

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Spring Time Is Student Show Time

Many colleges and universities that have art departments present student art exhibitions this time of year - just before the end of the school year and graduation for some.

In South Carolina the list is long: Anderson University in Anderson, College of Charleston in Charleston, Clemson University in Clemson, University of South Carolina in Columbia, Francis Marion University in Florence, Furman University in Greenville, Coker College in Hartsville, Winthrop University in Rock Hill, USC-Upstate in Spartanburg.

And those are just the venues we heard from. There are also Student Exhibitions going on in North Carolina too, but they are not as communicative about them.

For one of these venues in SC I had to encourage the person sending us the info to give us all the names of the students who will have works in the exhibit. After all, it may be the one and only time some of these artists will get their names mentioned in an arts publication. Mom and Dad will at least like to see their names associated with the art community once.

Some of these exhibits will present an opportunity to see some of the next hot art stars to join the Carolina visual art community and an opportunity to purchase their work before inflation and fame is factored into their pricing structure.

For others it won't be until their children have left home before they get an opportunity to "create" again. Life has a way of putting art careers on hold.

ArtFields Five Years In

ArtFields will soon present its fifth event in Lake City, SC. They didn't send

us a press release - which is no surprise. They'd rather I forget about them all together, but I won't. I've seen some info about this year's event - they're expecting to have another "epic" event with "life-changing awards", but in reality ArtFields is just a big juried exhibit of SC artists with some artists from 11 other Southern states joining in.

In looking at the list of those who got selected for this year's exhibit/competition the first staggering figure is that SC artists make up 60 percent of the exhibit - 253 from SC - 172 from the other 11 states, with only 1 from Arkansas, 3 from Kentucky, 3 from Mississippi, 5 from West Virginia, 6 from Virginia, and 7 from Alabama. And I still can't understand how there are only 54 from NC - a state twice the size of SC with many more visual artists. Are they not impressed?

And looking at the list of SC artists, there are a lot of repeat artists who have been in most of the four previous shows, but there are a lot of names missing this year. But I don't know if they entered and didn't make the cut or they just didn't enter. ArtFields doesn't like to give a lot of information about the entry process, the voting process, the jury process, or anything about their process.

They're also not getting a lot of press about their big 5th year event. They are no longer the shiny new thing in the visual art community. Plus when you don't like answering questions - reporters stop asking them.

ArtFields is still a show worth seeing - there will be a lot of good art there, but you won't get much info about it from us as they're not talking with us and I've given up on trying to get them to talk or listen for that matter. As our President is so often saying - so sad.

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