



Bill Condon *Guanajuato* 1957 ink and wash on paper

HETAG Newsletter No 24, July 2018

The Travels with Bill Issue

Here it is July, and Houston is HOT! And it's been hot for months already. And it will be hot for months more. Big things are about to start happening in the world of Earlier Houston Art (see announcements later in this newsletter), but that's next month. For now we're in the fiery clutches of that dispiriting nightmare, the summer doldrums. If you're like me, and you haven't managed to escape to some cool, enlivening mountain eyrie, then you're probably dreaming about one. So this issue of the HETAG Newsletter is dedicated to summer escapes.

But not just any escapes, and not by ourselves. We're traveling this summer with the Earlier Houston Artist, Bill Condon (1923-1998), and there couldn't be a better traveling companion when it comes to seeing the world through art. So pack your bags, visually anyway, and let's go. But be sure to get back by August. You won't want to miss the exhibitions and openings and lectures and panels for what will be the best opportunity there's ever been to see, and learn to love, Houston-made art – hundreds of paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures and ceramics, from the 1850s onward. And we'll be all rested and refreshed after our little July getaway with Bill.



Bill Condon *Paris* 1963 (l) and *Piazza San Marco, Venice* 1965 (r)

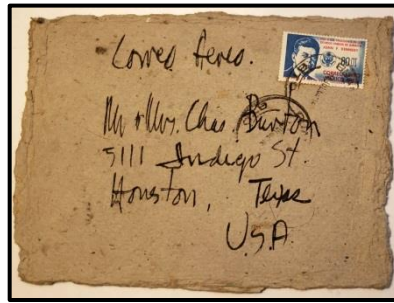
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Houston Art History Notes: Travels with Bill



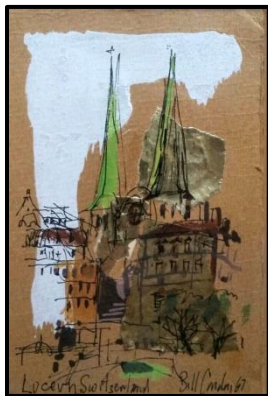
Bill Condon all dressed up (l) and with Stella Sullivan (r)

Houston architect/artist William J. (Bill) Condon (1923-1998) loved to travel, and he loved to send postcards home, but not just any postcards – he made his own, using the cardboard inserts that came in his laundered shirts back then. He'd cut them into postcard size blanks before he left and then work them up into place-specific cards as he went along.



Bill Condon Guanajuato 1962 postcard

So if you were a friend of this Bill, you might open your mailbox to find a wonderful little work of art greeting you from wherever he was at the moment. He must have sent thousands of them, and you can still find them around Houston, framed and ready to fill a small space on your wall – or big space if you're lucky enough to get a group – never mind that they're addressed to someone else.



Bill Condon Lucerne, Switzerland 1967 (l), Riesenrad, Vienna 1962 (c), Amsterdam 1960 (r)

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Bill Condon *Taxco* 1964

Condon was a native Houstonian. After serving in the U.S. Army for four years during World War II, he got a degree in architecture from Rice University, and he was a practicing architect throughout his working life. He seems to have retained a real affection for his alma mater since he made many images of the Rice U. campus over the years.



Bill Condon *Rice Institute No. 4*
34th Annual Houston Artists Exhibition, museum purchase prize, 1959

It's easy to see the architect's eye in his work, but art was at least as much a part of him as architecture. Fellow architect and close friend, Ralph A. Anderson, Jr., said of Condon's work: "He seems to be saying that, no matter how pretentious man is in what he builds, no matter how ugly, an other-worldly beauty exists there in spite of everything."



Bill Condon *Hong Kong* 1961 (l); *Denver, Colorado* 1969 (c); *Zurich, Switzerland* n.d. (r)

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Upcoming exhibitions:

SOUTH AND NORTH OF THE BORDER

A pair of exhibitions sponsored by
HETAG: The Houston Earlier Texas Art Group and
CASETA: Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art
in conjunction with
The Heritage Society and Houston Public Library



Thomas Flintoff *Court House, Houston* 1852 (l) and Robert Preusser *Untitled (Buildings at Night)* 1938 (r)

[SOUTH AND NORTH OF THE BORDER: Houston Paints Houston](#)

On view at The Heritage Society Museum

August 16 – November 24, 2018 (Reception Thursday, August 16, 2018, details to follow.)

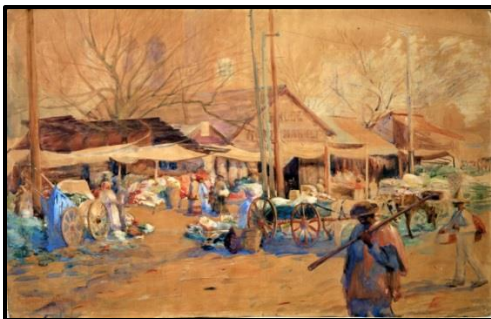
and

[SOUTH AND NORTH OF THE BORDER: Houston Paints Mexico](#)

On view at the Julia Ideson Building Exhibition Hall, Houston Public Library

August 25 – November 10, 2018 (Reception Thursday, August 30, 2018, details to follow.)

Together the two exhibitions will include more than 140 works created by Houston artists over 130 years, showing the evolving vision of our own city and of our closest neighbor to the south.



Emma Richardson Cherry [*Mexican Market*] c1905 (l) and Lucas Johnson *Esperanza de las Flores* 1971 (r)

Read a preview these shows in the [Houston Press](#), by [Susie Tommaney](#).

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In addition to *South and North of the Border*, a number of other exhibitions and events around the city throughout the fall of 2018 will add up to a **FESTIVAL OF EARLIER HOUSTON ART**, making this the best opportunity in a lifetime to see the full range of Houston art from the 1850 to the present. These are some of the delights in store for us:

[Sense of Home: The Art of Richard Stout](#)

Coming in early October to the O’Kane Gallery, University of Houston Downtown

This exhibition of the art of Houston artist Richard Stout, curated by HETAGer Sarah Beth Wilson McKeel, Curator of Exhibitions and Collections at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, opened in Beaumont last year, and will be at the O’Kane Gallery, University of Houston Downtown.

On Saturday, September 22, Richard Stout will be in conversation about his life and work with Alison de Lima Greene, The Isabel Brown Wilson Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art at The Museum of Fine Arts Houston. (Details to follow.)



Richard Stout with his painting *Blue Gibraltar 1957* at the opening of *Sense of Home: The Art of Richard Stout* at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas in Beaumont, September 2017.

[Art of Elinor Evans: Learning to See](#)

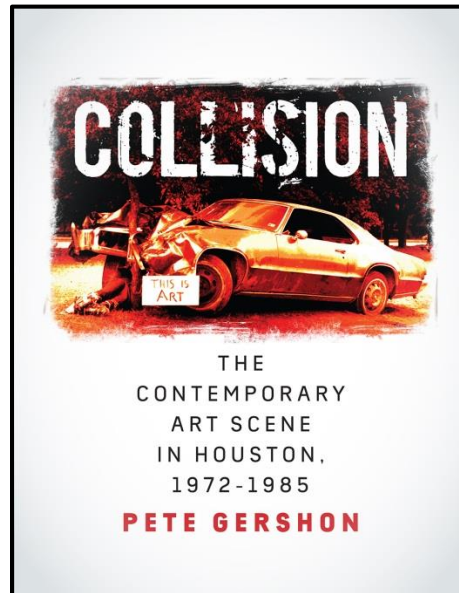
Fondren Library, Rice University

An exhibition featuring selections from the Woodson Research Center collection of Elinor Evans, award-winning artist and Rice University Architecture Department design instructor, including woven baskets and hangings, delicate collages, and a "portfolio of ideas" in mixed media on paper.



HETAG: The Houston Earlier Texas Art Group

In conjunction with the publication of [*Collision: The Contemporary Art Scene in Houston, 1972-1985*](#) (Texas A&M University Press, forthcoming) by Pete Gershon:



Contemporary Artists in Houston from the Collections of William J. Hill and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Leslie and Brad Bucher Gallery, the Glassell School of Art

August 3 –November 11, 2018 (Reception Friday, September 7.)

Featuring works by John Alexander, The Art Guys, Bob Camblin, Charlotte Cosgrove and Helen Orman, Ibsen Espada, Ezekiel Gibbs, Joseph Glasco, Allan Hacklin, Joseph Havel, Rachel Hecker, Dorothy Hood, Terrell James, Luis Jimenez, Sharon Kopriva, Jesse Lott, Jim Love, Suzanne Manns, MANUAL, Jesus Moroles, Kermit Oliver, Basilios Poulous, Forrest Prince, Philip Renteria, Bertram Samples, Gael Stack, Earl Staley, Richard Stout, James Surls, Michael Tracy, Arthur Turner, Dick Wray, and Sandie Zilker. Organized by Pete Gershon.

Sunday, September 23, 1pm: *Collision* book launch event, Favrot Auditorium, Glassell School of Art, Museum of Fine Arts Houston

1:00 pm – 1:45 pm: *Collision* presentation by Pete Gershon

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm: Panel discussion: Pete Gershon, Alison de Lima Greene, John Alexander, Bert Samples, Arthur Turner.

3:15 pm – 3:20pm: Group photo of '70s/'80s HTX artists on atrium steps by George Hixson.

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm: Book signing with writer and participating artists

Sunday, September 30, 1pm: Contemporary Houston Artists film festival, Favrot Auditorium

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm: *Dorothy Hood: The Color of Life* (1985, 30 min.)

1:30 pm – 2:00 pm: *Jesse Lott: Art and Community* (2017, 30 min, Cressandra Thibodeux, dir.)

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm: vintage Super8 home movies with live narration by artist Earl Staley

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm: *Jackelope* (1975, 60 min., Ken Harrison, director)

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Creating Collision: The Contemporary Art Scene in Houston, 1972 - 1985

Hirsch Library, Museum of Fine Arts Houston

August 28 – December 15, 2018

Featuring rare and unusual ephemera from the collection of the Hirsch Library including materials published by the B&E Holdings Firm, H.J. Bott, Lawndale Annex, Louisiana Gallery, Midtown Art Center, Moody Gallery, Robinson Galleries, Studio One Alternative Space, and Texas Gallery.

Thursday, October 4, 7pm, Hirsch Library

Conversation with Pete Gershon, Terrell James, and Clint Willour focusing on the research Behind 'Collision' and James's experience working for the Texas Project of the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art from 1979 to 1984.

Sharon Kopriva: Early Works

[The Jung Center, Houston, TX](#)

October 2 – 30, 2018

Saturday, October 6, 5 - 7pm: Opening reception

Tuesday, October 9, 7pm: Discussion with artist Sharon Kopriva about the work in the show.

From elsewhere around the state:

We've received word that Michael Grauer, Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs/Curator of Art and Western Heritage at Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, will be leaving for new opportunities in September. He will become McCasland Chair of Cowboy Culture and Curator of Western Art at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Michael has been a cornerstone figure in the world of Early Texas Art for the entire 31 years he's been at PPHM, and before. He's curated ETA exhibitions too numerous to list, including the recent *Jose Arpa: A Spanish Painter in Texas* and the groundbreaking *Texas Impressionism: Branding with Brushstroke and Color, 1885-1935*, to name just two. He has also presented many, many entertaining and eye-opening talks around Texas and beyond, including several at annual symposia of [CASETA: Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art](#). And he's been the guiding eye in building the largest publicly held collection of Early Texas Art, at PPHM – including massive holdings by his art hero, Frank Reaugh. ETA is much the better for Michael's contributions over the decades. He will be sorely missed by those of us who have come to know and love him over the years, but he's not going far and he promises to keep in touch. All the best, Michael. We are forever grateful for you and all you've done.





Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art
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June 26, 2018

On behalf of the board of directors of CASETA, I would like to thank you and the HETAG group for your support of the recent CASETA symposium in San Antonio. I thought that it was one of the best that we have had and hope that you agree. As you know, CASETA is a volunteer organization, supported by collectors, dealers, scholars, and others, and it is through such enthusiastic support as yours that we will be able to continue to present programs like this and further the cause of and interest in the art of Texas.

Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R Tyler", written in a cursive style.

Ron Tyler

HETAGers who Sponsored the 2018 CASETA Symposium

This letter is for YOU!

Minnette Boesel, Bonnie Campbell, Leila & Henri Gadbois, Paulette Harbin, Christian Kelleher
& Theresa Clarke, Tom & Tam Kiehnhoff, Rex Koontz,
Sandra Lloyd, Sarah Beth Wilson & Joseph McKeel, Larry Martin,
Bobbie & John Nau, JoAnn & Bill Owens, Trilla & Bob Pando,
Stan Price & Clay Huffard, Linda & Bill Reaves, Sally Reynolds & Associates, Shirley E. Rose,
Kay Sheffield, Richard Stout, Randy Tibbits & Rick Bebermeyer, Earl Weed, and Mary Ellen &
Tom Whitworth.



Dick Rembrandt [*Houston Skyline*] watercolor c.1960s

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Next HETAG meeting, Sunday, September 16, 2018, 2-4 p.m.

Helen and Erik Sprohge have invited us to visit their home, and Erik's studio, for a look at the art of Erik and his artist father, Paul Sprohge. This is a treasure trove of Houston art going back into the 1930s, when the Sprohge family came to Houston from Latvia by way of Berlin. You will see work by both Erik and Paul in the exhibition *South and North of the Border: Houston Paints Mexico*, but you'll see much more of it on our visit with the Sprohges. Don't miss it. Details to follow.



Paul Sprohge *Untitled [Mexican Market]* 1963

The mission of HETAG is to illuminate Houston's art history by providing viewing opportunities for art, by supporting and doing research on the artists and art communities working in Houston through the years, and by spreading the word.

**Back issues of the HETAG Newsletter are available via the
University of Houston Libraries
Digital Library**

<https://digital.lib.uh.edu/collection/hetag>

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Bill Condon *Patzcuaro* 1964 (l) and *Cemetery, Saltillo* 1960 (r)