

The Imperial Centre for the Arts & Sciences in Rocky Mount, NC, Features Works by Susan Lenz

The Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences in Rocky Mount, NC, will present the exhibit, *Last Words*, a solo show by Columbia, SC, fiber and installation artist Susan Lenz, on view in the Maria V. Howard Arts Center, from Jan. 7 through May 13, 2012. A reception will be held on Jan 29, from 2-4pm.

The exhibition will include a selection of grave rubbing art quilts, angel images on paper, and chiffon banners covered with embroidered epitaphs. Vintage household linens, recycled materials, and artificial cemetery flowers figure prominently in this body of artwork that reflects both personal and universal mortality. The exhibit is an exploration of lives' final words. It investigates the concept of remembrance and personal legacy.



The Book of the Dead by Susan Lenz

"As an installation, questions are posed," says Lenz. "The work asks: What are your final wishes? How do you want to be remembered? What last words will mark your life?"

Over the past two and a half years, Lenz has traveled all over the United States and England for her source material. From pioneer graveyards in Oregon to cowboy cemeteries in Texas, she collected personal epitaphs from hand carved stones. From abbeys in Bath and London to churchyards in Eccles and Dudley, England, Lenz has made crayon on fabric grave rubbings.

Many of the pieces in this exhibition have been shown in other national juried art shows, including *Art Quilt Lowell* (Lowell, MA), the *LaGrange XXVI Biennial* (LaGrange, GA), *Art of Fiber* (Lorton, VA), *National Fiber Directions* (Wichita, KS), *Art Quilt Experience* (Cazenovia, NY), the *9th Annual National Quilt Artists* (Earlville, NY), the *National*

Heritage Quilt Show (Athens, TN), *Fantastic Fibers* (Paduach, KY), and the *APQ Traveling Show* throughout Australia.

Last Words was also recently shown at Vision Gallery in Chandler, AZ, during October and November as part of the Southwest's "Dia de los Muertos" (Day of the Dead) celebration.



Time Files, Grave Rubbing Quilt Series by Susan Lenz

Beyond hand and machine stitched art quilts, Lenz has created two additional series using cemetery angel images. "Angels in Mourning" are large, framed photo transfers on printmaking paper. Found mementoes and dangling threads transform the sculpture images into suggested narratives of lives well lived. For "Dearly Departed", Lenz collaged her cemetery angel photos into individual pages from Victorian albums. She added epitaphs to each one using clipped vintage letters. *The Book of the Dead* is a 696-page altered book containing over 1200 epitaphs in calligraphy on pages washed with faint blue, gold, brown, and tan inks. The cover is from a leather bound Bible dating to 1889.

The exhibition will be held in the North Carolina gallery at the Imperial Centre. This space has soaring ceilings from which sheer chiffon banners will hang. Each one is free-motion machined stitched with collected epitaphs. The installation will transform the gallery into a quiet, reflective location meant to emulate the atmosphere found at the cemeteries that inspired the work.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Centre at 252/972-1163 or visit (<http://arts.imperialcentre.org/>).

Brookgreen Gardens in Murrells Inlet, SC, Features Exhibit Focused on Birds

Brookgreen Gardens in Murrells Inlet, SC, will present the exhibit, *Birds in Art*, on view in the Rainey Sculpture Pavilion, from Jan. 28 through Apr. 22, 2012.

Known as "the best opportunity for indoor bird-watching on the planet", this highly acclaimed traveling exhibition of paintings and sculpture was mounted by the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum of Wausau, WI. Since 1976, the annual juried exhibit has showcased the remarkable talents of more than 875 international artists, who have presented their very best work interpreting birds and related subjects.



Work by Andrew Haslen

Each year, 60 works by 60 artists are selected from *Birds in Art* to travel to national and, occasionally, international venues expanding the exhibition's reach to broader audiences. The 2011 *Birds in Art* opened to

the public at the Woodson Museum on Sept. 10 and is on view there through Nov. 13, 2011. In addition to Brookgreen Gardens, it also travels to museums in Kansas, Michigan, Colorado, and Alaska through 2012 and early 2013.



Work by Matthew Hiller

The traveling exhibit includes 49 paintings, drawings, and prints, and 11 sculptures selected from the 112 artworks shown in the full exhibit. Among the distinguished international group of artists having works in the traveling exhibit are Hélène Arfi (France), Chris Bacon (Canada), Robert Bateman (Canada), John Busby (Scotland), Adele Earnshaw (New Zealand), Peter Gray (South Africa), Simon Gudgeon (England), Nobuko Kumasaka (Japan), Lars Jonsson (Sweden), Zev Labinger (Israel), Lucinda Kate McEachern (Australia), Bernd Pöppelmann (Germany), and Ewoud de Groot (Netherlands).

The American artists include James

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Morgan (Utah), Frank LaLumia (Colorado), Timothy David Mayhew (New Mexico), Anne Senechal Faust (Louisiana), Roger Martin (North Carolina), Mary Cornish (Virginia), Lorri Davis (Alaska), Hilarie Lambert (South Carolina), Paula Waterman (Maryland), and Thomas Hill (California). A painting by the 2011 Master Wildlife Artist, James Coe, will also be in the traveling exhibit.

In conjunction with *Birds in Art*, the Woodson Art Museum selects an artist to receive its annual Master Wildlife Artist Award. The award honors artists who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in using bird imagery in their artwork. The individual recognized as the Master Wildlife Artist is further honored by a mini-retrospective of 10 to 12 artworks during *Birds in Art* at the Woodson. This year's Master Wildlife Artist is painter James Coe of Hannacroix, NY.

The Woodson's 32nd Master Artist, Coe initially was fascinated by egrets and

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