

# Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

## When You're Almost In, But People Think You're Out, But You Still Might Be

Last month I talked about getting our first ad from the Triangle area of NC and our hopes that it was just the first of many. Well, it turns out it wasn't really our first - way back in the late 1990s we had a few ads from that area for a short period of time. And when I say the Triangle I'm thinking Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill or Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh - if you like it that way. We hadn't had any ads from any of those cities in over 10 years and none since we started our new electronic version of the paper.

But it turns out maybe we did. I received an e-mail from one of the artists at the Hillsborough Gallery of Arts in Hillsborough, NC, and they wanted me to know that they think of themselves as part of the Triangle area. Hillsborough is the county seat of Orange County, home of Chapel Hill. Hillsborough is just a short drive from Chapel Hill and Durham. I'm sure I'd get the same logic from folks in Carrboro, Cary and Wake Forest - that they're part of the Triangle too. All are located in Orange, Durham or Wake Counties. But I asked in my return e-mail the \$64,000 question - do the folks in Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill feel that Hillsborough is part of the Triangle? That's the real question and knowing how some folks are about staking out their territory in the art world, my bet was that none of the big three would want to share. It's the same everywhere. There is never enough publicity, funding, or audience to satisfy everyone so competition is fierce and no one really wants to share - unless made to. And, in some ways I don't blame them.

But, from now on, *Carolina Arts* will now consider any art community in those

three counties to be part of the Triangle area of NC. Unless they contact us and say they want no part of it. We're here to do all we can for our supporters, whenever we can.

It's not the first time this has come up. A gallery in Fuquay-Varina, NC, asked to be listed with galleries in Raleigh in our gallery listings. Galleries in Davidson, NC, Cornelius, NC, and Pineville, NC, want to be listed with Charlotte, NC, galleries.

It goes the other way too. Some bedroom communities, which will go nameless, have asked us to take them out of the gallery listings of a larger community and give them a town or city heading of their own. The only problem we've had is when all the galleries involved don't agree on where they want to be included. And, I've yet to have anyone call (knock on wood) complaining that some gallery is included in one grouping and they don't belong there and they want me to move them out.

Here's something we wish people would call us about - galleries that you find in our gallery listings that are no longer open. We get those calls occasionally, but not often enough. I guess the last thing on a gallery owner's mind when they have to close their gallery is to call us to inform us to remove their gallery from our listings.

Of course there was one time when an unhappy artist who was asked to leave a gallery called to tell us that the gallery was closing. It's a good thing we check all those cases out before we remove anyone. We verify all info about closed galleries before we remove them.

There was also a case where an advertiser called to tell us they were closing and we needed to stop running their ad. So we stopped running the ad and removed

their gallery listing and I stopped going there to deliver papers (back in the day). Six months later I turned the wrong way and ended up going by that gallery and it looked like they were open. I called to find out what the skinny was and got someone who worked there instead of the owner and when I asked that I thought they were closing - that employee almost fainted and asked me what was up.

I told them that six months ago the owner told me they were closing and to pull their ad. Turns out the owner just didn't feel good about telling me to pull the ad as they were having to tighten their budget. I was amazed that it was easier to tell me they were closing instead of telling me they were cutting back on advertising.

Hey, we all have to deal with the bottom line, but don't tell me you're closing if you want to stop advertising or have to. Tell me your ads were so successful that you just don't need them anymore. Tell me your ad is working so well that you might have to hire more staff and you just can handle managing twenty employees at a time. Tell me you didn't like my last commentary, but don't tell me you're closing. That can cause a chain reaction of events that could eventually lead to your real closing.

You can even tell me you just don't think your ad is working for you. Believe me, we've heard that a few times over the last 25 years - many times after someone just ran their ad one month.

Unlike some military commanders think - we can handle the truth. And, we're here to please.

So, the lesson of the month is - look to see where your gallery is listed in our gallery listings to make sure you're where you want to be and tell us if you're not where you want to be. And, while you're checking the listings out, if you see a gallery listed that is closed - e-mail or call us to let us know - we might need to remove someone. You could also let us know that we're not listing a gallery that we should. Remember - the more galleries there are in one area the more attractive that area


will be to visitors who are looking to get the most out of their gas money.

I'm not saying cars and art are anything alike, but car dealers cluster for a reason. People like to shop around, they have different tastes, and they like convenience.

## The Numbers

Once again this last month we saw over 81,000 downloads of the Feb. 2012 issue of *Carolina Arts*. That's now three months in a row where we had more than 80,000 downloads in a month. There was no surge in downloads in the bottom half of the month, but we did set one record during that time. On Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012, we set an all time record for visits to our website in one day with over 4,200 visitors. The day before and the day after saw less than 3,000 visitors. What attracted so many to the website on that Saturday? Your guess is as good as mine.

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"Maddie and the Horse Who Loved Stars"  
Mike Smith - Watercolor

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Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881-1973), *Girl before a Mirror*, 1932, oil on canvas, 64 x 51 1/4 inches. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mrs. Simon Guggenheim. © 2011 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954), *Dance (I)*, 1909, oil on canvas, 102 1/2 x 153 1/2. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller in honor of Alfred H. Barr, Jr. © 2011 Succession H. Matisse, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Andy Warhol (American, 1928-1987), *Self-Portrait*, 1966, silkscreen ink on synthetic polymer paint on nine canvases, each canvas 22 1/2 x 22 1/2 inches, overall 67 3/4 x 67 3/4 inches. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Philip Johnson. © 2011 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

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