

AUGUST 12 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 22, 2017



VITREOUS VESSELS

Hayden Wilson



AMERICA ON EDGE

Sandee Johnson

OPENING RECEPTION
Saturday, August 12

ARTIST'S WALK & TALK
5 pm

RECEPTION
6-7:30 pm

upstairs
[artspace]

49 S. Trade Street
Tryon, NC 28782
828.859.2828

upstairsartspace.org

HOURS
Tuesday-Saturday
11:00 to 5:00 p.m.

TIDES, TOTEMS & TEAPOTS

Gary Huntoon
Diane Hopkins-Hughs



Caldwell Arts Council in Lenoir, NC, Offers 32nd Annual Sculpture Celebration - Sept. 9, 2017

Take a fall day in North Carolina's welcoming foothills. Add a colorfully landscaped city park with a paved walking trail hugging a serene lake. To this natural beauty, bring imaginative creations of professional artists and amateurs dabbling purely for enjoyment. Welcome to Caldwell County's Sculpture Celebration, marking its 32nd anniversary in Lenoir, NC, on Sept. 9, 2017.

"The fact that this show has been around for [over] 30 years is testament to its quality," says Mike Roig, a renowned sculptor from Carboro, NC, who has entered his moveable sculptures nearly every year since 1995. His tree-like sculpture on heavily traveled Highway 321 North is one of the most visible in a county ranked exceptionally high for its collection of permanent outdoor artwork. Another famous piece is "Across the Grain," an earth cast sculpture created on site and installed in downtown Lenoir by internationally acclaimed sculptor Thomas Sayre.

Roig says the Celebration is unlike any other. "It is a great collection of art and a good place to make connections." He says the public can meet and talk with artists in a relaxed setting, and artists very often come away with commissions for new work and can connect with each other.

Co-sponsored by the Tri-State Sculptors Association and the Caldwell Arts Council, the event is held in Lenoir's T.H. Broyhill Walking Park.

"Having the sculpture celebration here in the gardens at the Broyhill Walking Park is like a marriage between God and man's creative handiwork. Everyone who attends feels the connection. Sculptures are nestled among the landscaping so that each one is like a new discovery," says Sheila Triplett-Brady, Executive Director of the Broyhill Family Foundation.

"Each year is better than the last, and I marvel that our small community offers such a unique experience. I enjoy watching



Work by Jacob Brault, Best in Show 2016

the sculptors bring in their works, some on trucks so that they are swaying as if on a float in a parade, finding their niches, and displaying their art."

The show has always been known for its high quality, but the caliber of artists keeps notching up. Pieces vary from less than one-foot in size to more than 15 feet, and materials range from polished wood and metal to animal bones, consumer cast-offs and all types of found objects. Subjects range from carved granite statues and serious steel pyramids to creations of pure whimsy. Realistic and contemporary, stationary and movable, indoor and outdoor – all can be found there.

Tom Risser travels from close to South Carolina each year to be part of the show. Every year he says he can't wait until September to participate. "I love the energy," Risser says. "Being around other artists makes me feel supported for taking on this crazy passion. I don't go to sell things – though I do often – I go to see the artists, meet the public, and share stories. I get inspired by the work of so many great artists and I love seeing the joy on display in the work and in the hearts."

Each year, nationally recognized artists exhibit alongside novices competing for coveted merit awards and sales. Sculptors come from all over the eastern United

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States. And since the show is non-juried, anyone is welcome to compete. This year, about 70 artists are expected to enter up to three pieces of artwork each.

Artists choose a spot lakeside or stream-side to install their work. Some artists choose to use canopy tents to protect delicate artwork from sun and possible showers. Most pieces, however, are dotted throughout the landscape, hanging from trees or cradled into the earth, creating a magnificent sculpture-park-for-a-day.

Visitors can take a quick stroll through the park and glimpse all the competition's entries in less than an hour. However, many choose to spend the day wandering slowly from one eye-catching sculpture to another. Although artists are limited to exhibiting three pieces, many bring photographic portfolios of their work so the public can view a fuller range.

After walking and talking, visitors can enjoy festival foods from the food vendors set up at one end of the park. Many bring blankets or lawn chairs to sit back and enjoy regional musicians performing live music. More than 3,000 visitors are expected this year, and shuttles provide convenient free access from parking areas.

For Whitney Claire Brown, the Caldwell Sculpture Celebration is a family affair. Her father, Bill Brown, Jr. and grandfather, Bill Brown, Sr. both participated in the first Celebration in 1985 and she and her mother came to support them. "When I grew up and became a ceramic sculptor. I started showing alongside my father. He has since passed the torch to me. Now I bring my sculptures and he and my mother come and support me."

Whitney calls the Sculpture Celebration a great platform for three-dimensional works of all kinds – large, small and in all media. "The park is a magical place for that day, a perfect platform for sculpture," she says.

Another well-loved tradition is the "Sculptors Welcome Dinner" party on Friday night before the event. This casual, informative evening is open to the public by reservation and includes dinner and live music. The party welcomes the participating sculptors and judge, sponsors and visitors. Many find this preview makes the following day's sculpture event more meaningful.



Work by Keith Bryanht, First Place, 2016

Saturday's show culminates with an awards presentation, followed by the Judge's Walking Tour of Winners. During this popular feature, judges share what piqued their interest and why they chose the winning pieces. "Best of Show," "The Stevens Family Foundation People's Choice," and other cash awards will total about \$11,000 in payment to winning artists. Boosting the economy, many works will be sold that day or later in the year as artists complete commissions through contacts made at the event.

Nathaniel Miller moved to Lenoir in 2008 from a similar-sized town in West Virginia. "There wasn't much in the way of arts in my hometown, so I wasn't expecting much when I arrived here. Man, I was wrong." Miller had given up on making sculptures, but still had one of his pieces in his basement when Nancy Crawford, then affiliated with the Caldwell Arts Council, visited and recommended he enter his work. That piece won Best in Show and Miller has earned more awards since then.

"It was stunning for me. Having a place where I can show my work, well, it's made a big difference. I do a show and that same day, I'm thinking about what to create next." Miller says his sculptures are not your standard carved stone or wood pieces. The back end of a Cadillac is transformed into a living environment. The end of a canoe becomes a man.

Sculpture is a transformative art changing a material's form, appearance or character. In other ways, people, too, can be transformed. For your own transformative moment enter this date on your calendar: Sept. 9, 2017. But be forewarned. Once you

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