

# WHO WE ARE



*Autobiographies in Art*



*Featuring Works by:*  
**RICK BARTOW**  
**MILDRED HOWARD**  
**FAY JONES**  
**MARILYN LYSOHIR**  
**VICTOR MOORE**  
**JANET TAYLOR PICKETT**  
**JAKE SENIUK**  
**KIFF SLEMMONS**  
**CLARISSA T. SLIGH**  
**JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE SMITH**

<i>Writers</i>	Abigail Ehrlich and Sheila Mullen
<i>Editor</i>	Jennifer Reidel
<i>Designer</i>	Vikki Leib-Podry
<i>Computer Graphics Consultant</i>	Charles Reidy
<i>Photographer</i>	Richard Nicol and Vikki Leib-Podry
<i>Front Cover Artwork</i>	Clarissa T. Sligh
<i>Back Cover Artwork</i>	Janet Taylor Pickett
<i>Publication Coordinator</i>	Abigail Ehrlich
<i>Printer</i>	Consolidated Press
<i>Photographic prints by</i>	Moonphoto

**Who We Are: Autobiographies in Art** is a collection of one hundred works of art by ten artists. Ten similar minicollections are circulated to public school districts. This exhibition workbook and a video about the artists accompany the traveling exhibitions.

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*Washington State Arts Commission  
 Public Schools/Public Art Program  
 Ninth and Columbia Building  
 Olympia, Washington 98504  
 (206) 753-5894*

Public art has been placed in Washington's public schools since the passage of innovative legislation in 1974. Unlike any other state in the country, Washington's public schools are seen as viable and important environments for exhibiting the art of our time. Using the regional system of Educational Service Districts, the public art collection moves between schools and reaches students and their communities in rural as well as urban areas.

**Who We Are: Autobiographies in Art** features the work of ten artists who were selected by a jury based on the way they expressed their experiences visually, on their technical expertise, and on the artwork's appeal to young people. Artists were free to interpret the theme "Who We Are" in any way they wished. Some tell their story, some carry forward family histories, some create universal images.

The exhibition attempts to ask and answer some questions commonly asked by art viewers—*Who made this? Where did they get the idea? What's the artist like? Is he or she like me?*

Look for clues that will tell you something about who these artists are and why they selected these images and techniques to express themselves. The answers will not be found on the surface of the art alone. In addition to the information resources of workbook and video, we suggest you tap your most accessible fact finder—you. Within the files of your own memories, motivations, emotions, and dreams are universal clues about "who we are."

Abby Ehrlich and Sheila Mullen

# RICK BARTOW

was born in 1946 near South Beach, Oregon. His family is from the Mad River band of the Yurok people. In 1928 his grandfather moved the family from California and purchased land on the Oregon Coast where Rick, his wife Juliann, and their son now live. When Rick was five years old an aunt encouraged him to draw with her. Now, forty years later, she brings him paint brushes and art supplies from garage sales. Rick is a graduate of Western Oregon State University and a Vietnam war veteran.

## *Titles of the Art*

Coyote, Crow I and II, Crows, Dog, Hawk I and II, Me, Owl, Salmon

When Rick Bartow makes a self-portrait he uses a mirror and his wealth of knowledge about the animals that live near his home on the Oregon coast, where his family has lived for four generations. There the hawks, owls, crows, coyote, salmon, and dogs are considered friends with individual personalities and human traits—or traits we define as human.

The artist says he watches the animals and learns from them. "Mr. Hawk is a daily sight at our house. He is a source of learning an appreciation of beauty and grace," says Rick. Mr. Crow, as the artist calls him, is a trickster and an aggressive, noisy bird. In Native American mythology Crow was so annoying to the Creator that he was made black for punishment, so Crow envied other birds for their bright colors. To Rick, the caw of the crow sounds like "Give me. Please, give me." Coyote, or *Tsmegok* in Yurok, has the potential to be either good or bad. He is a combination of teacher and mischievous, forgetful fool. Salmon are admirable because their life cycle reflects that their life is lead correctly.

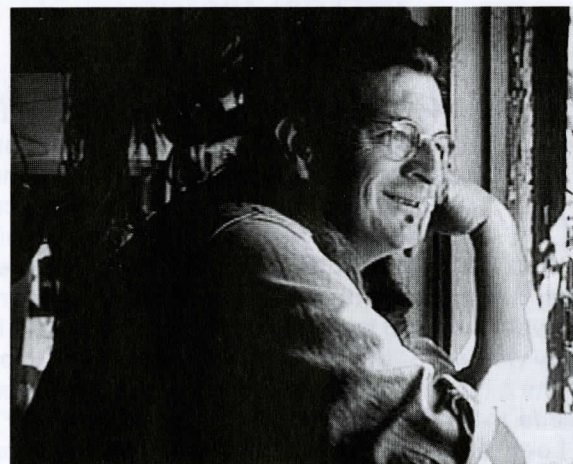
Along with pencils and pastels, the artist uses erasers as drawing tools. He uses several boxes of erasers in a year. The erasers are used to cut through layers of color to create lines or "renew areas" that he reworks. For Rick Bartow, creating art has been a lifelong undertaking, a healing tool during difficult times, and a precious part of his family's life.

## *Reflect*

1. Did you approach this work with greater measures of caution or confidence? Did you have any sense that you were being observed?
2. What was your first emotional response? After spending more time with the work, did that change?
3. Though the artwork is stationary, is there any feeling of movement? Why?
4. How would you describe the artist's relationship to the animal/bird in the work? Do you see transformation or co-existence? Conflict or harmony? Is one stronger than the other?
5. How would you describe the "voice" of this art?
6. What purpose does the hand serve?
7. Why is the animal/bird's name printed backward?
8. How would you describe the technique the artist uses for applying pastel and pencil to the paper? Does it remind you of anything? Where

does it seem deliberate? Where does it seem spontaneous? Can you deliberately make things look spontaneous? What effect does this have?

9. If you were to come upon this man/animal composite, what would you need to lure it toward you? Scare it away? Be able to study it?



## *Connect*

*"To draw a hawk, you must watch him—Crow the same. And to draw emotion I must observe myself . . ."*

\*Select an animal to which you have access for an extended period of time. Observe and make notes on its physical appearance, behavior in its environment, and

response to you. Next, imagine yourself as the creature you are observing and make notes, from its point of view, about your appearance and behavior. Make statements about each other for the benefit of those who have never seen either one of you.

*"To live, to really be alive is the hardest job you do everyday, you know. Because a lot of times I get trapped in preconceptions of what was, or what should be, and I forget to just be."* \*Be your own doctor. Write yourself a prescription that describes a remedy for ingesting (taking in) too many mixed messages about who you are. Keep the prescription close at hand and determine if it's advice that works. If not, rewrite your prescription.

*"In Yurok mythology, not unlike any other people's mythology, there are always animals who are given voices like people. So in a sense, you see animals as being people and people as being animals."*

*(The Yurok people of Northern California and Oregon believe that at one time animals and people were able to speak to each other.)* \*What stories or myths involve animals with human traits and voices? Which of those characters do you remember having a personality much like your own? What's to be gained from imagining animals to have human traits?

*"You have to listen to the muse (creative spirit) when it's talking to you, or it just goes on. And if it goes on, you miss that beautiful statement, that moment you could have done something."* \*Think about the voice you hear

when you feel encouraged to step outside "the usual"—to problem solve, comment, or document something as only you can do (ex: to write your feelings rather than curse your foes; to sing a song instead of sending a card; to draw your fear before it paralyzes you; to dance down the hall to music only you can hear). Draw a replica of that encouragement in your ear.

*Bartow believes that animals are another way of looking at ourselves, "as if through another window."* \*List as many phrases as you can in which we refer to animals to explain a human behavior or

activity (catting around, hungry as a bear, hawkish politics, dog tired). Make a list that animals would use if they did the same thing with humans.



Hawk II

*Bartow's connection to the land was nurtured by his uncle who Bartow says "could read the mud flats." He taught him to watch the relationships between the various life forms and respect their power and fragility. "Nothing lasts but elk teeth and the mountain."* \*Who in your life has been a positive role model and source of wisdom? Write them a letter about what they taught you and how you are using or plan to use that knowledge as you mature. Create an envelope for the letter that describes their unique addition to your life.

## Express

Take a mental walk through the wildlife around your home, yard and neighborhood. Make a quick list of those creatures you regularly interact with or observe. Granting them human attributes and personalities, choose one you feel connected to—one you could imagine yourself becoming and flourishing in as a member of their species. Using only pencil, chalk, pen, crayon, eraser, and the language of line, create a composite self-portrait of the image you share with this creature. Remember, this is a mental image, not a natural history document. Write a contemporary myth that deals with the blending of your two lives.

## Expand

- ☉ Take a look at the artwork of Hieronymous Bosch, Pieter Bruegel, and early Sumarian carvings.
- ☉ Examine Greek mythology for animals with human traits.
- ☉ Read about Jane Goodall's study of gorilla behavior.
- ☉ Investigate the different kinds of art papers available to someone working with pastels.
- ☉ Consider contemporary forms of transformation (transformer toys, plastic surgery).
- ☉ Read about the power of myth through the studies of Joseph Campbell.
- ☉ Investigate the poems of Louise Erdrich.

# MILDRED HOWARD

was born in 1945 in San Francisco. Her parents and nine brothers and sisters moved to the West Coast from Texas before Mil was born. She is the tenth and youngest child in her family. The artist is the mother of twins and recently became a grandmother. She is artist coordinator at the School in the Exploratorium, a science center, in San Francisco.

## *Titles of the Art*

Stories from Caney Creek:

Dickenson; Galveston; LuLu, Pa and Mildred; Mildred and Mama Dear; Miss Mildred; Miss Midred and her Sisters; Prairie View; Uncle Frank I and II; 3406 Avenue H

Mildred Howard's *Stories from Caney Creek* are assemblages made from found objects. The series commemorates the people and places of her mother's childhood in rural Texas. The artist has created this illusion of memories locked in a windowpane by printing family photographs onto the panes of salvaged windows and then painting and embellishing each with bits of memorabilia. Most of the photographs came from her namesake, Aunt Mildred, who died in 1990 at the age of 101. Neither of Mildred's parents, Mama Dear and Daddy Jam, had brothers or sisters, but they each had many aunts and

uncles. The artist refers to her great aunts and great uncles as aunts and uncles.

When she was a child, Mildred's mother told her many stories about the family which seemed magical to her. Everyone in her family, except Mildred, had lived in Texas. Later when Mil was old enough to spend summers in Texas she collected stories from her Grandmother LuLu (famous for her teacakes) and her Aunts Lily, Dell, Bert, and Ella who were born in the 1870s and 80s. Mildred remembers listening for hours while LuLu and Lily exchanged stories in Tut, an African-American dialect. The names of two works of art—*Dickenson* and *Galveston*—are the towns where her aunts lived.

In *Miss Mildred and Her Sisters* Aunt Mildred and her sisters Lena, Sammie, and Mable are shown as young women in Sunday dresses seated on the running board of a new car. Miss Mildred (the proper Southern address for one's

elder) is holding a bouquet of flowers. In another window two cousins sit with a car. In the early twentieth century most people used horse and buggy in Galveston, Texas. Mildred's relatives were among the first people in the area to own cars.

In *Miss Mildred and Mama Dear* we see the artist's mother and great aunt feeding chickens together. Miss Mildred was

Mama Dear's kindergarten teacher and she and her niece were lifelong friends. Framed in a small window that is attached to the surface of the big window is Miss Mildred's husband, Uncle Frank, carrying his hunting gun. In *LuLu, Pa and Mildred* we see the artist's grandparents and

great aunt in front of a family house in Van Vleck, Texas, in about 1910. This work is decorated with a window box filled with sarsaparilla bottles. Each "story" has its own relics: tiny perfume bottles, house numbers of old addresses, and oval celluloid buttons that the artist chose because they resemble melons. Every surface of the windows and frames have been thoughtfully altered to create intimate portraits of family members. One hundred years of oral history have been interpreted and saved in the windows.

## *Reflect*

1. Is this window open or closed?
2. Is the written memory more powerful before you look at the images or after?
3. Is the visual memory a comforting one? Why? Is the memory complete? Did the artist intend it to be?
4. As you look at the artwork does it tend to fade away or come into focus?
5. Can you hear the artist's voice when you read her remembrance? What does she sound like?
6. What are your thoughts about the objects on the frame? Would they be pleasurable to hold? Do they have an age? What do they add to the work? Where do you imagine they were found?
7. Is this a "successful" way to give life to a memory? Why? Do you need to know the artist to take part in the recollection? Does it stimulate memories of your own?



## Connect

*"Research of this work was done with a 101-year-old aunt who was my mother's first teacher, and through stories told to me through my parents."* \*Find out who your oldest living relative is. Attempt to find out by phone, letter, or conversation what stories they feel are important to pass down through the generations.

Ask them to include memories of precious moments as well as significant days. Take note of or record their thoughts.

*"There are tons of stories that I heard as a child. We didn't watch a lot of television. What we did was, you know, we talked to one another."*

\*Take a look at how information is transferred in your family. Make a list of the number of ways in which information can be shared (phone, note, dinner table). Considering the method most often used in your family, design a highly effective information station to be included in homes of the future.

*"I am the youngest of ten children. The sixth daughter born to parents who were born at the turn of the century and whose grandparents were born twenty years after slavery."* \*Make a similar descriptive statement about yourself. Write down what evidence exists that would allow someone to check on the truth of your statement (photos, birth certificates).

*"I try to tell a story. And I try to talk about a segment of history that sometimes is not covered, and might not be read about in books."* \*Select a significant occurrence in our collective history from this list:

\*Vietnam War \*World War II internment camps \*Removal of the Berlin Wall \*The civil rights movement \*The fall of communism in Russia \*The AIDS epidemic \*Your choice. By seeking out people who



Stories from Caney Creek: Miss Mildred and her Sisters

experienced these events, draw out stories that were or are not part of the official reports. Illustrate one of those stories.

*"In the work, you don't want to tell everything. I mean, you want to tell enough to make the viewer create the ending—or the beginning—or a portion thereof."* \*Take a good look at the characters in Howard's memory, then re-read her story. Indulge your imagination and write a story that involves these characters and the artist. If you wish, include yourself.

## Express

Visualize your family history as a simple black box. Inside are phrases, photos, notes, letters, and questions that refer to important (and not so important) family memories. For example: \*Aunt Lena visited one Christmas from Detroit. She smelled like carnations and gave me a pair of purple socks. Mom says she's the black sheep of the family. \*Grandfather ate fried liver and onions every Friday. He looked forward to it all week. \*I got a goldfish named Bud for my sixth birthday and my brother fed it to our cat. \*Create your memory box and begin to fill it. Add things to the outside surface that seem appropriate. Consider a way for the box to temporarily "display" a changing selection of memories from inside.

## Expand

- ◎ Find out where scientists have located memory centers in the brain.
- ◎ Ask your family's best storyteller to share tales.
- ◎ Look at the artwork of Escobar Marisol and the photographs of Gordon Parks.
- ◎ Survey your windowsills and see if they collect clues about your family.
- ◎ Draw a memory on the surface of a dusty window pane.
- ◎ Find out about the process of silk-screening on glass.
- ◎ Read the poems of Sara Teasdale or the stories of Garrison Keillor.
- ◎ Write a remembrance of your own and send it to the artist.

# FAY JONES

was born in 1936 in Boston, Massachusetts. The eldest of six, Fay painted murals on the bedroom walls for the younger children and recalls always wanting to be an artist. She is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. During the academic year Fay lives in Seattle with her husband Bob, an art professor at the University of Washington. They spend summers in their home on the Skagit River, working in adjoining art studios. They have four children and grandchildren.

## Titles of the Art

"Water" series:

Canoe at Dusk, Five Kinds (Tears, Drinking Water, Sea Water, Snow, Steam), Abandoned Beach, Blue Willow Plate, Lake at Night, Deception Pass and Herons, Flood, Sea of the Imagination, Ice Skating, Artist's Pool

Fay Jones has always lived near water. She grew up in New England and moved to the Northwest to raise her family. Fay is very fond of "places where land meets water." To the artist, water has many expressions and personalities: it is romantic, destructive, and essential.

Observation is a primary source of inspiration for Fay Jones. She observes places and events, and then stores them away in her mind. When she begins a painting, images of people and places are often combined as in a dream. "I rely a great deal on memory," says Fay. "I feel strongly that certain information and images need to be connected within a particular painting—but they are almost never *scientifically* correct."

As she paints, Fay translates memories and stories into pictures. During this process, the



paintings change a great deal. As she gets new ideas, instead of starting with a fresh piece of paper, she covers the changed elements with layers of paint and paper. The layers are an inherent part of the paintings.

## Reflect

1. Is this a smooth journey for your eyes or a rocky one? Why?
2. What is a central focus of the work? How do you know?
3. What aspect of water is Jones sharing in this work? Is it a memory, fantasy, suggestion, or symbol? What makes you think that? What other aspects of water might be included in her series of ten?
4. How would you describe the perspective? What does that point of view do for the way the work communicates?

5. What seems more forceful, the colors or the shapes? What happens when two colors meet?

6. What clues do you find that the artist works and re-works her compositions until she feels they're right? What do these traces of process add to the art? What do you think Jones would tell you about the concept of "mistake" in the creation of an artwork?

7. What things do you think inspires the artist? What images might be tacked to her studio wall?

## Connect

*"I've spent my entire life on coasts, or near them, and love the place where land meets water. There is the romantic side of water, and then the fact that it is both essential to life and capable of destroying it. . . . I'm drawn to water both by being interested in it and being afraid of it."* \*Think of an aspect of life that you find both interesting and a bit frightening at the same time (lightening, wild animal, mystery novel, love, building or person on your block). Write about an imagined or real experience in which you walked the line from interest to fear, or fear to interest.

*"My paintings change a great deal in process. I would call it probing rather than experimenting. Very often, the painting with the simplest image has taken the most time."* \*Make a set of dice for which each of the twelve sides is an image (photo, magazine, drawing, symbol) of water and its many uses. Roll the dice. Create a quick watercolor sketch or drawing that combines the two aspects of water. Roll the dice again. Add to or change your original art to include the new water uses.

*When she began painting: "I basically started in the upper left hand corner and worked down to the lower right hand corner with very little reverence for perspective. And I still do, partly because I really have bad eyes. Perspective has never been something that I've conquered. And then I've reached a point where I say it doesn't matter." \*Think about something you tried, and tried, and tried to do the "right" way and finally gave up (game, musical instrument, drawing, dance steps, craft, clothes, hair). Go back to that endeavor and try again—this time with your own rules. Determine a version you can do well (remember, the rules for "right" have changed). Illustrate the new approach and title it.*

*"I started painting and drawing as a way of taking the events of my life and putting them in place. . . . I gather information all the time. Very often my paintings are filled with things that are disconnected, but are all things that have happened to me. . . . or affected me." \*You are a collector of information—a prototype for a human gathering and storing machine. Your receptors are always open, and your storage units are always being filled. You are able to filter information, store things you don't yet understand, sort experiences before filing, and take things in as words, images, feelings, and sensations. You can bring this information forward as necessary. Using an outline of your current self, fill in the components necessary to carry out your new functions.*

*"I can change things endlessly. . . . My paintings end up maybe with forty layers of paint. So it's almost forty ideas, one on top of the other. And in some*

*way, the only one you see is the last one." \*Take a detective's eye to Fay's work. Note the clues where earlier ideas are hidden.*

*During Fay's teen years, her family lived and worked in a hotel they owned. "An adult world . . . I didn't lead a '50s T.V. sort of normal life, and eventually I was grateful for it. But at the time it seemed like an awful thing to have to go through." \*Select something in your life that currently seems*



Ice Skating

*frustrating, uncomfortable, or doesn't make much sense (you're teased for taking music lessons, you help out in your family's business, you have to make room for step brothers and sisters, you go to the doctor a lot, you can't spend time with someone you find interesting). Age yourself forty to fifty years. In words or images, describe how that "something" looks with the additional perspective and wisdom of time and age.*

*"I think I was one of those kids that was borderline trouble, so people were relieved*

*that I liked to draw, because it kept me from doing other things. . . . I can understand that now, having had children." \*Ask your parents or grandparents if they ever saw you heading toward trouble and tried to steer you away. What did they do? Were you aware of what they were doing? Did it work? Is it something you still do today? Make a set of "instead cards," one side trouble, the other side a constructive alternative (slug my sister/throw a baseball against a wall; copy someone's homework/admit I don't understand; spread rumors about someone who insulted me/tell myself I'm okay).*

## Express

For the moment, allow water to take on human qualities. Think about a time when it was a friend and a time when it seemed to work against you. In the same composition, have those two personalities meet. Think about any edges they create and where you fit into the mix. Use paper, paint, scissors, and glue to illustrate your idea.

## Expand

- ⊙ List all the agencies that monitor and control issues related to water.
- ⊙ Find old photographs of yourself in or near bodies of water. Try to remember your feelings.
- ⊙ Examine the different types of paper available to artists working with acrylics and watercolor.
- ⊙ Look for her painting at the Seattle Art Museum.
- ⊙ Make a list of books that deal with water adventures.
- ⊙ Teach someone how to swim.

# MARILYN LYSOHIR

was born in 1950 in Sharon, Pennsylvania. She grew up in a large Eastern Orthodox community where she was influenced by its religious paintings and finely crafted objects. In high school Marilyn began to make art, first sculpting life-size chocolate animals for a candy shop after school, and then she moved on to painting and ceramics. Marilyn graduated from Ohio Northern University and received a Master of Fine Arts degree in ceramics and sculpture from Washington State University. She lives with her husband, artist Ross Coates, and her niece in Moscow, Idaho.

## Titles of the Art

The Last Immigrant series:

Art, Brothers-Sister, Empty Cup, Family, Father, Home, Me, Mother, Pets, Trophy

Marilyn Lysohir has been working on her series, *The Last Immigrant*, for several years. Her grandparents immigrated to the United States from the Ukraine in Eastern Europe, and brought many Old World traditions with them. Because they overcame the shock of a new country, government, culture, language, and even style of dress, the artist represents them as strong survivors and personifies them as bears. In 1988 Marilyn's grandmother died at the age of ninety-nine. She was the last Ukrainian in the family.

Being close to someone from a culture that has disappeared (the Ukraine was absorbed into the Soviet Union) made the artist aware of the finality of loss and the importance of survival. Marilyn values the preservation of all endangered things. Through *The Last Immigrant* series the artist shows what it feels like to be the last of something. She urges us not to wait until we

come to the last clean lake, last grizzly bear, or last condor before we help our world survive.

Marilyn works with porcelain to build the structures of each piece, mold the bears, and make three-dimensional impressions of her hands. The artist gives each family member a special object, food, or pastime that they connect with. We see fish, a trophy, an empty cup, a paintbrush, the Statue of Liberty (symbolic of the European immigrant experience), trees and branches (representing the family tree). She also uses photographs from moments in her family's life. In one piece we see four pictures of the artist—from a first grader with missing front teeth to a high school majorette. In a few pieces we see maps, tracing places in the artist's life, and dinosaurs, humorous and poignant reminders that nothing lasts forever.

## Reflect

**1.** Who do you think the "Last Immigrant" is? Are there any clues? What experiences are common to immigrants? What emotions?

**2.** Does the artwork ask more questions or give more answers?

**3.** What objects do you see every day that are made of clay or porcelain? How are Marilyn's objects different or the same?

**4.** What features of the artwork are hard? Soft? Forceful? Vulnerable? Which features are from the past? The present?

**5.** Whose hands are depicted? Are they signs of welcome, warning, or information?

**6.** What does "scale" mean? Which objects are "to scale"? Which are not? Does changing the scale effect something it communicates? In what way? Would you guess this artist usually works on a small or large scale?

**7.** Can there be a difference between the subject matter of an artwork and the idea behind it? Describe both as you see them in this piece. Can there be a difference between the idea (artist's point of view) and the meaning (viewer's perception)? Describe both.

**8.** How many different words can you associate with this artwork? Which of those words relate to the materials and techniques? Which relate to

the idea or meaning? In which category did you come up with more words? Why do you think that is?



## Connect

*"The last immigrant, my grandmother, died two years ago, and she was ninety-nine." \*Find out if there was a "last immigrant" in your family, or identify*

which of your ancestors made the greatest family changes in geographic location and lifestyle. Write a letter that tells them about where you are today and how their choices affected you. What photos would you send them if you could? Ask the questions you wish they were there to answer.

*Because of the nature of her work, Marilyn takes up to two years to complete a project. Observing her patience and persistence, another ceramic artist called her "a marathon runner."* \*Consider a project, of which you are particularly proud, that took a very long time to complete. Using a large piece of cardboard in a game board format, map out the "marathon course" you followed to accomplish your goal. Be sure to include: hurdles and mental blocks; outside assistance; time-outs; attitude hills and valleys; encouragement and rewards.

*"In order to work for two years on a piece, there has to be some emotional attachment or some issue that interests me greatly." The subject matter of some of Marilyn's previous work includes: the death of her grandmother; her father's stories of war; her mother's career as a Marine; her own transition to married life.* \*Determine four things from your experience or personal memory that could hold your attention for a two-year period while you documented it through art. List these experiences/issues and determine the art form you would use (dance, sculpture, music).

*"My work doesn't give answers. I think it raises questions and calls for discussion."* \*You're an archeologist in the year 2050. You have recently uncovered this artwork in a well preserved limestone bed. Make a list of the questions it raises for you in trying to understand both the individual who made it and the time in which they lived.

*"I'm always challenging myself, and one way to challenge yourself is through the idea . . . formulating it and carrying it through . . . It's basically the idea of pushing myself."* \*Identify a goal that at this time seems unattainable (become a rock star, be a billionaire, compete in the Olympics, discover a cure for cancer, fly). Fold a long strip of paper into accordion squares.



Me

On the first square, write: "Made the decision to—." On the last square, write: "Became—." Beginning with the smallest step you can take toward your goal, write a series of challenges for yourself along your accordion timeline that will lead you to the last square. Tie it and hide it someplace so you'll find it years later. Create another accordion timeline for a goal you think you can accomplish in the coming year.

*"I talk a lot about balance in my work. And a very good example of what I do is take a negative experience, something that could be hurtful and tragic, and by using that experience or idea, try to make it into a positive accomplishment."* \*Create an appropriate award for those who demonstrate balance in

their lives as Marilyn describes it. Determine who should receive your award. Incorporate their name and accomplishments into your design.

## Express

Imagine for a moment that all the different elements of your life are stars (friends, family, interests, hiding places, school). Close your eyes and picture them swirling together in your own private galaxy. Now look beyond that universe and see the things you feel you've lost in your life which now seem to be floating outside the galaxy. Create an expression of that image and your feelings. You may wish to consider: the assistance of symbol, scale, dimension, and color as communication tools; the power of positioning images within your composition; the place of your loss's memory in your existing galaxy.

## Expand

- ⊙ Find out the unique properties of cast porcelain. Identify other things in your environment made of the same material.
- ⊙ Seek information about Ellis Island.
- ⊙ Compare past and current procedures for the naturalization of immigrants.
- ⊙ Read excerpts from Polish born writer Mary Antin.
- ⊙ Trace your family roots and their movement to this country or within it.
- ⊙ Look at the artwork of George Segal, Edward and Nancy Kienholz.
- ⊙ Find out the difference between symbol and allegory.
- ⊙ Research the symbolic nature of animals.

# VICTORMOORE

was born in 1926 in Wenatchee, Washington. He grew up near Pateros, lower Okanogan County. Upon high school graduation, Vic enlisted in the service. He is a veteran of World War II and the Korean War. Vic taught public school art for twenty-seven years. For his Master of Fine Arts thesis project at Washington State University, Vic built a castle out of junk in his yard. It is a landmark in Pullman where he lives with his wife Bobbie. They have one son.

## *Titles of the Art*

Man Playing Piano II, Man at Grindstone II, Horseshoer, Woman Vacuuming II, Gardener II, Man Starting a Boat Motor II, Pool Player II, Typist IV, Tina Turner II, Crew Working

Victor Moore grew up in rural Washington during the Depression. As a boy he was friendly with hobos who worked in the apple orchards. From these people, he developed a love of wood carving and a lasting sense of resourcefulness. Now retired from teaching, he delights those around him by transforming chunks of old wood into movable, whimsical characters.

Vic observes people and looks for inspiration in their repetitive, everyday movements—up and down or back and forth—and then carves a whirligig imitating that action. The artist's warm sense of humor is often apparent. As the whirligig propeller rotates, a gardener pulls her hoe through neat rows of carrots while a rabbit waits patiently behind her. In another, a man tries and tries to start the motor on his boat. Sometimes actions are exaggerated as in the concert pianist who sits rigidly in his tuxedo while his hands play

wildly on the keyboard. Vic says that "the work has no great mystical meaning." He is just interested in who we are and showing how humorous we can be without knowing it.

## *Reflect*

1. At first glance, did the artwork seem a friend or a stranger?

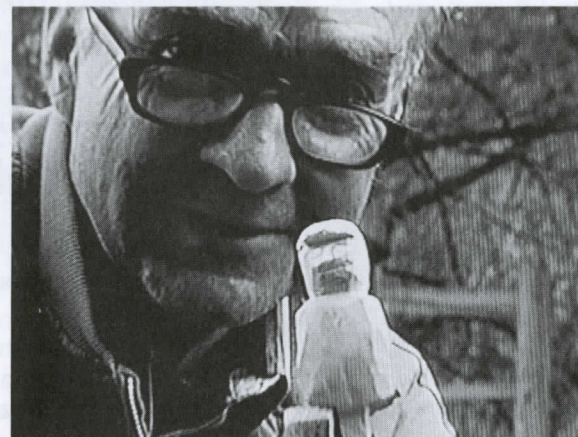
2. When was the last time you saw something similar to this? What have you been calling this type of art object (toy, folk art)? Is it the same name that the artist has given it?

3. What's old (traditional) about this? What's new (contemporary)? Where do you see evidence of power tools? Hand tools? What do you think he carves first? Why?

4. What makes this work different from any other in the collection? If you were given the artwork, where would you display it? Why?

5. How would you describe the movement you're seeing? How would it be different if powered by the wind?

6. The artist has made a series of ten of these works. What parts would you guess are the same on all ten? What other kinds of characters might be depicted?



7. What do you think the artist is like? Where does he live? What else is he interested in? What kinds of things influence him? What makes you think these things?

8. Who else would you like to see this work? Why do you think they'd be interested?

## *Connect*

*"Whirligigs are an early American folk art."*

\*Collect at least three definitions of what folk art is. What's one object in your environment that you'd consider to be folk art? Interview members of your family and find out if any of your relatives made objects that fit your definition (quilts, carvings, painted dishes, weather vanes, dolls). What happened to the art? Does anyone else in your family know the techniques they used? Make a time capsule list of any techniques or objects being made today that you think will be considered folk art in 2092.

*"Somebody said that the word 'whirligig' comes from a kind of hybrid of the words: to whirl giddily in the wind."* \*Look up whirligig in the dictionary. What else does it refer to? Create your own word for: cars that drive slow in the fast lane, people who speak with a very large vocabulary, machines that make a lot of noise and do very little, irritating insects that are impossible to catch. Imagine the whirligigs of your new people/objects.

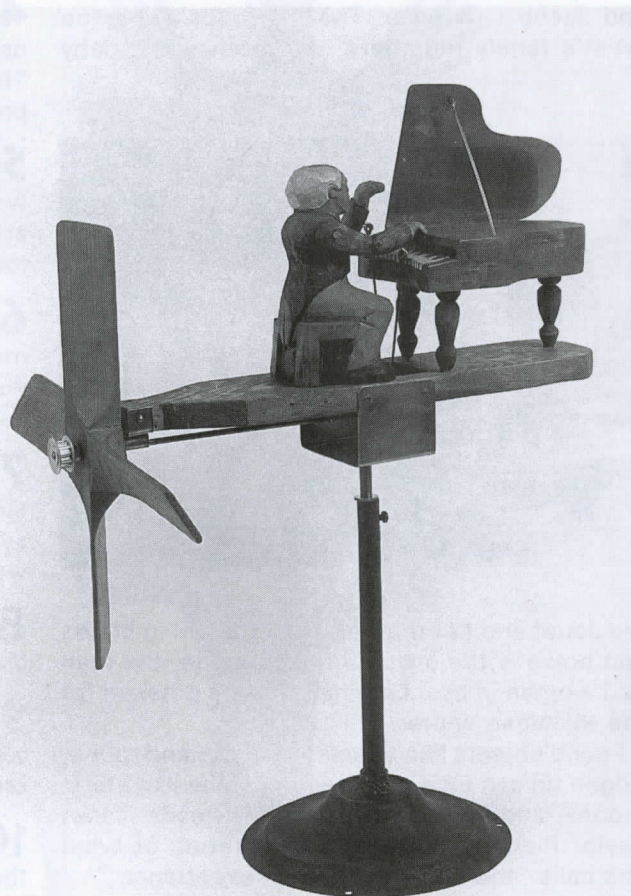
***"Technique will take care of itself if you have a good idea."*** \*Name some other people, besides Vic Moore, who might have said that. Do you believe it? Why or why not? What's a good example of his statement?

***"I like to record the work and play of people. I can exaggerate their movements and their poses. It's whimsical."*** \*What other kinds of artists or occupations require careful observation of how people move? Is observation a skill? Observe your teachers. Record the movements they most often repeat. Do a line drawing that diagrams the movement of each teacher within their classroom environment. Exaggerate or accentuate the movement by changing color or size of line.

***"Wind-driven pieces are limited by the crankshaft to up and down movements. . . .The motion must be repetitive, not random or a one-time only action."*** \*Make a list of the human tasks you know to involve repetitive motion. Put a mark by the tasks that are also performed by machine. Study the body parts used in these repetitive tasks and design a new wind-driven machine that will enable the average person to hand over most repetitive jobs to your invention.

***Moore remembers growing up in a large family during the Depression and spending time with migrant workers in central Washington. He was impressed by their self-sufficiency—making their own utensils and tools. "Everything they did was out of necessity . . . handyman art . . . I still love homemade tools."*** \*Select one tool from an average tool box (hammer, screw driver, chisel, scissors). See if you can trace its development. Has it changed much from its original form? Make a timeline that illustrates

the changes it's made (who used it, what they used it for, what it was made out of). Add to the timeline your guess about the next development.



Man Playing Piano II

***Talking about the Palouse country where he lives, Moore says, "Seasons are definite over here. . . . Summer is the time of putting in the harvest, fall is the time for harvesting, and winter is the time when I do my art."*** \*Imagine this artist at work on a whirligig. Draw him in his workspace. Consider such things as tools,

materials, season, space, light, and inspirations. What music is he listening to? What books does he have on the shelf? What might he be wearing? Consider sending him your drawing.

***Moore talks about being raised without art, but discovering it later in life. "I think there's a lot of people caught in this kind of beginning. . . .They've got to overcome that background . . . those prejudices, so they can open their selves to accept the things that are out there for us to explore."*** \*Using the most basic of mapping skills and tools, create a map of your future. Consider: I am here; the shape of the unknown; the vessels that will get me around; the obstacles in my path; the territory that has already been "discovered."

## Express

Using wood or paper, create a whirligig to be attached to your mailbox that would show you lived at that address. Consider what activity you would like to be known for.

## Expand

- ◎ Search out some white pine and try carving into it.
- ◎ Research the folk art of wind vanes.
- ◎ Find out something about the whirligig beetle.
- ◎ Trace the history of wind power.
- ◎ Find images of plank style (flat) whirligigs.
- ◎ Observe a mime in performance to study exaggerated human movement.
- ◎ Compare American folk carving with Native American, African, and Norwegian cultures.

# JANET TAYLOR PICKETT

was born in 1948 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and graduated with a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Michigan. She recalls building projects with her father and hearing wonderful stories from her mother and grandmother as a child. Janet lives in Montclair, New Jersey, with her daughter and teaches art and art history at Essex County College.

## *Titles of the Art*

Muses; In the Company of Women; Talisman, Memories and Recollection; Self Portrait in a Crazy Quilt of Memories; Talisman II: Reclamation and Ritual; I Was Birthed Amongst a Richness of Forever; Where the Muses Dwell; Portrait as a Fauve; Sanctuary; Book of Hours, Book of Days: Invocations and Meditations

Janet Taylor Pickett uses collage, painting, and drawing to create tributes to the people and the forces that created her and serve as her spiritual and artistic inspiration. Her artwork often has elements of ecclesiastical architecture: arches and crescent-shaped windows frame the artist's family, renaissance angels, country roosters, and adorned African women.

A combination of personal and worldly influences are repeated in the artist's vivid pictorial language. There are hands raised in praise, royal African Kente cloth, and treasured quilts sewn by her grandmother. There are birds, which are the artist's personal muse, roosters symbolizing Southern country life, and watermelon, sweet symbol of summertime. All kinds of people—real and mythical—inhabit her

work. Mythical people seem familiar: angels, Tahitian girls from painter Paul Gauguin's canvases, carved figures of African ancestors, and figures from the paintings of Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence. The real people are the artist's family members: the mother and baby



are Janet and her mother, the little girl in braids and bows is the artist in fourth grade, the man and woman in coats are her parents dressed for the Michigan winter.

Found objects like upholstery tacks and round, ridged tin can tops glimmer and shine like stars, moons, and haloes over people's heads. Janet Taylor Pickett's work is a celebration of what she calls "the universal human experience."

## *Reflect*

1. Is this artwork more like a poem, song, story, or conversation? Why?
2. Did your eyes scan the artwork before resting on a specific image?

3. Look at this artwork. Now look away. What do you remember? What gives the lingering images their strength?

4. What images are repeated? Do they always have the same meaning? Are certain images "framed" or "housed" in a way that shows protection or respect?

5. If you placed yourself in the art, where would you be? Why? Do you feel more like the artist is visiting your home or taking you on a journey?

6. How many different types of collage materials are there? (photos, copies, etc.) If this work is a drawing, what material sources did she use?

7. What do you think you know about the artist simply by looking at her work? Where are there symbols of her cultural heritage? Her role as a woman? Her place in the family of humankind?

8. Which of the images seem ordinary or common? Which exotic or unique?

9. What are the signs that the artist's hands were physically involved? If a machine tried to create this, how would the art change?

10. What images are the present? Which are the past? What has the artist done to blur the boundaries between the past and present?

11. If the artist were talking to you about humans as a species, what might she say about them? What would she highlight as their greatest accomplishments and most admired traits?

## Connect

*"Creativity is a focused exercise. It's focusing in on your imagination. It's having an imagination. It's being able, as a child, as a young person, to look around you and say, 'It's okay to look at the world and express myself' . . . in any color."*

\*Think of the most boring scene from your daily routine (brushing your teeth, waiting for the bus, eating the same old . . .). Draw a rough outline of that scene. Use your custom box of crayons or watercolor palette to turn that outline from ordinary to unique.

*"It's like my ancestors are working through me."* \* Sit down in the middle of your room with a notebook. Make a slow 360 degree survey of the things around you. Note anything you see that has in some way been touched or influenced by your parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents or other older relatives. Or try drawing a basic outline of yourself. Diagram the features you've been told were inherited or are like those of your parents and ancestors (height, nose, sense of humor, coloring). Include anything you think is your "original design" and may be passed on to your children or imitated by others.

*"I want you to look at my self-portrait and see yourself."* \*Write a letter to the artist. Begin with, "I took a day off today and wandered through your work." Tell her who you met, what you thought about, where you felt you'd been before, and where you chose not to enter.



Self Portrait in a Crazy Quilt of Memories

*"Ideas are like shadows, over the years they come into focus."* \*Draw yourself and one or more ideas that are currently "shadows" following you.

*"Each work of art is a narrative."* \*You are a disc jockey or talk radio host. Talk about this artwork to an imaginary radio audience.

*"Am I revealing too much?"* \*Create two self-portraits—one for the purpose of learning more about yourself, and one for the purpose of boosting your ego. Which is the most honest? Which has the most amount of information? Which would your friends or family say is most like you?

## Express

You have been asked by the university to teach a personal history course. The subject matter for the class is **you**. Using the technique of collage, create a flyer or poster that will be distributed to get people interested in taking the course. You may wish to consider class title; format for class (lecture, field trips); things people will learn about you; things people will learn about themselves; ways in which it may effect their lives.

## Expand

- ◎ Study the artwork of Robert Rauschenberg, Romare Beardon, Paul Matisse.
- ◎ Find out the origin of the word "collage."
- ◎ Ask to hear stories about your grandparents.
- ◎ Learn about the choreography of Bill T. Jones.
- ◎ Become aware of the number of times hands are depicted in works of art.
- ◎ Find out about the art of assemblage. (Look at work by Mildred Howard and Marilyn Lysohir in this exhibition.)
- ◎ Point out examples of collage in your community environment.

# JAKE SENIUK

was born in 1949 in Bavaria, Germany. When he was seven years old his family immigrated to the United States. From age seven to seventeen Jake grew up in Rockland County, New York, just north of New York City. He is a graduate of Harvard University and received a Master of Fine Arts degree in photography from the University of Washington. He is the father of two boys. Jake is the director of Port Angeles Fine Arts Center, Port Angeles, Washington.

## *Titles of the Art*

### Ten Archetypes:

Anima, Artist, Exile, Martyr, Rebel, Recluse, Sage, Shadow, Trickster, Warrior

In his densely layered sculpture Jake Seniuk has created ten self-portraits connecting some of his childhood experiences with twentieth-century history and philosophy. They are invitations to viewers to think about some famous/infamous figures in our culture and recognize archetypal tendencies in ourselves. His work is based on the philosophy of archetype, popularized by twentieth-century thinker Carl Jung. According to Jung, archetypes are models for identifying different kinds of behavior, such as the trickster or the warrior, and all people inherit several. Each person's life determines how the archetypes will develop, and whether the behavior will become public or private, positive or negative.

Archetypes have been expressed in characters from ancient myths from cultures all over the world. Jake uses archetypal characters to create his self-portraits and also to interpret some famous twentieth-century people, like Ronald Reagan, Andy Warhol, and Ralph Nader, who have been sources of

wonder for the artist. Each light box is composed of five elements: the archetype name (spelled out in drilled holes giving a glimpse of something hidden within), the anecdote (a childhood reminiscence), the personae (famous individuals who Jake identifies with the archetype, and who seem to represent extremes of the particular behavior), the attributes (written below each person), and the archetype image: Jake's silhouetted self-portraits in the central panels).

The artwork resembles medieval altar pieces that have been updated with late twentieth-century technology. The sheet aluminum boxes and doors are outfitted with fluorescent lights



and plexiglass faces. Onto these Jake added photographic images found through research, re-photographed with an ordinary camera and altered on his computer. The images were then silk-screened onto the aluminum doors. Theatrical gels provide the vivid colors beneath the plexiglass face.

Our first thought upon seeing the art is to read the story on the doors. By the end of the story we are curious about the author/artist. The light from within and the little door knobs beckon us to open the doors and unfold the mystery. Inside

we see two new people and some descriptive words about them. We move from the left wing across to the right, following the words like pages in a book. And who is the brightly colored figure in the middle? Since this is a self-portrait, is it the artist? Or is it an image of the archetype? It remains a mystery for viewers to ponder.

## *Reflect*

1. What tools or equipment were essential in creating this work?
2. What signals you or invites you to open the doors?
3. Why do you think the artist chose this design for talking about aspects of "self"? If this artwork were a human torso, what would the doors mean? What might the light signify?
4. Look up the word archetype in the dictionary. What other words do you know that have a similar meaning? What part of the artwork tells you which archetype you are seeing? Why did the artist display it with light?
5. When you read the personal story on the outside of the doors (anecdote), what connection is there to the lighted word (archetype)? Do you find a connection to anything in your life? Who do you allow access to your doors?
6. Who is represented on the inside of either door? What is their connection to the archetype? How do their public images relate to one another? If you were to imagine a line between them, could you think of anyone else who would fit on that line? Is it possible for people who seem opposites to be similar?
7. If you added the element of sound to the work, what would it be?

**8.** What archetypes are part of who you are and how you act? Are they things you can control? How did you acquire them? When do you notice them?

## Connect

*"Basically, making art, for me, is a way of making sense out of my life."*

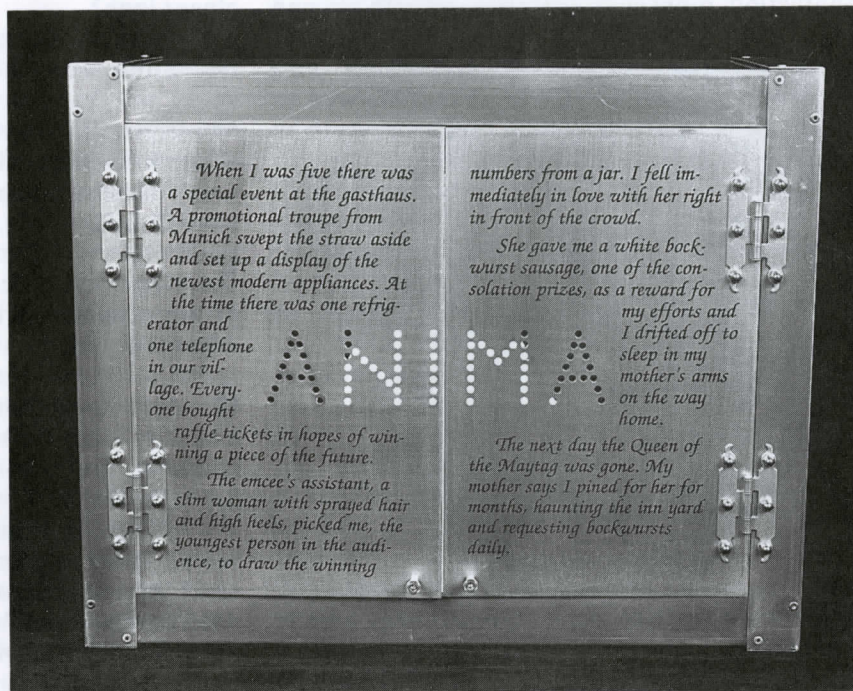
\*Why do human beings have a need to "make sense out of life"? Survey family and friends about what they do when they're trying to sort-it-all-out. Make a list of five methods most frequently mentioned. Is your own favorite method one of the five? What archetype might be driving you to make sense of it all?

*"The foundation of each piece is a short anecdote drawn from my early life and printed on the face of the doors. Each story stands as a formative encounter with the particular archetype that is the subject of the given box."*

\*Write your own anecdote or story in which you feel the archetype of this box was playing a role in how you thought or acted. Illustrate the memory and dress yourself in an "appropriate" uniform of the archetype.

*Part of Jake's sense of self grew out of his experience as an immigrant, moving from Germany to the U.S. when he was only seven.*

*"When I was young, that sense of difference was something that was very much at the surface of my mind all the time, and something I wrapped around myself."* \*Imagine yourself as a package—full of bits and pieces of who you think you are and who society says you should be. Draw a picture of the wrapping paper for this package that will identify and protect what's inside.



Ten Archetypes: Anima

*"I first became interested in art by viewing art. . . . I sensed people asking the same sorts of questions (I was asking myself), or having the same sorts of problems. It may be expressed in a different way than I would express it, but I could see that the questions were the same."* \*Looking at the other work in this collection, make a list of questions you think

the artists are asking. Identify five works of historic art whose questions, posed years ago, are still relevant today. What questions should today's artists ask as stimulation for thought about our future?

## Express

By gluing together three or more different size cardboard boxes with lids, create a table top bank of school lockers—each locker belonging to a specific archetype you think is part of your make-up. Knowing that these lockers are all part of the same unit, yet distinctly individual, personalize them to fit the needs of each archetype. Consider things the archetype needs to survive, how the archetype feels about being "exposed to the public," what the archetype likes to study, and what the archetype wants other people to know.

## Expand

- ⊙ Research archetypes in mythology (Venus, Neptune, Mercury) and contemporary advertising (the "stud," "good neighbor," "wise one," "the innocent").
- ⊙ Learn how the computer assisted in the creation of this series of artworks.
- ⊙ Find out what stories and historic personae were included in the other archetypes in the artist's series.
- ⊙ Look at primitive masks and Japanese folk art for representations of archetypes.
- ⊙ Inquire about the historic figures represented in the work—add to them.
- ⊙ Take a look at the art constructions of Joseph Cornell and the photography of Cindy Sherman in books at the public library.

# KIFF SLEMMONS

was born in 1944 in Adel, Iowa. She graduated from University of Iowa with degrees in art and French. Kiff attended The Sorbonne in Paris and studied metalsmithing in Japan. She lives in Seattle with her husband Rod Slemmons, photography curator at the Seattle Art Museum.

## Titles of the Art

Measuring Up series (two pieces on each theme):

Measuring Up to Yourself,  
Measuring Up to Parents,  
Measuring Up to Friends,  
Measuring Up to School,  
Measuring Up to the World

Kiff Slemmons creates small hands made of precious metals that are both jewelry (pins) and sculpture on a small scale. She chooses to work within the shape of a hand because it is universally recognizable and symbolic of a person, like a portrait. Within each hand in the *Measuring Up* series are chambers containing tiny objects and images that illustrate some of the artist's thoughts on growing up and being evaluated. She uses a variety of measuring and evaluating devices, including rulers, pencils, mirrors, and the hand itself. She collects and includes pieces of things that may not have value or meaning individually but, when combined like pieces of a unique puzzle, communicate big ideas in a small space.



In *Measuring Up to Yourself* the artist offers viewers a mirror to look in and two important attributes for growing up happily: confidence and sense of identity. In *Measuring Up to Parents* the puzzle symbolizes that we don't always know what parents expect, making it difficult to "measure up." The words "Look both ways" refer to the warning given to children when they cross streets alone. It also refers to parents with conflicting messages: mother may think one

way and father another, and children have to consider both to decide.

In *Measuring Up to Friends* the artist uses rulers of different sizes and shapes to show that our friends may each have different ways of measuring us. The watching eyes represent how friends'

opinions can sometimes cause us worry. Sometimes being accepted or rejected by friends is a concern, which the artist represents with a door asking, "are we in or out?" In *Measuring Up to School* we see familiar measurements of success: the alphabet all students must master, grades, graphs, and a graduation cap—the final goal. In *Measuring Up to the World* the artist suggests symbolically with a tree that as we grow we realize our individuality. We also learn that we are part of a whole, of the outside world, of nature, and of the future.

## Reflect

1. When you passed the artwork, did it yell or whisper?
2. What did you do in order to take a good look at it? What word would describe your first impression? What words come to mind after a closer look?
3. Is this jewelry or sculpture or both? Why?
4. If you were small enough to walk over the artwork, would you need to wear shoes? How many different surface textures would your feet encounter?
5. What object or representation of an object in the artwork is most familiar to you? Why? What took the most time to identify?
6. Why do you think the artist chose a hand as a central focus for her art? Does it function as a container, frame, or symbol?
7. Does "measurement" require precision tools? What symbols of measurement do you see? Is measurement always a factor in determining value? How many things can you think of that we are able to measure (size, weight, temperature)?
8. What kinds of things are measured by human observation and judgement alone? Is it usually accurate? Can you measure an artwork? What aspects?
9. Who is checking to see if you "measure up"?

## Connect

*"It's as if we have to go through a forest of measurement when we're kids."* \*Create a drawing that shows you walking through a forest of measurement and judgement, where the trees are your parents, your school, your friends, the rest of the world, and yourself.

*The artist talks of growing up in Iowa, in a relatively small family, within a small town and being shorter than many of the other children. "A minor, but interesting prejudice is that people think of small people in certain ways. Almost as though they have small ideas, cute ideas... small notions of things."* \*Write about a time you judged someone or something because of its size. Describe your feelings about that person or object and what effect it had on your words or actions. Now put yourself in the place of that person or object and write about the same incident from their point of view.

*"One of my main problems is how to communicate big ideas in a small space."* \*Think for a moment about how you define the word "big." Make a list of ten things you consider to be "big" ideas or beliefs (I'm smarter than people know; war is immoral; there's life on Jupiter; the end is near). Divide an 8 x 10 inch piece of cardboard into ten units. Using any and all materials available to you, illustrate one idea per space. Share your illustrations with others. Which were the most difficult ideas to communicate? Why?

*"I was interested in using materials that aren't necessarily associated with jewelry."* \*Select a "traditional" piece of jewelry (the real object or a magazine photograph). Using it as your model, re-create the form and basic function (ring, bracelet, necklace, pin) using materials from one of the following resource areas: your desk

drawers, refrigerator, backyard/alley, wastepaper baskets, or pockets. Design the magazine ad for your jewelry.



Measuring Up to the World

*"School has the most concrete means of measuring... but, does getting straight A's always mean that you're the smartest person in your class?"* \*The President has appointed you Chief Cheese of Education. Your first task is to reform the evaluation or grading system. Make a presentation to the President and Congress outlining your improved plan for measuring a student's abilities. Using your new system, evaluate your presentation.

*As a child, Slemmons collected and studied insects, being amazed by the precision of all the parts. "The detail, the teenyness, you know, the kind of 'monumentality' to them."* \*If you were asked to create a museum dedicated to the power of small, what would you include in your first exhibit?

## Express

The introspective toy and game company is paying you to create a new checkers game called "Expectations." Using the old checkers game as a model, build or draw the new version with one side representing the standards or expectations placed on you by your parents, friends, school, and society. While the other set of moving pieces is to represent the standards or things you expect of yourself. If you have rules for this new game, you may wish to write them out.

## Expand

- ◎ Study the traditional art of jewelry making in Africa, New Guinea, Australia, or Iceland.
- ◎ Investigate the ways in which humans all over the world decorate their bodies.
- ◎ Find out what tools are used in making jewelry and what special skills are required.
- ◎ Interview someone who measures things for a living (seamstress, butcher, cartographer, pharmacist).
- ◎ Select one standard you've set for yourself and evaluate its worth.
- ◎ Read *The Pickwick Papers*, or the *Shrinking of Treehorn*.
- ◎ Make a list of the things you think are impossible to measure.

# CLARISSA T. SLIGH

was born in 1939 in Washington, D.C., and grew up in Arlington, Virginia. As a girl she didn't enjoy school because she was advanced for her age and discouraged to study at her own level. She overcame her early academic frustrations and graduated from Hampton Institute, received a second degree from Howard University, and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Pennsylvania. Prior to devoting herself to art, she worked with N.A.S.A.'s Manned Space Flight Program in the 1960s, and later as a financial analyst on Wall Street in New York. Clarissa has a daughter and lives in New York City.

## Titles of the Art

Blue House; Good Clothes; Fooling Around; Orange House; Red Dress; Red House; Run I, II, and III; Up, up, up

Clarissa Sligh's artwork is based on her experiences of growing up in a close-knit African-American community outside of Washington, D.C. with her parents and five brothers and sisters. The family valued education, work, and participation in the Southern Baptist church.

Upon entering school Clarissa noticed that her life was different from the lives portrayed in Dick and Jane readers. She read the books with ease, but did not enjoy the characters who seemed foreign to her. She wondered why the happy characters in her school books never resembled her family and neighbors. She began to sense that society did not value her community's way of life as much as the life portrayed in

schoolbooks. In 1989, at age fifty, Clarissa wrote and illustrated a book *Reading Dick and Jane With Me* featuring childhood pictures of her brothers and sisters and a revised text.

In this series of autobiographical prints we hear the voice of a young child reading. As in Dick and Jane books, ideas and sentences are repeated (*Up, up, up* and *Red House, Blue House,*



*Orange House*). The repetitive words and sentences have an urgent, as well as rhythmic quality. The handwritten labels on family pictures introduce important people from Clarissa's childhood to viewers. As she works she imagines herself re-entering the picture frame. With stories and images we are able to imagine the aroma of bacon cooking in her grandmother's kitchen, and the fun and chaos of belonging to a large family. The artist hopes that viewers find personal parallels in her experiences and "realize we no longer have to pretend to have a T.V.-perfect or storybook life." The artwork offers a look at "life's sorrow and joy, struggle and hope."

## Reflect

1. As you read the text, can you hear the artist's voice? What does it sound like? Do you hear any specific emotions?
2. Are there words or phrases that are repeated in the text? If so, why do you think that is? Is there a rhythm to the repetition?
3. What are some things you imagine to be true about the person telling the story that the artwork doesn't show you?
4. Are the words the beginning of a story, the end of memory or a clue to an emotion? If you spend time looking at the art, do the images and text seem closer together or further apart?
5. Where is the child in the artwork? Where is the adult? Is this a story unique to African Americans? Why or why not?
6. When was the last time you told a story about your past? Did someone ask you, or did you offer it? Who in your family is the best at telling family stories?
7. What's the difference between reading this personal history and having it read or told to you? Which experience do you prefer? Why?
8. Does the artist stimulate a memory for you? Why, as an adult, is it important to remember your childhood?

## Connect

*"I use a family snapshot as the basis for my work. From there I imagine myself re-entering the frame." \*Select an old family photograph. Using a copy machine, enlarge the image until*

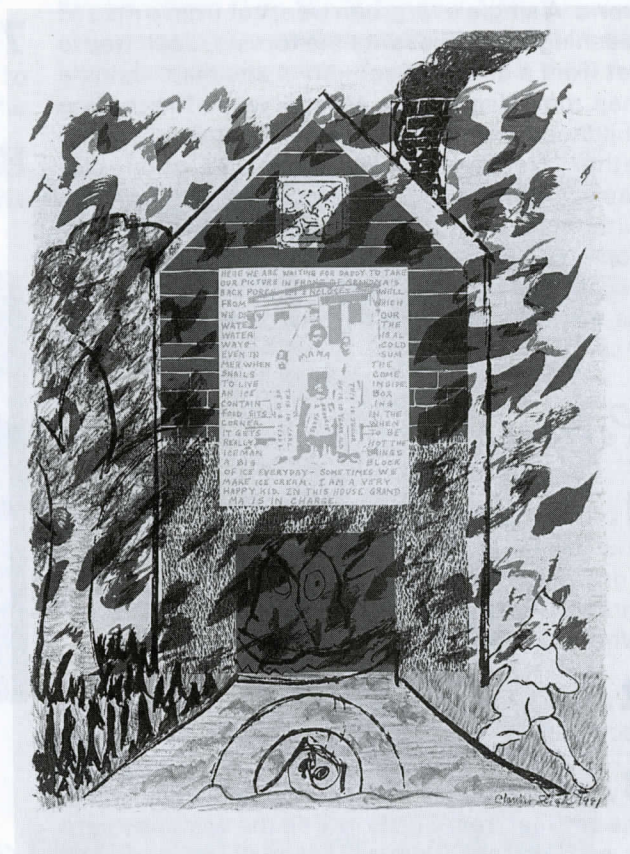
you have an 8 x 10 inch black-and-white picture. Draw yourself at your present age into the photograph. What role are you now playing? Do you feel like you'd like to change anything about the original moment the photograph captured. If so, make the changes on our copy.

*Clarissa remembers that her early experiences with school were not the best. Since she already knew how to read and write, she was asked to sit quietly as the others learned. "Another thing I hated about school was that's where I learned kids didn't like it if you were smart."* \*In the middle of a large sheet of paper, draw a circle. Inside that circle, squeeze the names of some of your classmates. Now draw a very large circle around that smaller one. Write your name on the edge of the big circle. When was the last time you felt like this? Fill in the space between the circles with words or pictures that illustrate the situation and feelings it caused.

*Even with three college degrees, Clarissa fights the feeling that she's not smart enough. She remembers a feeling in junior high that art classes were for "dumb kids" and that girls were never as smart as boys. "There's a way in which society doesn't really respect us as artists (and women)."*

\*You are a writer for the popular magazine, *What Society Thinks*. Your assignment is to find out how people on the street rate the importance of various careers. Make yourself a research graph that allows people to rate the following occupations on a 1-10 level of importance, where 1 is unnecessary to society and 10 is "can't do without": lawyer, bus driver, school teacher, poet, store clerk, accountant, artist, garbage collector, vice president, television news anchor, computer software salesperson, astronomer, homemaker, baby

sitter and farmer. Gather at least ten different opinions. Write an editorial about any conclusions you come to as a result of your research.



Red House

*"My work is influenced a lot by the church I grew up in, which was a Southern Baptist black church in a working class neighborhood, meaning that the preacher got up and gave a good, dramatic performance."* \*Think about the people in your life who seem to communicate their thoughts as though they were performing for an audience (brother or sister, teacher, religious leader, salesperson). Keeping in mind

their message and type of performance (voice, movement, gestures, props), create the perfect miniature stage and backdrop for them. Tell or write an imaginary reporter how they effected your life with their performance.

*"If you really work at what you're doing, you get respect."* \*Assign yourself a job you hate: cleaning your room, making dinner, practicing an instrument, watching after a brother or sister. Illustrate how you would do that job if: \*You hope to gain the respect of a parent \*You hope to gain the respect of your nation \*You want to respect yourself.

## Express

Think for a moment about the idea of your life's "path" so far. How long is it? How rough, smooth, straight, or curved has it been? Select a memory from that path and create a roadside marker commemorating it. Using both the format of historic markers and the artwork of Clarissa Sligh as inspiration, combine words and images to tell a perfect stranger what happened at that bend in the road.

## Expand

- ⊗ Look back to the illustrations of William Blake.
- ⊗ Learn more about the technique of silkscreen and the use of a copy camera.
- ⊗ Make a list of people who have defied assigned roles or would-be labels in their lives.
- ⊗ Look at the personal journals of van Gogh or at the presentation of Joseph Pintauro's poetry. Keep a daily journal of images and words.

# JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE SMITH

was born in 1940 on the Flathead Reservation in Montana. She moved frequently and lived for periods of time on the Nisqually Reservation in Kent, Puyallup, Yelm, and Spanaway, Washington, and in California. Jaune is a graduate of Puyallup High School and Olympic College in Bremerton. She studied art and art education at Framington State College, Massachusetts, and the University of New Mexico. She lives in Corrales, New Mexico, and lectures throughout the country on Native American art. She is the mother of three and grandmother of two.

## *Title of the Art*

### Ode to Chief Seattle

Painter and printmaker Jaune Quick-To-See Smith is a member of the Flathead Nation. Jaune's concern for the environment is linked to her heritage and experiences. Her love of nature is celebrated in the hand-painted lithographs *Ode to Chief Seattle*. In 1854 Chief Seattle, leader of the Duwamish and Suquamish people, is credited with describing how Native American people think of the world in a speech "This Earth is Precious." The speech reads, "Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods . . . is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The rivers are our brothers. . . . The air is precious to the red man, for all things share the same breath—the beast, the tree, the man, they all share the same breath. . . . We are part of the earth and it is part of us."

In *Ode to Chief Seattle* a fox, red bear, white buck, and blue horse all share the sky, earth, and

water in the artist's rendition of a harmonious world. A single evergreen tree, cut from a map of Washington, represents the forests. Each tree is cut from a different section of the map. Using a map may also be the artist's way of recording childhood memories of moving. Raised by her father, frequent moves were part of life for Jaune who worked as a migrant farm worker with her father from the age of eight. Because home and school were always changing, nature became her home and the animals her friends. As an adult these memories have become the inspiration for her art.

## *Reflect*

1. Did you follow an inside path or trail when you looked at this work? Or did you observe it from outside? If the artist were to lead you through it, where might she take you first? Next? Where could you stop and rest?
2. How many different symbols do you recognize?
3. How does the artist relate to the animals in the art (fear, respect)? How do the animals relate to one another (dominant, equal)? How do the animals relate to the land? What clues gave you your answers?
4. What do you think was the order of tasks in creating the art? What did she do first, second, last?
5. If this moment was taken out of "pause," what action would occur in the next few minutes? The next season? Fifty years from now?

6. What's the reason for many of the images seeming simple or flat? Where else have you seen pictures presented this way? How would the work change if the images were photographs?

7. Would someone your age on the other side of the globe be able to "read" this art? Why or why not?

8. Who would you like to give this artwork to? Why?



## *Connect*

"Water is endangered everywhere. I show lightening, clouds, rain, river, plants, animals, and people who need water to survive. . . . Four hands represent the races who have to work together to save our environment." \*You have been selected head of the World Council of Environmental Action. The immediate crisis is the pollution and disappearance of the world's

water systems. Your first task is a call to arms for world leaders. Like all monumental tasks, it begins with a first step. Create a symbol (or related pictographs) which represents your cause and can be "read" by leaders of all nations.

***"My work is like a diary of my interests, background, daily life, what I read, hear, and my travels."*** \*Assuming the role of this artist, make four entries in her diary that help us understand the inspiration for the images in her art.

***Raised by her father, a horse trader and migrant farm worker, she remembers, "I was always around horses and animals . . . and oftentimes, because we moved so much, they were the only friends I had."*** \*Seek out someone who moved a lot as a child (yourself?). Talk to them about how they learned to cope with change and fight off feeling lonely. Ask about what they may have missed with such a lifestyle and what they may have gained. Make a suggestion(s) to the principal about what could be done to ease the transition for new students.

***While living outside of Kent, Washington: "I read a lot of books, and the bookmobile would come once every four weeks in the summertime. So if I met the bookmobile after I worked in the fields in the daytime, at night I could read books. . . . Reading opened doors to other worlds for me."*** \*Make a personal travel log of the places you've been via the pages of books. If you have access to a world map, mark your journeys with book title flags that are attached to pins. You may need to add additional "worlds" to your travel log to include such things as (the world of magic, space, love, baseball, dreams). Consider a world you've not explored and seek out a book to take you there.

***"A lot of times, people have looked at my work and thought of it as ancient writing . . . pictographic."*** \* Find out the meaning of "pictographic." Select a word from the following list: \*Horse \*Earth \*Fire \*Child \*Shelter \*Hand. Find as many visual representations of that word as you can (other than photographs). If you can't tear them out



Ode to Chief Seattle

or photocopy them, sketch their likeness. Be sure to seek out the earliest to the most current. Create a composition using your examples that indicates a movement through time. You may wish to add the words that have been used throughout history and contemporary culture to label your object.

## Express

Learn what you can about ecosystems (a system made up of a community of plants, animals, bacteria, and its interrelated physical and chemical environment). Extend your knowledge of ecosystems to include such sectors of your daily environment as school, home, neighborhood, hang-outs, yard, or alley. Select one of these "systems." Spend time observing and making notations about the humans, animals, and plants that inhabit the area. Attempt to describe the land on which they live. Observe how they work together or against one another. What do they rely on for their existence? What would happen if one element disappeared? Multiplied? Does anything threaten the stability of the system? Using a variety of materials, illustrate how everything that occupies that space fits together. Make use of universal symbols as well as your own pictographic language.

## Expand

- ◎ Find examples of Chinese and Japanese alphabets, Egyptian hieroglyphics, and communications of early cave dwellers.
- ◎ Find out more about the Salish Indians and the contributions of Chief Seattle.
- ◎ Make a list of all the community, state, and federal agencies that deal with water quality and regulations.
- ◎ Track down the person who designed the universal symbol for "recycle."
- ◎ Bring someone in to talk to you about how the ecosystem of your community is fairing.
- ◎ Make a change in your daily routine to assist in caring for the system.
- ◎ Take on the cause of an endangered species.
- ◎ Find out more about the lithography process.

# GLOSSARY

## *anecdote*

an entertaining story about a real or fictitious incident.

## *archetype*

Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist Carl Jung (1875-1961) defined archetypes as ways of thinking and being that are inherited from the experience of all humanity. According to Jung, archetypes are part of each person's consciousness that influence our judgement.

## *celluloid*

a hard plastic-like material made from nitrocellulose and camphor, celluloid was widely used in manufacturing buttons, costume jewelry, and household goods before modern plastics were developed.

## *ecclesiastical*

relating to church practices and church buildings.

## *evaluate*

to examine carefully, to set the value of something.

## *Fauve*

*French for wild beast.* An early 20th-century group of painters and an art movement. Fauve painting is characterized by bold, non-realistic color and dramatic treatment of forms. Henri Matisse is perhaps the best known Fauve.

## *immigrant*

a person who leaves one country to settle permanently in another.

## *invocation*

the act of appealing to a higher power for assistance.

## *Kente cloth*

a silk and cotton or rayon and cotton cloth woven by the men of the Akan people of Ghana, West Africa. The brightly colored cloth was originally worn only by royalty, but now is worn widely by men for ceremonial occasions. Kente cloth is not only decorative; the weaving contains symbols and proverbs of the society. In the United States Kente cloth designs are copied on fabric and used for making clothes.

## *memorabilia*

notable things worthy of remembrance.

## *muse*

*from Greek mythology* a source of inspiration, a guiding spirit.

## *mythical*

from a traditional story originating in an ancient culture. Myths embody cultural ideals and express deep emotions with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes.

## *N.A.S.A.'s Manned Space Flight Program*

The United State's National Aeronautics and Space Administration program that sent astronauts into space in the 1960s.

## *porcelain*

a hard white translucent ceramic made by firing a pure clay and then glazing.

## *reclamation*

to restore to goodness or usefulness, also to turn away from evil or error.

## *relic*

something held dear for its age or associations with a person, place, or event.

## *reservation*

land set apart by the federal government for a special purpose, for example for use by Native American people or tribes.

## *sage*

one who possesses experience, wisdom, and calm judgement.

## *sanctuary*

a sacred place, or a place giving refuge from danger.

## *talisman*

something believed to have magical and protective powers.

## *tribute*

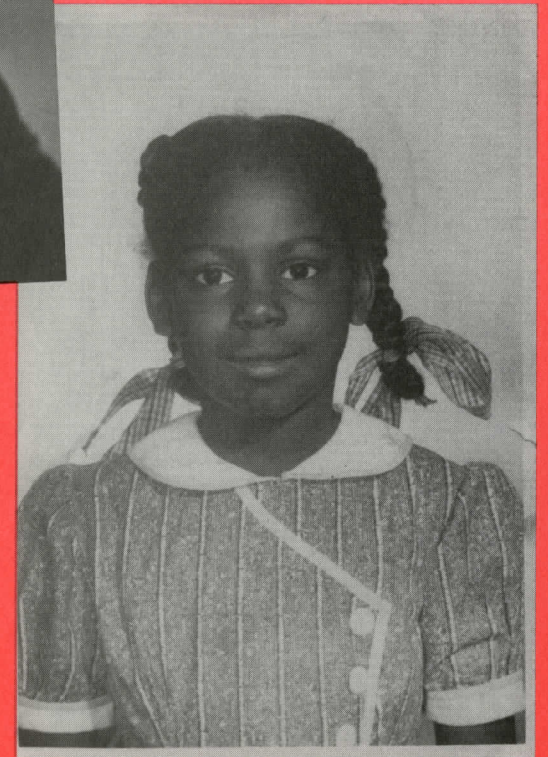
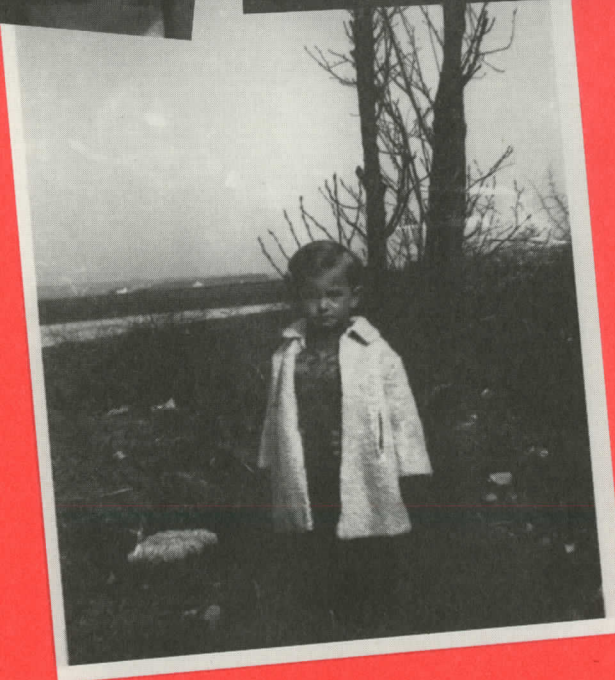
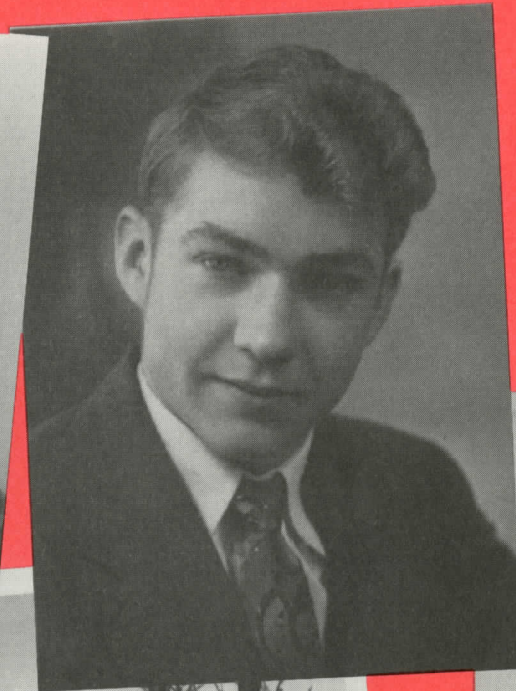
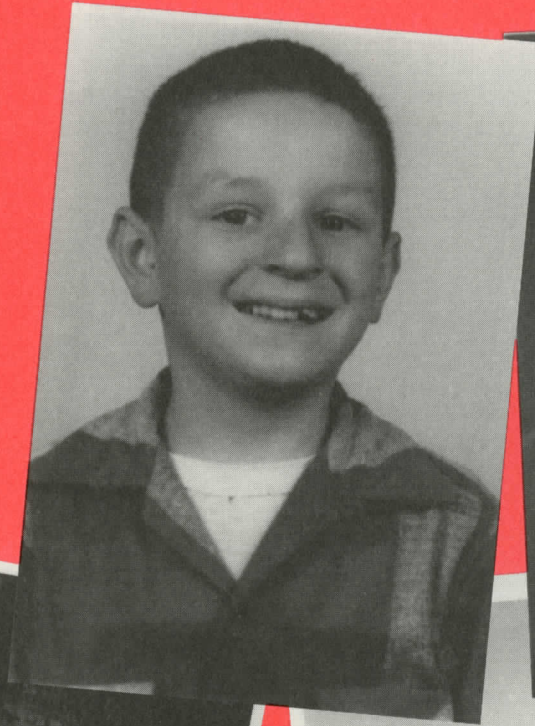
an expression of respect, admiration, or gratitude.

## *Tut*

a dialect of English in which all vowels are pronounced, spoken in rural south Texas by African Americans.

## *Yurok*

Native Americans originally from the northern coast of California. Also, their culture and spoken language.





*Talisman II Reclamation of Ritual*

*Josephine Lee 1999*