

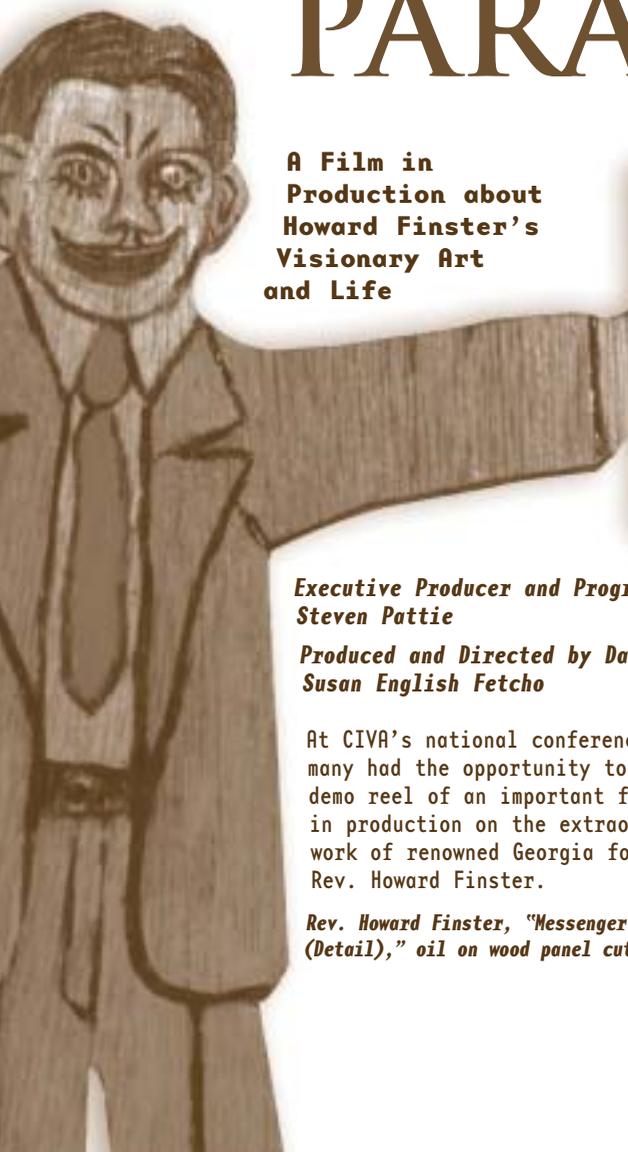
CIVASEEN

CIVASEEN THE NEWSLETTER OF CHRISTIANS IN THE VISUAL ARTS VOL.VI 03-2004

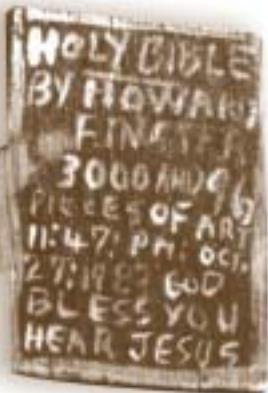
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THE MAN from PARADISE



**A Film in
Production about
Howard Finster's
Visionary Art
and Life**



**Executive Producer and Program Creator,
Steven Pattie**

**Produced and Directed by David Fetcho and
Susan English Fetcho**

At CIVRA's national conference last year, many had the opportunity to view a short demo reel of an important film currently in production on the extraordinary life and work of renowned Georgia folk artist, the Rev. Howard Finster.

Rev. Howard Finster, "Messenger of God Almighty (Detail)," oil on wood panel cut-out, 13" x 8", 1983

Finster is considered by scholars, curators and historians of art history to be among the most important self-taught artists of the 20th century. Many, like Phyllis Kind of Phyllis Kind Gallery are confident that Finster will be remembered in the years ahead as not only a major self-taught artist, but as one of the most influential contemporary artists of our day.

Rivaled only by Pablo Picasso, he produced more individual works of art – over 50,000 works in roughly a 25-year span – than any artist in history, and is considered by many to be the most widely

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Steven Pattie and Howard Finster

CIVA TIMELINE 1979-2004



Gene Johnson



Alva Steffler

1977

- Professor Eugene Johnson from Bethel College, St. Paul, MN convenes first conference

1979

- Biennial Conference at Bethel College, St. Paul, MN – Keynote Speaker: Jane Dillenger, historian
- Conferees adopt CIVA's bylaws and organization was founded
- Eugene Johnson, Art Chair, Bethel College is elected 1st president
- CIVA newsletter started, co-edited by Ed and Diane Knippers

1981

- Biennial Conference at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI – Keynote Speaker: Betty Edwards, arts educator
- Edward Boevé, Art Chair, Calvin College is elected president

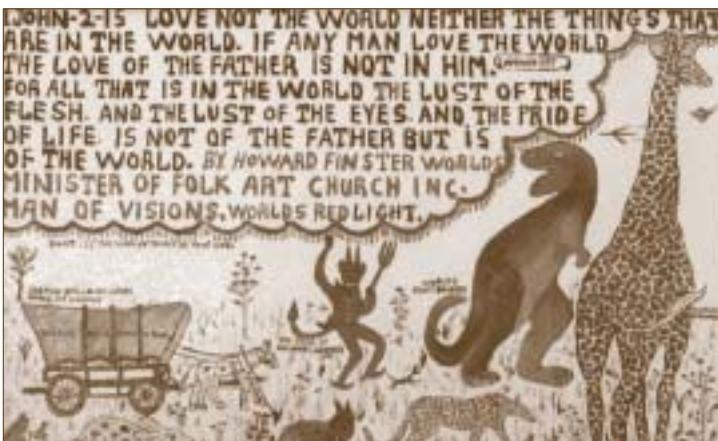
1983

- Biennial Conference at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI – Keynote Speaker: Hilton Kramer, art critic
- Alva Steffler, Professor of Art, Wheaton College is elected president

continued from page 1

exhibited artist in America today. As noted by Dr. Lynne Spriggs, curator of folk art at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, "No self-taught artist has ever achieved a higher public status or broader visibility than Howard Finster... The Rev. Finster was to the history of American folk art what Elvis was to the evolution of rock and roll..."

Finster's journey happened to accelerate alongside "sympathetic developments in art... graffiti art, 'fun' and 'Wild Style' painting, punk rock, the 'new figuration' (and) 'Neo-Expressionism,'" as noted by art critic Tom Patterson. Potent, driven, and unrestrained, this self-described "stranger from another world" is the creator of verbal, visual, sculptural, and environmental art, an unparalleled *tour de force* creatively ahead of his time. Contemporary artists like Keith Haring (who flew to Georgia specifically to spend a day with Finster only weeks before he died of AIDS), and other major artists like him, saw this former Baptist pastor as pointing the way to true originality and an individuality of expression that artists seek but rarely find.



Rev. Howard Finster, "Love Not the World," oil on plastic enamel panel, 19.5" x 29", 1982

This film has already generated significant attention among scholars, museums, galleries, critics, and collectors, and will feature a variety of people commenting on Finster's significance within both the American and international art scenes. It also showcases numerous celebrities who discuss Finster's impact on their lives and work. These include Mike Mills of R.E.M., country western star Marty Stuart, U.S. Sen. Zell Miller, fashion designer Todd Oldham, photographers Mary Ellen Mark and Christopher Makos, artists Mark Kostabi and Jon Waldo, and others.

The documentary highlights the visionary spirit that drove Howard Finster and presents him as the wonderful, eccentric, and creative personality that he was. How could an uneducated rural preacher, from a world that some would consider a religious back-

water, move to the forefront of the international art world? How did his work as a self-taught artist influence the established art scene, and did exposure to that world change Finster's own self-understanding as an artist? Where did he find the freedom and endurance to consistently speak with power from the margins of our society?

David and Susan Fetcho, who direct and produce this show, and Steven Pattie, executive producer and program creator, recorded what is the last extant footage of the artist 90 days before he unexpectedly died. In his own words and typically prescient fashion, Finster told the producers that the interview was "my last message to the world." The producers' goal is to faithfully present "the world according to Howard," a universe that was at once unpredictable, humorous, passionate, mysterious, and often prophetic. This is a briskly paced and thoughtful portrait of the man considered by many to be the senior statesman of visionary folk art and among the most important artists of the late 20th century.

Represented by agent Harvey Harrison, the producers' goal is to release this film by Fall 2004. For more information, readers are welcome to contact executive producer Steven Pattie at 925.485.0420 x343 or by email at spattie@russreid.com. Pattie is on CIVA's National Board of Directors. David and Susan English Fetcho of foundlight.tv can be reached by email at info@foundlight.tv.

CIVA SILVER 25TH ANNIVERSARY



Rev. Howard Finster, "Satan is After You," enamel on wood, 21.5" x 26.5", 1990

2004 marks the 25th anniversary of CIVA's birth. This silver year will be filled with much celebration, culminating in our coming together at Azusa Pacific University, Los Angeles, CA, June 15-18, 2005. The conference theme will be *Re:new*, as we look at CIVA's past and future, and investigate New Media, taking advantage of all the L.A. area has to offer. Already scheduled to speak is Dr. Richard Vosko, Liturgical and Public Art Designer for Los Angeles' renowned *Our Lady of the Angels* Cathedral. We are currently confirming other noteworthy speakers for this gala event. Pray with us as we strive with God's help to accomplish much in this significant year. We begin the celebration with a timeline highlighting some of the noteworthy accomplishments and events of the past two and a half decades.



Ted Prescott



Edward Boevé

1985

- Biennial Conference at Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL – Keynote Speaker: Howard Fox, curator
- Ted Prescott, Art Chair, Messiah College is elected president

1986

- 1st CIVIA Directory published

1987

- Biennial Conference at Marymount College, Washington, D.C. – Keynote Speaker: David Tannous, art critic
- Edward Boevé elected for 2nd term as president

1989

- Biennial Conference at Biola University, Los Angeles, CA – Keynote Speaker: Chaim Potok, author
- Edward Boevé elected for 3rd term as president
- Albany Institute for History and Art opens CIVIA's 1st traveling exhibition

ORDAINED to CREATE.

• The Self-Taught Art of Southern Preachers, Prophets and Visionaries

Steven Pattie

At the forefront of some of the most exciting self-taught art on the American scene are religious visionaries, preachers and prophets. Fueled by an unwavering sense of mission, these Christian artists are brimming with an unbridled passion for their God, and in the process, creating a body of work distinctly all their own.

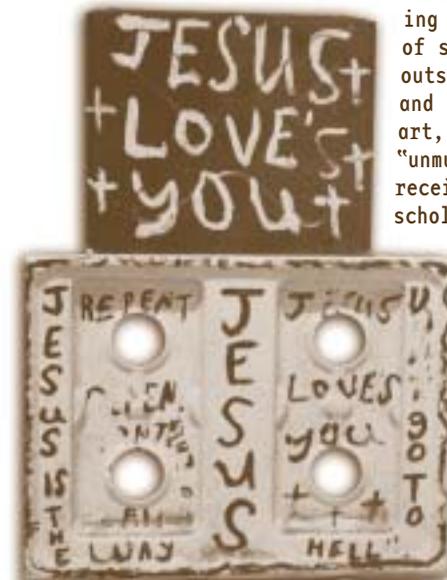
Most did not begin to create art until nearing an age when many people are approaching retirement. However, each person's lifetime of experience, rooted in years of keen observation and passionate living, has been their hardscrabble academy. Astonishingly, in many cases their art has taken them from the margins of society to the epicenter of the contemporary art world.

In the wake of a horrible family tragedy, Myrtice West's artistic vision was ignited by God. "Not knowing what had come over me," she felt led

to illustrate the Book of Revelation as her first major work, and over a seven-year period painstakingly produced 14 large and extraordinary oil paintings. Within a few short years, they found their way into major museum collections and became the basis for a book, *Wonders to Behold: The Visionary Art of Myrtice West*.¹

One day while painting a bicycle, a smudge of enamel looking like a face appeared on the Rev. Howard Finster's finger. It told him to "paint sacred art" in order to plant the word of God "on every brain cell." Honoring that instruction, Finster cemented all his tradesman's tools into the walkway of his garden to mark and insure his allegiance to this new call. "Working night and day for you all," he went on to create more than 50,000 works of art.²

Speaking with unfettered and unfiltered voices, Finster, West, and other artists like them are making a stir not just in the world of self-taught art. While created outside the established salons and traditional mainstream of art, these expressive outpourings "unmuddied by artistic training or received knowledge" as British scholar Colin Rhodes describes it,



Rev. W.C. Rice, "Jesus Will Help You," oil on enameled steel (discarded stove top), approx. 20" x 26.5", 1998

are at the same time influencing what is happening in the so-called art world-at-large.³ Challenging the establishment's canonical rules of creativity, the art is non-derivative and goes straight to the fundamentals of art: rhythm, design, balance, and proportion, something the best of artists feel instinctively. As Alice Rae Yelen from the New Orleans Museum of Art suggests, "Unencumbered by preconceived ideas or outwardly imposed models of what art should be, they are free to create without external expectations or guidance."⁴

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Ivy Billiot, "Angel," enamel on wood, 20" x 8" x 5", 2000

CIVA TIMELINE 1979-2004



Donald Forsythe



Sandra Bowden and
Laurel Gasque

1990	1991	1992	1993
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd CIVA Directory published • CIVA's <i>Miserere Series: Georges Rouault</i> exhibition begins to travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial Conference at Bethel College, St. Paul, MN – Keynote Speaker: Suzi Gablik, author • Donald Forsythe, Professor of Art, Messiah College is elected president • CIVA's <i>Works on Paper</i> exhibition opens and begins to travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd CIVA Directory published • \$53,000 grant from Fieldstead and Co. for publication of <i>Florence Portfolio</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial Conference at Messiah College, Grantham, PA – Keynote Speaker: Robert Hughes, art critic • Sandra Bowden, Printmaker from Albany, NY is elected president • Conference brochure published in <i>Computer Pictures</i>, received

continued from page 3

Defining the terms – inside or outside? Historically, the art of such self-taught creators has been broadly defined as folk, primitive, or naïve art. In recent years, other terms such as “outsider,” “art brut,” “self-taught,” and “vernacular” have also been introduced. However, individual descriptors are not completely accurate and often fall short of clearly describing an individual and his or her work. Unlike the traditional folk art of native and formally unschooled communities (such as we might find within Oaxaca, Mexico or New Mexico’s Zuni Pueblo), this art is different and particularly innovative. Always idiosyncratic, these eccentric works are only remotely related (if at all) to the surrounding cultures’ creative traditions, whether living and working within a major metropolitan environment like Atlanta or the southern Appalachian foothills. These artists create unique works coupled with a personal iconography and style all their own, clearly raising them above the confines of “traditional” folk art.

Lowery Sims, former curator of 20th century art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, noted in an issue of *ArtNews* that based on the work of many of these artists, the art establishment has had to “revisit the whole primitivist paradigm.” Authors and New York art dealers Frank Maresca and Roger Ricco, take it one step further in their most recent book *American Vernacular*. They rightly suggest that the boundaries “between ‘high’ and ‘low’ or elitist and popular art” should be altogether erased.⁵ Clearly, we need a new paradigm. As they correctly note, there has often been a simple and spurious opposition between what they call “vernacular and mainstream art.” Maresca and Ricco refer to this as the “grass ceiling” of folk art which forever “limits its appreciation, understanding, and evaluation.” Ideally we should be able to talk about Jean-Michel Basquiat and Howard Finster, William Edmondson and Henry Moore, or Pablo Picasso and anonymous African art, without hesitation or qualification in the same breath. We should regularly read, as I did in another issue of *ArtNews*, that a certain major artist’s work is particularly “Finsteresque.” The bottom line is that on the vast continuum of art, a continuum that should be envisioned horizontally rather than vertically, “insiderness and outsiderness are often matters of circumstance and cultural construction” and are generally not very helpful.⁶

The Lure of the Local. Why the general public has developed such an insatiable appetite for self-taught art is also related to something deeper. Modern men and women in the western hemisphere often have little sense of place. We are a peripatetic people constantly on the move and frequently without a compass. Complicating matters further, the majority of people grow up in families torn asunder, and left without a warm

hearth around which to gather. Yet we are created with a passion to put down roots, have a place to call home, and with a desire for community. Hence, this art’s attraction is fueled by what Lucy Lippard calls the “lure of the local.”⁷ Amidst the *zeitgeist* of our modern day, there is often an absence of value attached to place, physical and spiritual. Frequently this same malaise of our modern day is mirrored in the rarified art world, evidenced by what Lippard would call “postmodern paradoxes and paradigms.” In the end, what is often produced is a derivative and inauthentic art that is devoid of an original, passionate voice.⁸

Many of these artists hail from the South, a region with a strong sense of place and family. The artists themselves are folks “irrevocably connected to their land, communities, traditions, and families.” Rooted as such, these authentic and creative souls are luring an unsuspecting audience to places they may remember, but at the very least may want to know more intimately. Perhaps their audience’s desire is to vicariously fill certain voids within their own lives. Phyllis Kind of Phyllis Kind Gallery in New York City (a leading art gallery and the dealer who introduced Finster to the contemporary art scene) says that while Finster’s work is almost always explicit in its Christian emphasis, she never recalls selling art to anyone exclusively for that reason. Indeed, the non-religious person’s attraction to the work of folks like Finster and others is often about being led home to a place of passion, spirituality, and authenticity they remember, or would like to get to know.

While challenging, the unfiltered work of these deeply rooted artists is largely accessible, straightforward, and speaks to the heart about a passion and authenticity that is desirable, perhaps recoverable, and therefore in many ways a hopeful word in our modern day.

Instructions from Dreams, God, and Elvis. Bearing a mantle of evangelical zeal, each express their art in very direct, passionate and always idiosyncratic ways. Following instructions received from God, Elvis, angels, dreams, visions or from what they read in their well-thumbed Bible and the local paper, they are, as Yelen notes, “obsessively driven by unarticulated, internalized sources of inspiration” as they unwittingly, but often successfully, create the best of artistic infractions.¹⁰ She goes on to suggest that those who are preachers generally operate “on the fringe of the church hierarchy” and are as “out of the mainstream there as they are in the art world.”¹¹ Whether it is Howard Finster referring to himself as the “world’s red light” or “second Noah,” or James Hampton who on special occasions wore a hand-made foil crown marking his self-appointed special status as “Director of Special Projects for the State of Eternity,” each possess a self-avowed state of spiritual authority.¹²

A self-described “Man of Visions,” Howard Finster would regularly talk to his many “fans” (as he called them) about visitations he



Rev. J.L. Hunter, “Untitled,” enamel on wood Construction, 14.5” x 8.5” x 2.75”, 1988

1994



Board Members: Erica Grimm-Yance and Roger Feldman

- 4th CIVA Directory published
- CIVA CODEX I, produced by James Stambaugh, Director, Billy Graham Center, Wheaton, IL
- Florence Portfolio published
- Art for Gifts program initiated
- Joanne Weber, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT hired to write 4 year plan for CIVA
- CIVA Prayer Network established

1995



Prayer Network: Nancy Goes

- Biennial Conference at Berkeley, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA – Keynote Speakers: Judith Rock, dancer; Tom Sine, theologian; Nicholas Wolterstorff, philosopher
- Sandra Bowden elected for 2nd term as president
- 4 year plan written and adopted
- *Images of the Spirit* photography exhibition opens and travels

Junior Lewis, "The Last Supper," carved and painted wood construction, 10" x 9" x 20", 1996



would receive on a regular basis from angels, God, and even once an eight-foot Elvis who he indicated with the point of a finger stood "right over there in front of that tree." In my conversations with Finster, discussions of visions and dreams were fairly commonplace, and he would regularly speak about "having visions of things several years before they happened." On the front of one of Finster's paintings in our collection, he records in his own hand with a black Sharpie marker about how one needs to be prepared "to see strange things" and that one should "open your mind for visions" in order to "tune into other worlds..." This was where he lived, although admitting at times "it sometimes all seems like a bad dream."

Myrtice West, born and reared in the small farming towns of Cherokee County, Alabama, does not exactly recall how one day she landed in the pulpit of a local church preaching to the congregation in the wake of hearing of her daughter's murder. On the pulpit was a Bible, and it happened to be open to the Book of Revelation. Weeks later she felt strongly that God was trying to tell her something and so she went about studying the Revelation of John in more detail. Fueled by dreams and visions, she eventually stretched some canvas across the frame of a discarded window screen. After producing 14 major paintings illustrating the book of Revelation, she went on to produce hundreds of other paintings illustrating her visions based on the prophetic books of the Bible, as well as narrative scenes from the Old and New Testaments.

Creating Iconography – Jesus, Coca Cola, and George Washington. Artists such as the Rev. Howard Finster, the Rev. B. F. Perkins, the Rev. R. A. Miller, Myrtice West,



Myrtice West, "The Last Supper," oil on panel, 22" x 28", 2001

Felix Virgous, Missionary Mary Proctor, and Elder Anderson Johnson are good examples of artists who produce narrative works rooted in a claim of direct communication with God. Many recreate the Biblical stories on canvas. Artists such as Finster, Perkins, Miller, West, and Proctor often lace their art with didactic messages about the authority of God and centrality of the Bible, the importance of morality, eschatological visions, and some personal advice thrown in for good measure. The work of certain other artists, such as Zebedee "Z.B." Armstrong, J.B. Murry, and the Rev. Albert Wagner frequently tends towards abstraction, but is fueled by the same passion and preoccupation with spiritual matters. In all cases, their Christian walk is an integral part of their journey and is consistently evident in their work.

Frequently woven into the fabric of these artists' work is the ubiquitous presence of patriotic and national symbols. The most frequent images include the American flag, the Statue of Liberty, Uncle Sam, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King. As noted by Yelen, the presence of these historical expressions of patriotism indicate how engrained these emblems are in our daily lives.¹³ Artists like Finster, Johnson, and Miller regularly feature portraits of famous Americans. Cherishing the American's freedom of religious choice, the Rev. B.F. Perkins is especially known for his incorporation of patriotic and religious imagery, particularly the American flag and the *Statue of Liberty*. One piece by Miller in our collection, *Lord Love USA* is an evocative image featuring a large American flag on tin with the scribbled words, "You won't burn this flag."

Alongside these spiritual and political references, some of the artists regularly draw on secular resources to help spread their message, employing popular culture to their advantage. With Finster's involvement or explicit permission, his works have been commissioned or utilized by Coca Cola, Disneyland, *Time*, Absolut Vodka, U2, and MTV, in addition to creating album covers for such major bands as Talking Heads and R.E.M. In response to receiving the "Album Cover of the Year" Award in 1985 from *Rolling Stone* for his Talking Heads album, Finster declared "I painted 26 verses on that painting. It sold one million copies in two months. That's 26 million verses I got out into the world in two months." For Finster, the employment of such means is an intentional ingredient of his overall missionary strategy to the culture-at-large.

Handmade Universes – Gardens of Revelation, Declaration and Apocalypse. A surprising number of these artists are compelled to create wondrous and unusual environments that are sincere, powerful, and challenging declarations. Artists creating such handmade universes include Howard Finster, Ruby Williams, R. A. Miller, W. C. Rice, Anderson Johnson, Benjamin Perkins, Jesse Howard, Mary T. Smith, and others. As John Beardsley notes, these environments are "a form of rhetorical speech." Not designed for habitation, these unique gardens are above all "artistic and symbolic places."¹⁴ Their paintings, sculptures, and other art-making ventures do a tremen-

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CIVA TIMELINE 1979-2004



"A Presence Seen":
David Goa



Presentation of
Florence Portfolio

1996

- 5th CIVA Directory published
- Biblical Arts Center, Dallas, TX, hosts *Life of Christ*, CIVA exhibition
- CIVA Regional Conference, Portland, OR
- *Sacred Fire Symposium* in Israel with 2 CIVA exhibitions
- CIVA CODEX II produced by Chris Stoffel Overvoorde, Professor of Art, Calvin College
- *Ade Bethune: Images of Holy Labor* exhibition opens and travels

1997

- Biennial Conference at McGill University & Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal, Quebec, Canada—Keynote Speakers: Janine Langan, academic; Calvin Seerveld, artist; Joanna Weber, curator
- Sandra Bowden elected for 3rd term as president
- www.civa.org launched
- 1st tour to Italy with John Skillen from Gordon College
- Presentation of Florence Portfolio to Vatican Museum of Contemporary Art, Vatican City, Italy
- and to The UCLA Grunewald Center for the Graphic Arts, Los Angeles, CA
- *CIVA Creates The Portrait* exhibition opens and begins to travel
- 1st administrative assistant hired to help with office work

1999

- CIVA's 20th anniversary Biennial Conference at Concordia University, Milwaukee, WI – Keynote Speakers: David Morgan, art historian; Gene Edward Veith, author; Gregory Wolfe, editor of *Image*
- Introduced first Small Works Auction at conference
- Sandra Bowden elected for 4th term as president
- CIVA Membership Handbook published
- New 4 year plan approved
- New brochure published with foldout poster
- CIVA Regional Conferences held at Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, ID at Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA, and at IAM, New York, NY
- *CIVA CODEX I, II & III* exhibition opens and travels
- CIVA CODEX IV produced by Michael Mallard, Art Chair, Union University, Jackson TN
- Cameron Anderson, Madison, WI is hired as Director of Program Development for 1 year
- 2nd *Image/CIVA* collaborative Glen Workshop Summer Institute, Colorado Springs, CO
- 20th anniversary issue of the CIVA Newsletter is winner in the 1999 American Graphic Design Awards reproduced in *Graphic Design: USA and American Graphic Design Awards Annual No. 1*

2001

- Biennial Conference at University of Dallas, Dallas, TX in conjunction with Trinity Arts Institute – Keynote Speakers: Jeremy Begbie, author; Scott Cairns, poet; David Goa, curator; Mary McCleary, painter
- *A Presence Seen*, lectures from conference published
- Sandra Bowden elected for 5th term as president
- 3rd tour of Italy with John Skillen
- *Abstraction: the Power of Memory* exhibition opens and travels
- Updated brochure published
- 4th *Image/CIVA* collaborative Glen Workshop Summer Institute, St. John's College, Santa Fe, NM
- CIVA Regional Conference with Francis Schaeffer Institute in St. Louis, MO
- *SEEN Journal: Liturgical Arts* issue published with grant from the Calvin Institute for Worship, Grand Rapids, MI
- Proposal for permanent CIVA home office submitted to Gordon College, Wenham, MA
- Directory receives Award for Excellence in the directory category from American Graphic Design
- *SEEN Journal* a winner in the 2001 American Graphic Design Awards and reproduced in *Graphic Design: USA and American Graphic Design Awards Annual No. 2*

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Rev. R.A. Miller, "Flag," enamel on corrugated tin, 28" x 43", 1985

dous job of expressing their most deeply held convictions. However alongside those works, these large, didactic environments are their billboards, not unlike a large roadside sign on a remote highway warning people to repent. These gardens are a fertile seedbed of moral and theological opinions. Providing these historically marginalized people an enormous soapbox upon which to tell their story, they are a logical extension of their preaching.

Made using the coarsest of materials and with an organic sense of having unfolded over many years, they are not in

any traditional sense beautiful. They range from the attractive, optimistic, and whimsical – like what Howard Finster or Anderson Johnson created – to the rude and haunting, such as we discover in W.C. Rice's Cross Garden. A former house painter and operator of a trailer park behind his home, the Rev. W.C. Rice created an environment of a different sort in response to being saved and healed of an ulcerated stomach several decades ago. Spread over three acres and with a county road cutting between it, his environment is nothing short of apocalyptic and foreboding. It features a dizzying array of weathered, white-washed, and red-daubed crosses ranging from those made of telephone poles to much smaller ones dangling from the branches of weary trees. Scattered among the crosses, wild blackberries and kudzu are scores of signs painted on throwaway items like discarded autos, rusting tin, and junked appliances calling people to repentance. "Hell is hot hot hot," "Jesus Saves," "Died from sex used the wrong way," and other signs are among those preachments positioned wherever there is available space. But don't call Rice an artist, as he will insist he isn't one – just a preacher. The choice, Rice told me, is either "Jesus or Hell fire. It is one or the other, and that's the message I'm trying to get across." Intense and disconcerting, as a whole it leaves a haunting impression along Road 86 in Autauga County, Alabama that is hard to forget.

Perhaps the most famous environment of all is the Rev. Howard Finster's hortatory *tour de force*, Paradise Garden. Covering almost three acres of a reclaimed swamp, he originally built his paradise "of broken pieces to try to mend a broken world of people who are traveling their last road." Fueling his desire to build the garden were his years as a preacher, and his compelling need to share his message with the world in the biggest way possible.



Bill Dyrness

1998



Joan Bohlig, Kathy Hettinga, Karen Mulder, and Sandra Bowden

- Regional Conference at Biola University and the Armand Hammer Museum of Art in Los Angeles, CA
- Launched 20/20/20 fundraiser – 1st organized opportunity for monthly contributions to CIVA
- *Scribes of Hope* calligraphy exhibition opens and travels
- *A Time to Sew: Celebrating the Sacred in Textiles* exhibition opens and travels
- 6th CIVA Directory published
- 2nd tour to Italy with John Skillen
- 1st tour to France with painter Edward Knippers
- CIVA CODEX III produced by photographer Pat Dalzell
- Graduating senior college art major Free Membership Program initiated
- CIVA Board votes to initiate executive committee
- 1st *Image/CIVA* collaborative *Glen Workshop Summer Institute*, Colorado Springs, CO
- CIVA Artist Registry launched

2000

- 7th CIVA Directory published with original cover art by Tim Rollins and KOS, New York, NY
- *Window Into Eternity A Rediscovery of Holy Images* icon exhibition opens and travels
- CIVA's emerging artists exhibition *Ignite* opens and travels
- Edward Knippers' print collection *The Artist & the Bible: 20th Century Works on Paper* opens and travels
- 2nd tour to France with painter, Edward Knippers
- 1st CIVA Scholars Network Symposium, *Mapping the Landscape* held at Notre Dame University, South Bend, IN
- CIVA tri-annual publications created: SEEN, CIVASEEN, and the CIVAScene; editor, Barry Krammes, design director, Kathy Hettinga
- Grant received from Fieldstead and Company for CIVA's 1st issue of *SEEN Journal: 2000 Years of Christian Art*
- 3rd *Image/CIVA* collaborative *Glen Workshop Summer Institute*, St. John's College, Santa Fe, NM
- 2000 and Beyond fund drive launched
- CIVA CODEX V: 20/20 Anniversary Portfolio produced by Donald Forsythe, Professor of Art, Messiah College

2002

- 8th CIVA Directory published
- *Guidelines for Developing Church Related Galleries* published
- Greece tour with architect Don Bruggink of Overseas Connects, Holland, MI
- CIVA home office opens at Gordon College
- Dr. Dan Russ of Plano, Texas hired as 1st Executive Director
- Rosemary Scott-Fishburn hired as membership coordinator
- *CIVABUILDS* launched to raise \$300,000
- CIVA participates in The Calvin institute of Worship's Annual January Conference
- *TALMUD: The Art of Ben Zion & Marc Chagall* exhibition opens and travels
- Printmakers Network launched
- Graphic Designers Network launched
- 5th *Image/CIVA* collaborative *Glen Workshop Summer Institute*, St. John's College, Santa Fe, NM
- *SEEN Journal* a winner in the 2002 American Graphic Design Awards and reproduced in *Graphic Design: USA and American Graphic Design Awards Annual No. 3*



Rev. W.C. Rice, "Untitled," oil on wood (Various Cross Assemblages/Variou Sizes), 1970 - 1990

At its height, this environment was a rambling labyrinth filled with sculptures, assemblages, signs, paintings, gardens, various buildings, his studio, and a wedding cake-like tiered church. Among other purposes, his main goal was to create a terrestrial testimony to what he envisioned in the heavens. It was, in Beardsley's words, not just a garden of sculpture, but more like a "cabinet of curiosities, a hymn to the wonders of creation, and to the inventions of

mankind."¹⁵ Eventually, the demand for his art usurped his energies invested in the Garden, leading to a slow and steady decline of his environment.

Conclusion: For all these artists' acclaim, they have stayed true to their calling, using their talents to serve God. Neither constrained by the academy or the expectations of their neighbors and families, their work has created a stir in the world and in people's hearts. They have reached deep into the soil of their souls and mined those depths in order to produce an art of the most authentic variety. While occasionally registering social protest, posting wildly autobiographical commentary, or celebrating the world of nature in their midst, they are more likely preoccupied with preaching about their God, wherein his promises point to a better life in this world and the next.

Steven Pattie is an active visual artist, writer, collector, and most recently film producer. His passion for contemporary folk art has led him and his family to building a collection that is among the largest in the United States. The former president of New College Berkeley, he is currently a management supervisor with the Russ Reid Company and serves on CIVA's National Board of Directors. He is a graduate of Westmont College (B.A.), and Fuller Theological Seminary (M.Div.), and has done special studies at the American Film Institute and Stanford University.

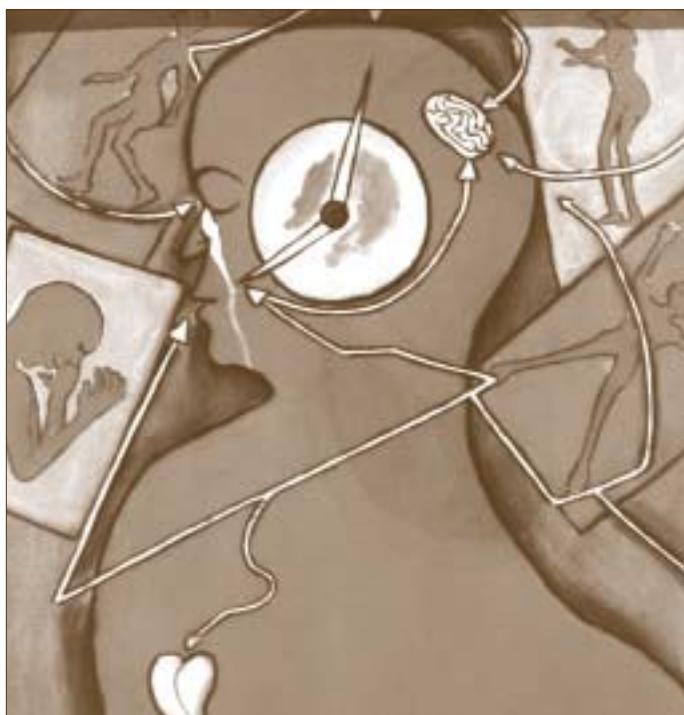
CIVA TIMELINE 1979-2004

2003



Betty Douglas

- Biennial Conference at Gordon College, Wenham, MA – Keynote Speakers: Bruce Herman, artist; Adair Margo, curator; Monsignor Timothy Verdon, theologian
- Sandra Bowden elected for 6th term as president
- Tyrus Clutter of Nampa, ID hired as Director
- Rome tour with architect Don Bruggink of Overseas Connects, Holland, MI
- 6th Image/CIVA collaborative Glen Workshop Summer Institute, St. John's College, Santa Fe, NM
- *Bread upon the Waters: Pursuing the Art of Generosity* opens and travels



Lorenzo Scott, "Time," oil on canvas, 18" x 24", 1997

Footnotes: "Ordained to Create" – continued from page 7

1. Carol Crown (ed.), *Wonders to Behold: The Visionary Art of Myrtice West* (Memphis: Mustang Publishing, 1999)
 2. An artwork in its own right, this 4' x 15' section of Finster's original sidewalk is a seminal work on permanent display along with a number of other important Finster paintings, sculptures, and assemblages, at the High Museum in Atlanta, Georgia.
 3. Colin Rhodes, *Outsider Art: Spontaneous Alternatives* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), p. 8.
 4. Alice Roe Yelen, *Passionate Visions of the American South* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1993), p. 17.
 5. Frank Maresca and Roger Ricco. *American Vernacular* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 2003), p.7. This was also addressed in an article I authored a few years ago wherein the point was argued that to talk about "outsider" and by implication "insider" art is really to ask the wrong question. See Steven Pattie. "Moving Beyond 'Insider' vs. 'Outsider' Art," *Art Calendar*, September 1997.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
 7. Lucy R. Lippard, *The Lure of the Local* (New York: The New Press, 1997), p. 5.
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
 9. Yelen, *op.cit.*, p. 17.
 10. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
 12. Over a period of about 15 years, James Hampton created a large indoor environment entitled "Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millenium General Assembly. Constructed of various foils, paper, wood and paperboard, it is on permanent display at the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.
 13. Yelen, *op.cit.*, p. 233.
 14. John Beardsley, *Gardens of Revelation* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1995), p. 8.
 15. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- Featured works of art and photography accompanying this article are courtesy of the Sage and Steven Pattie Collection of American Art.

CIVA

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Rev. Howard Finster, "Tribute to Silver Hills Baptist Church (Detail)," etching (19/50), 13.5" x 10.5", 1998

ORDAINED to CREATE: The Self-Taught Art of Southern Preachers, Prophets and Visionaries

A New Exhibit Sponsored by CIVA

Debuting this fall and available to museums, colleges, universities and religious institutions, are selections from the Sage and Steven Pattie Collection of American Art. Entitled *Ordained to Create: The Self-Taught Art of Southern Preachers, Prophets and Visionaries*, the exhibit will feature the work of a dozen southern self-taught artists. It will particularly focus on the passionate and creative journeys of Howard Finster, R.A. Miller, W.C. Rice, and Myrtice West in order to provide in-depth opportunities to view their art. A special feature of the show will be small environmental recreations showcasing the eccentric landscapes of Rice and Miller in order to give viewers some sense of their magnitude and power.

Sage and Steven Pattie have assembled one of the largest collections of contemporary self-taught art in the United States. This exhibit presents artists with strong Christian convictions that express their passion through visual art. Featuring artists discussed in the accompanying article, an exhibit of over 40 major works will be presented.

CIVA sponsors a variety of traveling exhibitions available for rental to museums, colleges, and universities across the United States and Canada. In addition to *Ordained to Create*, three exhibitions also available include *20th Century Biblical Works on Paper*, *Bread Upon the Waters*, and *Talmud in the Art of Ben-Zion and Marc Chagall*. An illustrated brochure accompanies each exhibition. For more information about exhibitions available for rental go to the CIVA web site at www.civa.org or call 508.945.4026.