

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Hope for a Quick Recovery

Last month we were highlighting visual art exhibits and events East of I-95 in North Carolina. Then they got the kind of spotlight no one wants from Mother Nature. Although the media has once again focused mostly on the damage which took place in Raleigh, NC, many areas struck by the tornadoes on Apr. 16, 2011, were communities East of I-95 all the way to the Outer Banks.

As far as I know, none of the facilities we featured were hit - directly, but the entire area will suffer due to all the media attention focused on those places that received damage. That's what the mainstream media does these days.

Yes, the storm caused 24 deaths, destroyed nearly 500 homes and businesses, and damaged over 6,000, which is all a tragedy, but even more damage will be done depending on how the people react who are listening to all the news reports.

Believe me, with all the coverage Hurricane Hugo got in the media after it struck Charleston, SC, in 1989, it took a year for people to start coming back to that city in numbers we were used to having. They had the impression Charleston was totally destroyed and it wasn't. The worst thing people can do to those folks in NC is to change plans for visits there or for summer vacations.

This area is going to get back on its feet sooner than you think and not all the businesses and art communities were affected. They still need your business and support today.

I'm sure if you called, you would find that art exhibits are still on view, art galleries are open and ready to sell you works by local artists, art festivals are still planned, and area hotels and restaurants are ready to serve your needs.

In fact, even if you didn't have plans to visit this area in the near future, one of the best things you could do to show them support is to go there and spend money.

It's one thing to lose your home or have it damaged - hopefully insurance will cover most of that, but it's another thing to lose your job or business - due to a lack of business - just so the media can have their headlines.

Perhaps the media storm is needed to get the attention of some officials, but President Barack Obama has declared the area a national disaster now, so it's time to get back to as normal a life as possible.

Now, the attention has shifted to Alabama, but for a lot of folks all they hear is tornadoes, destruction, don't go there.

More Art Museums Like This

For 24-hours The Cameron Art Museum in Wilmington, NC, will receive one original work of art from each NC artist, beginning May 6 at 5pm. There are no jurors and no fees. The exhibit, *State of the Art/Art of the State* is a premier state-wide event and exhibition featuring top curators from the Tate Modern, London and Guggenheim Museums, New York. The 24-hour event is followed by the exhibition opening, May 7, from 6-9pm. The exhibit will continue through Oct. 30, 2011.

We need more art museums in the Carolinas who are willing to provide exhibit opportunities like this to our visual artists - maybe not as free and unfiltered as this, but opportunities to be seen in a museum setting and be viewed by top curators.

That's why shows like, *Carolina's Got Art!* in Charlotte, NC, attracts 1,800 entries when it puts out a call for them.

I know in the past in SC, our state arts agency, the SC Arts Commission, sent out

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Shirley Novak



November Poppies

Oil

16 x 20 inches



Spring Fever

Oil

30 x 30 inches

Spring Fever Featuring New Works

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