

~ A BONUS SECTION FOR OUR NORTH CAROLINA READERS ~

Carolina Living People & Places™

From Italy to Pittsboro

Artist Siglinda Scarpa found home and
a sense of community in the heart of
North Carolina. —page 3



Asheville
BUILDING A
HOUSE TOGETHER

Maiden
HIGH SCHOOL
FOOTBALL LEGACY

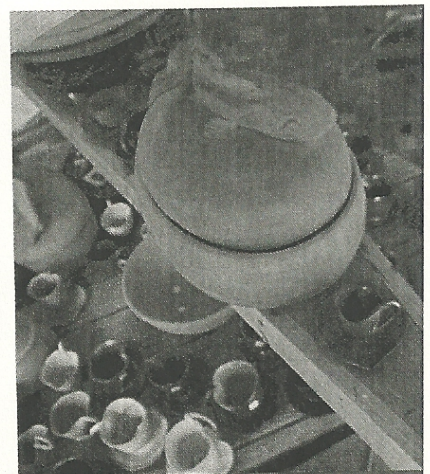
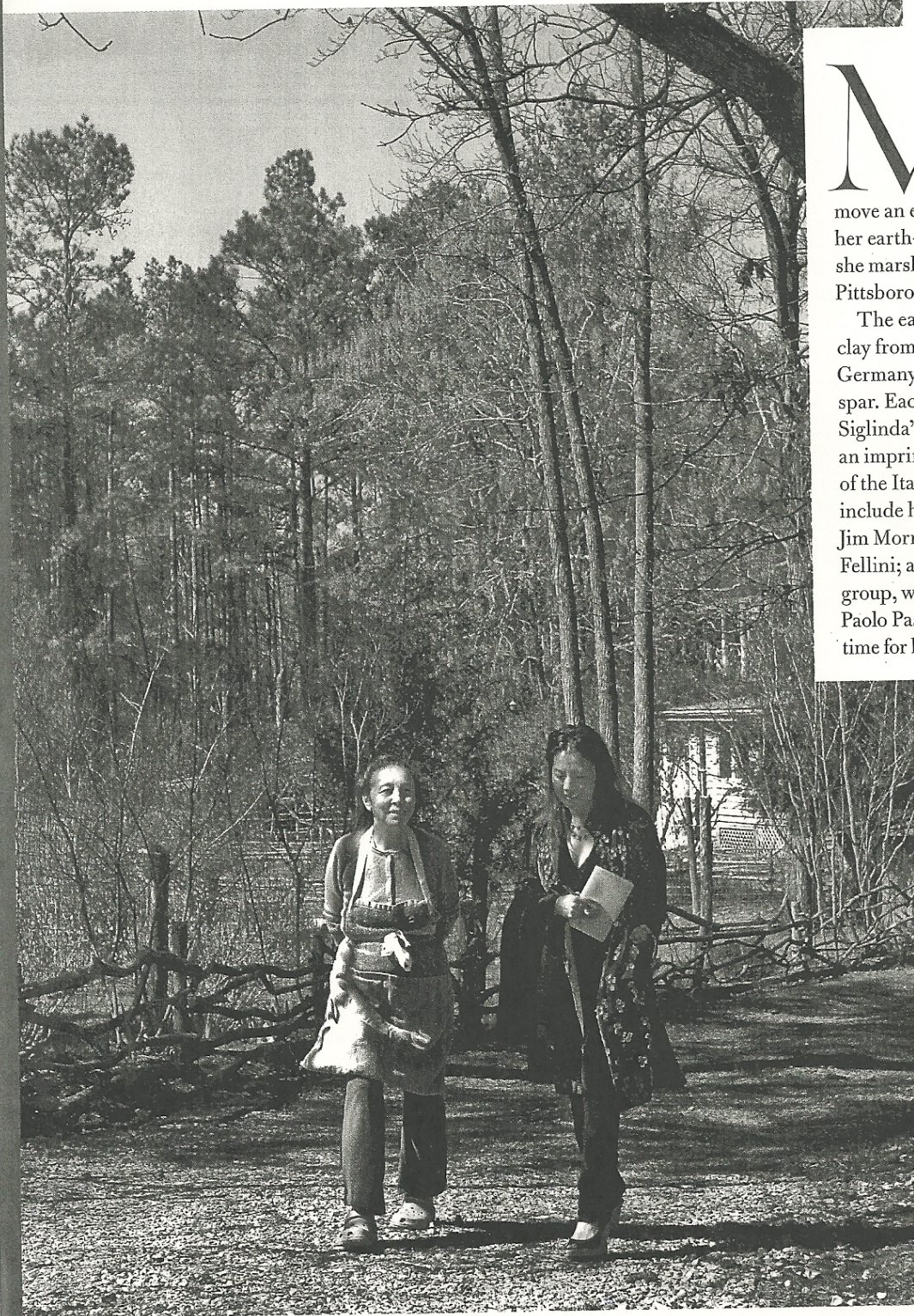
Durham
IT'S A MYSTERY

Rooted in North Carolina

With a talent born in the Old Country, an Italian potter's creativity springs to life in the Piedmont.
By **Kim Sunée**, photography **Joshua Carpenter**

Meeting sculptor and poet Siglinda Scarpa, you sense immediately that, though she is petite, this Italian dynamo can move an entire army with just the snap of her earth-covered fingers—especially as she marshals workers around her 16-acre Pittsboro property.

The earth on her hands is usually clay from around the world—England, Germany, as well as local talcs and feldspar. Each part of the earth is important for Siglinda's own clay formulas, and, in a way, an imprint of her life. Born in the foothills of the Italian Alps, Siglinda's adventures include having spent time chatting with Jim Morrison; editing films for Federico Fellini; and participating in an artists' group, which included Carlo Levi and Pier Paolo Pasolini. She also managed to find time for kids and grandkids. *➔ turn to page 4*



LEFT: Siglinda Scarpa (left) and *Cottage Living* Food Editor Kim Sunée enjoy a fall day at the potter's home in Pittsboro. **ABOVE:** Skirted teacups and clay cookware demonstrate Siglinda's talents as displayed at her Goathouse Gallery.

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art Siglinda from New York. The state was looking for: ng community; and a studio. ys, smiling. animals and my ish is accented of the Italian ration of love. ity here. I love 'm able to do o lives in Italy,

gerie of her place— ock of guinea a I visited her e Gallery, she dent volun- chapel Hill e more than l, many of ion. ,” she says, riends. “And

she muses, “is color with quality and depth. For me, it has to have real personality. Glaze is not like underwear—just there to cover the clay. It should be part of the piece you are making. It depends on texture and form. It can’t be flat. Not a stupid pink or just a green.”

Each piece Siglinda creates displays real personality. There’s harmony and simplicity to the designs but also humor—a goose with breasts, a fish flying out of a bowl.

“I’m not good at telling jokes,” she assures me, “so my sense of humor comes out in my work. There’s a whimsy in nature, especially in animals, and that inspires my designs.”

In her gallery, you will find teapots, teacups with “skirts,” and beautiful clay cooking vessels. “For making pots, I need a clay that is not going to crack on the stove,” she says, gliding her hand over a wide, deep dish with a lid covered in clay fig leaves. Even non-cooks find it hard to resist buying everything in Siglinda’s gallery.

Siglinda also designs plates and bowls and platters. “I would like to find a company to reproduce a line of my dinnerware,”



RIGHT: Siglinda's spacious kitchen displays evidence of the things she loves: pottery, animals, and cooking. **LEFT:** The artist's home matches her humble spirit, but the land around it is rich with fruit trees and plentiful gardens of herbs and vegetables.



she says. “It would allow me to have some resources to help the animals and also let me work on my sculpture.”

Siglinda makes me some tea and, in true Italian (and Southern) fashion, insists I eat something before leaving. She takes me out to the garden filled with roses and pansies, lettuce, arugula, pumpkins, and more. “That’s rafano,” she tells me, making me repeat her rolling Rs. “Italian for horseradish. I take fresh carrots and make a sauce of yogurt, cream, salt, pepper, and grated



Find Out More

Kim Sunée, Food Editor for *Cottage Living*, is the author of *Trail of Crumbs: Hunger, Love, and the Search for Home*. Learn more and watch a video of Kim and Siglinda at www.kimsunee.com.

rafano. Add just a bit of lemon. It's delicious."

We pick some herbs and walk through a gathering of fruit trees—sour cherry, pear, peach, and crab apple. It's easy to see how she came here and never looked back. "In the winter," she says, "jasmine blooms everywhere."

When I ask her what she loves about this state, she says, "North Carolina is a little piece of the earth, and people respect the earth here. I think we should all do it—quit cutting down trees and building walls. When people don't know what else to do,

they build walls. It's so lonely."

Once you step into the world of Siglinda Scarpa, you are never the same. There is a transformation that takes place, an evolution of the human spirit. It is very difficult to not be inspired by her enthusiasm for the earth and the sky and the colors of her adopted land.

She closes her eyes and takes a deep breath. "Call the studio, and tell the kids to come for pasta in 20 minutes," she tells me. She starts peeling onions and gestures

for me to fill a large pot with water.

"I love the fall here," she says. "November brings us all these beautiful root vegetables." As she brushes the earth off fresh mushrooms, I realize that, for all her talents, Siglinda would not know how to begin building a wall; here in North Carolina, she has learned to put down roots. ●

For more on Siglinda's animals for adoption and to purchase her cooking vessels and pottery, visit www.siglindascarpa.com.