

# Waterworks Visual Arts Center

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complished visual storytellers who share an interest in documentation (albeit of different types) as a means of sparking discourse, and ultimately - they hope - societal change.

Using an old-fashioned large format camera, Jeff Rich, an Iowa City-based photographer who lived in Asheville for 3 years, documents "hotspots for pollution or major change" in *The Watershed Project*. He defines a watershed as, "any body of water that flows into a major body of water." Rich tells us that it can take up to 15 minutes just to set up for each shot, noting that it is "a more painterly process than just taking a snapshot." From a major coal ash spill in Kingston, TN, to pollution by copper-mining (at the site of the 1996 Olympic White Water Rafting Competition), to fish-kills caused by the heated out-flow of hydropower sites, Rich directs our gaze to the critical impact of such hotspots on aquatic ecosystems and the human communities that surround them. In a montage combining images from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) archives (dating from the early 1930s), and some of the artist's own images intentionally formatted to appear as if they were part of this photographic record, Rich brings attention to the plight of several endangered species, including the snail darter, and the hell-bender salamander.



Work by Jeff Rich

Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*. The "remains are what sustain us," he says.

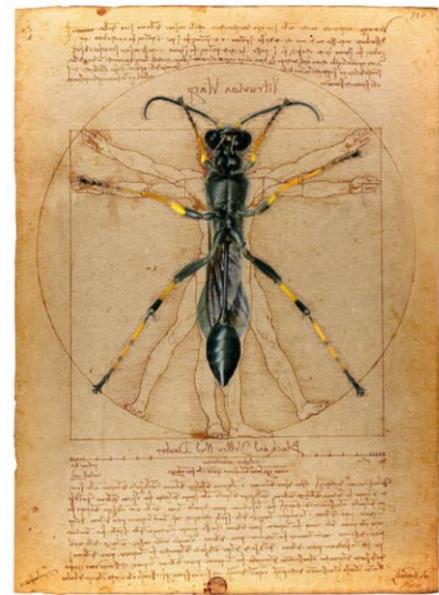
Bryant Holsenbeck's year without plastic was difficult at first. She carried a refillable glass water bottle (a practice she has continued), brought her own containers to purchase food items, and avoided take out packaging, plastic straws, and plastic utensils. During this year, she realized just how dependent we have become on single-use plastics as a society. Holsenbeck, began her career as a basket maker - this early grounding in structure and design, and the collection of materials chosen both for their meaning and visual impact, carries through to her current work. An avid environmentalist, Holsenbeck is interested in collaboration and transformation as means of shedding light on contemporary environmental problems, an approach that she feels is more effective than "pointing the finger."

For the past decade, Holsenbeck has served as a community artist, working with audiences of all ages to create installations using recycle-able or discarded materials such as empty plastic water bottles, and ropes and fibers washed up on the beach. Holsenbeck spent a week in early February at Waterworks to install this piece, with the help of adult community members, 5th graders from Overton Elementary School, and the Waterworks Docents and staff. An estimated 7,000 plus water bottles were used. Many of the crushed bottles that make up the stream contain environmental messages written by participating 5th graders. Visitors are invited to write their hopes for the future of the environment and place them in the 5 gallon water bottle on the pedestal facing the waterfall.

While differing widely in the approaches to their artistic practice and in their ways of working, Jeff Rich, Jim Lee, and Bryant Holsenbeck deliver a strongly-environmental message. Two themes stand out: the use of narrative and the message of environmental advocacy.

The Waterworks Visual Arts Center is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Its mission is to provide diverse opportunities in the arts for all people through exhibitions, education, and outreach. The Waterworks is funded by individual memberships, corporations and businesses, foundations, the City of Salisbury, and Rowan County. The Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, a federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities, supports the Waterworks Visual Arts Center. Waterworks receives general support from the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 704/636-1882 or visit ([www.waterworks.org](http://www.waterworks.org)).



Work by Jim Lee

"Jim, what's with all the dead bugs?" a friend asked at a show of the artist's work in Durham. For Jim Lee, "life is just that thin layer of existence of things built on top of what came before." Like fellow photographer, Jeff Rich, Lee considers his photography, "an extension of painting." He uses both a camera and a high resolution flatbed scanner with his own specially-designed adaptations to create rich and detailed images of both living and deceased organisms, referencing both still life and the history of portraiture. The artist painstakingly stages each image, using found objects and the remains of creatures such as the minute wasps killed by the heated hood of his car, insects from his porch light, or even live fish purchased from a pet store (which he placed in a special container on top of his scanner to capture an image of their movement.

After the photoshoot, the unharmed fish were released into a small pond in the artist's back yard.) Lee's process often involves weeks of observation to create a single image. The artist even pays homage to Dali, Picasso, and Da Vinci in *Dance of the Caterpillar Stalker Beetle 2*. In *Pablo's Muse* the skin of a praying mantis acts as a stand-in for Picasso's *Seated Woman*. 3. In *Vitruvian Wasp*, a female mud-dauber wasp becomes the mirror image of Leonardo Da

## USC in Columbia, SC, Offers Works by Caley Pennington

The University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, will present *Ingrained*, featuring works by Caley Pennington, on view in McMaster Gallery, at the USC School of Visual Art and Design, from Apr. 11 - 15, 2016. A reception will be held on Apr. 14, from 5-7pm.

Life is created through special shared moments where people reveal a more vulnerable side of themselves to one another. The *Ingrained* exhibition includes drawn portraits on wood panels of people who have made an impact on my life. Each work has served as a way to explore how relationships evolve, from initial impacts to intimate lifelong connections. Through the subjects' facial expressions, the overall

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composition, and the nature of the wood grain, I am exploring the relationship between a person's external facade and the internal emotional environment.

Pennington works in a variety of media as a way to explore and initiate connections between individuals she knows and strangers that view her work. Currently residing in South Carolina, Pennington is pursuing her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of South Carolina with an emphasis in painting. She spent her formative years in a small southwest Arkansas town where she created meaningful relationships that would fuel her passion for exploring the complexity of human emotion throughout her career. She went on to earn a Bachelor of Fine

Arts degree from the University of Central Arkansas and achieved a minor in Honors Interdisciplinary Studies. She is currently an Instructor of Record at the University of South Carolina, teaching introductory level painting classes. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States.

McMaster Gallery is located in the University of South Carolina's School of Visual Art and Design on Senate Street in Columbia, with accessible street parking on Pickens, Senate, and Henderson.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, contact Shannon Rae Lindsey, Gallery Director by e-mail at ([slindsey@email.sc.edu](mailto:slindsey@email.sc.edu)) or phone 803/777-5752.

## City Art Gallery in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Carol Pittman for 25th Artista Vista

City Art Gallery in Columbia, SC, announces its upcoming exhibition of new works by Carol Pittman opening Artista Vista, the annual spring Vista gallery crawl, Apr. 21, 2016, with an opening reception from 5-8pm. The exhibit will continue through June 30, 2016.

The gallery will be bustling with activity during Artista Vista. The opening reception for Carol Pittman "New Works" will be in the main gallery. Cindy Saad will be showing and selling her handcrafted silver and beaded jewelry. Mark Conrardy will be painting en plein air outside. The art supply store in the basement be offering sales and a great variety of inventory. There will be live music by Doug and Bunny Williams. All three gallery spaces will be open featuring exciting artworks by dozen of our represented artists.

Carol Pittman's new works are an evolution from her tile work into acrylic paintings. Many of the paintings focus on the circular composition as she sees the world as a continuing entity. The colors that she uses are greatly influenced by her love of colorful clothing for herself and other people and



Work by Carol Pittman

from the vivid colors she experiences in her travels to Greece especially. The circular motif can obviously be interpreted as an expression of the flow of life and hers is always one of great optimism. Pittman's joy and vitality of life come thru her works as rendered in the colors that she uses. Her tile pieces are an extension of her free spirit.

Pittman began her art career at eight years

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