

Focus on the Humanities

August 2007 - Mississippi Humanities Council Newsletter

(Visit our web site at www.mshumanities.org to learn more about us.)

REMINDER: New Deadlines for Larger Grants

The Mississippi Humanities Council has revised its deadlines for grant applications exceeding \$2,000. Applications for Regular Grants will now be accepted September 15 and April 15 annually. Decisions will be announced November 15 and June 15. Visit www.mshumanities.org and click on "Downloads" to review and/or download grant guidelines and application forms. The deadlines for Mini-grants, up to \$2,000, remain unchanged.

Contents:

- New MHC Position Addresses Cultural Recovery on Gulf Coast
- *New Harmonies* Opens in Gulfport Aug. 25 to 'Music Under the Oaks'
- Tennessee Williams Remembered at Two MHC-Funded Events
- Award-winning Emmett Till Exhibit Travels to Hinds CC
- 40th Anniversary of King Assassination Approaching in 2008
- MHC Awards \$16,127.28 for Humanities Programming
- Upcoming Humanities Events in Mississippi
- Next MHC Grant Deadlines Sept. 1 and Sept. 15, 2007

New MHC Position Addresses Cultural Recovery on Gulf Coast

The Mississippi Humanities Council has created a new position, Assistant Director for Special Projects, to provide on-site assistance to recovering cultural organizations. Dr. Shana Walton has assumed the new position. Dr. Walton, an anthropologist with 20 years experience documenting and preserving local cultures and a Ph.D. from Tulane University, formerly served as associate director of the Deep South Humanities Center at Tulane. She has also taught in the Department of Anthropology at the University of New Orleans, co-directed the Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) and instructed anthropology courses at USM. Dr.



Dr. Shana Walton, conducting field work during the New Orleans Jazz Fest "watermelon ritual."

Walton has authored and co-authored numerous papers on anthropological and sociological topics.

Since joining the Mississippi Humanities Council, Dr. Walton has met with numerous leaders of cultural organizations across the Mississippi Gulf Coast to assess their recovery needs and identify ways the Council can assist them.

***New Harmonies* Opens in Gulfport Aug. 25 to ‘Music Under the Oaks’**

(GULFPORT, MS) – A blues festival, a diddley bow lecture and open mic night are among the activities planned when the Mississippi Humanities Council-sponsored Smithsonian traveling exhibit *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music* moves to Gulfport Aug. 25.

New Harmonies is a full-color interactive exhibit telling the story of how the cultural blending of American peoples has resulted in more kinds of music than any other country on earth. The exhibit includes sound stations where visitors may hear examples of roots music, experience hands-on instrument displays and view hundreds of photographs depicting the founders and performers of America's unique sounds. The exhibition examines the diversity of American roots music, as rich and eclectic as our country itself, from blues, country and gospel to zydeco, tejano, bluegrass and klezmer.

New Harmonies will be on view in the Fine Arts Gallery at the Jefferson Davis Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Gulfport Aug. 25 to Sept. 28. Related events will include:

- Ribbon-cutting and Music Under the Oaks, Saturday, Aug. 25, noon–6 p.m., Jefferson Davis Campus. Bring your picnic for this fun family event featuring The Broadmoors and other musicians, food vendors, balloons, face painting and more.
- Blues Heritage Music Festival, Sept. 8, Jackson County Fairgrounds.
- Diddley Bow Lecture by University of Southern Mississippi ethnomusicologist, Dr. Chris Goertzen, Sept. 12, Jefferson Davis Campus.
- Ongoing art exhibit by multimedia artist Elizabeth Shafer at the Jefferson Davis Fine Arts Gallery.
- Open Mic Night, Sept. 15, 6 p.m. PJ's Coffee.

All events are free to the public. For details, visit www.mgccc.edu/~newharmonies/ or contact Anita Johns at newharmonies@mgccc.edu.



Shape note singers awed audiences in Vicksburg during the *New Harmonies* tour there.

New Harmonies will tour Mississippi throughout 2007 and part of 2008, moving next to the Marion County Historical Society Museum and Archives in Columbia, MS. Visit <http://www.mshumanities.org/pdf/kickoffschedule.pdf> for a complete tour schedule.

Tennessee Williams Remembered at Two MHC–Funded Events



The life and work of Mississippi playwright Tennessee Williams will be celebrated this fall at two events long-supported by the Mississippi Humanities Council. The first, the Tennessee Williams Tribute, will take place Sept. 4–9 in Columbus, MS. Events will include performances of Williams plays, breakfast discussions with Williams scholars, tours of historic Victorian Columbus homes, scholars' lectures and discussions and various lunches and dinners. For details, please visit www.muw.edu/tennesseewilliams/. The second event, the 15th Annual Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival, takes place Oct. 12–13 in Clarksdale,

MS, coordinated by Coahoma Community College. The 2007 celebration will focus on the play "Night of the Iguana." Festival activities are free and will include: lectures, panel discussions, film screenings, readings, dramatizations and full performances of Williams plays. For details, please visit www.clarksdale.com/twilliams/.

Award-winning Emmett Till Exhibit Travels to Hinds CC

Delta State University's award-winning Emmett Till Traveling Exhibit will be on view at Hinds Community College, Utica, throughout August. Using 10 free-standing panels, the exhibit describes the story of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old African American boy murdered near Money, MS, 50 years ago. For more information about the exhibit and how to arrange a local showing, visit www.deltastate.edu/pages/2757.asp.

40th Anniversary of King Assassination Approaching in 2008

April 4, 2008, marks the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, TN.

MHC Awards \$16,127.28 for Humanities Programming

The Mississippi Humanities Council recently approved several grant applications totaling \$16,127.28. The approved projects span a variety of humanities disciplines and include:

15th Annual Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival. Sponsor: Coahoma Community College. Award: \$5,000. Annual festival examining the work of Mississippi playwright Tennessee Williams through lectures, panel discussions, film screenings, readings and dramatizations.

Tennessee Williams Tribute Scholars' Panel. Sponsor: Southern Women's Institute–Mississippi University for Women. Award: \$1,500. Annual tribute to Mississippi playwright Tennessee Williams.

A Civil Rights Odyssey Through Puppetry: The Struggle for Justice. Sponsor: University of Southern Mississippi. Award: \$2,204. A collaborative project involving the ancient art of Javanese puppetry and oral history to educate Mississippi students about this state's Civil Rights history.

Mississippi Archaeology Month. Sponsor: Mississippi Archaeological Association. Award: \$2,000. Month-long program to raise public awareness of the importance of Mississippi's prehistoric and historic heritage.

Mississippi Delta Children's Arts and Letters. Sponsor: Delta State University. Award: \$2,000. Three-day literary event for children, including book fair, author and illustrator presentations, readings, signings and discussions.

Cleveland's Historic Neighborhood Preservation Project. An Oral History. Sponsor: Delta State University. Award: \$1,520. Project to record memories of people raised in Cleveland, Mississippi, at least one generation after the four major historic residential neighborhoods were founded.

Champion Hill: A Contrast in Command. Sponsor: Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp #265. Award: \$1,903.28. Program examining the defeat of Confederate armies at Raymond, Jackson and Champion Hill during the Civil War.

Upcoming Humanities Events in Mississippi

- Sept. 4–9, 2007, ***Tennessee Williams Tribute Scholars' Panel***, Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, MS. Annual tribute to Mississippi playwright Tennessee Williams. The MHC-sponsored portion of this week-long event is a scholars' panel on Friday afternoon, Sept. 8, and Saturday morning, Sept. 9. Please visit www.muw.edu/tennesseewilliams/ for a complete list of panelists and their topics.
- Oct. 1–31, 2007, ***Mississippi Archaeology Month***, Mississippi Archaeological Society, events cross the state. Month-long program to raise public awareness of the importance of Mississippi's prehistoric and historic heritage. Visit www.msarchaeology.org/maa/arch_month.html for details.
- Oct. 1, 2007–Jan. 31, 2008, ***Cleveland's Historic Neighborhood Preservation Project***, Charles W. Capps Archives & Museum, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS. Exhibit resulting from oral history project to collect memories of people raised in Cleveland, Mississippi, at least one generation after the four major historic residential neighborhoods were founded. Exhibit will be part of the DSU Archives & Museum's National Archives Month activities.
- Oct. 6, 2007, ***Marion County Historical Society Heritage Festival & Flea Market***, Marion County Historical Society Museum, Columbia, MS. Annual Heritage Festival events will complement a traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibition on display at the Marion County Historical Society Museum Oct. 2–Nov. 14. Musical performances will focus on genres indigenous to the local area, including blues, zydeco, early rock-n-roll, gospel and blue grass. Discussion programs will also

be offered on sacred harp singing, the music of Merle Haggard and the evolution of music.

- Oct. 12–13, 2007, *15th Annual Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival*, Cutrer Museum, Cleveland, MS. A celebration of one of America's great Pulitzer Prize-winning playwrights who spent his childhood in Clarksdale, MS, and later transformed many of its sites and citizens into legendary settings and characters in his plays. The 2007 celebration will focus on the play "Night of the Iguana." Festival activities are free and will include: lectures, panel discussions, film screenings, readings, dramatizations and full performances of Williams plays. For details, visit www.clarksdale.com/twilliams/.

For more information about Mississippi Humanities Council-sponsored events, please visit the Events Calendar on the Mississippi Humanities Council web site: www.mshumanities.org.

Next MHC Grant Deadlines Sept. 1 and Sept. 15, 2007

Sept. 1, 2007, is the next Mississippi Humanities Council minigrant application deadline for proposals up to \$2,000. Sept. 15, 2007, is the next regular grant application deadline for proposals over \$2,000. Application guidelines and forms are available at www.mshumanities.org.



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