

Memorial Service Planned for Jessie Poesch

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A memorial celebration in honor of art history professor emerita Jessie J. Poesch, who died on April 23, will be held on Monday (May 9) at 2:30 p.m. in Rogers Memorial Chapel on the uptown campus.



Longtime art professor Jessie Poesch, who passed away on April 23, retired from Tulane in 1992 but continued to work in her office on the uptown campus. (Photo from the Newcomb Art Department)

Inurnment will take place in her hometown of Postville, Iowa, at a later date. The Jessie J. Poesch Memorial Fund is being established to support the work of the Newcomb Art Department and Newcomb Art Gallery.

[Poesch](#), who was 88, was a pioneering historian of American art and architecture, perhaps best known for her definitive books on Southern art, including the catalogue and related exhibition in 1984, *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women, 1895-1940*.

A second, expanded edition of that book was developed in 2003 with friend and colleague Sally Main, titled *Newcomb Pottery and Crafts, An Educational Enterprise for Women, 1895-1940* (2003).

Main, who is senior curator of the Newcomb Art Gallery, said Poesch's contributions to the university were far-reaching, and not only in research and scholarship.

“The students she trained and encouraged have made their own statements in the field of art history as museum directors, curators and educators,” Main said. “Jessie was proud of each and every one of them.”

Poesch joined the faculty in 1963 and officially retired in 1992. That year, an endowed art professorship was established in her honor, and [Poesch](#) was named Humanist of the Year by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. Earlier this year she was named a Fellow of the Society of Architectural Historians for her significant contributions to the field.

A guest curator for several major exhibitions of Southern art, Poesch continued her scholarly work into retirement. In April of this year she published an article on former Newcomb College art faculty member Will Henry Stevens in *American Art Review*, and a catalogue for an exhibition on Stevens for the Spartanburg Art Museum.