

Piccolo Spoleto Crafts Shows in Charleston, SC, Set for May 27-29 and June 3-5, 2016

Fine Craft Shows Charleston is pleased to announce the Piccolo Spoleto Craft Shows for 2016. The two weekend shows will be held May 27-29 and June 3-5, 2016. Between the two weekends, nearly 100 fine craft artists from around the country will be selling their crafts. Many artists will be demonstrating their crafts either during formal demonstration presentations or during informal question and answer sessions with booth visitors.



A photo from the 2015 shows.

The shows will be held in Wragg Square Park at Meeting and Charlotte Streets in downtown Charleston, SC. The park's entrance and walkways have recently been upgraded. Show hours will be Friday and Saturday 10am-6pm and Sunday 11am-5pm. Adult admission is \$3 on Friday and Saturday and \$1 on Sunday. Seniors 65 and older and children 18 and under are admitted free.



Work by Jessica Ballard and Jacob Kent

The winners of our 2nd Annual Emerging Artist Grants are Jessica Ballard and Jacob Kent, woodworkers from North

Charleston, SC. They say, "Our goal is to showcase the beauty of raw materials and the way in which they compliment and contrast each other. Our finished pieces include bowls, boxes, trays, and wall mosaics."



Work by Ivo Kerssemakers

The second winner of an emerging artist grant is Ivo Kerssemakers, a photographer from Murrells Inlet, SC. Kerssemakers specializes in long-exposure digital photography in black & white and color. His signature works emphasize clean, surrealistic, and minimalist imagery.

Our followers on social media can preview the artists who will be exhibiting their works. Every day a few artists are featured on the Piccolo Spoleto Craft Show Facebook Page then these posts are echoed on Twitter and Pinterest. A slide show of artist work has been prepared for the web site at (www.finecraft-showscharleston.com), and lists of expected artists and demonstration schedules will also be available from the web pages by May 1.

Fine Craft Shows Charleston was created in 2011 by Dorinda Harmon, Vicki Vigneault, and Kasey Briggs; a group of three craft artists who have managed the Piccolo Spoleto Crafts Show for many years.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or visit (www.finecraftshowscharleston.com).

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A Few Words From Down Under

Editor's Note: Judith McGrath contributed her writings about exhibits and events taking place in Western Australia to *Carolina Arts* for about a decade. Although she was writing about events taking place thousands and thousands of miles away, they seemed relevant to what was going on here in the Carolinas. Her contributions were very popular when we first ran them and continue to be popular on our website's archives. We've decide to revisit them from time to time.

A Few Words From Down Under The Fine Art Shop

by Judith McGrath, first published in August 2007

Ran into an old art journalist friend of mine the other day and after completing the pleasantries, we began discussing changes in the local art scene. I was amazed his complaints were not for the crop of new art practitioners, rather the attitudes of the old galleries. The conversation helped me clarify my own discontent.

It seems today's commercial Fine Art Galleries have half their mind set in 'commercial' mode with the other half in 'gallery' approach. As a result neither is being properly attended to. The one fact they seem to ignore is that they are in the business of selling art to the public. They are specialty stores; Fine Art Shops!

Consider how, when entering any spe-

cialty store, be it furniture, jewelry, or up-market frock shop, you are acknowledged by a salesperson, who lets you know they are available to assist or happy to leave you to browse. Noting the presence of one customer, even when busy with another, makes a difference to sales numbers. It's called courtesy and it makes good business sense.

So why do staff of commercial art galleries (Original Art Stores?) ignore people who come into their space? Do they see members of the general public as only lookers rather than customers, or are they just plain rude? All I can say is their attitude must be very bad for business. Wouldn't it make better sense if every visitor to a commercial gallery (Art Emporium?) was treated as a potential client? Isn't it possible that if browsers were engaged in an informative discussion about the art, they might become collectors?

I appreciate being acknowledged by a staff member when I enter a gallery. It lets me know someone is available to answer any questions I may have. Then, like many others, I prefer to view the exhibition without being interrupted. But there is a difference between 'left alone' and 'ignored' Nothing is more insulting then being completely dismissed by art gallery staff (Shop Assistants?).

More than once I've entered a gallery, picked up a catalogue, viewed the exhibits, made annotations in a notebook,

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