

# Features

## Glass art impresses with beauty

Mark Plemmons  
Staff Writer

Who thinks glass is boring? Probably not the Asheville Art Museum, and certainly not Jon Kuhn.

The Jon Kuhn: Glass Sculpture exhibit will be on view at the Museum until Jan. 4, 1997, so be sure not to miss this small, but unusual, collection.

Kuhn's spectacular sculptures are highly polished forms of glass, of all shapes, colors, and sizes.

"Cosmic Desire," a large pyramid of clear glass, has some smaller glass patterns contained within. It's an impressive piece in and of itself, but it really has balconies to get the full effect. From that angle, the overhead lights strike the pyramid perfectly, causing the piece to vibrate with color and light.

Jon Kuhn's works are constructed by sandwiching sheets of clear glass and colored or patterned glass. Smaller elements create larger segments that are then assembled into the final art work.

Using transparent optical

glass, Kuhn suspends complex constructions of multi-colored glass that reflect and refract light in rainbows of spectral colors. While some hot work is used, the various elements are assembled using a transparent glue.

A tall, thin piece, "Beadwork Weave," uses incredibly small pieces of colored glass, making it look like a combination between a solid glass skyscraper and an old-fashioned woven hearth rug.

"White Cross," one of Kuhn's larger, completely clear pieces, is a wonderful tribute to his combined interests in spirituality and architecture that explores the ephemeral nature of

The main body of the work is a large upside-down triangle, but the pieces inside are what really draw the viewer's attention. Suspended within the main body is a cross, made of several straight pieces of all sizes, with an angled cube as its center.

In addition to exhibiting Kuhn's sculptures, the Asheville Art Museum is also showing a small display of glass elements

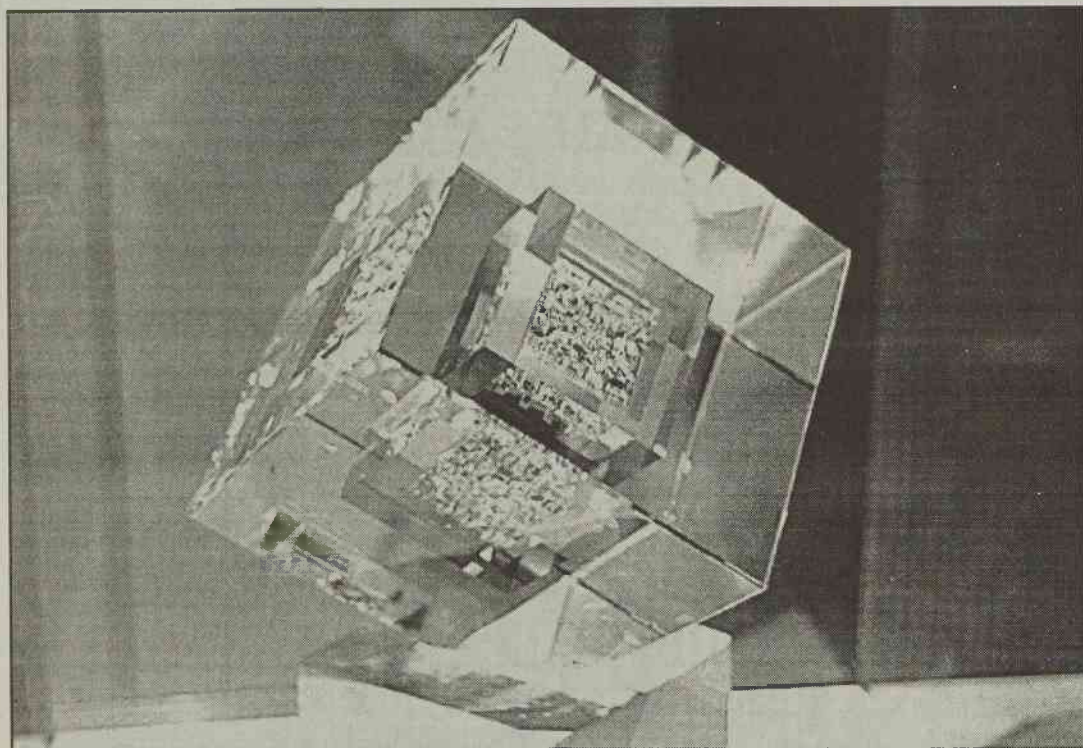
that demonstrate how the sculptures are created from raw materials.

Jon Kuhn received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Washington University in Topeka, Kansas, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

Since 1978, Kuhn has maintained a studio in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He was the youngest artist working in glass ever to have a work acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

The Asheville Art Museum is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and days. The Museum is located in the Pack Place Education, Science and Arts Center, One Pack Square, in downtown Asheville.

Admission is \$3.00 for adults, \$2.50 for senior and students with ID and \$2.00 for children 4-15 (children age three and younger are admitted free). For more information call (704) 253-3227.



John Kuhn's "Spring Days," a sculpture made of hundreds of slices of glass, sits on display at the Asheville Art Museum in an exhibit featuring his work.

Photo by Del DeLorm

## Tender Idols: a one-beer band

Rafica Adams  
Staff Writer

An easy way to gauge how a live band sounds is to count how many beers it takes before they sound good. Four or five is the running average for local bands, six for rock bands. Anytime you can actually enjoy the music for under three beers, then you're looking at a pretty good band.

Last Friday, at Gatsby's, I only needed one MGD light before I could see some value and skill in most of the members of The Tender Idols, a band from Atlanta, Georgia.

The four members of the Idols were drummer Gui Strauss, bassist Scott Collins, Danny Howes, a guitarist who happened to bear an uncanny resemblance to the late John Lennon (he's alive, I tell you!), and Ian Webber, who played guitar, tambourine, megaphone (yes, megaphone) and sang lead vocals.

The band has been together for a year and a half. The lead singer is from England, which these days automatically means

that he sounds like Oasis' Liam Gallagher. However, the musical chord selections and changes in the Idols' brand of music is enough to keep them distinct from any group that patterns and compares every song they write to the Beatles. If anything, I'd say that they were a cross between Nirvana and Oasis. Howes preferred not to name their main influences, but he said that The Tender Idols "were influenced by lots of groups over the years. There were a lot of British groups."

They played a variety of songs, but most were in the same musical vein. Howes displayed quite a bit of lead guitar skill. The band melded well together musically.

Their transitions were tight, their timing was on point and they never slipped out of key or missed a beat.

Many of the songs they played had an '80s rock flair to them. The group even did a cover of Duran Duran's "Planet Earth," after which Webber stated in his typical British drawl, "The Eighties are making a revival,

and we're here to tell you about it!" This is true. All they need is a couple of Moog synthesizers to complete the transformation.

The Tender Idols need to work on their harmonizing. Webber and Collins did all of the lead singing, but they were often out-of-key with each other when they attempted to sing in unison. I know that most British singers are tone-deaf by nature, but it has been proven that this handicap can be overcome. Webber also gave me a Davy Jones nightmare flashback when he began their set with tambourine in hand, swaying from side to side. Ending the set by taking off his jacket to reveal the butterfly-collared shirt he was wearing did nothing to change the image.

What The Tender Idols need to do is further define their sound (and sing their lyrics more clearly), so that they will be distinguishable from the British alternative groups. They're already down to the one-beer mark; they don't have that much farther to go.

## Retired surgeon establishes book trust

Jason Wicks  
Staff Writer

Life just got a little bit easier for working students who also carry a full-time class load. Dr. Herbert S. Johnson has established a trust fund to help working students pay for their books.

Johnson, a former student at UNCA, fell in love with the campus. "I was so impressed by UNCA that it led me to the idea of establishing a book grant for working students," said Johnson.

The grant will give 30 working students \$100 to use for the purchase of their books. The grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Johnson, a retired Coast Guard flight surgeon, became ill with a brain infection in 1981. The illness caused severe damage and as a result he was unable to speak for a second career for himself. He had recovered a great deal of his faculties and could understand things fairly well.

He attended some UNCA education classes and continued for about two years, until he became interested in other things and dropped out. Currently, Johnson has his own company called Mopti, an import business which deals mainly with West African artifacts and jewelry.

"My experience at UNCA was so pleasurable, and the work so stimulating and exceptional," Johnson said, "I thought the teachers, curriculum, and students were up to the very highest standards. I had never experienced such a pleasant atmosphere."

Johnson has attended the University of Chicago, Dartmouth, and Northwestern as an undergraduate, and Northwestern as a graduate student. "I've been to a lot of schools, and UNCA is the most exceptional of all," said Johnson.

Johnson stated that the academic community should not just pay attention to the academic stars (the A students): "I am not discounting these people, they deserve certain recognition. However, there are a lot of good people out there that are working extensive hours in order to get that degree. And they may not get that good of a grade point, but they are walking the extra mile, they really put their hearts into their

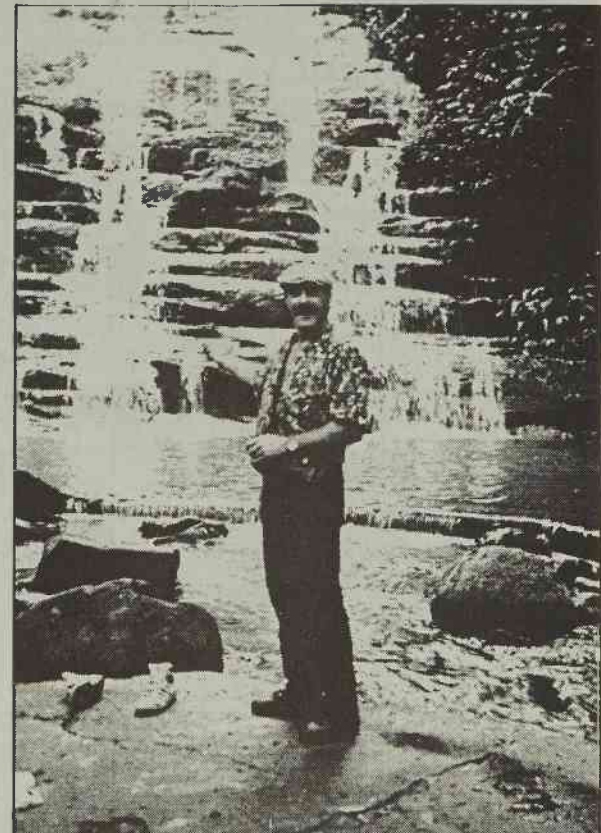


Photo Courtesy of Herbert Johnson

Herbert Johnson, pictured in the Ivory Coast, above, has given \$3,000 in scholarships to working UNCA students to buy books.

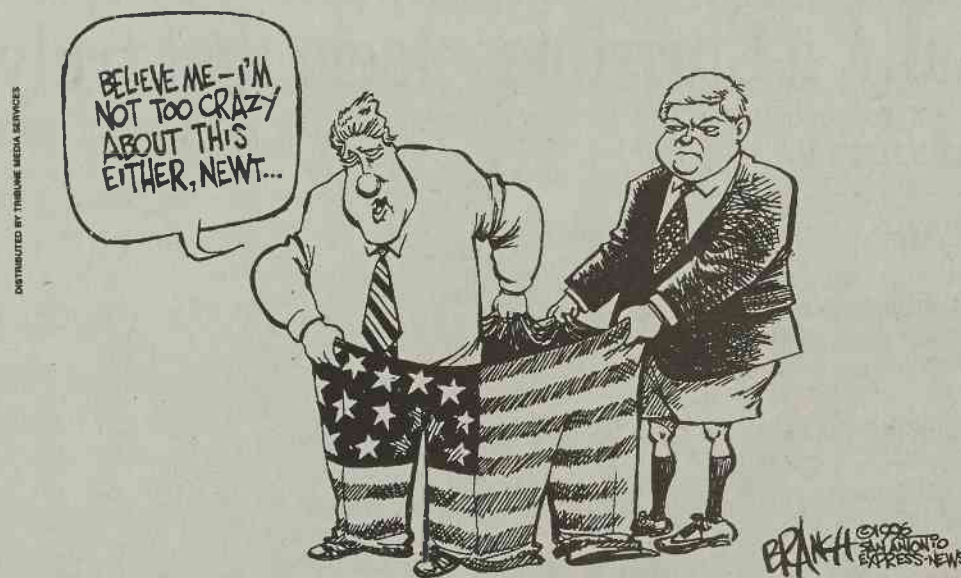
work. They deserve recognition and help, too." Johnson said he understands the hardships of working students and how they must settle for second best much of the time. With this book grant he hopes to show his appreciation for the students and UNCA.

"I only wish I could give more," said Johnson. "It helps in more ways than financial. It gives them some sort of incentive. It makes them feel like they are worthy because of the sacrifice and the effort. It's an encouragement for these people," said Johnson.

"I'm sure sometimes that these students feel like quitting, so I'm hoping that little bit, that little shot in the arm, will help them with their books, raise their morale, and encourage them to keep going," Johnson stated.

The grant will be available to students when they return from Christmas break.

Contact the Financial Aid office for more information.



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