

West Main Artists Co-op

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By profession, Hopps was a teacher for 31 years in Spartanburg County School District 7. After retiring in 2004, she became an art student and experimented with various media, eventually using watercolors as her primary medium. Most of her work is based in nature, and she has received several regional awards in juried shows. She now lives at Lake Bowen in Inman, SC.

"It's a great chance for Andy and me to show our art together," she said. "We both love creating, although our styles differ and we prefer a different medium, our subject matter often relates to nature, the earth and its beauty."

West Main Artist Co-op in Spartanburg, SC, Features Works by Danielle Fontaine

West Main Artist Co-op in Spartanburg, SC, will present *Pye Pond—A Memoir*, featuring works by Danielle Fontaine, a Greenville artist who tells Southern stories through encaustics, on view from Mar. 5 - 30, 2019. A reception will be held on Mar. 21, from 5-9pm, during the city's monthly ArtWalk, when most of the art museums and galleries in Spartanburg stay open late to showcase their newest exhibitions.

The exhibit metaphorically ask the question: Why do we choose to keep or discard certain things in our lives? Her explorations take the form of a pictorial memoir focused on a small family farm in South Georgia.

"I would like my visitors to spend a little time considering the enduring question of what we elect to keep or preserve and the reasons why, and reflect on what, or whom, we discard along the way. I hope people get an appreciation for the power of storytelling in visual arts, and for the little-known medium of encaustics, and for the beauty of family history in all its entanglements," the Canadian native said.

"I have been collecting images since 2010, amassing more photos every time we visit the family farm on the pond in South Georgia," Fontaine said. "I began doing the encaustic work based on this series of photographs when the Greenville Center for Creative Arts opened in 2015. The realization that I was creating a pictorial memoir came gradually as the work evolved. The story, in the studio as in life, is a work in progress."

West Main Artist Co-op's Venue curator Dwight Rose recruited Fontaine to exhibit in Spartanburg. "Danielle is an exceptional artist, and her exhibit is very storytelling about the South, which will appeal to a great many people. However, another reason I wanted to bring her work to Spartanburg was to give people another version of what it means to work in encaustics. So much of that work in general is very abstract and nonrepresentational. With Danielle, the patron can more easily see the representational images that are being used."

Most of her work will be for sale, ranging in price from \$120 to \$5,200.

Fontaine came to Upstate South Carolina in 1999 and has been a leader on the regional art scene ever since. She holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from McGill University in Canada, a master's degree in economics and politics from Oxford University, and a master's degree in creative writing from Queens University of Charlotte (NC). In 2015 she joined the Greenville Center for Creative Art as one of its inaugural studio artists. While being a producing artist in Greenville, she branched out.

"I initiated the pilot program for The Warehouse Theatre's *This Wooden O* educational outreach and mentored the first Greenville County High Schools Art Exhibit during the inaugural year of Artisphere," she said. "I am the co-founder and curator of the SeasonArt Series, a happy marriage of visual arts and literature at The Warehouse Theatre. With my husband Bill McLendon I founded the Brandon Fellowship at the Greenville Center for Creative Arts. I currently serve on the Urban Panel of the City of Greenville's Design Review Board."

Additionally, Fontaine is the recipient of the 2018 Carolina Arts Award. She will be featured in the March 2019 issue of the magazine *Carolina Arts*.

"WMAC is wonderful place to work as an artist," Donnan said. "The leadership is incredible and has made this place where artists want to come and work. Fellow members are very supportive of each other, are excited to see each other, and interest in your progress. WMAC is a great resource for Spartanburg, because of the members, leadership, and what we have to offer the tourist industry. A great place to visit at no cost."

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or visit (www.WestMainArtists.com).



Work by Danielle Fontaine

of a 2018 grant from the Elizabeth Green-shields Foundation, an organization that internationally supports emerging artists working in a representational style, as well as two grants from the Greenville Metropolitan Arts Council.

"I am humbled to exhibit at West Main," Fontaine said. "When Dwight invited me, I eagerly accepted even though I was not familiar with the Venue. I always trust Dwight implicitly – he is a fantastic person! I went to visit soon afterwards and the exhibit at the time was a retrospective of Mayo Mac Boggs – such a distinguished artist and a Verner Award winner! A very tough act to follow, but also an inspiration and a great motivation. I will work hard to make Dwight, WMAC, and the memory of Mayo Mac Boggs very proud."

"WMAC is a treasure for members and patrons, a haven for artists, and a shining example of the power of the arts to both document and benefit the communities the Co-op serves, not only in Spartanburg or next door in Greenville, but throughout the state of South Carolina," she said.

It wasn't until her mid-50s that Fontaine began using encaustics in her art. "I am not only a visual artist but a memoirist who at this juncture is plying her craft in the language of encaustics. I believe we are all artists and storytellers and that our perfect medium is out there waiting for us to find it. A good place to start looking for it is at the local art center."

In her artist's statement, Fontaine explains: "My encaustic work considers the enduring question of what we elect to keep or preserve and the reasons why, and invites reflection on what, or whom, we discard along the way. *Still Time on Pye Pond*, my original and ongoing encaustic narrative, dwells in a family farm in South Georgia, where an odd collection of potentially fixable or reusable items await their fate in a randomly ordered fashion. I find much poetry, at once beautiful and sad, in their uncertain future. It is this conflicted beauty, this southern family portrait that I seek to recreate in my studio."

"Objects stand in for people, for kinships tangled like Spanish moss, for ideas as deeply anchored as the roots that drain the soil, for time as still as the water on the sheltered pond. For things that could be fixed. *Pye Pond* used to be home to all of us; not

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anymore. There is waywardness. Unspoken absences. When I visit occasionally – these are our roots, this is family – I escape the silence and find solace in the fields and barns around the pond, in patient mounds of old familiar things. I collect images," adds Fontaine.

"This narrative, began as small photo transfer works and then works based on photo grisailles, evolved into larger works still inspired by my photography but now interpreted freehand, or in the case of buildings, drafted the old fashion way with my trusted old mechanical pencil from my architecture school days. The stories fully emerge with the application of encaustic colors. (I also occasionally choose to simply preserve my photos under a clear coat of encaustic medium.)"

"With its essential process of fusing after application, encaustic painting does not lend itself easily to straight line work. Learning to control this process in my unconventional encaustic work is a challenge I relish. It is a conscious attempt at harnessing wandering thoughts and reframing unspoken absences."

Anastasia & Friends Gallery in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Susan Lenz, Flavia Lovatelli, and Olga Yuhkno

Anastasia & Friends Gallery in Columbia, SC, will present *Alternative Storytellers*, a group show featuring work by Susan Lenz, Flavia Lovatelli, and Olga Yuhkno, on view from Mar. 7 - 29, 2019. A reception will be held on Mar. 7, from 6-9pm, during "First Thursday" art crawl.

The show includes three different approaches and three different media in order to convey stories that provokes thought and conversation. The inspiration and title for this show comes in support of the Deckle Edge Literary Festive, Sat., Mar. 23, which is now in its fourth year of celebrating the rich tradition of state-wide written word. While *Alternative Storytellers* is diverse in many ways, the narratives are united in passionate telling and in other unexpected ways.

Susan Lenz's work brings feminist twists to familiar fairy tales. Flavia Lovatelli's pieces are about environmental problems, addressing the issue and shedding light to the sources. Olga Yuhkno deals with social and political injustice. All three are tied by friendship, sisterhood and community. Together the work challenges ordinary story lines by suggesting novel alternatives.



Work by Olga Yuhkno

One of Lenz's pieces has Cinderella embracing her hearth broom and foregoing a fairy tale salvation through the patriarchy of a regal marriage. "When I first found the well used cinder broom, I knew I wanted to use it as a visual link to an alternative ending for Cinderella. It took weeks to come up with the right telling." Lenz shadowboxed the broom with letters clipped from vintage ephemera that spell a new narrative and better conclusion.

"Days of thinking resulted in a feminist twist," says Lenz. "Cinderella refused royal domesticity in favor of all sorts of waste management investments. The final sentences include: Cinderella became a billionaire. She cleaned up!"

Lenz also transformed Snow White, Hansel & Gretel's Witch, Rapunzel, Sleeping Beauty, and ordinary dolls. Each 2D, mixed



Work by Danielle Fontaine

West Main Artists Co-op is one of Spartanburg's leading arts agencies. It is a nonprofit and membership-based grassroots institution, housed in a converted church. It has more than 50 members, about 30 working studios, three galleries, two stages, a printery, and a ceramics studio. Normally, it has three exhibits each month: two by members; one by a guest artist. Nearly 10 years old, the Co-op has the largest collection of locally made and for-sale art in the city and the county.

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Work by Susan Lenz

media work includes a feminist twist. "I absolutely adored rewriting these common fairy tales," Lenz said. "It was so much fun and the humor is in every piece."

Flavia Lovatelli's signature paper coils also transformed her way of telling stories of environmental concern. As a sustainable artist, Lovatelli's work encourages others to follow the mantra: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Her story is about the damage of single use plastic.



Work by Flavia Lovatelli

"I started thinking about the massive amount of waste I personally produce in my household. Then I started thinking about the amount my neighborhood wastes. My mind couldn't wrap itself around the realization of our country's waste. Most of us are not even keyed into a consciousness of what we do. We are oblivious to the poison we live in. My past approach to art-making was to make change, to suggest a better way to live. For this exhibition, I focused on what nature might look like in the future, adapt-

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