



Shirley Mossman Nisbet, *Warm Sky and Ice Melting*, oil pigments on paper, 12" x 36"

Message From the Executive Director

The previous fiscal year at the VCCA has been one of milestones, firsts and anniversaries. We celebrated the 20th anniversary of our exchange program with the Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus in Schwandorf, Germany, and the fifth anniversary as proprietors of our French studio center, Le Moulin à Nef, organizing retrospective exhibits of Fellows' work in Germany and France to mark these achievements.

We awarded the first of several fellowships: the Alonzo Davis Fellowship to writer Raphael Oses; the Mark and Barbara Fried funded residency for an Israeli artist to composer Ariel Blumenthal; the Phillip and Eric Heiner Endowed Residency to writer Patricia Klindienst, recipient of the 2008 American Book Award; and the Robert Johnson Endowed Fellowship to visual artist Heidi Kumao.

And in March 2008, at the Virginia Festival of the Book in Charlottesville, we sponsored a panel discussion marking the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq to examine how artists respond to conflict. Fellows David Griffith, writer; and Judith Shatin, composer; shared perspectives from their work. This very successful event at Second Street Gallery included Los Angeles-based artist Sandow Birk and was led by William Cleveland, author of the book *Art and Upheaval* and director of the Center for the Study of Art and Community, in Washington state.

I like to think that wherever our Fellows go, the VCCA follows, whether to Schwandorf, or Charlottesville, or to Brazil, where visual artist Amy Chen traveled this fiscal year on a Fulbright Fellowship; or to Nepal where composer Andrea Clearfield made field recordings of the indigenous music that inspired her own work. And also in Auville; where, after five years, 62 Fellows have approached their work from the enhanced perspective given by a different culture. The program at the Moulin à Nef is supported by the financial contributions of these Fellows and individual donors, as well as the income generated by workshops that are open to the general public and often led by VCCA Fellows.

Back in Virginia and Mt. San Angelo—our home for three decades—we have enjoyed ongoing growth and achievement. An expanding Board of Directors continues to provide thoughtful leadership with the implementation of a new five-year strategic plan that dovetails with our marketing initiatives to increase the organization's visibility and sustainability. We have improved our services with refurbished writers studios, new pianos for composers, and a new dining program, where Chef Rhonda Scovill's green initiatives remind us that we all can be good stewards of the environment.

At the VCCA, looking forward to new levels of excellence and potential also means taking stock of our presence in the world. Our impact, through the world's finest artists, is immeasurable, traveling across geography, cultures, schools of thought and into the world's galleries, bookstores, libraries, museums and concert halls. We at the VCCA carry an incredible responsibility to safeguard and nurture the creative process for our mutual and greater good. We look to you to share in this responsibility and are grateful for your continued support.

Sunny Monk, Executive Director



*“For 35 years, the VCCA has been a haven,
a harbor, a nursery, a diving board, a launch pad,
a swing, a rest stop, a rodeo. There, people hunker
down, anchor, plant, harvest, leap, soar, return.
The fruits of these efforts belong to all of us.”*

– Gregory Maguire, author of the novel *Wicked*, now a Tony Award winning musical on Broadway

November 2006

Dear Friends:

For 35 years we have watched the joy of artists coming together, testing ideas and sharing views, simultaneously respected and challenged, but never censored. VCCA Fellows are carrying this legacy forward every day, existing at the forefront of the cultural and artistic landscape with unparalleled achievements and awards.

This year, six VCCA Fellows received the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship. Our own Gregory Maguire is receiving kudos on Broadway, where his novel *Wicked* has been transformed into a Tony Award winning musical. And writer Hillary Jordan received the 2006 Bellwether Prize for Fiction, a major North American award established by acclaimed author Barbara Kingsolver. It has been another stellar year.

We must continue to stretch our vision and uphold the promise to our Fellows that facilities will be comfortable and seamlessly maintained and that no deserving artist shall be denied access to the VCCA based on financial limitations.

Please help us celebrate our 35th year with an extra gift this year to the VCCA's Annual Fund. Your present will ensure many happy returns! We are so grateful for your support.

With thanks and warm wishes,



Suny Monk, Executive Director



THE CREATIVE RETREAT AT MT. SAN ANGELO
154 SAN ANGELO DRIVE, AMHERST, VIRGINIA 24521

The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts is an international working retreat for writers, visual artists and composers, located at Mt. San Angelo, a 12-acre hilltop in Amherst County, Virginia, approximately 160 miles southwest of Washington, D.C. In this bucolic setting, the VCCA provides residential fellowships of two weeks to two months, where artists may work free from the distractions and responsibilities of daily life.