

WINSTON-SALEM STATE VISIT

Ceramic artist Sharif Bey, who will be teaching a class in clay adornment this summer, recently visited Penland School with a group of his students from Winston-Salem State University. We asked Sharif to give us an account of the visit and how it came about.

I first learned of Penland School when I attended a workshop with ceramist Norm Schulman as a high school student at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild in Pittsburgh. I finally joined the Penland community, for a session, as a Lucy Morgan scholarship recipient shortly after I completed my MFA. By then I had heard many wonderful stories about the magical learning environment Penland offered and it still exceeded my expectations. It was a pivotal experience for me, but I was disappointed to discover only a few African-American participants. Sadly many African-American artists and art students had not heard of Penland and those who did had reservations about the racial climate of "the mountains." I assured my African-American friends and colleagues that in my experience Penland provided a warm reception to all students and instructors, however few of them expressed any interest.

In the fall of 2005 I joined the faculty at the historically black Winston Salem State University (WSSU) as an assistant professor of art education. In addition to fulfilling my responsibilities as the art education program coordinator, I took on the task of revitalizing the ceramics program, which had suffered years of neglect. During my first semester teaching at WSSU, I discovered that few of our students participated in culturally enriching experiences outside of campus, whose student population is around 87 percent African-American. As a young inner-city African-American art student I had the benefit of sharing many wonderful educational experiences through mentorship and community-based programs. Institutions like the Touchstone Center for Crafts in Uniontown, PA and Manchester Craftsmen's Guild exposed me to communities of professional artists, hobbyists, and enthusiasts who played a critical role in my development as an artist and educator. These centers afforded me opportunities to broaden my horizon by honing my craft and interact-

ing with people outside of my comfort zone. I learned at an early age that rich teaching and learning experiences can take place outside of the context of the traditional classroom.

In addition to the limitations of my school's facilities, our students had little or no experience talking with professional artists or visiting self-sufficient studio

moments as students sampled Brie cheese, focaccia bread, hummus, falafel, and other enlightening favors from the diverse offerings of the Penland dining hall. The students returned to our campus revitalized and full of questions but most importantly they raised their standards for achievement and their expectations of us. The impact of the trip was ideal.

—Sharif Bey



Students from Winston-Salem State University join Penland students for a demonstration by spring clay instructor Cynthia Bringle.

environments. Few of them work in the studio outside of class time. They had no point of reference for what it means to be a serious art student or aspiring artist. I contacted Penland School with confidence that the intensive working environment and the passion of the students and instructors there would inspire our students and assist us in changing the culture of our department. I longed to share with my students the magic I had experienced years before. Thankfully, after several correspondences with Penland staff member Stacey Lane, she was able to help us bring a small group of students to Penland.

On the two-day trip, my colleague Leo Morrissey and I accompanied six students to Penland during the spring Concentration session. Penland facilitated visits to classes and local studios in clay, glass, iron, wood, and drawing as well as providing us with hands-on experiences in metal casting and bookmaking. Our students were truly moved after hearing the instructors and local artists speak so passionately about how the arts enrich their lives personally, professionally, and spiritually. Penland students were friendly and so generous with technical information.

As a teacher, it was especially rewarding to witness my students having so many first-time experiences. In addition to seeing their first glassblowing, blacksmithing and bookmaking demonstrations, we also took advantage of teachable

Council to fund the planning process for the Teaching Artist Initiative, our newest community education program. This funding allowed staff to shape the program in consultation with regional and national leaders in the teaching artist field. Also thanks to the NCAC grant, Penland hosted a free *Creative Engagement* workshop, taught by nationally-known teaching artist Eric Booth, for 75 local artists and classroom teachers. More recently, Penland received \$30,000 through the National Endowment for the Arts' Access to Artistic Excellence program to support the pilot year of the Teaching Artist Initiative.

Penland also received generous support for community education programs from the William Randolph Hearst Foundations. The Hearst Foundations, which established a \$75,000 endowment for these programs in 2004, made a second, \$100,000 grant in 2007. The William Randolph Hearst Endowed Fund for Community Education will provide a lasting base of support for these programs, which also include Kids Camp and the Community Open House.

Penland's ongoing effort to increase regional and national visibility received funding for two new marketing initiatives. A matching grant of \$22,068 from the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area is helping fund a collaborative advertising campaign with the Asheville Art Museum

(Asheville, NC), the Turchin Center for Visual Art (Boone, NC), and Penland. The three institutions are placing joint ads in *Our State*, *Travel+Leisure*, *Art in America*, and the *New York and Southeast Gallery Guide*. A \$6,500 grant from the North Carolina Department of Commerce is funding a series of public radio underwriting spots that will help promote this summer's annual benefit auction.

The UPS Foundation renewed its support for Penland's Higher Education Partnership Program with a \$20,000 grant. This is the second year the UPS Foundation has supported the program, which provides tuition assistance to outstanding undergraduate students with financial need.

Penland's 2006-2007 general operating support request to the North Carolina Arts Council, prepared by interim grantwriter Peggy McBride with Jean McLaughlin and Susan Klaffky was funded in the amount of \$95,000—a significantly higher amount than expected, thanks to a special, one-time allocation from the state legislature. An anonymous foundation also provided \$166,555 in operating and capital support.

Penland obtained two significant capital grants to fund the first phase of the renovation of gallery and visitors center. The Cousins Foundation and the Cannon Foundation each provided \$50,000 to support the expansion of the lobby and construction of accessible bathrooms in this historic structure, enhancing Penland's service to the thousands of visitors who pass through the gateway of our campus each year. —Wesley Middleton

A HANDSOME GIFT

Penland School has received a gift of property, valued at \$76,000, from Dr. Albert Heyman of Durham, North Carolina. The property, which is adjacent to the school's main campus, consists of 1.1 acres and a two-bedroom cottage. Dr. Heyman has owned the property since 1966.

Albert Heyman is a neurologist and the founder of the Duke University Center for Cerebrovascular Disease. He led significant research in the areas of stroke and Alzheimer's disease. He is professor emeritus from Duke University.

Heyman and his family have a long connection with Penland. His wife, Dorothy, took classes at Penland for many years, and the Heymans and their two daughters, Leslie Tepper and Mical Schneider, summered at the Penland house. Dr. Heyman's daughters and his grandchildren have also taken classes. The Heyman family chose to give the proper-