

Arts

Unconscious Artist



Herb Jackson painting (detail)

By Robert page
Special To The Post

Davidson, NC - Painter Herb Jackson's experience with markings from the Linear A Script, an undeciphered and early form of writing native to the Minoan civilization in about 2000 B.C., illustrates what psychologist Carl Jung called the "collective unconscious."

Jung theorized that the psyche's collective unconscious maintains the common psychological inheritance of mankind. Ancient thought [patterns, stories, symbols, and myths show up in the dreams, thoughts and art of modern man, he said, and are sometimes so unfamiliar that man cannot understand them.

Markings from Linear A, as well as markings from its successor, Linear B, have shown up frequently as major elements in Jackson's large, color-washed abstract paintings and drawings as major elements, fragments and surface details. Much of his work is derived from his affinity for Greece, but the markings appeared before he had seen Linear A or B. Jackson exhibitions are scheduled this spring in Atlanta, Houston and New York, and the script emerges in many of the paintings included in the exhibitions.

Jackson, chairman of the art department at Davidson College, says Jung's theory is plausible, if not verifiable.

"It seems as though there is a great deal of information that one knows, but one does not know one knows," Jackson says. "That's always been the magic to me of art, that process of discovering what you already know, so that there's a sort of feeling of coming into your own, as you uncover information."

Linear Script A has not yet been deciphered, but is known to have been the language of Crete, an island in the Aegean which is now a part of Greece, in about 2000 B.C. It was apparently made up of ideograms, or graphic symbols representing objects or ideas. Linear Script B is also made up of ideograms and was deciphered in the 1950s.

Ancient symbols and markings sometimes show up in the work of other artists, and some critics believe Jungian theory plays an important role in the understanding of abstract art. It was an interest in this universal perspective of mankind, through time and across cultures, that led to "Transpersonal Images," an exhibition of six artists at an August 1983 conference of the International Transpersonal Association at Davos, Switzerland. The work of Jackson and the five other artists in the show displayed forms of rhythms believed to reflect universal human experience.

In the catalogue essay of the "Transpersonal Images," modern art theorist Roger Lipsey wrote that people must learn to distinguish between these levels of the unconscious and to adjust and capitalize on their interaction. "The most moving abstract work resonates -- in (20th century abstract pioneer Wassily Kandinsky's terms, reveals an 'inner sound' -- in such a way that the viewer is exposed to an unexpectedly large world of meaning and intelligent feeling," Lipsey wrote. Abstract art springs from psychological and spiritual sources, he wrote, and represents an ideal common language for the 20th century because it is tied to the psyche, and not to the traditions of individual regions or religions.

Many of the paintings in Jackson's upcoming shows results from his August 1987 visit to Crete or from his previous eight visits to Greece. In August Jackson spent long hours studying objects inscribed with the two script forms in the archaeological museum of Crete, located in the capitol city of Herakleion. He notes that the connection between the symbols occurring in his work and the linear scripts is not literal, but also cannot be overlooked.

"I'm not interested in replicating a form of Linear A," Jackson says. "I place paint on the canvas in layers, and sometimes the markings emerge and are then covered up. One symbol might have a wing on it at some point, then get covered up and another fragment emerge. In a sense the process is like an archaeological dig, because you often see only part of what is coming out. A lot of small things occur in these pictures that are surface details, and you could probably find these symbols throughout my work."

Jackson is known as a colorist and specialist in surface detail, and his work includes the use of acrylics on large canvases and oil crayons on paper. His art is included in the collections of the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; the Library of Congress and the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C.; the Minnesota Museum of Art in St. Paul, Minn.; the Mint Museum in Charlotte, N.C.; and the Whitney Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum in New York.

For further information: Jackson's office, 704-892-2000, ext. 358. Jackson's home 892-1723.

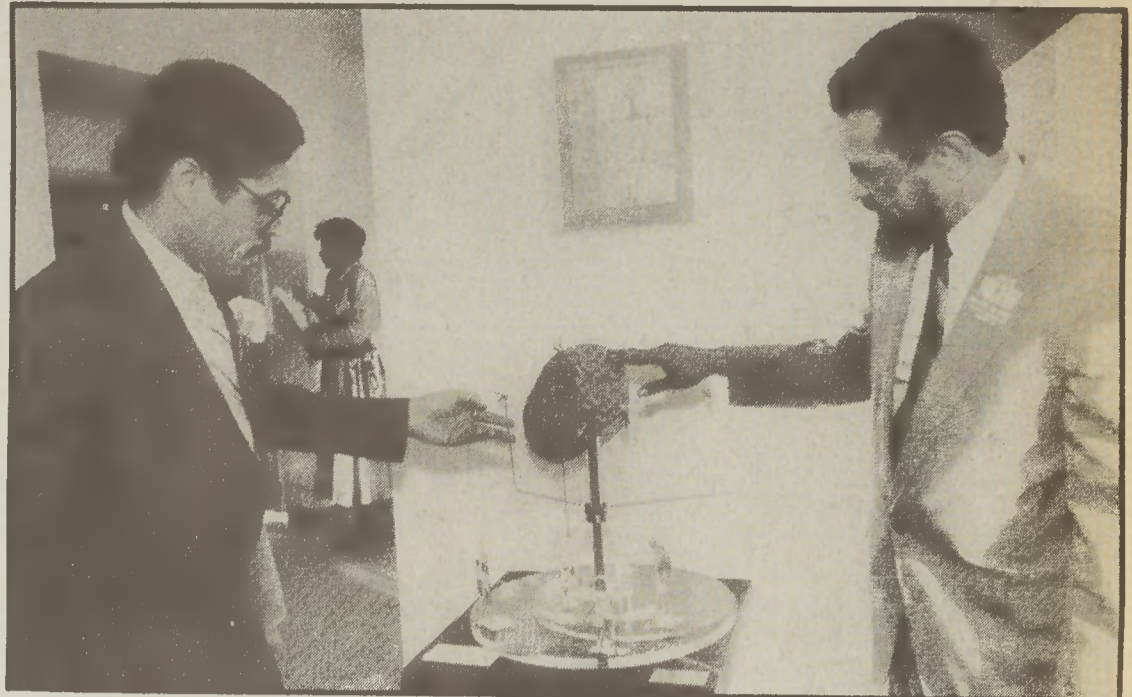


clay tablet/Minoan Script



Heard It Through The Grapevine

BURBANK - Only in America -- the land of opportunity for people and produce of all races, reeds, and USDA rating -- can a story like this unfold. The debut Priority Records LP by those lovable CALIFORNIA RAISINS has already sold over 500,000.



Artist Greet Candidate On Opening Night

Photo by CALVIN FERGUSON

Artist/photographer M.L. LaNey (left) chats with County Commission candidate Nasif Majeed at the opening of the artist's *Ideas and Images On The Go*. The exhibit of photographs and dioramas runs through April 8 at the Afro-American Cultural Center. A graduate of A&T State University, LaNey was a classmate of the late astronaut Ron McNair, who perished in the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster in 1986. A model of the space shuttle is in the collection. The U.S. Army, Navy and the state university system have commissioned dioramas by the artist. INFORMATION: (704) 374-1565.

Black Theatre National Tour

The North Carolina Black Repertory Company (NCBRC) has earned the reputation among its peers and others knowledgeable of the Black theatre scene today as one of America's leading professional Black theatres.

The NCBRC known for its excellent artistic quality, normally tours the Southeast as a member of the Southern Arts Federation Touring Program located in Atlanta, Georgia. Recently, however, the NCBRC announced that it has extended its touring efforts to the national level.

"The North Carolina Black Repertory Company decided to tour nationally because of the increase in requests for the Company to perform outside the Southeastern region," according to Larry Leon Hamlin, the executive and artistic director of the NCBRC. He further stated, "One of the major goals of the NCBRC since its inception was to make artistic contributions to American theatre on a national level, especially in Black theatre."

The NCBRC serves as a role model for many Black theatres especially in the South and offers consultancies to other not-for-profit organizations.

Founded in 1979, the North Carolina Black Repertory Company is based in Winston-Salem, NC, and is housed in the Arts Council's 541-seat theatre where it produces four major productions for its home season to excellent reviews. The Company is heavily supported by the Winston-Salem community. The NCBRC Theatre Guild, which is a support organization of the Company, has over 600 members, making it one of the largest theatre guilds in the nation supporting professional Black theatre.

Additionally, the Company receives funding support from a host of prestigious public and private institutions including Expansion Arts of the National Endowment for the Arts, Southern Arts Federation, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Winston-Salem Foundation, Winston-Salem Arts Council, N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, N.C. Arts Council, N.C. Theatre Arts and the N.C. General Assembly, as well as support from Corporate America such as R.J.R. Nabisco, Inc., AT&T and Integon.

The acting company consists

of professional actors from New York as well as from the State of North Carolina. Because of the diverse talents of its actors, the Company is capable of producing first rate dramas, musicals and comedies.

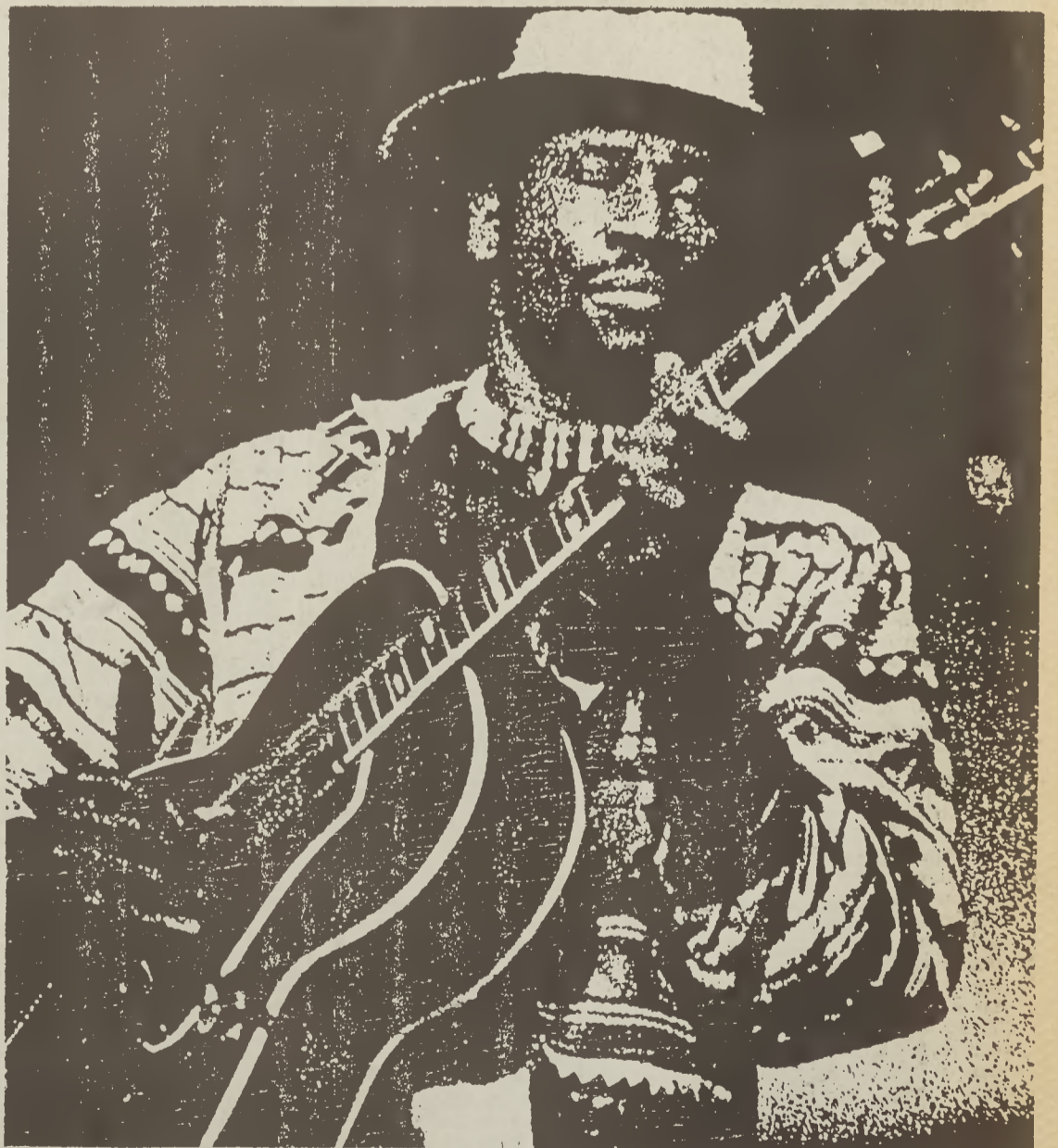
Under the direction of its artistic director, Larry Leon Hamlin, one of the South's most celebrated Black stage directors, the acting company explores the use of spontaneity in acting as opposed to masturbatory techniques. This brings a much desired freshness and believability to all of the NCBRC productions.

In addition to producing the Black classics, the company focuses on developing new works, presenting usually two new works each season.

Having a vision of theatre in the next decade, the Company has recently created a film-TV and video division.

For further information on the NCBRC call (919) 723-7907 or write NCBRC, 610 Coliseum Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27106.

Taj Mahal Goes Over The Rainbow



art by JASON

TAJ MAHAL

Over The Rainbow with Taj Mahal opens Monday, March 21 at CNB Performance Place. Tickets are \$15.00 and showtime is 7:30 PM. The doors open at 7:00 PM. Taj Mahal gained fame in the Martin Ritt film *Souther*. The show, a benefit for Jesse Jackson, is presented by PS Productions of Charlotte. Philip Sprinkle is the producer.

"I got in touch with Taj through Folklore Productions, his California booking group," Sprinkle said. "When this is over, I plan to set up a database for international anti-hunger groups. But I have to get through this first."

Warmup act for Taj Mahal will be Maria Howell & The 7th Street Band. Howell is lead singer and Billy Goodrum plays guitar and keyboards for this group which is the house band at The Jazz Cellar. Sprinkle also plays *kunga* drums with Root Source, also on the program. Other band members are: Marcus Roberts-rhythm guitar, Ayinde-drum, Jaruba-keyboards, Ton Hildreth-bass, and Noni-lead singer and African dancer. Call (704) 377-8691 or (704) 376-8883 (Spirit Square Box Office.)