

# Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

## Annual Holiday Reminder

Each year during the holiday season, no matter what holiday you celebrate, I try to remind our readers that one of the best gifts you can give someone or yourself is the gift of art. Most art will not need batteries. Most art will not wear out from over viewing. The recipient will get to enjoy your gift year after year, and year after year they will think about how wonderful a gift you have given them. And, best of all, most art comes with no assembly necessary.

The cost can range from giving someone a membership to an art museum, paying for someone to take an art class, buying an art book, purchasing an original piece of pottery, a fine art print, a small painting or all the way to giving them a large painting, sculpture, or even better, making a donation and having the new wing of an art museum named after someone. Now that's a gift. Hey, it happens!

OK, art can be a little pricey as a gift, but just like the economic status of our readers, good art comes in all sizes and prices. For the price conscious, fine art crafts can offer the most bang for the buck. Reproduction prints of original works of art also come in a wide range of prices, but don't forget that fine art prints that have been hand-pulled by the artist and come in smaller editions can be had for about the same price as some reproduction prints. Myself, I'd always rather have an image that only a handful of people share with me vs. thousands, and having an original is even better.

For those of you who fit into the category of "price is no consideration," (I'm talking about those folks enjoying that 16,000 + stock market) what better way to make an incredible impression than with

a monster piece of art - something that can give the folks at DeBeers a run for their money. Believe me, you will make an impression on the recipient, an artist, a gallery, or art space. You could become a patron overnight.

No matter what your price range, there is art out there which can fit any taste and any price range. And, you're lucky to be in the Carolinas, as there are plenty of talented artists out there working for you.

One consideration I ask of you - if you can make your special purchase from one of our advertisers that support this paper throughout the year - it would be good for me and you. After all, they have been paying for this paper since day one. Show them your appreciation.

If you don't know where to find such gifts, try just flipping through the pages of this paper. Our cover this month offers just a look at a few possibilities. You can also find gift ideas at many of the arts councils, art museums, arts centers, and commercial galleries listed in the back of the paper. And, don't forget our blog, *Carolina Arts News* - we're posting even more opportunities there daily that didn't make this issue of the paper.

## Last Pitch for ArtFields

Dec. 13, 2013, is the deadline for submissions to the 2014 ArtFields Competition and Exhibition in Lake City, SC. So, you better get your act together if you want to try to get into next year's event.

The 2014 ArtFields Competition and Exhibition takes place in Lake City from Apr. 25 through May 4, 2014.

Whether you're an established or emerging artist, you can submit your artwork to the 2014 ArtFields Art Competition for a

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chance to win part of \$100,000 in total cash prizes! You can make your submission at (<http://www.artfieldssc.org/artists/how-it-works/>).

One big change from last year is that the People's Choice award of \$25,000 will now be split into two categories: \$12,500 - People's Choice 2-Dimensional and \$12,500 - People's Choice 3-Dimensional.

Each of the People's Choice awards is determined by visitors' votes throughout the ten-day artfest. Visitors will register in Lake City, and vote for their favorite entries during ArtFields. Visitors may only vote once per entry.

For further info visit ([www.artfieldssc.org](http://www.artfieldssc.org)) and read, print it out, and read again before you submit your entry.

The other thing you may want to keep in mind as an artist is that if you make the cut and get in the exhibit, but don't win any of the \$100,000 in cash prizes, other opportunities are possible. The new Jones-Carter Gallery in Lake City selected two artists who had participated in the 2013 ArtFields event as their first exhibit as a stand alone gallery. They may also be checking out this year's entries for future exhibitions.

And, who knows who else is using the 400 entries as a shopping market for exhibits at other venues or for commercial gallery representation. The winners of the money are not the only winners who come away from that event. For a visual artists - exposure is the key to success.

## Dogs Chasing Their Tails

Keeping up with the stats of the paper is like watching a dog chase its tail sometimes. And I'm the dog.

It seems like every time I think I understand what's going on - I'm proven wrong. I felt pretty secure saying that we had a great Oct. 2013 issue, which in the end brought in 215,018 downloads. I added that we will probably see a drop off in November. And, why shouldn't I have felt that way, it happens every year. By the middle of November, if not sooner, people get holiday fever and all patterns of normal behavior fly out the window. Plus, we tend to have a smaller

issue and if there is anything I've learned - it's that the bigger the paper, the more downloads you'll see.

Well, now I can throw that theory out the window also. We had a smaller issue in November compared to October, and by mid month we had attracted the bulk of the downloads for the month (99%) and then the bottom dropped out as expected - even more than usual. But the kicker was that by Nov. 15th the total number was 225,000 +. So, I was proven wrong once again.

I think I need to retire from chasing stats. I'm getting too old to run around in circles anyway. People ask me about them and I can give them raw numbers but when they ask for meaning - I'm just going to have to shrug my shoulders and admit I haven't a clue. We'll just keep putting the paper out and in my next life I'll try and get a job at Google.

## Here We Come 2014

Later in July 2014, we'll be starting our 27th year of doing an arts publication and our 18th year of covering the visual arts in the Carolinas. Man, I'm glad I'm not carrying those papers anymore. Thank you Al Gore for inventing the Internet!

My biggest worry all December will be making sure we change all our dates to 2014 before we launch that January issue. All you have to worry about is making sure you make that Dec. 24, 2013, deadline.

Have a safe and happy new year!

## Dear Santa

I've been as good as I can be this year. I'm only going to ask for one thing this year. I've got a lot of very good art, I've still got some hair, I'm as healthy as most 62 year old men - better than some, and I'm happily married. All I want is for the Carolina Panthers to get into the playoffs this year. I'm not asking for another trip to the Superbowl or for them to win it. I just want for them to have a chance at doing those things. Every game they play makes my heart stronger, as they say - "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger", and their close games are almost killing me.

## CURTIS R. HARLEY ART GALLERY

### SPRING 2014



volumes<sup>2</sup>  
women bound by art

January 17 - February 21, 2014  
Panel Discussion / Reception, Jan. 30, 4:30 p.m.

### DOUBLE VISION Perspectives from Palestine

March 3 - March 28, 2014

Lecture/Panel Discussion/Reception, March 6, 6:00 p.m.



### USC Upstate Visual Arts Student Juried Biennial

April 8 - April 25, 2014

Reception and Awards, April 8, 4:30 p.m.



The USC Upstate  
Visual Arts Program  
includes Bachelor  
of Arts programs in:

Art Studio (graphic  
design emphasis)  
Art Education  
Art History (minor)

#### Harley Gallery:

The Gallery, located on the first floor of the Humanities & Performing Arts Center, is free and open to the public from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

#### To learn more:

Find Us Online:

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Or Contact:

Michael Dickins  
Gallery Manager  
(864) 503-5848  
[mdickins@uscupstate.edu](mailto:mdickins@uscupstate.edu)

Jane Nodine  
Gallery Director  
(864) 503-5838  
[jnodine@uscupstate.edu](mailto:jnodine@uscupstate.edu)

UPSTATE

University of South Carolina Upstate

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(864) 503 - 5000