



THE HISTORIC
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COLLECTION
QUARTERLY

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Summer 2010

Mignon Faget: A Life in Art and Design



Mignon Faget: A Life in Art and Design

The lifetime accomplishment of designer Mignon Faget is singular in the art history of New Orleans. During the entirety of her 40-year career, Faget has remained in the forefront of jewelry design in the South. The Historic New Orleans Collection is celebrating her achievement with the exhibition *Mignon Faget: A Life in Art and Design*. The exhibition features more than 400 objects, including textiles, jewelry, prints, linoleum

blocks, drawings, and glassware. Also on view are various samples of stones used in Faget's designs, objects from which she drew inspiration, photographs, and other collateral materials. The exhibition opens September 22, 2010, and continues through January 2, 2011.

Faget, whose training is in sculpture, draws upon elements of nature reinterpreted in metal and stone. In 1955 she earned her bachelor of fine arts degree from Newcomb College, where

she studied drawing under Pat Trivigno (b. 1922) and printmaking under James Steg (1922–2001). She cites her course with British teacher Robert [Robin] Durant Feild (1893–1972) as an influence on her work. Later, Faget would subconsciously follow the tradition established by founders of the Newcomb Pottery enterprise, which focused on motifs drawn from nature.

After graduation Faget studied at L'Académie de la Grande Chaumière in

Paris, and later enrolled in the printmaking class taught by Sue Ferguson Gussow (b. 1935) at Dominican College, a course that launched Faget's career in design. Upon seeing a print Faget produced in class, Gussow exclaimed that Faget was a designer and advised her to follow that direction. Faget, who from childhood designed clothing with her mother's help, applied a hand-printed pattern to fabric and began to experiment with textile design. She took that dress to D. H. Holmes Department Store on Canal Street. Its enthusiastic acceptance, and the order for more dresses, inspired Faget to enroll at Parsons School of Design in New York.

Returning to New Orleans, Faget established her cottage industry in 1971 in an Uptown, 19th-century, bargeboard

shotgun double on Dublin Street in the bend of the Mississippi River. Faget's clothing designs fell into three phases: hand-printed fabric, clothing studded with nail heads, and designs in denim and canvas. That first D. H. Holmes dress, which features a frieze of yellow nautilus shells on white cotton sail cloth, is on exhibition, as well as other clothing with hand-printed designs, block prints, and the tools she used to create her printed fabrics.

Faget's entry into metalwork came three years later when she melted down wedding gifts to make a silver belt buckle, which was inspired by a sand dollar she collected on the Gulf Coast. Subsequently, Faget focused on elements of the sea and earth translated into silver and rendered in clean lines reminiscent



Sterling-silver double-pecan slide from the Symmetry collection, photo by Glade Bilby II, courtesy of Mignon Faget



Cover: Mignon Faget in her studio, ca. 1979, photo by Michael P. Smith, courtesy of Mignon Faget

Above left: The dress that launched Mignon Faget's career in textile design, modeled by the designer, 1968, photo by Jean Seidenberg, courtesy of Mignon Faget

Above right: Mignon Faget and her seamstresses: Harriet Hazlit, Vivian Bart Kahn, Dawn Brown, Ruth Yates, Marie Christina Benitez, ca. 1972, unknown photographer, courtesy of Mignon Faget



Mignon Faget sculpting five-knot cuff bracelet on a mandrel, 1976, unknown photographer, courtesy of Mignon Faget

EXHIBITION



MIGNON FAGET: A LIFE IN ART AND DESIGN

On view at 533 Royal Street

September 22, 2010 –
January 2, 2011

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



Left: Rex Proclamation, 1992 (1992.50), gift of the School of Design; **above:** Mystic Club Mardi Gras ball favor, 1990 (1999.75.2), gift of Mrs. H. Hunter White Jr.

from the classic to the whimsical, including her well-known *Animal Crackers* collection. Other works inspire a sense of individualism in their artistic design, particularly in the *Symmetry* collection, which requires the wearer's conscious interaction in arranging the necklace according to personal preference.

From her early years, Faget has consistently supported numerous philanthropic causes. She executed commissions for museums and schools, as well as civic, social, and charitable organizations. A selection of her special commissions will be on view, including Mardi Gras krewe favors, objects she has designed steadily since 1977. That same year she produced her Egyptian *Scarab* collection for the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibition at the New Orleans Museum of Art. Faget's *Rex Proclamation*, created for the 1992 Mardi Gras, depicts a European explorer greeting a Native American. Between the two figures, an open treasure chest reveals a number of Faget's easily recognizable jewelry designs. The poster is bordered at the top with a row of sugarcane and at the bottom with a row of

of the work of Danish silversmith Georg Jensen (1866–1935). Within six years of establishing herself as a jewelry designer, Faget was described by *Times-Picayune* fashion editor Diane Sustendal as “our best-known nationally-recognized artist in the field of jewelry design.”

Through the years Faget has drawn inspiration from flowers, fruits, seeds, nuts, animals, birds, and insects. The majority of Faget's sculptural jewelry continues to reflect the influence of Jensen silver in its minimalism, simplicity of form and scale, sense of grace, weightlessness, and connotation of strength. A number of her works incorporate fabric into the design, particularly her *Symmetry* slip-cord necklaces made with stuffed-silk batik cords. The works range

corn—a theme that Faget developed in her *Zea* collection, focusing on the individual kernel of corn or its husk.

Many works relate to Louisiana's food and culture: red beans, fish, shrimp, crabs, crawfish, alligators, king-cake dolls, crosses, streetcars, banana leaves and flowers, and the Louisiana iris. Faget's concern for ecological conservation is evident in her *Corall* collection, which features small bits of sea coral. Her interest in historic New Orleans architecture is manifest in two major collections. *Ironworks* focuses on the iron work of Le Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré. She designed the *Romanesque Return* collection in 1990 for philanthropists Phyllis and Patrick Taylor, then owners of the Howard Memorial Library. Located at Lee Circle, the building was designed by architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838–1886). It is now part



Fireplace necklace from the *Romanesque Return* collection, 1990, photo by Glade Bilby II, courtesy of Mignon Faget

THE SHOP

The Shop at The Collection is now the exclusive French Quarter outlet for Mignon Faget jewelry and glassware. Select necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and cufflinks from the *Amulets*, *Archival*, *Fleur de Lis*, and *Ironworks* collections, among others, are now available in-store only. The Shop is also carrying selections from the *Gulf Coast* collection (**pictured below**). Twenty percent of the sale of each piece from this collection will benefit the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana (with Mignon Faget, Ltd. contributing 10 percent and The Shop matching that donation). To order, call (504) 598-7147.

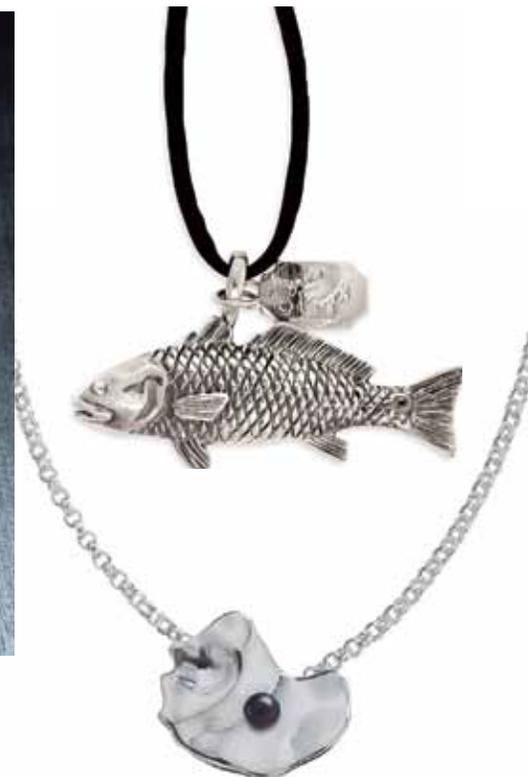


Mignon Faget, 1992, photo by Josephine Sacabo, courtesy of Mignon Faget

of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art. Subsequently, Faget continued to develop themes based on the library's architectural elements, particularly the vousoirs, fireplace columns and medallions, and carved figures of the "beast of knowledge" on the wooden beams.

Long active in preservation and conservation concerns, Faget donated her historic cottage at 710 Dublin Street to the Preservation Resource Center in 2005. She is presently calling attention to the long-term effects of the disastrous April 2010 oil spill through her marine-inspired pieces, which she sets against black ribbon in the tradition of mourning jewelry. Proceeds of this *Gulf Coast* collection go to benefit the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. Faget has long drawn on the richness of her native city and state for her designs. Her contributions to the architectural and art history of New Orleans are as rich as the subjects that inspire her.

—*Judith H. Bonner*



TULANE STADIUM

Fifty Years of Football in New Orleans

On Saturday, October 24, 1926, in typically festive New Orleans fashion, Tulane Stadium officially opened. A parade followed by dedication speeches by Mayor Arthur O’Keefe and Governor O. H. Simpson kicked off the inaugural game, which pitted the Tulane Green Wave against the Auburn Tigers before 15,000 spectators. Unfortunately, the Tigers spoiled the Greenies’ celebration with a blocked punt, which led to a safety and 2-0 victory.

Paid for by local subscribers, Tulane Stadium was designed by architect Emile Weil and constructed of concrete and brick by the O. M. Gwinn Construction Company. The stadium was located on Willow Street within Tulane’s Uptown campus. Modern amenities included women’s restrooms, telephones, and a large electronic scoreboard heralded in the *New Orleans Item’s Stadium Edition* as “the most complete football



Exterior of Tulane Stadium before Sugar Bowl, January 1, 1951, photo by Leon Trice (2007.0208.25), gift of the Sugar Bowl

DISPLAY



TULANE STADIUM: FIFTY YEARS OF FOOTBALL IN NEW ORLEANS

On view in the Reading Room
Williams Research Center
410 Chartres Street

Late Summer–Fall

Tuesday–Saturday
9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Free and open to the public

scoreboard in the United States.” Over the years the stadium was expanded multiple times—end-zone sections were added as well as an upper deck—eventually reaching a capacity of 80,985 in 1947.

In addition to the many home games played there by the Green Wave, the building hosted 41 Sugar Bowls—a tradition inaugurated in 1934—and Super Bowls IV (1970), VI (1972), and IX (1975). On September 17, 1967, the New Orleans Saints made their National Football League debut at Tulane Stadium in front of an announced attendance of 80,879, losing to the Los Angeles Rams, 27 to 13. The Saints played their first eight seasons at the stadium prior to relocating to the Superdome for the 1975 season. The Tulane Stadium games produced more than a few memorable moments, including John Gilliam’s 94-yard kickoff return

for a touchdown in the franchise’s first regular-season game and Tom Dempsey’s 63-yard, game-winning field goal against the Detroit Lions during the 1970 season.

In 1976 Tulane Stadium celebrated its 50th birthday with little fanfare. Although the stadium was a beloved icon to football fans throughout the region, the construction of the Superdome made the structure, which was outdated by comparison, superfluous. In 1975 the Saints, Tulane Green Wave, and the Sugar Bowl had all relocated to the dome. Four years later, in 1979, Tulane Stadium was demolished.

To coincide with the kickoff of football season, The Historic New Orleans Collection is mounting a display of photographs and other memorabilia from Tulane Stadium in the Williams Research Center’s Reading Room.

—Eric Seifert

Local Students Learn How to Conduct Research at The Collection

In the spring, 22 students from Sojourner Truth Academy's freshman honors history class created documentaries on four New Orleans neighborhoods. The students executed every part of the project themselves: the research, writing, interviewing of residents, filming, and editing. As part of the research component, The Historic New Orleans Collection welcomed the students for a half-day workshop on the primary resources available at the Williams Research Center. Led by research associates Daniel Hammer and Eric Seiferth, the workshop on April 29 empowered the students with the information and skills needed to delve into the history of the city's neighborhoods.

Hammer introduced primary resources, "the raw materials of history," by showing the students examples in The Collection's holdings, including documents from the National Archives recorded on microfilm, a voter registration document from the 1860s, and a



photo of Canal Street from 1918. Seiferth instructed students in the use of atlases, maps, directories, and census records to trace the development of neighborhoods, and demonstrated how images, like those in the Charles L. Franck and John T. Mendes collections, can be of use in research. Students learned about famous New Orleans musicians with specific neighborhood ties, such as Jelly Roll Morton from the 7th Ward, Manuel Manetta from Algiers, and Bunk Johnson from the Irish Channel.

"I think this project is interesting because it gives us exposure to the different neighborhoods of New Orleans," said Keli Knox, a member of the ninth-grade history class.

Combining skills learned at The Historic New Orleans Collection, other libraries, and school, the students chronicled the history of the 6th, 9th, and 17th wards and the French Quarter over the past 70 years. Through the project they gained valuable experience in researching and filmmaking, while becoming active participants in the creation of history.

The project was made possible by documentary filmmaker Phoebe Ferguson's foundation, the Plessy and Ferguson Foundation for Education and Reconciliation. Ferguson, who regularly volunteers at Sojourner Truth, worked with the students on the project.

—Rachel Gibbons

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH UPDATE

"Slow Blink" Project Field Trips

The education department's current project, "In the Slow Blink of an Alligator's Eye: Wetlands Vanish," dedicated to teaching students about the history of the wetlands and the importance of preserving them for present and future generations, has taken on greater significance in light of the recent oil spill threatening our coast. In April and May, approximately 200 students from the project were engaged in a wetlands learning experience. On field trips to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve's Barataria Preserve, the students were able to witness the wetlands alive again after a dormant period following the disastrous hurricanes of 2005. While

strolling the dirt trails and boardwalks of the 20,000-acre freshwater preserve, they got a taste of Louisiana's wild wetlands. Louisiana irises were blooming for the first time since the storms. Alligators and snakes were basking in the sun. Students went dipnetting on the edge of the boardwalks, catching baby crawfish and shrimp. The "Slow Blink" project will continue through the 2010–11 school year.

—Sue Laudeman

Students from Grand Caillou Middle School at Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve's Barataria Preserve, May 3, 2010



FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am honored each day to work with the creative, intelligent, insightful group of people who make up the staff of The Collection. The current exhibition, *Katrina+5*, truly showcases their hard work and dedication. Although it may be painful to revisit the agony and chaos of the hurricane and its aftermath, individuals have been streaming in to witness the extraordinary rescue footage and hear the harrowing stories of those who risked everything to pluck people from rooftops and out of rising water. The exhibition's popularity is testimony to the importance of documenting the event for posterity.

Now we are faced with another unprecedented disaster. The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, like Katrina, will forever change our lives. Along with the journalists and reporters, THNOC staff members are exploring ways to document and preserve information and images for future generations.

The education department has just completed a year of programming in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes, areas that have been directly impacted by the spill. "In the Slow Blink of an Alligator's Eye" is an oral history and wetlands-awareness project that actively engaged 200 middle-school students and their social studies and science teachers in the 2009–10 school year. The project will continue in the fall, undoubtedly with an even more urgent focus.

The summer has brought reasons to celebrate as well. In June, we hosted a smashing event to launch the autobiography of Harold Battiste, *Unfinished Blues: Memories of a New Orleans Music Man*, and a delightful symposium on culinary history, *Beans + Rice: A Culinary and Cultural Odyssey*, cosponsored by Dillard University. Please don't miss the 2010 New Orleans Antiques Forum, August 5–8, and mark your calendar for September 24, when the fall Concerts in the Courtyard series starts up again. Also beginning in September is the much-anticipated exhibition highlighting the extraordinary career of Mignon Faget. We look forward to celebrating our history and our future with you.

—Priscilla Lawrence

Residents and Visitors: 20th-Century Photographs of Louisiana

This fall The Historic New Orleans Collection and the New Orleans Museum of Art will unveil their eighth collaborative exhibition on the visual arts in Louisiana at NOMA. *Residents and Visitors: 20th-Century Photographs of Louisiana* showcases nearly 100 photographs drawn equally from the permanent collections of both museums. While NOMA's internationally acclaimed collection is global in scope, a large number of its photographs relate to Louisiana through subject, maker, or sometimes both. THNOC's photographic holdings, more centrally focused on places within Louisiana's borders, are collected for documentary content, as well as for aesthetic merit and the reputations of the photographers. The works chosen from the two collections provide a well-rounded overview of Louisiana photography and the evolution of photographic technology in the 20th century.

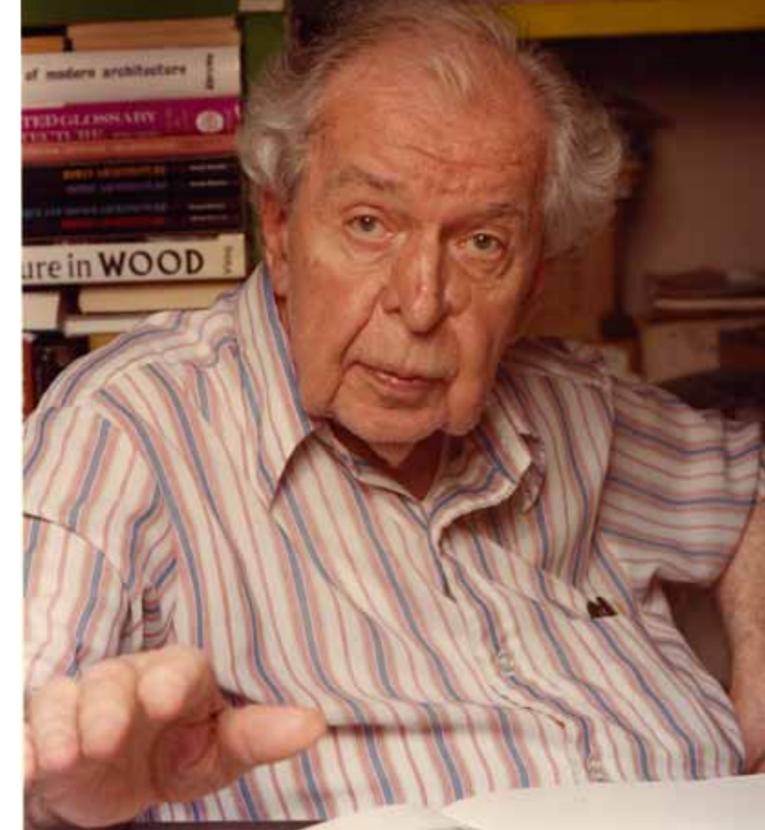
Residents and Visitors showcases artists based in Louisiana as well as those just passing through. Familiar figures in the Pelican State's photographic history include Walker Evans, Lee Friedlander, Arnold Genthe, and Clarence John Laughlin, among others. Lesser known, though no less talented, practitioners are also featured, including Marion Belanger, Jon Bernard, and Dan Leyrer.

Through most of the 20th century, photographic technology was based on exposing black-and-white, silver-based film (or glass plates) and making a print from the resulting negative. A trend toward making professional-quality cameras smaller and

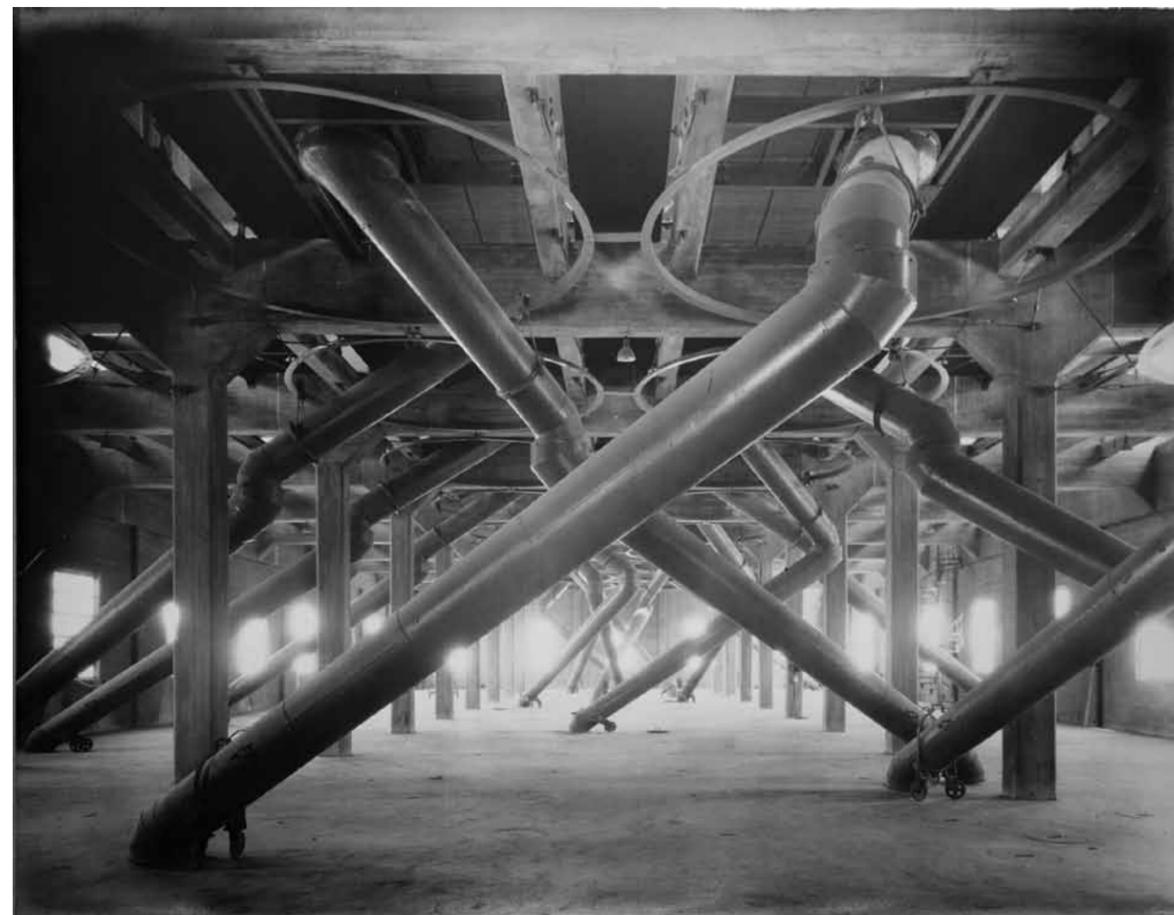
lighter, begun during the 1920s, resulted in the rise of journalistic-style photography and photographs that explored the "theater of the street." As the so-called "miniature camera" (i.e. 35 mm) became a tool of choice, other advances were made. By midcentury, increased sensitivity of films and improvements in both the speed and quality of lenses allowed pictures to be made in low light without flash and permitted quick movement to be captured in sharp focus. By the early 1950s, "instant" photography in the form of the Polaroid process made its debut, and color films, popular since their introduction in the mid-1930s in commercial and amateur applications, began to get serious consideration from photographic artists. The close of the 20th century saw the rise of digital imaging and a decline in the use of silver-based film and printing papers.

As seen in *Residents and Visitors*, process has always been a part of a photographer's tool kit but never replaced the essential commodities of insight and vision.

—John H. Lawrence



Clarence John Laughlin by John R. Miller, 1982 (1990.68.9), gift of Dr. Jerab Johnson



Public grain elevator by Charles L. Franck Photographers, ca. 1918, the Charles L. Franck Collection (1979.89.7579.14)

EXHIBITION



RESIDENTS AND VISITORS: 20TH-CENTURY PHOTOGRAPHS OF LOUISIANA

On view at the
New Orleans Museum of Art
City Park

September 29, 2010–
March 27, 2011

Wednesday, 12–8 p.m.
Thursday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Visit www.noma.org
for admission rates

IMPORTANT COLLECTION CONTINUES TO GROW



In 1976 Mr. Richard C. Plater Jr., a friend of THNOC founder General Kemper Williams, donated the Butler Family Papers to The Historic New Orleans Collection. The donation signified the legitimacy that The Collection was rapidly securing as a museum/research center devoted to the preservation of and access to historical Louisiana materials. The papers, particularly rich in research value, document the family of Edward George Washington Butler (1800–1888) and Frances Parke Lewis (1799–1875). The son of Colonel Edward Butler, one of the “Five Fighting Butlers” of Revolutionary War fame, Edward Butler was made the ward of General Andrew Jackson after the death of his father. Frances Parke Lewis was the daughter of Eleanor Parke Custis (1779–1852), Martha Washington’s granddaughter, and Lawrence Lewis (1767–1847), George Washington’s nephew. As a result, the papers reflect the family’s relations with both George Washington and Andrew Jackson.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Butler held a variety of positions, including serving with Major General Edmund Pendleton Gaines during the 1825 negotiations with the Creek Indians and commanding the District of the Upper Rio Grande during the Mexican-American War (September 1847–June 1848). In addition to

Butler’s correspondence documenting the family’s connections to Washington, Jackson, Gaines, and other prominent military and political figures of the day, the papers include Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis’s fascinating housekeeping book (published by The Collection in 1982) and letters, which include patterns and designs for clothing. After Butler retired from active service in the army, he and his wife moved to Louisiana in 1831 to be near his cousins who had moved to the area approximately 20 years earlier. As a result, the papers also document the daily operations of the several plantations owned and operated by the family in the Iberville Parish area.

Since the original 1976 donation, Mr. Plater and other family members have continued to supplement the papers with documents and personal items, including a monogrammed pocket watch, a 1789 travel guide to Holland and parts of France that Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis presented to her daughter Eleanor in 1813, and papers of allied families, such as the Gay and Price families. When viewed in totality, the papers document the lives and leadership of a prominent Louisiana family from the late 18th century through the 1970s.

Colonel and Mrs. Edward Twiss of England have recently donated two major additions to The Collection’s Butler family

holdings. Colonel Twiss’s mother, Frances Butler Ewens, was the great-granddaughter of Edward George Washington Butler. Included in the donation is a saber and scabbard that belonged to her great-grandfather. Dated between 1800 and 1840, the saber is marked “manufacture de Solingen.” Since the 16th century, the city of Solingen, Germany, has been known for the manufacturing of edged weapons.

Also included in the donation is a significant group of letters, primarily to and from Edward George Washington Butler, ranging in date from 1822 to 1890. In addition to presidents Washington and Jackson, Edward and Frances were friends of presidents Martin Van Buren and Zachary Taylor. The Twiss donation includes four letters personally written and signed by Andrew Jackson, one written and signed by Van Buren, and one dictated by Taylor. There are also 12 letters from Edward to Frances and one from Edward to his future mother-in-law discussing Frances.

Through the ongoing generosity of the descendants of Edward George Washington Butler and Frances Parke Lewis, the materials documenting the legacy of this exceptional Louisiana family will be available to family members and researchers for generations to come.

—Alfred E. Lemmon



Edward George Washington Butler, 1865 (76-48-L.2), gift of Mr. Richard C. Plater Jr.

Letter from Andrew Jackson to Butler, April 13, 1827 (2010.0042.3), gift of Colonel Edward Twiss

Letter from Butler to Frances Parke Lewis, July 27, 1825 (2010.0042.2), gift of Colonel Edward Twiss



Top: Edward George Washington Butler’s saber and scabbard, between 1800 and 1840 (2010.0123.1–2), gift of Colonel and Mrs. Edward Twiss; bottom: detail from saber

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- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala evening
- lunch with the executive director

DONOR PROFILE:

Nadia St. Paul Möise

In describing her love for New Orleans, Nadia St. Paul Möise recalls a line from the novel *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier: “Perhaps one should only love people as I love this place.” “That’s exactly how I feel about New Orleans,” says Nadia. Because of her deep-rooted devotion to the city, Nadia is also enamored with The Historic New Orleans Collection. “I support The Collection because of the magnificent job the institution and the people who work there are doing to preserve the uniqueness and the spirit of the region. It’s as if someone is taking care of a person you love; you have to love the caregiver. And I love The Collection for what it’s doing for our community and thus for all of us.”

Born and raised in New Orleans, Nadia came of age during World War II. Her memories of childhood are threaded with glimpses of the war’s impact on the city. Nadia spent her first 12 years in “the country,” as Jefferson Parish was considered at the time. “My father loved horses

and wanted to raise horses,” said Nadia. So, against her mother’s wishes, the family settled in Jefferson Parish. However, in 1943, gas rationing made commuting to the city, as the family did for work and school, difficult. So, to her mother’s great relief, the St. Pauls relocated to a house on First Street in the Garden District. Nadia proudly remembers her mother’s participation in the war-relief efforts. As the head of the New Orleans Hostess Committee, Nadia’s mother arranged Sunday dinners for servicemen in homes around the city. She also founded and directed the Center for Servicemen at the Beauregard House in the French Quarter. Nadia donated a scrapbook to The Collection documenting the volunteer efforts of her mother and many other women in operating the center at the Beauregard House.

After graduating from the Academy of the Sacred Heart, Nadia completed two years of coursework at Newcomb College before enrolling at Tulane University Law School. One of a handful of women at the school, Nadia was ostracized by her male classmates. But she persevered, obtained her law degree, and went to work for a fellow female lawyer who had a title insurance agency in her office. From the outset, Nadia found title work interesting because of the historical element. And it was through title work that she came to know The Collection. “I was working on a project with civil engineer and surveyor John E. Walker [immediate past president of the board of The Historic New Orleans Collection]. He would tell me about The Collection, and then he and his wife, Martha, brought me there for a visit. I immediately fell in love.”

Nadia is now a regular at THNOC programs. When asked what she would tell others who are interested in supporting The Collection, she said, “The Collection is so worthy of your support, be it financial or material. And even if



Top: Nadia St. Paul Möise next to her portrait, which she donated to The Collection in 2006; **bottom:** Nadia with the portrait’s artist, Franco Ruggiero

Antiques Forum Receives Encore Louisiana Award

The Encore Louisiana Commission, which promotes the attraction and retention of Louisiana residents ages 50 and above, selected The Historic New Orleans Collection as one of eight recipients of the Encore Louisiana Award. Presented in recognition of the importance and proven impact of The Collection’s annual New Orleans Antiques Forum, the award provided grant funding to help promote the 2010 event to be held August 5–8. In addition to the funding, the forum received promotional support in *Encore Louisiana* magazine and on the Web site, www.encorelouisiana.com.

you don’t have the means for financial support or materials to donate, you have something that you can contribute to this monumental effort to save and preserve: Volunteer, do your shopping in The Shop at The Collection, participate in the programs.”

In addition to taking in all that The Collection has to offer, Nadia loves to go out to hear music, particularly jazz. She is also an active member of Le Petit Salon, a cultural organization for women that was founded in 1924. And she is busy teaching her four grandchildren—three in North Carolina and one in Mississippi—about the rich culture of their grandmother’s beloved hometown.

—Mary Mees Garsaud

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.

MANUSCRIPTS

For the first quarter of 2010 (January–March), there were 25 acquisitions totaling approximately 7.5 linear feet.

■ Emily Flynn has donated a scrapbook documenting the early history of Le Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré from its 1916 origin to 1947. Much of the scrapbook concerns the life of theater cofounder Mrs. James Oscar Nixon who, late in life and with no prior acting experience, established the Drawing Room Players, a theater troupe based in the drawing room of fellow founder Mrs. Abraham Goldberg's Garden District residence. The players were part of a trend around the country to establish small theaters dedicated to presenting experimental works. In a mid-1920s newspaper interview, Nixon explained her enthusiasm for the "little theatre movement," which she believed would someday be "...the last bulwark of the spoken drama because of the increasing encroachments of the vitaphone [a sound system developed for motion pictures]." By 1919 the players had established themselves as Le Petit Théâtre du

Vieux Carré. Mrs. Nixon died in 1947, at the age of 90.

The scrapbook also contains congratulatory notes and correspondence from some of the era's prominent literary figures, such as local poet/folklorist R. Emmett Kennedy and fantasy author/playwright Lord Dunsany. Visiting New Orleans in November 1919, Lord Dunsany formally dedicated "to Art" Le Petit's newly renovated location on Jackson Square, helping to kick off a theatrical season featuring his works. The theater, now located on St. Peter Street, remains in operation. Other notables who signed Mrs. Nixon's scrapbook or corresponded with her include Nobel Prize-winning playwright John Galsworthy and noted Shakespearean actor Otis Skinner. (2010.0004)

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection recently acquired a late 18th-century land petition signed by El Baron de Carondelet and Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, successive Spanish governors of Louisiana. A notable addition to the Late Colonial and Early Territorial Collection (MSS 579), the document is particularly interesting because it illustrates the sequence of land grant consideration: the petition, the recommendation of the local Spanish authority, and finally the approval and ordering of the survey by the governor.

The petition was made on August 1, 1793, by James West, an inhabitant of the Natchez District, to Gayoso, Spanish governor of the area, requesting land in the district. Gayoso, who encouraged American settlement in his jurisdiction, endorsed the application and referred it to Carondelet in New Orleans. In his endorsement to Carondelet, Gayoso recommended 240 arpents, though West appears to have eventually received 470 arpents, nearly twice the recommended amount. On March 28, 1794, Carondelet ordered that the land be surveyed so that it could be awarded to West. (2010.0025)

■ Dr. Harry Lee Eskew has donated his collection of materials related to

gospel music in New Orleans. Containing nearly a dozen items, the collection includes a photocopy of the 1902 hymn "He, Who Safely Keepeth," and original programs from the Historic Second Baptist Radio Choir's 10th and 11th annual Religious Music Festival and Sermon. Also among Dr. Eskew's papers are original programs from the 1970 and 1972 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage festivals and newsletters and articles relating to music scholarship. The Dr. Harry Eskew New Orleans Hymn Collection complements THNOC's holdings relating to local music and musical scholarship.

Dr. Eskew is professor of music history and hymnology and music librarian at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, where he has been a faculty member for nearly four decades. An active scholar in hymnology with a special research interest in early American sacred music, Dr. Eskew is also a fellow of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. (2010.0052)

—*Mary Lou Eichborn*

LIBRARY

For the first quarter of 2010 (January–March), there were 20 acquisitions, totaling 40 items.

■ A rare and unusual Civil War-era almanac was recently acquired: rare, in that publications such as almanacs do not often survive their year of immediacy, and unusual, in that this almanac is printed as a single broadside sheet on the reverse of a section of wallpaper measuring 9½ x 8¼ inches. *Almanac for the State of Louisiana, 1863, Second Year of the Confederacy* was printed by Planters' Banner Print of Franklin, Louisiana, in late 1862, and contains each month listed with phases of the moon, dates of the days of the week, and sunrise and sunset for each day. Also signified are the dates and times for the beginning of each season, and a listing of "Movable Feasts," such as "Ashes—Feb. 18" and

“Easter—April 5.” The reverse of the almanac, showing the wallpaper, has a red rose design with silvery-white flourishes, green leaves, and smaller blue flowers. As the Civil War dragged on, supplies of all sorts became scarce throughout the largely rural South. Printers were sometimes reduced to extending their stock of paper by using wallpaper for a variety of printing jobs, especially for more ephemeral items such as newspapers and almanacs. In most cases where wallpaper was used, it was employed as a cover for a printed book or pamphlet. Of surviving Confederate imprints, very few are printed on wallpaper. (2010.0061)

■ Anna Bishop (1810–1884) was an English soprano acclaimed for her voice, beauty, and elaborate stage costumes. Her teacher and husband, Sir Henry Bishop (1786–1855), a very



Front and back of Almanac for the State of Louisiana, 1863, Second Year of the Confederacy, which was printed on wallpaper



popular, prolific composer and professor of music at Oxford University, is best remembered today for his piece “Home, Sweet Home.” They married in 1831, but Anna fell in love with her frequent accompanist Nicolas-Charles Bochsa (1789–1856), a French harpist and director of the King’s Theatre in London. When she left her famous husband and their three children for Bochsa in 1839, it was a major scandal. The lovers spent their years together continually on tour giving concerts first in Europe, then in North America. Their concert tour of Mexico resulted in a book, *Travels of Anna Bishop in Mexico 1849* (Philadelphia, 1852), which chronicles their triumphs, describes the glittering opera houses, and relates amusing anecdotes and characters they encountered.

Sir Henry died in London in 1855, having refused to grant a divorce to the very end. Within a few months Bochsa died in Sydney, Australia, while on tour with Anna. She eventually remarried and continued her concert career, performing in South America, China, Singapore, and India, becoming one of the most widely traveled vocalists of the 19th century. The library recently acquired a copy of “Anna Bishop’s Galop,” published in New Orleans by W. T. Mayo in 1852, a tribute to her local popularity. The piece—“introducing her celebrated Mexican songs, ‘La Pasadita’ and ‘La Catatumba’”—was arranged for the piano by the diva herself. (2010.0053)

■ *Sketches of the South and West, or Ten Months Residence in the United States* (Edinburgh and London, 1869) is a lively and opinionated account of a postretirement trip made in 1867 by British couple Henry Deedes and his wife. Although Deedes does not state what his former position was or from whence they sailed, he does describe incidents involving lost luggage, missed connections, accommodations, and various travel arrangements throughout the journey. Modern travelers could certainly identify with the couple’s situation. Deedes, a Southern sympathizer, visited New Orleans twice during this trip, describing the city and living conditions immediately postwar. (2010.0010)

—Pamela D. Arceneaux

THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION QUARTERLY

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CURATORIAL

For the first quarter of 2010 (January–March), there were 26 acquisitions, totaling approximately 2,000 items.

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection recently acquired 65 stereographs taken by Theodore Lilienthal in 1866–67. Born near Berlin, Prussia, in 1829, Lilienthal served in the Prussian army before coming to New Orleans in 1854, where he took up photography and by 1858 had a studio on Poydras Street. Initially he specialized in portraits, but in 1865 he produced a series of New

Orleans city views for the United States Quartermaster. Soon after, he began advertising stereographic views of the city. In November 1866 Lilienthal received a medal for his photographs of public buildings at the New Orleans Mechanics and Agricultural Association Fair held at the Fair Grounds, and he displayed large-scale photographs of the city at the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris.

The collection of images includes 18 from the Mechanics and Agricultural Fair, featuring the exterior and interior of the Horticultural Hall tent, J. H. Keller's Southern Soap Factory exhibit, and agricultural subjects, such as cows and fruit trees, as well as a group portrait of the fair committee. There are also bird's-eye views of the present-day Central Business District from the top of St. Patrick's Church and images of other CBD sites, such as a snowy Lafayette Square. Charity, Hotel Dieu, and the Marine hospitals, all on the section of Common Street that is now Tulane Avenue, are among the buildings documented in the collection. A variety of sites farther away from the city center are also featured, including Bayou St. John, the Carrollton neighborhood, and Orange Grove Plantation in Plaquemines Parish. A few of the stereographs are smaller versions of the large-scale prints displayed at the Paris Exposition.

After becoming ill in 1894, Lilienthal moved with his family to Minnesota, where he died that year. (2010.0095.1-.64)

■ Jean Jumer of Treasure Island, Florida, donated a collection of glass and pottery sherds retrieved from the courtyard of 810-814 Toulouse Street when the property was being restored in the mid-1970s. Jumer's late son, who lived in the ca. 1800 building for a time, accumulated the objects.

Throughout the 19th century it was not unusual for families to dispose of broken household goods in backyard privies which were later filled in. The



A snowy Lafayette Square by Theodore Lilienthal, 1866. The missing section of the fence in the foreground resulted from a fire at Odd Fellows Hall, across the street, on July 4, 1866. As the building burned, the front wall fell across Camp Street, flattening this section of the fence.

donation consists primarily of bits and pieces of broken pottery dating from the 1790s to the 1890s. There are several wine glasses, rouge and ointment pots, and broken pipe stems including one made in Glasgow, Scotland.

Also included are a number of examples of mocha ware, inexpensive utilitarian earthenware manufactured in Great Britain beginning in the 1790s. Mocha ware resembles semiprecious moss agate, which in Britain is called "mocha stone" for the port of al Mukha in Yemen, where shipments originated. Some of the pieces in the donation feature a serpentine design called the earthworm pattern. The presence of the mocha ware sheds light on the varieties of local household goods used during the 19th century, as well as the extent to which British-made pottery found its way into everyday family use in New Orleans. (2010.0092)

■ James Gundlach of New Orleans donated a collection of 34 hand-colored lantern slides depicting plants and flowers. Many showcase individual blooms, while others represent arrangements or garden settings. Taken along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the 1920s, the slides feature flora and fauna also commonly found in New Orleans and southeast Louisiana, such as climbing roses and Easter lilies.

The photographer, Mr. Gundlach's great-grandfather James M. Sherman (1854-1938), was an amateur naturalist with an interest in flowering plants. He lectured on the subject until the time of his death, using the lantern slides to illustrate his presentations. His home was a landmark in Pass Christian, Mississippi, called "Sherman's Castle." It still stands on West Beach Boulevard, having survived the ravages of Hurricane Katrina's storm surge. (2010.0018.1-.34)

—John Magill

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Sixteenth Annual Williams Research Center Symposium

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Years of Commitment

In 2010 four members of The Collection's staff celebrated major anniversaries in their employment with the institution. Through their long-term commitment to serving The Collection, they have shaped the organization's history.

John H. Lawrence—35 years

The first time John Lawrence gave any thought to working at a museum, he was in his senior year at Vassar College in New York studying literature and art history. As the final project for an art history seminar, he and fellow students developed an exhibition for the college's gallery. Little did John know at the time that developing exhibitions would be a major part of his future career. John graduated that year, 1975, and returned to his hometown, New Orleans, with plans to attend graduate school in art history after getting some work experience.

At a Tulane School of Architecture event (John's dad was a former dean of the school), he spoke with Dr. Bernard Lemann, who suggested that John inquire about employment at The Historic New Orleans Collection, a small museum that had only existed for about a year and a half. He was offered a job and, now celebrating his 35th year at The Collection, is the longest-serving employee at the organization.

"I was among the first 20 employees. It was still pretty small," John said of the institution, which today employs more than 80 full-time staff. He now serves as The Collection's director of museum programs, responsible for planning and implementing museum exhibitions, lectures, seminars, and related activities. He is also head of curatorial collections, having oversight of pictorial and object holdings numbering in excess of 300,000 items.

Despite his current job, which requires great responsibility and leadership, John is quick to point out his career's humble beginning: "I think I was hired to open and close the building," he said with a smile. "Truly an entry-level position."

In his 35 years at The Collection, John has served as curatorial assistant, curator of photographs, and senior curator. He has written and lectured widely about photography and the preservation of pictorial collections, and has served as curator for dozens of exhibitions on a variety of historical topics.

Priscilla Lawrence—30 years

"I was born drawing on something," Priscilla Lawrence, executive director of The Historic New Orleans Collection, said of her early interest in art. As a child growing up in Gulfport, Mississippi, she took art lessons beginning at age 7. "There was never any question whatsoever that I wanted to study art." This passion took shape when she studied art at Mississippi State College for Women in Columbus, earning a bachelor's degree in fine arts.

A number of years later, her love of art brought her to New Orleans, where she studied art history at Tulane University. Dr. Jessie Poesch, Priscilla's graduate

school advisor, told her about a position opening at The Historic New Orleans Collection for an assistant registrar. Priscilla began her career at The Collection in 1980, and has held several positions, including collections manager and acting director, before obtaining her current position as executive director in 2000.

"It has been a joy coming to this place every day," Priscilla said. Her interest in art history evolved into a career centered on Louisiana history, a progression that she says makes sense. "My love of art is accompanied by a general curiosity about culture, heritage, and history," she said. "And working in that capacity for a non-profit...it's a calling, not just a job."

Mimi Calhoun—30 years

At The Historic New Orleans Collection, the first thing visitors notice is the striking beauty of meticulously tended 18th- and 19th-century buildings and the lushly landscaped courtyards. Although the upkeep of these buildings is a team effort, the responsibility of maintaining their flawless appearance lies in the hands of facilities manager Mimi Calhoun.

Always sharply dressed and upbeat, Mimi manages a workload spanning many responsibilities: she oversees security and the fire-control systems, negotiates the annual maintenance contracts, maintains proof of contractors' insurance, supervises building and property maintenance, and inspects The Collection's nine historic buildings to ensure the facility's consistently manicured appearance. She has worked at The Collection for 30 years, but she came here, really, by accident.

In 1980 Mimi's good friend, who was working as a docent at The Collection,



Back row: Benjamin Rodriguez and John H. Lawrence; **front row:** Mimi Calhoun and Priscilla Lawrence

STAFF

IN THE COMMUNITY

Carol Bartels was elected vice president/president elect of the Society of Southwest Archivists. **John H. Lawrence** was appointed to the executive board of the Louisiana Historical Association.

CHANGES

The Collection welcomes seven new staff members: **Dorothy Ball** and **Michael Lee**, project personnel, publications department; **Kate Bruce**, assistant registrar; **Cath Cain**, photographic collections processor; **Lissa Capo**, Williams Research Center receptionist; **Jordana Civetti**, human resources/events assistant; and **Marguerite Frentz**, education assistant. The Collection bid farewell to four staff members: **Rachel Gibbons**, publications assistant, will attend nursing school at Louisiana State University; **Anna Hilderbrandt**, assistant registrar, moved to New York; **Mitchell Pendleton**, library cataloguer, moved to Columbus, Ohio; and **Tony Rodgers**, assistant preparator, moved to New York.

VOLUNTEERS

Daniel Jeane and **Julia Jorgenson**, docent department.

INTERNS

Jane Gruning, University of Texas, **Liz Childers** and **Eli Gay**, the University of the South at Sewanee, and **Lauri Dorrance**, the University of New Orleans, Williams Research Center; **Horacio Molina**, Loyola University, preparation department; **Lianna Patch**, Tulane University, publications department.

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

For the third year, the Williams Research Center is hosting an intern from the École nationale des chartes in Paris, a prestigious school dedicated to providing specialized training in the preservation of cultural heritage. The school has traditionally provided French cultural institutions, such as archives and libraries, with their leadership. **Marion Bernard** is cataloging the World War I papers of Rudolph Weinmann, which were recently donated to The Collection. Bernard has previously interned at the French National Archives, the Musée d'Orsay, and the Museum d'Histoire naturelle of Paris.

A second student from the École, **Pauline Gendry**, is interning with the Louisiana State Museum's Louisiana Historical Center, where she is cataloging 19th-century personal papers written in French. Gendry has previously interned at the French National Archives, the regional archives of Maine-et-Loire, and various cultural institutions in Bordeaux.

The Williams Research Center is also hosting an intern from the École du Louvre. **Elsa Whyte** is participating in the French Heritage Society's summer educational programs for American and French college students. Established in 1982, the society is dedicated to preserving the architectural patrimony of France and its legacy in the United States. Whyte has previously interned in the engravings and photography section of the French National Library and in the photographic section of the Musée d'Orsay. This summer Whyte will be cataloging the archive of Le Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré at The Collection.

was going out of town for a few weeks and asked Mimi if she would fill her position while she was away. Hesitant at first, Mimi agreed to help out, and she discovered that she *loved* giving history tours. For the next eight years, Mimi gave tours as a docent at The Collection.

In 1987 Mimi became the executive assistant and then in 1998 entered her current position as the facilities manager. "I have loved The Collection," she said of her time working here. "As a docent, I started out working one day, then increased to two, then three. As facilities manager I'm here full-time, five days a week. It's such a fun place to be."

Benjamin Rodriguez—20 years

Benjamin Rodriguez has worked at The Historic New Orleans Collection for 20 years. A native of Jinotepe, Nicaragua, he came to New Orleans in the late 1980s. He found work in a local hotel, but when the hotel closed, he needed a new job. The manager of the hotel recommended him to the buildings manager of The Historic New Orleans Collection, and he joined the maintenance staff at The Collection in November of 1990.

Benjamin holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from the Nacional Universidad de Nicaragua. He left his home country after college due to political conflict and moved to Mexico, where he worked as an accountant for the government in Mexico City for four years. Because he was not a Mexican citizen, he eventually had to leave the country. Many family members from both sides of his family lived in New Orleans, so he made his way to the Crescent City.

"I learned most of my English from working here at The Collection," Benjamin said. The institution was much smaller when he joined the staff, and he's seen it grow in number of employees and size of facilities. A few years ago Benjamin's wife, also a native of Nicaragua, and daughters, now ages 27 and 20, joined him in New Orleans.

AT THE COLLECTION

On June 8, The Collection celebrated the release of *Unfinished Blues: Memories of a New Orleans Music Man*, the memoir of Harold Battiste Jr. and the first publication in the Louisiana Musicians Biography Series. The festivities included a patron party at the Williams Research Center featuring a conversation with Battiste and co-author Karen Celestan moderated by Ben Sandmel and a performance by the Ellis Marsalis Trio, followed by a concert at One Eyed Jacks with Clyde Kerr, Jesse McBride and the Next Generation, and Henry Butler.



Alison Cody (book designer), Karen Celestan and Harold Battiste (authors), and Sarah Doerries (book editor)



Jesse McBride



Ellis Marsalis



Ben Sandmel and Walter "Wolfman" Washington



On June 12, The Collection and the Ray Charles Program at Dillard University presented *Beans + Rice: A Culinary and Cultural Odyssey*, a day-long forum on the ingredients, processing, multicultural connections, and consumption of beans and rice. **Pictured** are speakers Karen Leathem, Patricia Wilson, Jessica Harris (moderator), and Liz Williams.



On June 18, Wanda Rouzan, **pictured** here with her band, closed out the spring Concerts in the Courtyard series, which also featured the Panorama Jazz Band (March 19), the Preservation Hall Hot 4 (April 16), and Los Po-Boy-Citos (May 21). The fall series kicks off on September 24 with Tim Laughlin. Visit www.hnoc.org for the full schedule.