

# Crafty Feast, Craft Fair in Columbia, SC

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glass vases containing minimal color-block landscapes and live greenery. Margaret and Megan attribute their inspiration from the natural surroundings of their home in Raleigh, NC.

A new Crafty Feast vendor, Exit343Design is traveling all the way from Willow Grove, PA. The owner of Exit343Design, Stephanie Harvey, is a printmaker, photographer and crafter. She will be presenting two categories including her selection of handmade metal and beadwork jewelry. She brings original mixed media prints artwork along with chalkboard font prints, embroidery wall art and original photography prints.

To view all of our 2013 vendors, please visit the Crafty Feast website at (<http://www.craftyfeast.com/VENDORS.html>).



Works by BumbleFly-N-ButterBees

Crafty Feast is a Columbia, SC, juried craft fair event organized by Flock and Rally, representing unique, handmade crafts from around the Southeast and beyond.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or visit ([www.craftyfeast.com](http://www.craftyfeast.com)).

## Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, Features Works by Christopher Sims & Lori Larusso

The Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, is presenting *Christopher Sims: Dress Rehearsal* and *Lori Larusso: Homefront*, on view through Jan. 3, 2014.

Christopher Sims' photographs capture simulated Iraqi and Afghani villages in the US where troops train prior to their overseas deployment. This exhibition provides a glimpse into a world rarely seen and shows us aspects of what life is like for US soldiers from recruitment, to training for the battlefield. Also included in this exhibition are works from his series "Hearts and Minds" where Sims has captured images of young men and teenagers at the "Virtual Army Experience", a traveling road show and recruiting event the US Army takes cross-country to NASCAR races and air shows. Participants wait in line to enter a large tent, where they play video games produced by the army and meet decorated soldiers who have returned from service at the fronts in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Work by Christopher Sims

Sims offered the following artist's statement, "In recent years, I have been making photographs within fictitious Iraqi and Afghan villages on the training grounds of US Army bases, places largely unknown to most Americans. The villages are situated in the deep forests of North Carolina and Louisiana, and in a great expanse of desert near Death Valley in California. The villages serve as a strange and poignant way station for people heading off to war and for those who have fled it. US soldiers interact with pretend villagers who are often recent immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan, who have now found work in America playing a version of the lives they left behind. These villages are places of fantastic imagination."

"The portraits in *Hearts and Minds* remind us of the computer and television screens through which most of us have lived the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the filters of distance and media that create for us our own virtual homeland experience. The army reveals itself to be a keen reader of American adolescent emotions and passions, and employs this understanding through a brilliantly designed and bloodless simulation of the thrill of the fight. The portraits also offer us a glimpse into a future that some leaders and strategists have begun calling "the long war," and suggest to us the young people who will enlist in the coming years in the real army," adds Sims.

Christopher Sims was born in Michigan and raised in Atlanta, GA. He received an undergraduate degree in history from Duke University, a master's degree in visual communication from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and an MFA in studio art from the Maryland Institute College of Art. He has worked as a photo archivist at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, and currently teaches photography at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University.

Sumter County Gallery of Art's Curator Frank McCauley states, "I think the community here in Sumter, especially the Shaw Air Force Base and 3rd Army communities will find these images incredibly interesting. Our cities slogan is 'Uncommon Patriotism', this exhibition affords the viewer a rare intimate view behind the scenes, showing both where our soldiers come from and how they prepare for where they're going."

Sims' most recent exhibitions include shows at SF Camerawork, the Griffin Museum of Photography, the Houston Center for Photography, the Light Factory, the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, and the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art. His project on Guantanamo Bay was featured in *The Washington Post*, the *BBC World Service*, *Roll Call*, and *Flavorwire*. He is represented by Ann Stewart Fine Art in Chapel Hill, NC, and Clark Gallery in Boston, MA. He was selected as the recipient of the Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers in 2010 and was recently named one of the "new Superstars of Southern Art" by the *Oxford American* magazine.

The Sumter County Gallery of Art is also proud to present the paintings of Kentucky based artist Lori Larusso. The exhibition *Lori Larusso: Homefront* presents her beautiful and brightly colored, shaped paintings featuring representations of middle-America, interior spaces and manicured semi-private outdoor spaces that suggest a relative level of comfort and social acceptance. The architecture and objects represented in these works, such as a stainless steel toaster or an umbrellaed patio table, conjure a decidedly 1950's nostalgia for American Dream. These elements confirm and at times question the stability of the situation and remind the viewer of the culture we maintain on a daily basis.

Bret McCabe of the *Baltimore City Paper* states, "Larusso's paintings hover in that curious realm of suburban pop, where Wayne Thiebaud intersects with Patrick Caulfield. It's a realm defined by Larusso's palette and subject matter, and for the most part her targets are soft, but what she chooses to show and hide is what pushes her paintings into more interesting territory, precisely because it's unclear where she might be headed. There

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