

Summer 1986

The Story So Far

The regional offices of the Archives of American Art are gathering information on environmental artists. The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress supports activity in the field and has published articles in *Folklife Annual*. The United States Information Agency has included several sites in international exhibitions. Seven sites have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Ten sites have California Landmark status. Other states have sites in the nomination process. Experts in the field are getting more invitations to speak at national conferences. Governmental agencies, foundations and corporations have made grants to preservation organizations. A shelf full of books and magazine articles have been published. At least fifty exhibitions have been about or have included these environments. Major institutions are becoming members of preservation and advocacy organizations. Folklorists, historians and other scholars are beginning to study and write about these sites. Local interest groups exist in many states to protect individual sites. To us this information adds up; it means that the phenomenon of contemporary folk art environments has gained attention, interest and credibility. The field is beginning to be recognized and identified publicly. There's disagreement about definitions, categories and labels, but there *is* discussion. The field is coming of age.

Credibility is important, because credibility means that it will be harder to dismiss the work, allow the sites to be destroyed, ignore the artists. Credibility for folk art environments will make our job easier: the time we spend convincing institutions of the value of this work can then be spent in more directly useful ways. We hope that more people will experience and appreciate the magic of

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The late Annie Hooper with some of the figures from her "Bible Stories"

photo: © Roger Manley

Annie Hooper

(February 26, 1897–January 11, 1986)

After slipping off her wedding ring and handing it to a granddaughter, Annie Hooper died quietly in bed at home in Buxton, at Cape Hatteras on North Carolina's Outer Banks. She left behind an immense labor of love that had occupied her for much of the second half of her life—a series of painted wood and cement sculptures arranged in narrative

tableaux depicting Bible stories and events. Beginning work in the early 1950's, she eventually filled her house and outbuildings with the figures, creating a Biblical environment through which she conducted occasional visitors. Through some of the rooms there were pathways lined with tinsel and artificial flowers; others overflowed with scenes of the Exodus from Egypt, the Sermon on

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Courtesy of the Capital Children's Museum

photo: © Henry Eastwood

Nek Chand

Nek Chand, a sixty year old former municipal public works inspector from India, has been building *The Kingdom of the Gods and Goddesses of the Whole World* near his home outside Chandigarh since 1958. Built of broken china and glass, porcelain bathroom fixtures, plastic bangle bracelets, fabric scraps, bottle caps, automobile and furniture parts, and other discarded materials, his fantasy world of fifty foot high mountains, waterfalls, canals, landscapes, and villages is now populated by many thousand whimsical animals, deities, and people. Chand explained in a June 1984 *Smithsonian* article ("A fantasy garden by Nek Chand flourishes in India") that "All the gods of the world are my gods. Whatever I do it is not in keeping with any design. I work by intuition and inspiration. I wanted to build a holy place where the universal meaning of all gods, Jehovah and Christ, Buddha and Lord Krishna, is respected."

When Chand began his visionary project he worked at night by the light of burning tires for fear that if the government found out about it "that it would get me out of a job." ("Celebration of India," *Orlando Sentinel*, 6/13/1985.) Twelve years later the government did, indeed, discover the garden when a crew of tree trimmers was sent in to clear the site. In an unusually

enlightened move, the government designated the site as a public park in 1976 and allocated funds for its preservation and construction. Chand was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri award for achievement, and was hired to oversee a crew of 200 workers to landscape and maintain the grounds, and to expand his twelve acre creation to cover a fifty acre site. Much work remains to be done at the site which now attracts over 2,000 visitors each day.

Last fall, Nek Chand's first work outside India opened at Washington D.C.'s Capital Children's Museum. Ann Lewin, the founder of the National Learning Center, the parent organization of the museum, invited Chand to make a miniature recreation of his magical garden kingdom. It is the only exhibit that will remain after the national Festival of India concludes this year. *The Fantasy Sculpture Garden* was created by shipping fifty tons of sculpture from India, and enlisting the services of a huge corps of volunteer contractors and laborers who created an environment and numerous additional sculptures under Nek Chand's supervision. The Capital Children's Museum is located near the U.S. Capitol at 800 Third Street, N.E., Washington, D.C.

Pat Murphy

Source: *The Capital Children's Museum*

Exhibitions

Folk art environments have been featured in a number of exhibitions recently. *A Cat and a Ball on a Waterfall: 200 Years of California Folk Painting and Sculpture*, originated by the Oakland Museum and curated by Harvey Jones, is a major survey of more than 125 works by sixty largely self-taught artists. The exhibition includes the work of nine artists who created environments. SPACES wrote catalog essays, lent photographs from its collections, and was a major source of information for the curator. A beautifully designed catalog with a number of color photographs accompanies the exhibition and is available from the Oakland Museum. The exhibition opened on March 22 and will be on view through August 3, 1986.

The Road to Heaven is Built by Good Works--Southern Black Visionaries was held at the San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum from January 4 through February 23, 1986. This exhibition was curated by John F. Turner, collector and authority on twentieth century folk art.

Rebuilding Liberty: Old and New Themes in American Folk Art was assembled and curated by Daniel Prince, and installed at the Hotel Stamford Plaza, Stamford, Connecticut from December 1985 through February 1, 1986. The exhibit focused on patriotic and other popular icons from American culture, and included five dolls from Possum Trot, and photographs of other folk art environments: Litto's Hubcap Ranch, Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village, Sanford Darling's House of a Thousand Paintings, the Watts Towers, and Desert View Tower.

The Joyful Vision, at the Craft and Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles from November 20, 1985-February 2, 1986, was curated by John Fowler. This exhibition, described as "the world of visionaries, dreamers and other exuberant souls," included toys, miniatures, assemblages, paintings, hooked rugs, edible art, and photographs and photographic murals by Seymour Rosen of several environmental sites.

A Time to Reap: Late Blooming Folk Artists was organized by Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey.

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The exhibition, which opened November 9 at Seton Hall, traveled to the Monmouth Historical Association and closed May 31, 1986 at the Noyes Museum in Oceanville, New Jersey. *A Time to Reap*, with attendant catalog, was curated by Barbara Wahl Kaufman and Didi Barrett. "It is my conviction that never before has there been an identifiable body of late-starting artists in the history of art," states curator Barbara Kaufman in her catalog introduction. Seven of fifty-one artists in the exhibition produced folk art environments, and photographs of the environments were included as part of the exhibition.

Divine Disorder, curated by Seymour Rosen, was shown at the Triton Museum in Santa Clara, California from October 26-December 1, 1985; the entire exhibition dealt with environmental works. Seven folk art environments were described through the use of photographs, artifacts from the sites and explanatory biographical and contextual information.

Museum Exhibitions Survey

SPACES staff is in the final stages of an extensive survey to identify and gather information about museum and non-commercial gallery exhibitions of large scale art environments. We will publish the findings in the next newsletter. If you can help us with any information or material for this survey and our permanent archives, please send it to us as soon as possible. We depend on you to extend our knowledge.

Divine Disorder

The Triton Museum inadvertently miscredited the biographical essays in the brochure which accompanied their exhibition *Divine Disorder*. The Duke Cahill essay was written by Jocelyn Gibbs; the essays about Calvin and Ruby Black, John Ehn, Romano Gabriel, and Simon Rodia were written by Louise Jackson. Vernie Greenfield wrote the essay on "Grandma" Prisdrey.

John Medica's Garden

John Medica's Garden is a four acre site in an undulating landscape in Northern California which, in its natural state, contains many outcroppings of grey stone. On this site John Medica has built walkways, miniature castles, arches, grottos, planters, and a miniature "gold mine" and railroad, all made of discarded chiprock from a nearby quarry. The quarry, now closed, opened in 1880 and supplied rock and cobblestone to San Francisco.

Although most of the original 103 acres that John Medica purchased in 1943 have since been sold off in parcels, the garden and rockwork world John created between

native plants: trees, shrubs, flowers and many succulents, mostly cacti. The plants are beside the paths and the stone buildings and nestled inside and atop some of the structures. Medica refers to the site as his "garden" and the effect is of a garden with both stone and plant elements.

Also on the site are 3 buildings built by Medica: his stucco house, another smaller house where a caretaker lives, and a stone building which is used as a tool house. Ancillary structures include a lathhouse, where he starts his plant cuttings, and an arbor with a stone table and stone benches. Abutting the garden site on three sides is a new housing development which can be seen from the edges of the 4 acre site.

In December, 1985 John Medica's Garden was recognized as a significant example of a Twentieth Century Folk Art Environment in California by the State Historical Resources Commission and appended to the existing California Registered Historical Landmark #939. Like most creators of folk art environments, John Medica began building his site when he was middle aged, and used discarded materials. He designed and built it himself, with little education but what he taught himself. The quality of the craftsmanship is quite high: the stonework is beautiful and sturdily in place with no deterioration. The landscape design and placement of the stone structures has resulted in a wholly imagined world. The site has been a local landmark ever since John Medica began building it, and has been toured by many individual visitors and groups.

John Medica is now 85 (born 1900), and needs help maintaining the plants in his garden, which, in some sections, have become overgrown. He is concerned that his garden remain open to the public after his death. The site is an extraordinary example of one individual's vision, and has the potential to be a useful and magical public resource without changing or endangering its essential character. It is hoped that landmark designation will assist preservation efforts now being explored by SPACES, John Medica, his attorney and other interested local people.



Medica site plan by Susan and Don Ryan

1955 and 1967 is complete on the current four acre site. A self-taught mason and rockworker, Medica's stone structures and walkways are beautiful examples of stone craft and show no signs of deterioration. According to Medica, all the stone work done for his site is still extant. The site consists of 28 stone buildings, castles, towers, grottos and planters, most of which stand approximately 3 1/2 feet tall; 3 stone arches, approximately 8 feet tall; 6 stone bridges; 1 swimming pool; a miniature railroad which enters a miniature "gold mine"; and interconnecting, winding, stonework paths. Medica has planted his site with

What to Call Them

We have used the term "folk art environment" as a point of departure because it seems to be a recognizable term for most viewers and artists.

It has also been called Art / ArtBrut / Bricolage / Contemporary Folk Art Environments / Folk Art / Installation / Junk Sculpture / Landscape Architecture / Outsider Art / Sculpture / Sunday Art. It has been called Compulsive / Folk / Grassroots / Idiosyncratic / Instinctive / Isolate / Naive / Natural / Non-mainstream / Nontraditional / Popular / Primitive / One-of-a-kind / Obsessive / Self-taught / Singular / Spontaneous / Tribal / Unconventional / Untutored / Unconscious / Visionary.

The confusion caused by so many names and the difficulties encountered by the use of any particular name hinders the process

of documentation and preservation (there doesn't seem to be much disagreement about the magic that these places possess). We don't know what the perfect title is for these jewels on the landscape and we'd really like to give our members a chance to a) vote for their favorite and explain their choice, b) add a new title, c) find fault with a particular title or explain why none of these titles work. We will also be soliciting responses from major figures in folklife, art and other fields.

This stuff is just garbage!
neighbor of Irene Gibson Hall

Because these people are so individualistic, I would not call what they do a "folk art" – which usually involves an aesthetic shared by a group. To follow the approach of Levi-Strauss, I might prefer "folk bricoleurs," which indicates they are from an ethnic, regional or occupational community, but have made a very personal statement in their

assemblage of materials. The creations could then be called "folk bricolage landscapes."

Nicholas Spitzer
Office of Folklife Programs,
Smithsonian Institution

Idiosyncratic, not done by an architect..
Anonymous

SPACES would like to print a variety of proposed titles and attendant explanations in our next newsletter (credit will be given to each published author). You may pick a title on the list above (please feel free to mix and match) or choose your own title. We really would like to know what you think, although space limitations may force us to use excerpts from your statement. Please let us know 1) the best title, 2) the worst title, 3) your reasons for either choice. It's important that *your* perspective is included.



In the last issue we mentioned the death of Irene Gibson Hall of Eufaula, Oklahoma (March 6, 1890 or 1895 - March 25, 1983). Since the site has been dismantled, and few of our readers have had the opportunity to see it, we print this picture taken in November 1981.

photo: © Seymour Rosen

The Story So Far (continued from page 1)

these places. We hope that more of these artists can get honored in their lifetimes. We hope that more places can be saved *in situ* and we hope that more people can be involved in a variety of ways. We are convinced that the credibility folk art environments have gained will help us accomplish the tasks we originally set out to accomplish.

Oops

In Newsletter Number 2, in our News Briefs (p.3), we jumbled information about "Grandma Prisbrey" and the Preserve Bottle Village Committee. The correct address for the Committee is P.O. Box 1412, and the correct phone number is (805) 583-1627. The City of Simi Valley has agreed to utilize the State Historical Building Code for the Bottle Village restoration plans (not National Park Service guidelines). This is a vital distinction because the State Historical Building Code will allow for restoration that protects the integrity and character of the site.

Edward L. Farrell

(October 9, 1921–January 8, 1986)

Ideas was the cat and I was the mouse.
Ed's handwritten epitaph found among his papers

My friend Ed Farrell, one of the founding members of the Committee for Simon Rodia's Towers in Watts and part of the team that designed the Watts Towers Arts Center, died this January. Ed was always involved with impossible tasks; his "outrage" was always channeled into positive actions. He will be missed.

Seymour Rosen



Victory salute by some members of the Committee for Simon Rodia's Towers in Watts upon completion of a successful safety test. The 1959 test proved the stability of the Towers and removed a demolition order from the City of Los Angeles. From left to right: Edward Farrell, N. J. "Bud" Goldstone, Nicholas King, Herb Kahn, Jack Levine, William Cartwright

photo: © Seymour Rosen

Watts Towers Update

A long-awaited settlement concerning the preservation and long-term maintenance of the Watts Towers was reached by the Center for Law in the Public Interest on behalf of the Committee for Simon Rodia's Towers in Watts and approved by a Los Angeles court in October, 1985. A 1978 lawsuit charged the City of Los Angeles with violating its contract with the Committee by failing to care for the Towers. It is hoped that the new agreement will guarantee the long term preservation and maintenance of the Towers and will impose stringent standards for the preservation work.

Annie Hooper (continued from page 1)

the Mount, Hebrews worshipping the golden calf, and hundreds of angels, birds and sheep. The most crowded rooms could no longer be entered and Annie would use a yardstick to reach the light switch in these. In all, there were some 5,000 figures presenting nearly 300 stories from the Bible.

Annie was never able to see her work displayed "properly," with room for each scene to be appreciated and understood separately from adjacent scenes. Although she had shunned publicity for herself, she wanted her work to be seen by a wider audience than the people who somehow heard of her and made their way to the remote coastal town where she lived. Visitors were always astonished at her delicious sense of humor and that such a vast quantity of work could have been made by such a tiny woman. Many of the pieces weighed twice as much as she did.

Too often the death of an artist like Annie is followed by the destruction of the site and the dispersal of the work to collectors. Any scholarly interpretation or public appreciation of the work is limited to enjoying the formal qualities of whatever individual pieces happen to be saved. Fortunately, Annie's dream may eventually be realized, due to the Southern Visionary Folk Art Project of the Jargon Society, a non-profit corporation based in Winston-Salem. With funding from the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, the Jargon Society was able to hire a trained folklorist to spend two months with Annie a year before her death, labeling and documenting each piece and scene and making high-quality tape recordings of Annie talking about the work.

The day she died her family contacted the Society to donate the entire collection. In an agreement that had been previously worked out with Annie, Jargon will act as temporary steward of the work until adequate and appropriate space for its permanent display can be prepared.

Container Corporation of America donated several thousand shipping cartons and Vulcan Materials Corporation loaned Jargon an 18-wheeler and a driver to accomplish the move. A team of volunteers from the Folklore Curriculum

at UNC-Chapel Hill and local neighbors of the Hoopers spent a week packing the work in paper that had been gathered by three Outer Banks Methodist congregations. The cartons were carefully labeled and moved to storage in Raleigh. Now the Society is involved in helping a public institution (that will own the work) raise funds for the construction of a building to house it. Eventually it will be presented in a way that Annie herself would have liked.

The Jargon Society's SVFA Project works with artists like Annie Hooper throughout the Southeastern states in a variety of ways. Some, like Annie, seek a wider audience for their work, while others need financial independence, legal assistance, artistic recognition, help applying for funding, even medical care. By helping with each individual's needs and, at the same time creating public appreciation and understanding of this kind of art through publishing books and producing films on the artists, the Society seeks to preserve these rare birds and wildflowers of human creativity.

Roger Manley

Roger Manley first met Annie Hooper in 1970, while hitchhiking down the Outer Banks during Christmas break in his freshman year in college. Now, as a consultant to the Jargon Society, he continues on the journey he began with that first contact with Annie.

Finster's New Audience

Little Creatures, the newest record album by the musical group Talking Heads, sports a specially designed cover painting by environmental artist Reverend Howard Finster. The painting includes portraits of all the group's members (including David Byrne in the foreground holding up the world in an almost Atlas pose), religious edifices, large black mountains with expressive faces, women gathering flowers, and a variety of inimitable Finster statements in his signature printing. This work, numbered as are all of Finster's works, is "4000.411th." *Little Creatures* is available on Sire Records.

Saint EOM

(July 4, 1908-April 16, 1986)

A few minutes after noon on Wednesday, April 16, 1986, a few miles outside the little town of Buena Vista, Georgia, the visionary artist and architect Eddie Owens Martin (a.k.a. "Saint EOM") put a .38 caliber bullet into his right temple, thus bringing to a sudden close one of the most colorful if little known careers in the history of American culture.

St. EOM (pronounced *Ohm*) left as a monument to his life and his talents the extraordinary four-acre compound of wild vernacular architecture called *Pasaquan*, which he had spent his last three decades building. The fate of this homemade ritual fantasy world has not been determined as of this writing. St. EOM, who tended to take a pessimistic view of most human matters during his last years, predicted that after his death *Pasaquan* would be destroyed. But that potential tragedy may yet be avoided. The Marion County Historical Society and the Columbus (Georgia) Museum, with some assistance from the Jargon Society, are presently working toward an arrangement for the preservation and long-term maintenance of the site.

A Marion County native who was born the son of a poor sharecropper, Eddie Martin ran away from home at age 14 and spent most of the next 35 years in New York City, eking out a living as a waiter, hustler, gambler, and finally a fortune-teller in a tea room on 42nd street. In the 1950's, after his mother died and left him her farmhouse and four acres, he returned to Georgia and set up a fortune-telling or "psychic-reading" business in the front room, using the proceeds to construct his environmental masterpiece around the house. *Pasaquan* remained a perpetual work-in-progress, with numerous additions and repaintings over the years.

St. EOM's death at age 77 came at a time when interest in his work from the outside world was increasing. Photographs of *Pasaquan* were included in the lavishly produced *Fantastic Architecture*, published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., and St. EOM had been the subject of articles in *Smithsonian* and a number of other magazines and



St. EOM

photo: © Guy Mendes

newspapers during the past decade. Examples of his freestanding paintings and sculpture had been included in several recent exhibitions of contemporary folk art, and his illustrated biography was being prepared by the Jargon Society. Together with the Columbus Museum, the Jargon Society is in the process of organizing a solo exhibition of his work for touring in 1988.

Individuals and organizations interested in lending some tangible support to the preservation of *Pasaquan* and institutions interested in the traveling exhibition are encouraged to contact Fred Fussell, Director, The Columbus Museum, P.O. Box 1617, Columbus, Ga 31902; phone (404) 322-0400; or Tom Patterson, Executive Director, The Jargon Society, 1000 West Fifth Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101; phone (919) 724-7619.

Tom Patterson

Tom Patterson is Executive Director of the Jargon Society and author of numerous books and articles on folk/outsider/visionary art.

Newsletter News

Starting with this issue, we will be publishing the newsletter three times a year. We use articles from contributing writers, and hope you will feel free to send information about your projects that we may publish.

Plaques

Litto Damonte's Hubcap Ranch and Art Beal's Nitt Witt Ridge will be the next California folk art environments to receive Historical Landmark plaques from the State Historical Resources Commission. Both sites became State Historical Landmarks last year, appended to California Registered Historical Landmark # 939, 20th Century Folk Art Environments (thematic).

The plaque for Art Beal's Nitt Witt Ridge will be dedicated June 26, 1986. Art's friends and supporters will gather to celebrate Art Beal's creation and to help Art celebrate his birthday, for he will be 90 years old that day. The family and friends of Litto Damonte will dedicate the plaque at Hub Cap Ranch sometime later in the year. Litto Damonte died June 11, 1985, but not before his site was named a registered State Historical Landmark.

Time Capsule

Recently, SPACES Newsletter #1 was placed in a time capsule which has been incorporated into a sculpture by Eugene Thurman. The sculpture sits in the forecourt of the International Tower in downtown Los Angeles. When the time capsule is opened, 100 years from now, we hope some of the sites described in the newsletter will still be standing.

The Jargon Society and the Visionary Folk Artists of the American South

It wasn't too many years ago that the literary critic Hugh Kenner characterized the Jargon Society as "custodian of snowflakes." In a similar vein, the *New York Times* once referred to the Society as "patron of the American imagination."

What exactly is the Jargon Society? The official description is "a non-profit, public corporation devoted to charitable, educational and literary purposes." For 35 years since it was founded by the poet and photographer Jonathan Williams at Black Mountain College, Jargon has functioned as the publisher of a series of handsome, limited edition books featuring works by poets, writers, photographers and other artists who weren't getting the attention Williams thought they deserved. Most of these people were little known at the time of their first publication by Jargon. Many of them—Buckminster Fuller, Robert Rauschenberg, Kenneth Patchen, Charles Olson, Henry Miller, Robert Creeley, Aaron Siskind, Harry Callahan, Denise Leveretov, to name a few—later developed much more widespread reputations.

William's tastes have always inclined toward the outsiders, mavericks, individualists, recluses and non-urbanites of the art and literary worlds. His and the Jargon Society's role has been to find and publish and preserve valuable work that is being largely ignored, hence the above characterizations by Kenner and *The Times*. It should come as no surprise, then, that Williams has had a longstanding interest in the work of people like Simon Rodia, S. P. Dinsmoor, Annie Hooper and St. EOM.

The obituary pieces on Annie Hooper (see p. 1) and St. EOM (see p. 6) exemplify one of the Jargon Society's primary involvements at present. An article in the last issue of the SPACES newsletter announced the forthcoming publication by Jargon of St. EOM's illustrated biography (*St. EOM in The Land of Pasaquan*) scheduled for release next year. Since 1984, Jargon has been officially embarked on a new program that was in part inspired by SPACES. Jargon has always been headquartered in

the American South, very possibly the world's regional capital for inspired and eccentric backwoods artists and architects. There are more of these outsiders and visionaries in these parts than even in California. Through its Southern Visionary Folk Art Project, Jargon has been seeking out, documenting, exhibiting, and advocating preservation of important works of non-traditional, contemporary folk art and architecture in this part of the country. We have also helped some of the artists get financial assistance, broaden their audiences and increase their incomes. Some of the most extraordinary artists we have found have been living in particularly poor circumstances, and are eager to live a little better as well as to see their work appreciated by more people.

In addition to the forthcoming book on St. EOM and the illustrated biography of the Reverend Howard Finster that will follow soon afterwards, the Jargon Society through the Folk Art Project has sponsored a series of exhibitions and lectures in several states, salvaged the immense body of sculpture comprising the late Annie Hooper's life's work, initiated negotiations for establishment of a Southern outsider/visionary/folk art museum at a major state university in the region, and acted as a conduit for information about these artists and their work. Jargon is also sponsoring research for a forthcoming survey of outsider/visionary folk art and architecture in the South, with the working title, *Way Out People Way Out There*. This book will include texts by Jonathan Williams and photographs by Roger Manley and Guy Mendes.

We are interested in painting, sculpture, drawings, etc. as well as folk art environments. We respect the privacy of individuals whose work we document and exhibit, and we don't supply information-on-request as to where they live. The idea is to help these artists make a decent living at what they're best at, to help develop an audience for their work, and to do what we can to preserve a vast and diverse body of their work which has only been lightly skimmed by the established art world and the general public.

Since Jargon's Southern Visionary Folk Art Project began, we have seen the

deaths of some of our region's most extraordinary self-taught artists—Juanita Rogers, Sam Doyle, Leroy Peterson, Miles Carpenter, Edgar Tolson, and now St. EOM and Annie Hooper. Laura Pope's amazing sculpture garden outside Meigs, Georgia was almost completely destroyed before many of us even saw it, and other masterpieces of twentieth century folk art and architecture have suffered similar fates.

The point is that *great art* is produced just as much in the country as in the city, if not more so, and produced just as often by unschooled visionaries as by institutionally trained, "sophisticated" artists. In a careerist, consumer society like ours, it is easy to forget the value of quiet, dedicated individuals who do what they do simply because they love it and are compelled to do it by a deeper and more profoundly human urge than that of becoming rich and/or famous. In overlooking much of the work of these artists, mainstream society and the chroniclers of contemporary art history are missing some of the most compelling and significant art being produced in American today. Jargon advocates the recognition of these artists while they are still living and the preservation of their work in public collections and on site so that it might live on beyond them, as it richly deserves to do.

We are at present seeking grants and contributions toward the Southern Visionary Folk Art Project to support the work described here. Please send contributions to the Jargon Society (see address on p. 6).

Tom Patterson

Editor's note: SPACES contends that California can at least match the South for visionaries and outsiders; in fact California's reputation as a haven for the unusual is well-deserved.

Whole Earth Review

The August 1986 issue of the Whole Earth Review will contain a six page article describing several contemporary American folk art environments. The article will be extensively illustrated with photographs of the sites.

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Since the last newsletter, SPACES has

Initiated efforts and successfully nominated John Medica's Garden in northern California to state landmark status

Begun to develop a community trust to help John Medica keep the integrity of his site in perpetuity as well as to open the site to visitors

Participated in four major museum exhibitions

Begun an extensive survey of museum exhibitions which have been about or have included folk art environments

Spoken at the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts Annual Conference in St. Louis, and published an article in the Fall 1985 issue of the *NCECA Journal*

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