

The 31st North Charleston Arts Festival Takes Place Throughout North Charleston, SC - May 3 - 11

The North Charleston Arts Festival (May 3 - 11) is an annual nine-day event highlighting national, regional, and local artists and performers in the areas of Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Crafts, Photography, Media Arts, and Literature. For 30 years the festival has made quality arts programming affordable and accessible to the widest spectrum of the public, attracting over 30,000 residents and visitors from throughout the Southeast and beyond to experience over 100 free and modestly priced performances, workshops, exhibitions, and activities in a variety of venues, including libraries, community centers, schools, civic auditoriums, and parks. Named a Top 20 Event by the Southeast Tourism Society, the event has matured into one of the most comprehensive arts festivals in the state of South Carolina.



The Arts Festival's Main Event will be held on Saturday, May 4, 10am-4pm, and Sunday, May 5, 2-5pm, at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center and Charleston Area Convention Center, offering free admission and free parking, with over forty performances on four themed stages: General Audience, Cultural Heritage, Youth Entertainment, and Bands. Other features include judged fine art and photography exhibits; the 12th annual *South Carolina Palmetto Hands Fine Craft Exhibit*; youth art from Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester county students; the Lowcountry Gem & Mineral Society show and sale; the Village Antiques & Collectibles show; children's activities at Box City and Creation Stations; art & craft vendors, a food court, and much more.

The Arts Festival continues on May 6, with over sixty events and exhibitions throughout the week at various locations. An array of free and ticketed offerings include street dances, concerts, theater presentations, film screenings, an art walk, children's programs, workshops and demonstrations, a *National Outdoor Sculpture Competition & Exhibition*, and much more. This year's Grand Finale on May 11 features a Tri-County school showcase, music and dance performances, a slam poetry show, children's activities, food trucks, and an evening concert by Rivers & Company. The event concludes with a fantastic fireworks display over the Cooper River.

The North Charleston Arts Festival began at Park Circle in 1982 as a one day community celebration with the goal of enhancing the quality of life of residents through showcasing the arts. As the annual event matured, the festival's reach expanded to include visitors, prompting the addition of tourism development as a goal. In 1995, the Arts Festival moved from Park Circle to the North Charleston Coliseum and expanded to two days. By 2000, the opening of the Charleston Area Convention Center, the North Charleston Performing Arts Center, and additional new venues, provided the springboard for the festival to expand to nine full days of performances and activities for residents and visitors throughout the City. In 2008, the Arts Festival was recognized

by Southeast Tourism Society as a Top 20 Event. Today, the festival maintains the spirit of a public celebration of the arts with the mission of presenting a comprehensive, multidiscipline event schedule that provides an array of performing, visual, media, and literary arts events for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The North Charleston Cultural Arts Department works with the North Charleston Arts Advisory Committee (NCAAC), a volunteer group comprised of a cross section of the community, to develop year round programming for the city, including the Arts Festival. In addition to this core committee, numerous key volunteers work to develop individual components of the festival. Research is conducted on a continual basis and strategic plans and implementation are done ten months out of the year. Annual Festival evaluations by participants, staff, and volunteers are used as a planning tool for the following year.

The target audience for the festival reflects The Cultural Arts Department's mission of increasing awareness of the arts and making arts experiences available to the widest spectrum of the public. The assortment of free and ticketed performances and activities scheduled throughout the festival ensure that there is something for everyone, ranging from seniors to youth and families to individuals. The best example of the festival's broad appeal is the Main Event, where performances and activities attract audiences from every demographic category: male and female; all ages; all cultures; and all economic backgrounds.

An overview of the visual art offering during the Festival include:



Work by Ann Melanie

May 2013 - March 2014 - National Outdoor Sculpture Competition & Exhibition, located at the North Charleston Riverfront Park, located at 1001 Everglades Avenue, on the old Navy Shipyard. View thought provoking, outdoor sculptures by established and emerging artists from across the nation in this 8th annual juried competition and exhibition. Juror: Janet Kagan, a Founding Principal of the Public Art Collaborative, an interdisciplinary consulting group who initiates and refines cultural arts policies, projects, and programs.

May 4 - 11 - South Carolina Palmetto Hands Fine Craft Competition & Exhibition, located in Exhibit Hall A at the Charleston Area Convention Center, located at 5001 Coliseum Drive. Fine craft artists from across the state will display inspiring objects in the media of clay, fiber, glass, metal, wood, and three-dimensional mixed media in this 12th annual juried competition and exhibition. Juror: Karen Derksen, Director of Winthrop University Galleries and lecturer for the

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Work by Patz Fowle

Department of Design at Winthrop. Hours: May 4 & 5, 10am-5pm; May 6-10, 9am-5pm; and May 11, 9am-noon.

May 4 - 11 - Judged Fine Art & Photography Exhibitions, located in the hallways of the Charleston Area Convention Center, 5001 Coliseum Drive. View entries in Fine Art and Professional & Amateur Photography. Fine Art Juror: Sara C. Arnold, Curator of Collections at the Gibbes Museum of Art. Photography entries judged using Photographic Society of America Print Guidelines. Hours: May 4, 10am-5pm; May 5, 2-5pm; May 6-10, 9am-5pm; and May 11, 9am-noon.



Work by Kathy Knapp

May 6 - 11 - Wearable Art Exhibit and Pop Up Shop, located in Exhibit Hall A, Charleston Area Convention Center, 5001 Coliseum Drive. Juried by award-winning and nationally exhibiting textile artist, Torreah "Cookie" Washington, this unique exhibition showcases inspiring designs in the form of wearable art garments, ensembles, and accessories of all styles by emerging and established designers and wearable art artists from across the nation. Wearable art pieces in a variety of styles will be on display and available for sale during the week-long pop up shop. Hours: May 6-10, 10am-5pm and May 11,

9am-noon.

May 3 - 11 - Design Winner Exhibition - Works by Linda Elksnin, North Charleston City Gallery, located in the hallways of the Charleston Area Convention Center, 5001 Coliseum Drive. Linda Elksnin, winner of the 2013 North Charleston Arts Festival Design Competition, will display works on canvas and paper, including her winning design, 'A' Train. Elksnin uses a variety of media, including watercolor, gouache, acrylic, colored pencil, graphite, and fabric. She is known for her use of bright color and graphically pleasing design. Elksnin's inspiration comes from such eclectic sources as mola cut fabric art and Australian aboriginal painting, as well as self-taught and outsider artists from around the world. The public is invited to meet the artist at the gallery on Saturday, May 4, from 10am-4pm, and Sunday, May 5, from 2-5pm, during the festival's Main Event. Hours: May 3-11, 9am - 5pm.

May 4 & 5 - Tri-County Youth Art Exhibition, located in the hallways at the Charleston Area Convention Center, 5001 Coliseum Drive. Schools and individual students in Charleston, Dorchester, and Berkeley counties will display works in a variety of subjects and mediums. Juror: Kristy Bishop, City of North Charleston Artist-in-Residence 2012/13. Hours: May 4, 10am-4pm and May 5, 2-5pm.



Work by Carolyn Bracket

Through June 20 - Once Upon a Quilt: Welcome to My Quilted Story Book - 7th Annual African American Fiber Art Exhibition, located at the North Charleston City Hall, 1st & 2nd floors, 2500 City Hall Lane. Curated by award-winning and nationally exhibiting textile artist, Torreah "Cookie" Washington, this annual exhibit showcases African American fiber artists from across the nation creating works through a variety of traditional and non-traditional fiber techniques. The 7th installment features pieces inspired by the artists' favorite story; written or oral, fiction or non-fiction. Through this exhibition, these quilts are able to tell their own stories with messages that encourage, inspire, comfort, and enchant. Hours: daily 8am - 8pm.

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