

Pickens County Museum of Art & History in Pickens, SC, Offers Work by Twelve Women

The Pickens County Museum of Art & History in Pickens, SC, will present *A Dozen Dames: Twelve Women Making Art*, on view from Dec. 7 through Feb. 6, 2014. A reception will be held on Dec. 7, from 6-8pm.

A Dozen Dames, being mounted in both of the museum's upstairs galleries, is an invitational exhibition representing a range of artists dealing with a variety of techniques and subject matter. Included in this group are: Angelique Brickner, Linda Hyatt Cancel, Diana Farfán-Valente, Suzy Hart, Stephanie Howard, Randi Johns, Jo Carol Mitchell-Rogers, Beth Bullman Regula, Liz Rundorff Smith, B. J. Turner, Judy Z. Verhoeven and Susan Watson.



Work by Diana Farfan

Angelique Brickner, now working in Asheville, NC, received her BFA in Painting from Colorado State University. Her ceramic work has been well represented in a variety of exhibits at such prestigious places as the National Association of Women Artists Gallery in New York, NY; Target Gallery at the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, VA; Archie Bray Foundation for Ceramic Arts in Helena, MT; Woman Made Gallery in Chicago, IL and many others. Her work has been featured in numerous publications including *Ceramics Monthly* and *Ceramics Annual of America*.

Referring to her latest series of work, *Transparent Barriers*, Brickner said, "My latest work is an exploration of the barriers, real or imagined, that constrain us. This state of being trapped or 'boxed in', either by external or internal forces is universal. Whether constrained by the mores of culture, laws of governments, perceptions of race or gender, or the limitations and fears within our own psyches, my fascination lies with our ability to understand our entrapment and the varying responses we have to this state. I choose to encase ceramic figures in cubes and boxes because of our paradoxical understanding of this symbol. We live, work, worship and move in boxes, we feel sheltered and protected within their confines, but with a simple shift in perspective we can as easily then feel oppressed by our homes and families, jobs and possessions, religion, government and culture. The ceramic figure is left rough and organic, primal and is juxtaposed against the plastic, machined constraint posing an observation of whether the barriers and constraints that entrap us are a natural, organic state or the plastic inorganic construct of man - unnatural, contrived. Edges and Uncertain Legacy: My work is an exploration of the relationship of mankind to the edge upon which we exist, that edge between life and death, one reality and another, one paradigm shifting unexpectedly. It is that moment when perceived foundations

crack, break, twist and fall, leaving us to struggle, balance or resign ourselves to the inevitable result. It is that moment on the edge with which I am intrigued."

Raised and educated in Washington State, Laurens, SC artist Linda Hyatt Cancel says about her paintings, "While I've explored other subjects as still life, the orb with an attitude and personality has emerged to take center stage without taking itself too seriously. Nests and their precious cargo symbolize love, hope, security, comfort, and endless possibilities..." She continued, "Some of the subject matter are collections of what I find on a walk on a certain day, hoping that I can create something meaningful from the dying and broken."

Born in Bogotá, Colombia, Diana Farfán-Valente received her BFA at the National University of Colombia and her MFA in Ceramics at the University of South Carolina. Her works have been shown and awarded in a number of exhibitions in Colombia, Taiwan, and throughout the US.

Currently, Farfán is a full time studio artist living and working in Greenville, SC. She produces her work and teaches hand-building ceramics at her studio. She was recently awarded with grants from the South Carolina Arts Commission and Metropolitan Arts Council to develop her art projects. She is also a board member of Palmetto and Luna, a non-profit organization that promotes and supports the Latino Hispanic art and culture in the Carolinas.

Suzy Hart is a Life Member of the Art Students' League of New York, and President of the Appalachian Pastel Society. She was awarded the Butler Institute of American Art Award in the *Allied Artists of America 2012 Exhibition* and has received honors from the Portrait Society of America. Born in England, she has lived in Montreal, Montana and New York, and now lives in the South Carolina Upcountry. Always a consummate draftsman and sculptor, strong three-dimensional illusion and realism have been a constant in her paintings. In her lifetime as an artist, she has explored surrealism and contemporary approaches as well as classical forms to explore the many ways to tell a story. The human gaze is the most compelling force in her work. Hart strives to find the mystery in character, to enjoin the viewer to take part in the exploration, to get "drawn in".



Work by Beth Bullman Regula

Stephanie Howard was born in Greenville, SC, and grew up outside of Six Mile, SC. The subject matter of her drawings is derived from a mythology she has developed specific to the Southern United States. Stories are created in her work with themes that mix together a highly potent dose of southern fiction and reality. It is Baptist, Voodoo, Cherokee, Shakespeare, Appalachia, Delta, Beauty Queen and Cottonmouth. She uses the medium of pen on paper to create labor intensive works that sometimes include mixed media elements. It is on a pleasurable note to report that she is returning to again show her artwork in this exhibit as the first ever showing of Howard's artwork took place at the Pickens County Museum when she was only seven-years old.

Originally from Denmark, Randi Johns holds her Architecture degree from the University of Houston, TX. After many years as an architect, she shifted her focus to the arts running the Designers

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Showcase in Eureka Springs, AR, and later residing in San Miguel De Allende producing works for solo exhibits at the Lyn Galleria in San Miguel and for the professional counterpart to The American Institute of Architecture (AIA) in Mexico City. About her work Johns said, "Of all the influences in my work the most powerful is likely the use of color and abstraction where color dominates form, where color fights for its proper space and says something intrinsic about nature and this life that we live, where a tree can be red if that is how I feel about it, and where the painting is an expression of what I see and believe, at least on that day and at that time. As long as the passion is real and it is there, I want to get it on the canvas - 'To thine own self be true'."

Jo Carol Mitchell-Rogers is a Professor of Art and Chair of the Department of Art and Design in the SC School of the Arts at Anderson University. She earned a BFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Georgia and the MFA, also in Painting and Drawing, from Clemson University. Like many artists/teachers, Mitchell-Rogers is a perpetual student, later earning a PhD in Art Education from the University of Georgia.

Mitchell-Rogers has been recognized on campus and in the state for her teaching excellence as the recipient of the Boles Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Governor's Distinguished Professor Citation, and as the SC Art Education Association Higher Education Art Educator of the Year. A member of the ArtBomb Studios in Greenville, SC, Mitchell-Rogers maintains an active exhibition record as a painter and photographer. Her work has been included in over 80 invitational solo and group exhibitions, over 50 juried shows, and is included in numerous private collections throughout the country.

About her *Ordinary Icons* series of work Mitchell-Rogers says, "Driving this body of work is my interest in the notion of the iconography of the ordinary. I hope the images transform seemingly common or everyday moments that might otherwise be overlooked. Derived from original photographs, the paintings are intimate images whose subjects, typically, are commonly encountered objects taken out of context." She added, "Whether through the manipulation of color and light or the choice of subject matter, the work is intended to evoke a range of response. Some are intentionally playful and quirky, whereas others elicit a more contemplative feeling or sense of nostalgia."

Born and raised in the upstate of South Carolina, Beth Bullman Regula has always wanted to "make things". After receipt of her BA from Winthrop University she became an art educator and taught in several South Carolina schools, and for some time in Atlanta, GA. In 1983 Regula returned to Spartanburg and has, since, pursued a full-time career as a professional artist. About her current work Regula says, "My earlier works were pen and ink drawings on paper. Today, I use a variety of media in my work, particularly polymer clay. Since discovering this material, I have experimented with using it to create relief paintings as well as sculptures. This clay has given me a new way to involve detail, texture, painting and sculpture techniques." Regula went on to say, "The ideas and technical challenges involved in working with this material keep me excited. If I can bend it and shape it to express an idea, I'll use it."

Originally from Greenville, SC, Elizabeth (Liz) Rundorff Smith received her BA in Studio Art from the College of Wooster in Wooster, OH, and an MFA in Painting from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania where she was granted a Full Graduate Assistance Scholarship. Rundorff Smith also studied abroad at The Marchutz School of Painting in Aix en Provence, France, and The British Institute of Florence in Florence, Italy. She has also served as Program Director of the Hoyt Institute of Fine Arts in New Castle, PA where she developed and organized exhibitions and educational programming.

Rundorff Smith currently resides in Greenville, SC, and serves as Program Director for the Artisphere Festival. Continuing to produce and exhibit her work, she has been the recipient of numerous



Work by Judy V. Verhoeven

awards, most recently being an Honorable Mention by juror Betsy Cain in *A Sense of Place* a National Juried Fine Art Competition at the Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art in Augusta, GA. Rundorff Smith was also included in the *Carolina's Got Art 2013 Salon Exhibition* at the Larry Elder Gallery in Charlotte, NC.

In reference to her work, Rundorff Smith said, "I want to make visible the intangible presence of loss. As moments pass information is lost - obscured by the constant, fleeting movement of time. I am interested in the gaps in knowledge, or the loss of stability, that is inextricably linked to memory." She went on to say, "My work exists in the precarious space between representation and abstraction or physical presence and absence. Ultimately, I want to find significance in the practice of painting. I am committed to working with the medium of paint because I find the material to be at once complex and immediate. I find solace in the tradition of painting and limitless possibility in the elastic nature of the medium."

Born in Colorado and having lived in Michigan and Maine, B. J. Turner now calls Laurens, SC, home. She is a founding member of the Lauren's Artist's Coop and serves on their board of directors. Turner has been painting for more than 25 years. This self-taught artist has won several awards and museum purchase awards. Turner works primarily with landscapes, including trees, vegetables, and other still life models. She paints from her own photos and always keeps her camera handy during travels both here and abroad. Oil is her medium of choice because of the many vibrant and rich colors available.

Living in Greenville, SC, with her husband, son and two dogs, Judy Z. Verhoeven received her degree in Visual Communications from the Art Institute of Atlanta, and then worked as a graphic designer for a decade. Since 2006 she has been developing her technique and direction as a full-time collage artist. Verhoeven uses a comprehensive collection of found papers which she paints, stains and textures as her palette. It is with this media that she makes her collages. About her work Judy eloquently states, "It is meant to project acceptance, love, peacefulness, tolerance and gratitude."

Born in Juneau, AK, Susan Watson moved to New York City at age 18 to study art and received her BFA from Cooper Union and MFA from Columbia University. Widely exhibited, Watson has been featured in solo exhibitions in France, Miami, FL, and North Carolina. She currently lives in Seneca, SC, with her husband Chris and dog Emma. It was said about her work that she views her painting as an extension of the question, "What is the true nature of reality?" Commenting on this Watson said, "Painting offers a way to confront and delve into the mystery of life." In such work, she often represents life's mysteries through dream-like narratives. An interplay of light and dark elements, as well as the use of subtle or hidden imagery, reinforces her concepts, as she strives to express the unknown.

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