

Poignant images of New Orleans captured by local professor

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The haunting, black-and-white images of New Orleans' faded plantation culture as captured by surrealist photographer Clarence John Laughlin is the subject of a new documentary film by Dr. Michael Frierson, a professor of broadcasting and cinema at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Michael Murphy.

The film, "Clarence John Laughlin: An Artist with A Camera," made its world premiere in New Orleans in December.

A self-taught photographer, Laughlin captured the crumbling plantation houses, enigmatic graveyards and iconographic, vanishing landscapes of New Orleans and the South during a career that began in the 1930s and ended in the 1980s.

"Laughlin's nearly 17,000 photographs are a historical record of what New Orleans has lost," said Frierson, who has lived and taught in New Orleans. "Laughlin was an eccentric, but fortunately New Orleans is very accepting of eccentric people."

In an era when photography was not yet regarded as an art form, Laughlin explored the creative uses of the camera inspired by surrealist photographers such as Man Ray and Eugene Atget to create images that melded artistic techniques such as the use of props and costumes with a documentarian's eye for detail and historical record.

In addition to New Orleans, Laughlin traveled across the United States photographing buildings before they were torn down and replaced by what he considered soulless construction.

Frierson has produced short films for Nickelodeon, Children's Television Workshop and NETA. His is the author of "Clay Animation: American Highlights 1908 to the Present," which won the McLaren-Lambert Award from the National Film Board of Canada for the Best Scholarly Book on Animation.

His forthcoming documentary "Klan-FBI" depicts the relationship between an FBI special agent, Frierson's father, and his informant, a high ranking Klan officer, during the turbulent years of the Civil Rights Movement in North Carolina.

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CLEAN START FOR FIRST COUPLE



The Rev. Wallace Gaither and his wife, Co-Pastor Shirley Gaither, of True Temple Holiness Church, stand in front of their new business, VIP Auto Detailing and Car Wash on Peter's Creek Parkway. The couple has high hopes for the new venture, which opens April 5, including providing jobs for those who need them. Pictured with the Gaithers (far right) are Teresa and Randy Pool (from left) and Rodney Valentine.

Malveaux

from page A1

University of California at Berkeley, the College of Notre Dame in San Mateo, Calif., Michigan State University and Howard University. She has also lectured at more than 500 colleges or universities and holds honorary degrees from Sojourner Douglas College in Baltimore, Marygrove College of Detroit, the University of the District of Columbia South Carolina's Benedict College.

A committed activist and civic leader, Dr. Malveaux has held positions in women's, civil rights, and policy organizations. She was President of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs from 1995-1999, and is currently Honorary Co-Chair of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Well-known for appearances on national television programs, Malveaux is an accomplished writer and commentator whose work has appeared in USA Today, Black

Issues in Higher Education, Ms. Magazine, Essence Magazine and the Progressive.

Several well-known Bennett supporters and prominent friends of Malveaux's are slated to take part in inauguration events this week, including Dr. Maya Angelou. The well-known poet and educator will read a special poem during Saturday's noon inauguration ceremony at Greensboro Carolina Theatre (310 S. Greene St.). The service is free and open to the public. Essence Magazine's Editorial Director Susan L. Taylor will also speak during the ceremony.



Taylor

Ironically, Malveaux was Essence's first college editor, having been selected in 1970 by Marcia Ann Gillespie for her winning essay "Black Love is a Bitter/Sweetness."

Tomorrow (March 28), Dr. Dorothy Height, the president emerita of the National Council of Negro Women, will speak at a fundraising luncheon at the Shératon Four Seasons/ Koury Convention Center. Reservations for the 11:45 a.m. luncheon are \$50. Height will receive Bennett's first-ever "Woman of Audacity" award during the

luncheon. The Koury Convention Center will also host a Scholarship Gala on Saturday night, starting at 7. Entertainment for the event will be provided by The Temptations Review, featuring Dennis Edwards and Ali Woodson. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, a graduate of nearby N.C. A&T State University, is expected to attend. Gala reservations are \$100.

Other free events include "A Celebration of Voices," a concert featuring Gina Loring and Julia Nixon and other singers (Friday at 7 p.m. in Bennett's Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel); and a symposium featuring black female leaders from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Friday at the Koury Convention Center.

For a full schedule of events or for information on reserving space, go to www.BennettInauguration2008.com or call 336-370-1408.

Discussion will probe Guilford County and the Underground Railroad

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Guilford County's ties to the Underground Railroad are the topic of an upcoming bicentennial celebration event. Author Fergus Bordewich will present a talk on his latest book, "Bound for Canaan," on Thursday, April 3 at 7 p.m. at the Central Branch of the Greensboro Public Library. The talk is free and open to the public.

"Bound for Canaan" tells in human terms the story of the Underground Railroad, the network that smuggled enslaved African Americans to freedom in the decades before the Civil War. Some residents of Guilford County, chiefly members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) were involved in the Underground Railroad's work.

"I have tried to show how the Underground came into being, how it operated," Bordewich says. "[and] what kinds of people - black, white, men and women - made it work. There was no regular organization...every man did what seemed right in his own eyes. It engaged thou-

sands of citizens in the active subversion of federal law and the prevailing mores of their communities."

Bordewich, a native of New York, became interested in the Underground Railroad as a child after hearing legends of freed slaves who were said to have settled near his neighborhood in Yonkers.

In addition to "Bound for Canaan," he is the author of "Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinventing Native Americans at the End of the Twentieth Century;" "My Mother's Ghost, A Memoir;" and "Cathay: A Journey in Search of Old China."

Millicent Brown, an associate professor of history at N.C. A&T University, will moderate the discussion. Following the talk, there will be a book signing and reception, along with spiritual-style music.

The event is presented in partnership between the Greensboro Public Library, Guilford College, the Greensboro Historical Museum, Inc., the North Carolina Humanities Council and the Greensboro Bicentennial Commission.



Bordewich

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