

RHODES WEEKLY

Campus News And Information

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Bequest of \$1 Million Creates Rhodes Professorship

A \$1 million bequest by one of Memphis' best-known interior designers will create a new professorship at Rhodes College.

The James F. Ruffin Professorship of Art is named for the late James F. Ruffin Jr., founder and operator of Ruffin's Imports and Interiors for 46 years and a member of the Rhodes Benefactors' Circle.

Ruffin's gift will enable Rhodes to further develop a new program in Chinese studies, according to John Planchon, dean of Academic Affairs. The Ruffin Professor of Art will be a specialist in Asian art with expertise in Chinese art.

"Rhodes has several outstanding professors with expertise in Chinese history, politics, and language and literature," Planchon says. "Art was



James F. Ruffin

the missing link. Mr. Ruffin's gift makes it possible for the college to complete the mosaic. It is an

extremely happy occurrence for his gift to match so perfectly the college's curricular needs."

Ruffin began an association with Rhodes during the mid-1970s when he consulted on interior design for the former president's home in Hein Park. He also guided interior design of the current president's residence on Morningside Park after its purchase in 1992.

Ruffin left his mark all around the Rhodes campus, as well as in Memphis office buildings and residences. His artistic touch is evident in the president's offices and in many of the college's public areas, including the admissions and reception areas, the Hill Board Room, the Davis Room and the Gooch Conference Room. ■

Alum Returns Home as McCoy Visiting Artist

McCoy Theatre's current season opens Thursday, Oct. 7, with Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Guest directing the production is Rhodes alumnus Harold Leaver, who returns to campus as the 1999-2000 McCoy Visiting Artist. Over the years, the Harry B. McCoy Jr. Visiting Artists Program has brought to campus an impressive variety of performers. Among those who have shared their talent with Rhodes students are choreographer Agnes de Mille, actress Zoë Caldwell, soprano Kallen Esperian, plus music groups like the Kronos Quartet, the St. Olaf Choir and the Tokyo String Quartet.

"It's a delight to be back at Rhodes and to work with Cookie Ewing and Laura Canon again," says Leaver. "In fact, I was Laura's first

work study student!"

For his version of *Much Ado*, Leaver has assembled a cast and crew composed entirely of Rhodes students. The lone exception is theatre instructor and college alumnus Greg Krosnes. Featured are Tamra Patterson and Daingerfield Henley as Beatrice and Benedick, and Elizabeth Watt and Mark Thibadeau as Hero and Claudio.

This is the first time that Leaver has been involved with a McCoy production since he graduated in 1984. Although some things have changed in the past 15 years—Rhodes was still "Southwestern At



Harold Leaver

Memphis" when he was a student — much remains the same at the McCoy.

"The college experience has not changed that much," Leaver says. "Students still have the same degree of interest and enthusiasm as I remember."

During his student days, Leaver appeared in McCoy's *Another Part of the Forest*, *The Tempest* (as

Ariel), *The Taming of the Shrew* and other productions. He also performed on the mainstage at Theatre Memphis. In recognition of his achievements and contributions to

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Faculty Award in American Studies Established at Rhodes

Faculty members teaching in the American Studies Program at Rhodes College will be able to expand their research opportunities, travel and attend professional conferences thanks to a new \$50,000 faculty development endowment established by a benefactor.

Dorothy Sonnenfield Ross has established the Danforth R. Ross Award in American Studies in memory of her late husband who taught English at Rhodes from 1955-1974. Mrs. Ross also lectured at Rhodes in art history.

"This wonderful gift will help defray faculty travel costs, help fund curriculum development projects and other activities that will enhance faculty intellectual growth in American Studies," said John Planchon, dean of Academic Affairs at Rhodes.

Jim Lanier, who joined the History Department in 1967 and is currently chair of the American Studies Program, says Dan Ross made American Studies an important part of the curriculum during his years at Rhodes. Ross taught a two-semester



Danforth R. Ross

course in the English department that explored social and cultural themes in American literature.

"Dan was a man whose intellectu-

al curiosity and questioning nature made him an outstanding teacher," Lanier says. "He was a quiet, gentle man, a respected member of the faculty to whom a significant number of students were very dedicated."

Alumni chose Ross as the 1994 recipient of the Distinguished Faculty Portrait Series award.

Dan Ross graduated from Rhodes in 1933 with a degree in mathematics. He earned an M.A. from Vanderbilt and a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota. ■

Professors Publish New Books

- International Studies Professor John F. Copper has published his 25th book, *As Taiwan Approaches the New Millennium: Essays on Politics and Foreign Affairs*. The book was published this month by University Press of America.
- Michael LaRosa, assistant professor of history, and Frank O. Mora,

assistant professor of international studies, have co-edited a volume of documents dealing with the history of United States-Latin American relations. *Neighborly Adversaries: Readings in U.S.-Latin American Relations* was published this month by Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc. ■

Visiting Artist

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the department, he was named Outstanding Theatre Graduate of 1984.

Thanks to his experiences at the McCoy, Leaver says he had the skills to co-found Atlanta's Actor's Express, which was hailed nationally as "Atlanta's finest theatre" by the time its first season was complete. Along with his administrative duties with the Express, Leaver appeared in several of its productions and directed the world premiere of *The Vision*, which was named best Atlanta premiere for the 1989-1990 season alongside Athol Fugard's *Playland*.

For six years Leaver was also an administrator and performer with the Georgia Shakespeare Festival, while performing and directing for a number of Atlanta theatres.

Leaver, who holds an M.F.A. from the University of Georgia and teach-

es in its Department of Drama, has performed major roles in 10 productions during the past two years, including the title role in Theatre Emory's *Edward II* by Bertolt Brecht. He also has directed several shows, including the world premiere of *Conspiracy Theories* at UGA, and Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, the premiere production for the first professional opera company in Athens, Ga.

For five years he has been a core member of the Highlands Playhouse in North Carolina, performing 16 major roles, including Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady*. This coming holiday season he will star in *The Santaland Diaries* at Atlanta's Horizon Theatre. Next spring he is scheduled to be a visiting artist at Atlanta's Clayton University, where he will teach acting and direct *The Glass Menagerie*.

McCoy's *Much Ado About Nothing* previews on Oct. 6 at 8 p.m. with a "Dollar Night." Opening night is Oct. 7 and other performances are on Oct. 8, 9, 21, 22, and 23, all at 8 p.m., and Oct. 24 at 2p.m. Ticket prices are \$5 for students and \$10 for adults. Call the box office at 843-3839 for reservations. ■

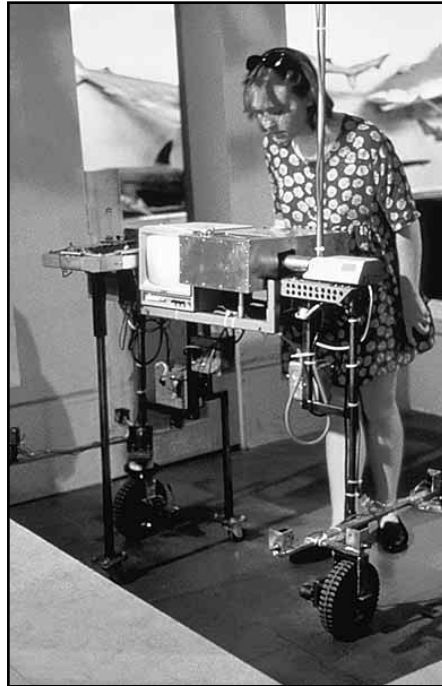
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Exhibit to Feature Self-pruning Hedge, Cockroach Colony

Val Valgardson: Suburban Artwork will be on exhibit Oct. 12 through Nov. 17 at Rhodes College's Clough-Hanson Gallery. An opening reception will be held Friday, Oct. 15, from 5-7 p.m.

The exhibit features works by Valgardson, assistant professor of art at Rhodes. Using suburban landscape themes, Valgardson has created sculpture/machines that raise questions about the social behavior of humans, environments they create and how they choose to live. Works include a self-pruning hedge and a mobile, enclosed display of cockroaches.

"As the World Turns", a self-pruning hedge, comes with its own manual of installation instructions. Once assembled it consists of a low-lying planter box and a self-monitoring robotic hedge trimmer that clips the enclosed hedge every 22 hours. The result, a perfectly shaped rectangular shrub with ends that are allowed to grow unrestrained, illustrates the suburban compulsion for perfectly trimmed lawns and hedges.



Val Valgardson's "Bug Run: A Furnished Frame" contains a self-propelled enclosure of cockroaches.

"Bug Run: A Furnished Frame" includes two boxes linked by tubes, all of which are attached to a frame and two motors. The boxes contain

cockroaches. As the cockroaches move through their space, they set off infrared sensors that turn on the motors, causing the whole piece to move across the gallery floor. A video camera in one of the boxes feeds images of what is happening to a monitor that is also part of the construction. Viewers will have the opportunity to see what life is like for cockroaches in the kind of enclosed spaces they normally inhabit.

Valgardson received his B.F.A. from the University of Victoria and his M.F.A. from the University of California, San Diego. He has exhibited widely, including shows at Beret International Gallery, Chicago; the Portland (Ore.) Institute for Contemporary Art; the San Diego Museum of Art; and the Perel Gallery in Vancouver.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the exhibit and the reception is free and open to the public.

For more information, call 843-3442. ■

Lilly Grant Funds National Project Based at Rhodes

A national project headquartered at Rhodes has received a grant of almost \$1.5 million from Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc.

The grant of \$1,482,765 will fund continuation of the Rhodes Consultation on the Future of the Church-Related College through the year 2003. Associate Professor of religious studies Stephen R. Haynes, who conceived the project, is its director.

Since 1995, the consultation has involved 54 colleges; the new funding will add about 40 more during the next two years.

The group's purpose is multifold: to identify outstanding junior faculty at church-related liberal arts colleges who will lead those institutions in the future; to assemble faculty in regional groups for networking and

professional development; to assist them in conducting formal discussions of church-relatedness among faculty on their own campuses; and

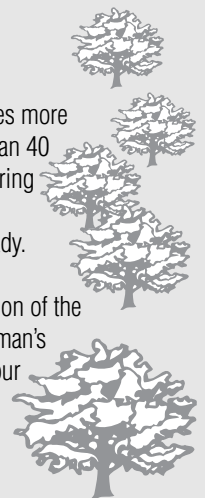
to help them develop programs that will make church-relatedness a meaningful aspect of campus life in the future. ■

By the Numbers

Rhodes Arboretum, otherwise known as the campus grounds, includes more than 1,700 individual trees representing more than 165 species. More than 40 species have been added during the past 15 years. A fierce storm last spring destroyed more than 200 of the arboretum's trees, and the 1999 summer drought has claimed others. Many of those lost have been replaced already.

The arboretum was begun during the early 1950s under the supervision of the late Rhodes biology Professor Arlo Smith with support from the Lumberman's Club of Memphis and private donations. A pamphlet providing a short tour of representative species is available from the Biology Department.

Source: John Olsen



Architectural Consulting Firm Scrutinizes Student Housing

Rhodes has retained Hanbury Evans Newill & Vlattas, a nationally recognized architectural consulting firm, to assist the college in developing a master housing plan.

The plan will guide the college in making future improvements in existing residence halls and assist

in analyzing campus sites for new construction.

Hanbury Evans is known for its work with some of the nation's top colleges and universities famed for their architectural beauty.

No decisions have been made, but in the coming months, Hanbury

Evans consultants will meet with members of the Rhodes community, including students, faculty and staff, to examine residence life at Rhodes, campus culture and students' living preferences, as they develop their recommendations. ■



Allison Alderson

Alderson Wins Scholarship

Rhodes graduate Allison Alderson ('99), Miss Tennessee, won the Waterford Crystal Scholarship for Business Management and Marketing during the Miss America Pageant.

Waterford awards the scholarship to a pageant competitor seeking to continue her education in graduate school in business. Alderson submitted an essay on the implications of product branding. She plans to pursue an M.B.A.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, Oct. 2 – Volleyball, Rhodes Classic, Mallory Gymnasium, noon. Free admission.

Monday, Oct. 4 – Speaker, political science professor Roger Petersen of Washington University, Blount Auditorium, Buckman Hall, 4:15 p.m. Free admission.

Tuesday, Oct. 5 – Volleyball, Rhodes vs. Lambuth, Mallory Gymnasium, 7 p.m. Free admission.

Thursday, Oct. 7, through Sunday, Oct. 10. – Play, *Much Ado About Nothing*, McCoy Theatre, 8 p.m. Tickets: \$5 for students, \$10 for others.

Friday, Oct. 8 – Field hockey, Rhodes vs. Depauw University, home, 2 p.m. Free admission.

Saturday, Oct. 9 – Football, Rhodes vs. Rose Hulman, home, 1:30 p.m. Admission: free to Rhodes students, faculty and staff; \$6, adults; \$4 students; \$3 children.

Men's soccer – Rhodes vs. Depauw, home, 2 p.m. Free admission.

Cross Country, Rhodes Invitational, Plough Park, all day. Free admission.

Sunday, Oct. 10 – Women's soccer, Rhodes vs. Rose Hulman, home, noon. Free admission.

Men's soccer, Rhodes vs. Rose Hulman, home, 2 p.m. Free admission.

Rhodes News Notes . . .

Women's basketball Coach Sarah Chase has created "Lil' Lynx," a booster club for girls and boys in kindergarten through eighth grade. Lil' Lynx offers children the opportunity to gain positive influences by attending games and other functions in which they interact with the players. Membership, which costs \$15 for children of Rhodes faculty and staff, \$20 for others, includes a T-shirt, newsletter, a basketball clinic, a pizza/poster-making party and the opportunity to be ball girl or boy for a game. Call 843-3946 for more information.

Ming Dong Gu, assistant professor of foreign languages, has published a paper in a book titled *Comparative Literature Now: Theory and Practice*, edited by Steven Totosy de Zepetneik and Milan Dimic, published by Honore Champion. The title of the paper is *In Search of a Common Poetics: A Comparison of Some Chinese and English Poetic Concepts*.



Alexandra Kostina, instructor of Russian, translated Vladimir Mayakovsky's poem "Listen!" into

English; it was published in the spring/summer 1999 issue of the *Ashville Poetry Review*.



Valerie Nollan, associate professor of Russian, wrote a review of *Contemporary Russian Satire: A Genre Study*, by Karen Ryan-Hayes, which was published in the 1999 summer issue of *The Russian Review*. ■