

# The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly

VOLUME XXXIV  
NUMBER 1

WINTER 2017



**BLUE NOTES:** The World of Storyville

## EVENT CALENDAR

### CREOLE CHRISTMAS HOUSE TOURS

Tour The Collection's Williams Residence as part of the Friends of the Cabildo's annual holiday home tour.

**Tuesday–Thursday, December 27–29, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; last tour begins at 3 p.m.**

Tours depart from 523 St. Ann Street

\$25; tickets available through Friends of the Cabildo, (504) 523-3939

### “FROM THE QUEEN CITY TO THE CRESCENT CITY: CINCINNATI DECORATIVE ARTS IN NEW ORLEANS, 1825–1900”

Join us for a lecture with decorative arts historian Andrew Richmond and learn about the furniture, glass, and other goods that traveled down the Mississippi River to be sold in New Orleans.

**Wednesday, February 1, 6–7:30 p.m.**

533 Royal Street

Free; reservations encouraged. Please visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) or call (504) 523-4662 for more information.

### GUIDEBOOKS TO SIN LAUNCH PARTY

Author Pamela D. Arceneaux will present a lecture and sign books as we launch THNOC's newest title, *Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans*.

**Friday, February 3, 5:30 p.m.**

Hotel Monteleone, 214 Royal Street; reception to follow at 533 Royal Street

Free; reservations required. Please visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) or call (504) 523-4662 for more information.

### 22ND ANNUAL WILLIAMS RESEARCH CENTER SYMPOSIUM

This year's symposium, “Storyville and Jazz, 1917: An End and a Beginning,” reflects on the centennials of the closing of Storyville and the release of the first jazz recording. Speakers will include Bruce Raeburn, curator of the Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University; Dr. Michael White, jazz clarinetist and Xavier University professor; and Alecia Long, director of graduate studies for the LSU Department of History.

**Saturday, February 4**

Hotel Monteleone, 214 Royal Street

Registration is required. Please visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) or call (504) 523-4662 for more information.



### MUSICAL LOUISIANA: AMERICA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Once again The Collection will collaborate with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra for this free concert exploring aspects of America's musical past. This year's theme is “Uniquely New Orleans: The Classical Tradition and Jazz.”

**Wednesday, February 15, 7:30 p.m.**

St. Louis Cathedral, 615 Pere Antoine Alley

Free; visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) or call (504) 523-4662 for details.

## EXHIBITIONS & TOURS

All exhibitions are free unless noted otherwise.

### CURRENT

#### Holiday Home and Courtyard Tour

Through December 30; closed December 24–25

Tuesday–Saturday, 10 and 11 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m.

Sunday, 11 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m.

533 Royal Street

\$5 admission; free for THNOC members

#### Clarence John Laughlin and His Contemporaries: A Picture and a Thousand Words

Through March 25, 2017

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

#### Goods of Every Description: Shopping in New Orleans, 1825–1925

Through April 9, 2017

Williams Gallery, 533 Royal Street

#### The Seignouret-Brulatour House: A New Chapter

Through June 2018

533 Royal Street

### PERMANENT

#### Louisiana History Galleries

533 Royal Street

#### The Williams Residence Tour THNOC Architecture Tour

533 Royal Street

Tuesday–Saturday, 10 and 11 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m.

Sunday, 11 a.m., 2 and 3 p.m.

\$5 admission; free for THNOC members

Groups of eight or more should call (504) 598-7145 or visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) to make reservations.

Educational tours for school groups are available free of charge; please contact Daphne L. Derven, curator of education, at (504) 598-7154 or [daphned@hnoc.org](mailto:daphned@hnoc.org).

### UPCOMING

#### Storyville: Madams and Music

April 5, 2017–January 2018

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

### GENERAL HOURS

#### 533 Royal Street

Williams Gallery, Louisiana History Galleries, Shop, and Tours

Tuesday–Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Sunday, 10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

#### 400 and 410 Chartres Street

Williams Research Center, Boyd Cruise Gallery, and Laura Simon Nelson Galleries

Tuesday–Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.



## ON THE COVER

Advertisement for the French balls from *Blue Book*

1907  
1969.19.8



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we turn the calendar year to 2017, The Collection is enjoying some great strides. The winter issue of the *Quarterly* features an article announcing that we have expanded our operations to include that of the Classical Institute of the South (CIS), a fellowship program and database dedicated to southern decorative arts. In addition, THNOC has established the Paul M. Haygood Fund in memory of the program's founder. We are pleased to share the results of the most recent CIS summer program on pages 12–13.

Our publishing arm is releasing three books this season, and all provide doors to intriguing worlds from the past. THNOC's illustrated edition of *A Life in Jazz*, the autobiography of musician and songwriter Danny Barker, takes readers through the street parades and dance halls of early 20th-century New Orleans, as well as the Harlem Renaissance and jazz scene of midcentury New York City. *Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans* explores the landscape of madams and brothels in New Orleans's notorious red-light district. The book fulfills the longtime vision of our very own Pamela D. Arceneaux, and we're thrilled to see her work in print. Our third release, the sumptuously illustrated *Garden Legacy*, will grace the pages of the spring *Quarterly*.

Finally, it has been a pleasure celebrating 50 years of The Historic New Orleans Collection over the past year. We have big news and a major milestone in store, so stay tuned for some exciting announcements in 2017. As always, thank you for your support of The Collection. It is members, donors, and friends like you who instill confidence that our next 50 years will be a success. —PRISCILLA LAWRENCE

## CONTENTS

### BOOKS / 2

In *Guidebooks to Sin*, a THNOC curator takes a bibliographic eye to Storyville.

With the illustrated edition of *A Life in Jazz*, Danny Barker's autobiography returns to print.

### ON VIEW / 7

#### Off-Site

Off-Site Spotlight: A new CD features rare Mahalia Jackson recordings from the William Russell Jazz Collection.

A new exhibition traces Clarence John Laughlin's life in letters.

### RESOURCES / 12

The Classical Institute of the South surveys decorative arts from before the Civil War.

### COMMUNITY / 14

On the Job

Staff News

Focus on Philanthropy

Become a Member

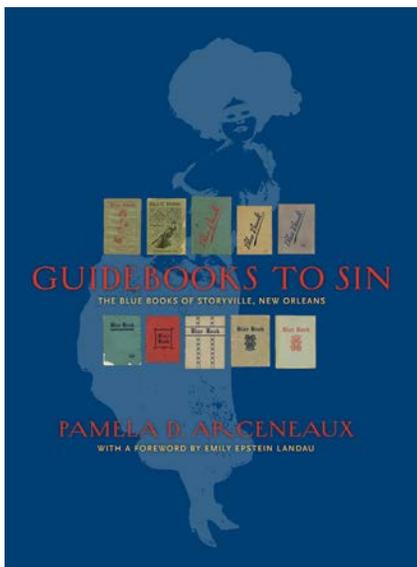
Donors

On the Scene

### ACQUISITIONS / 21

Acquisition Spotlight: A collection of family portraits connects France, New Orleans, and Saint Domingue.

Recent Additions



**NEW FROM THNOC**

***Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans***

by Pamela D. Arceneaux, with a foreword by Emily Epstein Landau

published by The Historic New Orleans Collection

hardcover • 9" x 12" • 160 pp. • 320 color images

\$50; available February 2017 at The Shop at The Collection and online retailers

# Working Blue

**THNOC's own Pamela D. Arceneaux releases her monograph on the blue books of Storyville, culminating decades' worth of research and work on the subject.**

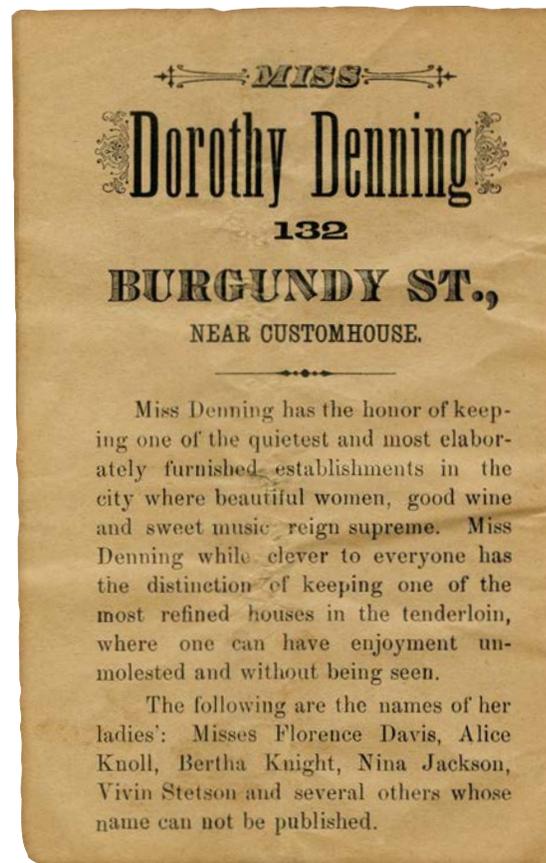
In February The Historic New Orleans Collection will publish Senior Librarian / Rare Books Curator Pamela D. Arceneaux's opus *Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans* to commemorate the centennial of the notorious red-light district's closure. Arceneaux has studied Storyville's guidebooks—collectively known as blue books—since she began working at THNOC in 1981. These rare directories of the neighborhood's madams and prostitutes, featuring advertisements for liquor, brothels, and venereal disease cures, were published between 1898 and 1915 and reveal much about a time and neighborhood closely tied to New Orleans's identity, even today. A bibliophile's dream, *Guidebooks* carefully catalogs THNOC's own extensive collection of blue books while introducing readers to Storyville as envisioned by its own entrepreneurs. —DOROTHY BALL

**ADAPTED FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO *GUIDEBOOKS TO SIN***

Most houses in Storyville were well-run operations under their landladies' iron hands, while others appear in police reports and newspapers with accusations of thievery between the women as well as from their clients, and boisterous fights. In most instances, the madams' full-page advertisements in the blue books—among the guides' most important and interesting features—provide little real information about these sexual entrepreneurs and almost no physical descriptions. Promoting the pleasures of wine, women, and song in florid language that in itself is amusing, the advertisements for the

“better” brothels are suggestive rather than explicit, written in relatively demure terms. Every madam or landlady is glorified as a queen among queens, keeping the most elaborate and costly establishment where “fun is the watchword” and “good times reign supreme.” Careful reading of the ads reveals certain phrases and indicators that present the aura the most successful madams attempted to project and the clientele they hoped to attract to their establishments.

Though some of the madams' advertisements are suggestive, graphic descriptions of services offered or sexual proclivities of the madams never appear in any of the genuine Storyville-era prostitution guides that I have examined. A 1963 souvenir facsimile based on the 1908 *Blue Book* has perhaps contributed



to the myth that these books were explicit. This souvenir contains fifteen fake advertisements that do not appear in the edition of *Blue Book* it otherwise replicates, featuring phrases like “firm, globular, heaving breasts of abundant size”: language far more descriptive and explicit than that in the genuine publications. In the genuine guides, the language in the ads is largely interchangeable from madam to madam and from edition to edition. One can imagine the reactions of W. O. Barrera and Jessie Brown when they saw their ads on facing pages in the 1913–15 edition of *Blue Book*; except for their names, the ads read almost exactly the same.

Despite their lack of concrete information, the madams’ ads are still entertaining in their extravagant promises of an elite and costly environment where white men “in the know” could share a sense of non-competitive camaraderie. Flora Randella’s full-page advertisement for the Cairo from the 1913–15 *Blue Book* contains many of the typical elements that can be found throughout these ads.

Flora Randella, who is better known as “Snooks,” the Italian beauty, is one woman among the fair sex who is regarded as an all-round jolly good fellow.

Nothing is too good for “Snooks,” and she regards the word “Fun” as it should be, and not as a money-making word. She is a good fellow to all who come in contact with her.

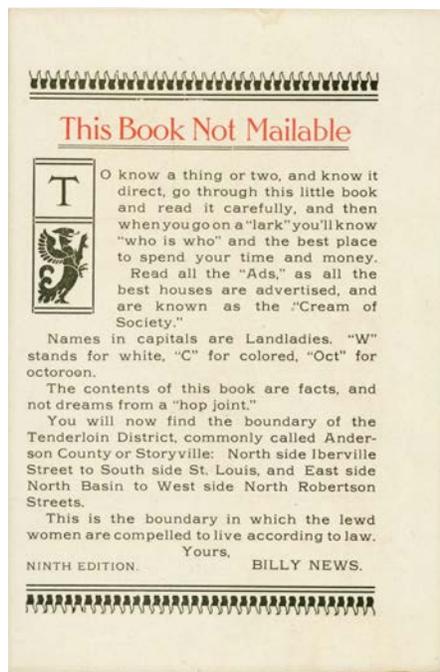
“Snooks” has the distinction of keeping one of the liveliest and most elaborately furnished establishments in the city, where an array of beautiful women and good times reign supreme.

A visit will teach more than pen can describe.

“Snooks” also has an array of beautiful girls, who are everlastingly on the alert for a good time, and her Oriental dancers are among our cleverest entertainers.

She is a “jolly good fellow,” a popular phrase intimating her standing and acceptance in the underworld of male entertainment that appears in numerous blue book ads. The claims of an “elaborately furnished establishment,” staffed by beautiful, fun-loving women, and the promise of risqué good times are repeated throughout nearly all of the madams’ ads. “Oriental dancers” imply something foreign and exotic. The teasing sentence “A visit will teach more than pen can describe” is repeated through several editions, in ads for the houses of Bessie Cummings, Como Lines, Vivian DeWitt, May Tuckerman, and Grace Lloyd.

Many ads emphasize the luxuriousness of the brothel, its exclusivity, or its reputation as a discreet, refined, well-managed establishment. Some brothels are described in their ads as so lavishly appointed with costly and unique furnishings that a visit could be considered a not-to-be-missed educational experience much like attending an art museum—with the added attraction of commercial sex. Such ads suggest that men from all social strata might better themselves simply by visiting these sporting palaces, although in promoting their brothels as elite and discriminating, madams were also targeting the class of men they wanted as customers. —PAMELA D. ARCENEUX

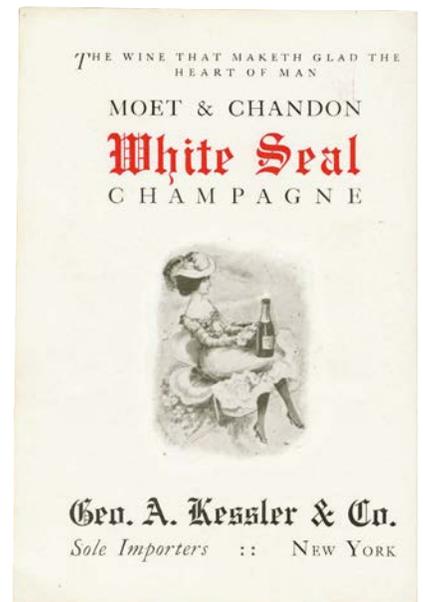


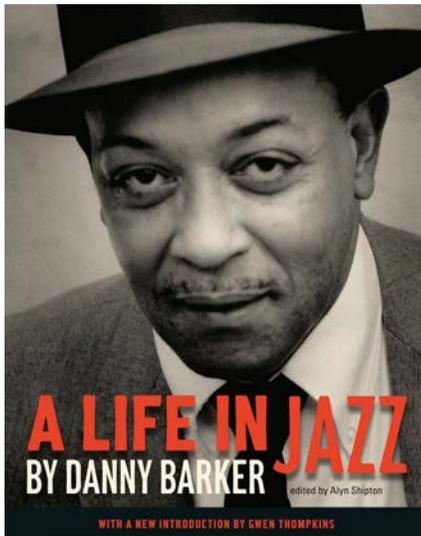
A. Brothel advertisement from *Blue Book* [1900] 94-092-RL

B. Page from *Blue Book* [1908] 1969.19.9

C. Advertisement for Rita Walker from *Blue Book* [1913–15] 85-517-RL

D. Champagne advertisement from *Blue Book* [1905] 1969.19.6





**NEW FROM THNOC**

***A Life in Jazz*, illustrated edition**

by Danny Barker

edited by Alyn Shipton, with a new introduction by Gwen Thompkins

published by The Historic New Orleans Collection

hardcover • 254 pp. • 8" x 10" • 115 color and b/w images

\$39.95; available now at The Shop at The Collection and online retailers

# Local Legend Speaks Again

With the illustrated edition of *A Life in Jazz*, Danny Barker makes a posthumous return to share his stories from six decades in the music business.

Storyteller, researcher, songwriter, performer, and mentor, Danny Barker (1909–1994) was an elder statesman of jazz, appearing on more than a thousand recordings and penning dozens of original songs. *A Life in Jazz*, first published in 1986, represents decades of work Barker undertook to write the intertwined stories of his life and music. THNOC’s new illustrated edition of *A Life in Jazz* brings Barker’s autobiography back into print, accompanied by more than 100 images that bring his story to life. Gwen Thompkins, host of public radio’s *Music Inside Out*, reflects on Barker’s legacy in her introduction, and the complete discography and song catalog showcase the breadth of Barker’s work. Through his struggles, triumphs, escapades, and musings, *A Life in Jazz* reflects the freedom, complexity, and beauty of this thoroughly American, black music tradition. —MOLLY REID

**ADAPTED FROM CHAPTER 15, “JELLY ROLL MORTON IN NEW YORK”**

When I arrived in New York City in 1930 my uncle Paul Barbarin and my friend Henry “Red” Allen took me to the Rhythm Club, which was known for its famous jam sessions and cutting contests. The afternoon I walked into the Rhythm Club, the corner and street were crowded with musicians with their instruments and horns. I was introduced, and shook hands with a lot of fellows on the outside. Then we entered the inside, which was crowded. What I saw and heard I will never forget. A wild cutting contest was in progress, and sitting and standing around the piano were twenty or thirty musicians, all with their instruments out waiting for a signal to play choruses of Gershwin’s “Liza.”





B

I was watching the jam session with interest when Paul said, “Come over here and meet Jelly Roll and King Oliver.” Paul led me through the crowd to where King and Jelly stood. I had noticed Fletcher Henderson was playing pool and seemed unconcerned about who was playing in the jam session, or who was there. Whenever I saw him at the club he was always playing pool seriously, never saying anything to anyone, just watching his opponent’s shots and solemnly keeping score. All the other musicians watched the game and whispered comments, because he was the world’s greatest bandleader. Paul told King and Jelly, “Here’s my nephew; he just came from New Orleans.”

King Oliver said, “How you doing, Gizzard Mouf?” I laughed, and Jelly said, “How you Home Town?”

I said, “Fine.” And from then on he always called me “Home Town.” Jelly, who was a fine pool and billiard player, had been watching and commenting to Oliver on Fletcher’s pool shots. King could play a fair game also. Jelly said (and he didn’t whisper), “That Fletcher plays pool just like he plays piano—ass backwards, just like a crawfish.” And Oliver laughed and laughed until he started coughing.

Jelly was constantly preaching that if he could get a band to rehearse his music and listen to him, he could keep a band working. He would get one-nighters out of town, and would have to beg musicians to work with him. I learned later that they were angry with him, because he was always boasting about how great New Orleans musicians were. Jelly’s songs and arrangements had a deep feeling lots of musicians could not feel and improvise on, so they would not work with Jelly—just could not grasp the roots, soul, feeling. At that time most working musicians were arrangement-conscious, following the pattern of Henderson, Redman, Carter and Chick Webb. Jelly’s music was considered corny and dated. I played

A. **Jelly Roll Morton outside the Rhythm Club in New York**

1939  
by Danny Barker, photographer  
courtesy of the Danny Barker collection of Alyn Shipton

B. **Cab Calloway and His Orchestra**

1943  
courtesy of the Danny Barker collection of Alyn Shipton

C. **Barker and Dizzy Gillespie asleep on a train**

ca. 1940  
by Milt Hinton, photographer  
© Milton J. Hinton Photographic Collection,  
[www.MiltHinton.com](http://www.MiltHinton.com)



C



**D. Blue Lu and Danny Barker publicity shot for Capitol Records**

1949  
courtesy of the Danny Barker collection of Alyn Shipton

**E. Barker with the Fairview Baptist Church Christian Band**

1971  
by Floyd Levin, photographer  
courtesy of the Louisiana State Museum

**F. Wynton Marsalis watching Barker at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival**

1989  
by Michael P. Smith, photographer  
© Michael P. Smith; The Michael P. Smith Collection at The Historic New Orleans Collection, 2007.0103.2.272

quite a few of these one-nighters with Jelly, and on one of the dates I learned that Jelly could back up most of the things he boasted of.

On one date the band met at the Rhythm Club about three in the afternoon and left from there in Jelly Roll's two Lincoln cars to play in Hightstown, New Jersey, at a playground that booked all the famous bands at that time. On the way we came upon a scene of much excitement. A farmer in a jalopy had driven off a country road right in the path of a speeding trailer truck. The big truck pushed the jalopy about a hundred feet, right into a diner. The impact turned the diner over, and the hot coffee percolator scalded the waitresses and customers. Nobody was badly hurt, but they were shocked and scared and screaming and yelling.

We pulled up and rushed out to help the victims, who were frantic. Jelly yelled loudly and calmed the folks down. He took complete charge of the situation. Jelly crawled into the overturned diner and called the state police and hospitals. They sent help in a very short time. Then he consoled the farmer, who was jammed in his jalopy and couldn't be pulled out. His jalopy was crushed like an accordion against the diner by the big trailer. The farmer was so scared he couldn't talk, and when the emergency wrecker finally pulled his jalopy free and opened the door and lifted him out, I noticed that he was barefooted. Jelly told me that happens in a wreck; the concussion and force cause a person's nerves to constrict and their shoes jump off.

We passed some men who were hunting in a field. They were shooting at some game that were flying overhead. Jelly said, "Them bums can't shoot. When I was with Wild West shows I could shoot with the best marksmen and sharpshooters in the world." Either Benford or Pinkett said, "Why don't you stop all that bullshit?" And that argument went on and on.

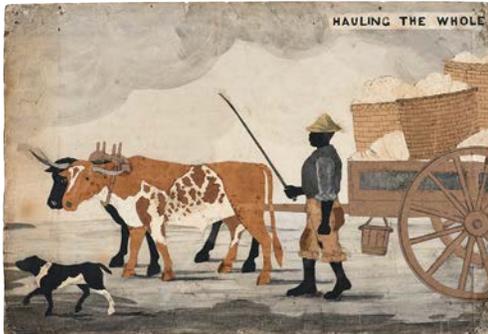
When we arrived at Hightstown and drove into the entrance of the playground and got out of the cars, I noticed a shooting gallery. So I said to Jelly, "Say, Jelly, there's a shooting gallery." Jelly's eyes lit up and he hollered, "Come here all you cockroaches! I'm going to give you a shooting exhibition!" We all gathered around the shooting gallery and Jelly told the owner, "Rube, load up all of your guns!" And the man did. Jelly then shot all the targets down and did not miss any. The man set them up again and Jelly repeated his performance again. Then he said, "Now, cockroaches, can I shoot?" Everybody applauded. Jelly gave me the prizes, as the man shook his hand. Then he and Jelly talked about great marksmen of the past, as his hecklers looked on with respect. —DANNY BARKER



OFF-SITE

# Black Lives, American History

Our quarterly roundup of holdings that have appeared outside The Collection, either on loan to other institutions or reproduced in noteworthy media



The Collection reproduced 10 images for use in the Smithsonian's **National Museum of African American History and Culture**, in Washington, DC. THNOC Curator/Historian Erin M. Greenwald and Rebecca Smith, head of reader services at the Williams Research Center, were invited on a preview tour of the new museum in September.

**Hauling the Whole Weeks Picking**

ca. 1842; collage and watercolor  
by William Henry Brown  
1975.93.1-.2

**Portrait of Betsy**

1837; oil on canvas  
by François Fleischbein  
1985.212

**Fats Domino and Dave Bartholomew**

1957  
by Franck-Bertacci Photographers  
1994.94.2.2286



John Balance, journalist with the *Advocate* newspaper, reproduced seven images in a series on the 50th anniversary of the New Orleans Saints.

**Saints quarterback Billy Kilmer handing ball off to running back Ernie Wheelwright**

between 1967 and 1970  
gift of Press Club of New Orleans, 1994.93.41

**Boy with Gumbo on Saints sideline**

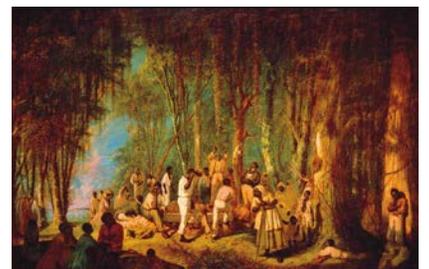
1967  
by Roy Octave Trahan, photographer  
gift of Roy Trahan, 1990.16.1.1240



Howard Smith secured permission to reproduce 95 images of gay Carnival ephemera for his book *Unveiling the Muse: Gay Carnival in New Orleans* (University Press of Mississippi, May 2017).

**Krewe of Amon-Ra ball invitation**  
1970  
gift of Tracy Hendrix, 1980.178.196

**Krewe of Ganymede ball invitation**  
1973/74  
gift of Tracy Hendrix, 1980.178.349

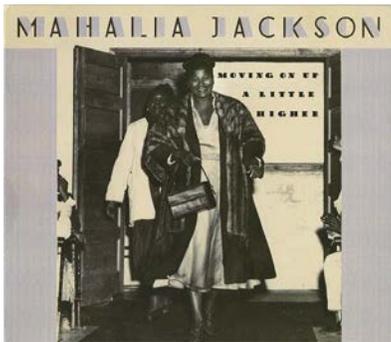


**Whitney Plantation**, in Wallace, Louisiana, requested reproductions of two images to be included in the museum's permanent exhibition.

**Plantation Burial**  
1860; oil on canvas  
by John Antrobus  
1960.46



A



**ON SALE**

***Moving On Up a Little Higher***

by Mahalia Jackson

Shanachie Entertainment, 2016

available at The Shop at The Collection in-store and online ([www.hnoc.org/shop](http://www.hnoc.org/shop)), \$14.95

**OFF-SITE SPOTLIGHT**

# The Queen Reigns Anew

**An album of previously unreleased Mahalia Jackson recordings launches, thanks to THNOC.**

Last month Shanachie Entertainment released *Moving On Up a Little Higher*, the first album of new Mahalia Jackson music to come out in 40 years. The 22 featured recordings cover a range of Jackson's performances from 1946 to 1957, and half are sourced from THNOC's William Russell Jazz Collection. Thanks to THNOC's digitization of Russell's tapes in the mid-1990s, these rare audio files were preserved for future use and can now be heard widely.

Jackson was born into poverty in New Orleans in 1911 and, at age 16, moved to Chicago, where she would first cut her teeth with the Greater Salem Baptist Choir. Her extraordinary voice and unbridled showmanship took her to churches throughout the city, sent her on a national gospel tour, and, ultimately, brought her global acclaim. She built a reputation as a passionate live performer and sold millions of records without straying from her roots in the church; she famously refused to perform in venues that served liquor. Later in her career Jackson also became an active leader in the civil rights movement and a close friend of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; she sang at the 1963 March on Washington rally, where he delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech, and at King's funeral in 1968. She died of heart failure four years later, at age 60.

Jackson's first and best-known hit, "Move On Up a Little Higher," inspired the title of the new album, which was produced by Anthony Heilbut. Heilbut, 75, is a prolific gospel historian who won a Grammy Award in 1976 for producing the posthumously released Jackson album *How I Got Over*. He said this new album has been in the making for decades as he's chased down hard-to-find recordings from throughout her career. An example is "There's Been a Great Change in Me," which comes from a 1956 performance Jackson gave during a CBS telecast. In his liner notes, Heilbut calls it "one of her greatest performances ever. . . . Here is the Mahalia who by then was making rockers from Elvis Presley to Buddy Holly tremble in their cowboy boots." Three decades ago he uncovered a copy of "There's Been a Great Change" only to find that the audio cut off midway through; after receiving a tip from gospel enthusiast Glen Smith that rare Jackson recordings could be found in THNOC's Williams Research Center, he unearthed a complete version.

"Without Smith or The Collection," Heilbut said, "this album would still be somebody's fantasy."

Smith came across the unreleased Jackson recordings at the WRC in 2012, around the time that The Collection was finishing its painstaking effort to digitize jazz historian Bill Russell's massive trove of audio files. Russell was a jazz historian whose collection—42,500 items in all, including an array of Mahalia Jackson materials—was acquired by THNOC in 1992, and The Collection honors him every year with its annual music-themed lecture series. In addition to the CBS performance, THNOC supplied audio from a concert Jackson did at a Chicago high school, a show at the Music Inn in Massachusetts,

and rehearsals in her home recorded by Russell himself. The last included a session with Jackson and pioneering gospel composer Thomas A. Dorsey, which Heilbut believes is the only extant recording of the two together—"one of those legends," he said, that he'd heard about long ago but had never found.

The album has been warmly received; in a review for the roots music website No Depression, Grant Britt wrote that "the live stuff here still sends chills up [and] down your spine." Marc Myers for *Jazzwax.com* described the assemblage as "the sound of soul before the word existed."

THNOC also supplied archival photos of Jackson for the CD's liner notes. The enthusiasm surrounding the release "confirms the value of what we've done to preserve the Russell collection," said THNOC Deputy Director Daniel Hammer, who assisted with the project.

C —NICK WELDON



B



**A. Mahalia Jackson singing with two others**

ca. 1954  
by Sam Rosenberg, photographer  
*The William Russell Jazz Collection at The Historic New Orleans Collection, acquisition made possible by the Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund, 92-48-L.164*

**B. Mahalia Jackson with group of men and women**

1954  
by Sam Rosenberg, photographer  
*The William Russell Jazz Collection at The Historic New Orleans Collection, acquisition made possible by the Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund, 92-48-L.163*

**C. Mahalia Jackson, New Orleans**

ca. 1954  
by Sam Rosenberg, photographer  
*The William Russell Jazz Collection at The Historic New Orleans Collection, acquisition made possible by the Clarisse Claiborne Grima Fund, 92-48-L.161*

# Giving His Word

A new show on Clarence John Laughlin explores the iconic New Orleans photographer's life as a writer and its relevance to his images.

## EXHIBITION

### Clarence John Laughlin and His Contemporaries: A Picture and a Thousand Words

Through March 25, 2017

Williams Research Center,  
410 Chartres Street

Free

Clarence John Laughlin (1905–1985) is known chiefly as a photographer, but writing and correspondence were a central part of his daily working life. The Clarence John Laughlin Archive at The Historic New Orleans Collection contains thousands of letters and pieces of writing, amassed over 50 years, that paint a portrait of a voracious reader, prolific writer, and uncompromising artist entirely immersed in the major currents of 20th-century photography. The new exhibition *Clarence John Laughlin and His Contemporaries: A Picture and a Thousand Words* examines the networks Laughlin created with letters and images. In the process of making those connections and using them to promote his work, Laughlin developed and refined his thinking on the use of expressive photography.

Laughlin insisted throughout his life that the words he wrote to accompany his photographs were equal partners in his creative enterprise. When describing himself in conversation, he always put the word *writer* before *photographer*. The archive brims with his writings: notebooks and index cards with details of the creation of every negative; lists of things to do and questions to ask; notes on his massive book collection; drafts of essays; and exhibition brochures with annotations and text of his own scribbled on the page, to name just a few examples. Because he felt that living in the Deep South isolated him from artistic mainstreams, Laughlin was compelled by an urgent need to communicate his artistic theories, and he became an indefatigable correspondent. Those who wish to understand his place in 20th-century art are indebted to him for retaining not only the letters he received but also carbon copies of a large majority of those he sent. This two-sided view of his interactions with photographers, painters, poets, and writers permits a keen understanding of his world. Letters Laughlin received are often filled with handwritten responses in the margins, as if he could not help answering before he had even finished reading. Laughlin also kept up exchanges, both lively and perfunctory, with editors, gallery owners, curators, and collectors.

The confidence that the mature Laughlin would have in dictating the presentation and interpretation of his photographs is foreshadowed in intense exchanges of letters with the editors Paul Brooks at Houghton Mifflin and Maxwell Perkins at Scribner's, during the

publication of Laughlin's first two books, *New Orleans and Its Living Past* (Houghton Mifflin, 1941) and *Ghosts along the Mississippi* (Scribner's, 1948). The correspondence underscores the directorial control that Laughlin continually sought (though did not always achieve). The esteemed Perkins, editor of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and Thomas Wolfe, eventually felt the need to explain to Laughlin that publishers "are not just printers to whom an author can specify the way in which he wishes his book to appear" (Jan. 15, 1947).

In addition to seeing Laughlin's words and images juxtaposed, visitors to the exhibition will view work by many photographers with whom Laughlin exchanged prints, including Imogen Cunningham, Bill Brandt, and Daniel Mascler. These images were generously loaned by the New Orleans Museum of Art.

In Laughlin's letters, records, notes, catalogs, and manifestos, one sees not only the artist's dedication and concentrated thinking but also the false starts, near misses, epiphanies,

#### A. *Child in the Forest*

1951; gelatin silver print

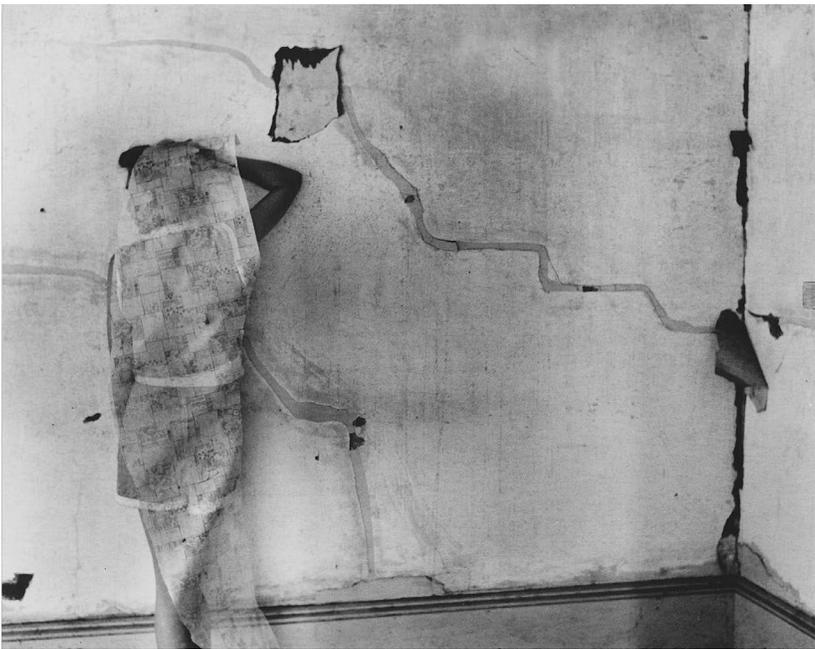
by Wynn Bullock

courtesy of New Orleans Museum of Art;

© 1951/2016 Bullock Family Photography LLC



A



B

and occasional bits of good luck that in various combinations resulted in finished images. And in the exchanges amid all this production, one sees a Laughlin who, though he imagined himself working in exile in New Orleans, sought out and was sought by a wide community of artists and who actively engaged with national and international photographic trends throughout his life. —JOHN H. LAWRENCE, JUDE SOLOMON, AND MALLORY TAYLOR

**B. Jack-in-the-Wall**

1954  
negative by Clarence John Laughlin  
The Clarence John Laughlin Archive at  
The Historic New Orleans Collection,  
1981.247.1.1096

**C. Letter from Michael E. Hoffman to Clarence John Laughlin**

August 8, 1972  
The Clarence John Laughlin Archive at The  
Historic New Orleans Collection, 86-14-  
L.234; © Estate of Michael E. Hoffman,  
courtesy of Philadelphia Museum of Art and  
Aperture Foundation

**D. Letter from Henry Holmes Smith to Clarence John Laughlin**

March 6, 1979  
The Clarence John Laughlin Archive at The  
Historic New Orleans Collection, 86-14-  
L.169; courtesy of the Smith Family Trust

212-877-54  
9071 St  
Dw. alone, misty + Matthew +  
Phone  
0-914-789-4491  
Aventure  
Need (Vol 14 #1)  
Life Photo Books  
Philadelph. Museum of Art - Fairmount  
PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART - FAIRMOUNT  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PARKWAY AT TWENTY-SIXTH STREET · P.O. Box 7646 PHILA. 19101

August 8, 1972  
Night of 11/6/75  
I called you.  
I am to come him  
225 Penn  
He had 80  
4 photos in  
show  
I am to come him  
225 Penn  
He had 80  
4 photos in  
show  
I am to come him  
225 Penn  
He had 80  
4 photos in  
show

Mr. Clarence John Laughlin  
P. O. Box 2683  
Custom House Station  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70116

Dear Clarence:  
You will be pleased to hear that the  
Museum has scheduled your exhibition to begin on  
or about November 21, 1973 and to run for approxi-  
mately eight weeks. (Wed.)

Based on this schedule and a great deal  
of experience, it will be necessary to have the  
photographs for matting, framing, etc., no later  
than March 30th, 1973. Please let me know if this  
date poses any problems for you.

In re-reading your letters about the  
exhibition, it appears that the major cause for  
your concern is the final selection of photographs.  
In order to reach an agreement soon and thus alleviate  
your concern, I will send you my basic selection by  
September 15th, 1972.

With best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,  
Michael E. Hoffman  
Advisor  
The Alfred Stieglitz Center

Note:  
1. Did not get Enlarged  
contact sheets with 3/2/73  
(He did not send mat for 1000 #16)  
2. I sent list of Negs. made to 10mm  
under cov of U of L on 3/14/73 (Air mail checked)  
3. Did not get Negs. with 3/15/73 (Air Etn)  
\$3800 (over 10 missing)  
4. Get advance on Phil. Mus. payment  
to help pay for Peter Jim using  
Kneeland McNulty  
Michael Botwinick  
5. Delgado Museum (John Bullard)  
6. No out our mat  
7. I will choose final size of prints myself  
and color of mats

Telephone P.O. Box 3-0100 - Cable PHILAMUSE  
RODIN MUSEUM - PARKWAY AT 22nd STREET

C

Rec'd 3/10/79  
Post. = 934

Henry Holmes Smith  
Box 3741  
Incline Village Nevada 89460  
March 6, 1979

Dear Clarence:  
Yes I received your letter of Jan. 20, 1978. The address is as above.  
To answer point by point:

- I fully support your suggestion that I write a note to accompany your portfolio. (in the Arizona Quarterly)
- I enthusiastically support the idea of a portfolio available for sale to the public and would gladly write something for it.
- Ernst has not discussed the possibility of my coming to New Orleans with him. Wanda Lee is working full time as Purchasing agent for the local government entity (Incline Village General Improvement District) and does not plan to go to Summit Fort Worth with me. Maybe we can come down there at a later date.
- My reservations about SPB are much like yours and are shared fairly widely. Do not let neglect disturb you any more than necessary. I propose to say some things about some of the failings you outline so clearly at this point in your letter. Considering the make-up of the society it is amazing it has done as well as it has.

Did you see my article "Critical Difficulties" in Afterimage last May?  
If not, I will send you a copy.

I am enclosing a small dye transfer color print made in the last several months. I hope it will delight you. I am also sending a copy of a short piece on the subject matter of the print.

All my very best to you  
Henry

You really must come here. I have some color experiments - which try to bridge the gap between painting + phot. - made in the 1940s - which take in directly with yours. - although you were not aware of my experiments. - nor I of yours (I'll recently) These experiments have never been published (although I tried to get Hoffman to publish a few of them last year) - I never exhibited (but over the

D



**ONLINE**

**Gulf South Decorative and Fine Arts Database**

Decorative arts lovers can browse antiques from across the South on this free online database.

Visit <http://www.hnoc.org/collections/digital-collections.html> and click on “Gulf South Decorative and Fine Arts Database.”

**A. Bedstead**

between 1840 and 1850; rosewood and mahogany possibly retailed by Prudent Mallard  
*private collection in Natchez, MS*  
CIS-2016-0132

**B. Dinner service**

ca. 1843; porcelain with enamel decoration and gilding  
by workshops of Edouard Honoré, Jacob Petit, and François Rihouët  
*private collection in Natchez, MS*  
CIS-2016-0009

**C. Window cornice**

ca. 1819; oil paint on wood  
*collection of Percival T. Beacroft, Rosemont Plantation*  
CIS-2016-0108.3

# Historic Southern Living

**A new database chronicles decorative arts in the pre-Civil War South.**

The Gulf South Decorative and Fine Arts Database is a free online reference catalog of objects dating from the 18th century to the Civil War. Researchers, collectors, and local history enthusiasts can browse thousands of decorative arts items made or used in the Gulf South prior to 1865. Maintained by The Historic New Orleans Collection as part of the Louisiana Digital Library, it makes the work of the Classical Institute of the South (CIS)—now part of THNOC—available to the public.

This year marked the sixth CIS summer field survey and the first year of the project as an element of THNOC’s operations. New Orleans attorney Paul M. Haygood founded the CIS in 2011 to help document historic decorative arts located in private collections across Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The CIS annually selected two fellows—typically decorative arts graduate students—to help conduct a field survey over the summer. What began with one man’s passion for underappreciated Gulf South history grew into a significant material-culture resource that drew from collaborations with local institutions such as the Louisiana State Museum, the New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Louisiana State University Museum of Art.

The recently updated database now contains over 250 items documented by 2016 CIS fellows Joseph Ramsey, a master’s student in art history at Tulane University, and Michelle Fitzgerald, a fellow in the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture at the University of Delaware. They and THNOC’s CIS coordinator visited three towns in Mississippi, learning about early settlements and economic growth along the Mississippi River. The trip marked the CIS’s fifth consecutive year documenting decorative arts in Natchez, which has a strong sense of local history and an abundance of intact antebellum homes. The team also expanded into new territory, documenting objects in the smaller towns of Woodville and Port Gibson. Cotton planters in the surrounding communities

relied on the towns for their county courthouses and local railroad connections to the Mississippi River.

Armed with a laptop and a Jeep full of photographic equipment, the CIS team traveled up the Natchez Trace and down gravel roads to examine family heirloom collections and public historic sites. Fellows assigned a catalog serial number to each item and recorded information including dimensions, maker (if known), date, production method, and materials. They also photographed each object from several angles, showcasing its proportions and construction.

The CIS fellows encountered mostly furniture, portraits, and porcelain, but also made more unusual finds, including music boxes, quilts, handwoven baskets, window cornices decorated with landscape paintings, and two bank vault doors. Some pieces were made locally, such as a set of bookcases made in the early 19th century by Natchez cabinetmaker Robert Stewart. Others were imported across long distances, such as a porcelain dinner service made by the Paris workshops of Edouard Honoré, Jacob Petit, and François Rihouët. The wide assortment of survey objects reveals different aspects of life in the past, from ornate luxury goods to simple handmade items that met practical needs.

Making connections with local residents was another key part of survey work. Conversations with homeowners could help piece together an item's provenance and origins, or open doors to additional survey sites. True examples of southern hospitality, the survey hosts who graciously opened their homes offered coffee breaks, cold drinks, ice cream bars, funny stories, and tips about local historic sites to explore. Some shared their own genealogical research or spoke candidly about the challenges of maintaining 19th-century homes. —SARAH DUGGAN



D



E



F

**D. Portrait of Nancy Bresher**

between 1830 and 1850; oil on canvas  
McGregor House collection, Port Gibson, MS  
CIS-2016-0206

**E. Bank vault door**

between 1830 and 1840; bronze and cast iron  
collection of the Woodville Civic Club at the  
Wilkinson County Museum  
CIS-2016-0069

**F. Bookcase**

between 1820 and 1835; cherry and white pine  
wood with glass windows and brass hardware  
by Robert Stewart  
private collection in Natchez, MS  
CIS-2016-0117.2



**ON THE JOB**

**Albert Dumas Jr.**

**POSITION:** Docent/receptionist, on staff since 2013

**ASSIGNMENT:** Research a painting's sitter to explore personal family history

**A. *Creole in a Red Headdress***

ca. 1840; oil on canvas  
by Jacques Guillaume Lucien Amans  
*The Historic New Orleans Collection, acquisition made possible by The Diana Helis Henry Fund of The Helis Foundation in memory of Charles A. Snyder, 2010.0306*

**B. and C. *Letter from Felix Bernard to his brother Hyacinthe Bernard Dumontier***

1803  
2008.0100.34



Ever since I moved back to New Orleans after college, my favorite activity has been hanging out in and exploring the French Quarter. It was on one of those occasions that I stumbled upon The Historic New Orleans Collection's exhibition *Something Old, Something New: Collecting in the 21st Century*. The show's centerpiece was an extraordinary painting called *Creole in a Red Headdress*, painted around 1840 by Jacques Amans.

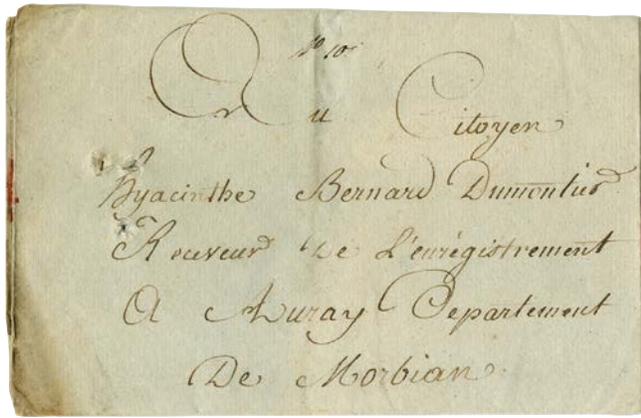
It was unlike anything I had ever seen before. As an artist myself, I was drawn to the painting—the beauty of the sitter, the rich colors, the attention to detail, and more. It was hard to believe that something so beautiful had been preserved all this time. After a while I noticed a slight physical resemblance to the sitter—the shapes of our eyes were almost identical, and we shared a likeness in the angle of the face, along with the shape of the hands. Even though the initials E. D. appear on the blouse, there is not a lot of information on the identity of the sitter. I began to visit The Collection regularly to see the portrait and became friendly with the staff, including Docent Joan Lennox, who would become a major influence on me at The Collection.

Thanks to Joan's encouragement, I started off as a volunteer docent in late January 2013. By July I had joined the staff, working at the Williams Research Center as the weekend receptionist, and over the next year I became a docent, while continuing to work at the reception desk. Docents and receptionists interact with the public, and I have met people from different parts of the country and all over the world as a result. Kurt Owens, fellow docent, said it best: "We are the conduits of THNOC." We interpret the history of the region, guide visitors through both the permanent and rotating exhibitions, and point out interesting aspects of the city.

When I share information about *Creole in a Red Headdress* with visitors, a lot of people observe that we do look alike. In addition, if a visitor notices my nametag, one of the common questions I get is, "Are you related to the writer Alexandre Dumas?" Thanks to The Collection's environment of historical curiosity and its resources, I began to examine my ancestry. From what I found on THNOC's Collins C. Diboll Vieux Carré Digital Survey, there were some Dumases in the Quarter around the same time as the portrait was painted, though we don't know for sure whether the portrait was even painted in Louisiana. Furthermore, I found no connections between those individuals and my own family. And a DNA analysis done through the PBS program *Genealogy Roadshow* closed the Alexandre Dumas case: I'm not related to him, as he had Haitian roots, and I showed no Caribbean ancestry.

My research did lead me to a trove of information about my family history, on a website about the Devall family (part of my dad's mother's side). There, I saw a photo of my great-grandfather for the first time and learned the identity of his father, my

great-great-grandfather John Tabor Devall—a white man who lived on the Ashland Plantation in West Baton Rouge and had 13 children by three black women. On Ancestry.com I found his will, dated March 12, 1920. In it, he left over \$1,000 to my great-great-grandmother, Hetty Gray; he also willed her a tract of land for her and her children.

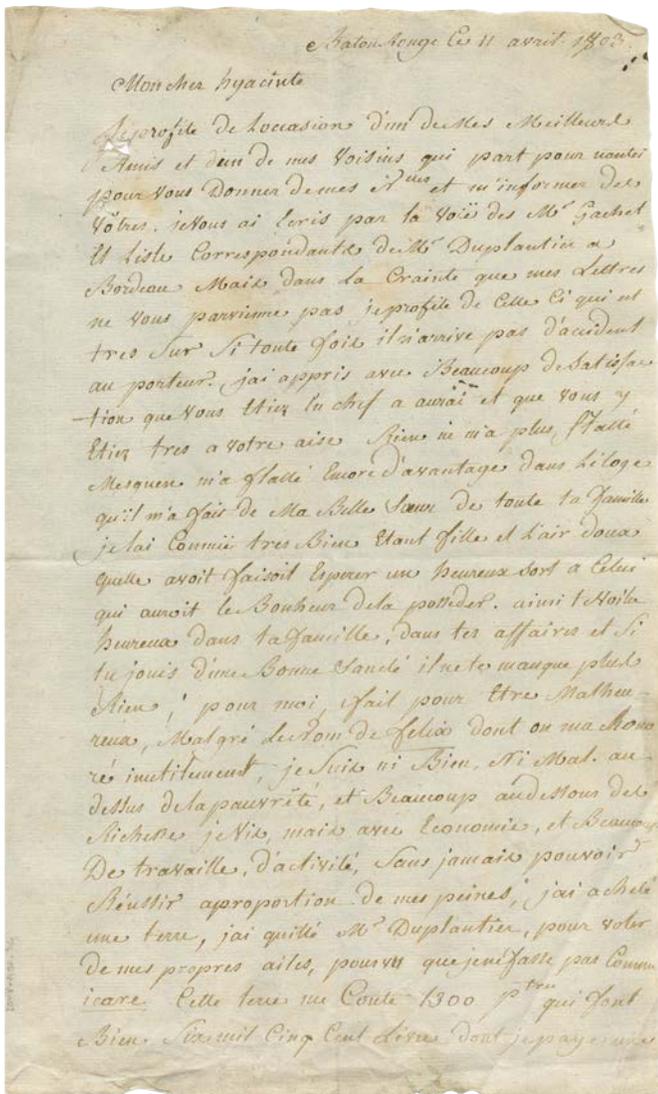


B

While going through THNOC’s online catalog with this new information, I came across a letter written by Devall’s great-grandfather Felix Bernard, dated April 11, 1803, to his brother in France, Hyacinthe Bernard Dumontier, to send him a share of their father’s estate. Bernard had bought some land near Baton Rouge and needed funds from the estate to finance labor for its cultivation. In the letter Bernard mentions the arrival of the French colonial prefect Pierre Clément Laussat in New Orleans, and shares his hope that Louisiana

will remain a French colony. In doing some research on Bernard, I discovered that he was a Frenchman who fought under Gilbert Motier, marquis de Lafayette, at the siege of Yorktown during the American Revolution.

My research on my family history has strengthened my work as a docent. Researching the objects on display gives me the opportunity to learn more about the items, the people, and the time period in reference to the region. I share what I’ve learned with visitors exploring the exhibitions, and, in doing so, I feel more connected to my roots in Louisiana. Learning something new never stops, and my research is ongoing.  
—ALBERT DUMAS JR.



C

## STAFF NEWS

### New Staff

Siobhán McKiernan and Nick Weldon, assistant editors. Lou Mixon, facilities engineer. Hannah Aufdembrink, Jack Bryant, Vanessa Cano, Michele Meneray, Lacey Poche, Kaitlyn Sullivan, Ian Schiffman, and Cory Turner, volunteers.

### Changes

Susan Eberle is now assistant registrar.

### In the Community

Rebecca Smith, head of reader services at the WRC, copresented a paper, “The Vieux Carré Survey: Access and Results,” at the Southeast Chapter Society of Architectural Historians Conference, held at Tulane University in September.

Smith was also named a Person to Watch by *New Orleans* magazine in the September 2016 issue.

Lydia Blackmore, decorative arts curator, spoke at the Natchez Antiques Forum in November.

### Awards

The Southeastern Library Association (SELA) recently honored **The Historic New Orleans Collection** with an award of excellence for its 2014 publication *Creole World: Photographs of New Orleans and the Latin Caribbean Sphere*, by Richard Sexton.



### New Board Member

In November The Historic New Orleans Collection’s board of directors welcomed its newest member, Lisa H. Wilson. John E. Walker will now serve as an emeritus member of the board.



**FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY**

## Gaby and Chris Cannon

As co-chairs of The Collection’s new member organization for young professionals, the Caillot Circle, Gaby and Chris Cannon are proud advocates of New Orleans history and culture. The enthusiasm and vision of the next generation is an important component of an organization’s continued success, and the Cannons began their work churning up youthful interest with a kickoff event on October 25. “I think bringing in a younger crowd will bring some exciting things to The Collection,” Chris said. “We’ve already lined up some really good people who want to help out. We really worked to reach out to a variety of folks.”

Chris grew up in Mississippi and represents the 11th generation of his family to live in New Orleans, where he’s been off and on since he received his MBA from Tulane University. The family’s New Orleans roots go back to the mid-18th

century, and his great-grandfather started Aunt Sally’s Pralines, which still produces the city’s trademark buttery pecan candy today. Chris currently operates a coastal restoration business, Living Blanket LLC, which uses live oyster reefs seeded on concrete forms to rebuild the coastline. “It’s a fully functioning reef upon implementation,” he said of the product, which launched in January 2016.

Gaby hails from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where her family has been active in coffee production for more than a century, and

she attended university in Madrid. “Coffee runs through our veins,” she said of her family, which continues to produce roasted coffee beans as wholesalers. Although she has long called New Orleans home, Gaby brings back fresh sacks of coffee beans from every trip to Honduras, because if she can help it, the only java she drinks is her family’s—taken black.

Gaby starting volunteering for The Collection in 2006, just before Chris left for his second tour of duty in Iraq. The couple had recently married, and the separation was difficult. Volunteer Coordinator Molly St. Paul, who had recruited Gaby into the fold, and other THNOC staffers helped provide a sense of support and community during that time, Gaby said. “The ladies at The Collection and Jack [Pruitt, director of development and community relations] took care of me,” she said. “Molly St. Paul was like my godmother. Charlotte [S. Hoggatt, sales associate] . . . I love her.” Gaby soon left her volunteer post to work at Tulane University as program manager for alumni relations, a job that keeps her global pedigree active as she develops international programs and clubs for alumni. She and Chris have two daughters, Heather, 7, and Beatrix, 5.

Of the Caillot Circle, she said, “We love New Orleans because it’s a city with a lot of past and a wonderful present. And The Collection helps keep that history alive. We’re excited about this organization not only for the history aspect but because we know how much fun it will be.” —MOLLY REID



## THE CAILLOT CIRCLE

Named for Marc-Antoine Caillot, the 21-year-old clerk who sailed to New Orleans for the Company of the Indies in 1729, the Caillot Circle aims to bring together lovers of New Orleans history and culture between the ages of 21 and 45, as well as the young at heart. “The Historic New Orleans Collection is an institution for everyone,” said Jack Pruitt, director of development and community relations. “It’s important that we reach out to young people and young professionals, because they are the key to the future of the city. They will help The Collection grow and continue to thrive.”

Programming will include special events, parties, and charitable work. Beginning in 2017, Caillot Circle memberships will help to defray the cost of bus transportation to The Collection for local and regional school field trips. In addition, the Caillot Circle will help provide scholarships for teachers from rural areas to attend The Collection’s education workshops. On January 6 Caillot Circle members are invited to a Twelfth Night gathering at The Collection, where the Krewe of Jeanne d’Arc parade will stop for a toast.

Registration is \$250 for individuals and \$400 for couples. For more information, please call (504) 598-7181 or (504) 598-7109 or visit [www.hnoc.org/cc](http://www.hnoc.org/cc).

## CAILLOT CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- invitations to exclusive events throughout the year (both at The Collection and off-site)
- 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
- complimentary admission to all evening lectures at The Collection
- private, guided tours of The Collection (by appointment)
- subscription to *The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly*
- special invitations to events, trips, receptions, and exhibition previews



Folk-country outfit the Tumbling Wheels spread their down-home, soulful sound at the October 21 installment of Concerts in the Courtyard.

# Become a Member

## BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

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

- complimentary admission to all permanent tours and rotating exhibitions
- special invitations to events, trips, receptions, and exhibition previews
- 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*

## HOW TO JOIN

Visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) and click the **Support Us** link or complete and return the enclosed envelope.

## MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

**Founder Individual**      **\$35**

**Founder Family**      **\$65**

*Full membership benefits*

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

**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)

**Caillot Circle Individual**      **\$250**

**Caillot Circle Couple**      **\$400**

(for ages 21–45)

*Full membership benefits plus:*

- invitations to exclusive events throughout the year (both at The Collection and off-site)

**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

**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

## 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 through the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) program. These benefits include free member admission, discounts on concert and lecture tickets, and discounts at the shops of participating museums. Visit [www.narmassociation.org](http://www.narmassociation.org) for more information.

DONORS

# July–September 2016

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Tribute gifts are given in memory or in honor of a loved one.

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## Bookplates

Donations are used to purchase books that will be marked with a commemorative bookplate.

Board of directors and staff of The Historic New Orleans Collection in memory of Ambassador John "Jack" Giffen Weinmann—*Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* by Kathleen DuVal (New York: Random House, 2015)  
 Board of directors and staff of The Historic New Orleans Collection in memory of Roberta Berry—*Opera at the Bandstand: Then and Now* by George W. Martin (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2014)  
 Board of directors and staff of The Historic New Orleans Collection in memory of Mimi Mary Clann Calhoun—*Feeding Desire: Design and the Tools of the Table, 1500–2005* by Sarah D. Coffin, et al. (New York: Assouline, for the Smithsonian, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, 2006)  
 Mr. and Mrs. John H. Lawrence in memory of Mimi Mary Clann Calhoun—*Longue Vue House and Gardens* by Charles Davey and Carol McMichael Reese (New York: Skira/Rizzoli, 2015)  
 Anne and Lee Hurley in memory of Mimi Mary Clann Calhoun—*Afton Villa: The Birth and Rebirth of a Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Garden* by Genevieve Munson Trimble (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016)  
 Louise C. Hoffman in memory of Mimi Mary Clann Calhoun—*Hungry for Louisiana: An Omnivore's Journey* by Maggie Heyn Richardson (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015)  
 Mr. and Mrs. John H. Lawrence in memory of Ambassador John "Jack" Giffen Weinmann—*Empire of Cotton: A Global History* by Sven Beckert (New York: Knopf, 2014)

ON THE SCENE

# The Restoration Roadshow Rises Again

In response to the historic flooding of south-central and eastern Louisiana in August 2016, The Collection revived the **Restoration Roadshow**, a free consultation service to help flood victims go about preserving their cherished belongings. The Collection first organized the service in 2005, following Hurricane Katrina and the levee breaches. The West Baton Rouge Museum joined THNOC in the project, and conservation experts in a variety of fields, including staff members from both museums, lent their time October 16 at the Mall of Louisiana.

A. THNOC staffers Maclyn Le Bourgeois Hickey, Judith H. Bonner, and Lydia Blackmore (left, front to back) greet visitors to the Restoration Roadshow in Baton Rouge.

B. A woman shows her damaged photographs to Mallory Taylor, THNOC assistant curator and photographic preservationist (center right), and Greta Glaser of Crescent City Art Conservation (far right).

C. Beth Antoine (center right) and Oa Sjoblom (far right) of New Orleans Book and Paper Lab consult with a man about his damaged LPs.



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On October 25 The Collection launched its newest member group, the **Caillot Circle**. Geared toward young professionals, the group celebrated its inauguration with a cocktail party at the Counting House.

D. Hartley and Blair Crunk

E. Marketing Assistant Eli A. Haddow and Carson Haddow

F. Gordon McLeod and Celeste Marshall

G. Caillot Circle co-chairs Chris and Gaby Cannon



H



I



J

On November 16 The Collection feted its top two member organizations at the annual **Bienville Circle and Laussat Society Gala** at the home of Pam and Cedric Martin. This past year the two groups sponsored the purchase of an original Bien edition of John James Audubon's *The Birds of America* (1860).

H. Colleen Ingraffia, Julie Breitmeyer, Susie Hoskins, and Marilyn Rusovich

I. Raymond Rathlé and E. Alexandra Stafford

J. Cedric and Pam Martin with Jack Pruitt

K. Daniel Hammer with Diane and John Kallenborn

L. John Bullard and Catherine Tremaine

M. Peter and Lisa H. Wilson



K



L



M

ACQUISITION SPOTLIGHT

# Family Ties across the French Atlantic World

**De Brueys family portraits and family tree**  
2016.0249

Six portraits recently donated by Diane Sustental Labouisse depict members of the extended de Brueys family, which had ties throughout the French Atlantic world during a tumultuous era. The flow of émigrés escaping the French Revolution and the Haitian Revolution in France’s sugar colony of Saint Domingue during the late 18th and early 19th centuries reinforced the bonds these geographically disparate locations had

with each other as well as with Louisiana. The de Brueys portraits help illustrate this human element; The Historic New Orleans Collection featured five of them, then on loan, in its 2006 exhibition *Common Routes*, which explored Saint Domingue’s relationship with Louisiana.

The story of one of the subjects, Marthe Cyprienne Reynaud de Chateaudain, demonstrates the fluidity of the times.

- A. **Madame François de Brueys (Marthe Cyprienne Reynaud de Chateaudain)**  
18th century; oil on canvas  
gift of Diane Sustental Labouisse, 2016.0249.1
- B. **Thérèse Michelle Aimée de Brueys (Madame Jean Claude Laval)**  
18th century; oil on canvas  
gift of Diane Sustental Labouisse, 2016.0249.2
- C. **Madame Hippolyte Chretien III (Celestine Cantrelle)**  
1846; oil on canvas  
by Alfred Boisseau  
gift of Diane Sustental Labouisse, 2016.0249.3
- D. **Admiral François-Paul de Brueys**  
18th century; oil on canvas  
gift of Diane Sustental Labouisse, 2016.0249.4
- E. **Gabriel de Brueys**  
late 18th or early 19th century; oil on canvas  
gift of Diane Sustental Labouisse, 2016.0249.5
- F. **Pons de Brueys, Baron d'Aigalliers**  
18th century; oil on canvas  
gift of Diane Sustental Labouisse, 2016.0249.6



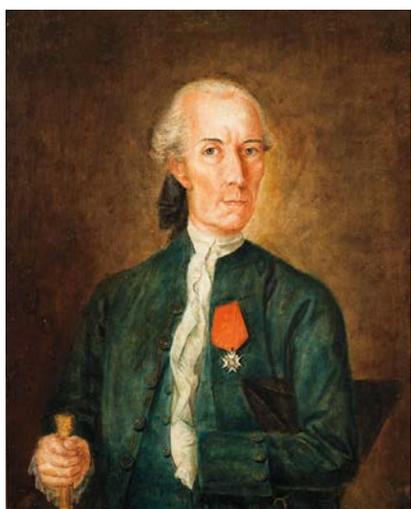
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## ACQUISITIONS

Born in Les Cayes, Saint Domingue, she would later marry François de Brueys, a chevalier of the Royal and Military Order of Saint Louis and the king's lieutenant in the town. Sometime after her husband's death in 1777 she returned to France, where she and her children were arrested in Nantes and imprisoned in Orléans for unknown reasons. They eventually fled to Philadelphia, where her daughter, Thérèse Michelle Aimée de Brueys, whose portrait was also included in the gift, would marry and settle.

In 1808, Reynaud de Chateaudain's son, also named François, left Philadelphia for New Orleans, where he established another branch of the de Brueys family. The Collection possesses an assortment of his personal letters and related family documents, and they provide useful context for these portraits (91-9-L and 97-50-L). Admiral François-Paul de Brueys, whose portrait was also included in the gift, served under Napoleon Bonaparte during the French Revolution and was the commander at the Battle of the Nile, where he was killed in action in 1798.

Images of identified colonial sitters with connections to Louisiana are relatively uncommon, so the French School oil paintings in this acquisition offer valuable opportunities for comparison with other portraits in THNOC's holdings, including those of the de la Rondes, the Boulignys, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville, and works by the prolific Spanish Louisiana portraitist José Francisco Xavier de Salazar y Mendoza.

The 1846 portrait of Celestine Cantrelle, wife of Hippolyte Chretien III, whose family established the Chretien Point Plantation in St. Landry Parish, joins The Collection's other holdings of paintings done by the influential Louisiana artist Alfred Boisseau. The acquisition also includes a family tree illustrating the relationships of the individuals in the portraits to each other and to the Sustendal family of New Orleans. —NICK WELDON

## RECENT ADDITIONS

### Going to See the Mardi Gras and Dispatches from a Revolution

#### Illinois Central Railroad Mardi Gras pamphlet

2014.0465.1

During the early 20th century the Illinois Central Railroad issued many colorful and enticing pamphlets encouraging travelers to experience "The Winter Charm of New Orleans." While promoting the city's semitropical climate for winter-weary northerners, these publications also touted its quaint French Quarter, unusual architecture, distinctive cuisine, and exotic customs such as Mardi Gras. This pamphlet, specifically for the Mardi Gras of February 28, 1911, contains an informative article about Carnival with an explanation of terminology and a brief history of the custom in New Orleans. The activities of Carnival's "secret societies" (krewes) in presenting organized street spectacles for all revelers, as well as lavish and exclusive society balls, are described. Krewes discussed include Rex, Proteus, Comus, and Momus.

Numerous black-and-white photographs depict fanciful parade floats, the arrival

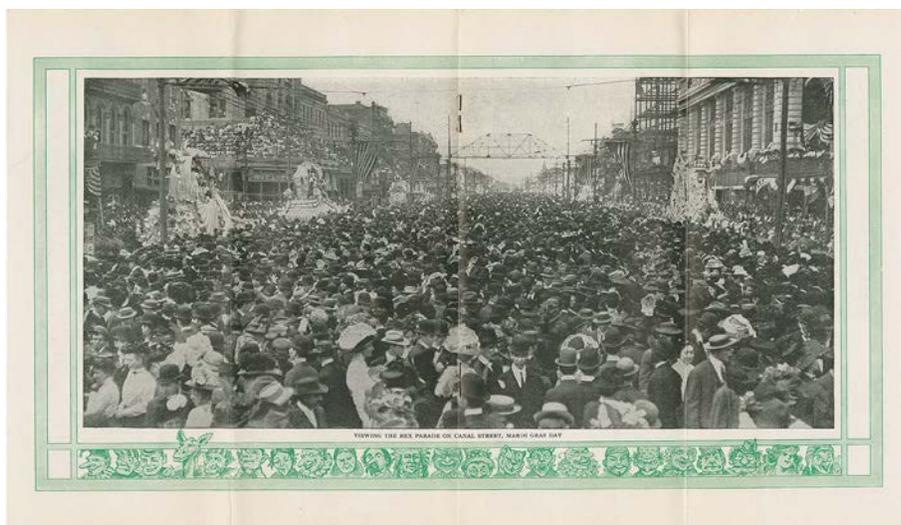
of Rex on Lundi Gras, and street maskers representing a broad range of imaginative characters. A photograph captioned "Viewing the Rex parade on Canal Street, Mardi Gras Day" dominates the center spread of the pamphlet, giving a dramatic view from the middle of the neutral ground with the Maison Blanche department store on the right. A sea of humanity fills the view, with nearly everyone—male or female—wearing a hat as they enjoy the floats on both sides of the street.

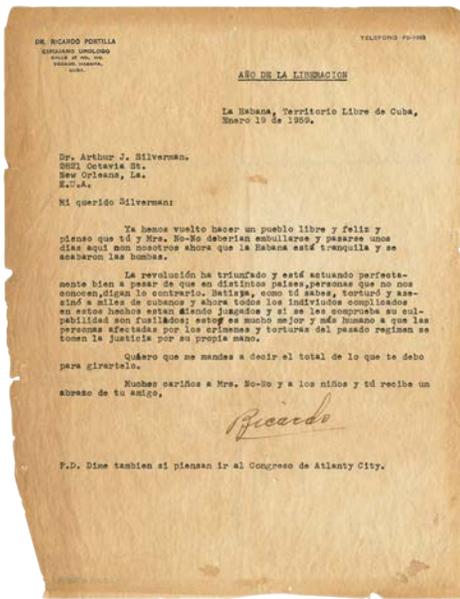
In examining this pamphlet, it should be noted that, by coincidence, Mardi Gras 2017 also falls on February 28. A safe and happy Carnival to all! —PAMELA D. ARCENEAUX

#### Arthur J. Silverman correspondence

2016.0260

In the immediate aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, urologist Ricardo Portilla wrote to his New Orleans friend and colleague Arthur J. Silverman, informing him of local conditions. Jonathan Silverman, the





recipient's son, has donated the two letters, both in Spanish, which provide a native Cuban's perspective on the revolution, which had come to fruition in January 1959.

Portilla (1913–1990) was a clinician and instructor at the Casa de Salud del Centro de Dependientes del Comercio in Havana at the time of the rebels' victory in the capital. Arthur J. Silverman (b. 1923) was then a New Orleans medical doctor.

Writing from Havana on January 19, 1959, Portilla disputed outside media reports of an island nation in turmoil. Havana, he insisted, was peaceful and the Cuban people “free and happy.” Trials and executions of those complicit in the torture and murder of thousands of Cubans under the regime of Fulgencio Batista were, Portilla asserted, humane and just when compared to the actions of the deposed dictator.

In the months that followed, Portilla traveled extensively and fell behind on correspondence. Another letter, dated October 9, 1959, begins with an apology for the lapse and gratitude for what Portilla describes as Silverman's assistance with currency exchange. Portilla, delighted at Silverman's news from an earlier letter of plans to visit, again warns his friend not to believe negative propaganda, assuring him that post-revolutionary Cuba is “a free country with a democratic and honest government” working to improve the

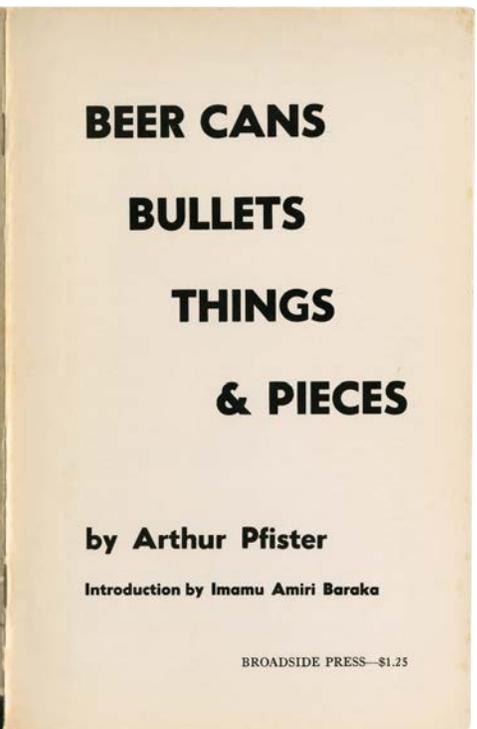
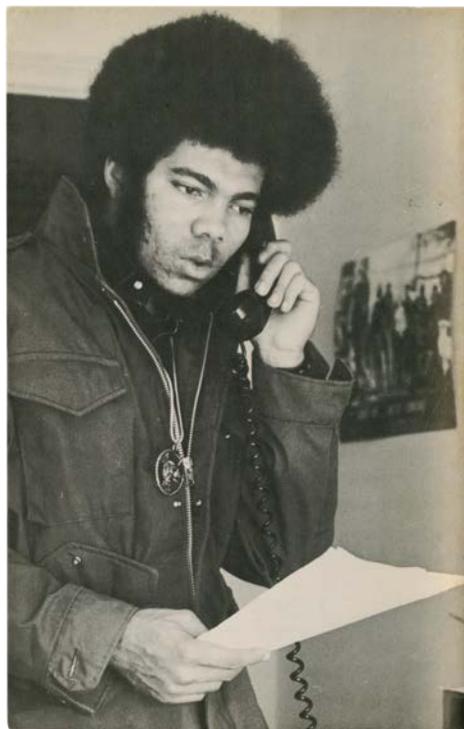
people's standard of living under the leadership of Fidel Castro. Portilla says he hopes new government-built motels will boost tourism and make it possible for Silverman to spend Christmas in Cuba. He concludes the letter with regards for Silverman and his family, noting that he is sending some tobacco. —M. L. EICHHORN

**Beer Cans, Bullets, Things and Pieces**  
2015.0028.5

Arthur Pfister (b. 1949) is a poet and educator from New Orleans who grew up in Tremé and became known as a spoken-word artist. After attending St. Augustine High School he left New Orleans for college and graduate school, earning an MA in writing from Johns Hopkins University. Pfister returned in 1988 and was often seen performing spoken word throughout the city, from the Maple Leaf Bar to Ebony Square (currently Shaya on Magazine Street), from the Edgelake Bar on Hayne Boulevard to Kaldi's coffeehouse on Decatur Street. With a captivating voice and a proclivity for collaborations with visual and performing artists, Pfister was not to be missed live, particularly when collaborating with New Orleans musicians such as Henry Butler

or Davell Crawford. In fact, performance is so integral to Pfister's poetry that his 2009 publication, *My Name Is New Orleans: 40 Years of Poetry and Other Jazz* (Margaret Media, 2009) was issued with a CD of recordings of poems represented in the book.

The Historic New Orleans Collection recently acquired a copy of one of Pfister's early books, *Beer Cans, Bullets, Things and Pieces*, a collection of 25 poems published by Broadside Press in 1972. Broadside was founded by African American poet Dudley Randall in Detroit in 1965, making it one of the oldest African American presses in the country. In addition to Pfister, Broadside also published such poets as Robert Hayden and Gwendolyn Brooks, both of whom served as US Poet Laureate, Hayden from 1976 to 1978 and Brooks from 1985 to 1986. Though *Beer Cans, Bullets, Things and Pieces* was not issued with a sound recording, Pfister's contemporaries understood the importance of listening to his poetry and not just reading it. Amiri Baraka, whose own poetry was published (as LeRoi Jones) in the New Orleans magazine *The Outsider* in 1961, wrote the introduction to *Beer Cans* and titled it “Pfister Needs to be Heard!” A few years later, in the January/February



1975 issue of the *American Poetry Review*, poet June Jordan wrote that Pfister has “such a sense of humor, and a clearly gifted capacity to play with almost any sacred cow, including the male ego . . . (Please be fair and read Pfister aloud).”

Pfister has lived and taught in Stamford, Connecticut, since 2005, though he came back to New Orleans in 2009 to receive an award from the Asante Foundation, which recognizes New Orleans artists who have made significant contributions to their communities. —NINA BOZAK

### Robert Salles jewelry designs

2016.0291.1–.159

This recent acquisition includes over 150 hand-drawn designs for pieces of jewelry sold in New Orleans and created by Robert C. Salles (1890–1963), a designer and engraver who worked for some of the largest jewelers in the city in the first half of the 20th century. Salles was born on June 21, 1890, one of seven children of William J.

Salles and Emma Caymo. He was working as an engraver for A. B. Griswold by 1906, when he was only 16 years old. By 1925, Salles was an engraver and designer for Coleman E. Adler’s on Canal Street, and in the 1930s he became an independent designer and engraver, doing contract work for Adler’s and Hausmann’s (which took over A. B. Griswold in 1926).

The designs in this acquisition are from his time as an independent contractor, and many of the pieces reflect the geometry of the art deco style of the 1930s. Each gouache design is a work of art in itself, and many are marked with the name of the jewelry store or customer for whom the piece was created. Although the majority of the designs are for diamond jewelry—including rings, brooches, and earrings—there are also a few for enameled or gold pendants, crests, and lapel pins. These designs document past styles, craftsmanship, and business practices in New Orleans but may also provide inspiration for future jewelry. —LYDIA BLACKMORE



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Postcard showing view of Storyville (detail)  
New Orleans: C. B. Mason, [1904-8]  
1979.362.16



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FROM THE SHOP

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## Jackson Sphere

Designed by artist Michael Storrings, this hand-blown and hand-painted ornament captures the historic beauty, lively sounds, and bustling crowds of New Orleans's Jackson Square. This year, give someone the gift of St. Louis Cathedral, street artists, musicians, the Cabildo, and the city's unmistakable *joie de vivre*.

Jackson Square ornament, \$72

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