

# *La Gazette du Moulin à Nef*

Volume 1 Number 2, May 2001

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The end of April delivers a mixture of gray skies, bright flowers, and sunshine to The Port, where work continues to bring the Moulin à Nef closer to completion. It is amazing to see a dream take shape! The windows and doors are in, the walls and sheetrock are up, and the paint is chosen. We are nearing completion on most aspects of the studio and administration buildings. Alain Delsol and I spent much of April in The Port talking to the artisans, negotiating with suppliers, and meeting with new people who are interested in what we are doing here. While we are still busy with landscape clean-up and ceramic studio equipment, furniture and supplies, our present focus is now back on the summer programs and the development of a French association that will work in tandem with the CÉCA. This issue is about Summer 2001 and an introduction to the new L'Association Auvill'Art (AAA).

### Summer 2001

Several artists and teachers from The Pont-Aven School of Art came to stay and work in Auvillar last summer. This summer, through the school, we will welcome Wendy Edwards from Brown University, Gerry Mischak, from The Rhode Island School of Design, and, Nana Gregory, from Los Angeles. In September Renee Paule Danthine, a Belgian printmaker living in Switzerland, and her husband, will be spending the month in Auvillar as well. We look forward to sharing Auvillar with you!



The Museum of Outdoor Art is sending Tim Flynn, the flamboyant wire sculpture artist, back to Auvillar with 4 students and another teacher to create a sculpture based on a theme and a site chosen by a French jury from the Tarn et Garonne. This should be interesting!

The Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design's Hélène Grall-Johnson, a geologist born in the southwest of France and presently working in Denver, is coming to Auvillar to pilot a program with art teachers. She will cover such diverse subjects as geology, art, and cuisine with her students. It will be a busy visit!

David Schmal, a composer, and his wife, are coming to Auvillar for a two week visit. He has been researching French music forms through history, and when he comes to Auvillar he will complete a piece and play it in Auvillar for the first time, with French musicians from the Conservatory of Music in Toulouse. I am eager to hear his response to Auvillar!

David Davison, a world renowned ceramist from The School at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts, will join us for the inauguration of the ceramic studio (La Ceba d'Aoubila). This will be David's first trip to Auvillar. What a pleasant surprise he will have!

## Mission Statement

The Cultural Exchange Center of Auvillar believes that the most meaningful exploration of another culture occurs through individual involvement and direct contact with that way of life.

The Center was created to facilitate programs conceived in this spirit and, in particular, to share the rich cultural and artistic heritage surrounding Auvillar, a charming and hospitable village in southwestern France.

To this end, the CECA provides facilities, including artists studios and a ceramics studio, assistance in designing and implementing programs in cultural exchange using these facilities, and most importantly, a natural link to the village, the people, and the region.

Summer is coming! As the rains of spring give way to the warming sun of summer, the jolly geraniums begin to overflow their containers, and welcome late afternoon visitors and evening strolls around town. Everywhere there is conversation, good food, wine and summer's easy pace. We'd like to welcome you to Auvillar. Come see what we've been doing! There will be surprises!

*Susan Saarinen*

for the CECA

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Website  
[www.moulinanef.org](http://www.moulinanef.org)

E-mail  
[CECA@moulinanef.org](mailto:CECA@moulinanef.org)

Facimile  
(303) 722-3702

Mailing Address  
The Cultural Exchange  
Center of Auvillar  
3200 Cherry Creek South Drive  
Suite 460  
Denver, Colorado 80209-3246



**L'ASSOCIATION**  
**AUVILL'ART**  
A French Association

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2001 in Auvillar a meeting was held which will have a considerable impact on the operation of the Moulin a Nef. The subject of this meeting was the creation of a French non-profit organization to be known as the Association Auvill'art (AAA).

As you may know, the Cultural Exchange Center of Auvillar (CECA) is the American entity whose job it is to oversee the construction and installation of the Moulin a Nef and to facilitate the organization of pilot programs that take place in the Center. It is the primary contact for the Moulin a Nef in America. The AAA, which will work in close collaboration and harmony with the CECA, will be the primary contact for our partners in France. But above all, the essential mission of the new tandem CECA-AAA will be the search for a new owner for the Moulin a Nef.

A provisional Administrative Board was constituted and designated officers to undertake the definition of statutes for the AAA. There will be more news about the official birth of the AAA in the next issue of the Gazette of the Moulin a Nef which will, in the future, represent both the American and the French associations.

*Francis Sohier*  
for the AAA



**JEAN AND VINCENT**

We couldn't go to press with this issue of the Gazette without a special thought for Jean Villa and Vincent Lairon, friends whose memory will remain in the village and in our hearts.

Around every corner we expect to see them reappear. Jean always had a kind word for our children and a story from the past to make us smile. He made his mark on visitors to the village who, though they may have encountered him only once, couldn't forget him. He was even among the few Auvillaraais of his generation to have had a hand in painting the mural on the school a few years ago. His presence (and his coffee) warmed up the market on Sunday mornings... When we pass in front of his house, our imagination will bring him back and we will see him sitting in his window keeping an eye on us with a little wave of his hand.

As for Vincent, he will be especially missed by his friends and neighbors in the Port. Sometimes gruff, but always kind-hearted, he will not be forgotten. His affection for the little Chapel of St. Catherine led him to be one of the founders of the ACREPA, an organization which sought to preserve it. He photographed the Chapel and painted in oil and watercolor to fix its image at least. The Auvill'art cultural exchange programs were of interest to him as well and his cozy garden was the scene of memorable evenings among artists and friends.

The Moulin a Nef honors these two friends of Auvillar here and hopes that their spirits will continue to inspire and accompany us down this road we would have liked to travel together with them.

*Corinne Gilles &  
Alain Delsol*

# ART, CULTURE, GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY in Southwestern France

A Continuing Education Program of the RMCAD

The Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, a well-known school of art in Denver, recently created a department of continuing education. To inaugurate this new branch, an overseas program will be offered this summer for teachers currently teaching art in American highschools.

region: the Moissac cloisters, the Ingres museum in Montauban, the Toulouse-Lautrec museum in Albi and numerous other sites. In the afternoons and evenings, classes in theory will be offered at the Moulin à Nef.

Outings are planned to examine the variety and detail in

well to pass over the aesthetic link between art and cooking in France. A full day has been reserved to explore this relation-



*Renoir*

Dr. Hélène Grall-Johnson, a member of the RMCAD faculty, will lead this experimental program in Auvillar from the 19th to the 29th of June. Hélène knows Auvillar well and members of the Danseurs du Brulhois folkdance troupe will remember her and the important role she played in organizing their tour in Colorado in 1995. Her new undertaking this summer has been carefully choreographed with help from the volunteers at the Moulin à Nef and other friends in Auvillar.

During the stay, mornings will be devoted to exploring the cultural and artistic wealth of the

the geology and topography of the region, including a two-day visit to the Pyrenees dedicated to the topic of "Geology and Landscape". An expert from the Bureau de Recherches Geologiques et Minieres (Office of Geological and Mineral Research) will join the group for this part of the program.

The next segment of this well-constructed workshop highlights Hélène's gift for establishing connections between art and culture, on the one hand, and geography and geology on the other. It would be unthinkable for someone who knows the region



*Monet*

ship. Moving beyond a scholarly evocation of Renoir's table or Monet's kitchen, the evening will culminate in a special dinner, where local specialities will be honored, glorified (perhaps even painted) and ultimately devoured



*John Lencicki*

by the lucky participants at the Maison Vielhescaze. Hélène has even promised a surprise guest-expert. Reporters at the Gazette will keep you informed...

*Alain Delsol*

# Pont-Aven Comes to Auvillar

## Artist in Residence Program Continues

For the second year, professors from the Pont-Aven School of Art, an American run, international art school in Brittany, France, will be coming to Auvillar to work as artists in residence. The four artists this year come from Brown University (Wendy Edwards), Rhode Island School of Design (Gerry Mischak), Lausanne Switzerland (Renée Paule Danthine), and Los Ange-

Maison Vielhescazes, sharing the kitchen and living spaces just as in grad school days. During the day, however, they fan out all over the countryside seeking ideas and inspiration. When the weather is too hot or inclement, or if they want to work in ceramics or spread out over a large wall or space, they will now have indoor studio space to work in, something that was lacking last

objects and wraps them in meters and meters of colorful duct tape to create fanciful furniture or free standing sculpture. Wendy Edwards, a painter, has been studying plants and flowers in Europe and the US to give her ideas for brightly colored paintings based on plant forms. René Paule Danthine, a printmaker and fabric designer, is fascinated by colors and textures so will have



les (Nana Gregory). One is a painter, two are sculptors and one is a printmaker.

The exchange between Auvillar and the Pont-Aven School of Art (PSA) began last year, when seven PSA professors spent two weeks each working in Auvillar. The landscape, climate, light, colors and people are so different from that of Brittany, where all of the artists have taught sometime during the past eight years. Last year, the artists all drew inspiration and great pleasure from noting the differences, while also appreciating the similarities between the Celtic Bretons and the people of the Tarn-et-Garonne.

The professors live in the

year. Two of this summer's artists speak French fluently and look forward to meeting people from Auvillar and artists in the region. The other two speak Spanish and some French and also hope to exchange ideas with people in the village. All of the PSA artists are looking forward to using their time in Auvillar to try new ideas, such as cyanotype in the case of one of the sculptors, Nancy Gregory, who will use this process of letting the sun expose light-sensitive paper overlaid with plants and found objects. Gerry Mischak will probably focus on shapes he finds in local architecture and pottery to inspire his sculpture: he often takes found

plenty of sources everywhere in Auvillar for her work!

PSA hopes that the exchange with Auvillar will continue to thrive and grow - and it WILL be an exchange this year, when Susan Saarinen comes to Pont-Aven and Quimper, where PSA helped arrange a "stage" for her to work in the ceramics factory of the renowned faience company, HB Henriot.

*Caroline Boyle Turner*

Director, Pont Aven School of Art

# Tim's Back

A program of the Museum of Outdoor Arts, Denver, Colorado

Tim Flynn wishes he could wrap a piece of wire around the people in Auvillar. Then he could twist up the wire and make it into a sculpture that would integrate all of the town's people. That being impossible, American artist Flynn has decided to take another route; the first-ever International Design and Build



project.

The Museum of Outdoor Arts founded Design and Build 10 years ago in Denver, CO. One of only a few outdoor museums in the world, it is known as "the museum without walls" and offers public art, architecture, landscape design, performing arts and educational programs. One of the museum's educational programs, Design and Build is an annual, professional-quality outdoor public art competition for high school students. Teams of advanced art students propose projects for one of 11 sites located in such places as the museum grounds, or at public libraries, bus stops, and parks. Design proposals are then submitted to the museum including maquettes, conceptual narrative, construction/installation details and a line-item budget. A team of professionals juries the designs and one is chosen for each site. Once the schools are chosen, the museum sends consultants Tim Flynn and Amy

Laugesen to help facilitate the projects.

Flynn has taught for the museum for 10 years and serves as Design and Build's art consultant and scribe. He also receives commissions for sculptures and shows in the museum's galleries.

"I'm the constructability guy," Flynn said. "I consult with the students to make sure that what they are building is built



right; that it is site-specific and safe."

Bringing Design and Build to Auvillar will realize one of the museum's goals for the project; taking it international. Flynn and Laugesen will arrive in France in June with a team of three college students: a writer, an artist and a photographer. The difference this time around is that the team won't be consulting students on a site-specific sculpture, but building one itself. The site has not yet been chosen.

"The goal of this project is a

cultural exchange," Flynn said. "A successful and fully integrated piece of public art that will be very site-specific and very much about the people and the town."

Flynn is no stranger to Auvillar. He spent a summer there two years ago as part of a French/American exchange of artists teaching classes in wire sculpture to the local children and building sculptures for the town. Remembering how welcoming the people of Auvillar were the last time he was there, Flynn is looking forward to giv-



ing the people something back in the sculpture.

"I realize I can't make everybody happy," he said. "But I want this piece to really emphasize the people of Auvillar. This piece has to be about all of them. I want it to be noticed by everyone."

The team of American artists will fly into France in June and spend the first part of their trip traveling to museums and collecting objects and inspiration for the sculpture. They will then go to Auvillar and pick five sites to develop ideas for. The best two of the five will be presented to the town in proposals. The sculpture could be temporary or permanent.

*Megan Alderton*

for Tim Flynn

# SPECTACULAR PROGRESS AT THE MOULIN A NEF

In 1999, the Donnell Kay Foundation bought a parcel of land and three ruins in the Port neighborhood of Auvillar to create the Moulin a Nef. Right away the brambles and weeds were cleared and an architect was recruited to undertake the restoration. Authorizations were requested and thanks to the support of the Architecte des Batiments de France in the department of the Tarn and Garonne (whose approval is required to work on buildings in historically protected zones), it



*La Ceba d'Aoubila*

has been possible to restore two out of three of the buildings at the Moulin.

Subsequently, the Donnell Kay Foundation agreed to finance the next step of the project, the interiors, which will be equipped primarily as artists' studios. The larger of the two houses, containing a ceramics studio and several other studio spaces, will be known as "La ceba d'Aoubila" after the floral motif used by the old faience-makers in Auvillar. The second building, to be used for offices, will be called "La Cloucado do Molin", referring to "la Cloucado Marcabrun", an

Occitan literary group at the beginning of the 20th century. Mr. Didier Medale, an architect from nearby Valence d'Agen, was selected to draw up plans and oversee the important work to be done.

## La Ceba d'Aoubila

Beginning early in the year 2001, contractors and subcontractors from Auvillar and the region began work on both houses. They will finish in June. By the middle of April things were moving along rapidly as our photos show. The equipment for the ceramics studio (kiln, wheels and lots of other stuff) has been ordered and will be delivered early in June 2001, installed on the ground floor of the Ceba and tested this summer. Upstairs, there will be three studio spaces which can be adapted to whatever use is required.

## La Cloucado do Molin

This building is nearing completion, lacking only furniture and equipment to fulfill its functions as an office to welcome the public, an art reference library and upstairs perhaps an image studio for digital art and

photography.

## The Surroundings

The space between the two houses has been cleaned up and awaits a decision on its future use. A program may be organized for the summer of 2002 in which architects and students in architecture would be asked to present projects on the Moulin a Nef as a whole. The lower part of the property near the houses will be maintained as a garden. On the hillside the terrain is being prepared to be planted with grapevines with the intention of restoring in the landscape some of the features that may have been present there a century or more ago. The plateau above the vineyard may someday see the construction of other studios but for the time being it is a fine spot to admire the view on the Port, the bridge and the Garonne.

For now, we can wish the Moulin a Nef fair winds and calm seas at the beginning of its new incarnation in the 21st century as part of the exciting and long-awaited renaissance of the Port.

*Alain Delsol*



# The Auvillar Suite

## An Artist in Residence Honors the Village in Music

As a composer of film and television music, I am thrilled at the unique opportunity of undertaking a Composer in Residency in Auvillar this summer. Having completed my third feature film and several documentary projects this winter, as well as a number of television works for the BBC, I am beginning to conceive the ideas that are slowly taking shape as the Auvillar Suite. With such a rich and diverse history, I have resolved to take the people of Auvillar on a musical journey from their past up until the present.



*David with Jerry Goldsmith*

Since Roman times the village of Auvillar in Southern France has had a rich and varied history. My challenge is to reflect this varied and colorful existence. I will be composing a suite of chamber pieces for piano, cello, and violin. This suite is based on the epic poetic traditions (Chanson du Geste) of the Middle Ages and early Renaissance. They are purely instrumental, as they are played by the piano trio, but reflect the grandeur of the history of the people and countryside.

We begin this musical tour with a MARCHE in the grand tradition of a parade, a proud celebration of the culture of the Auvillalais that has existed for

over a thousand years. This music serves as a link between all of the movements and ends with a mysteriously somber intonation that takes us back to ancient times, when the Romans were masters over Gaul.

The second movement, ALTAVILLARIS, continues with the music of the ancients. Out of the mists of time we hear the simple stirrings of a bygone era: primitive viols, harps and lyres, intoning the chaste beauty of the music of an age now long past. From these simple beginnings, we continue into the third movement, MINSTREL. The jocular meanderings of the medieval minstrels, dancing and hopping about is a counterpoint to this time of legend and pageantry. A retour to the MARCHE brings us into the new age of scientific and musical enlightenment.

During the Renaissance, the tradition of the traveling poet/musician, the Troubadour and the Jongleur, gave inspiration to the vivacious fourth movement, JONGLEUR. With energy and passion, these musicians and actors roved the countryside bringing a new and vital entertainment to the people. As the decades waxed and waned, music, language and culture all underwent many evolutions, taking on new forms and passions as events in history shaped the sounds of music to come.

As the walls of Auvillar were blasted by the Revolution of 1789, with the final bastion being brought down around the year 1839, the fifth movement, PASTORALE, is a more reflective and thoughtful lament of the idyllic time before the revolution. Again we revisit the MARCHE as we travel onward to the sixth and

final movement, the LAMENT.

Written in the style of the great French composer Eric Satie, this piece has a more modern twentieth century sound to it, celebrating the beauty and grandeur of the French countryside, its rolling hills and quiet dales, its gently flowing river, and the people who, with their rich culture and languages are the true jewel of Southern France.

I am very excited to share my vision of Auvillar and its history with the Auvillalais, and look forward to the coming time of



music and celebration. As a part of this creative endeavor, I will have the pleasure of making music with some local musicians from the surrounding countryside who will rehearse and perform the Suite along with me at the church of St. Peter in Auvillar. It will be my great pleasure to travel, along with my wife, to Southern France for a grand musical experience.

L'adieu jusqu' à nous ceci rencontrons l'été dans Auvillar.

*David K. Schmal*

## HAD ENOUGH? OR WANT MORE?

The Board of the Cultural Exchange Center of Auvillar created the Gazette for the obvious reason of communication: to explain our roots, to brag about our progress, to share our enthusiasm, to keep in touch with old friends and to seek out new partners, perhaps even the next owner of the Moulin a Nef.

Our first issue was intended as an introduction. We are proud to present, in this second issue, published jointly with the Association Auvill'art, more details about this summer's programs and updates on the incredible transformation of the Moulin a Nef buildings and their surroundings.

While the Board is eager to spread the word and to network with anyone interested in the

Auvillar project, we don't want to waste your time or our money if the newsletter is not of interest to you.



*La Cloucado do Molin*

At any time, you may request to be removed from our mailing list; you may suggest someone else who might be interested in receiving the Gazette; or you may send along any comments or suggestions you think useful. If you are among those who have advanced beyond "snail mail", feel free to accomplish the same things using our e-mail address:

[ceca@moulinanef.org](mailto:ceca@moulinanef.org)

Of course, you can always check up on us on the web at:  
<http://www.moulinanef.org>  
or stop by in Auvillar and see what we are up to.

*Lucy Delsol*

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Cultural Exchange Center of Auvillar  
3200 Cherry Creek South Dr, Suite 460  
Denver, Colorado 80209-3246



*Issue #3 will be sent in the fall*