

CURRENT EVENTS:

PICKENS COUNTY MUSEUM'S THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL JURIED SOUTH CAROLINA ARTIST'S EXHIBITION

The Pickens County Cultural Commission is pleased to host the Pickens County Museum of Art & History's "Thirty-Third Annual Juried South Carolina Artist's Exhibition". A reception and awards ceremony was held on Saturday April 28. The exhibition is on view until June 7, 2012.

Juror for this year's competition, Marcia Wood has been active in the arts since 1983, when she opened her first gallery in Atlanta, GA. In 1993 she founded Marcia Wood Gallery in Atlanta's Virginia Highland neighborhood. The gallery re-located to Peachtree Street in Buckhead in 1998, and has been located in the historic downtown loft district of Castleberry Hill since 2004. Wood currently sits on the board of Flux Projects and the advisory board of the Atlanta Printmaker's Studio. Representing emerging, mid-career and established artists who are based locally, nationally and abroad, Marcia Wood is dedicated to the exhibition, promotion and support of contemporary art. The mission of the gallery is to assist exceptional young artists in the onset of their careers as well as represent all of its artists with a commitment to a long-term vision and a specific focus on each artist's work. The gallery also considers it important to bring significant exhibitions by national and international artists to the Atlanta audience.

Wood spent the day of April 13 looking at, and contemplating 361 works of art representing 194 South Carolina artisans. The vast array of paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, ceramics, fiber and other mediums made for the difficult task of selecting works for, and eliminating works from, the final show. The impressive final selection of 118 works of art represents 101 individuals currently creating visual art in this state.

About the jury, Ms Wood said, "The invitation to come to the Pickens County Museum of Art and History to jury the Thirty-Third Annual South Carolina Artists Exhibition came as a welcome opportunity to explore an area I was not familiar with and maybe make some discoveries along the way. At the end of the day, I was reluctant to end my afternoon at the museum, looking at the work of so very many interesting and varied artists. I would like to thank, and congratulate, the approximately 200 artists, who submitted artwork in all range of media and style, for the dedication and hard work that being an artist is. It is not an easy path and it requires courage, honesty, passion, patience, commitment and lots of time, money and effort."

Wood continued, "The many artists who submitted work to the exhibition represent a wide constituency including those who are well known in their careers, to those just emerging, and artists new to the state, entering into the exhibition for the first time. It was invigorating to see the vitality of the art being produced in South Carolina and I look forward to returning and enjoying the riches of the artists of the state have to offer."

The awards for this year's competition represent not only a cross section of what is taking place in the visual arts of South Carolina today, but are also a fair representation of the variety of artists actively "at work". Ms. Wood chose the digital inkjet printed photograph, "*Woods Along the Tyger River*" by Taylor's Zane Logan as the First Place Award. Second Place was presented to Dawnyelle Moore of Liberty for her assemblage, "*Contents Flammable*". The Third Place honor went to Seneca's John Schaeffer for his charcoal and white pastel drawing, "*Light of the Soul*".

Juror's Choice Awards were bestowed upon David M. Benson of Spartanburg for his mixed media collage, "*Garden of Earthly Delights*" and to Taylor's J. Michael Johnson for his photograph, "*America's Cross*".

In addition to the above awards, Wood presented Honorable Mention Awards, denoting artwork of special interest, be presented to: Jim Creal of Spartanburg for his lithograph, "*Daufuskie Island: Palmetto Stage*"; to Traveler Rest's Sylvia Suzowsky Idelson for her photograph, "*It's A Wrap*"; to Peter J. Kaniaris of Anderson for his mixed media, "*Painter's Rag: Contingent and in the Mix*"; to Greenville's Lois Silk for her sculpture, "*Dancers in Blue - Edgar Degas 1890*"; and to Matt West of Walhalla for his mixed media sculpture, "*Kudzu Cultivator*".

The Museum's Director, Allen Coleman chose the graphite drawing, "*Woody and Buck*" by Ryan Heuvel of Easley as the recipient of the 2012 Director's Choice Award.

Thanks to the kind sponsorships of Pickens County & the Pickens County Cultural Commission along with Doreen Heimlich, Shirley Sarlin, Connie & June Bowers, Larissa Heimlich, Philip & Gilda Hendricks, John & Judy Rozelle, the Susan B. Benjamin Memorial Fund and the Seth Schafer Heimlich Memorial Fund, the Pickens County Museum selected nine works that, within the scope of their mission directive, will be added to the museum's permanent collection.

The Pickens County Cultural Commission's Purchase Award honoring Shirley Sarlin was presented to Christie West of Denmark for his marquetry (inlaid wood), "*Will You Wait For Me?*"

The 2012 Susan B. Benjamin Memorial Purchase Awards were presented to Jim Creal of Spartanburg for his lithograph, "*Daufuskie Island: Palmetto Stage*" and to Easley's Bill Jordan for his photograph, "*The Miller Takes a Break*".

The 2012 Seth Schafer Heimlich Memorial Purchase Award was presented to Richie Wilkinson of Greenville for his pastel drawing, *"Dusk in the Desert"*.

Additional Museum Purchase Awards were made to Taylor's J. Michael Johnson for his Photograph, *"America's Cross"*; to Dorothy Meredith of Salem for her natural fiber weaving, *"Deer Grass Vase"*; to B. J. Turner of Laurens for her oil painting, *"Pumpkin Fest"*; and to Easley's Travis Wood for his reduction woodcut print, *"Bandit"*.

In addition to the seventeen works of art singled out for special mention, there are one-hundred and one others on the walls and pedestals throughout the museum's Sealevel Gallery, G-1 Gallery and Focus Gallery. No matter where your individual taste in art may lead, you will find some satisfaction in this exhibition. The variety of work represented is a generous reflection of the community of artists presently at work in South Carolina.

The Pickens County Museum of Art & History is funded in part by Pickens County, members and friends of the museum and a grant from the South Carolina Arts Commission, which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Located at the corner of Hwy. 178 at 307 Johnson Street in Pickens SC, the museum is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Admission is free but donations are welcomed.

For more information please contact the museum at (864) 898-5963.