

Center for the Arts in Rock Hill SC

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digs on his own to make all of his pots. The glaze he uses is a combination of wood ash from his wood stove, local red earthenware clay, and local stoneware clay.

Bob Hasselle is a sculptor and potter who has worked in the art field for over forty years. He has an MFA in Sculpture from Tulane University and a BA in Art and Philosophy from Rhodes College in Memphis, TN. Throughout his career, Hasselle has had numerous awards, the most noteworthy being the museum purchase awards. His work has been included in the permanent collections of several museums including: The Huntington Museum of West Virginia, the Mobile Museum of Art, the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, OH, the Tulane University Collection, the Ohio State University Collection, and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

Also showing at the same time of the reception is the *Elementary Fall Art Show* Sponsored by Elliott Close in the Lewandowski Classroom Gallery of the Center for the Arts.



Work by Ron Philbeck

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 803/328-2787 or visit (www.yorkcount-yarts.org).

College of Charleston in Charleston, SC, Features Works by Renée Stout

College of Charleston in Charleston, SC, will present *Tales of the Conjure Woman*, featuring a major traveling exhibition of new works by Washington, DC, artist Renée Stout, on view in the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, from Oct. 18 through Dec. 14, 2013. A reception will be held on Oct. 18, from 6:30-8pm.

Stout is best known for her exploration of vestigial retentions of African cultural traditions as manifested in contemporary America. For many years, the artist has used the alter ego Fatima Mayfield, a fictitious herbalist/fortuneteller, as a vehicle to role-play and confront issues such as romantic relationships, social ills, or financial woes in a way that is open, creative, and humorous. The exhibition focuses on the artist's assumed role through an array of works in various media. As Stout explains, "The common thread running through bodies of my work of the past several years is the continuing need for self-discovery and the need to understand and make sense of human motives and the way we relate and respond to each other."

Curated by Mark Sloan, director and senior curator of the Halsey Institute, the exhibition will also feature a video about the artist and a 174-page hardcover catalogue. The video, produced by Sloan and videographers Brady Welch and Colin Sonner will include interviews with Stout at her studio in Washington, DC, insight into her creative process, and will feature an interview with Fatima Mayfield. The catalogue will include essays by several contributors, including Mark Sloan, Andrea Barnwell Brownlee, Director of the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, and award-winning poet/essayist Kevin Young.

Further educational programs will include artist talks, exhibition tours for the public, and a free gallery guide that outlines the basic tenets of Stout's enterprise along with an abbreviated interview between Fatima Mayfield, conducted by Dr. Ade Ofunniyin and a biography of the artist.

Stout's work explores the contours of the African American experience and the existence of an underground system of African-derived folk beliefs as transmitted from slavery to the present. This system, known variously as Hoodoo or conjuring, has its origins in herbal medicine, root work, and a belief in the spiritual attributes of plants and animals. The words "conjure" and "Hoodoo" sound vaguely familiar, yet their specific meanings are elusive. These traditions have had to morph and adapt to several new sets of cultural conditions, including plantation life, Christianity, and the vagaries of modern urban existence. This conjuring tradition persists, although it is rarely spoken of in public.

Hoodoo and conjuring are primarily used for beneficent purposes—helping, not harming—and are essentially "practical magic." They are most often evoked for protection, guidance, and good luck, often as a complementary system to Christianity. Today, it is not hard to find a commercial store or Internet-based provider that sells candles, oils, herbs, powders, and incense, which clearly proves that a thriving community still exists of folks who actively participate in this seemingly invisible sociocultural system. Stout has been exploring this conjuring cosmology through her art since the 1980s.

Utilizing two alter egos, Madam Ching and Fatima Mayfield, Stout has managed to illuminate the contemporary Hoodoo landscape by presenting viewers with objects and images that focus our attention on these shadowy traditions. Starting with Madam Ching, the artist's first alter ego, Stout, in her thirties at the time, created works in the guise of a herbalist/fortuneteller/spiritual advisor who was wise beyond her years. This character allowed Stout to espouse things that she herself did not feel comfortable saying or doing. She has stated: "In my shyness, I saw her [Madam Ching] as a vehicle to enable me to step out of myself and examine various issues I was confronting in my life at that time. In hindsight, she was the projection of the woman I hoped to become."

Her second alter ego, Fatima Mayfield, seamlessly emerged several years later, unbeknownst to Stout. She says: "One day the realization hit me that Madam Ching was no longer separate from me: I had become her, because, at that point, I had resolved many of the issues I had faced in that early phase of my life, and had grown into the woman I needed to be to move forward." Fatima also helps people get to where they want to be. This fictional healer uses charms, amulets, powders, oils, goofer dust, candles, and roots to work her magic. Fatima's world contains such colorful, recurrent characters as Black Nine, Pretty Poison, and Sterling Rochambeau, to name a few; each one challenges her in different ways. One client may be looking for love while another seeks good luck with the lottery, but there is always trouble. Fatima grows weary baring their burdens and seeks guidance from the spirits. All of this is transmitted through an act of poetic conjuring, as Stout has managed to create a plausible, palpable presence for Fatima's and her reading room through her art. Utilizing found objects, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, glassblowing, installation, and compelling storytelling, Stout brings the viewer into Fatima's lair. Such attention to the surface of each piece allows the artist to imbue each object with

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Carolina Clay Resource Directory is our attempt at *Carolina Arts* newspaper to create a focal point for info about the clay community in both North and South Carolina. We may not be everything some want, but we'll try and bring our readers the most news about what's going on, where you can find it, and info about the individuals and organizations involved in the Carolina community. Whether you call it clay, pottery, ceramics - if you don't see what should be here - just let us know about it so we can add it to the mix.

For the Carolina Clay Resource Directory go to:
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