

Letter from the Director

November, 1993

The leaves are off the trees now, after a long and golden autumn, and the contours of the surrounding hills are more easily traced. The lush foliage of these woods during the summer months actually seems to obscure quite a bit happening at the ground level. I like the woods during winter.

Similarly, our programs for 1993 have now ended and in the quiet we can catch our breath and trace the contour of this first six months more clearly.

Before we moved to Penland, I began working on the summer '94 program, along with many of the Penland community. The result is a vibrant and exciting schedule which will make some new inroads into the areas of master classes and those classes which cross boundaries to blend disciplines from a number of studios. I feel that to keep Penland's programming vital we need to offer some classes for the established professionals, classes which will have real potential to contribute to the field and to the larger group of classes that we offer to all levels of students. Wood and surface design will offer such classes this year and I want to thank Doug Sigler and Kathryn Gremley for their leadership in programming here.

The Northlight building will be humming this summer with a variety of classes which blend paper, photography, book arts, and printmaking, as well as a new commitment to letterpress printing. I hope to provide more of this collaboration between media in all of the studios.

I have come to be very appreciative of the many rich resources within North Carolina, and we are building new bridges of cooperation with many of them. The recent dialog on North Carolina Craft which we co-sponsored with East Carolina University was an experiment to see just how well the Penland magic could translate to an environment very different than our mountain home. The reception was very enthusiastic and warm. We did not have to say much, as many of the ECU faculty and students who had been to Penland made eloquent statements as to the value of our program. Linda Darty accomplished an amazing feat in pulling this gathering together in such short time and, in addition, produced a beautiful multi-media presentation on Penland's history.

Furniture and textiles play a huge role in North Carolina, and my dream is to set up programs with those industries to bring their people, both design staff and production workers, to Penland to revitalize their relationship to their craft. This idea has received enthusiastic response from a few corporate leaders already, and I believe we will see the effects of this outreach during this coming summer.

This winter will be quiet but very busy. The development of the glass studio and improvements to the Craft House will place some big demands on our staff, which I am sure we are up to. In looking back over the last six months it is easy for me to focus on mistakes made. I will doubtless make new ones this next six months, but I can promise that I will not repeat many. In this relative quiet of late fall I can see that the one characteristic of Penland in session is that there never seems to be enough time, especially enough time to be patient. Tomorrow we will join with members of the Penland community and share Thanksgiving dinner. We have much to be thankful for.

-Ken Botnick



Penland Line

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The Penland Line is published three times a year to communicate thoughts about the programs, people and philosophy of Penland and to keep in touch with several groups of people at once: craftspeople and friends living nearby, instructors, donors, and Friends of Penland. We invite you to share your news, opinions, and/or photographs with us. Write: Editor, Penland Line, Penland, NC 28765.

Penland School is supported by a Major Organization Grant from the North Carolina Arts Council, a state agency.