

THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION



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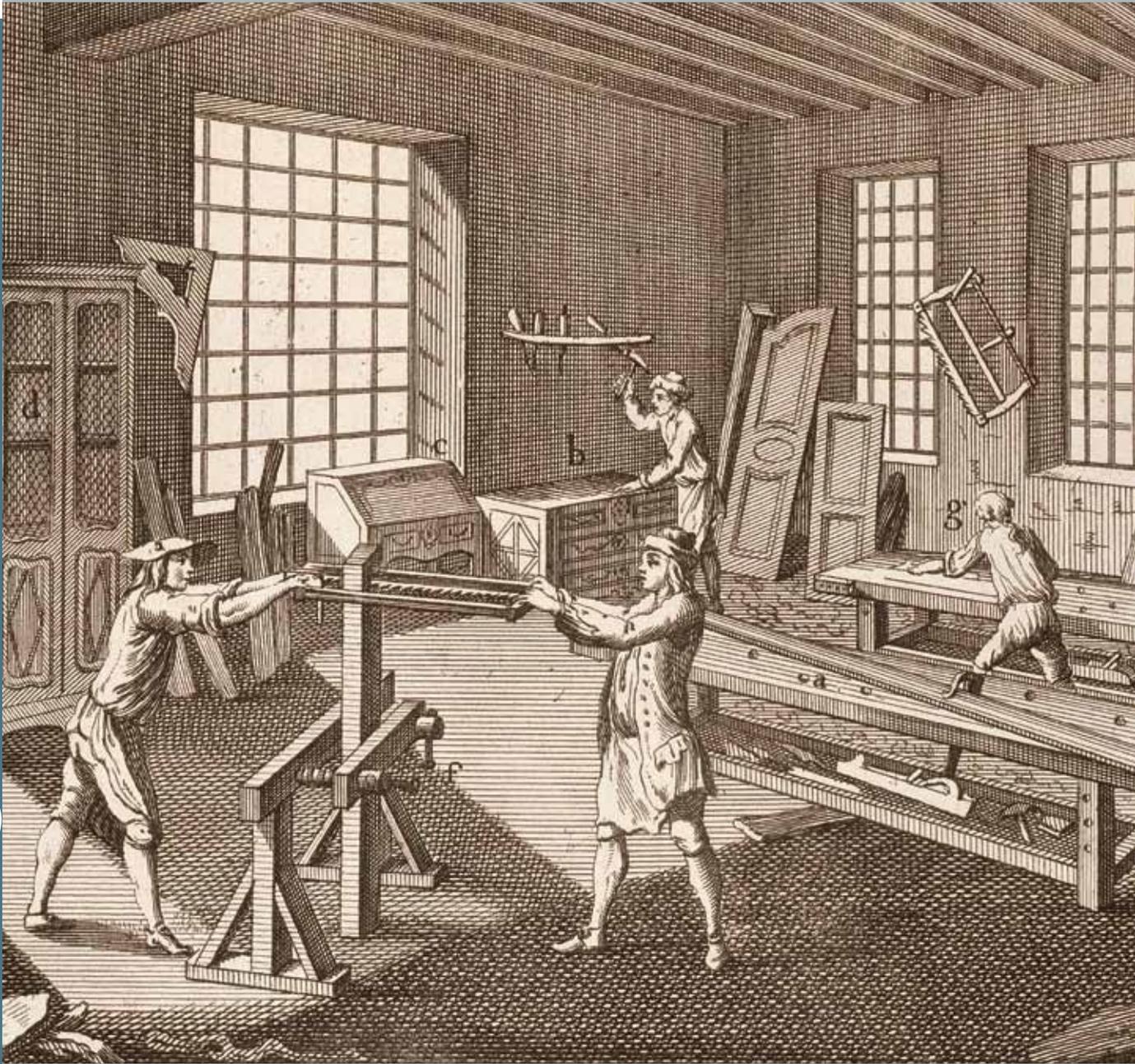


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THE QUARTERLY



FURNISHING LOUISIANA: 1735–1835

A Curator's Perspective: From Page Proofs to Gallery Plans with Editor Sarah Doerries

*On February 24, 2012, The Historic New Orleans Collection launches a major loan exhibition, *Furnishing Louisiana: 1735–1835*, a companion to the award-winning 2010 book by Jack D. Holden, H. Parrott Bacot, and Cybèle T. Gontar, edited by Jessica Dorman and Sarah R. Doerries, and with contributions by Brian J. Costello and Francis J. Puig, photography by Jim Zietz, and design by Tana Coman. The exhibition will be on view through June 17, 2012. Join us for an opening reception on Thursday, March 8, and for affiliated programs throughout the spring.*

Although I work at a history museum, my academic training is in literature, my personal practice in poetry. My lack of formal training in history preserves a sense of wonder as I encounter early Louisiana in the pages of the books I edit. My discoveries seem to me no less exciting than those of the first European colonists, who were surely astonished by what they found when they crossed the Atlantic.

I was fortunate to have a great-grandmother who lived into her late 90s; she died when I was just shy of 20. When she told me stories of her childhood, I found it difficult to conceive of the distance she had traveled in her life. Here she was in her air-conditioned TV room, her programs playing in the background, my mother on the telephone. How startling it was for me to imagine this contemporary woman in a corset, high-necked blouse, and long skirt in the heat of turn-of-the-century New Orleans; to picture the multitude of streetcar lines weaving their way throughout the city; to hear the tinkers' mules pulling their carts down the brick street outside her childhood home.

One must think much further back than that to envision the world encountered by the cabinetmakers whose work is featured in *Furnishing Louisiana*, a companion to The Collection's award-winning 2010 publication of the same name. The earliest craftsmen to settle the region under consideration—stretching from the Caribbean to New Orleans, up the Mississippi River valley and into French Canada—found themselves surrounded by marshlands, expansive prairies, and virgin forests; by natural resources abundant but unfamiliar. They had to adapt quickly—in their personal habits, their industry, their foodways, and their designs.

As any anthropologist will tell you, everyday household objects can say more about a culture than great works can. I picture an early colonial family in a small French-style house, settled in for the evening, their few possessions casting shadows in lamplight. The man of the house might be carving the legs to a slat-back chair; his wife might be weaving rush to form its seat. There is no doubt that many of the earliest settlers were furniture makers not by trade but by necessity. They felled trees close



Above: Creole-style inlaid armoire, Butterfly Man group, 1810–1830, Collection of Marjorie and Wade Hollensworth; right: “Campeachy” chair, early 19th century, courtesy the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello; opposite page: heron inlay from Creole-style inlaid armoire, 1810–1830, private collection; “The Cabinetmakers” from Diderot’s Encyclopédie, courtesy Special Collections, LSU Libraries, Louisiana State University; Ursuline refectory table, 1734–1753, Robert Edward Judice, on loan to The Historic New Orleans Collection.



Furnishing Louisiana: 1735–1835

On view in the Williams Gallery and History Galleries
533 Royal Street

February 24–June 17, 2012

Tuesday–Saturday
9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Sunday
10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Free and open to the public

ON VIEW

Opening Reception**Thursday, March 8, 2012**

6–8 p.m.

533 Royal Street

Free and open to the public

Lecture: Historic Finishes**Friday, April 20, 2012**

6–8 p.m.

Free; reservations recommended

Salt Lake City–based conservator Stephen Shepherd will discuss finishes used on historic furniture. He will appear in costume to demonstrate the wardrobe and techniques of a 19th-century craftsman.

Demonstration: Seat Treatments**Saturday, May 12, 2012**

9 a.m.–noon

Free; reservations recommended

New Orleanian Mary Cooper will demonstrate different techniques used in crafting the seating surfaces on some traditional Louisiana chairs—caning, corn shuck/rush, split oak, and cotton tape.

Site Visit: LSU Rural Life Museum**Saturday, May 19, 2012**

\$60 per person (round-trip bus departs New Orleans 8:30 a.m.); \$30 per person (drive yourself); reservations required

The LSU Rural Life Museum in Baton Rouge, with more than 30 historic buildings on site, is the perfect place to observe the technology and architecture associated with the production and use of early Louisiana furniture. Museum director David Floyd will address the group over a jambalaya lunch.

Workshop: Bench Making**Saturday, June 2, 2012**

9 a.m.–4 p.m.

\$130 (includes materials); limited to 12 participants; reservations required

Louisiana craftsman Greg Arceneaux leads participants through the steps involved in building their own small traditional bench.

To register for exhibition-related programming, call (504) 523-4662.



Creole-style armoire, 1800–1825 (2009.0027), gift of John Geiser III in memory of Marjorie Peirce Geiser and John Geiser Jr.

to home, shaped logs into boards, and carved, shaved, and turned the pieces into functional, multipurpose furniture—plank chests, for instance, that served not only for storage but also for seating.

These pieces were not merely functional; they were often beautiful. In them we see one of the fundamental qualities of being human: the urge to make art. An urge so strong, in fact, that these early settlers, in the face of their fears and discomforts, didn't just slap something together to be done with it but carved a raised lozenge on a simple chest, inlaid a monogram into a utilitarian armoire, added elegant turnings to the posts of a slat-back chair.

Of course, some early settlers were cabinetmakers by trade, and they carried with them to the New World traditions from their countries of origin, adjusting these traditions to suit the materials, needs, and tastes of their new homes. French and Spanish immigrants brought construction techniques and decorative elements from Europe, which are evident in the earliest Louisiana colonial pieces. A mass of immigrants from St. Domingue, fleeing the revolution there at the turn of the 19th century, introduced specialized techniques from that island (flush-panel armoire construction, for one) and a predilection for mahogany. Later, English and American immigrants worked with Anglo-style hardware, Federal styling, and patriotic decorations, such as bald-eagle inlay.



The Collection Develops Online Database of Louisiana Furniture

The Collection is developing an online database to accompany the 2010 publication *Furnishing Louisiana*. Serving as a digital extension of the book, the database will not only allow information to reach a larger audience but also provide more in-depth data, including supplementary images and research notes. Many of the supplemental images, which include detail views of the furniture, were not included in the book due to space constraints. Each image lends historical context and provides information about craftsmanship, adding to the ever-evolving scholarship on the early material culture of Louisiana.

The database will allow researchers to conduct side-by-side comparisons of objects with similar construction techniques or inlay patterns. A controlled vocabulary system will extract images that match the terminology provided by the user. Everyone from the casual antiques collector to the professional scholar will find The Collection's database a user-friendly and valuable resource. A pilot version of the database, featuring early Louisiana armoires, will be available for browsing in The Collection's Royal Street galleries as part of the *Furnishing Louisiana* exhibition.

—Elizabeth Ogden

As I've explored the history behind these objects, I've felt more and more familiar with the people who made them—and yet, in truth, we know very little about individual furniture makers from this early period. There was little tradition of artisans signing their work, and the few clues that remain (names or initials inscribed on the back or interior of a case piece, a cipher inlaid into an armoire) typically point to the identity of owners, not builders. Although we can seldom link discrete items to individual craftsmen, we can, using stylistic clues, trace patterns of provenance. The ubiquitous slat-back chair provides a perfect paradigm: groups of chairs made with particular woods, all sharing near-exact finials and turnings, have been found in various regions, suggesting the hand of a single turner or shop.

The most exceptional such discovery made in the course of researching *Furnishing Louisiana* is that of the Butterfly Man, so called because of the use of a signature double-dovetail, or "Dutchman's joint." One of his extraordinary armoires will be included in the exhibition. Three artisans who are known by name come from a long tradition of free colored cabinetmakers: Celestin Glapion *père*, Dutreuil Barjon Sr., and Dutreuil Barjon Jr. One of Glapion's handsome recessed-panel armoires, currently in The Collection's holdings, is showcased in the exhibition. The Barjons, who flourished in a period slightly postdating the exhibition's purview, were also part of



Furnishing Louisiana Honored

Furnishing Louisiana: Creole and Acadian Furniture, 1735–1835 was named Best in Show by the Southeastern Museum Conference and received a Gold Award in the Books and Catalogs category of the organization's publications competition. The book also received the Mary Ellen LoPresti Award for outstanding monograph of 2010, presented by the Southeast Chapter of the Art Libraries Society of North America. Competition included books from premier publishers and institutions across the southeast, including Duke University Press, Louisiana State University Press, the University of Georgia Press, Vanderbilt University Press, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, the Ringling College of Art and Design, Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center, and the Museo de Arte de Ponce.



another venerable tradition in Louisiana: a system of apprenticeship for skilled woodworkers. An example of an early apprenticeship contract, along with a searchable database of local craftsmen, is another exhibition feature.

Certainly nothing brings history to life like face-to-face contemplation of a cultural artifact. As an editor of *Furnishing Louisiana*, I spent nearly four years reviewing data for inclusion in the book. But no matter how often I read the measurements of a colonial armoire from the Judice Family Collection—93×51×19½ inches—I was unprepared for the manner in which the piece loomed over me when I first saw it. Ninety-three inches is nearly eight feet—that's almost a foot taller than Shaquille O'Neal, basketball fans. And at more than four feet wide, this armoire has girth as well as height. Among my first thoughts when facing the walnut behemoth was that I finally grasped the premise of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. I had no doubt that such a piece of furniture could contain an entire universe.

This is the experience we hope to share with visitors to *Furnishing Louisiana*. We encourage you to get up close and personal with early Louisiana furniture, some 50 pieces of which—from nearly two dozen collections, both public and private—have been carefully selected for display in The Collection's Royal Street galleries. Upstairs, furniture will be grouped according to stylistic and cultural influence. Tables will be arrayed to show the evolution of certain styles—how the exuberant hoofed *pied-de-biche* leg, for example, morphed into



the attenuate cabriole leg. Five armoires spanning a century of design will dominate another gallery. Still other galleries will showcase a variety of furnishings arranged as they might have been in typical period houses, most of which were simple, two-room affairs.

To allow a more tactile understanding of the craft—and because we understand that the urge to touch is hard to resist—the exhibition will feature an interactive component, curated by John H. Lawrence, in the downstairs galleries. Master craftsman David Broussard is providing samples of regional cabinet woods with various finishes, all of which can be handled by furniturephiles, while local artist Mary Cooper has prepared models of traditional seat treatments. From the workshop of Natchez-based conservator Steve Huber come examples of period joints, hardware, and inlay. Other sample construction elements are the work of THNOC's own master carpenter, Larry Falgoust. And Covington-based craftsman Greg Arceneaux is creating a few reproduction period chairs; although we may not be able to walk in our forebears' shoes, we can feel what it was like to sit in their chairs.

—*Sarah R. Doerries*

Below, left to right: Open armchair, 1780–1820, LSU Museum of Art, gift of Paula Garvey Manship, D. Benjamin Kleinpeter, Ken McKay, and Virginia Phillips (96.13.1); colonial saltire table, 1750–1790, Judice Family Collection; and cabriole-leg table, 1790–1820, The Sebastian Louis Kleinpeter Home.



The Virtual Gallery

“A little to the left—no, back . . . now to the right . . .”

Moving furniture around your own living room is not quite the same as moving priceless antiques around an exhibition space. In order to minimize the amount of on-site wrangling and rearranging, The Collection's preparators have generated a 3-D layout of the History Galleries utilizing Google SketchUp software. In the months leading up to the launch of *Furnishing Louisiana*, they populated this virtual layout with scale models of trundle beds, Campeche chairs, and *pied-de-biche* tables. Then, with the click of a mouse, they rotated an armoire here, constructed a viewing platform there—all in the service of designing an optimal gallery layout.

Head preparator Scott Ratterree noted that the free Google program is limited in its capabilities compared to other computer-aided design (or CAD) software. Yet the program has allowed him “to visualize and design exhibits beyond what I could only see and plan out in my head, before. It appears to be a significant improvement to the collaborative process that is exhibition design.” Ratterree added that “new prep staff members Robert Gates and Kara Brockman both have tech talents that enrich the department and, in turn, the future exhibitions at The Collection.”



13th Annual Bill Russell Lecture

*Reflections of Bechet,
A New Orleans Jazz Original:
The Man and the Music*

Historian Bruce Raeburn will moderate a program exploring the artistry, humanity, and legacy of creative genius Sidney Bechet. The evening will feature musical performances and commentary from members of the New Orleans Jazzman Band, with Jerry Embree (soprano saxophone), Frankie Lynne (banjo), Barry Martyn (drums), and Mark Brooks (bass).

Friday, April 13, 2012

6:30 p.m.

Williams Research Center
410 Chartres Street

Admission: \$10

*Presented in conjunction with the
French Quarter Festival*

Open to the public; seating is limited. Call (504) 523-4662 for reservations.

Culinary Symposium

*Creole Sweet: The Praline and
Its World*

Saturday, June 9, 2012

Williams Research Center
410 Chartres Street

5th Annual New Orleans Antiques Forum

Circa 1812

Thursday, August 2–

Sunday, August 5, 2012

Williams Research Center
410 Chartres Street



New Orleans: Proud to Call It Home

Exhibition Brings Royal Street Architecture to the Louisiana Children's Museum

WELCOME TO THE MERIEULT HOUSE proclaims the sign outside the newest exhibition at the Louisiana Children's Museum.

Rest assured, the actual Merieult House remains on Royal Street, where it has stood since its construction in 1792. But a miniature version has taken up residence in the Warehouse District. In collaboration with The Historic New Orleans Collection, the Children's Museum has expanded its kid-friendly survey of New Orleans architecture—*New Orleans: Proud to Call It Home*—to include The Collection's Royal Street complex. The exhibition, which opened in January 2012, is intended to teach children ages four through ten about 19th-century life in the French Quarter. Visitors stroll through a reproduction of the Merieult House carriage way into a courtyard, where they can hang wash, feed animals, and participate in other hands-on activities. Children can also role-play as shopkeepers inside a historic model of a general store.

THNOC docent educator Lori Boyer and young visitors (from left to right, Reilly Cullen, Desmond McFarlin-Walker, and Laurette Compass) make themselves at home in a historic, albeit miniature, French Quarter courtyard.

Six small-scale reproductions of other Collection buildings re-create the environment of a street in the French Quarter. Kids and parents alike have the chance to peek into the buildings to see images of the people who lived there—and to learn architectural terms in the process. Through its innovative use of social studies, technology, and urban-planning lessons, the exhibition introduces The Collection's resources and facilities to a new generation.

The Louisiana Children's Museum is located at 420 Julia Street. Admission is \$8.00. Museum hours are Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sundays, noon to 4:30 p.m. Check the Louisiana Children's Museum website at www.lcm.org for more information.

—Lori Boyer

FROM THE DIRECTOR

John Lawrence and I were pleased to travel to Worcester, Massachusetts, in early December for the opening of *In Search of Julien Hudson: Free Artist of Color in Pre-Civil War New Orleans*. The project was collaboratively developed and planned by the Worcester Art Museum (WAM) and The Historic New Orleans Collection. The exhibition opened here in January 2011—and those of you who visited our galleries or acquired the catalogue know that Julien Hudson is one of the first documented artists of African descent to have established a professional practice in the United States. After New Orleans, the exhibition traveled to the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, South Carolina, and then on to WAM for the December opening. WAM held a symposium featuring principal curator William Rudolph and catalogue contributor Patricia Brady addressing Hudson's place in art history and Hudson's life, respectively. In addition, speakers from the Massachusetts area discussed blended cultures of the Northeast.

During the exhibition's lifespan, two new works by free artists of color have been discovered and incorporated—a Parian porcelain sculpture titled *Uncle Tiff*, made in 1856 by Eugène Warburg, and a small portrait of a Creole woman signed "J Hudson 1835." The portrait expands the number of Hudson's known signed works to six.

The entire project was a wonderful example of the way in which the work we do here is part of something bigger: we plant the seeds, we expose people to art, to history, to ideas—and then these seeds grow in ways both expected and unexpected. A new Hudson! And new audiences, whether in South Carolina or Massachusetts, are learning something more about New Orleans and its extraordinary history.

Additional collaborations further extend our outreach. A new exhibition at the Louisiana Children's Museum, based on The Collection's historic French Quarter properties, is already captivating younger audiences. And a recent concert by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra—*Becoming American: The Musical Journey*—was the sixth in our series to highlight Louisiana's classical music history.

Thank you for your support in helping to make all of this cooperative programming possible!

—Priscilla Lawrence

ON LOAN



The exhibition *In Search of Julien Hudson*, which opened at The Historic New Orleans Collection in January 2011, is currently on view at the Worcester Art Museum, in Massachusetts, where it will remain through March 12, 2012. The exhibition previously traveled to the Gibbes Museum of Art, in Charleston, from July through October 2011. The first retrospective of Louisiana's earliest documented artist of color, the show has attracted national press coverage, with features in the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *The Magazine Antiques*, *Antiques and the Arts Weekly*, and other major publications.

Items from THNOC's permanent collection are regularly made available for exhibition at other accredited institutions, the better to educate audiences near and far about our region's heritage.

*

Alfred Waud's drawing *A Ray of Promise off W. Baton Rouge* (1865.90.47) is one of several items from The Collection included in *New Orleans Bound, 1812: The Steamboat That Changed America*, on view at the Cabildo through January 28, 2013. Organized by the Louisiana State Museum in partnership with the River Heritage Foundation, the exhibition commemorates the bicentennial of the arrival in the Crescent City of the aptly named *New Orleans*, the first steamboat to travel the Mississippi River.

A gelatin print of Clarence John Laughlin's 1941 photograph *The Apparition, Number Six. Time Phantasm. [Woodlawn Plantation]* (1981.247.1.915) is featured in *Robert W. Tebbs, Photographer to Architects: Louisiana Plantations in 1926*. Installed at the Presbytere of the Louisiana State Museum, the exhibition is open to the public through October 15, 2012.



Mount Vernon Estate, Museum and Gardens is showcasing *Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis' Housekeeping Book* (71-5-L.2) in an exhibition titled *Hoecakes and Hospitality: Cooking with Martha Washington*. Organized by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and on view through August 11, 2013, the show re-creates the environment enjoyed by guests of the Washington household. Nelly Custis, the granddaughter of Martha Washington, married George Washington's nephew Lawrence Lewis in 1799; her housekeeping book includes handwritten recipes, home remedies, and clippings illuminating contemporary domestic trends. Interested readers may purchase an annotated edition of the volume, edited by Patricia Brady, available at The Shop at The Collection.

DIANNE WOEST FELLOWSHIP IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

The Historic New Orleans Collection is proud to announce the recipients of the 2012–13 Dianne Woest Fellowship, supporting scholarly research on the history and culture of Louisiana and the Gulf South:

Jay D. Edwards

Professor of Geography and Anthropology
Louisiana State University
“A History of the Shotgun House in New Orleans”

Lo Faber

PhD candidate, History
Princeton University
“Building the Land of Dreams: The American Transformation of New Orleans, 1795–1820”

David Morrill Schlitt

PhD candidate, History
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
“Under the Dome: Enclosed Multi-Use Stadiums and the Metropolitan Landscape, 1965–2005”

Cameron B. Strang

PhD candidate, History
University of Texas at Austin
“Entangled Knowledge, Expanding Nation: Science and the United States Empire in the Southeast Borderlands”

The Historic New Collection gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Dianne Audrey Woest (1935–2003), a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana State University, former president of the New Orleans Council for International Visitors, and true friend of the arts. Through a planned giving arrangement, Woest designated The Collection as the beneficiary of her estate.

IN MEMORIAM



Fred W. Todd (1936–2011)

On November 12, 2011, we lost a friend: Tennessee Williams collector Fred W. Todd died in San Antonio.

I first met Todd ten years ago, when The Collection acquired his Tennessee Williams collection. We were packing up archival items for their shipment to New Orleans. The process took a long time; every item held a story that Todd wanted to share. As I wrapped up an old Signet paperback of *Baby Doll*, he told me it was the first Williams item he had acquired—purchased at a neighborhood drugstore in Nacogdoches, Texas, in 1956, when Todd was a student at Stephen F. Austin State University. He went on to talk about how important reading Williams was for him during the isolation of his service in the US Army, and he pointed out a few books that were acquired at a bookshop in Alaska, while he was stationed at Ft. Richardson. It was this love of books that led Todd to a career as a librarian, first at Stanford University and later as the director of the Aeromedical Library at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio. Some of the items in Todd's collection brought back memories of lifelong friendships formed with rare-book and manuscript dealers, who understood and shared his passion for Williams. Other items reminded him of pleasant research visits made by Williams scholars to his home in San Antonio.

Over the past 10 years, Todd played an active role in expanding The Collection's Williams holdings. In the process, he became a close friend. He will be deeply missed, but the Fred W. Todd Tennessee Williams Collection remains as a wonderful legacy—one that will enable researchers not only to study the life of this classic American playwright, but also to make a connection with Todd himself.

—Mark Cave

BECOME A MEMBER

Membership Benefits

All members of The Collection enjoy the following benefits for one full year:

- Complimentary admission to all permanent tours and rotating exhibitions
- Complimentary admission to the Concerts in the Courtyard series
- A 10 percent discount at The Shop at The Collection
- A subscription to *The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly*
- Special invitations to events, trips, receptions, and exhibition previews

New Benefits of Membership!

Responding to your requests and to the increase in program benefits, The Collection is offering new opportunities for membership. Beginning April 1, 2012, you may choose to join the Founder level as an individual or as a family.

Founder Individual Membership: \$35

for one person

Founder Family Membership: \$65

for one or two adults and any children under 18, all residing in a single household, or for one member and a guest

We value your association with our community. Should your Founder membership expire on or after April 1, 2012, you will have the opportunity to renew your membership at its current price level for one more year. To take advantage of this offer, your renewal must be received by Friday, March 30, 2012.

For questions related to membership, you may call (504) 598-7109.

How to Join

To become a member of The Historic New Orleans Collection, visit www.hnoc.org and click the Support Us link, or complete the form on the enclosed envelope and return it with your gift. Memberships at the Founder Family level and above include benefits for up to two adults and any children under 18 residing in a single household, or for one member and a guest.

Membership Levels

FOUNDER INDIVIDUAL \$35

FOUNDER FAMILY \$65

Full membership benefits

MERIEULT SOCIETY \$100

Full membership benefits plus:

- a special gift

MAHALIA SOCIETY \$250

Full membership benefits plus:

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)

JACKSON SOCIETY \$500

Full membership benefits plus:

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures

LAUSSAT SOCIETY \$1,000

Full membership benefits plus:

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala evening

BIENVILLE CIRCLE \$5,000

Full membership benefits plus:

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala evening
- lunch with the executive director

North American Reciprocal Museum Program

Members of the Merieult, Mahalia, Jackson, and Laussat Societies and the Bienville Circle receive reciprocal benefits at other leading museums throughout the United States through the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) program. These include free member admission, discounts on concert and lecture tickets, and discounts at the shops of participating museums. Visit sites.google.com/site/northamericanreciprocalmuseums for more information.

FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

Doug and Elaine Grundmeyer

New Orleans rightly boasts of its cultural riches. But it's the city's remarkable sense of intimacy—its ability to foster connections between people and place, past and present—that truly sets it apart.

For Doug and Elaine Grundmeyer, onetime high school sweethearts at Ben Franklin, the connections run deep. Both New Orleans natives—she grew up in Gentilly, while he was raised in Algiers—they treasure the city's vibrancy and resiliency. Happily settled now in the Garden District, they can map their family histories across the regional landscape. Elaine's father, Joseph Harold Toscano, a construction superintendent, helped to build the Superdome—while Doug's dad, Raymond, an entrepreneur, founded a chain of auto-supply stores on the West Bank. Doug's maternal grandparents and earlier Lanaux ancestors ran a citrus plantation in Plaquemines Parish.

A passion for culture pervades the Grundmeyer home. Doug, a board member of Southern Rep theater, brings a master's degree in literature and a flair for writing to his work as an appellate lawyer with Chaffe McCall LLP. Elaine, in turn, credits her love of the theatrical to her mother, Lillian Bennett. Indeed, a fascination with "movie stars and Hollywood" enticed her to California for college at UCLA and Berkeley. She and Doug settled on the West Coast early in their marriage, but they were soon drawn home by a desire to raise their daughter, Sarah, near her grandparents and extended family. Sarah later became a classical ballerina and international dancer.



Doug and Elaine Grundmeyer

The lure of family was one of the first things that brought Elaine to The Historic New Orleans Collection. She perused sacramental record indices and other genealogical resources to trace her family's roots back to Bordeaux, Nantes, and other locations in Europe. And she turned to the archives, again, in search of a more contemporary connection.

Like so many readers, Elaine had been charmed by John Kennedy Toole's classic, *A Confederacy of Dunces*—and struck by the familiarity of the novel's cast of eccentrics. But in Elaine's case, the familiarity was of a different degree. "I would read the stories, and I would say, these are like my family stories," she recalls. And then she learned that Thelma Toole, the author's mother, was a Ducoing by birth. "That's one of our family names," Elaine explains, "and I thought, well let me see if I can track it back." Her curiosity brought her to the Williams Research Center, where "it didn't take that long at all to find the person who connected everybody together." Thelma was from "the same area where my mother had grown up, in Faubourg Marigny, near Elysian Fields. My mother grew up on Dauphine Street—and I grew up hearing about Dauphine Street, which always sounded so exotic and wonderful!"

After Katrina, the Grundmeyers found renewal at The Collection. "You were open and sharing your resources," Doug notes, recalling that THNOC was the first museum in the city to reopen after the storm. "The crews were still in the streets, first responders were still here, and yet we could go to The Historic New Orleans Collection." Elaine concurs: "I had been doing my research right before Katrina, and when I found myself going back, getting back to my research, I wanted to cry. It just felt like such a continuation, a sign that the city would survive, and that we all would."

Doug and Elaine are proud to be members of The Collection's Laussat Society. They appreciate the fellowship that comes with membership—and, they both chime in, "the parties!"

Enthusiastic patrons of the arts, the Grundmeyers encourage others to get involved, too. "I think that this generation after Katrina is really going to be remembered," Elaine muses. "This is really the time for everybody to step up."

And, as Doug explains, "you see the results" of membership in The Collection. "You're carrying on the tradition. It's a living, vibrant organization. You're not just preserving artifacts, you are part of the future."

DONORS

July–September 2011

The Historic New Orleans Collection is honored to recognize and thank the following individuals and organizations for their financial and material donations.

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Tribute Gifts

Tribute gifts, given in honor of or in memory of a loved one, are unique expressions of thoughtfulness.

Estate of Elliott Cowand, Gift of
 Mrs. Margaret Cowand Schonberg,
 Mr. George Dicks Cowand, Mrs.
 Louise Cowand Daniels and Mr.
 Elliott Karlson Cowand Jr. in
 memory of Elliott and Emmy Lou
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 Dr. Joseph A. Smith in memory of
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Bookplates

Donations are used to purchase books that will be marked with a commemorative bookplate listing your name or that of another individual or family member.

Mr. and Mrs. William K.
 Christovich in memory of Shirley
 Boh Gaden
*Dixie's Daughters: The United
 Daughters of the Confederacy and
 the Preservation of Confederate
 Culture* by Karen L. Cox
 (Gainesville: University Press of
 Florida, 2003)



Above: Photographer Joséphine Sacabo (far right) presented the 2011 PhotoNOLA keynote lecture at the Williams Research Center on December 9. Pictured with her (left to right) are Dalt Wonk, Joshua Mann Paillet, and Jessica Lange. Below: Another successful season of Concerts in the Courtyard concluded in November with a toe-tapping performance by the Tin Men. Also on stage in the fall series were Shamarr Allen and the Underdawgs (September) and Meschiya Lake and the Little Big Horns (October).





ACQUISITIONS

The Historic New Orleans Collection encourages research in the Williams Research Center at 410 Chartres Street from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays). Cataloged materials available to researchers include books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, drawings, maps, photographs, and artifacts about the history and culture of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Gulf South. Each year The Collection adds thousands of items to its holdings. Though only selected gifts are mentioned here, the importance of all gifts cannot be overstated. Prospective donors are invited to contact the authors of the acquisitions columns.

Curatorial

For the third quarter of 2011 (July–September), there were 37 acquisitions, totaling approximately 8000 items.

■ The Collection acquired a set of six sterling silver mint julep cups manufactured between 1964 and 1967 by the William Spratling Company. Although the company was located in Taxco de Alarcón, Mexico, its founder, William Spratling (1900–1967), had an important earlier connection with New Orleans. Born in Sonyea, New York, raised near Auburn, Alabama, and trained in architecture at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University), he moved to New Orleans in 1921 as an instructor at Tulane University's School of Architecture. He shared an apartment with writer William Faulkner at 625 Pirate's Alley, and together in 1926 they published *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles*, a satire of Bohemian life in the French Quarter illustrated with caricatures drawn by Spratling. Beginning in 1926 Spratling started teaching summer classes in Mexico City and in



Mint julep cups by the William Spratling Company, between 1964 and 1967 (2011.0279.1–6)

1929 settled in Taxco. Though the town had silver mining, it lacked silver manufacturing. Spratling began to design silver pieces based on pre-Columbian patterns, employing local goldsmiths to manufacture them from locally mined silver. He opened his silverworks in 1931, adding an apprenticeship program and expanding the business as his work gained a following.

Spratling later moved his studio to a ranch at nearby Taxco el Viejo, and over the years a number of old friends and colleagues from New Orleans visited him there. By the 1940s Spratling's silver was being marketed throughout Mexico and the United States. His success prompted the US Department of the Interior to launch an exchange program between Spratling's Mexican studio and Alaska, hoping to establish a similar manufacturing endeavor there, but the project was not, in the end, fruitful. Spratling was killed in an automobile accident near his home in Taxco on August 7, 1967. (2011.0279.1–6)

■ A recently obtained collection of 13 35mm black-and-white photographic negatives and 16 prints by an unknown photographer—probably a visitor to New Orleans—presents an appealing glimpse of the Crescent City, and especially the French Quarter, in 1939. Though the negatives and prints are undated, visual clues reveal the year of their creation: a year on an automobile license plate in one image, and an advertising poster for the film *Gunga Din*, which opened in New Orleans on February 5, 1939.

The five French Quarter images document the neighborhood when much of it was in a dilapidated condition. One view of the 500 block of Chartres Street shows a portion of the Dufilho House, which Mayor Robert S. Maestri purchased in 1937 and donated to the city with the stipulation that it be used as a museum. The site today houses the New Orleans Pharmacy Museum. Another view, in marked contrast with today's gentrified and touristy French Quarter, shows a rundown courtyard with chickens scratching about on the ground. Ironwork galleries are visible in an image of Royal Street near its intersection with Governor Nicholls; the galleries remain today, but the Desire streetcar, seen in the distance, is now only a memory. A view of Chartres Street in front of the Cabildo and St. Louis Cathedral recalls a time when



500 block of Chartres Street (*top*) and 1100 block of Royal Street (*bottom*), 1939 (2011.0180)

automobiles were still allowed to drive and park around Jackson Square. Other sites depicted in the collection include City Park and St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery, where an unidentified woman stands in front of one of the wall vaults.

A view of the Mississippi River levee in a rural area highlights the swollen river reaching the top of the levee and possibly dates the image to the spring flood season, roughly February to April, of 1939. (2011.0180)

—*John T. Magill*

Library

For the third quarter of 2011 (July–September), there were 39 acquisitions, totaling 102 items.

■ Few theatrical broadsides survive for very long after the evening’s entertainment they advertise has concluded. The library recently acquired a broadside announcing a benefit performance for the acclaimed French ballerina Hermine Blangy (ca. 1820–ca. 1865) in her “last appearance” at the St. Charles Theatre, on the evening of Sunday, January 3, 1847. Mlle Blangy was especially noted for her role as the title character in the ballet *Giselle*, which was presented that evening along with a new ballet, *La Chatte Metamorphosie en Femme*, the latter based on one of Aesop’s fables, adapted by 17th-century French poet Jean de La Fontaine, in which Blangy danced the part of Princess Marabout, a white cat who magically becomes a young woman. Also noted at the bottom of the broadside is the following evening’s limited-engagement appearance of the American tragedian James Edward Murdoch (1811–1893), “in his favorite Character of HAMLET.”

This St. Charles Theatre was the second structure of that name built on St. Charles Avenue near Poydras Street. While not as opulent as the first, which was destroyed by fire on March 13, 1842, the second St. Charles ranked among the finest theaters in the United States when it opened on January 18, 1843. It was destroyed by fire in 1899 and replaced by a third St. Charles Theatre, which was demolished in 1967. The Hotel Intercontinental occupies the site today. (2011.0229)

■ With the horrors of the 1878 yellow fever epidemic still fresh in the minds of civic leaders, a citizens’ committee composed of several prominent businessmen and led by Charles A. Whitney was formed. Under the slogan “Public health is public wealth,” this committee, named the Auxiliary Sanitary Association of New Orleans, proposed to aid the city government and New Orleans Board of Health in promoting and enacting sanitary measures. The hope was that, by keeping the city clean, future catastrophic losses would be avoided. The group printed its charter and bylaws in a pamphlet issued at the beginning of the summer of 1879; the pamphlet was circulated as a guide to encourage other communities throughout the Mississippi River valley to establish similar organizations to further promote public health. A copy of this pamphlet, *An Address from the Auxiliary Sanitary Association of New Orleans to the Other Cities and Towns in the Mississippi Valley*, was recently donated by Eric J. Brock. (2011.0278.3)

■ Dissertations on topics related to the history and culture of the Gulf South region are ordered regularly from UMI Dissertation Publishing, a division of ProQuest. The authors of these works often conducted some if not all of their research at the Williams Research Center. A few recently acquired titles include “Understanding Gentrification: The Role and Abilities of Community-Based Organizations in Changing Neighbor-

hoods: A Case Study of Post-Katrina New Orleans,” by Myung-Ji Bang, University of Texas at Arlington; “Deconstructing Gender in New Orleans: The Impact of Patriarchy and Social Vulnerability Before and After a Natural Disaster,” by Alicia Nicole Jencik, University of New Orleans; “Black Girls Coming of Age: Sexuality and Segregation in New Orleans, 1930–1954,” by Lakisha Michelle Simmons, University of Michigan; “Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829–1869): The Role of Early Exposure to African-Derived Musics in Shaping an American Musical Pioneer from New Orleans,” by Amy Elizabeth Unruh, Kent State University; and “A Jungle of Anxious Desires: Representing New Orleans, 1880–2005,” by Tracey Ann Watts, University of Texas at Austin. (2011.0121.1, .9, .12, .13, .14)

—*Pamela D. Arceneaux*

Manuscripts

For the third quarter of 2011 (July–September), there were 41 acquisitions, totaling approximately 15 linear feet of material.

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection has recently acquired letters that Samuel Fulton wrote while acting as an American spy in the service of France. A native of North Carolina, Fulton settled near Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where the Federal Census and Diocese of Baton Rouge records indicate he was residing between 1818 and 1820.

Written in 1795, the Samuel Fulton letters illuminate an era of diplomatic instability. Jay’s Treaty, signed November 19, 1794, normalized American relations with England but exacerbated concerns that the US was turning away from France and Spain. These longtime allies saw their position strained in the face of shifting transatlantic relationships. These tensions were manifested in Louisiana: Spanish Minister Godoy resisted proposals to return the colony to France, while France gathered intelligence regarding the practicality of an invasion.



Left: Theatrical broadside, 1847 (2011.0229)



THE QUARTERLY

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STAFF

In the Community

Sarah Doerries has been named to the editorial board of the *Cincinnati Review*.

Publications

John H. Lawrence contributed the Foreword to *New Orleans Observed* by Errol Barron.

New Staff

Bobby Ticknor, data entry, Vieux Carré Survey

Volunteers

Durban Clarke, Sara Gothard, Jean Paul Perrilliat, Elizabeth Reade, Susan Williams, and Lisa Wilson, docent department

Changes

Mary Mees Garsaud, editor of the *Quarterly*, has left The Collection to spend more time with her growing family: husband Marcel, daughter Amelia, and baby son Marcel.

The French government entrusted Fulton to poll the Louisiana population concerning Anglo-American relations in the aftermath of Jay's Treaty. In a letter of March 5, 1795, Fulton requested French soldiers to lead an expedition against Spanish forces in Louisiana and the Floridas. In order to fulfill his mission, Fulton voluntarily surrendered his military rank but, in a letter of December 28, 1795, asked to be reinstated as a squadron leader. By the end of 1796, Fulton had furnished French officials with information about troop loyalty and the best system to occupy Louisiana.

The Samuel Fulton letters complement *Mémoire historique et politique sur la Louisiane* (Paris: 1802), in which Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes (1717–1784), French minister of foreign affairs during the American Revolution, contended that Louisiana should remain French. The Collection is fortunate to have copies of the original manuscript as well as the published book.

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection has recently obtained the William Williamson letters, a collection of three items relating to the December 17, 1850, fire aboard the steamboat *South America*. Laden with a cargo of whiskey, iron, and flour, the side-wheel packet steamboat blew up nine miles above New Orleans. Among the casualties were 16 soldiers bound for military service in Texas and New Mexico. Writing from Springfield, Ohio, on December 30, 1852, Andrew J. Williamson, who had survived the accident, asked the Washington, DC, firm of Bryon and Cochrane to petition Congress to authorize payment for losses sustained in the *South America* disaster. According to a notarized deposition from his brother William, Andrew J. Williamson had served as first lieutenant of the 3rd Infantry, US Army. After having been ordered to report to Newport Barracks in Kentucky, Lieut. Williamson outfitted himself and his unit for what was to be an extended military campaign in Texas and New Mexico. William Williamson, who had helped his brother

pack for the campaign, estimated the value of his brother's lost clothing, personal possessions, and military equipment at \$1000. (2011.0234)

■ A gift of Ms. Margaret Cowand Schonberg, Mr. George Dicks Cowand, Ms. Louise Cowand Daniels, and Mr. Elliott Karlson Cowand Jr. in memory of Elliott and Emmy Lou Dicks Cowand, the Cowand and Dicks Family Business Collection consists of materials concerning family-operated local businesses. This diverse collection documents the growth of a New Orleans family's business interests beginning with a French Quarter coopeage established in 1819 by Charles T. Cowand. A ledger for the years 1819 to 1825 is included in the collection, along with correspondence, minutes, advertisements, illustrations, patents, product catalogs, photographs, and ephemera related to the La Valliere Company; Finlay, Dicks and Company; and the Specialty Products Company.

Established in 1914 and located at 518 Bienville Street, the La Valliere Company marketed perfume and related products worldwide. The Cowand and Dicks Family Business Collection includes Chinese trademarks required to protect the La Valliere brand. The loss of the French Opera House to fire in December 1919 was a blow to the city's cultural life—but a promotional opportunity for the perfumery. Noting that its Sweet Olive line had been popular among opera goers, the company promoted the scent in the early 1920s with testimonials from former opera house staff and performers. After the La Valliere Company was dissolved in 1932, some of its product lines—including the first-aid liniment MUL-EN-OL and the floral-scented cream deodorant Sub Rosa—were taken over by the family-run Specialty Products Company. The Cowand and Dicks Family Business Collection complements the La Valliere Perfume Co. Records (2001-32-L), an earlier THNOC acquisition.

—**Mary Lou Eichborn**

OUTREACH

Students Get Creative with 18th Star Essay Contest

This past fall The Collection hosted an essay contest for seventh- and eighth-grade students in Orleans Parish to celebrate the upcoming state bicentennial and The Collection's recent exhibition, *The 18th Star: Treasures from 200 Years of Louisiana Statehood*. The theme of the essay contest was significant moments in Louisiana history. Students were encouraged to be creative in how they told their stories; some submitted fictional narratives, while others approached the topic by composing a series of letters or diary entries.

The Collection received 68 entries on topics ranging from Iberville to the Superdome to Mardi Gras, but the two most popular topics by far were Huey Long and the Battle of New Orleans. Each entry was judged on the basis of its composition, historical accuracy, and creativity.

The winners of the 18th Star Essay Contest are:

- 1st place: **Rachel Anselmo**, St. Dominic School, "Battle of New Orleans"
- 2nd place: **Hannah Nguyen**, St. Dominic School, "Louisiana Crawfish"
- 3rd place: **Madison Vise**, Ursuline Academy, "The Journey of Iberville"

The first-place winner received a field trip for her class to The Historic New Orleans Collection to see *The 18th Star* and to meet with some of the exhibition's curators. The second-place winner received four tickets for a ride on the steamboat *Natchez*, and the third-place winner received two tickets for the *Natchez*. All of the winners also received a THNOC publication for their school library and a family membership. To read the winning essays, please visit our website at www.hnoc.org and follow the Programs tab to the Educational Outreach page.

—*Amanda McFillen*

Garden District Gala

On October 27 members of the Laussat Society and Bienville Circle gathered at the home of Dorothy "Dot" Weisler for a gala evening featuring musical entertainment by the Detroit Brooks Trio. **Clockwise from top left:** Patricia Denechaud and Dot Weisler; Beau Bassich and Harry Stabel; dinner under the stars; Betsy Nalty and Fran Villere; Jacob Manguno and Andrée Keil Moss; Sonny and Laura Shields; Lillian Uhl and Helena Midkiff.



ON THE SCENE



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THE SHOP AT THE COLLECTION

Cajun Document Note Cards Now Available

Perfect for casual correspondence, this set of black-and-white note cards commemorates The Collection's recent exhibition *Cajun Document*. For six months in 1974, New Yorkers Charles H. Traub and Douglas Baz lived in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, and photographed there and in the surrounding countryside. Their collective work encompasses hundreds of images that depict the land, people, and life patterns of Louisiana's Cajuns. The note cards feature 10 images from the series that are now part of THNOC's permanent collection. The set is available for \$15 online (www.hnoc.org) and in The Shop (533 Royal Street).



Mardi Gras Masker at Rest and Pirogues and Swing by Charles H. Traub and Douglas Baz, 1974
(2009.0296.29 and 2009.0296.17)