

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

On Our Cover This Month

On our cover this month is the work "Raising the Roof" by Alexis Lavine, part of the exhibit, "47th Annual National Exhibition of the South Carolina Watermedia Society, on view at the Franklin G. Burroughs • Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum, in Myrtle Beach, SC, through Dec. 29, 2024. With nearly 180 entries, the Society's most competitive show in years, juror Ken Call meticulously curated a collection of 58 pieces that represent artists from coast to coast. The exhibition features many Southeastern artists, particularly those residing in Georgia, North Carolina and, of course, South Carolina. With works ranging from abstract to stark realism, the breadth of watermedia is explored and enriched through this year's "Annual National Exhibition".

Reaching Out To A Fellow Arts Publication

We have the link for the Nov. 2024 online version of "Rapid River Magazine Arts & Culture", a magazine covering Western North Carolina and the Asheville, NC, art scene. You can download it at this link (<https://online.pubhtml5.com/whax/oaqf/#p=1>). As you know Asheville was hit hard by Hurricane Helene and the art community there was hit very hard. "Rapid River Magazine" was about to go to press with its October 2024 issue, but Helene had different plans. It reminded me of what happened to our publication in 1989 when Hurricane Hugo came to Charleston, SC, for an unwelcomed visit. Our October issue was at our printer, but it didn't make it through as Hugo said, "Stop The Presses!"

So, I contacted Dennis Ray, Publisher/Editor of "Rapid River Magazine", by e-mail hoping he might see that e-mail eventually and take us up on our offer to link "Rapid River Magazine" on our website at (www.carolinaarts.com) - the online version and promote it in social media. Well, I didn't hear anything at first but after a few days passed, Ray said he would like that, but he had some revisions to do. I wish I had time to do some revisions myself. Our October 2024 issue was our biggest ever, as it was full of info about exhibitions about to take place in Upstate SC and Western NC, as well as other parts of the Carolinas.

But, by the time we launched on the evening of Sept. 30, most of those events were wiped out by Hurricane Helene. Well, we now have that link so you can download a copy of "Rapid River Magazine's" Nov. 2024 issue - a good reflection of what happened in WNC and Asheville and what's going on now and in the future. It's a horrible situation, but like Charleston after Hugo - WNC and Asheville will returned to being a major arts destination. With our help, support and time. So download that issue and read all about it at (<https://online.pubhtml5.com/whax/oaqf/#p=1>).

Hurricane Helene Recovery Resources

Arts Organizations:

FEMA help for the Arts at (https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_art-culture-fact-sheet_012024.pdf).

NC Arts Disaster Relief Fund at (<https://www.ncartsfoundation.org/>).

CERF+ Craft Artists Emergency Relief Grant at (<https://cerfplus.org/>).

ArtsAVL (Asheville Area Arts Council) at (<https://artsavl.org>).

Toe River Arts Council (Burnsville & Spruce Pine) at (<https://toeriverarts.org/>).

Southern Highland Craft Guild at (https://southernhighlandguild.org/donate/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAR3OVHcsLWVPV9YRP-i1pyB0yi9q6jTMN-NrOrpVRIKBzypmeJeQ7t6jaZFTL_aemKVXj_cOockF0-tQWJ9RFQ).

Local & State Organizations:

Western North Carolina Community Foundation at (https://cfwnc.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=1332).

United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County at (<https://www.unitedwayabc.org/>).

North Carolina Community Foundation Disaster Relief Fund at (<https://www.nccommunityfoundation.org/nonprofits/disaster-relief-fund/hurricane-helene-response>).

The American Red Cross - Western North Carolina at (<https://www.redcross.org/donate/donation.html/>).

What about artists and art organizations in South Carolina? Well, most of the info I've shared about recovery efforts has come from North Carolina artists and art organizations. As of this writing, I have received nothing from those in charge of the arts in South Carolina - the SC Arts Commission. As usual, you have to go to them to get info and all I found was this link (<https://www.scartshub.com/responding-to-helene/>). I didn't see much info there where they were doing much to help the arts themselves. Maybe I didn't see what they are planning to do, but they also never have anything there to help folks in the commercial arts.

You would think they would contact the only visual arts publication in South Carolina to help provide info for artists, art galleries, and arts groups, but then that's me. I'm not surprised as they try to make it as if "Carolina Arts" doesn't exist. That's OK with me as we don't need their handouts with strings attached. Plus, we're not a non-profit (official status) but we would fit the description better than many folks they give funding to. We help people without strings attached, whether they are for-profit or non-profit.

Of course, the alternative to all this red tape is for artists in these areas finding new outlets for their work while they recover, which survived this disaster or new art they produce - either online or at other brick and mortar facilities - commercial galleries or art centers. That might be the faster way to put money in your pocket.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic some artists used a Facebook page to sell art at the Artist Support Pledge Carolinas - Marketplace. On this page people bought and artists sold discounted artwork made available by artists in the Carolinas through the Artist Support Pledge. Artists pledged to sell their work for no more than \$200. Once they reached \$1,000, they would spend \$200 of their own money on the artwork of another artist. That seemed to work back then. Some couldn't post works fast enough before it was sold.

Survivor's Guilt

I've shared a lot of horrible videos and photos of the disaster which took place in Upstate SC and Western NC - one, to show what happened there and two, to inspire people who didn't suffer damage to help these folks out. At times I found myself ignoring Facebook posts promoting other events taking place in other areas of the Carolinas. I even didn't go to a few events I had planned to, because I didn't want to report about something while others were suffering. It's called survivor's guilt. But the visual art community can't afford for me to have that attitude while other artists, art galleries, and arts organizations are going forward with plans, which have been in the making for months, if not years. So we're doing two things at once - going forward and trying to help.

Help For A Supporter

One of our supporters in WNC was hit very badly by Hurricane Helene and other circumstances. Maggie and Freeman Jones run Turtle Island Pottery, located in the

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Ocean Promenade
acrylic on panel
36 x 36 in.



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