

# Some Books for Summer Reading

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With its fanlike evergreen fronds, soft trunk, and strong root system, the palmetto is a wind-adapted palm that can bend with strong sea breezes without breaking or being uprooted. Emblematic of survival against opposition, the palmetto tree has captured the imaginations of South Carolinians for generations, appearing on the state seal since the American Revolution and on the state flag since 1861.

The palmetto was named South Carolina's official state tree by Governor Burnet R. Maybank in 1939, and in 1974 Governor John C. West commissioned acclaimed South Carolina artist Jim Harrison to paint the official palmetto tree portrait for the State of South Carolina, an image that adorns the State House to this day. *The Palmetto and Its South Carolina Home* showcases the timeless, natural beauty of the state tree in marshland and coastal landscapes in the popular Harrison style.



Appearing on glassware, stationery, jewelry, and many other decorative and functional objects, the palmetto tree is an omnipresent symbol in South Carolina culture. For Harrison, the palmetto remains foremost an icon of the wondrous Carolina coastal habitats. Sweeping images of the coast have been part of Harrison's art since the beginning of his career, and he continues to illustrate his love of the South Carolina coast by capturing the beauty of the state tree amid the many stunning and enchanting scenes included here.

*The Palmetto and Its South Carolina Home* also explores the historical background of the tree and its many ties to South Carolina's heritage as a symbol of strength and beauty worthy of this artistic celebration.

"The South Carolina coast is quite a special place. My artwork represents my southern heritage with a wide range of images from coastal to rural Americana scenes. Recently I have refocused on capturing the timeless beauty of our state's coastal areas and South Carolina's tree in particular. The palmetto tree is an image that is very much a part of our state's past, present, and future, and it represents not only the beauty but also the strength of our state and its people," said Harrison.

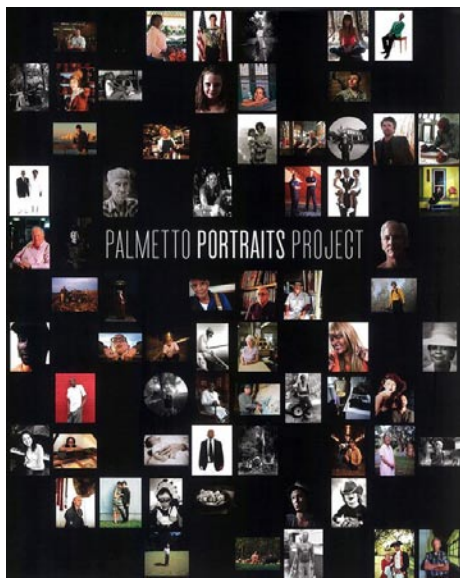
Harrison describes himself as a mood realist artist. Through his work he seeks to evoke in the viewer the same deep appreciation he holds for America's scenic heritage. Harrison has devoted much of his life and art to the preservation of the past. He studied art at the University of South Carolina and launched his professional career in 1971 on the sidewalks of New York's Greenwich Village.

Harrison's first book, *Pathways to a Southern Coast*, was published by the University of South Carolina Press in 1986 and was brought back into print in 2009. He and his wife, Margaret Harrison, manage the Jim Harrison Gallery in Denmark, SC.

*Palmetto Portraits Project*, edited by Mark Sloan

Essay by Josephine Humphreys, Afterword by Paul E. Matheny III

A rich compendium of portraits from two dozen photographers depicting everyday South Carolinians



10 1/4" x 12 3/4", 176 pages, 124 color and 58 b&w illustrations  
ISBN 978-0-615-35474-3, hardcover, \$29.95

The *Palmetto Portraits Project* is a collaboration between the Medical University of South Carolina, the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston, and the South Carolina State Museum intended to reflect the full range and diversity of South Carolina citizens at work and play in the lowcountry, piedmont, and the upstate.

The portraits include close-ups and wide shots of ordinary people living in South Carolina. Military personnel from Fort Jackson, Parris Island, and Charleston Air Force Base were photographed. Factory workers at the BMW Manufacturing Plant are featured as well as firefighters, children, church attendees, and shop merchants on Charleston's King Street. From historical reenactors to a roller derby girl, these photographs highlight the range of individuals who make up everyday life in South Carolina.

Reminiscent of the Farm Security Administration's photographs of 1930s, the *Palmetto Portraits Project* is a visual survey of state residents at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Novelist Josephine Humphreys provides an essay contemplating our shared kinship. Editor Mark Sloan offers insight into the privileged access that portrait photographers have long provided into the lives of their subjects.

Each photographer prefaces his or her work with a brief description of the photographs and the experiences of working toward this collaborative project. In the afterword Paul E. Matheny III offers an assessment of how these portraits may be viewed by future generations and applauds the photographers for capturing "the soul of the state."

Mark Sloan is the director and senior curator of the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston School of the Arts. Sloan is an accomplished photographer and the author or coauthor of eight books.

South Carolina novelist Josephine Humphreys is the author of *Dreams of Sleep* (winner of the 1985 Ernest Hemingway Award for First Fiction), *Rich in Love* (made into a major motion picture), *The Fireman's Fair*, and *Nowhere Else on Earth*.

Paul E. Matheny III is chief curator of art at the South Carolina State Museum.

Photographers participating in this project include: Jack Alterman, Jeff Amberg, Gayle Brooker, Vennie Deas-Moore, Brett Flashnick, Squire Fox, Andrew Haworth, Molly Hayes, Jon Holloway, Caroline Jenkins, Julia Lynn, Nancy Marshall, Phil Moody, Milton Morris, Stacy L. Pearsall, Blake Praytor, Ruth Rackley, Kathleen Robbins, Chris M. Rogers, Nancy Santos, Mark Sloan, Michelle Van Pary, Sam Wang, and Cecil Williams.

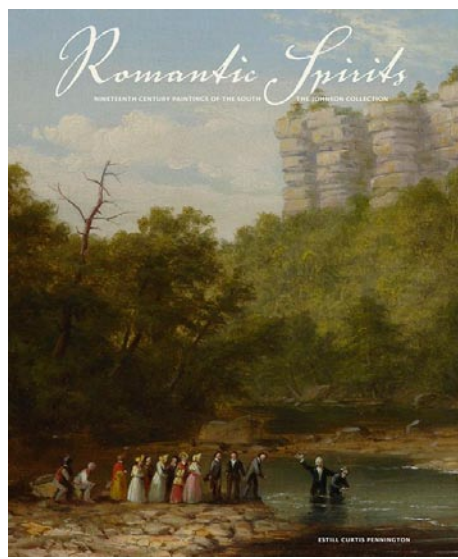
*Romantic Spirits: Nineteenth Century Paintings of the South from the Johnson Collection* by Estill Curtis Pennington

A lavishly illustrated exploration of romanticism in iconic Southern masterworks

10" x 12", 168 pages, 45 color and 29 b&w illustrations

ISBN 978-0-615-56265-0, hardcover,

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\$34.95

The late, eminent scholar Clement Eaton once observed that the nineteenth-century romantic spirit, which "subtly permeated the society of the Old South," was borne out most vividly in the region's "arts and social manners." Having had its genesis in European literature and fine art, romanticism found its way into the cultural output of the young Republic, both North and South. The same ideals that imbued the canvases of the Hudson River School also colored the art of painters who found their inspiration and audience below the Mason-Dixon Line.

In this study of thirty-two artists represented in the Johnson Collection, noted art historian Estill Curtis Pennington delineates the historical, social, and cultural forces that profoundly influenced their aesthetic sensibilities. Author of the award-winning books *Lessons in Likeness* and *Kentucky: The Master Painters*, Pennington examines the core concepts of the romantic movement as it unfolded in the American South: the heroic individual, an idealized chivalric code of personal honor, the sublime quality of nature, and the inevitability of change in an imperfect world. Many of the artists under consideration in this lavishly illustrated volume created works of art that have achieved iconic status in the annals of painting in the South, including William Dickinson Washington, William Thompson Russell Smith, Gustave Henry Mosler, Thomas Addison Richards, Joseph Rusling Meeker, Robert Walter Weir, and Thomas Sully.

Spanning the years 1810–1896, *Romantic Spirits* includes insightful illustrated biographies of the featured artists, as well as extensive bibliographic resources. This inaugural publication underscores the Johnson Collection's commitment to advance interest in the dynamic role that the art of the South plays in the larger context of American art and to contribute to the canon of art historical literature.

Estill Curtis Pennington has served in curatorial capacities for the Archives of American Art, National Portrait Gallery, New Orleans Museum of Art, and Morris Museum of Art. Pennington's *Kentucky: The Master Painters from the Frontier Era to the Great Depression* was a nominee for the Smithsonian's Charles C. Eldredge Prize for Distinguished Scholarship in American Art and a winner of the 2009 Publication Award of Merit from the Kentucky Historical Society. His most recent book, *Lessons in Likeness: Portrait Painters in Kentucky and the Ohio River Valley, 1802–1920*, has also been honored by the Kentucky Historical Society.

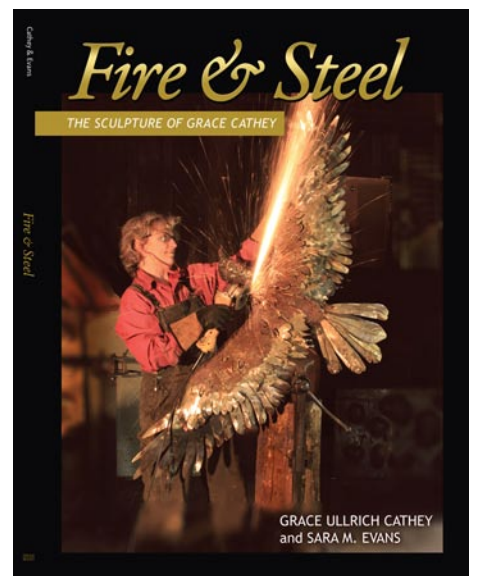
All of these books were published by USC Press in Columbia, SC.

*Fire & Steel: The Sculpture of Grace Cathey* will be published by Dahlia Books on July 1, 2013.

*Fire & Steel* is a collaboration between Cathey and the distinguished historian Sara Evans (author, Carolina native and seasonal resident).

*Fire & Steel* introduces Grace Cathey, tells the story of how she came to metal art after years as a professional weaver and painter and how her work has grown and changed. It also describes some of the techniques, especially finishes and use of color, that draw on Cathey's experience as a weaver, watercolorist and print artist.

Printed in full color with over 100 photographs throughout the book, *Fire & Steel* is primarily an art book that introduces readers to the full range of Cathey's work, from major pieces of public art installed



on the main streets of Waynesville, NC, Hendersonville, NC and the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville, NC, to a variety of custom pieces for homes and gardens - even wearable pendants.

There are very few women sculptors who work with fabricated metal: cutting steel, welding, hammering, grinding, and shaping to create beautiful pieces both large and small. Cathey's career developed in western North Carolina and her subject matter draws heavily on the fauna and flora of the Southern Appalachians. Rand-McNally's *Best of the Road* lists her gallery on Depot Street in Waynesville as a landmark.

Professor William Hood at the New York University Institute of Fine Arts says of her work, "Grace Cathey shares a gift rare among artists. Her exacting craftsmanship coaxes metal into works of art that are alive with the likeness of graceful, vibrant, playful creatures. They delight the eye and light up the heart."



Lawrence J. Wheeler, director of the North Carolina Museum of Art, in Raleigh, NC, declares that Grace Cathey's sculptures are "beautifully conceived, and brilliantly executed. Her integration of the natural world into her large formats is lyrical and lovely, not easy to achieve in such an unyielding material."

Trained first as a fiber artist, Cathey spent 15 years as a weaver, but once she tried MIG welding in a welding class, she never looked back. She started making garden stakes and then worked her way up to flora and fauna: animals such as frogs, roosters; twisting vines and flowers in bloom. Her functional garden pieces such as gates and trellises often feature an unexpected extra - like a butterfly on a bloom or a lizard slinking up the side.

Cathey's work is part of the permanent collection at the North Carolina Arboretum and Chimney Rock State Park and has been exhibited at the United States Botanical Garden in Washington, DC, and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh. Her large-scale public art has been included in both Hendersonville and Waynesville's Art on Main series. You can also see her work at her gallery, housed in historic Walker Service, an auto service center her husband's grandfather opened in the Frog Level area of Waynesville in 1928.

For info about purchasing any of the books from USC Press, call 800/768-2500 or visit ([www.uscpress.com](http://www.uscpress.com)).

For info about *Fire & Steel*, visit (<http://gracecathey.com/book.html>).