



Miss Emma by Benny Andrews  
Collection of the ARA Food Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Fourth Annual  
Oxford Conference For The Book  
*The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi*  
April 12-14, 1996



# Book Arts Display

The Book Arts Exhibit on display at Barnard Observatory throughout the 1996 Oxford Conference for the Book comes from Burke's Book Store. The exhibit focuses on the artistic features of the book ranging from pre-Gutenberg methods to contemporary viewpoints. Book Arts is a rather broad term given to any sort of artistic endeavor that has an aspect of the book involved in its creation. The role of the book is still that of information carrier, and the aesthetic concerns that these books address are being recognized increasingly by the general public.

Special thanks to Harriette Beeson, Terry Chouinard, and Sam Tickle of Burke's Book Store in Memphis, Tennessee, for the book arts display at the Oxford Conference for the Book. Burke's, established in 1875, is one of the oldest bookstores in the United States.

## April 1996 First Annual National Poetry Month A Nationwide Celebration of Poetry

**"I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear."**

**—Walt Whitman**

This April, America is singing the praises of poetry, as thousands of publishers, bookstores, libraries, schools, and literary organizations across the country celebrate the first annual National Poetry Month. This effort, spearheaded by the Academy of American Poets, will spotlight poetry and its vital place in American culture.

"National Poetry Month is a wonderful way to celebrate the richness of the voices in our midst," says Robert Hass, United States Poet Laureate. And Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney comments, "Poetry has been defined as 'human existence come to life': National Poetry Month will be a great celebration of the art and all of its rewards and promises."

A number of national events are highlighting National Poetry Month, drawing the attention of national and local media. Poet Laureate Robert Hass is hosting readings in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco; the American Poetry and Literacy Project is distributing 15,000 free books of poetry to schools, libraries, hospitals, homeless shelters, and other institutions across the country; publishers and book distributors are offering special discounts and promotional packages; and in honor of National Poetry Month and the arrival of their new fragrance, Poème, Lancôme will be conducting a nationwide poetry contest on the topic of Love.

National Poetry Month is also being celebrated in individual communities across the country. Bookstores are hosting readings and creating special book displays; libraries, universities, and literary organizations are sponsoring readings, festivals, and workshops; and teachers and educational organizations are working to emphasize poetry as an essential part of the school curriculum.

Sponsors of the Oxford Conference for the Book join in the celebration of National Poetry Month and the nationwide effort to keep America singing.



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# The Fourth Annual Oxford Conference For The Book

## Schedule of Events

The writing workshop will be in the Union Ballroom. All other program sessions will be in the Education Auditorium.

### Friday, April 12

9:00 a.m. **Writing Workshop** - Barry Hannah, director  
**How to Submit Manuscripts and Work with an Editor**  
Reginald Gibbons  
Cynthia Shearer

10:30 a.m. **Writing Workshop** - Barry Hannah, director  
**From Author to Reader**  
John Berendt  
Padgett Powell

Noon **Lunch** (On Your Own)

2:00 p.m. **Welcome**  
Chancellor Robert C. Khayat

**Robert Penn Warren: "It Was Poetry or Death"**  
Joseph Blotner

3:30 p.m. **"Go, Little Book...": Getting a Book to Readers**  
Barry Hannah, moderator  
Leigh Feldman  
Dan Frank  
Judy Long  
Cynthia Shearer

5:30 p.m. **Cocktail Buffet - City Grocery**  
(Black Tie Optional)

8:00 p.m. **Readings and Remarks**  
Padgett Powell  
Cynthia Shearer

### Saturday, April 13

9:00 a.m. **Publishing Poetry**  
Aleda Shirley, moderator  
Reginald Gibbons  
Robert von Hallberg

10:30 a.m. **Literature and the People**  
Andrew P. Mullins Jr., moderator  
William F. Winter

Noon **Lunch** (On Your Own)

1:30 p.m. **Books for Young Readers**  
Elaine H. Scott, moderator  
Stella Pevsner



2:30 p.m. **Students and the Contemporary Culture of Reading**

Richard Howorth, moderator  
Nancy Bercaw  
Anna Cremaldi  
Jay Langdale  
Lewis Nordan

4:00 p.m. **Hazards of the Book Craft in the Age of Electronic Wizardry**

John Egerton

8:00 p.m. **Readings**

Lewis Nordan  
Bailey White

**Sunday, April 14**

9:30 a.m. **Literary Intellectuals Driving into the Millennium**

Robert von Hallberg

11:00 a.m. **Readings**

Edwidge Danticat  
Reginald Gibbons

Noon **Lunch** (On Your Own)

2:00 p.m. **Fishing in the Air: A Writer's Journeys**

Sharon Creech

3:30 p.m. **Broad Daylight in the Garden of American Publishing**

Avin Mark Domnitz, moderator  
John Berendt

5:30 p.m. **Jambalaya and Musical Finale - The Gin**

(Blue Jeans Optional)

The 1996 Oxford Conference for the Book is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture with support from Square Books, Nan and Tom Davis, the Oxford Junior Auxiliary, the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council, and the University of Mississippi's College of Liberal Arts and Sesquicentennial Committee. The conference is coordinated by the Center for Public Service and Continuing Studies at the University of Mississippi.

For visitor information, contact: OXFORD TOURISM COUNCIL, P. O. Box 965, 115 South Lamar, Oxford, MS 38655. Telephone: 601-234-4680. FAX: 601-234-0355



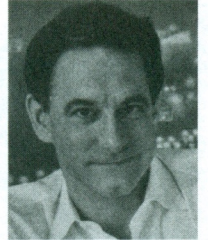
The University of Mississippi began a four-year Sesquicentennial celebration February 24-25, 1994, with Charter Day academic convocations on the Oxford and Jackson campuses and a legislative reception. The Mississippi Legislature signed the charter to form the University in 1844, making it the first institution of higher learning in the state. Four years later in 1848, the University opened its doors to the first 80 students. This observance—designed to showcase the University's academic offerings, research, and service to Mississippi and the nation—will climax November 6, 1998.



# Speakers

NANCY BERCAW is an assistant professor of history at the University of Mississippi. As part of her work for a degree in American Civilization at the University of Pennsylvania, she wrote a dissertation on family and gender relations in the Mississippi Delta during the Civil War. She has also written on American popular culture in the 19th century.

JOHN BERENDT became an associate editor at *Esquire* in 1961 after graduation from Harvard, where he had been on the editorial board of the *Harvard Lampoon*. He was editor of *New York* magazine from 1977 to 1979 and wrote a monthly column for *Esquire* from 1982 to 1995. His first book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, won the 1994 Southern Book Award, was selected as a 1995 Pulitzer Prize finalist, and is currently over 100 weeks on the *New York Times* nonfiction bestseller list.



JOSEPH BLOTNER, professor emeritus, University of Michigan, has lectured extensively in the United States and Europe on American literature and particularly on the work of William Faulkner. Among his many publications are *Faulkner: A Biography*, published in two volumes in 1974 and in a revised, one-volume edition in 1984, and *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*. Professor Blotner now lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, and is completing a biography of Robert Penn Warren.

SHARON CREECH is the author of a number of children's books, including *Walk Two Moons*, winner of the 1995 Newbery Medal and other awards. *Absolutely Normal Chaos*, based on her own "rowdy and noisy family," was published in 1995. Sharon Creech has also written two novels for adults, poetry, short stories, and a play. She grew up in Ohio and worked for the *Congressional Quarterly* and the Federal Theatre Project in Washington, D.C., before moving to England in 1979. At the school in Thorpe, Surrey, where her husband is headmaster, she has taught American and British literature.



ANNA CREMALDI is a junior at Oxford High School. In addition to her interests in reading, she plays the piano and french horn, and has been a Lions Club band all-star for three years. Anna was the 1995 Mississippi winner of the National Peace Institute essay contest and recently became an Educational Tours grant recipient—winning a trip to Europe for two weeks. An honor student, she played the part of the Wicked Witch of the West in the Oxford High School production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

EDWIDGE DANTICAT was nominated for the 1995 National Book Award and the PEN/Faulkner Award for *Krik? Krak!*, a collection of stories about the Haitian experience. The author, who moved to New York from Haiti at the age of 12, in 1981, has also written a critically acclaimed novel, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, published in 1994. She began writing seriously while attending public schools—and learning English—in Brooklyn, after which she earned an undergraduate degree at Barnard College and an M.F.A. at Brown University.



AVIN MARK DOMNITZ is president of the American Booksellers Association and chairman of the board of Harry W. Schwartz Bookshops in Milwaukee. A teacher, trial attorney, and frequent lecturer on various phases of the bookselling industry, he wrote the financial curriculum for the ABA Bookselling Schools and has written several articles and papers on bookselling.





JOHN EGERTON is an independent writer of nonfiction who has been writing about his native South since the late 1950s. Among his books are *Generations*, (1983), winner of the Lillian Smith Award; *Southern Food* (1987), winner of the Julia Child Award; and *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (1995), winner of the Robert F. Kennedy Award. *Shades of Gray: Dispatches from the Modern South* (1991) collects 13 of his articles from *American Heritage*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Southern Exposure*, and other publications.

LEIGH FELDMAN is a literary agent with the Darhansoff & Verrill Literary Agency in New York City. Among her clients is Cynthia Shearer, author of *The Wonder Book of the Air* and curator of William Faulkner's home in Oxford, Mississippi.

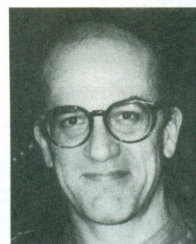
DAN FRANK is senior editor and vice president at Pantheon Books, a division of Random House. He was previously editorial director at Viking Press from 1989 to 1991. He has published John Berger, Julia Blackburn, Alan Lightman, Terry Tempest Williams, and many other authors, as well as Cynthia Shearer of Oxford, Mississippi.

REGINALD GIBBONS is editor of *TriQuarterly*, one of the premier literary magazines in the United States. He is the author of a novel, *Sweetbitter* (Broken Moon, 1994; Penguin, 1996), a story collection, *Five Pears or Peaches* (Broken Moon, 1991), and a collection of poems, *Maybe It Was So* (University of Chicago Press, 1991).



BARRY HANNAH received the William Faulkner Prize for his first novel, *Geronimo Rex* (1972), and the Arnold Gingrich Short Fiction Award for *Airships* (1978), a collection of stories. His achievement in fiction has been honored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Among his other publications are the novels *Ray* (1980), *The Tennis Handsome* (1983), and *Never Die* (1991) and, most recently, the story collection *Bats Out of Hell* (1993). He is writer in residence at the University of Mississippi.

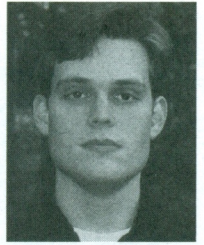
RICHARD HOWORTH owns Square Books in Oxford, Mississippi. He is treasurer of the American Booksellers Association and has been nominated as ABA's next vice president. In 1986 he received the Charles S. Haslam Award for Excellence in Bookselling. He was featured in the recent "96 Southerners to Watch" issue of the *Journal-Constitution's New South: Olympic Atlanta Magazine*.



ROBERT C. KHAYAT was named chancellor of the University of Mississippi in July 1995 and was inaugurated in the office during a formal ceremony on April 11, 1996. He studied at the University of Mississippi, receiving a bachelor's degree in education in 1961 and a law degree in 1966, and later earned a master's degree in law from Yale University. Immediately before becoming chancellor, he was professor of law and executive director of the Sesquicentennial at the University of Mississippi.

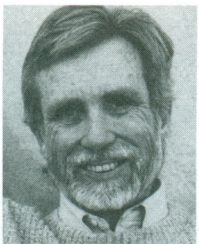
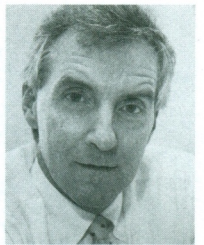


JAY LANGDALE was born and raised in Valdosta, Georgia, and graduated with honors from Mercer University in 1993 with a degree in political science. He is presently a graduate student in Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi where his work has centered on Southern intellectual history. This spring, following completion of a thesis comparing the lives and writings of Walker Percy and Richard Weaver, he will receive his M.A. degree. Then, he plans to begin work on a doctorate in history.



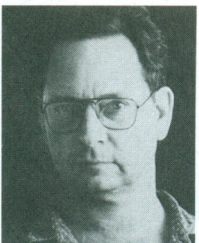
JUDY LONG operates the Old Black Dog Bookstore in Athens, Georgia. She writes about readings and booksignings in a weekly column for an Athens magazine and sponsors a monthly reading series that provides a forum for both published and unpublished authors to read from their work.

ANDREW P. MULLINS JR. is assistant to the chancellor at the University of Mississippi. He also is an associate professor in the School of Education and teaches in the Mississippi Teacher Corps Program. He previously served as a special assistant to two governors and three state superintendents of education. His book *Building Consensus: A History of the Passage of the Education Reform Act of 1982* gives an account of the political process involved in the efforts of Governor William Winter's administration to change the education system in Mississippi.



LEWIS NORDAN is the author of five books of fiction set in Arrow Catcher, a place similar to his hometown of Itta Bena in the Mississippi Delta: *Welcome to the Arrow-Catcher Fair* (1983), *The All-Girl Football Team* (1986), *Music of the Swamp* (1991), *Wolf Whistle* (1993), and *The Sharpshooter Blues* (1995). *Sugar Among the Freaks*, a collection of his stories with an introduction by Richard Howorth, will appear this spring. Lewis Nordan has received the Southern Book Critics Circle Award, two Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters awards, and three American Library Association awards. He teaches at the University of Pittsburgh.

STELLA PEVSNER wrote her first novel for young readers at the request of her son, the eldest of her four children. That was in 1968—and 16 books ago. That first book—*Break a Leg!*—has been followed by such titles as *A Smart Kid Like You*; *And You Give Me a Pain*, Elaine; *How Could You Do It*, Diane?; *The Night the Whole Class Slept Over*; *I'm Emma: I'm a Quint*; *Jon, Flora, and the Odd-eyed Cat*; and, most recently, *Would My Fortune Cookie Lie?* Stella Pevsner, an Illinois native who grew up in Lincoln and now lives in Chicago, has won many awards for her writing.



PADGETT POWELL has received the Prix de Rome of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Whiting Writers Award, and a nomination for the National Book Award. He is the author of three novels—*Edisto* (1984), *Edisto Revisited* (1996), *A Woman Named Drown* (1987)—and *Typical* (1991), a collection of stories. His work has appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Harper's*, and many other publications. He teaches at the University of Florida.





ELAINE H. SCOTT chairs the Arkansas State Board of Education and serves on several committees for the National Association of State Boards of Education. She has been involved with the Reading Is Fundamental program since 1974 and received the RIF Leader for Literacy Award in April 1994. The *Journal-Constitution*, in a recent issue of *New South: Olympic Atlanta Magazine*, selected her as one of "96 Southerners to Watch."



CYNTHIA SHEARER was born in Chicopee, Massachusetts, in 1955, and grew up in Georgia. She lives with her husband and daughter in Oxford, Mississippi, and works for the University of Mississippi as the curator of Rowan Oak, the home of William Faulkner. Her first novel, *The Wonder Book of the Air*, was published early this year. Her stories have appeared in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Triquarterly*, *Missouri Review*, *Oxford American*, and *Reckon: The Magazine of Southern Culture*.



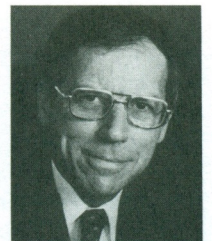
ALEDA SHIRLEY, a poet, teaches at the University of Mississippi. She won the Poetry Society of America's 1987 First Book Award for *Chinese Architecture* and the St. Louis Poetry Center's 1992 Stanley Hanks Chapbook Competition for *Silver Ending*. Her work has also been widely published in various reviews and magazines.

ROBERT VON HALLBERG is chair of the Department of German and a professor in the Department of English at the University of Chicago. He is founding editor of the University of Chicago Phoenix Poets series and the author of *American Poetry and Culture, 1945-1980*. *Literary Intellectuals and the Dissolution of the State* (1996), a collection of his interviews with more than two dozen writers and literary scholars from East Germany, concludes with an essay that warns against the domination of American literary criticism by academic critics.



BAILEY WHITE teaches elementary school in Georgia and is a regular commentator on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. Her first book, the runaway *New York Times* bestseller *Mama Makes Up Her Mind and Other Dangers of Southern Living* (1993), was followed by a second bestseller, *Sleeping at the Starlite Motel and Other Adventures on the Way Back Home* (1995). Bailey White is currently working on a novel.

WILLIAM F. WINTER, Governor of Mississippi from 1980 to 1984, is a senior partner in the Jackson law firm Watkins Ludlam & Stennis. He is a founding member of the Southern Literacy Forum, founding chairman of the Foundation for the Mid South, and chairman of the Commission on the Future of the South. He has served as chairman of the Southern Regional Education Board, Southern Growth Policies Board, and Appalachian Regional Commission, as well as president of the Mississippi Historical Society. He is the contributing author to three books—*History of Mississippi*, *Yesterday's Constitution Today*, and *Mississippi Heroes*—and has served as president of the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History since 1969.





THE CITY OF OXFORD, originally part of the Chickasaw Cession, was incorporated by Legislative Act in 1837. The town was captured during the Civil War by Union troops and most of its buildings were burned to the ground, although many historic structures remain. Oxford has always been known for its close relationship with the University of Mississippi, whose approximately 10,000 students make it roughly the same size as the town. Many people visit Oxford each year to see the University, Rowan Oak, and other classic Southern architecture, including the Lafayette County Courthouse, Barksdale-Isom Place, built in 1838, and other homes on the streets surrounding the town square. Visitors and residents alike appreciate the close and gentle beauty of the Lafayette County countryside, which includes National Forest land and such buildings as College Hill Church, where William and Estelle Faulkner were married in 1929. *USA Today* named Oxford one of the top six college towns in the United States. Oxford is also listed in *The 100 Best Small Towns in America*.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI, affectionately known as Ole Miss, is the state's oldest public institution of higher learning and has been a recognized leader in teaching, research, and public service since opening in 1848. In November of that year a faculty of four offered liberal arts instruction to 80 students. From those beginnings, the student body has increased to its current enrollment of 10,350 on the main Oxford campus. The campus itself has expanded from 640 acres in 1848 to more than 2,500, with an additional 23,000 acres of forest land in south Mississippi. The academic division of the Oxford campus is composed of the College of Liberal Arts (1848), School of Law, which is the fourth oldest state-supported law school in the nation (1854), School of Pharmacy (1908), School of Business Administration (1917), Graduate School (1927), and School of Accountancy (1978). The Schools of Medicine (1903), Nursing (1958), Health Related Professions (1972), and Dentistry (1973) are located at the Jackson campus. In all, the University offers more than 100 programs of study. Having graduated 23 Rhodes Scholars, Ole Miss ranks seventh among all public universities in number of students chosen for this honor.

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE was established at the University of Mississippi in 1977. Since then, the Center has become a focal point for innovative education and research by promoting scholarship on every aspect of Southern culture and encouraging public understanding of the South through publications, media productions, lectures, performances, and exhibitions. Among its notable publications are the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, *The South: A Treasury of Art and Literature*, *Mississippi Writers: Reflections of Childhood and Youth*, *Cultural Perspectives on the American South*, *The Blues: A Bibliographical Guide*, and magazines, *Living Blues* and *Mississippi Folklife*. The Center has also sponsored or cosponsored important programs that draw national recognition, among them four annual events: the Oxford Conference for the Book in April, the Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference in August, the International Conference on Elvis Presley in August, and a history symposium in October. Open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., except for University holidays. Telephone: 601-232-5993.

FRIENDS OF THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE was founded in 1984 to provide support for the Center's teaching, research, and outreach programs on the American South. All Friends of the Center receive its quarterly newsletter *Southern Register*, the *Southern Culture Catalog*, discounts on Center conferences and programs, and reduced prices on Center posters, books, recordings, and other items. Contributions to Friends are tax deductible. Telephone: 601-232-5993.

ROWAN OAK, WILLIAM FAULKNER'S HOME, was built by a pioneer settler in 1844 and bought by Faulkner in 1930. This plantation-style house was his home until his death in 1962. Open 10:00 a.m.-noon and 2:00-4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 2:00-4:00 p.m. Sunday. Closed on Mondays and on Easter Sunday, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. Telephone: 601-234-3284.

UNIVERSITY MUSEUMS: The Mary Buie Museum (1939) and the adjoining Kate Skipwith Teaching Museum (1976) house collections representing the fields of archaeology, art, anthropology, decorative arts, history, science, and technology. Particularly outstanding are the David M. Robinson Collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, the Millington-Barnard Collection of 19th-century scientific instruments, and the Southern Folk Art Collection, centered on the paintings of Oxford artist Theora Hamblett. Open 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1:00-4:00 p.m. Sunday. Closed Mondays and on University holidays. Telephone: 601-232-7073.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: Over 300 manuscript collections and over 20,000 volumes of Mississippiana are housed here. Among its permanent exhibits are William Faulkner's Nobel Prize and signed first editions and manuscripts. The Seymour Lawrence Room, a gift of the late publisher, contains signed first editions, manuscripts, photographs, correspondence, and memorabilia of the dozens of authors he published, including J. P. Donleavy, Barry Hannah, Jim Harrison, and Jayne Anne Phillips. Telephone: 601-234-6091.

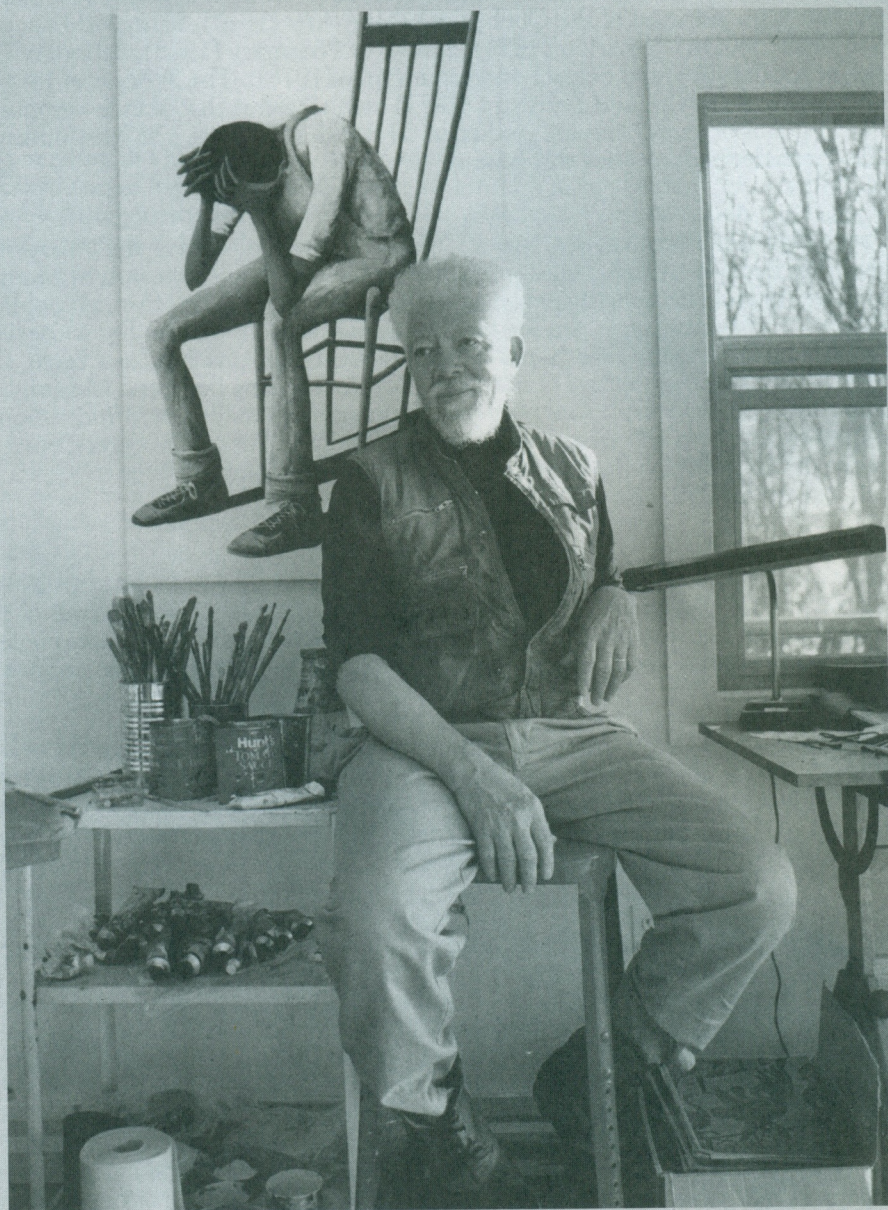


UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI BLUES ARCHIVE: This research collection on blues music contains books, periodicals, recordings, films, photographs, and posters. Of special interest are the B. B. King Collection, the Kenneth S. Goldstein Folklore Collection, and the *Living Blues* Archival Collection. Materials do not circulate. Open 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for University holidays. Telephone: 601-232-7753.

YOUNG AUTHORS FAIR: Stella Pevsner will participate in the 1996 Young Authors Fair sponsored by the Oxford Junior Auxiliary. The fair, held annually in the spring, provides opportunities for children's authors and illustrators to make presentations to third, fourth, and fifth graders in local schools. The children participating in the fair write books and illustrate them with the help of their teachers, parents, and members of Junior Auxiliary. The books are collected and displayed at the public library, which hosts a reception for the children and the guest authors and illustrators on fair day.

## Benny Andrews

was born in 1930 in Georgia and educated at Fort Valley State College in his native state and at the Art Institute of Chicago. His work is widely acclaimed and is represented in many collections all over the United States such as the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Hirshhorn, the LaJolla, and Wichita Art Museums, and the Gibbes and the High Museums. Andrews has also illustrated his late brother Raymond's books (*Appalachee Red* won the James Baldwin Prize). Although he now lives in New York and his collages deal with many subjects—war, religion, social issues—much of his work represents the life that Andrews knew growing up in the South. "Southern culture is like a bank—you go to it, draw from it," he says. Andrews's work will be included in a major Atlanta exhibition to coincide with the Olympics: "Homeland of the Imagination: The Southern Presence in 20th-Century Art," NationsBank Plaza, May 15-September 4, 1996.



Douglas Neely/The Hartford Courant

The painting *Miss Emma* by Benny Andrews appears in this publication courtesy of the artist. *Miss Emma* is from the collection of the ARA Food Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.