



# GENERATIONS OF KENTUCKY

AN EXHIBITION OF FOLK ART WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUY MENDES

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COVER

EARNEST PATTON

*Hog Killing*  
1989

GUY MENDES

*Earnest Patton with  
Earnest Junior and Rebecca,  
Wolfe County, Kentucky*  
1994

# GENERATIONS OF KENTUCKY

AN EXHIBITION OF FOLK ART WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUY MENDES

Organized by The Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation is proud to present the nationally touring exhibition *Generations of Kentucky: An Exhibition of Folk Art with Photographs by Guy Mendes*. This project explores the impact family and community have had upon twenty-two of Kentucky's folk artists and the art they create. Two years of extensive research and planning went into the creation of this exhibition and accompanying brochure. It is our hope that this revealing view of the artists and their families will allow people throughout the country to understand many of the factors that help shape the wonderful, but often misunderstood art form – folk art.

This exhibition and brochure required the efforts of many people. The Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation would like to acknowledge the following: project curator Christopher Greenman, guest curator Larry Hackley, project directors Eva McGee and Linda Schwartz, preparator Albert Spearath, consultants Dr. Betsy Adler and Bob Gates, graphic designer Richard Groot, photographer Geoffrey Carr (brochure production of folk art pieces). Thanks also go to Lisa Lizer, Susan Scheiberg, Jeff Suchanek, Adrian Swain, all of the lenders including Josephine D'Amato and William B. Richardson, Eason Eige, Ken and Donna Fadeley, Steve and Linda Jones, The Kentucky Folk Art Center, Michael and Eva McGee, Anne and John Miller, Larry Poe, Sue Rosen, The Reverend and Mrs. Alfred R. Shands III, Nancy and Ellsworth Taylor, Anne and Allan Weiss, Margaret and Richard Wenstrup, and all of the sponsors and artists.

A special thank you to Linda Schwartz for originating the idea of this exhibition and to corporate sponsors Texas Gas Transmission Corporation and Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, whose generous support made the project possible.



Rita Steinberg

Executive Director

Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation

## INTRODUCTION

In 1992 art dealer Linda Schwartz hosted the Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation's traveling exhibition *Critters* at the Galbreath Gallery in Lexington. This show featured the works of both fine and folk artists. The enthusiasm expressed by viewers of the exhibition encouraged Schwartz to approach the Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation about developing another project involving folk art. Her original concept was to pair objects created by Kentucky folk artists with portraits of the artists made by photographer Guy Mendes who has filmed, photographed and written about Southern folk artists for over twenty years.

Folk art dealer and freelance curator Larry Hackley was invited to select the folk art section of the show. At his suggestion, and in keeping with the established tradition of prior exhibitions produced by the Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation (*Remembrances: Recent Memory Art by Kentucky Folk Artists*, *Sticks: Historical and Contemporary Kentucky Canes*) and the Folk Art Society of Kentucky (*God, Man and the Devil: Religion in Recent Kentucky Folk Art*), it was decided that this exhibition should also focus on an important concept or dynamic associated with the folk art created in the state. What this rapidly expanding field of art desperately needed was more serious scholarly inquiry into the motivations, themes and work strategies employed by these grassroots artists. After some debate and in recognition of the large number of husband-wife collaborators and multi-generational clans of folk artists working in Kentucky, it was determined that this exhibition would explore the influence of family and community on these talented artists. Twenty-two artists from eight families were selected for the exhibit; each family group representing a different set of relationships (i.e. father-son, husband-wife) and various influences and collaborations.

State folklorist Bob Gates was enlisted as a consultant for this exhibition and Dr. Betsy Adler, who has written extensively about folk art and artists, was also employed as a consultant and editor for the brochure essays written by Julie Ardery, Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Kentucky, and Tom Patterson, art critic and author of books on the famous Reverend Howard Finster and St. EOM (a.k.a. Eddie Owens Martin).

All of us who have worked on this project hope *Generations of Kentucky* will bring new insight and understanding to the work produced by these Kentucky artists.



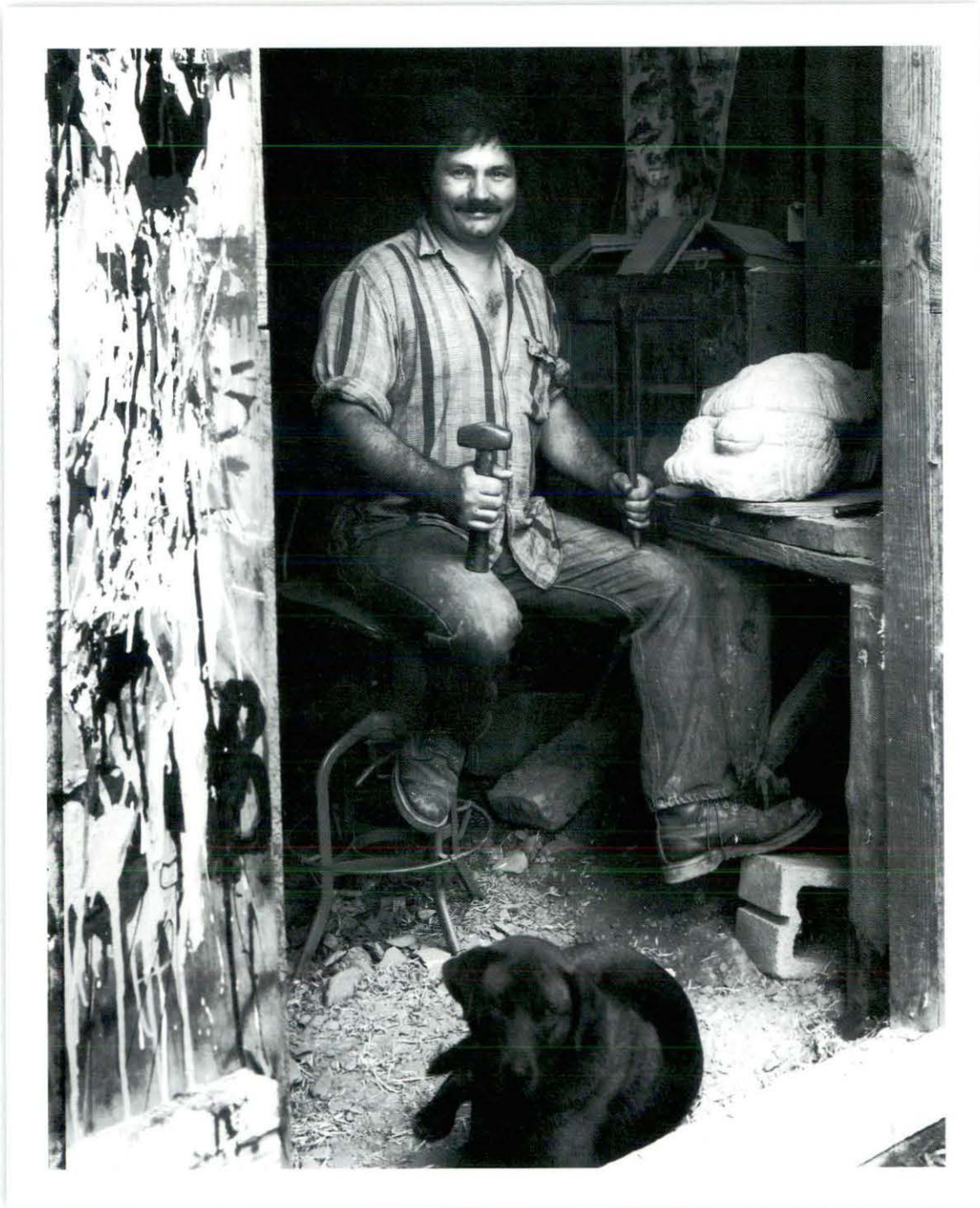
Larry Hackley

Guest Curator



Linda Schwartz

Project Director



GUY MENDES · *Tim Lewis, Elliott County, Kentucky, 1993*

# FROM THE WELL

## *Eight Families of Eastern Kentucky Artists*

by Julie Ardery

Every artist has to water-witch for her own creative springs. Each must balance industry and vision in the singular way called *style*. But in meeting these requirements, all are served by family, for it is in families we first learn to feel, to speak, to work. And these are the rudiments of art.

Some families typically pursue artistic interest with schooling. A budding painter or printmaker is sent away to learn new, non-familial habits. Art students come to know color theory, adopt critical attitudes, immerse themselves in the masterworks and conventions of classical, romantic, and avant-garde traditions; perhaps most important of all, they enter a society of fellow academic artists who share these ways of seeing and working. In this sense, art education buys one's way into a bloodless family – Cousin Frida, Uncle Vincent, Great-great-grandfather Giotto, their pictures all pasted down in the family album known as Janson's *History of Art*.

Never having sought academic training, the painters and sculptors represented here are more distant relatives of the Janson clan. Their imagery and materials derive from sources both more generalized and closer to home. Their techniques evolved from rural occupations, and also from the factory jobs they found outside Kentucky. Though all artists build on the gifts and deficiencies that inevitably mark us as family members, these painters and sculptors lacked many of the more abstracted resources – the bottled waters – available to their academic counterparts. Consequently, they have tended to return to the family well for subject matter, confidence, and skills. *Generations of Kentucky* shows the depth and the profusion of that source.

Like most of the artists who made them, the pieces in this exhibition were born at home. Hazel Kinney draws in her lap, under the watch of a big copper-colored dog. Lillian Barker and her grandson Jay paint together on top of a freezer kept in the dining room. Junior,

Leroy, and Tim Lewis all work in shops built a stone's throw from their front doors. Edgar Tolson, too, had a compact blue trailer just out back where he would retreat from his large family to carve.

Created in or very near the midst of a household, this art bears traces of family. Graphite scratches on an Edgar Tolson *Expulsion* sculpture selected for the 1973 Whitney Museum Biennial puzzled the New York curators: some of the Tolson children had been doodling with a pencil. Noah Kinney made a life-sized mandolin player, named her Kathy Lee, and then dressed her in the blue and white frock Hazel had worn on their wedding day. On the bread-board passed down to her, Jessie Cooper painted a portrait of her grandmother and hung it on the wall of her own kitchen. Tim Lewis, with a stone turtle at an early stage, nonchalantly turns the hammer and chisel over to his nephew, Leroy's son Scotty, who'll take a few licks. Accidentally and deliberately, family matters intrude on the work of stay-at-home artists.

By choice, these painters and carvers all reside close to their childhood homes, places redolent with family history. The Lewises live along the Right Fork of Newcomb Creek on land their great-grandparents homesteaded. Calvin Cooper lives at Plummer's Mill in southeast Fleming County, where his parents farmed and he and brother Ronald attended elementary school. Garland Adkins and Lillian Barker were practically raised by their grandparents in Elliott County, where both of them live now, and grew up in the company of cousins, aunts, and uncles. Lonnie and Twyla Money were raised along the Laurel/Jackson county line, where today they operate a farm of their own. For each of these artists family exerts steady force, through relatives whose lives they cross daily and the tangible presence of ancestors.

To see one's own kin age and decline is to see time vanishing; therefore, Tim Lewis keeps a notebook of his great-aunts' maxims and sometimes translates them into talking/walking canes: "Cut your nails on Sunday, work for the Devil on Monday" – "Never look a gift horse in the mouth." Charley Kinney used to tell ghost stories to anyone who'd listen and painted the house dances, butter churnings, and coon hunts of his youth. As grandparents, parents, and childhood friends pass on, these arts of retelling become more dutiful.

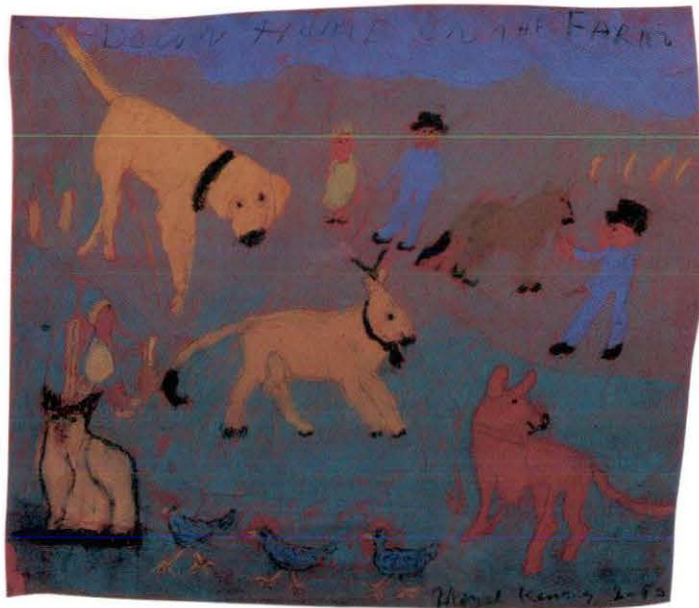
University-trained artists customarily leave home to engage art as a career, but these makers began as dabblers and hobbyists, turning to carving or painting when their working lives were curtailed. Edgar Tolson, who had whittled since childhood, began carving with a purpose only after suffering a stroke in 1957. In 1984, Ronald Cooper's legs were crushed in a highway accident. Downcast by a slow recovery, he began to cut out figures in wood. "After he got started in this," his wife Jessie said, "it gave him something to get up for in the morning."

Linvel Barker retired in 1983, after thirty years' of work as a boiler-maker in an East Chicago steel mill. He and his wife Lillian returned to Elliott County and in the next year refurbished the house her parents had bequeathed to them (the building had formerly been the Brack Adkins School where Lillian and Minnie Adkins, too were students). After a year Linvel was desperate with idleness. "When winter came I couldn't take it. I tell you, really and truly, it was serious," Barker said. "I wished I'd never even thought of retiring. All my life growing up the way we did here, everybody worked. Well, here I get up in the morning and there's no place to go. Then that night I'd feel like I'd wasted a whole day. I couldn't take it." It was at the suggestion of neighbor Minnie Adkins, along with Lillian's urging, that Linvel began to carve.

Childhood, unemployment, infirmity, and retirement, all periods of leisure, seem the circumstances when these artists have been most prolific. These are also the conditions that pull people closest to their families. It may be that weeks, months, or even years spent unrelievedly at home produce an optimum psychic state – relaxed but slightly suffocating – that induces people like Lonnie Money, who "always thought of artists as somebody else," to extend themselves creatively.

The rubric "self-taught," often applied to the artists shown here, is not quite accurate. While they never enrolled in studio classes, they accumulated skills and sensibilities through a variety of jobs and now ply these tools expressively. Far and away, the most formative of their occupations has been farming. Earnest Patton, the Kinneys, and the Moneys depended as their parents had wholly on farming for their livelihoods; until just recently when art sales have provided

HAZEL KINNEY - *Down Home on the Farm*, 1993



LINVEL BARKER - *Buffalo*, 1994



JESSIE COOPER - *We Are Blessed*, 1991



DONNY TOLSON - *Wood Chopper*, 1981

some income. Most of the others were raised on farms; all have planted tobacco, milked, or plowed.

Minnie Black's pieces most fundamentally tell of a farm raising. Learning to sow flowers from her mother and gardening since childhood, Black in 1947 became fascinated by a gourd she saw growing wild. She began to experiment with plant strains and, after following her husband into retirement, set out to make "gourd art." The processes of planting, cultivating and curing – watching her gourds swell up and dry – clearly tantalize her as, over the summer weeks, a gourd grows to suggest a mermaid, pterodactyl or drum. Like every backyard gardener, Black prizes the oddities and giants that her vines bear and makes special use of them, for bass musical instruments or scaly beasts. Not so much "self-taught" as a lifelong student of the soil, Black has propagated a hybrid art form: equal parts fantasy, natural history, horticulture, sculpture.

Continually, these generations of artists reflect on farm life through images of animals. Earnest Patton of Bethany pays homage to the beasts of burden with which he cleared and worked hillside farms in Wolfe County. His first ambitious woodcarving, circa 1973, and still his favorite piece, was of a span of mules pulling a wagon. "I've worked with stuff like that all of my life and farmed with it and I just loved it. If I was able now, I'd still work mules," Patton said. Over the decades he has seen farming change dramatically, from hoof to tractor power, from a time when his mother dusted tobacco plants with wood ashes to an age of chemical pesticides. His sculptures of farming's unmechanized era capture the dignity, virility, and power of livestock, as they honor women and men who, through seasons of family teaching, learned to respect and harness that power.

Edgar Tolson's father farmed for a living but lived to preach the gospel. In his early twenties, Edgar followed him into the pulpit as a lay minister, preaching intermittently for more than two decades until, in the words of his brother Elvin, "The cares of the world snared him." Fallen away from the church, Tolson went on to tell Bible stories with his pocketknife, carving *Daniel in the Lions Den*, *the Crucifixion*, *the Beheading of John the Baptist*, and over a hundred versions of *Adam and Eve's Temptation*. Several of his *Preacher*

sculptures may be either images of his father or portraits of a past self. Donny, his son, also renders Biblical subjects and favors scenes of spiritual trial: David and Goliath, The Temptation of Jesus, Jacob Wrestling with the Angel. Sculpting the life of faith as a struggle not a certainty, Donny Tolson is also recounting family history.

Ronald and Jessie Cooper likewise preach and reminisce through art. Jessie paints flea market furniture with pastoral scenes of the past: a camp meeting like the one where she met Ronald, *June Bride*, and *My Home Church, Ramey's Chapel*. Ronald's sculpture is more didactic, its cautionary phrases ("If a sinner could look at hell they would live different") painted on in splintery print. While Ronald himself never considered entering the ministry, six relatives have (including Calvin's son, who pastors the church in which Calvin and Ronald were raised). He and Jessie see their art as a form of evangelizing. "I'm not one to say anything much in church. I'm real quiet, I guess, that way," Ronald explained. "But with my work, I feel like I can kind of give a message without having to say it myself. I do think there's people that don't even think about heaven or hell or where they're going to spend eternity – maybe not even brought up in any kind of a religious home. And maybe they see this and it might help them in some way. At least I hope so. We both feel that way about our work."

Logging and milling supplied the men in these artist families, especially, with early working knowledge of wood. Lillian Fannin Barker's father ran a sawmill in Elliott County. Her future husband Linvel worked there and so did Lillian: "If the sawdust boy didn't show up, I shoveled sawdust," she said. Today, her brother Gary Fannin runs his own mill and saws most of the linn logs that the Barkers use for sculpture. Edgar Tolson in his youth worked as a logger, a trade both he and Earnest Patton, who carved *Paul Bunyan and the Blue Ox*, have memorialized. Through lessons in the mills and logwoods each of these carvers grew to understand and value the timber they would later turn into art. "I think wood is beautiful," Linvel Barker said. Except for a few early pieces, all of his works are sanded smooth with only an occasional eye-drop of paint. "If I paint it, it could be made out of plastic," Barker said. "I think paint robs the wood of really being wood."

Several of these artists claim direct descent from earlier craftsmen. Lonnie Money discovered six years ago that his great-grandfather had been a carver in Switzerland. Emigrating to the states in 1883, Jacob Money pursued his craft with a Louisville furniture factory but, unable to support a family on piece-work wages, he moved to the mountains and turned to mining coal. Money possesses a delicately carved cow his ancestor made. He keeps it in a glass case alongside his own pieces, all of them displayed in the milking barn he and Twyla have converted into a studio.

Tim and Leroy Lewis' grandfather Enoch was a chairmaker. In the late 1980s after studying several books on traditional woodcraft, Leroy built himself a shaving horse with a drawknife and began making chairs the old lathe-less way. Their father, Proctor Lewis, was an accomplished carpenter and cabinetmaker who whittled in his spare time; Leroy still has part of a chain his father made from one piece of wood. In the Lewis family, local trees became ax handles, plowstocks, furniture, log houses, and toys too; Junior Lewis remembered his dad's sourwood whistles and squirt guns made from box elder. In sum, these traditions constituted an ongoing course in woodworking that casts doubt, at least in the Lewises' case, on the term "self-taught."

To support their families when jobs in the mountains dwindled, a number of these artists left Kentucky for factory work. The Coopers, the Adkinses, and Junior Lewis followed siblings to Dayton, Ohio, and Hammond, Indiana. Lillian Barker, who first played with the band-saw in her dad's blacksmith shop, was later trained with machinery in three northern factories, manufacturing windshield wipers, cleanser, and candy. With power tools she now buzzes out the squirrels and buffalo Linvel carves and finishes them with a sander. Her patience and facility with tools, paired with Linvel's skill, emerge in the precision of the Barkers' pieces. Thus, like the older trades of farming, chairmaking, and logging, industrial work enters a family tradition and may just as likely bloom as artistry.

Work hones certain physical skills, and just as significantly, develops social patterns of cooperation, divided labor or rivalry. Of the artist-families here, most worked together in some capacity before taking





up art. For the Kinneys, the Pattons, and the Moneys, this cooperative work was always family farming. The Coopers and Adkinses also began their marriages by farming family land with equipment borrowed from their parents. The dalliness of farming and its custom of shared rather than specialized duties have surely prepared husband and wife teams to collaborate as artists. Minnie Adkins said, "I think that's the key to any success – togetherness. Working together instead of pulling against each other."

For eight years Ronald and Jessie Cooper were partners in the grocery business. Ronald had worked in his father's country store, then at a Flemingsburg grocery; in 1951, summoned by a brother who'd moved north to Dayton, Ronald and Jessie left for Ohio where he went to work for Kroger. "Of course, I wanted my own grocery," Ronald said. "Knowing that Kroger was a money-making place, I thought I could do just what they were doing. Maybe I got that from back when we just had the little store at home." In 1960 the couple found a grocery for sale in Tollesboro, Kentucky. They moved back to the country, to a house without plumbing, trading the amenities of weekly wages and town life for the satisfaction of operating their own concern.

Most of these artists have been self-employed or worked for relatives. Minnie Black and her late husband William ran a country store and gas station. Tim Lewis drove a coal truck for his cousin Junior. Garland Adkins trucked lumber for his uncle. Donny Tolson joined a cousin's moving company. To this day, family businesses permeate these artists' lives. The morning I visited the Moneys, Twyla's cousins were roofing the house and the Adkins' son Mike dropped in for a loan to repair his backhoe and finish a contract timbering job. Requiring initiative, endurance, and risk, self-employment tests one's strength and demands suffering the full brunt of personal failings; in fact, it makes an ideal proving ground for the artist.

Of course, many small enterprises fail. Both the Blacks and the Coopers were forced to quit their independent groceries. Tim Lewis wrecked his cousin's coal truck, putting an end to their business. Because small scale farming has become an increasingly unreliable way to make ends meet, those reared in farm families – who, like Twyla Money, always assumed they would spend their days raising

cattle, bucking hay, and hanging tobacco – have had to supplement a shrinking farm income.

By the mid-1980s, a national market for folk art was waxing. Phyllis George Brown had negotiated Kentucky crafts into Bloomingdale's department store and published a celebratory book. In Eastern Kentucky two important conduits had been established, searching out unusual objects for documentation and for sale to a growing number of collectors and galleries. Folk art dealer, researcher, and curator Larry Hackley had been cruising the mountains since the late 1970s and established a reputation with clients in Chicago, Detroit, Nashville, Atlanta, and Washington. Tom Sternal of Morehead State University's art faculty had in 1985 instituted a small folk art collection at the school. In March of 1987 he hired potter and local gallery owner Adrian Swain to head the school's folk art effort with aims of enhancing the existing collection and selling works made by non-academic regional artists.

Also by the mid-1980s mining companies had abandoned Elliott County's high sulphur coal fields. Mountain farmers were stretched to the limit. Still, many East Kentuckians hoped to make a living close to home. Hackley and Morehead State's Kentucky Folk Art Center provided the kinds of sustained sales that kept many of these rural artists working and sparked others to try painting and carving for the first time. Proceeds from art might not equal a miner's pay, but when pieced together with another source of income could provide a decent living.

It in no way discredits these artists or their works to point out that they enjoy, and in many cases need, an economic return on their art. On his first visit to the Coopers' home, Tom Sternal was immediately interested in Jessie's painting of a baptismal scene and three "mud dolls" she had made. Ronald Cooper recounted that when Sternal offered a hundred dollars for the picture and dolls, Jessie, "like to fell over. At that time, we were out of money. We'd used all of our savings and everything that we had." Expenses from Ronald's accident had run high. He explained, "We didn't get to settle on our automobile accident for five years. I wasn't released from my doctor for five years, and so we were really getting low for money. That (offer) really looked good to us." Cooper said Tom

Sternal, told Jessie, "to get to work and make some more dolls and do some more painting, and that's how we got started in it."

Motivated to sell their works, these artists take pride and pleasure in making gifts of art too. Tim Lewis presented a marble angel to his wife Lola on their first anniversary and has made several canes for ill relatives. For each of the family's newborn babies – about 25 nieces and nephews thus far – Junior Lewis has carved a comical alligator. Calvin Cooper came across a wide flat rock in the woods and brought it to his sister-in-law Jessie, knowing it would inspire her to paint. She covered the stone with a scene of her childhood church, and in gratitude, painted a table for Calvin. Donny Tolson whittled his sweetheart a Valentine and carved an elegant saber out of poplar for a young friend.

Since childhood, Minnie Adkins, too, has given her woodcarvings away – a nesting bluebird for her mother, deer, a miniature plow for an appreciative aunt, and many more pieces now lost even to memory. Before a market ever existed for her work, her gifts to loved-ones asserted the worth of what might have seemed an idle pastime and gradually built her local reputation as a carver. Now that she and Garland have more orders for pieces than they can possibly fill, she continues to spend many hours each month making tokens of friendship: "I enjoy giving something more than I enjoy the money I get from selling," she said.

For several years the Adkinses hosted folk art gatherings, first at their house, and then at the Isonville school, to bring artists and buyers together. What might have degenerated into a for-profit-only flea market became an old fashioned picnic thanks to the Adkinses' charisma and Minnie's ceremonial presentation of handmade gifts, the afternoon's centrifugal event. These days whenever Kentuckians with an interest in folk art gather, one is guaranteed to see some trace of her liberality – a carved fox dangling from a leather-thong necklace or a t-shirt emblazoned with panting bears.

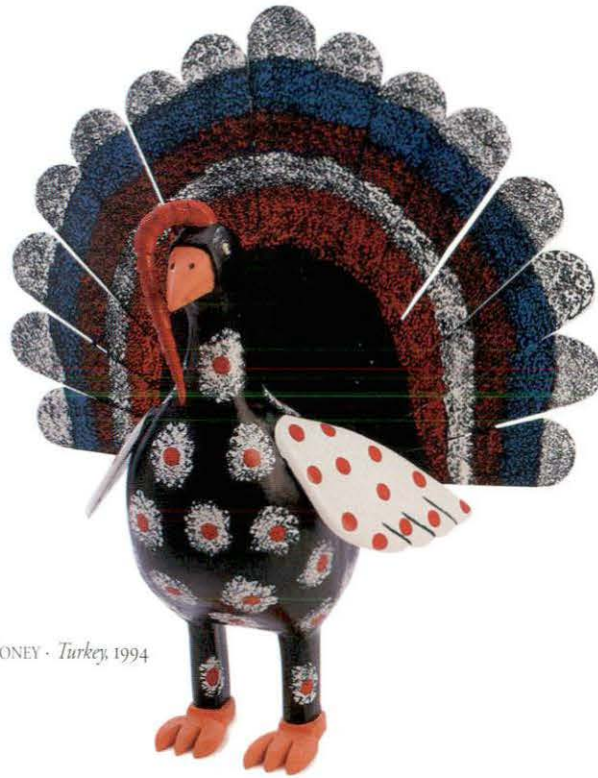
*Family* suggests an ideal, of health, affection, and solidarity. In fact, of course, all families are scarred. The same roots that pass along skill and assurance carry other legacies of addiction, neglect, and betrayal. Most of these artists have found their creative efforts dismissed within the family, at least until outside buyers and

GARLAND AND MINNIE ADKINS · *Ox Yoke with Minnie and Garland*, 1994



ERMA "JUNIOR" LEWIS · *David and Goliath*, 1994

LONNIE AND TWYLA MONEY · *Turkey*, 1994



scholars expressed interest in their work. Many have experienced only envy for their success. One artist confided, “It’s really sad when you don’t have any friends to share with and no family that wants to hear it. The only people we really talk about this stuff to is people away from here.”

Family obligations, especially when children are small, tend to brake an artist’s drive. Art sales are usually erratic, and children keep hands busy. Many men begin making art only at retirement age or with a spouse’s income to rely on; all but one of the women included in this exhibition began steadily painting or carving only after children had grown. Furthermore, while family members share tools, materials, and contacts, they ordinarily take pains to stay out of each others’ way. Tim Lewis hurried to complete a stone piece one winter and took refuge in his cousin Junior’s workshop. Junior said amicably, “He brought his old wheelbarrow up here and rolled it right out there in that metal building. And I was out there working in wood. Those rock chips flying everywhere...there was no way Timmy and I could work together.” Moreover, these makers, in contrast to traditional folk artists, tend to avoid their kinspeople’s art, media, and themes. For example, though they played music together for decades, Noah and Charley Kinney tacitly divided the world of visual art between them – Noah turning to wood sculpture and Charley to painting and puppetry. Hazel concentrated on her own art only after her brother-in-law and husband had died. Junior Lewis refuses to make chairs for sale since his cousin Leroy is known as a chairmaker. Junior explained, “I try to stay out of other people’s lines of work.”

These are not folk artists in the traditional sense, anonymously carrying on family craft legacies. Instead, their greatest appeal is to an audience of collectors who favor originality. As each of them strives for distinction, they pull subtly against each other, like the anxious parents, siblings, and spouses that they are. These tensions in part explain why the Adkinses, the Moneys, the Barkers, and the Coopers are so eager to co-sign art work, even when a piece has plainly been made by just one in the family. The double signature insists on unity in a potentially divisive circumstance. Likewise, Minnie Adkins’ renaming the Right Fork of Newcomb Creek “Peaceful Valley” seems less accurate than willful, a fiction designed to sooth feelings in an artistically competitive community.

Through the years, Minnie Adkins and Minnie Black have in fact approached the notion of family with verve and daring. On one wall of the Adkins’ house hang photos of grandson Greg in his basketball uniform and other framed family pictures. Two more walls are covered solidly with snapshots: pictures of the hundreds of guests, fans, fellow carvers, and buyers whom Minnie and Garland have befriended through their art. This far flung network of admirers, continually wheeling through the Adkins’ lives, constitutes a kind of family too. At a recent Dayton conference on African-American and Appalachian art, the Adkinses were exhibitors and panelists. Bing Davis, an African-American artist and college professor, met Minnie there. By the end of the meeting he was asking permission, reiterated in a letter, to call her “Aunt Minnie.”

Minnie Black, now aged 95, said, “I never thought I’d ever be this old. But we never know. I’m the only one left of that big family now.” In the early ’80s Black reinvented “family” by forming a band of elderly friends. They entertained for five years, usually at local churches and nursing homes, playing a bizarre array of her gourd instruments. Black is also the matriarch of the American Gourd Society. She has been honored each October since 1972, when its thousands of members converge on Mt. Gilead, Ohio, to swap seeds and show off the best of the year’s crop and craft. Black said, “It’s just like a big family reunion. Everybody’s so glad to see the others. And to tell you the truth, they stand in line to hug me when I get there.”

There is a tendency to see non-academic artists as tradition bearers, buoyed and bounded by ascribed traits like family, region, ethnicity – and to understand fine artists as products of personal achievement. In fact, all must work from the givens of social class, family, gender, and historical circumstance, and proceed or stall according to individual proclivities, grace and chance. The artists featured in *Generations of Kentucky* invite us to find familial influence primarily because they have literally welcomed photographers, collectors and scholars into their homes. After sniffing around the kitchen, leaning back on the couch, coddling the dog, we are more apt to see the influence of domestic life in their art than we would in paintings or sculptures encountered in the neutral zone of a rented studio or commercial gallery. This sense of intimacy is a privilege and a

significant part of the work’s appeal. The home visit is now an established ritual of collecting, an excursion that at once serves to authenticate the art and to create around it the complex aura of a grail, souvenir, or heirloom. Genuinely hospitable as these artists always are, however, a visitor never exactly sees them “at home;” for in fact, their houses have become public spaces. As we can never understand the full force of any family legacy but our own, likewise we are, and with good reason, excluded from the backstages where these artists must let down and live.

Searching for the wells of legacy these artists have drawn from, one sees how the best of what they’ve made neither exhausts nor merely preserves the source. Instead, their inventiveness soars with the heat and height of a geyser – a force, indeed, for generations. Claiming a spot in Janson’s scrapbook, Tim Lewis declared, “It’s my intention to be sitting by the old masters one of these days.” Minnie Black entrusts her place in history to another agency, the family. In thirty years, she has transformed what was once a failing mom and pop market into her own “Gourd-Craft Museum,” putting East Bernstadt on the map. Her hope is that Ruth Mitchell, her daughter and a gourd artist in her own right, will keep the museum open. “I could die easy,” Minnie Black said, “I really could. It’d make me happy, if she’d just promise me that she’d take the museum over and carry it on like I have, and try to do some of the things that I’ve done.”

*Julie Ardery, a Kentucky native, is writing a dissertation on the career of woodcarver Edgar Tolson. With assistance from the University of Kentucky Graduate School and the Kentucky Oral History Commission, she has collected some 60 interviews with participants in the field of folk art, including the artists quoted here. All tapes and transcripts are archived at the University of Kentucky Oral History Program.*



# INGRAINED IMAGES & OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

## *Recent and Current Family Art Traditions in Appalachian Kentucky*

by Tom Patterson

Our society maintains some funny notions about art and who is allowed to make it. Work by artists like those represented in this intensely animated exhibition currently occupies a kind of critical no-man's land that has remained in dispute for two decades.

In Kentucky, most curators, critics and other commentators appear to be comfortable using the term "folk art" to describe this work. But many folklorists and others disavow that characterization, since this art and its creators rarely fit the textbook criteria for identifying folk art and folk artists. Meanwhile, the even more problematic term "outsider art" enjoys widespread currency among this art's growing legions of enthusiasts, particularly those drawn to the romantic ideal of the isolated artist working without official permission and outside the so-called mainstream of art and society.

Like the long list of other prefixes that have been applied to this art and in addition to other problems they raise, the "folk" and "outsider" designations both presume the necessity of distinguishing it from what is commonly called contemporary art (sometimes known by the archaic terms "fine" art and "high" art). But the rationale for such compartmentalization looks more and more suspect in an art world no longer revolving around the old Eurocentric-academic value-system in which these terms are based. The notion that art schools and art museums as we've come to know them constitute a "mainstream" within contemporary culture is a quaint anachronism. If there is a current mainstream, it is a vast, multicultural and multitrade Amazon that is surely broad enough to encompass the likes of Minnie Black, Tim Lewis and Donny Tolson.

To be sure, many aspects of the work in this exhibit are firmly rooted in longstanding Southern Appalachian and local community folk traditions. Charley and Noah Kinney were widely recognized for their skilled and spirited renderings of old-time mountain tunes on fiddle and guitar respectively, and many of their sculptures and drawings depict aspects of traditional Appalachian life whose origins predate this century, but there was apparently no precedent in their families or communities for their visual-art activities. Minnie Adkins began carving wood as a child growing up in a part of Kentucky where woodcarving skills were common among the male population, but she taught herself the craft and only began working at it seriously in the late 1980s. The late Edgar Tolson took up woodcarving on his own after being disabled by a stroke he suffered in the late 1950s, but his son Donny Tolson and a nephew who lived nearby, Earnest Patton, followed in his footsteps and continue to work in styles which, however distinctive, are clearly derived from the elder Tolson's.

These artists and others from similarly non-academic backgrounds are sometimes described as being "unaffected by outside influences," but while such language may bolster the myth of the "outsider," it doesn't square with the facts and the evidence. The late twentieth century's ultimate "outside influence" is, of course, television, and the life of virtually every artist here (with the possible exception of the Kinneys) has been touched by this pervasive medium. In addition to the effects of newspapers, books, magazines, popular music, movies and now videotapes, most of the artists represented here have grown accustomed to receiving frequent visitors from all over the country and beyond, providing them with even more outside influences than they would otherwise be subject.

This exhibition is the latest of several important ones in which some of these and other Kentucky "folk" artists have been represented over the past two decades.<sup>1</sup> In highlighting families within which more than one member is an artist, it foregrounds the problems of definition and cultural influence discussed above. While it reflects aspects of family and community tradition typically associated with folk art, the show also presents ample evidence of the enlivening impact that "outside influences" have had on the artists and their work.

Sitting on his sister's back porch near Campton one late spring afternoon, Donny Tolson patiently shaves microscopic slivers from the work-in-progress he holds in his lap – a poplar log carved in the image of the biblical Eve, a favorite subject, with the serpent wrapped around her body and peering over her left shoulder. Reflecting back on his decision to take up woodcarving 14 years ago at age 21, he recalls the exchange he and his famous father had at the time: "After I told Daddy I was going to try it, he said, 'There've been people all over the world who tried to duplicate my carvings, and nobody's ever been able to do it.' And I told him, 'I ain't going to duplicate yours. I'm going to make something of my own.'" <sup>2</sup>

Despite this premature declaration of artistic independence, the younger Tolson's first work was a stark tableau of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden that was directly derivative of his father's art in both form and content. Mounted on a flat base, the figures were stiff, columnar and unpainted, with wide eyes that seemed to be staring into some strange other world. But from the beginning, and increasingly as he progressed and began to develop more of his own style, Donny's work was more detailed, polished and refined than his dad's. While Edgar's repertoire of figures was mainly limited to biblical characters and common people, Donny's has grown far broader, encompassing historical figures like Daniel Boone, as well as various pop-culture icons, including rock singer Bob Seger, University of Kentucky basketball player Kenny Walker and (his largest piece to date) Kentucky Fried Chicken founder Colonel Harland Sanders.

Earnest Patton began carving about 30 years ago, by his recollection, when he was in his late twenties, first producing a small rooster from a hunk of cedar. After he saw his uncle carving a small effigy of an ox one day in the early 1970s, he tried his hand at it, producing a small ox and several other animal forms on a similar scale. Soon he moved on to carve human figures, biblical scenes similar to Edgar Tolson's and eventually, a series of human-animal hybrids based on mythological beings. While Tolson's influence remains evident in his art, Patton has developed his own distinctive style of figuration, as indicated by the comparison this exhibit provides.

LILLIAN BARKER · *Joshua Wall of Jericho*, 1990



LEROY LEWIS · *Rocking Chair with Indian Head Finials*, 1993



TIM LEWIS · *Ezekiel's Vision*, 1992

EDGAR TOLSON · *Uncle Sam*, 1972





GUY MENDES · *Minnie and Garland Adkins, Elliot County, Kentucky, 1994*

A recent embodiment of Patton's signature style is this show's compact but startling, haunting carved-and-painted portrait of *The Devil*, which expands on his earlier mythological creatures and on Donny Tolson's unpainted renderings of the Prince of Darkness. Far more threatening than his cousin's smaller and usually unpainted devil figures, this one is a coal-black winged satyr with huge yellow and green eyes, a prominently exposed penis, upturned s-shaped tail and a pair of long, sharp white horns with fangs to match. In his right hand this fiendish creature holds the handle of a long sword, upon which a bloody-red-drenched tip rests on the sculpture's supporting base, while his left arm is extended as if he's about to shake your hand, welcoming you to Hell.

Aside from the Campton area, where the Tolson and Patton families live, the most important locale in Kentucky as a center for contemporary wood-carving is Isonville, which is in Elliott County. It is home to seven of the artists represented in this exhibit. The key figure here is Minnie Adkins, whose example and encouragement have helped spark a small artistic renaissance in her community during the past nine years. Adkins taught herself to carve wood as a child, but it was only in the mid-1980s that she began seriously pursuing this craft as a means of earning a living after she and her husband Garland had fallen on hard economic times. The impetus for her renewal of interest in this old childhood pursuit was a chance visit she and Garland made around 1985 to artist and art dealer Adrian Swain at his gallery, Swain Pottery in Morehead, the seat of neighboring Rowan County. There she saw a number of small wood sculptures and other pieces by Noah Kinney, Carl McKenzie, Mack Hodge, Minnie Black and others. Inspired by their examples and her discovery that a market existed for such things, she went home, sharpened her carving knife and got to work. Her husband, longtime heavy-equipment operator and construction worker who had recently lost his job, used his newfound spare time to join in this activity, taking a few pointers from his wife and quickly finding his own style. The Adkinses were quick to develop a sharp self-critical eye, and from the outset they have continually sought to refine their creative skills and improve the quality of their work. "I'm embarrassed to look at them old things we made," Garland says of their early work. But Minnie counters that she remains

proud of the early pieces. Still, she acknowledges, "The work's gotten a lot better-looking since we started. We use better paint, better wood, and we've learned how to shape the pieces a whole lot better than we used to. Now we can make animals that look like they're walking instead of just standing straight-legged."

Both Minnie and Garland carve, but she paints most of their sculptures. The bird and animal figures are lively and animated, with cartoonishly exaggerated features – sleek red foxes with elongated sharp noses, for example, and black bears on all fours with their absurdly wide mouths frozen in big grins baring rows of huge, white pointy teeth. In the years since they began their exceptional little cottage industry, they have expanded their repertoire substantially, making portrait sculptures, compositionally sophisticated Bible-scene tableaux and most recently, pieces that incorporate found objects. These objects include the dot-patterned smiley-face deer antler trophies Minnie produces whenever she can find another set of antlers. She has made tentative forays into the craft of quilt-making, and recently she acquired a computer, whose potential as a creative tool she is presently exploring. Among the other ways she deviates from the stereotype of the "isolate" artist is in her own art-collecting activities. Far from being disinterested in and unaffected by other artists' work, she actively collects the work of her peers, from well-known figures such as Georgia's Howard Finster to more obscure talents like "Creative" G.C. DePrie of Huntington, West Virginia, as well as fellow Kentuckians Noah Kinney, Minnie Black, Carl McKenzie and others.

Minnie Adkins has also played a vital role in supporting and promoting the work of other artists in her community and farther afield. Hardly more than hollering distance from "Peaceful Valley Farm" live five other gifted artists who all acknowledge her as an inspiration and guiding force – brothers Tim and Leroy Lewis, their cousin Erma "Junior" Lewis, and the Barkers, Linvel and his wife Lillian.

In discussing the origins of his artistic skills, Linvel Barker reminisces, "When I was growing up, just about everybody could whittle things. My daddy made his own axe handles, but that was just something everybody did in those days, and I learned how to

do it, too, just by making things. But I didn't really start carving like I do now until about a year and a half after I retired back in '83, after Minnie Adkins and my wife kept telling me I should carve some-thing. This was right after Minnie and Garland had started carving and selling their things. So I started out carving chickens, back in '85, then I started making other kinds of animals – dogs, cats, horses, cows and other things."

Barker's animal figures look nothing like those of the Adkinses or any other present-day representational wood sculptor. Streamlined, vertically elongated and unpainted (except for the dark eyes Lillian paints on many of them), they call to mind the more abstract forms of Constantin Brancusi and other Modernist sculptors. Nearly a decade of crafting his distinctive wood figures has given him a new and sharpened perception of the world. "I had been around animals all my life on farms and in zoos," he explains, "but when I went to make one out of wood, I found out I didn't really know what they looked like, because I'd never really looked at one. So I started looking for details more in anything I looked at, and I found out that after you do that for a while, you see more beauty in nature – in anything, the smallest thing, like just a leaf. You know, we go through this life, and some of us never even see where we are or what we're looking at."

As for Lillian Barker, she does more than paint eyes on her husband's carvings. Not long after he took up wood sculpture, she picked up a brush and started painting narrative scenes from the Bible, such as *Jacob's Dream*. This image of angels on a stairstepped ladder in an idyllic landscape embodies a style somewhat resembling Marc Chagall's but also reminiscent of traditional memory painting as practiced by the likes of Mattie Lou O'Kelley, Anna Mary Robertson "Grandma" Moses and Kentuckians Jessie Cooper, W.R. Mays and Betty Wallen.

The varied sculptural works that Leroy, Tim and Junior Lewis produce are generally more detailed and otherwise far more elaborate than Linvel Barker's elegantly stylized pieces. Like their grandfathers and their fathers, Leroy makes handcrafted furniture, most notably his trademark chairs like the one in this exhibit, with its split-bark seat and noble male and female heads carved on its





RUTHIE COOPER · *Devil's Pet*, 1994



RONALD COOPER



CAVIN COOPER · *Large Dog and Small Dog*, 1989



TIM COOPER · *Biker Chick on a Hog*, 1994

supporting back posts. Placed so that they stare over the shoulders of anyone seated in the chair, these heads are like sentinels, symbolic guardian spirits carved in the image of Native Americans wearing traditional hairstyles and headgear. Leroy has produced a number of variations on this motif, usually in the form of full-body portraits – carefully painted sculptures of standing Native American “Indians.” Leroy says these weren’t inspired by the old cigar-store Indian commercial displays but simply by the fact that “I’ve got a lot of respect for the Indians. I’ve met a lot of Indian chiefs and other Indians, and I think I’ve got a little Indian in me, but pretty far back.” Leroy was the first member of his family to start working with wood sculpture, sometime after 1985, and at the time he wasn’t even aware of the Adkins’ work in this medium. In addition to his chairs and his Indian pieces, he has carved a number of horses and bears, several versions of a woman wearing a long dress and a less modest bare-breasted *Desert Storm Girl* wearing camouflage-pattern boots and a U.S. flag bikini bottom.

Leroy’s cousin Junior helped his father make chairs when he was a youngster, but he only started carving in the late 1980s after Minnie Adkins suggested he try it. While he has carved canes, totem poles, small boats and tableaux based on nursery rhymes and biblical scenes, Junior is mainly known for his wildly gruesome black and white horned devil heads with mean-looking fangs and bright red gore dripping from every orifice. These evolved from a simpler and far less startling masklike carving of a head minus the horns and fangs, and his story of how that happened exemplifies the kind of impact market forces can have on an artist’s work. When he took that piece to the folk art sales gallery at Morehead State University in hopes of selling it, he recalls, “They said for me to paint it and make it look evil. So I took it home and painted it like that, put the horns and sharp teeth on it and brought it back and they sold it. So I’ve been making them like that ever since.”

Although the last of these three to enter the aesthetic arena, Tim is the most versatile and prolific artist among the Lewis clan. He started carving and painting wood canes in 1988 before taking up the more difficult medium of stone sculpture the following year. His rich imagination and creative ingenuity are evident enough in his carved canes, such as the tribute to the space shuttle *Endeavor*

included in this show, with a handle carved to represent the shuttle itself and a shaft painted with yellow stars against a black night-sky background. But his most impressive works are the stone sculptures. These range from relatively simple forms such as a mermaid, a human skull and various animals, to far more complex works such as *Ezekiel’s Vision*, also included here. The four heads across the top of this stele-like piece are vaguely reminiscent of those on figures by the self-taught African-American sculptor William Edmondson, while the artist’s handling of the wings on the back and sides recalls the plumage on feathered-serpent effigies from the PreColumbian Maya and Aztec cultures of Mexico and Central America.

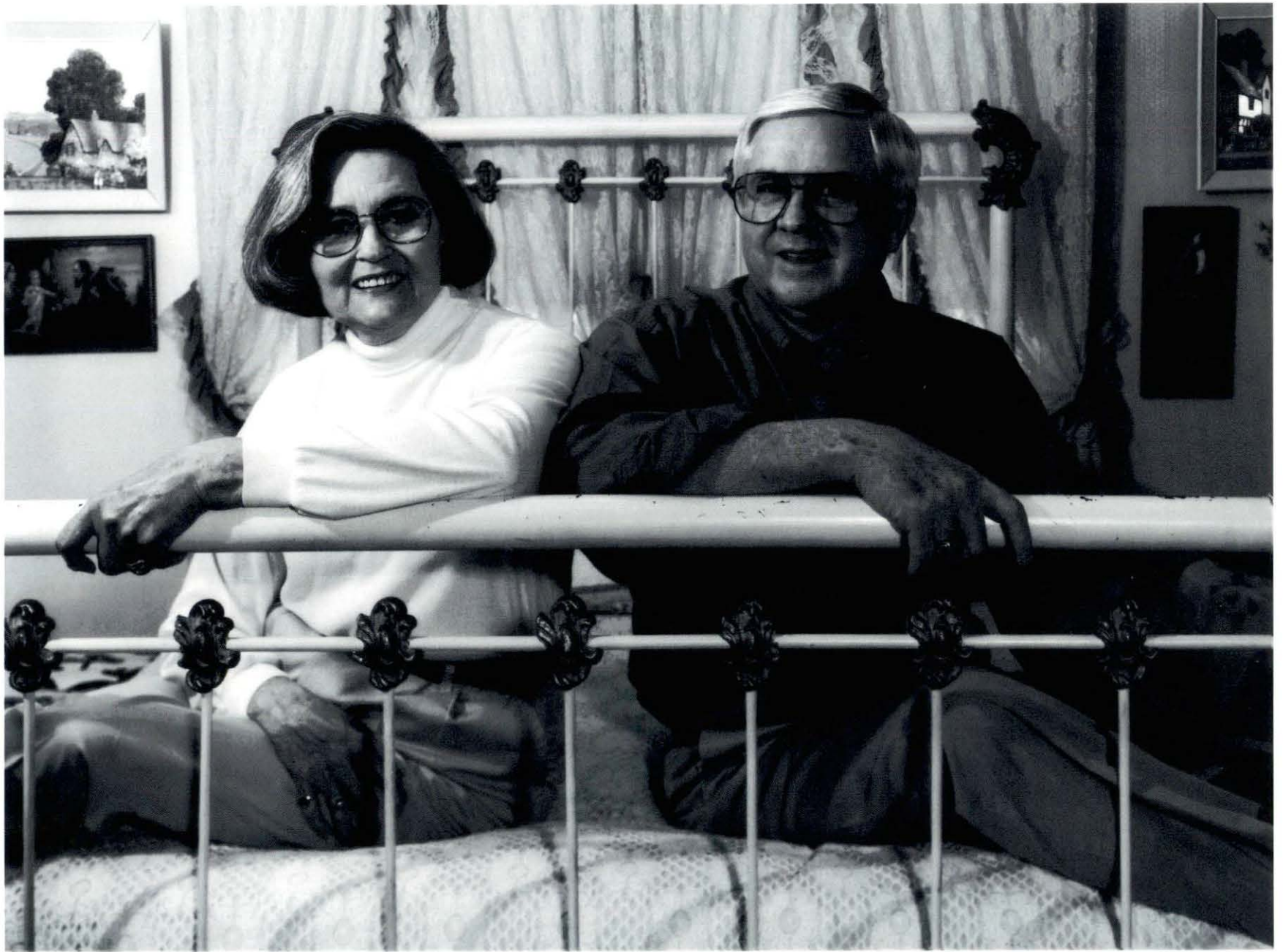
Another carver whose first piece was a cane is Lonnie Money, who lives with his wife Twyla on their farm near East Bernstadt. Other than a ball-topped cane he carved as a child for his grandfather, Money’s first pieces were small carved animals he made for his own amusement during the 1970s. In the early ‘80s he did piece-work for the crafts-marketing program at nearby Berea College, cutting and carving out the basic forms of animal figurines on which other craftsmen did the finishing work. Then in 1986 he met art dealer Larry Hackley at a crafts fair, and Hackley encouraged him to create his own pieces based on his own designs. Money took the advice, devising his own patterns for the figurines of chickens, roosters and other birds and animals he began to carve and paint during the late ‘80s. A few years later, around 1990, this one-man cottage industry expanded when his wife took over most of the painting responsibilities. More craft-oriented than other work in the exhibit, theirs are striking, well-made pieces nonetheless.

In a related vein, but more varied in its subject matter, is the work of Calvin Cooper, who has his own ideas about the difference between art and craft. As a youngster during the Great Depression – half a century before he began carving animal and human figures – he made willow-twig furniture for his family. Similarly, early on he began making silhouette cutouts from scrap wood using a bandsaw and patterns he copied from how-to books, and when he retired eight years ago at 65, he set out to produce and sell enough such pieces to earn something of a part-time income. “But,” he says, “I found out everybody and his brother was into that. It’s what I call ‘craft’ – little painted cutouts of ducks, flowers and things like

that.” For a while he sold his “craft” pieces through a co-operative near Prestonsburg, but the prices he received were hardly worth the time it took him to turn them out. Then a collector who happened to meet Cooper and see these pieces made a suggestion: “He said if I carved this stuff a little bit, it would bring real money instead of just pennies.” Adapting and modifying techniques he had used in making twig furniture, Cooper began gathering small maple and dogwood trunks and branches sprouting multiple limbs, which he cut up and transformed into the torsos, legs, wings and heads of chicken and rooster figurines. Soon he branched out to make other lively bird and animal forms and portray various human figures, including biblical heroes such as Adam and Eve, historically significant individuals like Abraham Lincoln and ordinary people.

About the same time Calvin Cooper began his woodcarving activities, his younger brother Ronald was also making his first attempts at creating art, just a few miles away at his home in Flemingsburg. But in Ronald’s case the motivation was of a different, more painful nature – recovery from a 1984 car accident that crushed his legs and disabled him for more than three years. Ronald’s wife Jessie had pursued drawing and painting for her own pleasure since her childhood in the 1930s, and Ronald had made miniature furniture as a hobby when he was in his twenties, but it was only during his recovery from the accident that they both began to get serious about making art. Jessie started painting scenes from the Bible, her own life and her dreams in a narrative memory-painting style, initially on canvasboard, while Ronald’s first works were bandsaw cutouts which Jessie painted – the kinds of pieces his brother calls “craft.” Like Calvin, Ronald and Jessie sold these early pieces through the co-op near Prestonsburg. There a few of Jessie’s works were purchased for Morehead State University’s folk art collection and the newly established sales gallery (now the Kentucky Folk Art Center), which soon began to offer pieces for sale by both artists.

Their association with the gallery exposed them to the work of other self-taught and traditionally based artists in nearby communities, and it also showed them that a thriving market existed for hand-made expressions of their own personal experience and religious views. Ronald’s work in particular began to evolve in surprisingly inventive ways at this point. Around 1988 he began an aesthetic



GUY MENDES · *Jessie and Ronald Cooper, Fleming County, Kentucky, 1994*

descent into hell that has kept him occupied ever since, producing the first in an ongoing series of intense tableaux that depict his vision of eternal damnation and infernal torment. Often these are painted and constructed on the exterior and interior surfaces of functional objects such as wooden boxes, kerosene heaters or articles of furniture – a technique that both artists discovered around 1990. Ronald believes that “Hell is just as real as Heaven,” and in explaining his artistic strategy he says, “My work has a lot of humor to it, but most everything I make also has a serious message to it that might help somebody who’s not living right.” He uses plenty of violent, startling imagery, he explains, because “if you don’t get people’s attention first, you’re not going to be able to get your message across.”

While Ronald’s work is mostly fire and brimstone, Jessie’s is sweetness and light. She has continued to paint nostalgic memories from her childhood, scenes depicting her notion of what heaven looks like and other usually comforting images, most often on a miniature scale. Like Ronald’s newer pieces, her recent paintings often incorporate texts, and most are painted on old furniture, animal skulls and other unconventional surfaces. Sometimes the two work together on a single piece that plays off the sharp contrast between their respective styles and favored subjects, as in this exhibit’s collaboration titled *Jesus Is Coming*. Between the two of them, they have produced an extraordinary body of work that forcefully conveys their views on the value and the meaning of life.

The latest members of this eastern Kentucky family to begin making art are the Coopers’ son Tim and his wife Ruthie, who also live in Flemingsburg. Since 1990 Tim has created a variety of wood sculptures in the form of angels, giant locusts, various animals, long-haired motorcyclists, and pop-culture figures – Elizabeth Taylor, Cindy Crawford, Madonna, Michael Jordan, Dwight Yoakum and others. About two years ago Ruthie started making figurative assemblages from animal bones, such as the hellish little monsters included in this exhibition. In only a few years these two young artists have produced convincing evidence of their emerging talent.

Closer to the other end of this exhibition’s age-spectrum are the Kinney brothers, Charley (1906-1991) and Noah (1912-1992), whose

recorded music and surviving artworks provide vivid testimony to their multiple talents, generous spirits and long, experientially rich lives together on the family farm in Lewis County. Both brothers began drawing during their childhood years and made art in one form or another for virtually their entire lives. Charley’s early artistic activities were motivated in part by the fact that a birth-defect had left him unable to perform hard manual labor, and art, crafts, music and sleight-of-hand magic tricks provided him with varied ways of earning extra income while other family members handled the more physically demanding farm work. A skilled basketmaker, he also taught himself to sculpt with clay while he was still relatively young, and for a number of years beginning in the 1940s his oven-fired clay figurines were sold to tourists in Kentucky state parks. He painted autobiographically based narrative scenes in a rawly expressionistic style that was fortuitously kin to the urban neo-expressionism of the 1980s – the decade during which he began to gain a widespread reputation as a visual artist. And he created a whole family of slapdash string-puppets, roughly half life-size, with movable joints and bodies patched together from scrap wood and cardboard, wire, cornsilk and old socks and underwear, among other scavenged materials. Using an ingeniously jerry-rigged contraption powered by a foot-pedal, he could make these amazingly animated rag-bag characters dance while he played fiddle, Noah played guitar and Noah’s wife Hazel assisted. Those who knew the Kinney brothers report that they would entertain visitors with such performances for hours on end.<sup>3</sup>

Although he had always enjoyed drawing and regularly found time to play music with his older brother, Noah Kinney only began regularly making art in the 1970s when ill health curtailed his farming activities. Despite failing eyesight and painful arthritis, he spent much of his time during his final 20 years sculpting a variety of human and animal figures from wood and other materials. Unable to carve in the traditional Appalachian style, using a pocket-knife, he devised his own technique, shaping his pieces with a coping saw and augmenting them with wood putty before painting them in typically bright colors.

Neither of the Kinneys had any children, and Charley never married, but Noah is survived by his much younger widow, Hazel

(b. 1929), who now lives in Flemingsburg and continues to produce small, simple drawings of animals and biblical scenes.

Born earlier than Charley Kinney or even Edgar Tolson, and still in remarkably good health and spirits at 95, is Minnie Black, who has seniority in this exhibit and is probably its most widely known artist.<sup>4</sup> She also has the distinction of practicing the most unusual art form represented here – figurative gourd sculpture. Black made her first such pieces in the late 1960s. Her working method has evolved and become more sophisticated over the years, but from the beginning it basically involved further articulating the forms she perceived in the gourds’ natural shapes by attaching fragments of smaller gourds and adding malleable molding substances, doll’s eyes, scraps of fabric and other relatively ordinary materials. The early pieces were small lizards, birds and animals, but as she gained more control over her singular medium she grew more ambitious and began creating larger works whose subjects were more challenging. After creating her first gourd portrait – of her sister, Myrtle – she went on to portray herself in various versions and several of her acquaintances, as well as pop-culture figures such as Mickey Mouse and Elvis Presley. More recently, she has created gourd-sculpture caricatures of such public figures as former U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle (as a quail) and President George Bush (as a bush). She also makes fanciful bug-eyed monsters, things that resemble dinosaurs, and other creatures of her continually active and surprising imagination. Examples of her intensely lively and varied work are displayed throughout the small stone bungalow that her late husband built for them to live in almost 50 years ago. Also on display are a few pieces by Black’s daughter, Ruth Mitchell, who uses gourds as the raw materials for another kind of art form. Now living in Henderson, Mitchell uses woodburning tools and occasionally colored felt-tip pens to transform the natural blotchy mold-stain markings on the surfaces of dried gourds into strangely contorted faces and figures that could almost be described as surrealistic.

The sign on the whitewashed facade of the boxy cinderblock building next to Black’s house reads, “Minnie’s Gourd Craft Museum.” Floor-to-ceiling shelves in its main room serve as display racks for dozens of her quirky lizards, dinosaurs, and other gourd creatures, while elsewhere in the room are several unmodified,



NOAH KINNEY · Hunter on Horseback, 1986

CHARLEY KINNEY · House Dance, 1988



MINNIE BLACK · Caveman 1988



RUTH MITCHELL · Four Gourds with Pyrographic Drawings, ca. 1989 - 1992

exceptionally long-handled gourds; a few biblical tableaux; a couple of her caveman figures; her rendition of an albino gorilla; and a baseball-size replica of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's head on a trophy-style plaque; among other surprising artworks and artifacts. The museum also contains Black's collection of musical instruments made from gourds. She has invented a number of such instruments, and she even organized a group of friends in her community to form a musical group to play these instruments – an outfit she likes to call the world's only all-gourd senior citizens' band. But her collection also features some instruments she made but didn't invent, and these are in some ways the most surprising things to be found in this little building full of surprises. For example, there's Black's *berimbau* – a traditional Brazilian percussion instrument resembling a wire-strung archery bow with a decorated gourd sound-chamber attached. Also on display are her gourd *cuiça* – another Brazilian instrument – and an African *djembe*, along with two or three other African-style drums, several of which are painted in rainbow-colored geometric designs. In explaining the presence of these exotic items, Black recalls that in the late 1970s she was visited by African-American percussionist and musicologist Bale McKnight, who was then living in Louisville and seeking special gourds to use in making his own drums. They became friends, she gave him some gourds, and he showed her how to make the instruments now on display in her museum. This nonagenarian Appalachian white lady's international, multicultural assembly of beautifully crafted musical instruments stands as a fitting object-lesson for those who would call her an "outsider" or an "isolate."

Minnie Black is perhaps the most individualistic artist among this group of strong individuals and strong artists. Despite her advanced age, she remains highly open to the outside influences she happens to encounter. At the same time, she has maintained a singularity or vision that makes her work – most of it, at least – instantly recognizable. Incessantly working and experimenting with new forms and new figures, sharing information and ideas with an ever-expanding network of fellow-artists, collectors and others who have been drawn to her little corner of the world, she is an amazing exponent of a generation that is almost gone. But, more to the point for our purposes, she is a uniquely important contemporary artist.

Most of the other artists represented work in styles and media that are more directly rooted in local and regional tradition. But they, too, maintain a spirit of openness to the larger world of art and culture stretching far beyond the Southern Appalachians, and the work in this show reflects that spirit as much as it does the artists' family and community values.

This work may originate in rural locales, but it is decidedly cosmopolitan and contemporary. Those who can't live without special qualifying adjectives might take this into account in the rethinking they'll be doing soon if they're not already. If you've gotta have special terms, folks, at least use accurate ones. Call it rural cosmopolitan contemporary art.

*Tom Patterson is a freelance arts writer, editor and independent curator. He is the author of books about St. EOM and Howard Finster, and his writings on contemporary art have appeared in dozens of art magazines, exhibition catalogs and other publications.*

#### NOTES

- 1 The first such exhibition, *Folk Art of Kentucky*, a 1975 survey of the state's "self-taught artists," at the University of Kentucky Fine Arts Gallery in Lexington. Among the other important precedents for the current show were *Kentucky Spirit: The Naive Tradition*, at the Owensboro Museum of Fine Art in Owensboro (1991), and *Local Visions: Folk Art from Northeast Kentucky* (1992), a traveling exhibit drawn from the Folk Art collection of Morehead State University in Morehead.
- 2 All quotations from artists represented in the exhibition are from in-person and telephone interviews conducted by the author during June 1994.
- 3 The information on Charley and Noah Kinney was drawn from the following sources: *Kentucky Spirit: The Naive Tradition*, Owensboro: Owensboro Museum of Fine Art (1991), not paginated; *Local Visions: Folk Art from Northeast Kentucky* (1992), Morehead State University (1992), not paginated; *Remembrances: Recent Memory Art by Kentucky Folk Artists*, Louisville: Kentucky Art and Craft Foundation (1986), pp. 5-11; and discussions with Noah Kinney's widow, Hazel Kinney, on June 9, 1994, and with Larry Hackley on June 9 and 10, 1994.
- 4 Edgar Tolson may be more widely known than Minnie Black in the realm of art exhibiting, collecting and dealing, but Minnie Black has made appearances on popular television talk shows including *The Tonight Show* and *Late Night with David Letterman*, whose audiences include millions of viewers no doubt unfamiliar with Tolson's work.

## FRIENDLY TERMS & COMMON GROUND *Some Notes on Guy Mendes' Artist Portraits*

*by Tom Patterson*

Propped in its customary spot against the window at one end of the desk where I'm writing this essay is a special personal talisman – a twelve-by-eighteen-inch print of a photograph Guy Mendes shot ten years ago, a couple of days after I first met him. It's a richly detailed, beautifully composed image of the late, great Saint EOM, a.k.a. Eddie Owens Martin – probably, in fact, the definitive portrait of the visionary artist, architect, psychic reader and self-styled otherworldly High Priest of Marion County, Georgia. At the time I was working on my book about EOM, *St. EOM in The Land of Pasaquan*, and my publisher Jonathan Williams had recruited Guy to assist in photographing the artist and his amazing four-acre environment of painted cement sculpture and architecture. Guy flew from Lexington to Atlanta – my home at the time – where Jonathan and I met him for a day or two of fun in the big city before the excursion down to EOM's place in the deeper South. I could immediately tell that Guy was a kindred spirit, a fellow traveler in the aesthetic strange-lane, and we hit it off.

It was early July 1984, and steambath hot, the blazing sun roughly at its zenith, when Guy and Eddie set up the shot in the backyard of the artist's flamboyantly modified Georgia farmhouse. EOM had slipped into the colorfully embroidered black chieftain's robe from Cameroon that he would be buried in less than two years later – a garment that unfortunately acted as a solar collector under these conditions. To help offset this effect, Eddie had topped off his exotic outfit with a reconfigured Chinese coolie's hat whose brim was ringed with cowry shells that formed a halo around his head, and it at least shaded his face and upper body from the intense light and heat.



GUY MENDES · Noah Kinney, Lewis County, Kentucky, 1978

Guy didn't get the shot he wanted on the first or second try, but when he finally did, it was one of the most memorable photographs of his career, and it remains so to this day – right up there with his portraits of Edgar Tolson alongside his carved Uncle Sam twin and guitar-picker Carlos "Little Enis" Toadvine surrounded by the topless dancing staff at Lexington's Boots' Bar. Across the upper background of the image, lush vegetation is silhouetted against a pale sky, while a panorama of boldly patterned three-dimensional art spans the middle distance, with the compound's scallop-roofed two-story pagoda near the composition's center. And there in the foreground is the Bodacious Badass of a self-proclaimed Saint himself, frontally positioned against the serpentine, mandala-lined central wall of his homemade wonderland. His face emerges in mysterious chiaroscuro from the blackness under his hat brim, and he wears a solemn and mournful-looking expression, eyes shut behind hornrimmed glasses framed by his thick moustache and braided beard as he holds his hands with palms together in front of his chest in the Buddhist gesture of *gassho* or gratitude. EOM was probably just thinking he wished Guy would hurry up and get the shot right so he could shed these suffocating duds, go back inside and light up a fresh blunt, but the wily photographic wizard had made it look as if Eddie were saying a silent prayer for a world mired in suffering and delusion. Not one to waste his time, he put up with Guy's characteristically laid-back pace on this sweltering day only out of respect for a fellow artist, and his patience was rewarded with a remarkable portrait.

The photograph wound up as the closing image in the EOM book, and it also appeared in Guy's 1986 collection of photographs, *Light at Hand*. More than a dozen of the 44 other pictures in this collection are also portraits of artists, and these are consistently among the book's strongest images. For this reason and because of the kindred-spirit thing I mentioned earlier, I was pleased to learn that Guy would be involved in the "Generations of Kentucky" project, and that his photographs of these artists would be an integral part of the exhibition. I had hoped my old strange-lane buddy would be along for my travels around eastern Kentucky while visiting the artists last spring, but the Multi-talented Mudbug (that's old-time hipster slang meaning a dude from New Orleans,

Guy's original home) was otherwise occupied that week, directing one of the public television documentaries that he writes when he's not behind the lens of a still-camera. I finally caught up with him on my last day in that part of the country, at a rural yard-party where he turned up with his wife Page, their brand new baby boy Wilson and a stack of fresh prints that Guy had made for the exhibit. We perused these on the hood of somebody's car in the late after-noon light while sipping bottled beers – an appropriate way to see his work.

Despite vast differences between the two artists in terms of their artistic sensibilities, lifestyles and living circumstances, I was struck by the similarities between Guy's photograph of Earnest Patton and the above-described picture of Saint EOM. Both images are outdoor domestic scenes that were apparently shot around mid-day, and Patton's position in the recent one is almost precisely the same as EOM's in the earlier one – standing slightly to the right of center and facing the camera, only not quite as close to the lens as Eddie is. A few feet farther back and to his right is Patton's eleven-year-old son, Earnest Jr., mirroring his dad's relaxed, hands-in-pockets stance. In the middle distance a side-view of Patton's simple wood-frame farmhouse is the compositional counterpart of Eddie Martin's exotic architectural compound in the '84 photo, and Patton's nine-year-old daughter Rebecca can be seen standing on the porch. As seen by the Bluegrass Mudbug, Patton's home is surrounded by lush vegetation comparable to that in the background of his portrait of EOM. There are even similarities between the two artists' faces – both bearded and wearing similarly shaped glasses. But all of these resemblances and compositional parallels only further highlight the sharp contrast in mood and attitude that the two photographs embody, and this contrast indicates the extent to which these portraits reflect who these artists are. Which, after all, is the ultimate measure of a portrait.

Saint Eddie Owens Martin was a radical re-creator whose aesthetic and philosophical strategy involved setting himself apart from the rest of us, and the photo shows him, appropriately, alone in his own world. Patton makes no pretensions at setting himself apart from his neighbors or anyone else. Sure, he's an extraordinary sculptor, but he presents himself as nothing more than a regular guy, a down-

home, down-to-earth family man who likes to whittle. And unlike the embittered exile my old amigo EOM had become by the time Guy captured his soul on film, Patton displays an easy, matter-of-fact contentment with his circumstances. All of this comes through in this portrait, and particularly in the open, neighborly, silver-fringed grin with which the artist welcomes the click of the shutter.

Guy Mendes' portraits of artists are about one artist facing another on friendly terms and common ground, and it is our privilege to stand there with them for that empathic and quietly epiphanous moment. As for the approach he employs in order to crystallize that moment so beautifully and unintrusively, the Mudbug himself said it best in an interview with our old mutual friend Jonathan Williams that appeared as the afterword to *Light at Hand*: "A photographer needs to be in a state of relaxed attention, call it, in order to stumble one way or another into a new place."

Give your relaxed attention to the photographs in this exhibit. Let the Bluegrass Mudbug take you to some new places and introduce you to some new people who'll welcome you into their homes and studios and backyards as if you were a fellow artist.

*Winston-Salem*

*4 July 1994*

*Birthday of Saint EOM (1908-1986)*





GUY MENDES · *Lillian and Linvel Barker, Elliott County, Kentucky, 1993*

## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

3D WORK DIMENSIONS: H X W X D

2D WORK DIMENSIONS: H X W

## GARLAND AND MINNIE ADKINS

b. 1928 b. 1934

*Black Horse*

1993

wood, paint

21 1/2" x 40 1/16" x 5"

Anonymous Lender

*Noah's Ark*

1992

wood, bark, paint

21 1/4" x 32 3/4" x 25"

Kentucky Art and Craft  
Foundation*Ox Yoke with Minnie and Garland*

1994

ox yoke, wood, paint

16 1/4" x 38 1/2" x 5 1/2"

Anonymous Lender

## MINNIE ADKINS

*Sweatshirt*

"Peaceful Valley Woodshop"

1992

acrylic, cotton

27 1/4" x 26 1/4"

Sue Rosen

*Three Painted Antler Mounts*

1991

antlers, wood, paint

15 1/4" x 18 1/2" x 10 1/2",

17" x 18" x 14 1/2",

18 1/2" x 18" x 12"

Anonymous Lender

*Twig Rooster Quilt*

1990

quilted by Lend A Hand Center,

Barbourville, KY

cotton, polyester

77 1/2" x 92"

Anonymous Lender

## GARLAND AND MINNIE ADKINS

GIFTS TO FRIENDS AND

COLLECTORS

*Desert Storm Rooster*

1991

wood, paint

17 1/2" x 7 1/2" x 5"

gift to Rita Steinberg

*Dancing Heart*

"Christmas 1988"

1988

wood, paint

7 1/2" x 8 1/2" x 3 1/4"

gift to Sue Rosen

*Squirrel with a Nut*

1989

wood, paint

6 1/4" x 5 1/2" x 1 3/4"

gift to Sue Rosen

*A Minnie Mouse with Fox*

"To Maggie and Dick

From Minnie"

1991

wood, paint

13" x 6" x 6"

gift to Margaret and

Richard Wenstrup

*Self-Portrait of Minnie with Fox*

"Merry Christmas 1993 -

I did out fox you. MEA"

1993

wood, paint

10 1/2" x 5" x 5"

gift to Larry Hackley

*Cow Bell on Ribbon*

1991

ribbon, metal, paint

4 1/2" x 3 1/2" x 1 3/4"

gift to Larry Hackley

## LILLIAN BARKER

b. 1930

*Joshua Wall of Jericho*

1990

acrylic on board

24" x 36"

Eason Eige

*Noah's Ark*

1993

acrylic on board

24" x 36"

Larry Poe

## LINVEL BARKER

b. 1929

*Buffalo*

1994

wood, paint

12 1/4" x 4 1/4" x 15"

Ken and Donna Fadeley

*Giraffe*

1993

spaulted wood

27" x 13" x 3 1/4"

Kentucky Art and

Craft Foundation

*Pig*

1991

wood, paint

12" x 5" x 18 1/2"

Anonymous Lender

## MINNIE BLACK

b. 1899

*Cave Man*

ca. 1988

gourds, sculpta mold, paint, hair,

fake fur, bamboo, rubber, stone

18" x 13" x 7 1/2"

Anonymous Lender

*Gourd Critter*

ca. 1990

gourds, sculpta mold, paint,

seeds, plastic

21" x 13" x 28 1/2"

Anonymous Lender

*Stegosaurus*

1994

gourds, luffa, sculpta mold, paint,

chicken toe nails, plastic

12" x 16 1/4" x 23"

Eason Eige

## CAIVIN COOPER

b. 1921

*Large Dog*

1989

wood, paint

19 1/2" x 7 3/4" x 13"

Margaret and Richard Wenstrup

*Small Dog*

1989

wood, paint

13 1/2" x 9" x 9"

Margaret and Richard Wenstrup

*Rooster*

1992

wood, paint

16" x 16" x 11 1/4"

Margaret and Richard Wenstrup

## JESSIE COOPER

b. 1932

*Daddy Said We Are Rich*

1989

cow bone, paint, wood

13 1/2" x 8" x 3 1/2"

Margaret and Richard Wenstrup

*We Are Blessed*

1991

magazine table, paint

19 1/4" x 20" x 12"

Margaret and Richard Wenstrup

## RONALD COOPER

b. 1931

*The Wicked in Hell*

1989

cow skull, paint, wood

8" x 13" x 5"

Anne and John Miller

*Truth Trunk*

1989

wood, metal, bone, paint, plastic,

rubber

29 1/4" x 30 1/2" x 20" (OPEN)

Eason Eige

## RONALD AND JESSIE COOPER

*Hell Mountain*

1993

root, paint, wood and metal

stool on wheels

32 1/2" x 36" x 28 1/2"

Kentucky Folk Art Center

*Jesus Is Calling*

1988

paint, wood

36 1/2" x 16 3/4" x 17 1/2"

Kentucky Folk Art Center

## RUTHIE COOPER

b. 1967

*Hell Hound*

1994

cow bones, paint, glue

15" x 15 1/4" x 17 1/4"

Ruthie Cooper

*Devil's Pet*

1994

cow bones, paint, glue

17 3/4" x 15 1/2" x 10"

Ruthie Cooper

## TIM COOPER

b. 1957

*Biker Chick on a Hog*

1994

wood, paint, metal, plastic

14 1/2" x 21" x 9 1/2"

Sue Rosen

*Woman Angel*

1994

wood, paint, rope

18" x 26 1/2" x 4 1/2"

Tim Cooper

## CHARLEY KINNEY

1906 - 1991

*Coon Hunt*

1988

tempera, graphite,

charcoal on paper

32" x 40"

Larry Hackley

*Haint*

1986

tempera, charcoal on poster board

22" x 28"

Michael and Eva McGee

*House Dance*

1988

stove polish, tempera,

charcoal on paper

22" x 28 1/2"

Anonymous Lender

## HAZEL KINNEY

b. 1929

*Down Home on the Farm*

1993

pastel on paper

17 7/8" x 20 1/2"

Steve and Linda Jones

*Old Woman in a Shoe*

1993

marker on paper

12" x 18"

Steve and Linda Jones

*Two Black Cats on a Fence*

1992

cray-pas on velvet paper

19 3/4" x 27"

Margaret and Richard Wenstrup

## NOAH KINNEY

1912 - 1991

*Coon*

1987

wood, paint

18" x 8 3/4" x 17"

Eason Eige

*Female Nashville Performer*

ca. 1974

wood, paint, wire, thread

11" x 4 1/2" x 5 3/4"

Nancy and Ellsworth Taylor

*Hunter on Horseback*

ca. 1986

wood, paint

10 1/2" x 4 1/2" x 14 1/2"

Larry Hackley

*Male Nashville Performer*

ca. 1974

wood, paint, wire, thread

12 3/4" x 4 1/2" x 7 1/4"

Nancy and Ellsworth Taylor

ERMA "JUNIOR" LEWIS  
b. 1948

*David and Goliath*  
1994  
wood, paint  
10 1/2" x 19" x 10 1/8"  
Anonymous Lender

*Devil Head*  
1992  
wood, paint, mirror  
23 1/4" x 15 3/4" x 16 1/2"  
Anne and John Miller

*Last Supper*  
1988  
wood  
8 3/4" x 25 3/4" x 8 3/4"  
Anne and John Miller

LEROY LEWIS  
b. 1949

*Desert Storm Girl*  
1991  
wood, paint  
30" x 10 3/4" x 4"  
Anonymous Lender

*Rocking Chair with  
Indian Head Finalis*  
1993  
oak, hickory bark  
48 1/4" x 24 1/2" x 35 1/4"  
Josephine D'Amato and  
William B. Richardson

*Woman in Red Dress*  
1990  
wood, paint  
26" x 8" x 5 1/2"  
Eason Eige

TIM LEWIS  
b. 1952

*Evolution*  
1993  
sandstone  
25" x 19 1/4" x 6 1/2"  
Anonymous Lender

*Ezekiel's Vision*  
1992  
sandstone  
26" x 22 1/4" x 7 1/2"  
The Reverend and Mrs.  
Alfred R. Shands III

*Root Cane - Don't Look a Gift  
Horse in the Mouth*  
1993  
wood, paint  
37 1/2" x 11 1/2" x 4 1/4"  
Anonymous Lender

*Root Cane - Inch Worm  
Measuring Blue Jeans*  
1990  
wood, paint, metal  
37 1/2" x 8" x 3"  
Anonymous Lender

*Root Cane - Space Shuttle Endeavor*  
1992  
wood, paint  
40" x 8" x 4 3/4"  
Tim Lewis

RUTH MITCHELL  
b. 1927

*Bird House Gourd with  
Pyrographic Drawing*  
1991  
gourd  
11" x 9" x 7 1/2"  
Anonymous Lender

*Cannon Ball Gourd with  
Pyrographic Drawing*  
1991  
gourd  
6" x 6 1/2" x 6"  
Anonymous Lender

*Cave Man's Billy Gourd with  
Pyrographic Drawing*  
ca. 1989  
gourd  
17" x 7 1/2" x 7 1/2"  
Anonymous Lender

*Dipper Gourd with  
Pyrographic Drawing*  
ca. 1992  
gourd  
22" x 4 1/4" x 4 1/4"  
Ruth Mitchell

LONNIE AND TWYLA MONEY  
b. 1949, b. 1952

*Clovis*  
1976  
pine, paint  
6 3/8" x 4 3/4" x 3"  
Lonnie and Twyla Money

*Granny*  
1976  
pine, paint  
6 1/4" x 3" x 4"  
Lonnie and Twyla Money

*Pig with Ear of Corn*  
1994  
wood, paint  
8" x 13 1/2" x 6 1/4"  
Lonnie and Twyla Money

*Quilt with Animals*  
quilted by Shirley Buck  
1994  
cotton, polyester  
92" x 68"  
Lonnie and Twyla Money

*Turkey*  
1994  
wood, paint  
32" x 28 1/4" x 10 1/4"  
Anonymous Lender

EARNEST PATTON  
b. 1935

*Abraham Lincoln with Snake Cane*  
1994  
wood, paint  
19 1/2" x 10" x 11 1/4"  
Anonymous Lender

*The Devil*  
1994  
wood  
22" x 11" x 12 1/2"  
Anonymous Lender

*Hog Killing*  
1989  
wood, paint  
22 1/2" x 11" x 11 3/4"  
Eason Eige

*Holstein Bull*  
1981  
wood, paint  
11 3/4" x 12 1/2" x 5 1/4"  
Anne and Allan Weiss

*Lone Ranger and Silver*  
1988  
wood, paint, leather  
21 1/2" x 11 1/4" x 15"  
Eason Eige

DONNY TOLSON  
b. 1958

*Kenny Walker*  
1985  
wood, paint  
29 1/2" x 8 3/4" x 8 3/4"  
The Reverend and Mrs.  
Alfred R. Shands III

*Man and Woman*  
1981  
poplar, pencil, marker  
17" x 3 3/4" x 3 1/2",  
15" x 4 1/4" x 3 1/2"  
Eason Eige

*Wood Chopper*  
1981  
walnut, redwood, pencil, marker  
21 3/4" x 5 1/2" x 9 1/2"  
Larry Hackley

EDGAR TOLSON  
1904 - 1984

*Two Figures*  
1975  
wood, paint  
16 1/2" x 2" x 3 1/4", 15 1/2" x 2" x 4"  
Ken and Donna Fadeley

*Uncle Sam*  
1972  
poplar, paint, foil paper  
29 1/2" x 7 3/4" x 5 3/4"  
Nancy and Ellsworth Taylor

*Yoke of Oxen*  
ca. 1959  
wood, paint  
6 7/8" x 7 1/4" x 8"  
Larry Hackley

GUY MENDES  
b. 1948

*Minnie and Garland Adkins,*  
*Elliott County, Kentucky*  
1993  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Lillian and Linvel Barker,*  
*Elliott County, Kentucky*  
1993  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Minnie Black in her  
Gourd Museum,*  
*Laurel County, Kentucky*  
1993  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Minnie Black with Ruth,*  
*Laurel County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
20" x 16"

*Calvin Cooper,*  
*Fleming County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
12" x 18"

*Jessie and Ronald Cooper,*  
*Fleming County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Tim, Ruthie, Jessie and  
Ronald Cooper,*  
*Fleming County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Charley Kinney,*  
*Lewis County, Kentucky*  
1978  
silver gelatin print  
12" x 18"

*Hazel Kinney,*  
*Fleming County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
18" x 12"

*Noah Kinney,*  
*Lewis County, Kentucky*  
1978  
silver gelatin print  
12" x 18"

*Junior Lewis,*  
*Elliott County, Kentucky*  
1993  
silver gelatin print  
12" x 18"

*Leroy Lewis,*  
*Elliott County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Tim Lewis,*  
*Elliott County, Kentucky*  
1993  
silver gelatin print  
20" x 16"

*Twyla and Lonnie Money,*  
*Laurel County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Twyla and Lonnie Money,*  
*Laurel County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
12" x 18"

*Earnest Patton with  
Earnest Junior and Rebecca,*  
*Wolfe County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

*Donny Tolson,*  
*Wolfe County, Kentucky*  
1994  
silver gelatin print  
12" x 18"

*Edgar Tolson,*  
*Wolfe County, Kentucky*  
1974  
silver gelatin print  
14" x 14"

## EXHIBITION ITINERARY

Kentucky Art and Craft Gallery · Louisville, Kentucky  
September 9 through October 28, 1994

Owensboro Museum of Fine Art · Owensboro, Kentucky  
November 6 through December 30, 1994

Galbreath Gallery · Lexington, Kentucky  
January 9 through February 17, 1995

Ohio Craft Museum · Columbus, Ohio  
February through March 1995

The Houchens Gallery  
Capitol Arts Center · Bowling Green, Kentucky  
June through July 1995

Eagle Gallery  
Murray State University · Murray, Kentucky  
November through December 1995

Kentucky Folk Art Center · Morehead, Kentucky  
January through February 1996