

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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MCDERMOTT FOUNDATION ADDS TO TEXTILE COLLECTION

DALLAS — March 21, 1996 — The Eugene McDermott Foundation — whose many contributions to UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas have helped make it an aesthetically pleasing place to work, study or visit for medical care — is again enhancing the medical center's environment.

The foundation recently gave the medical center \$125,000 to purchase, mount and install a number of new textiles for the James W. Aston Ambulatory Care Center and Zale Lipshy University Hospital. The foundation has selected and donated hundreds of artworks to UT Southwestern during the past three decades. Several of the new textiles will be placed in Aston's Center for Bone and Joint Disorders. Another group of textiles will be placed in offices and other locations throughout University Hospital.

Approximately 60 pieces are scheduled to be installed beginning in late spring. They represent the latest contributions to an increasingly impressive textile collection begun at UT Southwestern in the late 1980s. The McDermott Foundation has provided textiles for the lobby, offices, dining area and patient rooms at University Hospital, as well as the lobby, clinics and offices in Aston and the Charles Cameron Sprague Clinical Science Building.

Margaret McDermott, Mr. McDermott's widow, has been the guiding force behind the acquisitions, working closely with Carol Robbins, curator of New World and Pacific cultures at the Dallas Museum of Art. Ms. Robbins said the foundation began selecting the textiles in 1986, in preparation for the furnishing of University Hospital. She said Mrs. McDermott has taken several trips to visit dealers around the country and the world to inspect and select the works. She has displayed a keen interest in every aspect of the project, from selection to installation.

The new textiles in University Hospital are, like many of the other textiles now seen there, from Asia. Approximately 20 pieces destined for the bone and joint center consist primarily of African textiles. The African works include garments and embroidered panels with complex designs, which functioned as a form of currency at one time in parts of Zaire,

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Ms. Robbins said.

Mrs. McDermott and the foundation have placed textiles from particular cultures in different locations around the medical center. The University Hospital lobby contains works from the Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Bali, silk pieces with brocaded patterning. Other areas of the hospital include pieces from Japan, China and India. The Sprague Building includes representations of the batik traditions of Indonesia. Many of these works have stylized creatures and allusions to the sea, Ms. Robbins said. The Aston lobby includes blankets and rugs acquired from the Southwestern United States, as well as a set of hand-carved, textured maple panels by Dallas artist Richard Wincorn. He based the woodwork on a 19th-century Navajo blanket design. Tibetan saddle-covers, featuring rich colors and designs, are found on the walls of the Eugene McDermott Center for Pain Management.

Ms. Robbins said many of the textiles date from the 19th century or early part of this century. The foundation has made an effort to choose textiles that were created by hand for use in that particular culture. Many were made originally for ceremonial occasions. A large number of the pieces chosen by Mrs. McDermott and the foundation are garments, including head cloths from Java, long skirts and shoulder cloths from Indonesia, and veils from Thailand, Ms. Robbins said.

Mary McDermott Cook, president of the foundation and the McDermotts' daughter, said her mother has always had a "great eye" and believes art is capable of inspiring positive thoughts and raising spirits. When Mrs. McDermott began considering how the newly built University Hospital should be decorated, she wanted to avoid using the standard framed prints so common in hospitals.

"The medical center has given my mother a chance to continue collecting," Mrs. Cook said. "She and my father saw such potential in UT Southwestern many years ago, and my mother is pleased to have seen it grow into such a quality medical center."

Dr. Kern Wildenthal, UT Southwestern president, said the faculty, students and staff of the medical center, along with the center's patients, appreciate the generosity of the McDermotts. "Once again, the McDermotts and their foundation have found a way to make UT Southwestern a more attractive place to be," he said. "Their great generosity and encouragement have contributed in great part to UT Southwestern's progress."

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