

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Charleston - The Holy City

Well, it seems Charleston lived up to one of its nicknames this last couple of weeks - let's hope that lasts a long time.

What got me was the reaction of some to the call to take the Confederate flag down from the SC State Capital grounds - as if this came out of the blue - just because some young punk took some selfies with the stars and bars and was upset that Africans took back control of two of their countries from white man's control. He killed nine people because of that - nine black people. He wanted to start a race war. I guess he also didn't know that a race war has been going on for quite some time in America.

I'm not singling out the South here because in the '60s, when I was in High School in Saginaw, MI, we had race riots. Instead of getting us out of the building - they locked us in, I guess so we could work it out. The South has no claim on racial problems - it's an American thing, but in the South, they put it in your face every day.

I can see that flag flying freely every day, and if I see it, surely every black person sees it.

What's all this have to do with an arts publication?

Well, artists in the Carolinas have been dealing with this racial subject ever since we've been doing an arts publication and they're still dealing with it today. So the issue of some people's disdain for the flying of the Confederate flag is not a new issue - it's not a surprise.

Dr. Leo Twiggs, a retired art professor from SC State University in Orangburg, SC, has been dealing with the image of the stars and bars in his artwork for years.

That flag calls to mind equally for Twiggs the suffering of slaves, the turmoil



Work by Dr. Leo Twiggs

of Reconstruction, the indignity of Jim Crow and even the promise of the Civil Rights era, and, of course, the aftermath, when this piece of cloth, venerated by some, reviled by others, continues to inspire the argument and dissension.

On our cover this month we have an image made by Eliot Dudik of Ian Dillinger, a high school art teacher in the Charleston, SC, school district who has died 45 times on the battlefield. The photograph was made at a Civil War reenactment at Boone Hall Plantation in 2014.

Coastal Carolina University in Conway, SC, will present *Broken Land / Still Lives*, featuring photographs by Eliot Dudik, on view in the Rebecca Randall Bryan Art Gallery in the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts building, from July 13 through Aug. 21, 2015. You can read about it on Page 23.

Also in this issue we have an article about an exhibit being presented at 701 Center for Contemporary Art in Columbia, SC, which will present *Tyrone Geter: BLACK!*, on view from July 9 through Aug. 23, 2015. You can read about it on Page 12.

Both these exhibitions seem timely for the recent events which took place in Charleston. Let's learn from the past.

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