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The Official Newsletter of the Friends of the Houston Cole Library

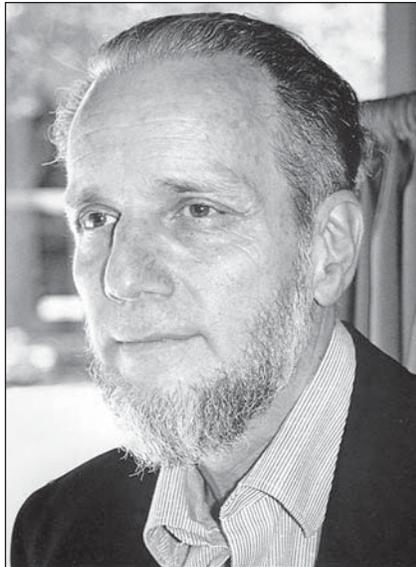
Spring 2006

Friends of Houston Cole Library to host discussion on history of Jazz

Charles Suhor, Independent Scholar and member of the Alabama Humanities Foundation speakers bureau, presents "The Jazz Story – African Roots, American Branches" on March 9, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. in the Houston Cole Library 11th floor.

Jazz is rightly known as African-American music. Which elements, though, are rooted in African music, culture, and history, and which are from the classical and popular music traditions that Africans encountered in the New World? How did these traditions merge into a new art form around the late 19th century?

Suhor will trace the development of early jazz from its African roots to the American scene, debunking some popular myths along the way. For example, although the richly multicultural setting of New Orleans was an ideal breeding ground for the growth of jazz, it was not the only ground. Dr. Suhor will show how



Suhor

photo courtesy AHF

important pre-jazz forms such as ragtime and rural blues were nurtured elsewhere and imported to the hub city of New Orleans.

Aided by vintage recordings, a photo exhibit, an authentic African "talking drum," and overhead trans-

parencies, Suhor uses non-technical language to bring the sense and sound of early jazz into the 21st century. This presentation is part of the Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF) 2005-2006 Speaker in the House program.

Charles Suhor, Ph.D., was born and raised in New Orleans. He began playing drums at age 12, mentored by his late brother Don, a prominent jazz clarinetist and saxophonist. In the 1950s he played drums with Dixieland, swing, and modern jazz artists like Pete Fountain, Al Hirt, the Loyola University big band, Buddy Prima, and Bill Huntington.

He pursued a full-time career as an English teacher, but remained active as a weekend drummer and jazz journalist. He currently plays with the Recreators, a Swing Era band in Montgomery. Dr. Suhor has written literature and composition textbooks and numerous articles on English teaching and jazz for *Down Beat*, *English Journal*, *Phi Delta*

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Travel and Translation from Conference to Publication

Editor, Contributors for newly published essay collection to present on May 16

Carmine G. Di Biase, Professor in English at JSU, has recently achieved the publication of an influential collection of essays, *Travel and Translation in the Early Modern Period*.

Originally, the essays began as a purposefully conceived conference of the same title. It was held over three days in November 2002 at Houston Cole Library, JSU. Dr. Di Biase invited international scholars in their

field to contribute papers with the aim of turning them into a unique volume.

The edited volume includes essays by History professor Russel Lemmons, English Professors Randall C. Davis,

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Joanne E. Gates, and Di Biase himself. Geography and Geology professor Kelly Gregg contributed to the 2002 program with a narrated slide show of Hernando de Soto's travels through the Southeast. Howard Miller, formerly of the department of History and Foreign Languages Department, is a contributor in a volume that includes seventeen essays. The volume is Volume 26 of the *Approaches to Translation Studies*, published by Rodopi Press of Amsterdam and New York.

Di Biase, speaking recently at a meeting of JSU's faculty group, *Academe*, mentioned that he was especially pleased to have Oumelbanie Zhiri contribute, as her scholarship on the influential Leo Africanus has received international acclaim.

The relationship between travel and



Donald Beecher, Russel Lemmons, and Carmine Di Biase.

translation might seem obvious at first, but to study it in earnest is to discover that it is at once intriguing and elusive. Of course, travelers translate in order to make sense of their new surroundings; sometimes they must translate in order to put food on the table. The relationship between these two human compulsions, however, goes much deeper than this. What gets translated, it seems, is not merely the written or the spoken word, but the very identity of the traveler.

The essays constitute the first survey of how this relationship manifests itself in the early modern period. As such, it should be of interest both to scholars who are studying theories of translation and to those who are studying travel and the literature of travel.

The May 16th event in the library will be an informal talk about how the collection came together. Contributors will speak briefly on their topic: Di Biase uses his expertise on Michelangelo and John Florio to investigate concerns of the whole volume, especially as it relates to crisis points in the life of an exile and how the act of translation is

transformative and cultural. Lemmons writes on Martin Luther's travel to Rome and how that instigated the resistance to decay in the Catholic Church and eventually his 95 Theses. Randall Davis examines the Anglo-American attitudes to Native American Languages, stressing that Roger Williams conveyed-- more than others who had early contact with the New World-- a mutual understanding between cul-

tures. Joanne Gates looks at the curious and comedic antics of John Taylor, Water Poet of the Thames, who had a particular fascination for ridiculing the foreign travels of Thomas Coryate.

Copies of the book can be purchased. Refreshments will be served.



Davis



Di Biase

Cassandra King returns to JSU for fall Friends event

Cassandra King, author of the novels *Making Waves in Zion*, *The Sunday Wife*, *The Same Sweet Girls* was the featured speaker at the fall program of the Friends of Houston Cole Library on October 5, 2005. She delighted a sizeable crowd that included students, avid readers of her books and members of the real alumnae support group. These true-life Same Sweet Girls are only a loose foundation for her fictionalized group, several of whom narrate the novel as multiple first person narrators. One is the wife of an Alabama politician, another a gourd artist.

King gave a detailed history of her becoming a writer that included childhood habits and her former life, married to a Methodist minister, the subject of her breakthrough novel, *The Sunday Wife*. She also joked that her being raised in "LA" stood for Lower Alabama, and that at book signings she is mistaken for the wife of horror novelist Stephen King. In fact, she is married to Pat Conroy, noted for his own autobiographical fiction, set in coastal South Carolina. It is Conroy she credits with the advice to write about what she had known and lived, rather than trying to investigate rodeos, which she thought



Author Cassandra King autographs her novels for devoted readers.

she could observe. She was introduced by Friends Board Chair Joanne Gates as a writer whose personalized stationery included the line, "So Many Novels to Write, So Little Time," and she intrigued her audience with hints from her next novel, currently entitled *Queen of Broken Hearts*, with a focus on a divorce therapist.

She fielded questions that ranged from how study of the Bible influenced her writing to habits a good writer needs, and a concern about the status of Dauphin Island after Hurricane Katrina. King had presented at JSU as part of the 2003 *On the Brink* Conference of emerging Southern writers.

The Friends offered a chance for attendees to be eligible for a free book drawing. Coupons appeared in *The Chanticleer* and *The Jacksonville News*. Marian Bryant won the drawing and selected *The Same Sweet Girls*.

Chanticleer writer Jessica Summe reviewed *The Sunday Wife* in the October 6th issue of the campus paper and wrote about the event in the October 13th issue. Summe interviewed King and many attendees, reporting that King was still energetically signing books at nearly 9:30 p.m. The Friends presented Cassandra King a hand painted gourd by local gourd artist, Beth Coheley.

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Kappan, and others. Scarecrow Press published his award-winning book, *Jazz in New Orleans –The Postwar Years*, in 2001.

Dr. Suhor has collaborated with jazz pianist Ellis Marsalis on programs that show connections between jazz improvisation and everyday language. He performs with The Jazz and Poetry Connection, a cooperative of poets and musicians that has appeared in seven states. He has taught jazz history at Auburn University's Montgomery campus. Since 1997 Dr. Suhor has lived in Montgomery, where his wife, Dr. Deborah Little, teaches technology at Alabama State University. They enjoy frequent visits to New Orleans and to their children and grandchildren in Florida.

The Alabama Humanities Foundation is a nonprofit organization funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (of which the AHF is the state affiliate), as well as by corporate and individual donors. The Foundation is dedicated to the promotion and celebration of the humanities throughout the state of Alabama and, to that end, conducts its own statewide programs and awards grants, on a competitive basis, to nonprofit organizations for humanities projects. For more information on Speaker in the House or other AHF programs, please call 205.558.3980. For more information about this program, please call William Hubbard at: 256.782.5248.

Friends mourn Opal A. Lovett, longtime board member

The Friends of the Houston Cole Library lost a dear friend on February 12 with the passing of founding board member Opal A. Lovett at the age of 78. Memorial services were Feb. 16 at the First United Methodist Church in Jacksonville.

Mrs. Lovett, who served on the board from 1989-1997, was an English and journalism instructor at JSU. She also served as advisor of the *Mimosa*, JSU's yearbook, for 14 years; conducted writing workshops at libraries throughout the state; and assisted with *On the Brink* at JSU. Her column about local personalities, *A Glimpse*, was featured in the Jacksonville News for many years.

Kenneith Calvert, long time friend and past chair of the Friends board, said of Mrs. Lovett: "Opal never received a PhD nor published a book, but she read and edited dissertations and manuscripts for many persons who did. Her legacy lives on."

Joanne Gates, current board president, said, "Those of us who knew Opal Lovett from her passion for library programs perhaps remember best that she ferried people to Anniston to the Calhoun County Library's reading series events and, most memorably, led a session on writing autobiography by using Eudora Welty's *One Writer's Beginnings* as text. I remember Opal's green pen markings that thoughtfully considered my childhood memories, and I am still friends with fellow small group members with whom I

shared the first draft of my piece."

The wife of Opal R. Lovett, retired university photographer and master storyteller, Mrs. Lovett also is survived by a son, O. Rufus Lovett of Longview, Texas; a daughter, Opal Collier of Milwaukee, Wisc.; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Memorial donations may be made to the Opal A. Lovett Scholarship Fund at JSU.

Gates, Osterbind elected to Board of Directors

Congratulations to Joanne Gates and Kelly Osterbind on their election to the Friends of Houston Cole Library Board of Directors. Dr. Gates is serving a third term, most recently as Chair, and Ms. Osterbind is beginning her first term on the Board.

The Directors and their terms of service are:

Shirley Mogil, Jeanette Remer	2004-2006
Karen Gregg, Sandra Walker	2005-2007
Joanne Gates, Kelly Osterbind	2006-2008
Bill Hubbard	ex officio



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