



The Ellarslie Muse

A Newsletter for Members of the Trenton Museum Society

Spring 2007



From the Director's Desk...

It is with great pride that I report to you -- the members of the Trenton Museum Society -- the progress of the Collections Management Committee, educational programs and museum exhibitions.

The collection has taken a great leap forward under the direction of board members Brenda Springsted, Brian Murphy, Paul Trosko, and (soon-to-be-back-on-the-board!) Carolyn Stetson. With the help of a few college interns, the bulk of the work upstairs in the attic is nearly complete with only a few more items to go. The Collections Management Committee is now in the process of entering the Larry Paul Collection of Scammell restaurant ware in preparation for a late June exhibition. Alicia Rodriguez is logging in all of the Scammell, and Rich Willinger is tackling the tedious job of logging-in all of our ephemera, yeah Rich!!!

The educational programs have taken on new life with a great boost of energy from Judy Sears, Nicole Yull, Carolyn Stetson, and the aid of NYU graduate student Eunji Shim. Eunji is a tremendous asset to our small, but dedicated and impassioned museum staff and has been working an average of 12 hours a week on education. She has even carved out time to help with exhibit changes.

Speaking of exhibits...the 25th Ellarslie Open is currently on display until June 24.

"A Mind's Injustice: Or, the Minds in Justice" -the collaboration with McCarter Theatre Center that chronicles the life and times of Elizabeth Packard and Dorothea Dix will be on view through June 10th.

Already the fall line-up includes: the Garden State Watercolor Society, Michele Post and Robert Beck (affectionately called Post/Beck) and we start off the New Year with the Biennial K-12 Trenton Public Schools Show.

March 2008, marks my tenth anniversary at Ellarslie Mansion with a very special exhibition of the work of Jules Schaffer-a man whom I describe as a surrealist sculptor--and the art of Kristen Lerner, the very first winner of the Ben Whitmire Purchase Award. I am very much looking forward to the new season.

Finally, we need your help in any one of a number of ways...Let's start with the simplest: Shop at Molly's for your gift-giving needs! Gift Store volunteers, Mary Kay Girmscheid, Carol Hill, Nicole Yull will gleefully help you fill your orders. They are doing a terrific job from the buying and merchandizing of the items, to the point of sale transactions. Tell your neighbors, co-workers, and friends about the store, too. Proceeds from sales at Molly's support the Trenton Museum Society which, in turn, supports so many of the Museum's exhibits and events.

Encourage your various organizations and communities to take advantage of our group tours and catered luncheons offered by the Museum Society. This is a low-cost, wonderful way to raise awareness (as well as funds) for the Museum, to potentially increase membership and generate volunteer participation. These group tours also provide a great forum in which to connect with others of similar interests.

As we are expanding, we need more shelving for the collection. We continually seek artifacts donations, and we need to finalize the transformation of the upstairs with the purchase of six additional exhibit cases. The custom cases are not prohibitively expensive: these come in three and four-foot sizes and they are available for \$600.00 per foot. We are looking to raise approximately \$15,000 for all 6 cases.

Anyone or any group that donates money towards the purchase of a case will have his (their) name(s) engraved on a brass plaque that will be mounted on the case.

We need your continued support for any or all of these aforementioned items. We have come a long way because of you, our members, and we hope that you will join us as we grow and move forward into the future.

I cannot begin to express my gratitude for all you do for the Museum.

Thanks for your support

Brian O. Hill, M.A.

THE ELLARSLIE MUSE

is a publication of the
Trenton Museum Society
P.O. Box 1034
Trenton, NJ 08606
(609) 989-1191

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MISSION OF THE TRENTON MUSEUM SOCIETY

The Trenton Museum Society is a volunteer, non-profit organization which supports Ellarslie, the Trenton City Museum. This museum was established to collect, conserve, and display tangible items that represent the culture and traditions of all Trentonians. Collections, changing exhibitions and public programs are supported by the museum to advance the historical and cultural significance of Trenton, its people and its industries. The Trenton Museum Society supports the acquisition and conservation of the permanent collection and originates programs to sustain and nurture the cultural life of Trenton and its artists and to foster aesthetic awareness in fine and decorative arts.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Jennifer Concha Nancy Nicholson
Don Leibowitz Paul Trosko Jane Rosenbaum



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Trenton Museum Society

**PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL**

It's never easy to say goodbye to an organization and a group of people who have been such a large part of your life for such a long period of time. Unfortunately, I find myself in the unhappy situation of having to do such an unfortunate task. After five years with the Trenton Museum Society - three as a trustee and two as its president - I've come to the end of a long and pleasant journey.

I want to take just a moment to thank all of the people who made being TMS president such a positive experience - my trustees, my committee chairs, my executive officers, members of the society, volunteers and of course, museum director Brian Hill. I know this worthwhile and vibrant organization will continue to provide fabulous artistic, educational, musical and community programs. This group works tirelessly to serve a community it loves so well and it was an honor to be part of that experience. Thank you everyone and all the best in the future!

Jennifer Concha
TMS President

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Trenton Museum Society will be held on Wednesday, May 23, 2007 at 6 pm to be held at Ellarslie Mansion in Cadwalader Park. The purpose of the meeting includes the election of Trustees to serve for the 2007-2008 year, report on activities of the board for the last year and any other business that has come before the Society. All members are invited to attend.

MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunday - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Closed Mondays and major holidays

Phone: (609) 989-3632 Website: www.Ellarslie.org
Fax: (609) 989-3624 E-mail: TMS@Ellarslie.org



The Trenton City Museum at Ellarslie Mansion is owned by the City of Trenton, Douglas H. Palmer, Mayor, maintained and operated by the Department of Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture, Division of Culture. This program is made possible in part by the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission through funding from the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, A Partner Agency of the National Endowment of the Arts, with additional support from the Trenton Museum Society.

Art Scene 2007

By: Judy Sears, Education Committee Co-Chair

Art in the Park is a program providing Art classes at our museum for area children and adults. The winter session began on January 27th and ran every Saturday through February 24th. The classes were taught by local certified Art Educators and varied in topics from the art of making books to creating Mardi Gras masks. The sessions were broken into two groups. The morning session was dedicated to children in kindergarten through third grade, while the afternoon session was for older children and adults. Response to these workshops was fantastic with several sessions at the 12-student maximum.

Also at the museum this winter was our Thursday After School Program. Instructor Rebecca Erickson treated students from the neighborhood schools to free Art classes. The students studied the current art exhibits in the museum and created their own works from that experience.

This spring, for the first time at Ellarslie, we also offered several 6-hour workshops in the Arts for adults only. The classes took place on Saturdays in February, March and April running from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Two of the sessions offered in this new program featured Diane Smith teaching Pine Needle Basketry and Diane

Frascella teaching Mosaic Tiling. An extra added bonus with this new program was that any New Jersey teachers who took the courses were awarded Professional Development credits for their attendance. For more information about future arts education opportunities at Ellarslie, please see our website at www.ellarslie.org.

Many thanks to all the teachers, students and volunteers who have made all our educational programming possible!



TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT: *Brenda Springsted*

When Trenton Museum Society Trustee Brenda Springsted was in high school, she became interested in Egyptology and decided to attend Brown University because it had an Egyptology department. After one course she discovered the program wasn't for her, but she had also taken a course in American colonial archeology and found herself hooked on the subject - and on the way to a career in archeology.

For her Master's thesis at New York University, Brenda researched 18th century stoneware pottery produced at a site in Ringoes, N.J. She later researched and located in Burlington, N.J., the 17th century Delft pottery operated by London master potter John DeWilde. She currently works at cultural resource consultant Richard Grubb & Associates in Cranbury, N.J., as the Lab Director in the Archaeology Section. She, with others, is currently writing a book on Stonewares of the Mid-Atlantic.

Brenda joined the board of the Potteries of Trenton Society (POTS) in 2000. Luckily for the Trenton City Museum, Brenda moved to the Cadwalader Heights section of Trenton about three years ago - where the proximity of the museum and Brenda's background in

New Jersey pottery created a perfect match. Brenda joined the museum board and is currently co-chair of the Collections committee, which is charged with acquisition as well as restoration, maintenance and storage of the museum's collection. She and the other committee members have been very busy cataloguing and researching a collection of over 700 pieces of Scammell-Maddock pottery that was recently donated to the museum.

As a member of both POTS and the Trenton City Museum boards, Brenda acts as a liaison between the groups and hopes to bring them together where there are areas of mutual interest. For example, POTS held a symposium at the New Jersey State Museum, and Brenda organized a display of Trent Tile molds at the Trenton City Museum in conjunction with the POTS event. Next fall she will be curating an exhibit for the 100th anniversary of Cadwalader Heights, where not surprisingly many executives of the Trenton potteries lived.

Brenda enjoys her association with the Trenton City Museum and hopes to help generate interest in ceramics and also bring forward the cultural history the museum holds. For its part, the Trenton Museum Society is thrilled that Brenda has brought her expertise in and enthusiasm about pottery to the board.

~ REFLECTIONS ~

A LOOK BACK THROUGH THE SEASON

By: Brian O. Hill, M.A., Director, Trenton City Museum

FOOD AS ART

The Trenton City Museum proudly kicked off its twenty-eighth season with *Food as Art*. The exhibition showcased works by James Freeman and John Murdoch. Theirs were still life subjects which, over the years, have been described as the "poor painter's models" but here, they were obviously not. These scenes were carefully chosen to allow the viewer insight into their process. Painting stills has been considered a means by which an aspiring artist could easily hone his craft in preparation for his chosen life's journey. Jim and John have truly taken it to a very fine art. During this exhibit, scores of patrons came to visit, to sit, and to enjoy what Jim and John presented. The artists welcomed us to step into their world. The viewers were constantly entertained: patrons reported being overwhelmed by John's magnificent still life images of gold leaf and beautifully hand-made frames or entranced by Jim's world of delicately detailed servings from his "Huck Finn" imagination of Illinois rivers, creeks and caves.



FAIRYTALES AND INTIMATE CIRCUMSTANCES

"I remember the first time I knew I wanted to be an artist. I was five years old and had been given a bag of soft clay as a present. Feeling exhilarated over having received such a marvelous gift, I set to work trying to create an Indian maiden. ...I remember how special it felt, to have the ability to create such a magical object. Right there on the spot I knew I wanted to be a sculptor, for what could be more perfect than creating objects which became alive? At the same time, I became obsessed with fairytales and read them voraciously." This statement from Susanne Pitak Davis and the following from Carmen Cartiness Johnson best define the theme of this fall exhibit.

Carmen mused, "Being self-taught, I started painting scenes from childhood summers spent in Arkansas with my grandparents. I began painting after my grandmother passed. My very first painting was from a picture of my grandmother bending over petting a dog. Her body positioning in the painting was the same as the photograph. I added a house, trees and a fence. Although, the image was very raw, I felt I had stories to tell, from memories of women connecting in intimate circumstances."

Carmen added, "I paint people in everyday situations, people in their own assumed privacy. I usually don't paint

figures with faces, and would rather let their body language and clothing address their character and define them. The places these people inhabit are mostly of my own creation."

Carmen's playful use of colors would evoke jealousy even for Paul Gauguin. Her scene of a dozen or so faceless adults, loitering in a living room drinking apple martinis is priceless.



The public enjoyed the work even more: smiles were wide and the laughter abundant as our visitors strolled through the galleries saying, "this is just wonderful!"

TWIST OF FATE

Prior to the show, I visited these four artists (Campbell, Cook, Dellosso, and Mader) in their studios. Starting the day in Brooklyn and working through Manhattan to West New York, I experienced the work in the studios of the four artists. Each had an energetic imagination so diverse, that I became very excited about the how their work would appear in Ellarslie Mansion. There were many media represented at this exhibit from pencil to plaster, oils and acrylics to pastel and glass, sculpture in alabaster, marble, plaster, brass and bronze.

Naomi Campbell's talented command of any medium is quite evident. Many of the viewers were enamored with her watercolors.

Steve Mader, on the other hand, is just as gifted with the delicate touch he applies to marble, wood, wire, or plaster bringing his imagination into three-dimensional life. The wire sculpture of a ¾ size female fascinated the audience - old and young alike. Most wanted to know how he had started such a piece and what was he thinking when he had conceived it!

Janet Cook's work is a wonderful mesh of complex repetitions and extreme boldness in pastels. Her work is inspiring and her use of color in her pastel compositions reminds me of the playful era of the sixties. Her oil paintings are deeply evocative, generating much discussion and conversations among the viewers.

Lastly, we speak of Gabriela Dellosso. To be taken back in time by the masterfully composed and detailed oils, exquisitely presented and framed...leaving no



detail untouched is simply a joy. Gabriela has become such an accomplished master at so young an age. Most of her work is very large in scale, post-Renaissance in style with a touch of surrealism on the side. Her use of light demonstrates her masterful touch and her shadows hide everything, including blue jeans and sneakers.

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE?

The works presented were in a myriad of media, as life is, multifaceted and multidimensional. Everything from the drawings, fashion, paintings, photographs, porcelain, sculpture, textile, poetry and prose contained in this exhibit can evoke, provoke, emote and even promote "love"...or, do they?

The art reminded the viewer of the delightfully, sweet smell and texture of velvety chocolate, the scent of a freshly cut rose, or the romance of a by-gone era -- all which ignite within us that fire and passion of a love deeply felt. The period garments, vintage Valentine's Day cards and postcards, war-time love letters, China, ceramics, hotel memorabilia, and current works by John Ennis and Deborah Raven invoke this very nostalgic and dulcet affection.

Works of Sarah Stengle and Robert Beck reminded us of the hurt sometimes inflicted by Cupid's arrow.

The fiery, passionate love reminiscent of Eros - the Greek God of love - was also seen in the photographic images of Ricardo Barros and Catherine Stroud, the art of Karen Guancione and Paul Matthews and the ceramics of Applegate, Cybus and Isparky.

First, we traveled back in time to walk through the dressing rooms and intimate memorabilia of notable Trenton's turn-of-the-century brides and ceramic figures (that often stereotyped the female). Then, in the opposite gallery, we saw the works of contemporary artists Barros, Beck, Ennis, Guancione, Matthews, Stengle, and Stroud...all questioning, "What is this thing called love?"

PETER CALLAS AND MARGARET KENNARD JOHNSON

Peter and Margaret had their opening reception on Saturday, March 3, 2007. The collection of wood-fired ceramics and hand-made paper printmaking from these two marvelous artists provided a wonderful stimulus for the visual and the tactile senses. The general sense from the many fans of Maggi was the same. As one visitor remarked on opening night, "We all love her work and have been to many of Maggi's openings, but have never seen it in the same light as it was displayed at the Trenton City Museum." Peter Callas was equally appreciative, stating, "I never thought that pairing my work with a printmaker and papermaker would do what you have demonstrated here, I am extremely honored to be here with Margaret."

The viewers were treated to a carefully balanced display of handmade paper and wood-fired ceramics, allowing them to peek into the myriad of twists and turns needed to present these materials in both their natural and manipulated states. Maggi's work, pressing layers of handmade paper together with snippets of wire and beads, creates a very live and animated style demonstrating both the gentle and dominating aspects of paper. Some of her work was displayed unframed, allowing the natural, tactile relationship between the paper and clay to come through. Peter's work, very aggressive and naturally organic, almost demands the paper sit up and pay attention, while at the same time, Maggi's paper patiently waited and demonstrated the essence of passive elegance to the clay. The lecture was equally stimulating with many guests inquiring about the process of papermaking or the difficulties of Anagama kiln firings. There were many questions from those who attended ranging from development and process, to inspiration and technique. It was a great exhibition and great gallery talk.



Images presented:

Fruit Bot with Lime Spice
Drop Booties by John Murdoch;
Gauguin Angel by Susanne Pitak Davis;
Untitled by Steve Mader;
Onward by Margaret Kennard Johnson



ACME RECEIPTS PROGRAM

Did you know that just by shopping at your neighborhood Acme Superstore you could help support the Trenton Museum Society??

TMS has elected to take part in the fundraising opportunity "*Acme Tape Saver Program*" offered by the good people at Acme Superstores!

Every time you shop, just save your BLUE cash register receipts and bring them to Molly's the museum store at Ellarslie Mansion.

Acme Superstores will donate 1% of the total receipts received to the museum society.

So shop at Acme, save those receipts and help support the museum!!!

A SPECIAL "THANK YOU" TO PATRON-LEVEL AND ABOVE MEMBERS

Every year, the Trenton Museum Society extends a special thanks to its members at the Patron level and above. The Museum Society appreciates all of our members, but would like to specially acknowledge the following members for their extreme generosity:

Douglas Bushnell and Betty Wold Johnson

Edward Dippold and Debra D'Arcangelo

Gail Szenes

Heritage Village at Lambertville

Clare Estates

Chris and Laurie Brashier

Jim and Ann Carlucci

Brian and Beth Daly

Dan Dodson and Michelle Emerson

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Sarah Unger

Martin and Barbara Warfel

Norman Webster

J. Jay Smith and Mark Williams

Women Who Mean Business Association,

Charles Tarr and Roy Ziegler



Are you an avid internet shopper? Why not combine your love of internet shopping with a chance to support the Trenton Museum Society?!? Simply log on on to shopformuseums.com, select the Trenton City Museum as your choice of charitable institutions and watch the donation percentages pop up for all your favorite on-line shopping locations like Amazon.com, Barnes&Noble.com and many more! Your purchases will help generate funding for all the programming you've come to love and enjoy at Ellarslie! So shop away and help the society today!



Musical Notes



By Nancy Nicholson - Music Committee Chair

Love is in the air, springtime is here, the bathrooms are finished...and music is at our Museum!

This year our Music Committee at the Trenton City Museum has created a complete concert series for our members. The season began by inviting Fred Miller back for a Valentine's Day Lecture in Song: *What is this thing Called Love?* Over 40 people attended and we were given a Valentine present of a concert sponsorship by TMS Board Member Chuck Lorimer's Accounting Firm, Zimmerman and Lorimer. A delicious tray of cookies was also donated by Pennington Market.

Our next concert was a Gospel Concert by radio host and recording artist Eric Gambrell - who has the number one gospel radio show afternoons on Trenton's WIMG radio 1300 AM. He was supported by 30 members of The First Baptist Church of Pennington Choir. The love and dynamic energy of this fabulous spiritual group was beyond uplifting! Many thanks to TMS board member and choir member Beverly Mills for creating delicious homemade refreshments to accompany the event.

The Duchess - Doris Spears will return on Friday, May 18 at 7 p.m. for

a special concert: *The Duchess and Lady Day...A Soul Connection*. Doris is an internationally acclaimed jazz singer and Trenton resident, and has thrilled our audiences with her dramatic interpretations of jazz, blues, gospel and standards. For more information about Doris Spears, visit:

www.singinspears.com.

And back on Friday June 1 & Saturday June 2nd - the Trenton Community Music School will return for a recital of student and professional performances. This event will be free and refreshments will be provided by the TCMS community.

On Sunday June 3 at 2 p.m., we welcome back Geoffrey Dorfman for a concert themed "From Vienna to Moscow" featuring the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Scriabin. Enjoy a beautiful sunlit Sunday afternoon listening to this virtuoso performance.

On Friday, July 27 at 7:00 p.m. we will open the doors and enjoy great music and fabulous food on a hot summer night as we welcome back Joe Zook and Blues Deluxe for an evening of Summer Blues.

Fall plans include a return engagement by the Eric Mintel Quartet on

Friday September 28 at 7 p.m. The Eric Mintel Quartet has played at the Kennedy Center and they turned our museum into a sophisticated jazz club last fall. A classical concert by pianist Marion Zarzeczna is scheduled for Sunday October 21 at 3 p.m. Ms. Zarzeczna is a Trenton resident who has performed many times at the Trenton War Memorial. She teaches at Westminster Conservatory and has played to great acclaim all over the world.

Our concert series has grown tremendously over the past year and to keep ticket prices low (\$10 for Trenton Museum Society members, \$15 for non-members), sponsorships are vital to our continued success. We appreciate asking our patrons reserving tickets at 609-989-1191 - it helps us to plan for the concert when we have an idea of how many people to expect.

Our board members and members of the Music Committee have donated their time and energy to attending and promoting the concert series. We are very happy to hear from any individual or organization who would like to help sponsor a concert. Please contact Nancy Nicholson, Music Committee Chair at NNicholson05@msn.com.



Gandid Snaps

Trenton Museum Society
P.O. Box 1034
Trenton, NJ 08606

**The Trenton Museum Society
welcomes your membership!
Why not ask a friend to join!**

Senior/ Student — \$30
Individual — \$45
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Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
as 2007 - 2008 Membership Dues

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
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EXHIBITIONS

April 28 to June 23
Ellarslie Open XXV
Opening reception: May 5 from 5 to 9 p.m.

June 30 to September 9
Trenton Artists Workshop Association
Opening reception: June 30

CONCERTS

Friday, May 18 at 7:00 p.m.
Doris Spears:
The Duchess and Lady Day - A Soul Connection
(Complimentary wine and refreshments with admission)



Sunday, June 3 at 2:00 p.m.
Geoffrey Dorfman
*From Vienna to Moscow ~ featuring the music
of Mozart, Beethoven and Scriabin*



Friday, July 27 at 7:00 p.m.
Joe Zook and Blues Deluxe - Summer Blues
(Complimentary wine and refreshments with admission)

Tickets for these three concerts are:
\$10 for TMS members; \$15 for non-members.
Please call 609-989-1191 or email
Nancy Nicholson, Music Chairperson
at NNicholson05@msn.com to reserve tickets

Also performing this Spring at Ellarslie:



Trenton Community Music School
Student and Professional Performances
(these two concerts are Free and open to the public)



Friday, June 1 at 7:00 p.m.
& Saturday, June 2 at 3:00 p.m.