

## **American Folklore Society Monthly News Bulletin**

**January 2010**

[A monthly e-mail update from AFS to fill the gap between the *AFS News* and the new AFS web site.]

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### **AFS 2009 Election Results**

In the 2009 election balloting, the following members were elected to AFS office:

Executive Board: Ray Cashman, The Ohio State University; Jason Baird Jackson, Indiana University; Rachelle Saltzman, Iowa Arts Council

Nominating Committee: Steven Winick, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

Our congratulations go to those newly elected, and our thanks go to all of the candidates for their willingness to serve the Society and to the 2009 Nominating Committee (Solimar Otero, chair; Juwen Zhang, Suzanne Seriff, and Guha Shankar) for their work to identify candidates and prepare a slate.

The 2010 nomination process--which will lead to a slate of candidates for the Presidency, the Executive Board, and the Nominating Committee--will begin in the spring. The senior member of the Committee, Juwen Zhang of Willamette University, will serve as its 2010 chair.

### **American Folklore Society Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award**

The American Folklore Society Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award will be awarded again in 2010. This award is bestowed every two years on a living senior scholar in recognition of outstanding scholarly achievement over the course of a career. The awardee is honored at the American Folklore Society annual meeting, and is given a \$500 prize, a plaque, and lifetime membership in the Society.

To nominate a candidate for the award, submit four copies of a cover letter and supporting materials detailing the rationale for the candidate's nomination, with an electronic copy of the cover letter sent by e-mail, by **February 15, 2010**, to Timothy Lloyd, Executive Director, American Folklore Society, Mershon Center, Ohio State University, 1501 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201 USA; [lloyd.100@osu.edu](mailto:lloyd.100@osu.edu).

Nominees not selected in the year of their original nomination are kept in consideration for two more reviews.

Supporting materials should include a CV or list of scholarly positions; publications and other scholarly productions; professional and university service; degrees; awards, grants, and honors. Other materials in the nominating package, numbering less than 25 pages, may also include reviews of prominent works, letters and articles by major scholars attesting to the candidate's contributions and achievements, and texts of awards and honors.

The past recipients of the Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award Recipients are W.F.H. Nicolaisen, University of Aberdeen, and *emeritus* of the State University of New York at Binghamton (2002); Linda Dégh, Indiana University, *emerita* (2004); Don Yoder, University of Pennsylvania, *emeritus* (2006); and Richard Bauman, Indiana University, *emeritus* (2008).

### **2010 Chicago Folklore Prize**

The deadline for submissions for the 2010 Chicago Folklore Prize is April 1, 2010.

First awarded in 1928, the Chicago Folklore Prize, awarded to the author(s) of the best book-length work of folklore scholarship for the year, is the oldest international award recognizing excellence in folklore scholarship. Occasionally, a joint recipient or a second-place recipient is also selected. The prize is offered jointly by the American Folklore Society and the University of Chicago. From its inception, the administrators and judges for the prize have interpreted "folklore" in a broad and inclusive sense, and winners have traditionally come from the fields of folklore study, cultural studies, ethnomusicology, literary study, anthropology, sociology, cultural geography, and dance ethnology.

The recipients of the 2009 Chicago Prize were Ray Cashman of The Ohio State University for his *Storytelling on the Northern Irish Border* (Indiana University Press); and Michael Dylan Foster of Indiana University for his *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yokai* (University of California Press). For other past recipients, please go to [www.afsnet.org/aboutAFS/AFSprizes.cfm#chicago](http://www.afsnet.org/aboutAFS/AFSprizes.cfm#chicago).

We encourage entries from scholars in folklore and their publishers all over the world. Works submitted must be monographs published in 2009 or within one year of the submission deadline. We will not consider articles, dissertations, reissues of older works (unless they have been substantially revised and rewritten), editions of works by others, or works-in-progress for the prize. A modest cash award is made to the winner or winners of the prize. If no entry is

deemed worthy, no prize will be awarded. The winner/s will be announced at the October 2009 annual meeting of the American Folklore Society in Boise.

If you have questions, please direct them to American Folklore Society executive director Timothy Lloyd at [lloyd.100@osu.edu](mailto:lloyd.100@osu.edu). Please submit three copies of your entry to 2010 Chicago Folklore Prize, American Folklore Society, Mershon Center, The Ohio State University, 1501 Neil Avenue, Columbus OH 43201 USA.

### **Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World**

Six authors plus four editors plus three scholarly mentors added up to an intensive day-long workshop at the AFS annual meeting last October in Boise, part of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-sponsored initiative "Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World." The initiative, a collaborative venture of the university presses of Illinois, Mississippi, and Wisconsin, responds to the Mellon Foundation's call to publish first books in "underserved areas" of scholarship. The initiative will culminate in a series of books that aims to expand both the boundaries and the readership of folklore scholarship.

The workshop, the first of a projected five offered in cooperation with the AFS, brought together six authors whose projects were intensively workshopped, both in seminar-style group sessions and in individual sessions with publishing and folklore professionals. Authors came from the US, Iceland, Canada, and the Virgin Islands, and represented a range of scholarly experience, with some coming recently from masters or doctoral work and others having logged ten years or more in academic or public folklore positions. The three mentor/scholars who participated in the 2009 workshop were former UIP editor and past President of the American Folklore Society Judith McCulloh; Erika Brady, professor of folk studies at Western Kentucky University; and Simon Bronner, Distinguished University Professor of American studies and folklore at Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg. Representatives of the participating presses were Joan Catapano and Laurie Matheson (Illinois), Craig Gill (Mississippi), and Sheila Leary (Wisconsin).

This initiative marks an unprecedented effort in collaboration among university presses. Where the acquisition of book projects for publication is ordinarily a competitive situation, the workshop pools the collective expertise of editors from three presses in the service of selecting, developing, and publishing books for the series. All participating editors reviewed all of the 110 proposals submitted, assessing each project's appropriateness to the goals of the series, folkloric content and/or approach, and compatibility with various areas of focus on their press's lists – for instance, African American studies for Mississippi, Slavic studies for Wisconsin, music and anthropology for Illinois. After deliberation and discussion among the group, each press selected two projects to sponsor. The

mentors were then paired with two projects each. Joan Catapano, editor-in-chief of the University of Illinois Press, explained, "We wanted to develop avenues for collaboration beyond collective marketing, although we'll also be collectively implementing broad, interdisciplinary marketing and promotion of the books and series in both print and electronic media." Because of the high volume of projects received, editors were not able to provide individualized feedback on projects not selected for the workshop.

The central goal of the workshop was to help authors realize the potential of their work to speak to broader audiences both within and outside of folklore by writing accessibly, presenting their findings in a focused but not narrow way, and exploring the implications of their research in ways that speak to larger questions of culture, performance, communication, history, and so forth. Editors and mentors commented on general issues such as style and organization as well as on specific ways authors might engage with other scholarship or contextualize their work more effectively. Participating authors also shared ideas and questions about each other's work, having reviewed all workshop material in advance of the conference.

Participants found the experience stimulating and encouraging. Natalia Khanenko-Friesen, whose book project concerns Ukrainian immigrant communities in diaspora, commented, "Being able to participate in FSMW authors' workshop, together with publishers and folklore scholar-mentors, has been extremely beneficial for me as a person working in an academic environment where I am the only trained folklorist." Robby Dobler, whose work is on new forms of memorializing the dead, said, "It was really encouraging to meet with respected names (people whose books and articles have influenced and continue to influence my own approach to the study of folklore) and to emerge with a notebook full of ideas for shaping my manuscript into the book it can become." Valdimar Hafstein, whose project explores new constructs for protecting "intangible" cultural forms, found the workshop "an invaluable chance to meet my editor in person and talk through the work ahead on the manuscript, and the morning roundtable session was an unexpected bonus, a rich and enjoyable learning experience. The diversity of the authors and their book projects was fascinating." Russell Rodriguez, whose book project on mariachi bands grows out of his own experience as a professional mariachi musician, found the experience "not only highly productive but was also motivating. Meeting other scholars with such diverse topics, issues, and theoretical approaches to folklore inspired me. Other authors participating were Marion Jacobson, whose project is a cultural history of the piano accordion; and Robert Nicholls, whose book will explore Afro-Caribbean masquerading rituals.

The participating folklorist-mentors also found the workshop stimulating. Erika Brady noted, "I hoped that the author development workshop would be

constructive and rewarding for the authors - I had no idea how constructive and rewarding it would be for me as well! The choice of authors/manuscripts was richly diverse, and each participant brought a fine critical sense tempered by a supportive attitude that was a pleasure to observe." Simon Bronner felt that "a significant part of the process was the interchange between mentors, who were also experienced in publishing, with the editors, who voiced pragmatic concerns in addition to intellectual questions." Judith McCulloh was excited by the intellectual energy and wide-ranging research of the authors participating: "To their credit, the authors had read all their colleagues' submissions and came prepared to comment on them. I was also heartened by how quickly the authors fell into conversation with one another, a bright, enthusiastic new generation ready to share information and ideas."

The Mellon Foundation grant will fund five years of activities and eventually will result in the publication of approximately 24 books under the joint imprint "Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World." Proposals for the 2010 workshop may be submitted between January 1 and April 1, 2010. Further information and complete submission guidelines are available at [www.folklorestudies.org](http://www.folklorestudies.org).

### **Fundraising Launched for the W. F. H. Nicolaisen Library**

The library of Emeritus Professor Bill Nicolaisen was gifted to the Elphinstone Institute of the University of Aberdeen in 1997 and is presently temporarily housed in the Cromwell Tower. It is a substantial collection extending to 130 metres of shelving and it is of major significance to the future of the Elphinstone Institute. "The library," Bill writes, "covers fields like folklore, onomastics, linguistics, English language, Scottish literature, and Celtic studies, and is to be integrated with the David D. Buchan library to form a research library in Scottish Ethnology, to be used in-situ by persons affiliated with the Elphinstone Institute and other researchers."

The library is currently uncatalogued and difficult to access. In consultation with the University Librarian, Chris Banks, and as a first step to fulfilling the requirements of the gift, we plan to catalogue the library to MARC standard, giving particular priority to the folklore books, which will be of most immediate use to our students. While this must be undertaken by professionally qualified librarians, several associates of the Institute who fulfill the requirements have agreed to undertake the task at a cost considerably lower than current market rates. The Friends of the Institute have agreed to help us achieve this goal by starting a fundraising drive towards the substantial sum required, on the order of £12,000. We are looking for sponsors both large and small to make this important development happen for the Institute. For information, please e-mail [elphinstone@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:elphinstone@abdn.ac.uk).

## **Bea Roeder Fund**

The Association of Western States Folklorists (AWSF) invites applicants for its scholarship titled The Bea Roeder Fund: For the Future of Public Folklore in the West.

This fund, named in honor of the late Western folklorist Bea Roeder, provides support for graduate and undergraduate students and community scholars with demonstrated interest in a career in public folklore in the American West, to attend the annual AWSF meeting. AWSF has established this Fund as a way to celebrate Bea's life and work and to create opportunities for networking and professional development for a new generation of public folklorists and cultural workers. The fund is administered by the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA) on behalf of AWSF.

The fund provides the recipient(s) up to \$400 to be used to attend the annual AWSF conference, to be held in Virginia City, Nevada, from April 11-15, 2010. Applications are available on the ACTA website at <http://www.actaonline.org/content/bea-roeder-scholarship>. Applications need to be postmarked or emailed by February 12, 2010. To learn more about AWSF, see <http://awsf.wordpress.com/>. For more information about the scholarship, please contact Georgia Wier at [georgiawier@gmail.com](mailto:georgiawier@gmail.com) or 970/590-3933. To make a contribution to the Bea Roeder Fund, you may contact Amy Kitchener at 559/237-9813 or [akitch@actaonline.org](mailto:akitch@actaonline.org).

## ***Folk Life***

The journal *Folk Life* is devoted to the study of all aspects of traditional ways of life in Great Britain and Ireland, and comparative study of other countries and regions. The journal fosters international approaches and debate, deals with all forms of both materials and expressive culture, engages in current theoretical debate and provides a forum for innovative museological thinking. For information, please go to [www.ingentaconnect.com/content/maney/flk](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/maney/flk).