

# Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

## ArtFields Results Revisited

Last month, the timing worked out for us to be able to print the results of the first ArtFields visual art competition, held in Lake City, SC, but something happened to ruin that only days after we launched the issue. ArtFields announced it was suspending the People's Choice award. As it turns out they had learned that John Cooper of Rutherfordton, NC, had entered a colorized version of a well-known photograph taken during the Jewish uprising in Warsaw, Poland, disqualifying his entry as not a work he totally created or owned.

The top three award winning entries become property of ArtFields and they didn't want anyone years later putting a claim on a work in their collection.

Some artists who believe in something called "fair use" (taking someone else's art and changing it a bit) cried foul, but I, for one, am glad ArtFields will stand by a policy of asking for entries from artists that is totally their own work.

So when ArtFields named Kirkland Smith's image of Steve Jobs, made from parts of Apple products, the "fair use" folks cried foul again - asking what's the difference? Folks, there's a big difference between Photoshopping a photograph and using a photo as a guide to build an image out of parts of computers, iPads, and iPhones. Try it sometime and you'll see the difference.

Here's the revised results for the 2013 ArtFields:

ArtFields \$50,000 Top Prize! - James Arendt of Conway, SC.

Juried Panel \$25,000 Prize! - Leanna Knapp of Juliette, GA.

People's Choice \$25,000 Prize - Kirkland Smith, Columbia, SC.

That closes the book on ArtFields 2013, but it doesn't close the book being written about Lake City's transformation - a story we intend to follow.

My big question about this event was - what will someone see in Lake City the day after the festival, a month after the festival or before the 2014 festival? So, a month later I went back to Lake City to see what was going on. The short answer was - not much on a Saturday.

The opportunity to check out Lake City came when on one Saturday I could do a grand tour of the Pee Dee taking in two events and a trip back to the Art Trail Gallery in Florence, SC, which had moved to a new location. You can read about my tour of the Pee Dee at my blog, *Carolina Arts Unleashed* at (<http://carolinaarts.com/wordpress/>).

There wasn't much of anything going on in Lake City, but I was really there to visit the Moore Farms Botanical Garden for an event and to see one of the invited installations from ArtFields, a grass structure by Charleston, SC, artist, Herb Parker, that I had missed seeing. Hopefully one day that garden will be one of the reasons visitors will go to Lake City, but for now it's not open very much.

Lake City is still working on banker's hours - Monday through Friday - not the best schedule for attracting visitors. But, I did find a flyer on the door of the Jones & Carter Building (one of the ArtFields venues) which will become the Jones Carter Gallery, part of the Community Museum Society. That facility will present its first post ArtFields exhibition - *agriART*, featuring works by Joshua Vaughan, Mark Conrardy, (who participated in ArtFields)

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and an installation by Vassiliki Falke-hag. The exhibit opens with a reception on June 21, from 5-7pm and continues through Aug. 26, 2013. So there will be cultural life in Lake City after all.

I tried seeing if the ArtFields' Gallery would be showing anything soon, but I couldn't get a reply from them by the time I had to write this. Small steps are better than none.

## Summer Has Arrived

I can tell Summer has arrived in the Carolinas, if not by the weather, by the slow down in the flow of information. We went from a high of 87 pages in May to 67 this month. Some of that is due to the fact that colleges and universities tend to stop programming during the Summer, as well as many artist guilds that close up operations during Summer months, but a lot of it has to do with unseasonably mild weather. People are spending time outside before the real Summer settles in and the heat is turned on. Yet, there is lots to do and see - as far as the visual arts go in the Carolinas. So be brave and get out there.

Of course some folks missed the boat this month thinking that we would extend our deadline due to the Memorial Day weekend. Unfortunately, no matter what holiday shows up, the calendar doesn't add any days to our deadline of getting the paper online by the first of the month.

The deadline is always the 24th of the month - no matter what - even in months like February when that only leaves us four days to produce a paper. I start working on the layout on the day of the 24th, but anything that gets in by 5pm - gets in the paper. The only exception is if some Johnny or Suzie come-lately arrives before I've finished the section of the paper they might go in. The layout is always as tight as a drum, so there isn't much wiggle room after I'm steam-rolling through the layout. So get in on time, but my advice to anyone would be - get in early.

The 24th of the month might seem early in the month for a deadline, but it takes some time to pull all the info we

have received by then and turn it into a publication of 60-80 pages. There's no elves here to work on it over night.

## Our Covers

The last couple of months, starting with our cover with works by Peter Scala of North Charleston, SC, in March, we've seen a growth spurt in downloads and views on Facebook. May was no exception.

Our April 2013 issue eventually saw 180,289 downloads. It had already set a new record by the time I wrote last month's commentary with 178,607, but in the last two days it squeezed in a few more thousand downloads.

The May issue is close to catching up with the April issue, but hasn't yet. It's at 178,647, but it's hard to predict if it will get a last minute boost like the April issue. Either way it's been a great three months of growth. I would expect the Summer will have a big effect on our June issue's downloads, (downward) but you never know.

## Art or People

The City of Detroit, MI, is almost bankrupt. Most of its debt is in the form of obligations for city employee pensions. The person who is overseeing the city's debt problems has floated the idea that perhaps the city, which owns the Detroit Institute of Art (DIA), could sell off some of its collection which could perhaps bring in billions of dollars for the city.

The city owes 15 billion in long term debt. It is estimated that 38 of the Institute's highest profile artworks could bring in \$2.5 billion, but supporters of the DIA claim that without those works you might as well close the Institute.

It's a no-win situation but some people have suggested that the DIA should at least offer up some of its works to help the city out of its situation.

I'm sure the Detroit has lots of other assets it could put on the auction block,

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*Morning Has Broken*

Oil on canvas

12 x 12 inches

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