

Ciel Gallery in Charlotte, NC

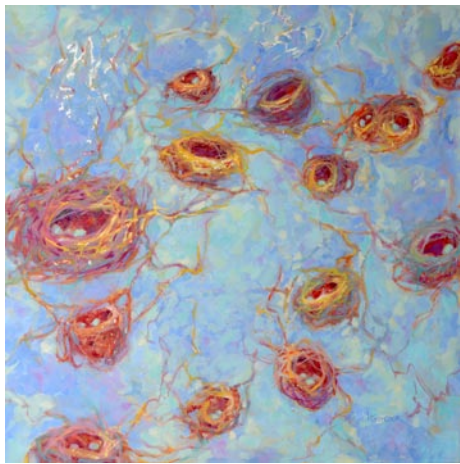
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fixed, unyielding, hard as rock materials that I must shape to my will. It seems quite counter-intuitive. Stubborn and recalcitrant, in fact — a match made in heaven. It's probably no real surprise to anyone that my two earliest art influences were both obsessives who collected and created with trash. Glittery trash. Treasure indeed. I work primarily with glass and china, and have been known to pattern cuts that measure a third of an inch on the longest side."

Painter Marianne Huebner talks about her obsessions in cultural terms. "I ritualize the hunt at art supply stores like Americans craving Starbucks. Hand me a stash of new supplies and I'm like a kid with a new iPhone. Knowing my weaknesses, a friend suggested I research Henry Darger, a self-taught artist compelled to document his life through visual story and imaginative forms. Henry used repetition to convey relationship, meaning, and liveliness. He traced. He copied. He drew and painted. Fifteen thousand pages later, he died with his work unfinished."

"Intrigued, I began to explore ways to repeat my own forms. I bought tracing paper. I gridded images. I obtained a light table and then a pantograph - something like the Venti Vanilla Soy Latte to the standard cup of home brew. New art toys - new ideas - new ways to obsess over form and repetition of form and repetition of form."

"My obsession with nests started innocently enough," says Laura McRae Hitchcock. "I was struggling to work through the heartache of children growing up and leaving home, our nest. My youngest was starting his senior year, and without planning it, I painted a little nest with light glowing through and one feather left inside. I ached as I painted, remembering our house full



Work by Laura McRae Hitchcock

of children, endless activity, and my safe haven in the backyard studio. And as I painted, I realized that life was about to open up; I just had to look for the light in my empty nest and I would find it. Since that morning I've painted over a hundred nests, and each seems to be a metaphor for my life at that moment. Interesting, isn't it? How life can give you the gift of an 'accidental' obsession to help you figure it all out?"

Ciel Gallery is located on E. Park Avenue, in South End, Charlotte's urban, trendy neighborhood within walking distance to the train. This well-known fine art & fine craft collective hot-spot, focuses on local artists connected with Charlotte's pulsating art scene. Ciel hosts twelve unique fine art exhibitions a year, and offers a varied slate of art instruction for all levels.

All works will be available for purchase online as well.

For further information check our NC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 704/496-9417 or visit (www.cielcharlotte.com).

Mint Hill Town Hall in Mint Hill, NC, Offers Photography Exhibit

Mint Hill Town Hall in Mint Hill, NC, is presenting *New Faces in Photography*, featuring the work of eight new members of Mint Hill Arts, on view through Oct. 10, 2017.

Mint Hill Arts is pleased to announce its latest exhibit of artists at the Mint Hill Town Hall Gallery, "who express their creative talents through photography. Those featured are Jay Alexander, Carol Hambridge, Sharon Houck, Patricia Joyner, Steve Lindenman, Dale Mayberry, Howie Silinski, and Jacob Thomas. Although all eight work to capture the essence of the subjects they examine photographically, their approaches are far from homogeneous.

Several of the artists, including Alexander, Mayberry and Silinski, are drawn to nature and landscapes and lean toward finding the right lighting and composition to capture nature at its best. Mayberry and Silinski were both inspired by the work of Hugh Morton, photographer and nature conservationist who founded Grandfather Mountain; Silinski has photos on exhibit at Grandfather Mountain's Nature Museum.

About photographing nature, Alexander comments, "I have always found that having a camera in my hand allows me to see things around me that I would otherwise miss, and to see the world from a different perspective," and this is echoed by Silinski, who says photography "allows me to

become more intimate with life's delicate beauty."

Jacob Thomas, on the other hand, experiments with photography to create something the world has never seen before. To do this, he uses image enhancement and a lot of different lighting effects such as prisms and fairy lights. Carol Hambridge, who, designed the Matthews Alive Posters for 2013, 2016, and 2017, manipulates light on floral arrangements to capture unimagined images of light, life and color that "narrow the gap between what is real and what is imagined."

Steve Lindenman is a freelance event and commercial photographer. In addition to corporate work, he shoots for variety of publications, which includes professional and college sports. His work has also been published internationally, as he has traveled to Europe and Asia to shoot on assignment. Houck is a professional equine photographer. Thus the subject matter featured in the show ranges from landscapes to floral arrangements to horses to sports images.

The Town Hall Gallery is located in the rear of City Hall, on both the first and second levels, on Mint Hill Village Lane, Mint Hill, NC.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery by calling the City Hall at 704/545-9726 or call Mint Hill Arts at 980/226-5532.

City Art Gallery in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Jan Swanson

City Art Gallery in Columbia, SC, will present *The Way I See It*, an exhibition of paintings by Jan Swanson, on view from Aug. 3 through Sept. 16, 2017. A reception will be held on Aug. 3, from 5-8pm.

Swanson says, "I hope that when people see these paintings they will know that I did them. I think they will. Some of them have schoolwork from my great grandparents' house in them, others are just painted from things I've seen around Columbia and other Page 16 - Carolina Arts, August 2017

places. Others are things I remember from childhood, specifically my father selling furniture and fabric and the pearls my mother wore. Hopefully they all reflect my sense of humor which is my favorite quality about myself!"

Swanson is a graduate of Clemson University and a native of Asheville, NC. An artist working in oils, acrylic and collage, she has taken drawing and painting classes

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CITYART

Jan Swanson



I Used to Be Queen (12x12)

"The Way I See It"

The opening and reception for the artist will be Thursday August 3rd 5-8pm. The exhibit continues thru September 16, 2017.

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