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Stella Jones Gallery: organizational analysis and suggested marketing plan

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**STELLA JONES GALLERY:
ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS AND SUGGESTED MARKETING PLAN**

An Internship Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Arts Administration

by

Kara Tucina Olidge

B.A., Spelman College, 1992

Summer 2000

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ABSTRACT

Stella Jones Gallery: An Organizational Analysis and Suggested Marketing Plan is based on my internship as Managing Director of Stella Jones Gallery. The internship report will focus on 1. Analyzing the organizational structure and cultures of Stella Jones Gallery as it relates to the internship and 2. Creating a marketing plan to support, expose, and expand the mission of the organization. Because of the report's objectives, the internship report has been segmented into the following sections:

Part I: Organizational Analysis

Stella Jones Gallery's organizational structure and culture will be analyzed to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of its methods and practices. Through the analysis, a description and evaluation of my internship as Managing Director will be provided to discuss the overall effectiveness of the position. It will also discuss the position's contribution to the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. This section will be immediately followed by suggestions in management and staffing as well as ways in which the organization can redefine and strengthen its organizational culture.

Part II: Suggested Marketing Plan

At the time of the internship, Stella Jones Gallery had been in existence for three and a half years and is emerging as one of the leading African-American galleries in the southeast region of the United States. The gallery has been very fortunate to have reviews in highly regarded magazines such as *Art Business News*,

Art and Antiques, and the *International Review of African-American Art*. It has not, however, established a strategic marketing plan to propel the gallery to the forefront of the commercial arts industry. The marketing plan created will suggest ways the gallery can capitalize on the medial attention it has received. Secondly, it will illustrate how the gallery can promote and establish its product within the commercial arts industry and non-profit sector of the visual arts. Finally, it offers ways in which the gallery can forge ahead of its competition by offering on-line as well as curatorial and educational services.

The issues addressed and suggestions made are to help Stella Jones Gallery reach its potential as a leading art organization. In conclusion, this report will note any changes or improvements made in the gallery's management practices, staff, and marketing strategies as a result of the suggestions offered.

PART I: ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Organizational History

Stella and Harry Jones, both natives of Houston, became interested in the art market in the early 1970s. The impetus in their collecting African-American art was to provide their children with positive images by artists of the African Diaspora. Their first purchase was an Elizabeth Catlett lithograph for \$100. Its market value today is least ten times the original price. Their interest in collecting African-American art increased, as each purchased became more expensive. Their collection now includes Charles White, Aaron Douglas, Palmer Hayden, Elizabeth Catlett, Barbara Chase-Riboud, Lois Mailou Jones, Bennie Andrews, John Scott, Jacob Lawrence, Jeffrey Cook, and many other 20th century artists of the Africa Diaspora.

At the height of her personal art collecting, Dr. Jones had a lucrative OB/GYN practice with several thousand patients in New Orleans. Mr. Jones continued his real estate appraisal services in Houston. They relied heavily on art historian/educator/author/artist Dr. Samella Lewis, founding editor of the *International Review of African-American Art*, to guide their collection. In continuing her interest in collecting art, Dr. Jones took classes at Southern University of New Orleans while she and her husband continued to seek the wise counsel of noted authorities in the field that included artists, scholar, art agents, and gallery owners.

After retiring from the medical industry in 1995, Dr. Jones opened Stella Jones Gallery on St. Charles Avenue in the heart of the New Orleans Central Business District. The inaugural exhibition, held in June 1996, was entitled "Four Generations of African-American Sculptors." This exhibition featured the prominent sculptors Richmond Barthe,

Elizabeth Catlett, and Richard Hunt. It also included works by emerging New Orleans' sculptors Kimberly Dummons and Nkoyo Lavigne. The exhibition was organized and curated by Dr. Samella Lewis. Times Picayune's art critic, Chris Waddington wrote, "the show sounds like a museum offering and comes close to matching that quality in a compact display of 28 tabletop sculptures and 20 works on paper ... the show has a richness often lacking in commercial exhibits that focus solely on recent productions." (Lagniappe Section, The Times Picayune, June 1996.)

Stella Jones Gallery also exhibits premiere artists from North and South America as well Caribbean and contemporary African artists. According to Dr. Jones, the gallery stresses the importance of collecting art of the African Diaspora while building a legacy to African-American culture and its contributions to American history. It honors the participation and contributions of these master artists to the broader culture. The gallery also emphasizes the inclusion of art in the financial portfolio, as the risks are minimal and the financial benefits are excellent.

Mission, Objectives, and Goals

In the past decade, there has been a surge of interest in works of art by people of African descent, especially in African-American visual art. Stella Jones Gallery's mission is to facilitate this interest by educating individuals, contemporary and traditional museums, corporations, and the academic world in building visual art collections with unparalleled aesthetic appeal and economic potential.

In keeping with their mission, Stella Jones Gallery's primary objective is to host a twelve-month exhibition season that showcases artists of the African Diaspora. Its second objective is to inform the greater public about African Diaspora arts by providing

educational information regarding featured artists. The gallery supports this effort by sending invitations with a biography of the artists exhibited to its clientele. The Joneses also place a binder of articles, resumes, and media-related information about artists in the gallery for review. They offer a suggested reading list that contains pertinent information about the artists to collectors and organizations.

In addition to their educational efforts, Stella Jones Gallery has partnered with Dillard University, Southern University New Orleans, Southern University Baton Rouge, and Xavier University to create an informal education component to their exhibitions. This usually includes a workshop or informal talk by a local or national scholar and featured artists. (See Appendix: Educational Materials)

Although it has never been formally identified, the gallery's goal is to accomplish their mission and objectives while making a profit at selling artworks by African Diaspora artists.

Organizational Structure

Similar to many galleries in New Orleans, Stella Jones Gallery does not have a formal organizational structure. The organization is run very much like a mom-and-pop business. Dr. Jones and Mr. Jones serve as artistic directors and have the assistance of a managing director. Although Mr. Jones does share in the artistic programming of the organization, Dr. Jones has the final say in the decision-making process.

As artistic directors, the Jones's are responsible for artistic programming. This includes soliciting artists to exhibit in the gallery. More often than not, this involves traveling to artists' studios, attending conferences, art fairs, and expositions.

Traditionally, the artistic director serves as the gallery's curator or employs someone to do

so. Although Dr. and Mr. Jones are actively working in this position, neither of the two fully understand the role of artistic director and, through not knowing, have abdicated this part of their responsibility. Instead, they have chosen to make it the responsibility of the part-time preparator who is contracted on a monthly basis.

Organizational Culture

In examining the organizational culture of Stella Jones Gallery, it is intrinsically important to define organizational culture and its sub-components. According to Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn, organizational culture is “the system of shared beliefs and values within an organization” (Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn p. 426). Most significantly, management scholars and consultants increasingly believe that cultural differences can have a major impact on the performance of organizations and the quality of work life experienced by their members. The analysis of the gallery’s culture will utilize three levels of organizational culture which are the underlying forces behind the organization’s performance and experience of its employees: observable culture, shared values, and common assumptions.

Observable culture can best be described as “the way we do things around here.” This involves the methods developed by the group and how these methods and practices are taught to new employees. The very basic methods and practices at most standard galleries evolve around soliciting artists to be represented by the gallery, exhibiting and selling visual art, and establishing a consistent clientele. Because the gallery has only been in existence for three and a half years, it lacks consistency in its methods and practices. In the area of soliciting artists to exhibit and be represented by the gallery, it is done purely on the aesthetic taste of Dr. Jones. Since Dr. Jones has been an avid art collector for nearly 25 years, she has become intimate with many African-American, contemporary African, and Caribbean artists. Many know of her reputation as a serious collector. The method/practice of soliciting artists for the gallery usually involves a phone call or two by Dr. Jones.

The second level, shared values, is the dominant values of the organization's members and as they are adhered to by the majority of the organization. It implies that the members of the organization operate as a whole. Unlike the organization's observable culture, the organization lacks any form of shared value. The gallery's values parallel the observable culture in the sense that they are based on the desires of Dr. Jones. This, unfortunately, changes at random and can be very detrimental to the success of the gallery. The core of the of the organization's culture is the common assumptions or "taken-for granted truths that the collection of corporate members share as a result of their joint experience" (Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn p.427). This dynamic surfaces when many organizations are faced with crisis situations. Because the gallery's two leaders-owners are married, many of the organization's common assumptions are born out of their thirty-year relationship. These assumptions are not always suitable in the work environment. Moreover, employees lack consistent direction when operating under normal conditions or during a crisis.

CHAPTER II: THE ROLE OF MANAGING DIRECTOR

Description of Internship

As managing director of the gallery, my primary responsibilities included all correspondence for the gallery with artists and clients, monthly billings, supervising any additional staff, assisting in hanging exhibitions, and packing, shipping, and handling of artwork. In addition to these tasks, I was also responsible for marketing the exhibitions to the greater public by creating and sending out monthly press releases and making follow-up calls to the media to encourage critics to critique and list the exhibitions. This also included writing articles on the gallery or featured exhibitions for several of the local magazines.

Management Challenges Faced through Internship

Although artistic programming, exhibition installations, and all of the managerial and marketing aspects have managed to get done, they are being achieved in an untimely and unorganized manner. Much of the problem lies in the lack of a complete gallery staff.

Clientele and artist's files are often missing or not properly filed. Because the correspondence to artists and clients is very unorganized, their responses to collectors, organizations, and artists are not done in a timely manner.

The Joneses often miss media deadlines for press releases or print advertisements because they lack the expertise and refuse to hire professional arts administrators. The poorly organized and cluttered storage facility is extremely dangerous. Although they acknowledge that they do not have any professional visual arts experience, they sincerely believe that they can do everything. This hinders the gallery's progress.

Despite these problems, the owners refuse to hire additional staff. Their perception of having additional staff would mean increasing the gallery's operational cost. Their answer to hiring additional staff is employing friends and family members to assist when the gallery is in busy or as a replacement while they travel. Neither their friends or family members have any gallery management experience nor are they knowledgeable about the visual arts. This becomes extremely problematic because it interferes with the day to day operations of the gallery. As Managing Director, most of my time was used in training their family members and friends how to be curators, preparators, and arts administrators.

Arguably, increasing a gallery staff will increase their operational cost. The additional cost, however, should be viewed as a considerable investment in the organization. One of the problems of looking at the feasibility of hiring additional staff is that the owners have not created an operational budget. The gallery operates monthly with no real assessment of how the gallery is progressing financially. The Joneses have mentioned on several occasions that there is an accountant who handles the gallery's financial affairs. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of monthly, quarterly, or annual reports of the gallery's financial standing. When asked if the gallery has an operational budget or financial reports, the owners immediately become stonewalled. They refused to discuss or share any financial information. Their refusal to do so, whether through naivete or not having a financial system in place, also adds to the inefficiency of the organization.

CHAPTER III: RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE AND MAXIMIZE GALLERY POTENTIAL

Suggestions on Improving the Organizational Structure

In contemplating how the gallery can increase its staff with people who are both knowledgeable and professional, the following suggestions are made.

Artistic Directors. Both Dr. Jones and her husband are exceptional as artistic directors. Their taste in art is impeccable and they have a natural knack for soliciting artist to exhibit and be represented by the gallery. They are at their best when they are traveling and networking with museums, agents/dealers, and artists.

Managing Director. The gallery should employ a managing director whose responsibilities include managing an annual budget, supervision of staff, and overseeing the incoming and outgoing inventory. It is vitally important that this person have an arts background, preferably in visual arts, with two to three years experience in gallery management, curatorial services, or in the non-profit sector of the arts. The primary reason for this suggestion is that the Joneses do not have this experience or background and will need to depend heavily on it to ensure that the gallery reaches its potential.

Gallery Assistant. This position should be designed to assist both the artistic and managing directors in administrative duties and sales. It can also include all correspondence and filing. Another task is to ensure that all media-related information gets to the media and the public. This can be a part-time position

and is ideally suited a visual arts intern.

Gallery Preparator: The preparator is chiefly responsible for maintaining the exhibition space and packing, shipping, and handling of all artwork. The gallery is in dire need of a full-time preparator who can do this but can also be responsible for the gallery's inventory and the general upkeep of the gallery's storage facility. Because the gallery houses an inventory valued in excess of two million dollars, the gallery should take extreme care in hiring someone who has extensive experience in this area.

(Please Note: As of now, Mr. Jones has taken on this responsibility, yet he is neither experienced in this area nor willing to become so. As a result, the gallery does not have a complete inventory list, the storage facility is gravely disorganized and dangerous, and the exhibition space is marginally presentable.)

Creating an Operational Budget and Financial Reports

In creating an annual budget, the gallery will be able to forecasts its expenses. This budget will ensure the gallery has some financial guidelines to measure its growth and/or stagnation as a commercial arts organization. When used with monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports, it can also be used to determine the profit/loss ratio in exhibition sales, what expenditures are necessary and unnecessary, and what to project for future activities.

Expanding Staff through Internships

In addition to generating an annual budget and monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports, the gallery can increase its staff by creating internships. By creating annual internship positions, the gallery can hire emerging arts professionals at half of the cost of hiring someone who has extensive experience in these areas. Ideally, the gallery should consider hiring graduate students because they can fulfill the obligation and are very serious about the careers as art professionals. The New Orleans' academic community offers four graduate programs: Tulane University's M. F. A. program and Art History program (which offers a masters in art history) and University of New Orleans which has both an M. F. A. program and an Arts Administration program. This can easily minimize the cost by hiring graduate students from the universities.

Whether the gallery employs fully experienced professionals or graduate student interns, the gallery is in severe need of a staff that can accommodate the gallery's activities. To ignore this need will only diminish the quality of exhibitions and services provided and shorten the life span of the gallery.

Suggestions for Improving the Organizational Culture

A healthy work environment can be created at Stella Jones Gallery if the owners work with its current staff to define its' organizational culture. Simply simply focusing on the mission of the organization can do this. While addressing the mission, each staff member should critically look at how the objectives and goals are being achieved and redefined. Culturally, it analyzes how the organization will exist to achieve these goals. This will take some yielding on the part of the gallery's owners. Nonetheless, the

organization could be highly successful if new practices and methods were created through a joint effort between the owners and their staff.

In changing the organization's culture, Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn use the following points to outline a strong organizational culture. Considering and implementing these points are strongly suggested.

Elements of Strong Corporate Culture

"A widely shared philosophy." Each member at Stella Jones Gallery should not have an abstract notion of the gallery's mission but a real understanding of what the gallery stands for. A widely shared philosophy can be created by implementing a job slogan to motivate the gallery's staff and promotes a healthy work environment.

"A concern for individuals." The concern for each member of the gallery should be placed at the forefront of the organization. Due to the organization's size, the concerns of each individual can be implemented into its objectives by creating appropriate personnel policies, procedures, and job duties.

"A recognition of heroes." When individuals display extraordinary efforts that add to the success of the gallery, these individuals should be recognized. This should not come haphazardly but should be a regular and widely known practice within the gallery. This will not only maintain the gallery's success but will strengthen the beliefs and values of the organization's culture.

"A belief in ritual and ceremony." Because the gallery is still in its infancy stage, it is the ideal time to create a common identity that can become the gallery's internal trademark. It will also strengthen the employee's belief that he is a stakeholder in the organization and result in lower employee turnover.

"A well-understood sense of the informal rules and expectations." Stella Jones Gallery

could implement this concept in both a formal and informal manner. The gallery's rules and expectations can be placed in the office so it can be seen daily. More emphasis should be placed on creating rules and expectations for all gallery staff.

"A belief that what employees do is important to others." The success of a gallery solely relies on how attentive and well informed the staff is to its artists and clients. The role of the employee is vitally important to the organization. Employees should be encouraged to share ideas and contribute to policies, procedures, and programming.

As an arts administrator, I strongly believe that the suggested improvements are merited and would enable Stella Jones Gallery to operate in an effective and efficient manner. Increasing staff, whether they hire arts professionals or partner with university and colleges intern programs, would lessen the stress and task requirements placed on those individuals currently employed. In addition to increasing staff, acknowledging the contributions made by each staff member and giving them the opportunity to share in the creation of policies and procedures will create a healthier work environment. This environment will be the result of each staff member viewing their role in the gallery as a stakeholder – having ownership in the how the gallery defines and achieves its objectives.

PART II: MARKETING PLAN

CHAPTER IV. AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART: THE PRODUCT AND ITS MARKET

Although Stella Jones Gallery has the reputation of exhibiting and selling works of the African Diaspora, approximately 90% of the artwork is African-American. These works range from artists who are typically classified as being from the Harlem Renaissance (1920s) and Work Progress Administration period (1940s) to current contemporary African-American artists (1950s to present).

While Stella Jones Gallery represents widely know artists such as former NEA President Bennie Andrews, Jacob Lawrence, and Elizabeth Catlett-Mora, the gallery has also helped to establish the careers of emerging artists. The careers of New Orleans native and sculptor Kimberly Dummons, mixed media artists Mark Broyard and Michelle Levigne have all advanced by being featured at Stella Jones Gallery. The gallery has also exposed the New Orleans community to abstract artists such as Mary Lovelace O’Neal and Norman Lewis, who both have esteemed reputations in other regions of the Unites States but share an obscure reputation in the southeast region.

Stella Jones Gallery offers a unique product because the artwork is predominantly African-American in its “referential, technical, and circumstantial dimensions” (Colbert, p.31). Although New Orleans has over 40 fine art galleries, only seven represent or exhibit African-American art. Out of these seven, only three are run or partially run by African-Americans: Stella Jones Gallery, La Belle Gallerie (which is 50% French owned), and the Neighborhood Gallery. Because of its presentation and roster of artists, Stella Jones Gallery is the only one of the seven recognized as a fine art gallery.

African-American Art and the Commercial Arts Market

African-American art has only received a considerable market share of the visual arts market within the last 30 years of the 20th century. In *Collecting African-American Art*, author Halima Taha substantiates the increase in the market activity for African-American art as result of the sociopolitical events of the 1950s and 60s. She states,

It was inevitable that in the period between 1958 and 1967 the rumblings of the Civil Rights Movement and the changing nature of the art scene would coalesce and, in turn, provide the African-American artist an altogether new set of circumstances. While artist continued to integrate the art scene, a rapidly expanding art milieu offered any number of options to African-American artists. Their works began to appear in other venues such as the Museum of Modern Art, the American Academie in Rome, and new African American run art organizations like the Ebony Museum (later renamed the DuSable Museum) in Chicago and the Studio Museum in Harlem (Taha, p.161)

The exposure gained from the Civil Rights Movement and the integration of art venues are largely responsible for the increase of African-American art being collected by academic institutions, museums, and individual collectors. Works by Jacob Lawrence, Bennie Andrews, Lois Mailou Jones, and Romare Bearden are highly sought after and can easily command prices ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000 on both primary and secondary markets. For example, Bruce Teleky, owner and curator of American Vision Gallery in New York, speaks about the recent popularity and value of African-American art in *African-American Art Plays to an Expanding Audience* (Art Business News, January 1997). Mr. Teleky represents African-American textile artists and children's fiction writer Faith Ringgold. In the article, Mr. Teleky states that Ringgold's painting, "The Church Picnic," was voted the most popular work in Atlanta's High Museum's entire collection. Mr. Teleky also stated that Ms. Ringgold's original works "sell in excess of \$100,000,

while her prints are in the \$3000 range.” While this is a great accomplishment, African-American art still only represents less than one-fourth of the commercial arts market.

With African-American art having representing less than one-fourth of sales in the commercial arts market, Stella Jones Gallery depends heavily on museums and academic institutions for additional sales. The museums in which the gallery has a considerable measure of success are those in the southeast region of the United States such as the New Orleans Museum of Art, Mississippi Museum of Art, and Gibbes Museum of Art. In addition to purchasing artwork, these museums contract curatorial and educational services from the gallery. This has helped greatly in building partnerships within arts communities with organizations that fall within the non-profit sector of the visual arts. While these partnerships continue to strengthen over the years, the gallery should continue to penetrate museums in areas that do not have access or exposure to African-American art.

The academic institutions served by Stella Jones Gallery are located in Louisiana. The Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, Southern University of New Orleans and Southern University of Baton Rouge have all increased their collections by purchasing artwork from the gallery. The benefits of working among these institutions are extremely helpful in increasing the gallery's individual client base. Nevertheless, the gallery has not taken steps to network and expand its organizational and institutional clientele and should do so. These institutions and organizations are heavily connected within the academic arena and could provide many contacts that can increase the gallery's visibility and sales.

CHAPTER V. SETTING OBJECTIVES AND DEFINING STRATEGIES

Marketing Objectives

Market objectives require both human and financial resources, both of which are normally limited. The answer to the question "How much effort do we want to expend?" determines the means used to reach the objectives already set and also infancies the viability of the strategies envisaged.

-Francois Colbert

As mentioned earlier, during the time of the internship the owners of the gallery had neither fully implemented a marketing plan nor had any financial reports to determine the direction the gallery should take to increase visibility and sales. Therefore, the marketing objectives created will only have as its basis the mission statement of the organization.

Sales

The marketing plan designed for the Stella Jones Gallery will look to increase sales by 5% in three different areas: 1. limited edition prints, 2. original works, and 3. educational tools.

Because of the current interest in collecting limited edition prints (i.e. serigraphs, lithographs, and monographs), the gallery should focus on increasing sales in this area. The most benefit is that it offers a variety of artists as well as a great range of prices for the novice and avid collector. In response to the gallery's position in the market as a fine art gallery, the selling and exhibiting prints does not harm its growing reputation. Many of the artists they represent, from the Harlem Renaissance to the present, have all in some point in their careers have created limited edition prints. These prints are as valuable as original works in primary and secondary markets. For example, one of the leading online

visual art services is artnet.com. It has become very successful in auctioning limited edition prints by world-renowned artists. Over the summer of 1999 the site has auctioned several prints by mixed media artist Romare Bearden. The site featured a monoprint that sold for \$35,000 and two serigraphs by the same artist for \$2,500.00. It is evident that providing a variety of works will bring a diverse clientele and increase sales.

In the area of original works (i.e. paintings, sculptures, mixed-media works), the gallery can easily increase its sales by 5% by courting museums nationally, primarily in the southeast and Midwest regions that have little or any works by African-American artists. Since they have gained a respectable reputation in the very short time, Stella Jones Gallery should become more aggressive in serving museums and academic institutions in these areas.

The other quite remarkable products that the gallery houses which can increase sales are books and catalogues on artists of the African Diaspora. Their main focus with these products is to have them purchased by their individual clientele. Selling these products to non-profit organizations and academic institutions, however, can make a greater profit for the gallery. Since African American artists represent less than one-fourth of the commercial market, major publishing companies rarely produce numerous books and catalogues on these artists. The relationships created with the artists, curators, and art historians have brought a plethora of literature in this area. The sales in books and catalogs can definitely increase and surpass the targeted sales goal of 5% if they focus on academic institutions and non-profit organizations.

Market Share

Marketing Strategies

A. Target Segments: Commercially, Stella Jones Gallery's target market is African-American women with a salary of \$35,000 and above who live in the northeast, mid-west, and western regions of the United States. Most clients are doctors who have a prior affiliation with Dr. Jones before she closed her practice. Next are African-American and White males who are usually married with an income of \$30,000 and over.

B. Suggested Segmentation Technique

Computer-based segmentation is the most beneficial segmentation technique for Stella Jones Gallery. Given the time and the shortage of staff, the gallery cannot assume the task of a priori segmentation, which would allow the gallery to create descriptors to explain various needs, preferences, or behaviors observed. In the event that the gallery's owners would consider this, they would have to contract with a marketing firm for assistance.

Computer-based segmentation, as defined in Francois Colbert's *Marketing Culture in the Arts*, will give the gallery the ease of extracting descriptors from the billing software that they use to track the needs and aesthetic preferences of their clientele. If the gallery implements the suggestions for increasing sales, the descriptors extracted from their sales will allow them to create cluster analysis to define psycho-graphic and sociodemographic profiles for their targeted groups. Colbert states,

Each group presents a certain internal homogeneity in terms of its level of demand, as well as certain heterogeneity in terms of other groups. Analysis follows, with some comparison of the groups that enables the marketing manager to ascertain whether the needs or behaviours are indeed different. If they are, some of the descriptors used in the market study are

reused to further describe these needs and behaviours. The advantage of this approach is that it allows the marketing manager to discover innovative ways of defining segments without being restricted by predetermined patterns (Colbert 117).

The vital point Colbert makes is that computer-based segmentation descriptors are based solely on the information provided through their clientele and sales. Since the visual arts lie within the leisure market, the descriptors are too subjective to use a pre-determined based technique such as a priori segmentation and too cumbersome to rely on survey information from visitors. Determining the target segmentation must come from sales that can be used as a greater paradigm of the market that the gallery's chooses to target.

C. Positioning Desired

Since Stella Jones Gallery competes both nationally and locally, their positioning takes on two competitive strategies respective to the national and local markets.

Within the local market, Stella Jones Gallery should take the position as the leader.

As stated by Colbert, "leadership in the arts is generally defined in terms of the product itself- that is, the capacity of the production to draw a large audience or to obtain peer recognition" (Colbert 236). Stella Jones Gallery is considered the very first fine art gallery to exist in New Orleans that specializes in works of the African Diaspora. It can easily claim the position of leader in this area within the local arts community. In doing so, it needs to incorporate this language in all of its promotional material and work to establish its growing reputation as a local leader in works of the African Diaspora.

Also, in establishing its position locally as a leader, one fundamental change that it must make in promotions is to sever its ties with the Warehouse Arts District of New

Orleans. The gallery is neither housed in the warehouse district nor does it benefit from any of the activities or promotional materials produced by the collective. Stella Jones Gallery is located on St. Charles Avenue in the heart of the Central Business District whereas the Warehouse Arts District is located approximately twelve blocks away. By being affiliated with the Warehouse Arts District, the gallery's location and effectiveness as a leader is diminished. Most clientele and interested collectors are extremely confused when they look for the gallery in this area. This results in the gallery losing potential clientele. It also suggests or infers that the gallery needs to rely on the reputation of the district to garner interest or clientele. This is very damaging to the gallery's visibility and sales. What the gallery must do is simply divorce itself from the consortium and re-establish as the premiere or leading gallery located in the Central Business District.

Nationally, the gallery should assume the position of the challenger. In competing with many of the national galleries, the gallery has indirectly taken this position by matching their promotional campaigns, exhibitions, and by offering competitive prices and alternative payment plans. Additionally, the gallery can exploit the weaknesses of their competition by offering on-line services. With the exception of Noel Gallery (which is located in South Carolina and opened the same time as Stella Jones Gallery), many of these galleries have been in existence for nearly fifteen to twenty years. Their tenure as art galleries has created a solid clientele base but has also diminished their drive to compete in the market place. The only new additions many of the galleries have added in the areas of technology are a computer and a fax machine. Moreover, many traditional fine art galleries have snubbed their noses to online services to uphold the traditional ways of selling fine art work.

By doing this and linking to major sites such as artnet.com, Stella Jones Gallery can leap ahead of its competition and market to consumers who use online services. This advantage allows the gallery to surpass the local and national market and places it in the global market.

As most of its competition seeks to deify African-American artists of the twentieth century, the gallery should take advantage of those mid-career to emerging artists by establishing them as masters of the twenty-first century. This will establish the gallery not only as a leader in works of artists of the African Diaspora but also as a pioneer in exposing the market to our next visual art masters. Establishing the careers of artists will determine the position of many major galleries in the future. Stella Jones Gallery has the reputation to forge ahead and identify those who will be considered as formidable talents in the art world.

CHAPTER VI. SETTING OBJECTIVES AND DEFINING STRATEGIES II

Assignment of Resources

In her book *How to Find Art Buyers*, Nina Pratt stresses that the marketing budget is usually one-half to five times the organizations fixed expenses such as utilities, rent, and staff. Although, Pratt admits that many fine art galleries have no problem meeting the cost, the area of concern when budgeting for marketing arises in either creating a staff position or finding the time for a staff person to implement the marketing plan. This, ideally, is the problem for Stella Jones Gallery.

The following budget and allocation of human resources is suggested for the gallery. The allocation of human resources is based on the average of twenty hours per week that is needed to effectively implement a marketing plan. The time averaged will also be allocated in the budget as a part of the annual marketing cost.

STELLA JONES GALLERY

Suggested Marketing Monthly and Annual Budget

CATEGORY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY
Print Advertising	1,500.00	18,000.00
Promotional Materials	700.00	7,000.00
Brochures	416.00	
Exhibition Invitation	200.00	
Flyers	50.00	
Online Services		
Website (initial fee)	1,200.00	1,200.00
Website Monthly Maintenance	150.00	1,800.00
Organizational/Commercial Links	--	--
Reproduction	200.00	2,400.00
Photographs		
Slides		
Computer Reproductions		
Postage	125.00	1,500.00
Miscellaneous/Contingency	200.00	2400.00
Human Resources	800.00	9,600.00
Gallery Assitant	200.00	
20 hrs. weekly @ \$10.00 hourly		
Total Cost:	4,175.00	43,900.00

Defining the Marketing Mix

Objectives & Strategies/Program of Activities for Each Variable in the Marketing Mix

Product. As mentioned earlier, Stella Jones Gallery's emphasis on works of the African Diaspora comprises African-American, contemporary African, North and South American, and Caribbean. These works are extraordinary representations of the African Diaspora. The gallery can expand their body of artists to include more works by artists of Latin descent. An increase in Latin-oriented works will diversify the gallery's offerings and give it the opportunity to penetrate a growing local Latin community.

Price. The gallery should create a four-tier pricing strategy to appeal to a more diverse clientele and ensure consistent sales. With the first tier of the pricing strategy, the gallery should offer inexpensive prints within the range of \$75.00 to \$ 500.00. This price range can appeal to those visual arts enthusiasts who would like to purchase original works but lack the discretionary funds to invest in higher priced works.

The second tier should include original works that can range from \$500.00 to \$2,500.00. This can accommodate mid-level collectors who have can comfortably afford works priced in this range without having to create strenuous financial commitments. The gallery's third tier should be fine and rare works that are priced anywhere from \$5,000.00 to \$15,000 with the same objective as tier two.

Those works priced \$15,000 and above will be placed in the fourth tier. These works will be shown exclusively to prominent collectors, corporations, academic institutions, and non-profit organizations. The objective in doing so is to directly target individuals and organizations who can afford to purchase these works and make sure that

they are placed in collections that can be possibly become accessible to the public.

Place: Since the gallery has an ideal location, its exhibitions are primarily held during the standard exhibition time - six to nine p.m. The gallery, which is approximately 800 square feet in size, can only present one exhibition per month. This leaves little space to show works by other artists represented by the gallery. Because this is the case, the owners should not (which they do often) show any other works by other artists on the floor because it distracts the viewer from the current exhibition. It also gives the gallery an unorganized appearance.

The gallery has a storage facility on the second floor of Bank One Center that can be used to entertain clients that are seeking artworks other than those being displayed. This gives the gallery a more professional air while giving the client privacy to make purchase decisions. Utilizing this space gives the gallery a great advantage. It offers the client better personable service and gives the gallery an opportunity to expose clients to other works housed in the storage facility.

Stella Jones Gallery has also benefited greatly by exhibiting works in museums, academic institutions, and commercial art expositions. The gallery should continue to do so by focusing on exhibiting at least four times a year at outside of the gallery.

Promotion: Mailing List. Although Stella Jones Gallery has a mailing list of well over 3000 individuals, organizations, and corporations, the list does not indicate the particular interests of their clientele. It also does not indicate the past purchase trends or basic demographic information. In *How to Find Art Buyers*, Nina Pratt states

A well-known gallery that publishes, wholesales and sells at retail limited edition reproductions has its mailing list coded by subject interest. While mailings go out to the entire list of over

5,000 names four times a year, monthly mailings only go to those interested in the category of art featured... A list is a finely tuned instrument. It is not a club with which to beat potential clients over the head. Use both mail and phone in a discriminating manner, and you will save money, save time, and greatly increase your chances of success. (Pratt, p.78)

Therefore, placing individual collectors, organizations, and corporations in demographic categories such as ethnicity, region, age of the individuals, and the number years the organization or corporation has been in existence, will help to reduce the cost of monthly mailings. More importantly, it will provide the gallery with a knowledge base of its target markets.

V. Implementation

Coordination of Operations & Schedule of Activities. It is recommended that Stella Jones Gallery reduce its twelve-month exhibition schedule to a ten-month exhibition schedule and a two-month planning period. This will allow the gallery's staff to coordinate the exhibition season a year in advance. Additionally, it will allow the staff to create a contingency plan if there are any unforeseeable problems.

The two-month planning period should take place in the summer. Given *White Linen Night* and *Arts for Arts Sake*, which the former taking place in August and the latter in October, the gallery should use the months of June and July for its planning period. This provides an opportunity for the owners to travel to the artists' studios to select a full body of work for the upcoming exhibition season. It also gives that staff time to coordinate the schedule and handle much of the administrative tasks. This includes tasks such as assessing the season's success, updating client files and mailing lists, and taking inventory of all outgoing and incoming artworks.

After the planning period, each exhibit should have a four-month planning period before its opening date to ensure its success.

Evaluation. Stella Jones Gallery should evaluate the success of this project by assessing quantitative and qualitative data that has been collected over the ten-month exhibition season. It is suggested that the gallery contract an independent evaluator to develop specific evaluation instruments (e.g. surveys, focus group questions, and follow-up questionnaires) unique to the gallery's needs. The following criteria should be measured:

1. Total number of audience for each exhibition compared to number of purchases. (**Expected results:** 18 purchases/60 attendees for one-month exhibit).
2. Participant (e.g. scholars, curators, artists, and consumers) feedback on artistic and production quality of exhibitions and programs (**Expected results:** Exhibition and workshop increases awareness about Mississippi Delta textile artists as cultural and historic figures; participation in project leads to new professional opportunities and sales).
3. Extent to which artists/exhibitions advances the gallery's mission and establishes it as an emerging cultural commercial institution of national importance (**Expected results:** level of regional and national media coverage of project; level of audience attendance or purchases by non-New Orleanians, level of response from national foundations).

Assessing this information is very necessary to identify the gallery's needs while addressing the aesthetic preferences of its target market.

CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION

My internship as Managing Director of Stella Jones Gallery ran from October 1, 1998 to June 30, 2000. The time I spent working in the gallery literally brought to life countless case studies, ideas, and management practices examined and studied in the University of New Orleans' Arts Administration program. Although as Managing Director of the gallery I was constantly faced with organizational issues, I can say that these issues have taught me crisis management. It emphasized the importance of creating strategies to achieve the organization's mission and objectives. It also illustrated the importance of each staff-member fully knowing their position and role in the organization.

The following reports are based on the two objectives of the internship as found in the Abstract.

Part I: Organizational Analysis

In section one of the intern report, Stella Jones Gallery's organizational structure and culture of the gallery prove to be ineffective and inefficient in its methods and practices. Although the gallery has a unique niche by specializing in fine artworks of the African Diaspora, its lack of organization, insufficient staff, and absence of annual budgeting and generating financial reports are keeping the gallery from reaching its potential. At the close of the internship, the suggestions provided in this report were presented to the gallery's owners. Unfortunately, the Joneses did not see the problems addressed as hazards to the gallery's growth. They continue to conduct business in the same manner.

At my insistence, the owners did adopt an internship program, in which they have partnered with Southern University's Fine Art program to have one undergraduate student work in the gallery for a period of nine months. This student is responsible for organizing and maintaining the storage facility of the gallery. Although the gallery can certainly use more hands, I believe this is a step in the right direction. Hopefully, the Joneses will increase the number of interns to assist with administering and marketing the gallery's activities.

It is unclear whether or not the owner's did implement an annual budget or created monthly, quarterly, or annual financial reports. As mentioned earlier, the owners are very guarded when asked about the gallery's financial affairs so I can only assume that the gallery is also still practicing the same accounting methods.

Part II: Suggested Marketing Plan

In addition to organizing and administering much of the gallery's affairs and creating an internship program, I believe my greatest contribution to Stella Jones Gallery was providing the gallery with a marketing plan. The Joneses did acknowledge that the gallery was in dire need of a marketing plan that could position the gallery in the local and national visual arts market. Unfortunately, the owners, while actively working as artistic directors of the gallery, are trying to implement the plan themselves instead of hiring an additional staff person.

As of June 30, 2000, the Jones still had not fully implemented the marketing plan. Their reason was that they simply did not have the time. When asked whether they would reconsider hiring someone to do the job, they said it was not necessary.

This response alludes that that the owners are very comfortable and confident about how the gallery is administered. It is very doubtful that if the gallery is faced with a challenging organization, it will continue to progress under current circumstances. As for now, the uniqueness of the gallery's product is what keeps it alive. If the owners do not see the need to make a change in its management practices, staff, and marketing strategies, I highly suggest that they lend their talents to philanthropy and close Stella Jones Gallery.

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APPENDIX

CURRICULUM VITA

Kara Tucina Olidge, a native of New Orleans, was the first recipient of the Coca-Cola "I Have A Dream" Scholarship in 1987. A graduate of Spelman College with a B. A. in Philosophy, she has extensive experience working in the visual arts in Atlanta, Georgia and New Orleans, Louisiana. Her experience in the arts includes serving as the Visual Art Curator for the Amistad Research Center, Team Coordinator for the Arts Council of New Orleans' Urban Arts Training Program, and as an independent curator for Crossroads Arts Collective. Ms. Olidge professionally worked in the areas of grant writing and project management with New Visions Gallery and the Fulton Public Library in Atlanta, Georgia. She continued her work as an arts administrator in New Orleans at the Neighborhood Gallery, LaBelle Galerie, New Orleans Outreach, Junebug Productions, and the Blacks Arts National Diaspora, Inc. Currently, Ms. Olidge is pursuing a M. A. in Arts Administration at the University of New Orleans with full academic support from the prestigious Marcus B. Christian Fellowship. At the time of the internship, Ms. Olidge served as Managing Director of Stella Jones Gallery. Ms. Olidge is presently the Director of Education for the Shakespeare Festival at Tulane University in New Orleans.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

STELLA JONES GALLERY

COLLECTING AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

"Collecting is an obsession with certain compulsive aspects."

"Acquiring is a journey accompanied by many personal stories"

"Many great collections are started quite accidentally."

WHAT IS BLACK ART OR African American ART?

I think it depends largely upon whom you ask. Here are some different definitions by prominent African American artists:

HUGHIE LEE-SMITH writes, "It's an art that derives its inspiration and substances from the struggle of Black, people for economic, social, and cultural power; an art which reflects, celebrates, and interprets that struggle in a stylistic manner which is meaningful to the African American community and members of other oppressed minorities."

LOIS MAILOU JONES wrote almost 30 years ago, "I believe it is the duty of every black artist to participate in the current movement which aims to establish recognition of the works by "Black artists." I am and will continue to exhibit in "Black Art Shows" and others, the works which express my sincere creative feelings. That these works portray the "Black" experience or "heritage" or be purely abstract is immaterial, so long as they meet the highest standards of the modern art world. The major focus is to achieve for Black artists their just and rightful place as "American Artists."

LARRY NEAL in 1969 wrote, "Black Art is rooted in a spiritual ethic. The artists carry the past and future memory of the race, of the nation. They represent our various identities and link us to the deepest, most profound aspects of our ancestry..."

BILL PAJAUD wrote in the IRAAA, "I have never tried to be a "Black artist," but sought a more universal label of artist. When I first got out of college, I wanted to be the best Black artist in the country. I was not two months out of college when I realized this was not a valid goal that I should aspire to something that was much more universal. Being a good Black artist puts a limitation on you in that you're not recognizing the full complement of this world's talent. You have many great artists: Charles White, Romare Bearden, and Richard Hunt. But they and others are more than Black artists are. They are artists. I've always painted Black subjects and themes, even without realizing it, because that was and is me, that is my experiences.

WHY COLLECT:

- Collectors are essential to the vitality of the visual arts, because they lend support to the artists, which enables them to continue a visual record of our history and culture.
- The pleasure of the adventure (finding objects of interest in unexpected places)
- Contact with other avid collectors is wonderful. Each has a love of the arts which only enriches their passions.

- The enjoyable aspects of finding and adding a certain piece to a collection and its accompanying memories.
 - Day to day enjoyment and enrichment.
- *There is adventure, scholarship, and friendship associated with assembling a fine art collection.**

HOW DO YOU LEARN THE PROCESS OF COLLECTING:

- **READ**, along with that build a good reference library for whatever it is that you are interested in.
- Visit museums, private collections and galleries.
- Attend gallery and museum openings. Talk with the artist who will usually be in attendance. You will get a chance to understand and appreciate aspects of the artist's background, style, motivation, use of certain materials and colors.
- Attend auctions
- Talk to experts(an expert in this case is anyone who knows more than you about what you want to collect)
- Ask for honest advise and don't be insulted when you get it.
- Don't purchase too rapidly.
- Don't be blinded by your enthusiasm for a certain piece of art and become financially overextended for the love of a great art world.
- Collect what you like and can live with.
- Do buy the best that your budget can afford. Contrary to popular beliefs, you don't have to be rich to begin a good collection of visual art. You can collect on a budget. If gallery owners and dealers are really willing to assist you in building a collection and becoming a loyal client, they will also assist you with creative financing.

EXPERIENCE &-EXPOSURE = BETTER EVALUATION

If you continue to learn as you collect, your preferences become more discriminating or sophisticated. And, yes just as all collectors, your collection will undergo many changes if you continue to collect. So the first thing you have to do in this process is educate yourself, learn about the art or pay from the knowledge by buying only from the most reputable source you can find.

STELLA JONES GALLERY

Place St. Charles - 201 St. Charles Ave - New Orleans, LA 70170

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BOOKS & POSTCARDS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Visuals

Autographed Postcards (ALL EXHIBITIONS) \$5.00

Books & Catalogs

Art: African American Dr. Samella Lewis, Author \$25.00

Written by noted scholar and art historian, Dr. Samella Lewis, this book covers 300 years of African American Art. Lewis places African American art within the different genres of visual art as well as the sociopolitical times in which these artists found their artistic visions. It is a great informative guide for beginning collectors and scholars.

African American Art Crystal A. Britton, Author \$25.00

"*African American Art* presents a broad selection of African American artists whose work reflects the essence of African American art and the black aesthetic. It also looks at how these artists struggled for inclusion in society's marketplace and survived the imposition of marginal status on them, their art, and their culture." Crystal A. Britton, Author

A Courtyard Apart: Elizabeth Catlett & Francisco Mora \$20.00

A Courtyard Apart takes an engaging look at the careers of two prolific artists, Elizabeth Catlett and her husband Francisco Mora. It covers the span of their careers independently and as a couple. It also provides insights into how both artists perceive their work and how their timeless works are created.

Barbara Chase-Riboud (Catalog) \$11.00

This catalog commemorates Chase-Riboud's first solo exhibition in New Orleans, Louisiana. The catalog contains an essay by the renowned Anthony Janson and several of her works that were exhibited at the gallery.

Collecting African American Art Halima Taha, Author \$50.00

This first edition signed copy by author Halima Taha has already become a collector's item within the first six months of publication. It combines the history of African American art with informative points on how to collect art. The book contains written perspectives by artist and scholar Dr. Samella Lewis, artist Evangeline Montgomery, and poet and author Ntozake Shange.

Ed Clark: For the Sake of Search \$50.00

This book depicts the passion of expressionist painter and colorist Ed Clark. Through many of his colleagues, art critics, and a very rare interview, Clark's determination as artist to make his way on his own terms comes to life. Important examples of Clark's paintings and works on paper from the earliest to the most recent, illustrated in color, vividly demonstrate his remarkable accomplishment.

Edouard Duval Carrié \$30.00

This powerful catalog introduces us to some of Carrié's latest depictions of the Haitian Orishas. Highly regarded as one of the visual vanguards of Haitian culture, Edouard Duval Carrié was the winner of the 1998 Monet fellowship in Paris.

El Anatsui-A Sculpture History of Africa \$30.00

Highly regarded in Africa, El Anatsui is considered to be one of the leading sculptors of his generation. Known as the guru of contemporary West African art, Ghanaian born El Anatsui is now readily establishing a wide international reputation. This book represents the first attempt to draw together under a single cover the many aspects of the artist's career. The various scholarly texts, written in English, German, and Japanese, are complemented by a series of color visuals of El Anatsui's sculpture.

Elizabeth Catlett Sculpture: A Fifty Year Retrospective \$35.00

This monograph covers a fifty-year period from 1946-1996 in the life's work of the renowned African American artist Elizabeth Catlett. From the beginning of her career as an artist and a teacher in the 1940s, Catlett's themes have reflected her concerns for social injustice, the human condition, and her life as an African American woman and mother. Over sixty sculptures are presented in the retrospective that illustrate Catlett's dedication and love for people and her art.

El Loko: Harmony and Identity

\$15.00

This catalog documents the philosophical paintings of internationally renowned Africa artist El Loko. It takes an in-depth look at how El Loko worked to develop his own universal pictorial alphabet while paying homage to his African culture and heritage.

Explorations in the City of Lights: African American Artists in Paris 1945-1965

\$25.00

Lois Mailou Jones, Larry Potter, Beauford Delaney, Harold Cousins, Herbert Gentry, and Ed Clark are featured in this catalog about artists who lived in worked in Paris, France from the mid-40s to mid-60s. It highlights the artists' careers with several illustrations of the artists' works. It also provided insights into the presence of African American literature, music, and visual arts in Paris during this time.

Grown Deep-Essays on Harlem Renaissance Dr. Richard A. Long, Author

\$14.50

This book is comprised of 12 essays that were published in response to the resurgence of interest in the Harlem Renaissance. Each essay has been provided with a postscript, providing details about its original appearance as well as supplementary information.

Homecoming: Samella Lewis/Bill Pajaud

Unsigned \$11.00 Signed \$15.00

This catalog celebrates two artists who are regarded as the keepers of the African American cultural torch. It commemorates the exhibition held at the gallery October 1 -November 30, 1996. The catalog is signed and dated by both Lewis and Pajaud.

Illuminated Manuscript: Poems and Prints by Malaika Favorite

\$15.00

Selected poems and prints by poet and artist Malaika Favorite that celebrate women, love, and growing up in rural Southern Louisiana.

Life and Art of Lois Jones Tritobia Hayes Benjamin, Author

\$25.00

This landmark book makes accessible as never before the life art of the remarkable painter Lois Mailou Jones. It depicts how Jones used the canvas to convey her impressions of such disparate venues as Martha's Vineyard, Haiti, Paris, and Africa. It also displays Jones's impeccable career as a professor at Howard University, teaching for more than forty-seven years and providing many opportunities for her students to travel and create throughout the world.

The Spiritual and Mystical World of Louis Delsarte

Signed \$10.00

Signed by Louis Delsarte, this catalog captures the dreamlike world of the artist. It features a discerning essay on the artist by AFROCOBRA participant and Professor Dr. Michael D. Harris. Over ten highly sought after works by the Delsarte are featured in this catalog.

Mary Lovelace O'Neal

\$10.00

This catalog commemorates Lovelace O'Neal's first solo exhibition in New Orleans, Louisiana. The catalog contains an essay by artist and art historian David Driskell, professor Cheryl McKay Dixon, and Al Gordon.

Norman Lewis: Twenty-five Highly Important Paintings

\$12.50

This catalog covers the span of Lewis's career as an abstract expressionist in 25 paintings dating from 1943 to 1977. It depicts his movement from the more figurative works to his stylized abstracts from the mid to latter part of his career. A chronology of Lewis's life and career as an abstract expressionist is included.

Norman Lewis: Works on Paper 1935-1979

\$12.50

The catalog presents the most extensive compilation of works on paper by Norman Lewis. The works display the whimsical, somber, and sometimes tragic view of Lewis's eye. A chronology of Lewis's life and career as an abstract expressionist is included.

Once Upon a Time in Atlanta

\$10.00

This book chronicles the life of author Raymond Andrews while living in Atlanta, Georgia in the late 1940s. It features illustrations by his brother, renowned artist Benny Andrews.

Sky Sash So Blue

\$18.50

A wonderful and timeless children's book about the determination of enslaved Africans to hold on to family, love, and hope. Extraordinary fabric collages by American painter Benny Andrews pay tribute to the strength of family and the grace to be found in everyday life in this remarkable picture book.

"Seeking shelter from the storm..."

According to Dr. Richard A. Long, "the 'folk-rural' tradition developed from within the typical black community. The memory of an African legacy, the institution of slavery, confinement within a socially instituted caste system, and a position on the margins of the economy-all of these influenced the self-taught and vernacular style, like many of the quilts created by African American women." From the period of the Underground Railroad to contemporary times, traditional quilts have always been functional. They served as means of communicating during the period of the Underground Railroad, preserved the memories of our ancestors, and provided warmth for our families.

Quilting bees or quilting parties, according to Sharon Patton, "were very much a part of plantation society in the nineteenth century. They were elaborate affairs, either sponsored by the slave master or arranged impromptu by the slaves." Quilting parties provided opportunities for socialization and reinforced slave community ties, thereby making them significant social events that contradict the common belief that slave life disrupted African-American cultural traditions. As they told our stories, fortified family and community ties, guided our paths, and kept us warm... they have been our *shelters from the storm*.

DID YOU EVER WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE TO MAKE A QUILT?

Join the Quilters of Wilkinson County, Mississippi

And the Crescent City Links, Inc. for a

CONVERSATION & QUILTING BEE

LEARN TO QUILT

Saturday, March 6, 1999 • 10am-2pm

UNO Downtown Conference Center • 226 Carondelet St • Room 215A

(May enter from Stella Jones Gallery)

WHAT TO BRING

Fabric scraps (large & small), cotton batting, domestic yellow cloth,
Scissors, tape measure, thimble, needle & quilting thread

AN ARTS EVENT SPONSORED BY CRESCENT CITY LINKS, INC.

As part of International Women's Month

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An Exhibition of Traditional Quilts

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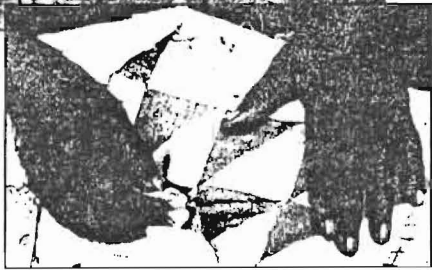
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"Some of them, when they wasn't doing nothing, they'd set 'round and quilt. They would get feed sacks, they would get flour sacks, and from those pretty flour sacks they would make little girls dresses. And the flour sacks, they would wash them for clippers."



**Joyce
Johnson**



"It was cold. My mother would put us in the bed and she would take it would be a lot of those quilts. Sometimes she would put an iron to our feet at night and then she would, you know, put those quilts... she would put those quilts and I tell you, you couldn't hardly turn over... We did it for warmen, because that was the only way you had to keep warm."



**Dorothy
McQuarter**

