

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

A Packed Gallery Listings

One of the benefits to my "house arrest" - they call it home bound care to have a nurse come three times a week to change my stomach wound bandage, is that I had lots of time to work on our Gallery listings. This is where I go through our listings to update info about exhibits being offered during the upcoming month. Because I can't go anywhere, I spent time roaming through websites to find info about exhibits. This was info where the people presenting the exhibits made no effort to send info to us so we could inform our readers as to what's on view in the Carolinas.

Some used to send us info, but then a staff change was made and the new person wasn't told to send us info about their exhibits. And, I usually won't have time to track these new people down and get them to send us info. It's a big problem with visual art organizations like guilds - they usually assign one person to do publicity for the group - for a year and then someone else will do it. In my experience, this is a process where you spend months training the new PR person how and when to send us info and before you know it the year is up and you start the process over again. Some don't have a clue as to how to deal with the media - they never have, and every once in a while you get someone who is good at it but none the less you'll lose them when the year is up. And, there seems to be no transition period where the in-coming person gets any training from the outgoing person.

And you wouldn't believe how many arts organizations and groups who have websites, present exhibits, but you'll never find any info posted about those exhibits. The frustrating thing is many of these same sites have info on past exhibits.

Many folks have now gone to posting info about exhibits on Facebook, but many of those posts are targeted toward getting people to

come to receptions and they also offer incomplete info. Many just post an unidentified photo of artwork without telling you who the artist is or why they are posting that image. It's all free and there are not any limits as to what you can post, but people act like they're paying by the word and saving money by using as few words as possible.

It's madness for people like me whose goal is to offer as much info about exhibits being offered during a certain month in the Carolinas.

So enjoy all the info about the exhibits taking place this month, but don't expect to see it this way next month - due to a short February and I'll only be including the info that is sent to us by deadline.

Changes at the Charleston County Public Library

The Saul Alexander Gallery at the main branch of the Charleston County Public Library, in downtown Charleston, SC, will offer First Monday Gallery Night with the exhibits they are presenting. This will include light refreshments and snacks, but no alcohol. Maybe one day that will be the next step. The first one takes place on Feb. 5, from 6-7pm, for the exhibit *Imprints of Shadows*, featuring works by Shawn Allison on view from Feb. 1 - 28, 2018.

A lack of receptions has made the Library space less desirable to many artists who want an event to be able to invite people to - so this should help in getting more applications for exhibits from local artists.

The Saul Alexander Gallery will accept submissions Feb.-Sept. 2018. This is an opportunity for South Carolina artists and craftsmen to present their work to the public. A jury of local art professionals will meet to review all submissions, and those

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accepted will be scheduled to exhibit for one month during 2019. For more information visit

(<https://www.ccpl.org/saul-alexander-gallery>).

Some people discount this space but I think it's one of the best non-commercial exhibit spaces in Charleston. No other space is open to the public for as many hours, free parking on site, and think of the folks who go and use the library - highly educated people who are still enjoying the learning process. That's the kind of folks I'd want seeing my art. And, now you can have receptions.

And there are many other libraries around the Carolinas that offer exhibit spaces.

One Shining Moment at the SC Arts Commission



Carl R. Blair (1932-2018) died this January - he was my only decent connection with the SC Arts Commission and after he tried to get me an audience with them - they kicked him off the commission - sending a message around SC's visual art community - don't ever question us - you're lucky to get the handouts we give you. It's our way or the highway folks. So sad.

Blair was the only Arts Commission

board member who ever recognized my complaints about some Arts Commission policies. At the time, I listed ten things I'd change about the Arts Commission - Blair agreed with some of them and had arranged a meeting.

What was supposed to be a full discussion of that list - point by point - turned into a quick 10 minute face to face during the Spoleto Festival where then director Suzy Surkamer all of a sudden had to go to an important meeting - another important meeting.

Shortly after that Blair was replaced with someone who knew not to make waves. That's how all arts commission board members are chosen - see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil.

Blair was also one of the founders and owners of Hampton III Gallery in Taylors, SC, a long time supporter of *Carolina Arts*, and one of the few commercial galleries in the Greenville area to present exhibitions of works by their stable of artists, some of the most talented in the region and SC. He was a long time professor of art at Bob Jones University in Greenville.

Carl Blair tried to make relations between the SC Arts Commission and the commercial visual art community better in SC and it cost him his position on the Commission's board. He was a good man, artist, instructor, gallery owner, and Arts Commission board member - he will be missed.

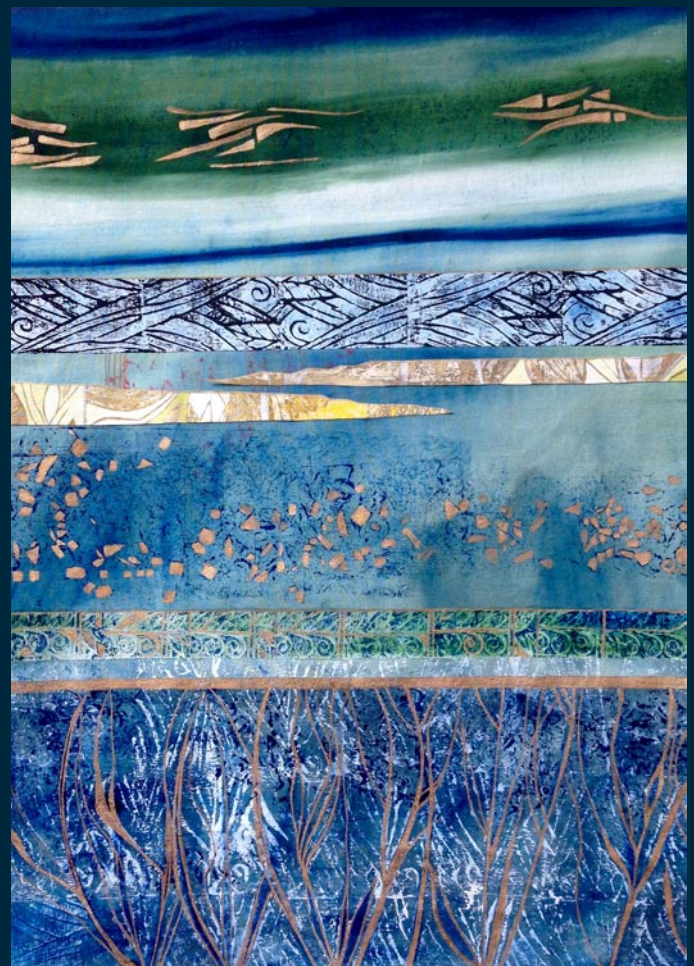
Speaking of the Arts Commission

The SC Arts Commission is celebrating its 50th anniversary with some events and exhibitions, but you might not know it - unless you're a fan of the Arts Commission (someone who receives funding from them). They're not the best at publicity and usually the people they partner with are not either, with a few exceptions. You would think they would send info about these exhibits to the only visual arts publication serving South Carolina and North Carolina, but they haven't sent us one press release. Happy Anniversary!

Nance Lee Sneddon *Wet Sand Patterns*



Glitter Tide



Prussian Blue Waterway

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