

Pickens County Museum

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Work by Carol HasBrouck

the Carolinas and Georgia, working in the plastic mediums (painting, drawing, sculpture, etc.), to submit work to be considered for inclusion. All entries were to fall within the theme of "Patriotism", whatever that artist's interpretation of the word may be (pa-tri-ot-ism pā-trē-ə-t-z-əm, noun devoted love, support, and defense of one's country; national loyalty. Origin: 1720–30; patriot + -ism).

In curating the exhibition Museum Director Allen Coleman tried to keep a core concept to the selection process. He said, "The core of our understanding of just what is 'Patriotism' resides in diverse culturally negotiated understanding - the perceptions, contradictions, questions, problems and issues that continue to be challenged and redefined around the ideal of freedom and love of country. It may fixed in a persistent struggle to define and achieve freedom and expression or it might exist in a comfortable zone where one is simply sure of their own feeling. The American narrative has over the centuries reflected a striving toward personal or communal success and individual freedoms within social, economic and political fabrics of shared rights. The movement towards these ideals has sometime been unsteady, sometime heroic, sometime controversial... but the concept continues to inspire."



Work by Frank McGrath

The wide range of artists who submitted were all inspired to reflect their own sense of patriotism through their artwork. Of those the thirty-nine selected for inclusion in the exhibition are: Kathy Bell, Stanley Bermudez, Greg Bowling, Vickey Brickle-Macky, Linda Hyatt Cancel, Brad Caraway, JJ Casey, Clinton Coleman, Ashley Davis, Melody Davis, Darryl DeBruhl, Trent Frazor, James Greene, Chris Hartwick, Carol HasBrouck, Ernesto Hernandez, Mary Lou Hightower, Lauren Hill, Amanda Illian, Lynn Ingram, Diarmuid Kelly, Lauraette Kirkland, Tracy Landers, April M. Leland, Dabney Mahanes, Hamed Mahmoodi, Mark Malmgren, Eve Martin, Frank McGrath, Donna N. Minor, John Moore, Mark Mulfinger, Kevin Pang, Grace Scherer, Sara Dame Setzer, Kirkland Smith, Tom Supensky, Wendyth T. Wells and Jane Woodward.

J. Michael Johnson was born and raised in East Tennessee and has lived in the south-east United States all his life. He began taking images and working in his darkroom Page 28 - Carolina Arts, July 2013

over thirty years ago and has traveled extensively across the United States and the world to capture images. His love of photographing the motorcycle lifestyle and other subjects, and his self-taught methods along with formal courses and in-field seminars with nationally known photographers, have truly defined the subjects he has photographed and written about over the years.

These experiences have provided a collection of work that documents bikers and biker ladies riding on Daytona's Main Street along with the serious side of these riders as they remember the Vietnam era, showing them riding from the Pentagon to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, on Memorial Day to remember a fallen comrade, a brother, a sister or a father whose name is now engraved forever in the black granite of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Johnson captures the images the general public never hears about or sees. His color and black and white photographs capture the Spirit of America and its precious Freedom of Speech.

When asked about his work, Johnson said, "The Nam Era: Never Forgotten, is a veterans photo tribute that I started in 1997 at 'The Wall' (The Vietnam Veterans Memorial) in Washington, DC. It shows us that "Freedom Is Not Free" as another part of my photojournalist journey into the motorcycle lifestyle that is so often shied away from by so many civilians and journalists."



Work by J. Michael Johnson

Johnson continued, "The early Sunday morning walks into the depth and quietness of 'The Wall' lets me digitally capture veterans visiting names on 'The Wall' that represent the real 'Human Cost of Freedom'. The names of young boys and girls growing up too fast, fighting a war on foreign soil and in so many cases giving their lives fighting for American freedom in a land that some say God forgot - Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. These digital images show friends and family members touching loved ones' names and making a rubbing of the name so they can remember, honor and keep their loved ones memory alive. It also serves to remind us that we still have POW-MIA's in Vietnam." Johnson concluded, "There are still parts of this exhibit that live only in my head as I sometimes must make the decision as when to let an award winning image go because a Vietnam vet's personal privacy was much more important than a photograph."

Since 1997, Johnson's photographic and written work about Daytona's Bike Week, as well as many other motorcycle rallies and events, has been repeatedly featured in *Easyriders*, *Biker* and *In The Wind* magazines. He has provided commercial photography services to various companies in the motorcycle industry, including Lehman Trikes of Canada publishing Johnson's work in their *Pride Matters* magazine. Johnson's renowned motorcycle lifestyle photography has resulted in his giving slide shows to numerous motorcycle clubs, churches and civic groups. His most requested images are of the Vietnam veterans visiting the "Moving Wall" and the "Vietnam Veterans Memorial" in Washington, DC, during "Rolling Thunder" events.

Johnson is a co-founder of the Spartanburg Photo Guild, a member of the *American Image Press/Today's Photographer Magazine*, and served two terms on the Board of Trustees, of The Spartanburg Art Museum, Spartanburg, SC.

Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, Melody Meredith Davis considers herself fortunate to have studied art at Carnegie-Mellon University receiving a bachelor's degree in painting and drawing in 1982. With her children grown, she moved "halfway back" to Salem SC in 2009 from the Tampa Bay

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Work by Melody Davis

Area to be near the mountains. Melody's current situation allows her to focus completely on her artwork for the first time since college. She also enjoys meeting other artists and getting involved in arts organizations in such a beautiful area of the country.

When asked about her work, Davis said, "Art has been a necessity of life for as long as I can remember. Emotional expression through the human form in any media has

always been my passion and I find endless inspiration in those closest to me." She continued, "I love the challenges of painting and the immediate energy of digital photography, but it is the clarity of pencil drawing that is the best therapy."

Recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families and the Department of Defense as a 2013 Blue Star Museum, the Pickens County Museum of Art & History is funded in part by Pickens County, members and friends of the museum and a grant from the South Carolina Arts Commission, which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or call the Museum at 864/898-5963.

Artists' Guild of Spartanburg in Spartanburg, SC, Features Upcycled Works by Lou Webster

The Artists' Guild of Spartanburg in Spartanburg, SC, will present *Upcycled in the Upstate*, featuring works by artist Lou Webster, on view in the Guild Gallery located at the Chapmen Cultural Center, from July 1 - 28, 2013. A reception will be held on July 16, from 6-8pm, with an artist talk at 7pm and again on July 16, from 6-8pm, during the Spartanburg ArtWalk.

The exhibit allows the viewer a glimpse of how art and creativity play an important role in the pursuit of living a "green" lifestyle, especially in terms of recycling and "reimagining" items that no longer "serve a purpose". Upcycled artwork not only reuses old materials, it tells a story that becomes a part of history.

Webster describes her art process and work by saying, "As a native of North Carolina, my love of texture and materials stems from a fascination of the dilapidated farmhouses and barns that dot the rural landscape. Structures long abandoned fall slowly to the earth. Broken and twisted

they evolve into mixed media sculptures of rusted metal, weathered planks, and untamed vegetation. I am drawn to the quiet beauty of these ragged forms and worn surfaces and most important, to the individuality they exude."

"In the South there exists a stubborn frugality - that use what you have mentality - that drives creativity in many ways. Like those rural 'sculptures' I admire in the landscape the items that comprise my art have been discarded too," adds Webster. "Most were once useful household articles, now upcycled and reimagined. Found objects are evaluated for form, symmetry and balance in relationship to each other. Having a green perspective allows me to reap double satisfaction from my work. Each finished piece becomes something greater than merely the sum of its parts; it has character, whimsy and a new story to tell."

Webster earned her Bachelor's degree in Environmental Design at NC State University

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