

By OLIVIA KIERS / October 15, 12:00 AM

## Boston Accent: Partners in Art

Two years ago, a stained glass window triptych by 19th-century American artist John La Farge was displayed at the Boston International Fine Art Show in a state of mid-restoration. Today, this window is fully restored and showcased in the exhibition John La Farge and the Recovery of the Sacred at Boston College's McMullen Museum of Art through December 13. "The great stained glass windows are dazzlers," says Nancy Netzer, director of the McMullen.

As visitors experience the dazzling color inside the McMullen this fall, they will also be treated to the beautiful foliage and rolling hills of Boston College. The collegiate atmosphere embodies the McMullen's approach. Since the museum's opening in 1993, "there was this wonderful spirit of cooperation," Netzer explains. "We organize our museum around faculty research...and use our museum as an arena for sharing that with the larger public."

John La Farge and the Recovery of the Sacred stems from chief curator Jeffery Howe's interest in La Farge's search for "the sacred" in his art and travels. Howe "wanted to think about the man who wrote so much, who thought so deeply about the visual and its relation to the spiritual," says Netzer. Netzer thinks that visitors will be surprised by the range of artwork represented. One of her personal favorite pieces, for example, is a watercolor study of "an aesthete" enjoying a Japanese landscape, possibly a self-portrait of the artist during his travels.

Coming full circle, this year's BIFAS benefits the McMullen at its annual gala on Thursday, October 22, and hosts a presentation by Howe on "The Light of Memory: John La Farge and Stained Glass" at 3 p.m. on Sunday, October 25. Netzer says, "We were very pleased when the La Farge windows were displayed at the BIFAS two years ago. The McMullen and its supporters...have an especially warm feeling for the [event], and very high regard for the dealers who show there." This year's show is also an opportunity for the McMullen to share progress on its expansion project to a new location at 2101 Commonwealth Ave. in Brighton, which will give the museum more gallery space, better parking and better access to public transportation.