

# Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, Offers Exhibition With Three Artists

The Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, will present an exhibition by a trio of outstanding artists, Chotsani Elaine Dean, Craig Crawford and Antonio Modesto Milian, on view from Oct. 22 through Jan. 8, 2021.



Work by Chotsani Elaine Dean

Chotsani Elaine Dean a ceramicist former of Anderson College in the upstate of South Carolina and now an Assistant Professor of Ceramics at the University of Minnesota. Dean notes: "The many, complex layered realities of the history and visual archives of my communal ancestry form and impart creative purpose in my studio practice and research. Foremost in my research are quilts from Slavery (chattel enslavement) thru Antebellum periods, made on and off of cotton plantations by enslaved and free blacks, through mid-20th century. The visual and historical synthesis of various craft traditions, historical events and commodities; quilts, the cotton trade, Civil Rights Movement and the vast realm of textiles, inform and shape my visual ideas and approach to ceramics."

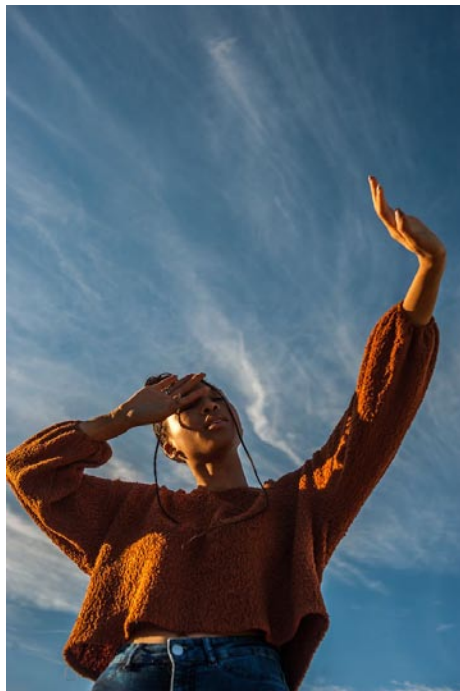


Work by Craig Crawford

Craig Crawford is a painter who earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of South Carolina. After graduation, he moved to Washington, DC, where he apprenticed with conservator Charles Olin, former head of Painting Conservation at the Smithsonian Museum and the National Portrait Gallery. Crawford became an associate conservator, specializing in American landscape and French Barbizon works. Crawford later returned to South Carolina and opened his own conservation practice.

Moody and evocative, Crawford's psychologically charged paintings explore his deep-rooted emotional response to his surroundings in rural South Carolina. Crawford notes: "Interpreting the landscape that I am familiar with through the use of multiple techniques, composition, and a great appreciation for 19th century American landscape painting is what interests me. In 18th and 19th century American landscape painting artists conveyed a sense of mystery and intimacy that comes from the interplay between realism and personal emotional history. I enjoy painting the Lowcountry landscape and swamps along rivers since I grew up in Aiken, SC."

Anthony Modesto Milian is a New York City transplant living in Greenville, SC. His photography is the vehicle by which he portrays the human experience and individual stories. He first got his introduction to artistic storytelling by creating the street photography blog "Faces of the Upstate". After the untimely passing of his brother Milian began focusing on telling his own story as an Afrolatinx. He is an inaugural fellow at the Greenville Center for Creative Arts, has served on the creative team of TedX Greenville, and completed "Seeing through photographs", a program sponsored by P.S.1 MoMa.



Work by Antonio Modesto Milian

Milian notes: "That he hopes his work will have a larger impact than he alone can have, and open up a larger dialogue than me just talking. When people see my work something else happens. They're more engaged in asking what experience informs that work, which opens up a dialogue about Black Lives Matter, police brutality, community policing, and things like that."

The ongoing effects of COVID-19 have forced many institutions such as the Sumter County Gallery of Art to reschedule exhibitions, insure all precautions and cancel classes and receptions. Still we move forward and on July 30th we opened our most popular exhibition a little late this year, the *Sumter Artists' Guild (SAG) Exhibition*. We took in 124 pieces and it is one of the strongest SAG exhibitions in many years. The judge, Robert Keith IV picked an outstanding group of winners: Best of Show – Sylvia Pickell's quilt *Snail Trail*, First Place – J. Michael McGuirt's dreamlike painting *Onward We Go!*, Second Place - Vicki Hagner's mosaic *Wing Tips*, Third Place – Kerry Strathman's landscape painting *Fading Day, Rev. Carter Road Sunset*, Honorable Mentions – John Quinton Dingle's family portrait *Sleeping Beauty*, John Cotner's mixed media *Reef* and Lisa Melton's digital photograph *Bite The Bullet*.



Work by Sylvia Pickell, Sumter Artists' Guild Best of Show

The gallery is elated to be able to present the Sumter Artists' Guild exhibition when so many other cultural institutions are not yet able to open. So many people (not all at once) have come to view the exhibition. It feels like a bit of a return to normalcy – and art embodies optimism and makes people happy. For now, that is enough. The Guild exhibition will be up through Oct. 16, 2020.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the gallery at 803/775-0543 or visit ([www.sumtergallery.com](http://www.sumtergallery.com)).

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