

CURTIS R. HARLEY

ART GALLERY



The

THE ART OF JESSE AND TOM FLOWERS

EXHIBITION AND DOCUMENTARY

Other Brother

Exhibition

November 6 - December 4, 2015

Artists' Reception November 12, 4:30 P.M.

Documentary Screening

7:00 P.M., November 18

The George

160 East St John St., Spartanburg, SC 29306
Room 150

The USC Upstate
Visual Arts Program
includes Bachelor
of Arts programs in:

Art Studio (graphic
design emphasis)
Art Education
Art History (minor)

Harley Gallery:

The Gallery, located on the
first floor of the Humanities
& Performing Arts Center, is
free and open to the public
from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Mon.-Fri.

To learn more:

Find Us Online:

www.uscupstate.edu/harleygallery

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UPSTATE

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USC Upstate in Spartanburg, SC, Offers Exhibit & Film Focused on Two Brothers - Jesse & Tom Flowers

Following a successful Kickstarter project for *The Other Brother* documentary in 2014, and a successful exhibition of the artwork at the Fine Art Center in Greenville, SC, Asheville, NC, artists Mark Flowers and Kristy Higby of Mountain Tea Studios will exhibit the work of Jesse and Tom Flowers at the Curtis R. Harley Gallery at USC Upstate from Nov. 6 through Dec. 4, 2015. In conjunction with the art exhibition, they will also screen the documentary created by Kristy Higby entitled "The Other Brother" at The George, room 150, downtown Spartanburg, SC, on Nov. 18 at 7pm. Filmmaker Kristy Higby and Tom Flowers will be present after the screening for a brief question and answer period.

The documentary's subjects are Tom Flowers, now 87, a retired Faculty Emeritus of Art at Furman University, who remains an active professional artist in the Southeast today and Jesse Flowers, his older brother who passed away in 2004 after living a reclusive life near Fredericksburg, VA. Both Tom and Jesse made art all their lives. This exhibition and documentary chronicle an amazing visual connection between brothers who were estranged most of their lives. The documentary has been screened many times from film festivals in Oklahoma and Sante Fe, NM, to most recently at the Fine Arts Center in Greenville, SC. This is only the second time that original work from both brothers has been on display.

"It became clear from viewer feedback about the documentary that this project needed to have a Part II in the form of an art exhibition," says Kristy Higby, the film's creator who spent eight years creating the documentary. One of her other works is *Bowl Digger*, a short documentary about Maxie Eades, a retired mill worker-turned wooden bowl-maker from Dacusville, SC, in Pickens County who was recently named



Self-Portraits by Jesse and Tom Flowers

"A South Carolina Treasure".

In addition to being a compelling story, this project has been a cathartic experience for our family that reaches across generations.," says Mark Flowers, the documentary's Producer.

"We think it would please Jesse to know that his work had an audience, and Tom is excited about the opportunity to exhibit side-by-side with his brother," said Higby.

Mark and Kristy have made a life in the visual arts - creating, exhibiting, and teaching. They know the value of exhibiting artwork and want to create a formal opportunity to share Jesse and Tom's artwork. More about them and their artwork can be found on their website, (www.mountainteastudios.com). Creating and teaching art has been part of their partnership for the last 40 years.

A link to the trailer for the documentary *The Other Brother* can be found at (<https://vimeo.com/86635649>).

Quotes about the exhibition and film:
"Both the film and exhibition work together to give the viewer a fascinating look into the lives of Tom and Jesse Flowers,

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whose artwork forms a significant and tender connection between the two estranged brothers," said Liz Miller, Curator, Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapman Art Museum, Myrtle Beach, SC.

Quotes about the film:
"The screening of *The Other Brother* at if ART Gallery in Columbia, SC, on Oct. 24 surpassed my high expectations. Around 50 people packed the place, sharing fewer than 50 chairs, standing room only, therefore.

The response to this magnificent piece of work was profound with the audience being genuinely moved by the story - a story that presents specifics about two people, artists both, and their family while inevitably touching on larger issues. The audience's engagement was evident during the Q & A with filmmaker Kristy Higby, producer and other-brother son Mark Flowers, and the latter's other-brother, father Tom Flowers. An exquisite score with surprising music, including original music that most will not have heard before, compliments the poignant narratives and interviews, and the passages from letters from the other brother, Jesse. I had been looking forward to screening this film at my gallery and I am so glad I did. It really was a memorable evening," said Wim Roefs, Director, if ART Gallery, Columbia, SC.

A review by Jim Campbell, artist and retired Fine Arts Center Teacher in Greenville, SC:

"This seventy-two minute documentary by Kristy Higby pries open so many important questions that it is difficult to know where to start. On the surface, the film simply examines the artistic and family lives of two young brothers growing up in WW II era America who eventually become totally estranged after the older brother, Jesse Flowers comes back from the war.

Tom Flowers, the younger, extroverted brother goes on to become a college athlete and a popular professor of art at Furman University, while Jesse becomes increasingly more isolated and reclusive.

Helping us approach a deeper understanding of this story about a family of American artists are incredible volumes of sketchbooks and other artworks by both



Drawing by Jesse Flowers

brothers, the first-hand interviews with Tom and his sisters, family photographs, video of Jesse and thousands of letters written by Jesse to his sister. All of this is made more remarkable yet by the fact that the filmmaker, Kristy Higby, also visual artist, is married to Mark Flowers, the painter son of Tom Flowers. Kristy brings an artist's sensibility to the visual style of the documentary. As the film unfolded, I found myself with renewed interests in a great range of things, including: the nature versus nurture discussion, the effects of war on young men, the difficulties of communicating fully with people we love, the primal role of art-making and the importance of telling our stories. Needless to say, when a mere seventy-two minutes of my time yields that much thought, I do recommend that others try to find the time, too."

Tommy Hays, Greenville, SC, native and author of *What I Came to Tell You* and *The Pleasure Was Mine* says, "In *The Other Brother* Kristy Higby has rendered a cinematic miracle, illuminating the extraordinary life of Jesse Flowers - a solitary, mysterious and troubled man who found solace and meaning in little else but his art. When Higby first began this project, Jesse was not much more than a family story, a talented eccentric who spent most of his time holed up in his shack doing his artwork or writing in his journals and who had at one point chased his visiting brother and children away with a loaded shotgun. But after Kristy spent years immersing herself in the thousands of letters, journals and sketchbooks he left behind, and interviewing Jessie's devoted sisters and his es-

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