

the Courier



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WILLIAM H. JOHNSON FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

INTRODUCING THE COURIER. The editors are pleased to send you the first issue of The Courier, the Newsletter of the William H. Johnson Foundation for the Arts. As we begin our third year, it is a good time to review what we have done and to thank all of our loyal supporters. Please enjoy the articles and pictures. Feel free to send in comments, ideas and suggestions.



Examples of the work of Laylah Ali, the 2002 William H. Johnson Foundation Prize recipient

LAYLAH ALI RECEIVES THE 2002 WILLIAM H. JOHNSON FOUNDATION PRIZE OF \$15,000

The William H. Johnson Foundation for the Arts is pleased to announce that Laylah Ali has won the first annual William H. Johnson Prize of \$15,000. She was selected by a jury which reviewed applications submitted by talented African American and other minority artists from throughout the United States.

Laylah Ali was born in 1968 in Buffalo, New York. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Williams College in 1991 and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Washington University, St. Louis in 1994. She also attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in New York City and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, Maine. Ms. Ali has had solo exhibi-

tions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; MassMOCA, North Adams, Massachusetts; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston; and the Indianapolis Museum of Art. She also recently completed *Projects 75* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Importantly, Ms. Ali's work will be included in the 2003 Venice Biennale.

The jury also awarded Honorable Mention prizes of \$1,000 each to Laurie Jackson of Savannah, Georgia and Kori Newkirk of Los Angeles, California.

These three artists exemplify the mission of the WHJFA. Their talent, potential and professional commitment rank them among the best young artists in the country. The top prize the foundation awards will make a huge difference in the life of a promising artist, and should provide some relief from financial struggle so common to artists.

WHJFA ANNOUNCES INCREASE IN 2003 PRIZE

The WHJFA, in its unwavering commitment to young artists, is pleased to announce that its top prize in 2003 will be raised to \$20,000. The Board of Directors unanimously approved of this increase, recognizing how challenging it has become for artists to receive individual grants. The winner will be announced in December 2003.

Atwell and Rob and Jane Hicklin of the Charleston Renaissance Gallery; they made all of the events possible, and successful!

A LOOK BACK AT OUR FIRST TWO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GALAS

Our first benefit was held on Saturday, May 5, 2001 at the Beverly Hills home of Steve Turner and Victoria Dailey. It was a spectacular event, with



The founding board members of the William H. Johnson Foundation for the Arts, Bill Galloway, Bernard Kinsey, Victoria Dailey, Steve Turner and Ralph Clark, at the Turner Dailey home on May 5, 2001 (Photo Sammy Davis)

Deniece Williams singing *Black Butterfly* at the Turner Dailey home (Photo Sammy Davis)

At the Galloway home on May 25, 2002: three of the artists who donated works to the auction, Mark Greenfield, Merton Simpson and Artis Lane (Photo Natalie Sanders)

Joy Simmons, Clarence Avant, Faye Davidson and Lynn Goodloe at the Galloway Home (Photo Natalie Sanders)

WHJFA IN CHARLESTON

On October 31, 2002 a benefit for the WHJFA was held at the Charleston Renaissance Gallery in historic Charleston, South Carolina and was the centerpiece event of the Fourth Charleston Fine Art Annual. Board members Steve Turner and Victoria Dailey attended. The event kicked off with a slide presentation on WHJ by Steve Turner at the Avery Research Center for African American History & Culture. The room was packed with an enthusiastic crowd, many of whom continued on to the gala benefit dinner hosted by the Charleston Renaissance Gallery, which held an exhibition of WHJ's works. The following day, Steve Turner was on a panel sponsored by the Gibbes Museum of Art. It was a memorable weekend, and many Charlestonians were thrilled to learn more about WHJ, and to see his works back in his home state. Some great results of the event are that Karen A. Chandler of the Avery Research Center is especially interested in helping the foundation place a memorial marker to WHJ in Florence, South Carolina and that our foundation is welcome back to South Carolina for future events. The foundation extends its grateful thanks to Daria

delectable dishes prepared from the recipes of Mrs. Abby Fisher, the first African American woman to author a cookbook, *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking*, published in 1881 in San Francisco. Guests were treated to a spectacular impromptu performance by guest Deniece Williams, who sang *Black Butterfly*. Rosalyn Smith Clark, of Opera Noir, also delighted guests with an aria. On view were original works by William H. Johnson, and selections from the hosts' collection of 19th century photographs of African Americans.

Our second gala event was held on Saturday, May 25, 2002 at the home of Bill and Brenda Galloway in Pasadena, where delicious dishes were made from recipes in *The Federation Cookbook: A Collection of Tested Recipes Contributed by the Colored Women of the State of California*. This rare cookbook was compiled by Mrs. Bertha L. Turner and was published in Pasadena in 1910. Distinguished artist Merton Simpson, of New York and Paris, was the guest of honor at this memorable event. There was live music, and the Galloways collection of art by African American artists was admired by all. A silent auction took place where works of art by Phoebe Beasley, Herbert Gentry, Mark Greenfield,

Artis Lane, Talita Long and Merton Simpson were sold. The silent auction was a success, both for the foundation and for the savvy buyers who took home fine works of art. Special thanks go out to our most generous donors: Steve Martin, Angel City Links, Northern Trust and Chalone Vineyards.



Rob and Michelle Davenport at the Clark's home on June 8, 2002



A scene at the Charleston Renaissance Gallery on October 31, 2002



Marvin and Carol Dulaney at the Charleston Renaissance Gallery. Marvin is on the board of the Avery Research Center for African American History & Culture in Charleston, South Carolina.

WHJFA IN THE BAY AREA

Our third event was held at the home of Ralph and Rebecca Clark in Oakland on Saturday, June 8, 2002, where the WHJFA found a receptive audience of Bay Area guests. Steve Turner made a slide presentation on William H. Johnson at the Oakland Museum, and the party which followed was a festive occasion. The Clarks' hillside home, packed with partygoers and art, provided a beautiful setting with a splendid view of the sunset across the bay. The foundation succeeded in introducing itself to a core group of enthusiasts in the Bay Area.

WHJFA ADDS 2 NEW BOARD MEMBERS

At its meeting on December 13, 2002, the five founding board members of the WHJFA voted unanimously to add two new board members: V. Joy Simmons, M. D. and Robert C. Davidson, Jr.. Both are great additions to the board and each has a long list of credentials.

Joy Simmons, head of C. T. & Ultrasound at Kaiser Permanente in Los Angeles, has been a passionate collector of works by African American artists since 1974. She also serves as a board member on the Friends, Foundation of the California African American Museum and is the Vice-President of the

board at the Santa Monica Museum of Art. She was recently appointed to a term on the Board of Trustees at her alma mater, Stanford University.

Robert C. Davidson, Jr. is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Surface Protection Industries, Inc.. Bob currently sits on the Board of Directors of the following organizations: Morehouse College, Atlanta Georgia; Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. (NYSE); Broadway Federal Bank (NASDAQ); Fulcrum Venture Capital Corp.; Childrens' Hospital Los Angeles; The University of Chicago Graduate School of Business Advisory Council; and he is a member of the Finance Committee, Hillcrest Country Club. Previously, he served on the board of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. He and his wife Faye are passionate collectors of African American art and they have made their beautiful San Marino home into an exhibition space worthy of their neighbor, the Huntington Library.

The full board is constituted as follows:
 Bernard W. Kinsey, Chairman of the Board
 Steve Turner, President
 Victoria Dailey, Secretary and Treasurer
 Ralph Clark, Vice-President
 William J. Galloway, Vice-President
 Robert C. Davidson, Jr., Board Member
 V. Joy Simmons, M. D., Board Member

HARLEM NIGHTS COME TO PACIFIC PALISADES

Our next fundraiser will be held on August 9, 2003 at the Pacific Palisades home of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey. The theme of the evening will be Harlem Nights in Southern California and the Kinsey home will be turned into a nightclub reminiscent of one from Los Angeles' own Central Avenue. There will, of course, be live music! Artwork by African American artists will be on view, as will documents and artifacts relating to African American history. There will be a benefit auction of fine art, rare books and other African American collectibles, and special guests will be in attendance. You can be sure, as with every party at the Kinsey home and every WHJFA gala, that this will be an evening to remember! Invitations will be sent out in early July. Plan on reserving early, as this event will sell out quickly.



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