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Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, SC, Presents Two Special Exhibitions

The Gibbes Museum of Art's commitment to contemporary art is celebrated in the special exhibitions, *John Westmark: Narratives* and *Beyond the Darkroom: Photography in the 21st Century*, on view from Apr. 4 through June 29, 2014.

These exhibitions examine the creative process of photography and painting in contemporary, southern art. These will be the final special exhibitions on view before the museum closes for renovations in July 2014. "Since the museum opened its doors in 1905, supporting contemporary art has been central to the Gibbes' mission. Our spring exhibitions further this mission by showcasing the great artistic talent of our region today," says Pam Wall, Curator of Exhibitions.



The Fireflies, 2013, by John Westmark, acrylic and paper sewing patterns on canvas, 70 x 87 inches. Image courtesy of the artist.

John Westmark, winner of the 2012 Factor Prize for Southern Art, weaves imaginative narratives into his large-scale paintings. He explores the human figure in dynamic ways, through his innovative use of text and paper sewing patterns collaged on canvas. Westmark's paintings depict strong courageous women, some portrayed as stoic martyrs and others as warriors engaged in conflicts of rebellion. The *Narratives* exhibi-



Ballroom, Charleston, from the *Aiken-Rhett House Series*, 2005, by Michael Eastman (American, b. 1947), C-print on paper (digital). Image courtesy of the Gibbes Museum of Art/ Carolina Art Association in honor of Francis X. McCann.

tion features a series of new work created specifically for the Gibbes installation.

"As a product of the American South, and its rich tradition of storytelling as a vehicle to impart a moral lesson or social enlightenment, I am interested in the role of stories and folklore in modern life," says Westmark. "This work references stories from a broad spectrum of humanity, and translates them into a visual narrative structure guided by the schematics of the store-bought sewing pattern. Domestic garment making is often looked upon as an intimate affair passed from one generation to the next, but once the pattern is used, it is tucked away or discarded. These paintings repurpose the garment pattern and its nostalgic aura into a storytelling template."

Beyond the Darkroom: Photography in the 21st Century, examines a variety of photography-based works acquired over the past ten years for the museum's permanent collection. Since the invention of photography in 1839, the medium has constantly evolved with the development of new technologies. In the 21st century, photographic processes have shifted from the darkroom to the digital world, bringing new possibilities to the medium. Ranging from the text and

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photo-based works of Carrie Mae Weems to the digital montages of Stephen Marc, the 2009 Factor Prize winner, this exhibition showcases the great innovation in photography today.

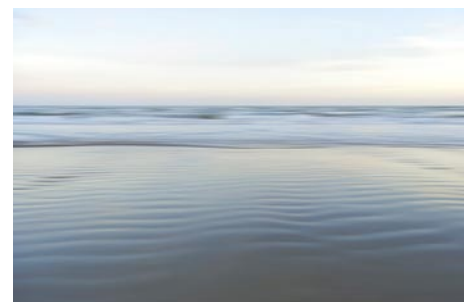
A number of related programs, tours and special events will be offered during

these exhibits. For full details visit (www.gibbesmuseum.org/events) or call 843/722-2706 x21.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 843/722-2706 or visit (www.gibbesmuseum.org).

City of North Charleston, SC, Offers Works by Susana Berdecio and Jazz Artists of Charleston Photographers

The City of North Charleston's Cultural Arts Department is pleased to present concurrent exhibitions at the North Charleston City Gallery, located at the Charleston Area Convention Center, in North Charleston, SC. On view from Apr. 3 - 30, 2014, the gallery will be featuring photographs by Susana Berdecio as well as Jazz Artists of Charleston's resident photographers. A reception will be held on Apr. 3, from 5-7pm.



Discovering a Sense of Place of Susana Berdecio

In *Discovering a Sense of Place*, Susana Berdecio presents a collection of photographs that capture the artist's vision of the unique Lowcountry landscape. Spending her childhood in Mexico and living most of her adult life in the western part of the United States, Berdecio became accustomed to photographing the vast open landscapes, tall mountains, dense forests, and winding rivers that surrounded her. Since moving to South Carolina five years ago, she has learned to adapt and adjust her techniques and artistic approach to connect to her new landscape, which she

describes as dense, lush, and full of seemingly chaotic forms.

"The light is spectacular, sometimes so bright that color is muted," she says. "The creeks, the marshes, the ocean, the clouds all offer an exquisite variety of light, tone, color and texture."

Berdecio spends hours exploring with her camera. She then sits down with her photographs to recreate them into images that reveal the feel of the landscape, the mood of the light, and the intricacy and movement of its details. "Sometimes the images require few changes," she explains. "Sometimes, the final result is just a small piece of the original capture where I have tried to recreate what I felt being there, adding all of the subjective elements from my past as I express how I have learned to see the Lowcountry."

See *Jazz - Jazz Artists of Charleston* presents a stunning visual perspective of Jazz Artists of Charleston (JAC) and Charleston Jazz Orchestra (CJO) events from over the past six years. The carefully curated collection of images includes photographs from Jazz Artists of Charleston's resident photographers Alice Keeney, Pricilla Thomas, Ben Williams, and Reese Moore. The photographs highlight the people, places, and moments that have shaped JAC and CJO, and capture the rhythm and swing of the jazz music that the groups perform, promote, and work to preserve.

In the words of the late Jack McCray,
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