MEET MELISSA!

Our Collections & Exhibitions Coordinator

By Katya Reno

Melissa Sotelo, our collections and exhibitions coordinator, was awarded the prestigious Forty Under 40 Award last year, by *The News-Gazette's Central Illinois Business* magazine. Winners were nominated by peers and selected by a panel of judges based on achievements, experiences, innovations, leadership, and community involvement. Melissa has designed and crafted many exhibits during her fourteen years at the Spurlock, including her all-time favorite, *In Her Closet: How to Make a Drag Queen* (9/2019-8/2020).

To further honor Melissa, we wanted to sit down and chat about her journey at the Spurlock. What follows is a portion of our conversation.



So you came to the University of Illinois from the western suburbs of Chicago. What did you study while you were here?

Industrial design. I wanted to be a toy designer. My dad worked at a company that created designs for McDonald's Happy Meal toys. I was able to shadow somebody at his job. And I really enjoyed the creativity behind the creations of toy-making. I thought it was interesting that you could create things in three dimensions on a computer, which is not something I'd seen before. This was in the earlier days of computers. So 3D things were a lot less common. They also picked the types of plastics that were going to be injection molded into creating these pieces. So not only were they creating the design, but they were creating the forms. I was inspired by that, and I thought that it would be a fun thing for me to do.

When I came to the University, I got a job here at the Spurlock. I lived very close, and I thought it would be an easy commute. The Spurlock was just blocks away. I also thought the job would be really interesting.

When I was hired, I worked as a Collections student, but I also worked for Education, creating traveling kits for a lot of Kim's [Kim Sheahan Sanford, assistant director of education] projects to do outreach for schools. I was blessed with an opportunity after I graduated to remain, so I did, and that was really nice.

Were there certain things that you learned while studying for your BA in Industrial Design that prepared you for work at the Spurlock?

I was hired because I was in the Industrial Design program. The beauty of Industrial Design is that it is very generalized. It can be applicable to many different fields. The strength of having industrial designers — and I've had many students since then who have been industrial designers — is that they have a lot of good hand skills. They can not only create the design, but they can build and have a finished product. For example, when we make kits for traveling materials to go to schools, we're able to custom create those kits, with mounts specifically designed for the object.

Believe it or not, a lot of people really don't have hand skills. I'm finding that over time, people have fewer and fewer hand skills, because everything is academic based. I've seen people

who struggle a lot to create with their hands. I've helped Christa [Christa Deacy-Quinn, collections manager] teach classes in which we make boxes, and I've had grad students crying, because they can't figure it out. They know that they could intellectually figure it out. But physically, they can't. It's different — that translation from the intellectual to the physical.

So, it's really wonderful to have students who come in already having hand skills. That's why I was hired because I had that background. In addition, I also had a textile-based background. So again, that's even harder to find nowadays, too. I struggle to find students who have those skills in terms of sewing. Creating loops and knots. It's incredibly handy. That's not something you would normally advertise for, like: "Hey, can you make knots?" It's actually the thing. It's actually an important skill.

Can you talk about who you felt mentored you and supported you in your early career?

Folks here at the museum, to be honest with you. One of the strongest, most supportive environments that I had while in school, was this job. That's the environment we hope to continue hosting for students. We are a safe place for a lot of students. When I was a student, I felt that the things I was bringing to the Museum were treated as special and important.

I felt that my skills were useful, and like what I was doing was important and good. That's why this was my safe place. Honestly, in some respects, I feel like I probably wouldn't have finished college without it — without people who really respected me as a human and who were concerned about me as a person. They were — they're wonderful. So yeah, that's an environment that we host for students here. Not everybody has an easy sail to college. So it's wonderful to be that catch net for those who are struggling. And there's so many different ways to struggle in college. But again, being a safe haven for people and making sure that they are valued as people first is really important. We've had many, many discussions with folks who benefited from this, not just me. That's what we do.

Can you describe what a typical day looks like?

I laugh because there is no typical day. That is one of the aspects that I enjoy very much. You come in, and you assume you're going to do a specific job, and you end up doing five other completely different ones that are suddenly a priority. But I think that's what makes us a flexible team. We know



coming in that we just have sort of an idea of what's going to happen today. But the likelihood is that that may not at all be the case — unless there are big hard deadlines coming up, that are inflexible. We generally end up doing a lot of flexible things.

Right. That makes sense. And what is it like putting up an exhibit?

So typically for an exhibit, we gather with the Exhibits Committee, and decide which exhibit we would like to host or create. Then, we are in meetings with the curator, and or curators, depending on if it's a community or individual. I am in charge of the design of the physical aspects of an exhibit. So, I assist with whether or not something that they have in mind is possible. In terms of scale, size, motion. A lot of people don't think about that stuff. They'll go, "Oh, yeah, let's put this enormous thing in the middle of the gallery. It'll be perfect." Well, really, how are we getting that into the building? That sort of thing. I do more of like the physical logistics of the design aspect.

Then after the curators come up with a storyline that they would like to present to the public, I create the physical aspects of how to tell that story. And I make sure everything is ADA compliant. Beth [Beth Watkins, education and publications coordinator] designs and helps write the story and gives graphics to complement that story, and to complement the objects that are in there.

Come exhibit installation time, we will build maps for the objects that are going to go up. That's where the students help me out. We've got a wonderful Collections team that helps me create the mounts for and install the objects and set up all the labels as soon as those come in — and then we've got an exhibit!

So tell me about what it's like to take a storyline, this sort of abstract thing and make it into something that's physical. What's that process like for you?

We've always told stories through objects. So I find it easy. I think maybe it's a matter of practice. But it's much easier to dissect a story, noting what objects are related to those parts of the story, and then place them throughout the room in a way that makes physical sense for the people to walk through and experience that story. It's often really straightforward. It's not as abstract as it sounds.

We utilize a lot of tricks to get people to move different places. There's a little psychology involved as well. We put very large pieces in the back of the room to attract people into the space. Anything with moving objects are also very attractive to people. I can tease them into moving from one place to another, utilizing a lot of these tools to make them curious about a space and kind of navigate a space in a specific direction.

Now, this is also utilized in other fields of work: retail uses this very, very well. They often put their clearance materials at the back of the store so you have to go past the new products.

When you're done with an exhibit, how do you know that you've succeeded?

There are many different methods of determining success. For some, it's the numbers — keeping track of how many people go through the space and how many people utilize the exhibit in a specific way. For some, it's impact: so discussions with folks after they move through a space. They sometimes leave us notes about how they experienced the space — where there was a positive or negative experience, whether they've got it, whether it was thought-provoking, whether they were offended.

Personally, variety is what I'm going for, and making sure that a lot of different voices are highlighted. So that every time we switch over the exhibit, it will be something very different, with different people elevated. That's how I consider it a success.

That we get to host more voices. We're all working toward that in different ways. We're trying some multimedia methodologies, and we're collecting oral histories. That's actually better because we are now able to showcase those online, as well. So that we are sharing in more platforms than just the physical. The drag exhibit was amazing [*In Her Closet: How to Make a Drag Queen*] in that we were able to have personal histories, and written histories as well, on the walls. That was impactful — to have people's individual words up. I would have loved to have more audio, if possible. But again, we're moving more toward that — toward that way of people's voices being highlighted and elevated, and their stories told.

Can you explain why you feel oral histories are so important?

Personally, because I come from a Latinx background, oral histories are really important. That's the way we communicate most in our culture, in our family. I really gravitate toward the oral word. Toward peoples' voices, toward the inflections and the cadence of their speech. More so than the written word, where I can alter how it sounds in my head, and so it might not be getting the message that the speaker would have wanted. So I feel that it's less vague if someone tells me their story, in their own words, with their own voice.

Sometimes we're really blessed to meet folks that really change our perspective on history, our perspective on life and on culture, our experience of our lived existence, generally. We all live, we all may live in the same place in time, but we all experience it differently. And it's very, very important to hear other people's stories to understand where they're coming from. If they're willing to share it, of course.

Thanks so much to Melissa, for sharing a little of yours.



“Melissa is humble and content to stay in the background and let others occupy the spotlight. But don’t let this fool you. She is intelligent, incredibly creative, generous, and courageous. Occupying a ‘behind the scenes’ position at the Museum allows Melissa the latitude to **mentor, improve accessibility, bring more color and life into our space,** and help the Museum highlight and amplify community voices. She fights for what she believes in and works daily to create lasting, positive change both at the Spurlock and in the museum field.”
 — Director Elizabeth Sutton



*Exhibit In Her Closet:
 How to Make a Drag Queen
 (9/2019-8/2020).*



SPURLOCK HOSTS FIRST iSCHOOL CLASS

In New Collaboration and Community Gallery

By Gavin Robinson

After months of planning, Spurlock Museum’s collections manager, Christa Deacy-Quinn, and assistant collections manager, John Holton, launched their first museum preservation class at the University of Illinois School of Information Science (also known as iSchool at Illinois). The course, titled Preservation of Museum Artifacts (IS573 PMA) was one of only a few in-person classes offered by the iSchool during spring semester of 2021. Preservation of Museum Artifacts takes a practical, hands-on approach to teaching the management and preservation of museum collections. This was the first time an iSchool course was taught inside the Spurlock Museum, and it served as an excellent opportunity to try out the Museum’s new Collaboration and Community Gallery (CCG) space.

Before class planning even began, staff at the Museum realized that we needed a dedicated space to assist UIUC professors with University classes ranging in size up to thirty students (this was pre-COVID, of course). So, Director Elizabeth Sutton along with Deacy-Quinn and Museum staff decided to create a new space by carving out and repurposing some of our existing exhibit space. Collections staff redesigned the European Gallery and designated space for a new Collaboration and Community Gallery. This gallery space would be used as a multipurpose room, where activities, like community gatherings, workshops, University classes, and pop-up exhibits, could be held. Consisting of approximately 1700 square feet of open space, with high ceilings, the gallery was a perfect location in which to host Deacy-Quinn and Holton’s class — and it would be a great test run of the CCG’s capabilities.

With the onset of COVID-19, efforts were made to space work stations 6 feet apart, create contact-tracing sign-in sheets, designate each student their own tool kit to avoid sharing, and assign daily disinfecting routines. Students were separated into three color-coded lab groups, so that during hands-on lab activities, the students would work in the same cohort of five. By day one of spring semester, all precautions were in place and Preservation of Museum Artifacts was ready for launch. With the inaugural semester of Preservation of Museum Artifacts a roaring success, we’re excited to be hosting this class once again this year in the CCG.



Top left: Collections Manager Christa Deacy-Quinn instructs students on environmental monitoring on the first day of class.

Top right: Gavin Robinson, collections storage coordinator, helps a student identify insects caught in a sticky trap during the Integrated Pest Management lab activity.

Above: Students practice inspecting artifacts for insect damage.



Since this pilot project, the Museum has been using the CCG for all kinds of activities, like our **Spurlock Sundays craft events, University classes, our Contemporary Conversations seminar discussions, and even our very first poetry reading** with the C-U Poetry Group (in coordination with the Arts Festival, Pygmalion).

The CCG is sure to offer up even more opportunities for community engagement as COVID-19 restrictions loosen, and we look forward to finding new and exciting ways to use the space. We hope to see you there sometime soon!



Above: Students practice techniques for handling artifacts safely at their individual workstations.

Middle: Collections Manager Christa Deacy-Quinn and Collections Storage Coordinator Gavin Robinson are assisted by University of Illinois Facilities and Services Iron Workers in moving European Gallery casework in preparation for the new Collaboration and Community Gallery.

Bottom: Christa Deacy-Quinn, collections manager, teaches students about pest-excluding devices during the Integrated Pest Management lab activity.





Behind: In the **Big History Money** program, students examined the people celebrated on bank notes from around the world.

Right: This slide from the Big History Money program compares bank notes with **watermarks**. Attached to each image is an audio file that describes and identifies the artifact.

EDUCATION IS 'Zooming' Around the Community

By Kim Sanford

The doors closed. In-person visits ended. Our auditorium went silent. And the question loomed large: “How will our teaching translate through a computer screen?” We are pleased to say that the answer is “It still works pretty well.” With the help of Zoom, Facebook, and Google Classroom, we are continuing to keep in touch with students and families in Central Illinois and beyond. We are also collaborating with individuals and groups, both familiar and new.

A lot of our COVID-era contact with the community started and continues through social media. Early in the pandemic shut-down, staff members shared their favorite museums, posted discussion prompts based on artifacts, and shared links to engaging activities. Performers who had been scheduled for our Spring WorldFest event were hired instead to videotape performances we could offer online. Since April 2020, I have shared over 150 unique stories in weekly live storytelling sessions (Lunchtime Live Storytelling). Now that the Museum is open again, we are using social media to spread the word about new gallery activities, and Spurlock Sundays, a monthly craft event.

Collaborations have both strengthened old ties and opened us up to new audiences. Our second Sunday afternoon program with the UIUC Russian, Eastern European and Eurasian Center’s Stephanie Porter featured Women’s Day Celebrations in Eastern Europe. Participants had a great time during the Zoom program, then came in for goodie bags containing craft materials and Russian candies to enjoy at home. Our work continues with other members of the Champaign County Museums Network. The Museum of the Grand Prairie was a

major contributor to Crafts, Folklores, and More, a series of programs coordinated with community member Kuldeepa Vartak-Mehta and hosted by the Spurlock. All member museums contributed to the Virtual Visit Challenge, where people who couldn’t come into COVID-closed museums were able to keep learning about area museums by visiting their websites, Facebook pages, and YouTube channels to answer trivia questions. The winner of the grand prize was a UIUC student who was learning remotely — from California! She was thrilled to have a way to stay involved with Central Illinois and to hear she would receive a big box of prizes in the mail.

We’re very pleased to say that our outreach work also continues with area schools. Our website promotes Zoom versions of some of our favorite programs. An asynchronous version of one of our most popular tours is offered in Google Classroom, allowing teachers to adjust the activities to fit their schedules. One of the best things about teaching through Zoom with Google Classroom involves the amount of content we can share. When we did the programs in the classroom, our contact was limited to what could be shared in a forty-five-minute period. One or two activities were completed, with maybe a third one introduced and finished by the teacher the next day. Working virtually, we only have a twenty-five- or thirty-minute period, but the programs have been divided into anywhere from four to eight activities. One or two activities are done in the classroom, but all others are available for teachers to assign as homework, or to do in the classroom on their own over the course of the unit. Teachers appreciate having the option of assigning content-rich assignments that are not coming directly from a textbook.

We are grateful to all of those who have made these programs possible. We are especially grateful for the UIUC’s Title VI Centers (the Center for Global Studies, the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies, the European Union Center, and the Russian East European and Eurasian Center) and UIUC’s College of Education for their continued support of our Big History program.

Ukrainian Vase: During the International Women’s Day program, a discussion of possible gifts included ones like this Ukrainian vase from the Artifact Collection.





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