Art Association Builds Visual Arts In Fiesta

The Lafayette Art Association is now in the 21st year of being a cultural asset to our community. Organized in 1959 by approximately 60 civic leaders and a few local artists, the membership has grown to over 300 artists and craftsmen from seven Southern states. The aim of the organization has been to build interest in the visual arts in the community.

One of the ways this interest has grown is by the annual Art and Craft Fiesta each November at the municipal auditorium. This show has grown in stature and attracts some of the finest artists and craftsmen in the South. Currently, this show is listed as one of the 24 best in the country by "Sunshine Artists-USA" a national magazine of Art & Craft shows. This show, as well as all of the LAA shows, is free to the public. The Spring show attracts many of these same artisans, and this year will be held May 4-6 on the grounds of Blackham Coliseum.

The Art Association, in addition to sponsoring these art activities, has also been one of the prime contributors of funds for visual arts to the community in the form of art books, materials, and equipment to the high schools, public library, Art Center, Alleman New Hope Center for retarded citizens, and to USL.

This year, complete sets of nine cassette-slide watercolor workshops are being donated to each of the high schools and to the public library. These were purchased from the profits of the last Art Fiesta. In past years the association depended very heavily on help from the local merchants and banking institutions to finance their art shows, and the local people supported them fully in these endeavors, allowing the show profits to be returned to the schools, etc. Through the efforts of the association members, the shows are now self-supporting, and the LAA is grateful to all for the past help given them in their early struggling years. One of the still incompletes projects of the LAA is to have an Art Association building to house a gallery of local art and crafts, as well as to have a place for monthly meetings and art and craft workshops.

Although membership in the association is open only from mid-November through January, visitors and guests are welcome to attend the monthly meetings, where demonstrations, lectures or films are part of the meeting programs. Membership rolls for 1980 will be open at the November Art Fiesta and interested persons may apply at that time.