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University of Massachusetts at Boston

Volume 9, No. 24

February 25, 1975

American Folk Art Comes to Boston

Recognizing American Folk Art to be the product of a strong creative drive expressed by citizens from all parts of society and at all times throughout our history, the University of Massachusetts at Boston has chosen to celebrate this significant part of America's artistic heritage as its contribution to the Bicentennial events being held in Boston.

It will begin by presenting a series of exhibitions devoted to the different kinds of art objects created by our native artists as well as by sponsoring special events devoted to folk music and drama at a new Bicentennial Exhibition Hall and Visitor's Center located at 100 Arlington St.

The series was inaugurated last week with the opening of the exhibition "American Folk Art: The Hooked Rug." This first exhibition provides Bostonians with the opportunity to see a comprehensive selection of what is a uniquely native American art form. Hooked rugs originated on the Eastern seaboard and became known as "New England Rugs." Some seventy pieces dating from the 19th and 20th centuries have been brought together from outstanding private collections and such unique public institutions as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, the Newark Museum and Old Sturbridge Village. The exhibition was first seen in New York City at the Museum of American Folk Art where it was organized by guest curators Joel and Kate Kopp.

Like the more familiar patchwork quilts and weathervanes, these rugs are the results of the ingenuity and creativity with which our forefathers enhanced the utilitarian objects of their family lives. In their hands discarded cloth and worn garments were transformed into objects that both protected their families from the cold and brought color and pattern into their homes.

Animals, people and houses are favorite subjects, as are farm related activities and events of American country life. Compositions range from a single large cat or house dominating the entire rug through panoramic landscapes. One example illustrates a Christmas morning in a farm house with celebrating children scattered over the entire surface.

Color was as important as subject matter and often the strips of previously used fabric were dyed to achieve a more interesting color or combination of colors. Color and subject matter are often intimately connected. Bright reds, yellows, and blues illustrate the lively activity of "Around the Christmas Tree," while soft pastels are used for the equally joyous but more subdued scene of a wedding dance in the rug "Love Plays a Tune."

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American Folk Art Comes to Boston

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Dr. Bates Lowry, Chairman of the Art Department and of the Bicentennial Committee brought the exhibition to Boston with the cooperation of the Museum of American Folk Art in New York. The exhibition will be open daily 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. through March 30 at the Bicentennial Exhibition Hall, 100 Arlington St., Boston.

The work by the Art Department staff and the Physical Plant to prepare the exhibit and the Exhibition Hall was exceptionally professional.

The Exhibit is First Class in every way.

Phoenix Repertory Theatre Company Visits Campus

The Department of Theatre Arts, College II, invites all members of the Phoenix Repertory Theatre Company, an integrated group, on Wednesday, February 26, 12:30 - 2:00, Library Lounge, Third Floor, College II.

The Phoenix Repertory Theatre Company, which is presenting "Member of the Wedding" at the Shubert Theatre in Boston for the next two weeks, will introduce members of the cast who will discuss with the UMass-Boston audience on Wednesday "The Theatre as a Profession" and will answer questions from the audience concerning the theatre as a career. Guests and audience will meet informally over refreshments at the close of the session.

Slavet the Advocate

Joseph S. Slavet, Director of the Boston Urban Observatory, made two major addresses as an advocate for Property Tax Reform recently. In his role of consultant to the Massachusetts League of Cities and Towns, Mr. Slavet and William Flynn, State Secretary of Communities and Development, were featured speakers at the January 29th meeting of the Massachusetts Mayor's Association at the Marriott Hotel in Newton. On February 8th, at the annual meeting of the Mass. Selectmen's Association held at the Parker House in Boston, Mr. Slavet served on a panel discussing "Tax Reform and the Effects of 100% Valuation" along with Dr. Gregory Anrig, Commissioner of Education; David L. Turner, Sudbury Town Counsel; Deborah Ecker, Associate Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Corporations and Taxation; and Lyman H. Ziegler, Vice President, Mass. Taxpayers Foundation.

Public Facilities Impact

Joseph S. Slavet, Director of the Boston Urban Observatory at UMass-Boston, announced the approval by the Public Facilities Commission of the City of Boston of an observatory proposal to study the impact of new public facilities on neighborhoods of the city. The five-month study, budgeted for \$15,745, will examine the internal effects of new facilities to determine their impact on operational programs and services, analyzing the degree to which original objectives were achieved, comparing programs of the facilities with those of facilities they replaced, and determining whether the original assumptions for new facilities as to location, costs and program components have been borne out.

The study will also examine the external effects of new facilities, to determine their impact on neighborhoods as perceived by local residents and appropriate officials. The sample of public

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Public Facilities Impact (Continued from page 2)

facilities to be analyzed in depth will include three schools, two libraries, two multi-service centers (one of which includes a health clinic), two fire stations and two police stations.

Once this study is completed, a follow-up phase is planned to propose policy guidelines for future city investments in public facilities.

New Lomax Film

The Anthropology Colloquium Series is presenting Alan Lomax who will introduce the first Boston showing of his new film Dance and Human History, at 12:30, Wednesday, February 26 in room 203/205 on the second floor of College I.

This film is the first to look at body language cross-culturally. Analyzed by a new system called Choreometrics (dance as a measure of man), Mr. Lomax and his associates have discovered intimate links between movement style and cultural adaptation, and between dance style and the role of women in a society. The film is drawn from a research file of over 200,000 feet of dance films from around the world, much of it rare footage from archives not normally accessible.

Alan Lomax, America's foremost folklorist, is the author of many books, among them Folksongs of North America, Folk-song Style and Culture, and Mr. Jellyroll, a biography of Jellyroll Morton. Best known for his collecting work in the United States, he has also edited the Columbia World Library of Music record series. He is currently director of the Choreometrics Project, Department of Anthropology at Columbia University.

College Placement

In the Winter issue of the Journal of College Placement, Gardner Yenawine, Director of Vocational Counseling and Placement, has some provocative views of faculty, students, and members of student affairs staffs.

The theme of his essay is that in order to survive the future, placement officers must learn to concentrate as much time on their role as educators as on placement activities.

Some Yenawine quotes:

"We must continuously develop services and programs that are responsive and therapeutic. In addition, we must identify and implement programs to deal with special or unique career development problems within the population, such as those arising from institutional and general social racism, or, similarly, resulting from the impact of sexism; problems of retarded or arrested development; or the special problems exhibited by returning adult students."

"The liberal arts curriculum is not vocationally or professionally oriented. Nor is the faculty. Yet, many of the entering freshmen link their decision to go to college with either vague or explicit vocational considerations. The faculty understands this but is not inclined to pay much attention to the implications for teaching and learning.

This lack of attention has created a sort of collective guilty conscience, especially prevalent among the tenured, more tradition-

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College Placement (Continued from page 3)

bound faculty. This group holds considerable power on campus and directly influences policy in student affairs as well as in academic affairs. The faculty tends to see the placement office as the office solely concerned with nothing more than finding relevant career opportunities, i.e., jobs for graduating seniors. This attitude is not an uncommon phenomenon, and it is a real obstacle to overcome in any serious attempt to redefine priorities in career planning and placement offices."

"As efforts in the educational area become more obvious, there will be a need to de-mystify the help students can receive from involvement in programs and services emanating from placement offices. Finally, let us hope that vigorous efforts in this area will succeed where rhetoric, professional titles, office labels, and token votes in the university senate have failed, and that the perceived differences between ourselves and our colleagues on the faculty will be minimized."

Harbor Gallery

A new exhibit "The Posed Figure" opened yesterday at the Harbor Gallery, College II and will continue through March 14th. The exhibit of drawings and watercolors executed during group drawing sessions is shown Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Among the artists are DeWitt Hardy, George Burk, and Pat Hardy.

Some recent reviews

Sean O'Casey: The Man and His Work by David Krause came under Shawn O'Connell's non-rose colored glasses in a Boston Globe review. While admitting the author has first-rate credentials, O'Connell writes: "Krause tells his story well -- straight and with love. He has nothing but sympathy for O'Casey who called the sentimental symbol of Ireland, Kathleen Ni Houlihan, 'a ragin' divil;' he has full love for O'Casey's hatred of Ireland's 'murdherin hate.'

But the heart and scholarship, alas, have their limits. Krause is such a partisan that he automatically defends his hero even at his worst; Krause, for example, foolishly chides Yeats for legitimate objections to 'Tassie,' even makes a half-hearted attempt to defend O'Casey's sad propaganda plays.

On the West Coast, Arnold Beichman (Visiting Professor of Politics at the University of British Columbia) in the Vancouver Sun writes about Joseph C. Goulden's The Benchwarmers: The Private World of the Powerful Federal Judges. "What Goulden has done excellently," says Dr. Beichman, "and in a balanced manner, is to bring together into one place all these exposes plus his own highly revealing interviews with unnamed lawyers and judges. He details the politicization of the judicial selection process and the immunity of the judges from any kind of real supervision by their peers. He concludes, however, that 'a few rogues and scoundrels are the price one must pay for an independent judiciary.' meaning one which is non-accountable to president or Congress save in the case of impeachable offences."

Conservator

Frank O'Brien has returned to the campus to help solve some monumental problems of energy conservation. His expertise will be enhanced with everyone cooperating in the use of light and heat. The fuel surcharge on our electric bills alone is enough to make the strong weep.