

# A Few Words From Down Under

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the public on the weekend. Unfortunately the issue came out after the fact.

When I first spoke to the organizers, I was told the purpose of the project was primarily to attract attention to, and inform the public at large about, the visual arts; to break down the barrier between Artist and Appreciator; to showcase the diversity of creative talent that is practiced in the cities, country towns and regional areas in this State. The object was to demonstrate to all and sundry, but mostly to the uninitiated, that fine art is more than just expensive items displayed in fancy galleries or sold for big bucks at well-publicised auctions; that craft involves the controlled manipulation of different media into many forms that can be functional or purely decorative; that visual artists are ordinary working people, often with families to support, and their output is an important part of our culture and life style. It was a great concept but they were preaching to the converted. The project saw organizers take giant steps within their own bureaucracy while the wider community took only a few baby steps toward understanding art and artists.

The lesson that needs to be learned at the close of this project is how it celebrated 'organization' more than art. The concept was to collect a group of artists and take them toward the single goal of getting their art out to the public. But the organizers were so involved with 'collecting' they lost sight of the end zone.

They failed to achieve their initial aim, which was to 'attract attention and inform the public'. Although the project did showcase the diversity of talent, more thanks go to the individual artists who did it themselves than the organizers who couldn't draw a conclusion, much less paint a picture of reality, or carve a swathe through hyperbole.

All too often, professional organizers get their rewards at the start of a project instead of the end. If they had to wait for a calculation of outcomes before counting their income, perhaps they would do more to maintain a continued interest in an event while it is current. I suppose the bit that really rankles is when the final report on this project is delivered to the powers-that-be it will be so rosy even those without hay fever will find their eyes watering.

Judith McGrath lives in Kalamunda, Western Australia, 25 minutes east of Perth. She received a BA in Fine Art and History from the University of Western Australia. McGrath lectured in Art History and Visual Literacy at various colleges around the Perth area, and was an art reviewer for *The Sunday Times* and *The Western Review* both published in the Perth area. McGrath was also a freelance writer and reviewer for various art magazines in Australia. McGrath is currently enjoying retirement.

## Newberry College in Newberry, SC, Features Works by Robert & Hannah Poe

The Wessels Library Gallery, on the campus of Newberry College, in Newberry, SC, is featuring the work of Robert Poe and Hannah Poe, both from Greenwood, SC, through Mar. 24, 2014.

Robert Poe is Professor Emeritus at Lander University and received his formal education at the University of North Carolina, the Brooklyn Museum School in New York, and the University of E. Tennessee. Hannah Poe received her BFA from the University of North Carolina, an M.ed from Lander University, and has participated in the Professional Pottery Program at Piedmont Tec in Edgefield, SC, as well as workshops at Penland School of Crafts in NC.



Work by Hanna Poe

leaving space around them to find their own borders, freeing the artist from the discrete edge of a stretched canvas. His photographs share some of the same concerns for color, texture, and formal abstract composition that one sees in his paintings.

Hannah Poe's found object sculptures reveal a high degree of sensitivity to the formal relationship between color and form as well as very refined craftsmanship. Her work is elegant. These found objects are arranged and joined in such a way that makes every element feel as though they had always been together or were intrinsically meant to share the very space that they occupy in the sculpture. It is her eye for this connectedness of forms that produces harmony in her pieces. "Having always drawn and loved color, I am usually working on some idea, but the challenges of creating in 3 dimensions propels me into the actual activity. I cannot think my way through it; I must actually do it! What could be better?," says Hannah Poe,

Interestingly enough, there is only a subdued kinship in the artistic concerns of this husband and wife couple and so the joint show, however remarkably refined, includes a great deal of variety.

Much of the artwork will be available for purchase.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Wessels Library at 803/321-5229.



Work by Robert Poe

Robert Poe's work has always been experimental with compositional ideas and abstract subject matter. "I keep trying to surprise myself", he said. His paintings deal with formal abstract concepts - color, line quality, composition, yet his brushstrokes are often loose, emotionally charged and hint at an almost systematic geometry at the same time. There exists an internal dichotomy in his paintings, but to the artist's credit, far from being disturbing, it is pleasing. These marks that construct the image float in the centers of the canvases

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