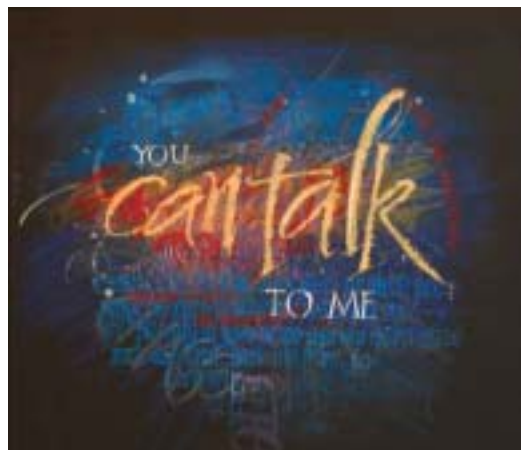


# The Arts & Culture

“I tend to think in short stories. It’s a modality of interpreting the world.” —LORRAINE LOPEZ



**VISUAL ARTS:** **Creative Expressions VIII**, shown October through December at the John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development, was the 21st show of artists with disabilities organized by the Nashville Mayor’s Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities. Featuring work by artists with a wide range of disabilities and ages and in a variety of media, the exhibit was one in a series dedicated to or created by people who have disabilities or who are at risk developmentally.

**Elizabeth Garlington**, studio arts manager for Sarratt Student Center and first-year Divinity School student, showed narrative art quilts inspired by ethnic textile patterns and design motifs in **Healing Story**, **Healing Quilt**, the inaugural 2002–03 exhibit at the Margaret Cuningim Women’s Center.

Her work combines stories, images and narratives from her own life with “forms where the final product is unplanned and evolves with the intuitive handling of materials.”

of Tennessee, Knoxville. A continuation of Lyons’ critique of museology and the authority of the curatorial “voice” found within the contemporary museum, *The Spelvin Folk Art Collection* called into question issues surrounding folk and outsider art, namely “the mythos of folk art as based on a Romantic concept of creativity that is essentially anti-intellectual.” Lyons acted as “curator” of this fictitious collection—which he created—including biographical information on each of the “collectors” and “artists,” creating a remarkable and curious foray into the nature of the creative process.

**The Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery** launched its exhibit year with **The George and Helen Spelvin Folk Art Collection** by Beauvais Lyons, professor of art at the University

## ACCOLADES

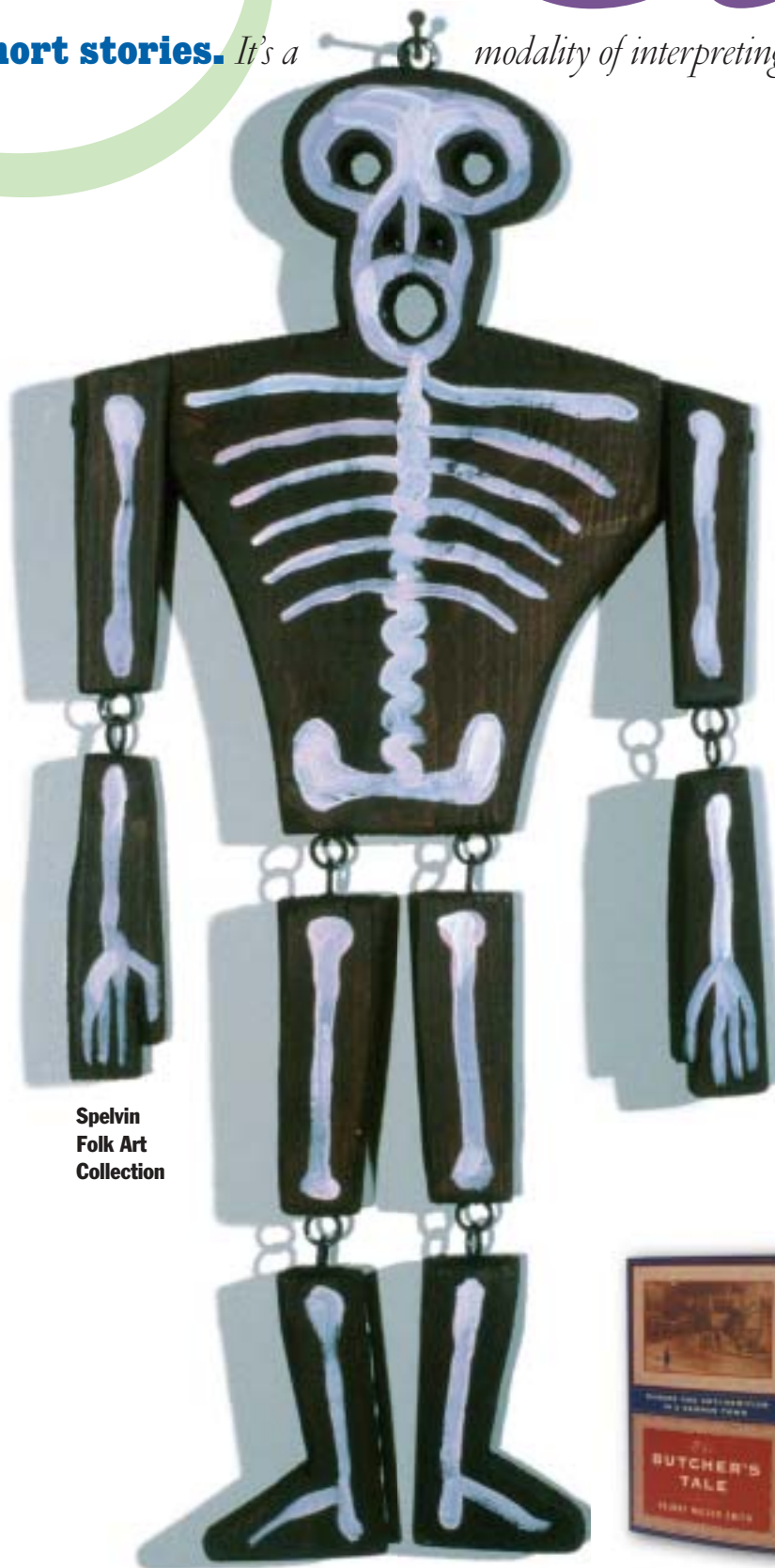
*Soy la Avon Lady and Other Stories*  
by Lorraine López (Curbstone)



“Assimilation into American culture and abrasive family dynamics are the subjects of the 11 finely crafted stories gathered in this striking debut collection. López is an original, and this fine collection, which won its publisher’s inaugural Miguel Mármol Prize for fiction, is a thoroughgoing delight.”

—KIRKUS REVIEWS

Exploring the Chicano/a quest for identity in a culture characterized by great differences in language, race, class and gender, the stories in *Soy la Avon Lady* deal with a wide range of characters, and López’s vision ranges from the tragic to the comic.



Spelvin Folk Art Collection

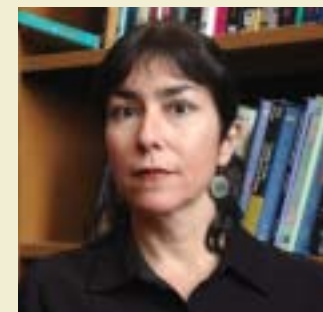
## BOOKS & WRITERS:

Vanderbilt was well represented at the 14th annual **Southern Festival of Books**, Nashville’s celebration of the written word, presented by Humanities Tennessee. Faculty, alumni and students took part in panel discussions, readings, book signings and musical performances. Those involved included faculty members **Kate Daniels**, **Thadious Davis**, **Tony Earley**, **James Ely**, **Sen. William Frist**, **Mark Jarman**, **Sheila Smith McKoy**, **Dorothy Marcic**, **Helmut Walser Smith**, **Carol Swain** and **Susan Ford Wiltshire**; alumni **Catherine Crawley**, **Elizabeth Dewberry**, **Walter Durham**, **Greg Miller**, **John Perry** and **Kendall Taylor**; and current Blair student **Charles Charlton**.

*The Butcher’s Tale* (Norton) by Helmut Walser Smith, associate professor of history, tells the story of Konitz, a small town in the eastern reaches of the German Empire, where in 1900 a Christian boy was found brutally dismembered. Within weeks the town was engulfed in violent anti-Semitic riots and demonstrations. *The Butcher’s Tale* places the accusations, and the ensuing maelstrom of violence, under a microscope.



**Lorraine López**, assistant professor of English, winner of the 2002 **Mármol Prize for Latina/o Fiction** for her short-story collection, *Soy la Avon Lady and Other Stories*



DANIEL DUBOIS

**Q:** When did you start writing?

**A:** I think I was 8 years old when I wrote my first story. It was the first thing I ever did that totally absorbed my attention and I had no awareness of time passing. I thought this is what I wanted to do, but I didn’t know at 8 that a person could do that until a student teacher told me, “You could be a writer.”

**Q:** How do you see comedy and tragedy working together in your stories?

**A:** I don’t sit down and say, I’m going to write a tragic or comic story. It’s a case of the story telling itself—I’m just opening to it. But I do think that when you pair comedy and tragedy, both are strengthened, both are intensified.

**Q:** You’ve spent a fair amount of time in the South, where there is a strong penchant for storytelling. Has being in the South affected the way you tell stories?

**A:** Yes, it has. I would classify the last three stories in *Soy la Avon Lady* as very heavily

southern influenced. They take place in Georgia, and Georgia is such a beautiful state, a fertile place, a good place for my imagination to take root and expand. It’s a great experience whenever you can dislocate yourself. Your senses come alive because of the newness.

**Q:** Which do you prefer writing: novels or short stories?

**A:** I enjoy the challenge of writing short stories. My writing group and my past professors have commented that I seem to be a novelist in my approach—that when a short story ends, they thought it would go on. But someone once said that a novel is an evolution and a short story is a revelation, and finding that revelation—I’m addicted to it. I want to do it right, and it’s so hard.



**MUSIC:**

**Edgar Meyer**, adjunct associate professor of bass and award-winning musician and composer noted for his innovative blending of musical styles, was named a MacArthur Fellow on Sept. 25. More commonly known as “genius grants,” the fellowships are awarded annually by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to “individuals who show exceptional merit and promise for continued and enhanced creative work.” Each recipient receives \$500,000 in “no-strings-attached” support over five years. In a news release announcing Meyer as one of



24 individuals to receive this year’s awards, the MacArthur Foundation called Meyer “a multifaceted musician whose

expansive artistry is altering the way string instruments are played” and who is “equally comfortable in jazz, folk, country and classical styles.” Through this amalgamation of genres, “Meyer is crafting a uniquely American lexicon for symphony orchestras and chamber ensembles.”

Grammy, Emmy and Academy Award-winning songwriter, composer and musician **Randy Newman** was the first guest in the Blair School’s 2002–03 Conversations Series in November. From popular hit singles to film scores, including the award-winning “Monsters Inc.,” “Toy Story,” “Parenthood” and “Ragtime,” Newman’s work is eclectic and widely acclaimed. Moderated by **Deanna Walker**, adjunct artist teacher of piano,

Newman’s appearance at the Blair School was in conjunction with performances with the Nashville Symphony.

Eleven current and former Blair faculty members including Dean **Mark Wait**, **Amy Dorfman**, **Ruth Gotthardt Stith**, **Enid Katahn**, **Karen Ann Krieger**, **Craig Nies**, **Jama Reagan**, **Melissa Rose**, **Roland Schneller**, **Rachael Short** and **Charlene Harb** took part in the Nashville Symphony’s **Piano Spectacular!** during October. Ultimately, eight pianos and eight pianists took the stage as pianos were added to each piece. Wait was soloist in Elliott Carter’s seldom-heard Piano Concerto, and opening the program was the premier of Concertino for Celesta and Orchestra by **Michael Kurek**, associate professor of composition at Blair.

The third and fourth concerts in the Blair School of Music’s **Beethoven Sonata Series** took place in September and early January featuring faculty members **Craig Nies** (piano), **Cornelia Heard**, **Christian Teal**, and **Carolyn Huebl** (violins), and **Felix Wang** (cello). The series has journeyed through the charm and virtuosity of Beethoven’s early violin sonatas to the surging power and drama of his late works. The fifth and final concert in the two-year series will take place in Ingram Hall on March 28.

In October one of the world’s finest ensembles, the **Emerson String Quartet**, enthralled the Langford Auditorium audience with their interpretations of Haydn, Bartók and Schubert as part of the Great Performances at Vanderbilt series.



**Emerson String Quartet**

Internationally acclaimed soprano **Dawn Upshaw**, born at Vanderbilt Hospital, made her way back to native ground in early September for a sold-out performance at Ingram Hall and a master class at the Blair School of Music. Students and faculty alike were taken with her range of expression, and her remarkable ability to communicate meaning regardless of the language of the text. The evening consisted of challenging but beautiful music—songs by Shakespeare contemporary John Dowland, Debussy’s *Songs of Bilitis*, Russian songs

by Rachmaninoff and Mussorgsky, a piece by South American-born Osvaldo Golijov, and a set by American popular song composer Vernon Duke. The next day’s master class included four students chosen by audition for the honor of performing for Upshaw, whose teaching was as inspiring as her performing. The students were **Christopher Mann**, tenor; **Lillian Askew**, soprano; **Zachary Nadolski**, baritone; and **Jennifer Berkebile**, mezzo-soprano.



**Dawn Upshaw and Christopher Mann**

**ACCOLADES**



Senior **Courtney Dashe** received honorable mention in the National John Lennon Songwriting Contest. At a reception in BMI’s New York office in May, Dashe received a \$500 scholarship for her country/pop song “You Must Have Found a Reason.” A California native, Dashe says, “Nashville has given me the resources to strengthen my songwriting and vocal performing skills.”

**UPCOMING**



**VISUAL ARTS:**

**Crimson Rain McCaslin** comes **Full Circle** Feb. 18 through March 18 in the Sarratt Art Gallery, showing an affinity to wild birds that obsessively collect shiny, colorful objects to decorate their nests, in her mixed-media works that revolve around collecting and recycling.

**MUSIC:**

**Emergence**, a collaboration between the Nashville Ballet and the Blair School of Music, will feature works by **Michael Alec Rose**, associate professor of composition, and **Stan Link**, assistant professor of the philosophy and analysis of music, with **Crystal Plohman**, artist teacher of fiddle, in performance with the Nashville Ballet on March 14–15 in Ingram Hall.

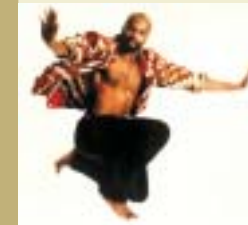


**THEATER:**

“**Two Gentlemen of Verona**,” winner of the Tony Award for best musical of 1972, celebrates spring and its promise of love in this rendition of Shakespeare’s play on stage at Vanderbilt University Theatre Feb. 14–16 and 20–22.

**DANCE:**

**Ronald K. Brown/Evidence** will perform at Langford Auditorium Feb. 14. One of modern dance’s foremost choreographers, Brown is influenced by the fast-paced, rhythmic movements of Africa.







A Dybbuk

**THEATER:**

Presented in conjunction with the celebration of the opening of the Ben Schulman Center for Jewish Life in early October, **Vanderbilt University Theatre** presented **“A Dybbuk or Between Two Worlds,”** written by S. Ansky and adapted by Tony Award-winning playwright Tony Kushner. Regarded as a cornerstone of Yiddish drama, the turn-of-the-century tale of a bride’s spiritual possession by her deceased true love projected a phantasmagoric world of broken promises and shattered dreams.

In November, VUT presented David Hare’s biting critique of mainstream religious denominations, **“Racing Demon,”** winner of four major British playwrighting awards.

**DANCE:**

**The Second Hand**, billed as “three men who turn dance on its head,” fused dance, theater, acrobatics and humor at Langford Auditorium in November as part of the University’s Great Performances Series. “Their hyperactive, imaginative pieces are boisterous, gymnastic and raucous, somewhere between frat-house pranks, martial arts, phys-ed class and high art,” says *Dance Magazine*.



The Second Hand

**OPERA:**

In November a passel of pirates invaded Ingram Hall as the **Vanderbilt Opera Theatre**, with music by the **Vanderbilt University Orchestra**, performed **“The Pirates of Penzance,”** Gilbert and Sullivan’s parody of public morality in which a band of pirates proves to be more honest than so-called “respectable people.”



“Pirates of Penzance”

**HUMANITIES:**

In October at Wilson Hall, pioneering public art administrator **Jerry Allen**, director of cultural affairs for the city of San Jose, Calif., addressed current trends in public art at the Public Art Forum, a series of talks and discussions sponsored by the Metropolitan Nashville Arts Commission, Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery, Vanderbilt University Medical Center Office of Cultural Enrichment, the Visual Arts Alliance of Nashville (VAAN), and the Frist Center for the Visual Arts.



The oldest sustained lecture series at a college or university devoted to the mass effort to

exterminate Jews, Vanderbilt’s **Holocaust Lecture Series** celebrated its silver anniversary this year. Using the theme “Living On ... A Tradition of Reflection,” the series explored, through art, film, music and dialogue, the lives and works of Holocaust victims as well as those who survived. Events were scheduled throughout the month of October and included an exhibit of works by Hungarian artist György Kádár from the University’s Holocaust Art Collection on display at Sarratt. Claude Lanzmann, director of the critically acclaimed “Shoah”—a nine-and-a-half-hour documentary on survivors and guards of the Nazi concentration camps, which many consider the preeminent oral history of the Holocaust—was keynote speaker for the silver anniversary



and also was part of the Chancellor’s Lecture Series. “A Dybbuk or Between Two Worlds” was performed by Vanderbilt University Theatre, and a week of events dedicated to the opening of the Ben Schulman Center for Jewish Life was held on campus.

**Vanderbilt Chancellors**,

an exhibit in the lobby of the Central Library through the end of last year, showcased the University’s seven chancellors and was culled primarily from materials held in Special Collections. Items on display included a bow tie from Chancellor Gee, iris memorabilia from Chancellor Kirkland, a snapshot of Chancellor Wyatt’s airplane, and correspondence, clippings and photographs.



From Holocaust Art Collection by György Kádár

**ACCOLADES**

**Susan DeMay**, senior lecturer in art and art history, displayed ceramic platters at the *Messages from the Heart* exhibit at the Madison (Tenn.) Arts Center last October and November. **Marilyn Murphy**, professor of art, had work chosen for the 106th Annual Exhibition, Catherine Lorillard Wolfe National Arts Club in New York City during October. A hand-colored etching and a relief print were in the exhibit *What’s My Line?*,



“The Golden Mean”

which accompanied the exhibition *James McNeill Whistler: Prosaic Views, Poetic Vision* at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville through the beginning of the year, and her work “Box of Hot Ideas” was acquired by the Huntsville (Ala.) Museum of Art for its permanent collection. In January at the Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery, **John Powers**, BA’01, winner of the 2001 Margaret Stonewall Wooldridge Hamblet Award, showed sculpture inspired by his travels in Western Europe and studies at North Carolina’s Penland School of Arts and Crafts.



John Powers