

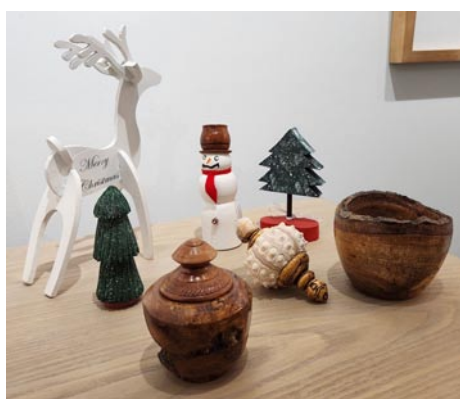
Society of Bluffton Artists in Bluffton, SC, Offers Annual Holiday Market

The Society of Bluffton Artists (SOBA) in Bluffton, SC, is thrilled to announce the return of its Holiday Market, a seasonal showcase featuring handcrafted, one-of-a-kind gifts by local artists. From Nov. 4 through Dec. 31, 2024, the SOBA Art Gallery's featured artist room will transform into a festive shopping destination for the community.

Visitors can explore and purchase a wide array of artfully crafted items perfect for the holiday season, including wreaths, small paintings, holiday décor, and gift-worthy treasures. Each piece is thoughtfully created by talented Bluffton artists, making the Holiday Market an ideal stop for unique and personal holiday shopping.

"The Holiday Market is a beloved SOBA tradition, perfect for anyone looking for a unique holiday shopping experience," said Karen Richards, President of SOBA.

The Society of Bluffton Artists is the cornerstone of Bluffton's vibrant art scene, located in the heart of Old Town Bluffton's



View of works from a previous Holiday Market

historic district. As a non-profit organization, SOBA is dedicated to enriching the community through the arts by offering regular art classes, exhibitions, scholarships, and outreach programs.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call 843/757-6586 or visit (www.sobagallery.com).

Furman University in Greenville, SC, Offers Exhibit Focused on Queer Artists in the South

The Furman University Department of Art in Greenville, SC, is presenting *Found Family: Queerness and Community in the South*, on view in the Thompson Gallery, through Nov. 15, 2024. A closing reception will be held on Nov. 15, from 5:30-8:30pm, with a Juror's Talk by Marty Epp-Carter being offered at 6:30pm.

This juried exhibition is organized by the Thompson Gallery in collaboration with the Queer Arts Initiative, which champions queer arts in the Upstate. Representing six states, the show features 14 queer artists whose work explores contemporary queer identities and lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ communities in the South.

The exhibition showcases 22 artworks, each created within the last three years, including painting, sculpture, photography, drawing and video media. The artists range in age and career trajectory, gender and sexual identity, and artistic style and critical tone, but together they represent a cross-section of the Southern queer art scene's vibrant heterogeneity. Their work brings visibility to the authentic experiences of LGBTQIA+ communities in the region.

Found Family celebrates these stories - from the individual to the shared, the triumphant to the disheartening, the aspirational to the anxiety-inducing - to explore how queer communities function and thrive in the often tenuous, socio-political environment of the South. *Found Family* amplifies the new, emerging generation of Southern queer artists and attests to the exciting potential direction of the region's queer art scene in the coming years.

Participating artists include: Jenna Casey, Ashley Felder, Maggie Genoble, Claire Harvey, Jules Jackson, Huan LaPlante, Will Lattman, Jacob Lehmann, Cole Miller, Catherine Paul, Savannah Ralph, Zachary Riga, Rial Rye, and Brad Silk.

Stephen Mandravelis, Ph.D., Director, Thompson Art Gallery, Assistant Professor of Art History, Furman University offers the following Director's Welcome, "It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Found Family: Queerness and Community in the South. I am thrilled by this exhibition and the twenty-two artworks it includes."

"The fourteen artists in this show represent the complexity of the South's LGBTQIA+ communities and, through this, give voice to the range of experiences associated with being Queer in a geographic area not always known, historically, for its acceptance of difference."

"The exhibition's themes of inclusion, affirmation, and support provide important lessons for all audiences - Queer or not - in cultural awareness, human compassion, and broad civility. *Found Family* represents, to me, the ideal type of exhibition for Furman University's Thompson Art Gallery," adds Mandravelis. "It brings an array of techni-



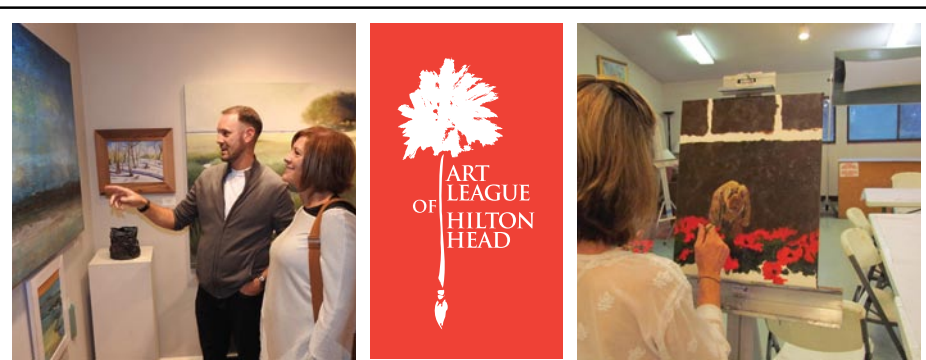
Work by Cole Miller

cally impressive and critically thought-provoking art to the threshold of our students' studios and classrooms, allowing for invaluable first-hand, experiential instruction. Similarly, by directly speaking to the current social position of Queerness in the South, *Found Family* demonstrates art's capacity to engage some of our society's most timely and pressing issues. Through its interdisciplinary programming, it places the Gallery at the center of rich, campus-wide conversations over these debates."

"Finally, *Found Family* grounds itself in the interests of its broader public community. As the gallery's first major, external group show in almost fifteen years, *Found Family* reestablishes the Thompson Gallery as a contributor to the region's contemporary art scene and as a means to advocate for its community's emerging needs. I hope *Found Family* is the first of many future shows in the Gallery that so successfully and seamlessly marry its pedagogical and contextual missions. This exhibition is the result of the dedication and hard work of several parties."

"I'd first like to thank and recognize our community partner, the Queer Arts Initiative (QAI) of the Upstate LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce. Their early interest in partnering with Furman on an exhibition provided the catalyst for *Found Family's* conceptualization and development, and the exhibition's scope and reach is indebted to the QAI's publicity and network. Similarly, my gratitude extends to the exhibition's Jurying Committee. Led by prominent local Queer artist, Marty Epp-Carter, and accompanied by Rae Clark from the QAI and Kylie Fisher from Furman's Department of Art, the Jury had the difficult task of selecting twenty-two artworks from an extremely competitive pool of submissions. Many deserving artworks could not be included.

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