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The University of Alabama

UA Professor and Art Historian Joseph Bolt Dies

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – Dr. Joseph Sullivan Bolt, who served for 36 years as a professor in the department of art within the College of Arts and Sciences at The University of Alabama, died Tuesday, July 9. He was 81.

Bolt, a painter and art historian, was recognized for his extensive knowledge of 20th century art and as an award-winning teacher. In 1984, Bolt received the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award, given by UA's National Alumni Association.

Bolt was active throughout his career with the Southeastern College Art Conference, serving terms as vice president and as a member of its board of directors. In 1986 the organization honored 37 years of service to it with a lifetime membership.

Bolt's scholarly work focused on American attitudes and criticism of European art and comparisons of art and art criticism in America and Europe. He published articles in the New Catholic Encyclopedia, the Dictionary of American Biography, the Encyclopedia Britannica, the North Carolina Museum of Art Bulletin, and the Southeastern College Art Conference Review.

An avid painter, Bolt exhibited in the North Carolina Artists Annual Exhibitions and in The University of Alabama's Annual Art Faculty Exhibitions.

Born in Laurens, S.C., in 1921, Bolt received a bachelor of fine arts degree in art from the University of Georgia in 1942. Following three years of service in the United States Air Force where he was stationed in Scotland, he obtained master of fine arts degrees in art history and in sociology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1949; and a doctor of philosophy degree in art history from Harvard University in 1962.

He joined The University of Alabama faculty in 1949 and continued to teach in the department of art following his retirement in 1988.

Bolt is survived by his wife, Carolyn McCarthy Bolt, and daughter-in-law, Peggy Bolt Mitchell. He is preceded in death by his son,

Flannagan Bolt, who died in 1988.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Joseph S. and Carolyn Bolt Endowed Support Fund, P.O. Box 870101, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487.