

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Ah Spring!

While February saw several days in the 80s, I still think of March as when Spring takes place in the Carolinas. Although several of those plants and trees that bloom in March have already arrived, one cold snap could take them all away. March is when the pollen wars start. And, March is when the tourists return in mass, which also means the beginning of outdoor art shows and more traffic in art galleries and art museums. This hopefully means more money in everyone's pockets along the art industry chain - the artists, the art supply industry, the art gallery or art museum, and art publications. We could all use that I'm sure.

So the Spring and early days of Summer are the mad dash before the long days of heat settle in over the Carolinas and the hurricane season starts in the Fall. Of course for all natives and those who have been here long enough to get used to the yearly climate it's no big deal, but for the visitors and new comers - it's a bit too much to handle yet.

This is my 45th year in South Carolina. For me, it would be hard to go back to Michigan, my native land. When I talk to old friends who still live there, while I'm sitting outside on my porch in mid-70 weather, they're telling me about how it might get above freezing next week and how they got another foot of snow overnight. They haven't been out of the house for a week. I have both fond memories and nightmares about my youthful days in that kind of weather, but I can't imagine living in it today. I often dream (in July and August) about sitting in a big room with a roaring fireplace and a big picture window watching fluffy flakes of snow coming down and walking outside and hearing almost nothing as the snow blankets all

sound, but then I remember the mornings my father got me up from a dead sleep at 5 or 6am to help shovel the driveway so he could go to work and then crawling back in bed listening to the radio for the announcement of the hallowed snow day. And if that announcement came, spending the entire day outside in the snow and cold until I was soaking wet and turning blue. Go figure.

So let's spend our Carolina Spring seeing as much art as we can and adding a few works to our collections before the hoards come.

I Share Art Posted on Facebook & Twitter

Some artists know this and probably won't be too happy that I'm going to tell you this, but if you're an artist working in the Carolinas or an art gallery working in the Carolinas - I like to share posts which contain art on Facebook and Twitter. I really do.

Of course it has to be good, but I'm not a hard ass critic - I'm easy to please and I like all kinds of art - some more than others, but I'm fair. And, I'd like the post to say more than - here's a work of art I did. And, make sure your post can be shared to others.

I can't tell you how many times I've seen a work of art on a post and it has no info - not even the name of the artist. People like me, want to know more than - oh that's nice, or that's fantastic! They want to know who created this art, how big it is, where they can see it up close and maybe - just maybe, wonder how much it's going to set them back if they want to own it. A title, what medium it is and when it was made, is just gravy, but it wouldn't hurt. I'm telling you, a little information never killed the experience of seeing a good work of art. And even if it's not my cup of tea or I can't afford to own it - I can share it with others.

Corrigan Gallery in Charleston, SC, Features Works by Mary Walker

Corrigan Gallery in Charleston, SC, will present *Jazz, Odyssey and Petroglyphs*, featuring works by Mary Walker, on view from Mar. 1 - 31, 2019. A reception will be held on Mar. 1, from 5-8pm, part of the Charleston Gallery Association's Artwalk.

Mary Walker is a painter and printmaker who started her career in New York studying with Isaac Soyer at the Art Students League. She was born in New York, raised in Tryon, NC, and was high school educated in Charleston. Since 1981, she has lived and worked on Johns Island, SC. She has exhibited internationally and has been the curator for art shows. She has studied dance for years and worked with dancers incorporating their artform into art exhibitions.

Walker has worked independently in print studios including the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop in NYC, Scuola Internazionale di Grafica in Venice Italy, Santa Reparta in Florence Italy, the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, PAAM print studio in Provincetown, MA, Limerick Printmakers in Limerick Ireland, and Studio Due on Johns Island, SC. She is the winner of numerous regional grants and residencies. Her work is also represented in Provincetown.

Walker reveals the influences and process of the works in this show saying, "We took a trip to New Mexico last fall. I love seeing the petroglyphs there and have incorporated them into many of these works. I do both woodcuts and monotypes. In these I have experimented with carving on different types of wood and then cutting them. I used this technique in both the petro and the Odyssey prints. I like to experiment with printing to see what I can do."

"The jazz paintings particularly I have pushed to loosen control," adds Walker. "I always allow the painting to take over the process and to lead me, but in these, I have released even more control. People who don't paint may not realize that it is possible for the painting itself to do the painting. It's Page 4 - Carolina Arts, March 2019



Work by Mary Walker

not an easy or comfortable way of working, but I am drawn to it more and more."

Speaking in general about her paintings Walker reveals her favorite imagery and process. "I have been asked about the characters in my paintings. The Bosch character is one of my favorites. I have two Pinocchios and Kristi Ryba's egg scale has become a character. I've often used petroglyphs from New Mexico and have interspersed them with sculptures from the Peggy Guggenheim Museum and now I can't distinguish the source. Some, many come from the work itself. They appear and I change them and then they become regulars. Some come from trying to portray an idea or a character in a narrative. I distill them until they suit. None can be too visually complicated. I simplify and simplify until they become icons."

"I like pretty birds, but I am not interested in using them. Crows and grackles are great because they have such big simple shapes, same for vultures. Vultures are a powerful symbol. Trees are powerful. I have no use for the green foliage. I'm interested in seeing their structure, their strength. They can be very expressive. Cats and dogs often enter my paintings. Dogs tend to have a softening effect, add an innocent feeling. Cats can be more ominous or critics watching the scene. Both are curious and watch-

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ful," says Walker.

"Grids I often use to find or re-establish my structure. I was an algebra teacher, so I've always loved the idea of the x and y coordinates. Once I've put the grid in, I can hang or place elements, scenes on it. Later I can eliminate some of the grid to set up different spatial areas of the painting. I have been encouraged to break this frontal plane, but I keep coming back to it. There is no renaissance space in my paintings."

"In the past, I would always start with a narrative and struggle to express it in a clear truthful way," adds Walker. "I still do this but am now leaving things more and more to chance. I spend most of the process floundering and asking myself if this is a decent way to proceed, but it does eventually lead to surprising results."

Walker is the consummate artist working daily, constantly experimenting and pushing herself and the materials. She has devoted her life to creating art. Her subject matter is varied incorporating her travels, literature,

earlier artists' influence and the iconic characters she creates in the process of exploring these subjects.

The Corrigan Gallery llc is in its 14th year of representing local artists creating nontraditional work - Manning Williams, Corrie McCallum, John Hull, Mary Walker, Kristi Ryba, Daphne vom Baur, Nancy Langston, Max Miller, Karin Olah, John Moore, Gordon Nicholson, Paul Mardikian, Susan Perkins, Lese Corrigan, Midge Peery, Arthur McDonald, Sue Simons Wallace, Bill Buggel, William Meisburger and Valerie Isaacs. It expanded to include the artists of the Charleston Renaissance with the estates of Elizabeth O'Neill Verner and Alfred Hutty and second market works of merit such as Matisse, Wolf Kahn and William Halsey. Next month the estate of Michael Tyzack (1933 - 2007) will be exhibited.

For further information check our SC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 843/722-9868 or visit (www.corrigangallery.com).

You can contact us by calling 843/693-1306 or by e-mail at - info@carolinaarts.com but do it before the 24th of the month prior to our next issue.



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