

Spanish art at Mint Museum

By Sandy Seawright
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST
Spanish Colonial Art from the Lilly & Francis Robicsek Collection

Mint Museum of Art
2730 Randolph Road
Charlotte is a much more culturally rich city than I have realized. A great example of this is this magnificent exhibit of paintings and sculptures of Christian saints from the collection of the pioneering heart surgeon, Francis Robicsek and his wife, Lilly, which museum staff members shared came directly from the Robicsek home.

In a nearby gallery are the cutting-edge sculptures of Robert Lazzarini, who challenges our ideas about perspective. The large desk and chair in the Lazzarini exhibit are from the personal collection of a Waxhaw, N. C. family.

Another wonderful aspect of the Spanish Colonial exhibit is that it shows the enormous taste and talent of the Mint's exhibitions team. Taking up the three large galleries in the middle of the museum, the exhibit is installed using different wall paint colors and constructed wooden plat-

forms so that it is very personal, spiritual and intimate like visiting a series of chapels. The exhibit is not presented as an overwhelming blockbuster!

The exhibit is historically informative telling us that when Christopher Columbus discovered the new world in 1492 Spain wanted gold and to convert those in what is now the Southwest United States through Mexico and Central America and into South America to Christianity. Religious art was a great way to spread the Christian message.

In Latin America the feast day of a person's patron saint is as important as their birthday. Winged Saint Michael, wearing armor and holding a sword in one hand is most noted for subduing satan. He is the patron saint of haberdashers, grocers, police and swordsmen and appears in the exhibit at least a half dozen times in both paintings and in multicolored sculptures.

In one version he holds a scale to weigh souls on Judgment Day, and he is linked to Totonacapan the rain god. Saint Michael's feast day is September 29.

People adopt feast days of saints for reasons besides religion. One Jewish friend who spends time in Latin America says he likes Saint Michael's feast day because Michael is his middle name.

The exhibit also features female saints such as Saint Rita of Cascia, shown in a painting who became an Augustinian nun in 1413. She was known for her austerity.

devotion to prayer and care for others.

In another painting "Saint Christopher and the Christ Child" created in Peru on oil on canvas, Saint Christopher carries the Christ Child on his shoulders. His feast day is July 25 and he's the patron

saint of bus drivers and travelers.

This rich exhibit continues at The Mint Museum, 2730 Randolph Road, through September 10. For additional information call the museum at (704) 337-2000.

Country goes but so far for Mob



Field Mob
Light Poles and Pine Trees
Various producers
Disturbing The Peace

Field Mob takes credit for the current southern hip hop trend and rightfully so.

The duo's "From Ashy To Classy" debut CD was critically acclaimed in 2001. "From The Roota To Tha Toota" gave fans the funny "Sick of Being Lonely."

Now Shawn J and Smoke offer "Light Poles and Pine

Trees," their third major release. The group has settled at Ludacris' Disturbing Tha Peace label and are sure to get much more promotion than in the past.

The unique title assures the duo hasn't changed its Southern roots. "There ain't no skyline where we're from," Shawn J says. "There's no Arch like in St. Louis or Palm trees like in California," Smoke says. "You look up and that's (pine trees and light poles) all you see in Albany (Ga.)."

That southern charm still plays well. The radio hit "So What" which features Ciara is more '80s skate jam than hip hop, but that's the kind of thing Jazze Pha likes. The country drawl mixed with the

slick production lifts the song from being mundane.

That doesn't happen often enough on this release. There are other songs of interest but most of this stuff just comes up as OK rather than innovative. "Bend Over" and "Beat 'Em Up, Eat 'Em Up" play into the too often used sexual subjects that rappers fall on. "Blacker Da Berry" breaks out of the ho-hum mode by humorously examining the light-skinned/dark skinned drama. The best politically incorrect line from a song is found here: And Venus and Serena/They done beat more white girls than O.J. and Rick James together.

More of those moments would lift this CD to something far better than it is.

The N-word still sparks controversy

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will be. It always has been," Merritt said on the show.

It's very scary to think that because we have allegedly taken the bite out of the N-word that hate crimes won't exist anymore

When racists can use the N-word without repercussions, will we as African Americans decide that this word isn't a substitute for brother?

On the net:
www.abolishthenword.com

Sequel hard work for author to do

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mine. "She's my best friend and she's a pessimist," she said with a laugh.

Murray said she had no intentions of writing about Jasmine again, but her fans kept asking her what happened to the woman that they "loved to hate."

"I was like, you hate her, why do you want to know (what happened to her)?" she said.

When she came up with the plot line for "A Sin," Murray said she'd already written a character that would fit in this story and that was Jasmine.

She said that this was actually more difficult to write

than penning her first novel. "The challenge was that Jasmine was a character created in my first book. I was stuck creating a book around an unlikable character," she said.

What Murray ended up doing was creating a well-crafted novel that isn't preachy, but has a message. This follows

the path of all of her novels, though—which is why calling her a Christian fiction novelist is some what of a misnomer.

"I'm not trying to be a

preacher, I'm trying to be a novelist," she said.

Though she said having the Christian label affixed to her works may limit her market, she's not worried.

"God told me don't worry about it, so I'm leaving it to God and the readers," she said.

Murray will be in Charlotte June 26 at Joseph-Beth Booksellers at 6 p.m.

"I'm really excited about coming to Charlotte," she gushed. "Fifty percent of the letters that I receive come from Charlotte."

And her big sister lives here.

"Now she has a chance to show me off," Murray said.



Murray

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JUNETEENTH
FESTIVAL OF THE CAROLINAS

June 15th - 18th
Independence Park, 300 Hawthorne Lane

Charlotte, NC - Join The Juneteenth Planning Committee and Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation as we celebrate the **Ninth Annual Juneteenth Festival of the Carolinas**. Festivities will last for 4 days at Independence Park, 300 Hawthorne Lane on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 15 - 18, 2006.

Juneteenth of the Carolinas in honor of Marilyn Griffith Turner will give away a full 4 Year Scholarship to St. Augustine College. Please check the website www.juneteenthofthecarolinas.com or call House of Africa at 704-376-6160 to obtain the requirements for the scholarship.

Cultural Camp on Thursday, June 15th at Independence Park Recreation Center Cost \$10, Lunch provided, Bring a t-shirt for tye-dye.

- All day cares, summer camps, schools, and churches to bring children and youth ages 6-16 out for a day of culture.
- In need of volunteers to work during the camp
- Contact: Pape Ndiaye at 704-376-6160 to register your group or child

Drum Circle - Friday June 16th at Independence Park on Hawthorne
Drummers and dancers come out on Friday and join the drum circle.

Juneteenth Festival of the Carolinas 9th Annual Festival Calling All:

- Bands come and battle it out in Our Battle of the Bands Contest
- Local Entertainers come and grace our stage with your melodic songs, flowing movement, and elegant poetry.
- Choirs (church, school, and community) sing melody to our ears during our Gospel Fest on Sunday
- Step Teams from all around come reach us the Boot Dance of our Native Land
- Jazz Bands we need you for our Jazz night in the Park.

Open Talent Search at HOA on Friday, May 12th, 19th, and 27th from 6-8 p.m.

- Talent Show with a chance to win studio time with Boondax Records
- Local Entertainment Showcase
- Fashion Show - Hats & African Attire
- Jazz in the Park
- Battle of the Bands
- Gospel Fest

For More Information:
Contact House of Africa at 704-376-6160 or papsafrica@aol.com

Visit our website at www.juneteenthofthecarolinas.com

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Submit, in writing, on your organization's letterhead, the title of your event, date/location, contact person and telephone number for your activity to:

Coca-Cola Community Connection
801 Black Satchel Rd., Charlotte NC 28216
Attn: Terry Peterson - Phone 704-697-4040 • Fax 704-697-4054 or Email terry.peterson@cbcc.com