

“ART IN ATLANTA” was an Olympics related touring (Atlanta, Magdeburg, Munich, Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Newcastle – upon-Tyne etc ) exhibition organized by Artists in Residence International/Gilla Juette and curated by Jerry Cullum & Tina Dunkley. Participating artists (George Beasley, Clyde Broadway, Dan Cooper, Sandy Corley, Barbara Daupert, Marshall Davis, Mirtha Ferrer, Eddie Granderson, Stephanie Jackson, Wadsworth Jarrell, Arturo Lindsay, Lynn Linnemeier, Toby Martin, Michael Murrell, Se-Hoon Oh, Donna Pickens, Barbara Shrieber, Paula Gately Tillman, Larry Walker, Ling Zhang) did residencies/collaborations in a host city. Corley’s was Munich.

ARTIST’S STATEMENT for “Fragments” triptych for “Art in Atlanta”:

## **"FRAGMENTS"**

**("Of A Time Past")**

Mixed Media

**Sandy Corley**

1994

The *fragments* of **WOOD** used to create this piece came from an out-building on the property in Indian Springs, Georgia that is now restored and called the Indian Spring Hotel. It was originally built and operated by Chief William McIntosh, son of a Creek mother and a Tory Infantry captain of Scottish ancestry.

McIntosh became the most widely acclaimed Creek Indian chief in the Southeast. In his twenties, he debated a land treaty with President Thomas Jefferson. In his third decade, he was a brigadier general in Andrew Jackson's army in the Creek War and the First Seminole War. In his early forties, he was killed by Upper Creek Indians. To his fellow Creeks, he was a traitor who had disobeyed the law of the Creek Nation by signing away the remaining Indian lands in Georgia. To Georgians, he was a hero who understood what was best for his people. In less than a year, another treaty was signed, and the Creek Indians gave up all of their lands in Georgia in exchange for land in the West.

The **CARVED** areas and over-sized **MILAGROS** are pre-columbian, Mississippian era Moundbuilder's symbols. These *fragmented* images come from shell, copper, and pottery *fragments* found throughout the Southeast U.S.. All are motifs from the Southern Cult. The Southern Cult is the term used to describe the similar motifs, most likely resulting from religious beliefs, found among the peoples of the Mississippian period (900 AD - 1550 AD). The motif of the two **FORKED EYES** come from a *fragment* found on an embossed copper head plate in the Etowah Mounds in Georgia. It is probably a variation on the natural eye markings of the hawk or falcon which were common in the Southeast U.S. The **HAND AND EYE** was engraved onto a *fragment* of a cup found in a grave pit at the Moundville Site in Alabama. The **CENTRAL CARVINGS** are derived from a design on a *fragment* of a jar unearthed in the burial fields of Mississippi's Walls culture. In this piece they are used as ancestral ghosts connecting the past and present. **MIRRORS** remind us that we are a part of the past through these ancestors. The two **EQUAL-ARM CROSS** designs come from a conch shell *fragment* in Hamilton County, Tennessee. The remaining two **FACE** motifs come from a shell *fragment* that was once a cup. The carving technique used in this piece is intended to approximate the "scratching" methods prevalent in all these ancient artworks, which were the beginnings of the South's artistic tradition.

Most prehistoric Indians of the SE never beheld the Atlantic or walked the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico, but traders carried bits of the shore deep into the continent in the form of **SHELLS** for craftwork. **MARSHGRASS**, **ALLIGATORS** and beautiful **PLUMAGE** have been and remain a major part of everyday life of the original inhabitants of Georgia and Florida, therefore fitting materials to create the "phoenix" figure, (Atlanta's own symbol). And **CORN**, first domesticated before 4000 BC in Mexico, reaching the Southwest by 1000 BC and reaching the

Eastern U.S. two thousand years later, needs no explanation.

Until recently, Rough boards and **RED CLAY** were the essence of "home" in the rural South. But the flecks of gold in this clay were the reason for removal from their homes, of the inhabitants who lived here after the Mississippian Peoples. The whole piece is painted with a wash of this **RED CLAY**, because it is the enduring color of Mother Earth throughout this region and the hue that still shines on the skin of her original children.