

# La Gazette du Moulin à Nef

## From the Director



Following a flurry of cross-continental paperwork and a visit to the French consulate in Washington, D.C., the Moulin à Nef was officially transferred to the VCCA on December 29, 2004. With the acquisition of the property, the VCCA has literally expanded across continents to become one of the few artists' retreats in the world with locations in two countries. We remain committed to facilitating cultural and artistic exchanges of the calibre the citizens of Auvillar have become accustomed to.

Month-long VCCA residencies will be scheduled two or three times a year. These residency programs are exclusively for VCCA Fellows—artists and writers who have previously been in residence at our facility in Virginia. Our Fellows who travel to Auvillar will continue the interaction with the village so ably created and sustained by the AAA and CECA.

During the remaining months, the Moulin à Nef studios will be used by university classes, museums, and other groups, such as the plein air students led by Denver painter John Lencicki, who are returning to Auvillar for two weeks this summer. We are looking forward to welcoming back old friends like the Lencickis and introducing new friends to the charms of Auvillar and the port.

To help us administer our new overseas venture, we have hired two veteran VCCA Fellows, Lucy Anderton and Frank Soos, whose profiles appear to the right. Lucy and Frank, accompanied by Artists' Services Director Sheila Pleasants and Program Director Craig Pleasants, are traveling to Auvillar in May for orientation before our first group of VCCA Fellows arrive in the port on June 4.

Of course none of this would be possible without the hospitality and support of those volunteers, caretakers and friends throughout the village and in the town hall and tourist office who have helped make our programs so successful.

I have visited Auvillar on several occasions, and will return this summer while our Fellows are in residence. I look forward to welcoming VCCA Fellows and friends to this glorious place for many years to come! A bientôt!

Sunny Monk, Executive Director



**Do you know of groups or individuals who might be interested in using the Moulin à Nef facility in Auvillar? Please put them in touch with us! Our brochure and rate card are available upon request:**

**434-946-7236, [vcca@vcca.com](mailto:vcca@vcca.com)**

## Moulin à Nef Staff



From May through November, the Moulin à Nef will be under the watchful eye

of three-time VCCA Fellow Lucy Anderton, our first Resident Artist in France. Lucy, who was born in Great Britain and raised throughout Europe and the United States, holds an MFA in poetry from Warren Wilson College. She represented Chicago three times at the National Poetry Slam and she held the 2005 Emerging Writer position at Randolph-Macon Woman's College. Her work has appeared in a variety of places, including the *Iowa Review* and the *New York Quarterly*. While in residence, Lucy will live in the Moulin à Nef staff apartment with her husband, novelist Nick Fox.

Like Lucy, Frank Soos is no stranger to the VCCA, having served as VCCA's first Resident



Artist in 2002. He joins the staff as Program Coordinator for the Moulin à Nef, promoting the facility to groups interested in artistic and cultural immersions in the south of France. He is the author of several books and winner of the Flannery O'Connor Award for his short story collection *Unified Field Theory*. Now retired from teaching, he was the director of the creative writing program at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Frank and his wife, artist and VCCA Fellow Margo Klass, live in Alaska and Virginia.

# VCCA Fellows in Auvillar this Summer

**The following Fellows comprise the first group to be in residence at the Moulin à Nef since the property was transferred to the VCCA. They will be in Auvillar between June 4 and July 2.**

**Holly Downing**, painter, Sebastopol, California, studied printmaking at the Royal College of Art in London. After a year of study she received a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship to research and produce mezzotints in London. She has received many awards and grants and has exhibited in galleries and museums in Europe, Japan, the Philippines and the United States. In the 1990s she began doing plein air landscape painting. She looks forward to painting the regional architecture and landscape of Auvillar, attempting to convey through her work something of the life of the region.

**Phyllis Goldberg**, visual artist, New York, New York, has participated in exhibitions in the Small Works Shows at New York University Gallery, solo shows at college galleries, and an exhibition in Cologne, Germany. She studied at the Art Students League. She has received two Pollock-Krasner grants and a one-year residency at the "Space Program" of the Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation. In 1999 she received a grant from the Grandmother Winifred Foundation recognizing her as a role model for older women struggling to continue studio work despite the difficulties of aging and economic hardship.

**Lindsay Nolting**, painter, Columbia, Virginia, studied painting in New York with Theodoros Stamos, a member of the first generation of Abstract Expressionists. Between the ages of 22 and 29, she travelled between New York and Paris where she worked on abstract

canvases which she showed at the American Center, Boulevard Raspail in Paris. Allusions to landscape appeared spontaneously in these works, which signalled for Nolting a return to Virginia. Since that time, Nolting's paintings have been inspired by the iron red earth, the blue hills and the changing rivers of the Virginia Piedmont. Nolting was among the first artists exhibiting at the Experimental Market of Contemporary Art established in 1969 at the Marché aux Puces in Paris.

**Ruth Knafo Setton**, writer, Orefield, Pennsylvania, is the author of the novel, *The Road to Fez*. Born in Morocco, she is the recipient of literary fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and PEN, among others. Her fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction appear in many anthologies and journals, including *Best Contemporary Jewish Writing* and *To Mend the World: Women Reflect on 9/11*. She is the Writer-in-Residence for the Berman Center for Jewish Studies at Lehigh University.

**The second group of Fellows in Auvillar this summer will be in residence between July 12 and August 9.**

**Diane Hoffman**, visual artist, Providence, Rhode Island, has exhibited work in solo exhibitions nationally and at the Kunstruimte NP40 in Amsterdam. She has been an artist in residence at the Oberpfalzer Künstlerhaus in Schwandorf, Germany and Buren College of Art in County Clare, Ireland. Her work is in the collection of Stadt Schwandorf, Germany, and Theater Works of Memphis, Tennessee. Hoffman is currently teaching at the Rhode Island School of Design.

**Elizabeth Kadetsky**, writer, New York, New York, published her first book, *First there is a Mountain*, a memoir of her experiences studying with the Yogi BKS Iyengar, in 2004. A Fulbright to India, she is a Pushcart prize winning fiction writer and her in-progress story collection, *Parallax of Wishful Thinking*, has received commendations from the Dana Award, *The Iowa Review* fiction contest, the Flannery O'Connor short story award, and others. She teaches journalism at Columbia University.

**Dana Roeser**, poet, W. Lafayette, Indiana, is the author of *Beautiful Motion* (poems), winner of the Samuel French Morse Prize at Northeastern University Press, judged by Ellen Bryant Voigt. Her poems have appeared in *The Iowa Review* and *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, among many other journals. Twice, her poems have been featured on the well-known poetry website Poetry Daily. Recently a visiting professor at Butler University in Indianapolis, she has been appointed the Jenny McKean Moore Writer-in-Washington at George Washington University for the academic year 2005-2006.

**Susan Wicks**, writer, Kent, England, is the author of four collections of poetry, two novels (one of which, *The Key*, was serialised on BBC Radio 4) and a short memoir, *Driving My Father* (Faber, 1995 and Basic Books, 1996). She has been awarded a number of writing fellowships in Europe and the United States, including Hawthornden Castle in Scotland and the Villa Mont Noir in Northern France. She currently directs the Creative Writing Programme at the University of Kent in Canterbury.

# October 2004 Highlights



In October, during the VCCA's second pilot residency program, five of our Fellows travelled to France to spend a glorious autumn month in Auvillar. Our Fellows (pictured left to right: filmmaker David Petersen, poet Meredith Trede, visual artist Lyndia Terre, photographer Karen Bell and writer Sophie Cook) were graciously welcomed and acknowledged by the mayor at the 12th annual pottery festival and made to feel at home throughout their stay. The residency program culminated in an open studio event the evening of October 27 featuring an exhibit of photographs and drawings of the area and readings in French and English. The evening also included a screening of the short film, *Un Jour En Auvillar*, by David Petersen, who, throughout his stay, captured the essence of village life with his camera.



*Around 40 people attended open studios at the Moulin à Nef October 27. The evening included a viewing of the short film, Un Jour En Auvillar.*



*Saint Sixte sculptor France Alvin and New York photographer Karen Bell at the A-7 Gallery in Auvillar in October.*

---

## VCCA Fellow Publishes Poems in Toulouse Journal



*Sarah White during her Auvillar reading.*

Some of the work written in Auvillar last summer by Sarah White, poet in residence in July 2004, appeared in the recent edition of *OC*, a journal published in Toulouse. These poems, written in contemporary American English but rich with allusions to the troubadour tradition, appear with an Occitan introduction by François Pic, bibliographer and historian of ancient and modern Occitan literature. (White met this specialist last summer thanks to

an introduction by Alain Delsol, one of the founders of the Moulin à Nef). Pic, President of the International Association of Occitan Studies, will welcome White once again for ten days in May 2005, this time in Toulouse. During this visit, White will meet a number of Occitan poets in the hope of arranging further trans-Atlantic literary collaborations.

# Auvillar School Children Make Ceramic Chickens

In 1994, Lucy and Alain Delsol started an informal cultural exchange between Denver and Auvillar. In 1997 I made my first visit to Auvillar as part of that exchange. Since then, the Cultural Exchange Center of Auvillar was created, and the Moulin à Nef was animated by composers, film-makers, dancers, artists and others, and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA) became the new proprietor of the Moulin à Nef. During our negotiations, Suny Monk, Executive Director of VCCA, made it clear that she wished to continue the cultural exchange in some form. We spoke about ways to accomplish that. One way, fun for me, is to open the ceramic studio, from time to time, to our friends in Auvillar.

On a cold day this past March, Mademoiselle Galan, some brave mothers, and 25 children arrived on the doorstep of the Moulin à Nef to make chickens! With an excited, but respectful buzz, the children started to follow some simple directions I gave them in order to make it easier to accomplish the task at hand. The first hour was full of questions, clarifications, and demonstrations. The children needed to know how to shape the clay, stick it together, and make it strong but not too thick to fire. Everyone worked very hard to understand the process. Then, all at once, the questions stopped! The forms were made, adjustments were successful, and the children began to add their embellishments.

Wow! The 25 chickens all constructed in approximately the same manner became 25 very unique individuals! I carefully

stacked the kiln and fired the chickens to be ready for glazing the following week. When the children returned, they chattered like chicks as they poured and painted glaze on their works. The results were magnificent! On Sunday, just after the chickens came out of the kiln for the second time, they were seen in the market place, at the Fête des Poules au Pots.

For me, it was a moment of pleasure. The children had had a good time, they had learned something about clay. For them, perhaps it was also a moment to learn that some experiences are universal.

– Susan Saarinen



Artist and Auvillar resident Susan Saarinen instructs Auvillar schoolchildren in the art of ceramics.

---

## Return Service Requested



THE CREATIVE RETREAT AT MT. SAN ANGELO

**E-mail:** [vcca@vcca.com](mailto:vcca@vcca.com)

**Phone:** (434) 946-7236

**Fax:** (434) 946-7239

### Mailing Address

The VCCA  
154 San Angelo Drive  
Amherst, VA 24521 USA

### Auvillar Contact

Le Moulin à Nef  
Le Port 82340  
Auvillar FRANCE  
05 63 95 72 91

### Websites

[www.vcca.com](http://www.vcca.com)  
[www.auvillar.com](http://www.auvillar.com)  
[www.auvillar.net](http://www.auvillar.net)

