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## Abstract Sculpture Installation is ‘Perfect’ Ending as University Museum Director Enters Retirement

 JULY 10, 2009 BY [ADMIN](#)



**Artwork intended as inspiration for those touched by Alzheimer’s disease**

OXFORD, Miss. – On his last day as University of Mississippi Museum director, Albert Sperath received something more meaningful than the customary gold watch.

Sperath’s parting “gift” was the opportunity to assist in the installation of the abstract sculpture “Bardo of Rose.” Famed artist Roy Tamboli’s piece of work has a permanent home on an island of land on the museum’s west side. A public reception for the artist will be announced at a later date.

“This feels like coming in first in a race,” said Sperath, who retired June 30. He and Robert “Bob” Pekala, the museum’s technical assistant, helped Tamboli balance and stabilize the sculpture on its pedestal after it was mounted using a forklift.

The sculpture’s owner, Wilbrod “Will” St. Amand Jr., UM professor emeritus of biology, offered earlier this year to give it to the museum through the UM Foundation’s Friends of the Museum program. After some discussion, the gift offer was accepted, Sperath said.

Neither a bust nor a statue, “Bardo of Rose” is an extremely personal piece for Tamboli. Standing 108 inches tall and weighing roughly 300 pounds, the steel-and-glass artwork symbolizes the artist’s mother and her experiences in caring for Mario Tamboli, her late husband and Roy Tamboli’s father, who died three years ago from Alzheimer’s disease.

bardo02.jpg

**Sculptor Roy Tamboli (left) gets some assistance from UM Museum Technical Assistant Bob Pekala in installing “Bardo of Rose”.** UM photo by Nathan Latil.

“Bardo’ is a Buddhist term literally meaning ‘in-between,’” Roy Tamboli said. “The ring in the piece represents the circle of life. The break in the ring speaks of the gap in relationships created by the disease itself and the patient’s loss of memory. The gap is bridged by coils representing the dedication and devotion of the patient’s caregiver.

“The twisted coil near the top symbolizes the stress and trauma of living with someone who has Alzheimer’s. Finally, the glass globe at the very top represents the pearl of joy found in the surrender of acceptance.”

St. Amand met Tamboli and his mother more than a decade ago when the two began attending the Alzheimer’s Caregivers Support Group of the Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging, which has been meeting monthly in Oxford for more than 25 years.

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OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation’s capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy’s new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying “thank you.” “It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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#### Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

bardo01.jpg

**Former UM Museum Director Albert Sperath (left) shares a moment with (from left) sculptor Roy Tamboli, his mother Rose Tamboli, and donor Will St. Amand.** UM photo by Nathan Latil.

Having experienced the loss of his own wife, sister and mother-in-law to the disease, St. Amand found many shared experiences with the Tamboli family.

"For years Roy, who lives in Memphis, has brought his mother, who lives in Sardis, to our meetings," St. Amand said. "His love and dedication to his parents have impacted me and many others as well."

Though "Bardo of Rose" has appeared in exhibitions in many cities around the country, Tamboli said he is pleased that it has found a permanent home at the university and in the Oxford community.

"I wanted it to be here because of Dr. (JoAnn) O'Quin and her support group," Tamboli said. "She always loved this sculpture. Therefore, I think this was the most appropriate place for it to live, where she and others can enjoy it." O'Quin, UM professor of social work and pharmacy administration, is coordinator of the Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group.

Sperath said that beyond the artistry of Tamboli's sculpture, he hopes it will be a bridge of understanding and inspiration between the general public and those

whose lives are touched by Alzheimer's.

"Having this piece installed on my last day here is my crowning achievement. What a perfect end to my time as director," Sperath said.

University Museum, Fifth Street and University Avenue, is open to the public 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1-4:30 p.m. Sunday. For more information, call 662-915-7073 or visit <http://www.olemiss.edu/museum/>

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