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Masters of

ART

Story page 48

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This issue's cover aims to convey the spirit of being an artist:

one that is of a renegade.

one that is of an outcast.

one that is of an individual who harbors no fear to denote his or her presence whilst letting one's wonderful freak flag fly in the unforgiving winds of countless criticisms.

one whose purpose is to jostle the rest of us left sleeping, to pry our eyes apart simply to awaken us as to why we are living.

Why?

Because, it is magic.

Cheers to The Masters.



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CENTERFOLD / BROADSIDE PROJECT



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JASPER IS

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Dear Friends,

This time of year it really is all about the new and the old, isn't it? The process of growing through life, adapting and discarding, honing one's skills at how best to experience being alive and leave some evidence behind that you were here and the world is at least a modicum better for it.

I think about this a lot with *Jasper*. In fact, I'm a bit obsessed about it and I know this to be true of several other staff members, as well. I think it has something to do with the fact that all of us are artists. Whether our disciplines involve paint, film, design, words, or the performing arts, every time we put the finishing touches on one issue, there we are again, starting from scratch on another. We constantly get these incredible opportunities for do-overs. Even if the paint is dry and the book is closed and the audience has all gone home, we continue to get these chances to make what we thought we had finished even better. It's sort of thrilling.

I see this passion a lot in my friend and *Jasper* design editor, W. Heyward Sims. Evi-

dently, the concept for this issue's cover came to him in the middle of the night. Bright and early the next morning he headed out to buy the spray paint he needed to recreate his vision and then call photography editor Forrest Clonts over to shoot it. He had other options—easier options. But it's not just a cover to him; it's his interpretation of a concept—a body of thought. It's his art. (I was able to persuade Heyward to write about this on page 3.)

And this, dear Friends, is what it's all about. The new and the old; the process of growing. I'm reminded of this every time I get an email or a phone call or a text message from a member of the Jasper team saying, "*Hey—what if we put together a (fill-in-the-blank-with) film festival, art show, concert, anthology ...*" and every time I look at the ever-expanding list of story ideas and artists we still need to profile. *There is so much new to do here because so much has already been done.*

And so you have in your hands our 15th issue. In this issue we respond to a need that has become more and more evident to us—the recognition of artists whose bod-

ies of work and levels of respect and confidence have carved for them unique places in our community. We call them Masters of Art and invite you to enjoy the work these visual artists have given us. This issue also looks at the work of two highly successful and prolific artists, filmmaker Steve Daniels and composer John Fitz Rogers, as well as at an exciting new endeavor undertaken by local writer and barman, Darien Cavanaugh, called the Broadside Project (centerfold). We had hoped to write about Columbia Classical Ballet's always-exquisite performance, *Life Chance*, but sadly, they turned down our coverage of the concert. Not to worry though, dance will return with the March issue.

Thank you for sticking with us, Columbia. Thank you for reading and supporting *Jasper*, and thereby, supporting your local arts community. I believe the world *is* at least a modicum better for it all.

Take Care,

Jasper // as in Johns, the abstract expressionist, neo-Dadaist artist
as in Sergeant, the Revolutionary War hero
as in Mineral, the spotted or speckled stone
as in Magazine, the Word on Columbia Arts

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WINTER WRITING FOR SUMMER READING

There's a new literary journal in town and you could find your work in its inaugural pages.

Fall Lines – a literary convergence is a new literary journal based in Columbia, SC and presented by *Jasper Magazine* in partnership with Richland Library, the University of South Carolina Press, Muddy Ford Press, and One Columbia. With a single, annual publication, *Fall Lines* is distributed in lieu of *Jasper Magazine's* regularly scheduled summer issue just in time for those lazy days of summer reading. While a limited issue of three thousand copies of *Fall Lines* will be printed, due to the generosity of the Richland Library, *Fall Lines* will also be available in its entirety in a downloadable e-format via RichlandLibrary.com. (But don't worry. If you subscribe to *Jasper* or are a subscribing member of the Jasper Guild you'll still get your copy of the literary arts-rich *Fall Lines* mailed to you this summer in plenty of time to enjoy it at the beach or by the pool!)

Fall Lines is accepting submissions of previously unpublished poetry, essays, short fiction, and flash fiction from January 1 through March 1, 2014. While the editors of *Fall Lines* hope to attract the work of writers and poets from the Carolinas and the Southeastern US, you do not have to live in the SE to enter. That said, we're delighted to announce that some of our most exciting local authors are already on board to have their work published in our pages.

Here's the fine print. Please limit short fiction to 2000 words or less; flash fiction to 350 – 500 words; essays to 1200 words. Submit your work via email to Editor@JasperColumbia.com with the words "Fall Lines" in

the subject heading along with the category (above) of the item being submitted. While you are invited to enter up to five items, each item should be sent individually as a single submission. Please include with each submission a cover sheet stating your name, age, email address, and USPO address. There is no fee to enter.

Publication in *Fall Lines* will be determined by a panel of judges and accepted authors will be notified in May 2014, with a publication date in June 2014. Accepted authors will receive two copies of the journal and be invited to a release party to celebrate the launch of our new literary journal. Stay tuned to the wheres and whens of the launch party by frequently visiting www.Jaspercolumbia.com. /CB

MOVIES AND COTTON – AND MOVIES ABOUT COTTON

During production of her 2004 experimental, non-fiction film *Cabin Field*, independent filmmaker Laura Kissel became interested in the life cycle of the cotton plant. *Cabin Field* focused on a mile-long stretch of agricultural land in Crisp County, Georgia and, during production, Kissel visited a local cotton gin. In the course of that visit a local farmer told her that all of the cotton being processed at the gin was being sent to China. Witnessing the small town of 500 and the Hispanic workers who labored at the gins, along with their dependence on China's need for cotton is what set in motion the concept for Kissel's feature documentary *Cotton Road Movie*.

Kissel came to Columbia in 1999, straight from graduate school at Northwestern University, accepting a position as assistant professor in USC's Media Arts department. Her work has been part of the Black Maria Film Festival, the Atlanta Film Festival, the Mary Pickford Theater at the Library of Congress, as well as at the statewide screenings that were part of SCETV's *Southern Lens* series. She has won numerous honors including a Fulbright Fellowship to China in 2009 and was a featured artist at the Robert Flaherty seminar in 2011.

Cotton Road Movie follows the supply chain of cotton from seed to harvest in South Carolina and through export to China. The film introduces us to the generational farmer who is struggling to keep her or his farm afloat, Chinese factory workers who have

bigger dreams for their lives but instead work in cold warehouses sewing the white fluffy product, and finally the cotton brokers and Chinese factory owners who find themselves at the mercy of the market in order to make their own livings.

Kissel's initial concept for the film has remained intact: global commodity circulation. But she has noticed one unexpected cultural shift. "More Americans are starting to question their consumption habits," explains Kissel, "looking at labels, beginning to think about the environmental, economic and human consequences of our global economic structure. The commonality between minimum wage workers in America and workers in the developing world is becoming more recognizable."

As the structure of the film began to take shape, Kissel sought input from select groups. "I'm really motivated by a spirit of sharing, collaboration, and conversation. Preview screenings and putting clips (of a film) online can build an audience and create interest in your work." One such screening took place in November. A diverse audience of filmmakers, film professionals, and her academic peers viewed Kissel's latest edit of the film and offered collaborative input and critique on its message and form.

Kissel's plans for the future of the film are specific. *Cotton Road Movie* will enter into competition on the international film festival circuit in 2014. But she also has goals of using the film as a resource in developing audience engagement ideas. "I want this film to find different audiences and have a vital life out in the world," she adds. Production for *Cotton Road Movie* will complete in January 2014. /WS

STAGES ALL OVER THE MIDLANDS

"If you build it, they will come." That's a dicey proposition at best for businesses, moreso for a fledgling arts organization during a recession. Still, with unwavering optimism based on experience, actor/director Robert Harrelson created On Stage Productions and hasn't looked back since.

Harrelson recalls that acting "brought me out of my shell" at Lexington High School. After graduating with an English major and theatre minor from Coastal Carolina (then part of USC), Harrelson moved home and dove into local productions, often acting

and directing at the Village Square Theatre in Lexington. He learned that his greatest passion was helping others discover their own passion for performance. Still, like any actor, he worked a day job; a career in retail led him to Disney World, and then New York City, where he managed Disney's ESPN Zone. Harrelson realized that resources readily available in New York enabled him to mount productions and produce his own plays off-Broadway. "Finding a theatre is easy," Harrelson notes, and a space in Times Square could be rented for \$2000/week. "A couple of good nights pay for the rest of the week. Actors are everywhere," he recalls, and at his first audition, nearly 900 people showed up for 11 roles. This can-do mentality led to a series of successful productions as "On Stage City Productions," with his work schedule allowing him to rehearse his actors during the day.

The closure of ESPN Zone and a desire to be closer to family led Harrelson back in the Midlands, where he quickly reconnected with the Lexington theatre community in 2010. "I don't know if theatre follows me, or I follow it," Harrelson laughs, "but it keeps me complete." He knew that he could apply lessons learned in New York to the West Metro Columbia area. He began talking to colleagues and potential supporters about a not-for-profit venue that would engage audiences, as well as actors of varying ages (adults and children) and levels of experience and proficiency—a true community-based theatre. "I like the one-on-one," Harrelson admits, enjoying smaller casts in intimate venues, where he can work more closely with actors, and help an adult or child grow via the repetition of the rehearsal process. Suzie Wattenbarger remembers being instantly impressed, and sold on the idea for «a new theatre venture. He had a core group already who had known and acted with him over the years.» Wattenbarger found herself on the Advisory Board, and became involved in recruiting volunteers and publicizing shows. She feels that «Robert is genuine, and cares deeply for everyone doing anything at all to help; even people coming to the shows makes him so very happy. Plus, he is appreciative, and looks for ways to show (that) appreciation.»

On Stage Productions (echoing its NY predecessor's name) performed first at Glenforest School, and in Lexington's Old Mill. Word of mouth and promotion via social media led to sold-out performances, and in 2013 the new group renovated and



SCREEN SHOT FROM COTTON ROAD MOVIE



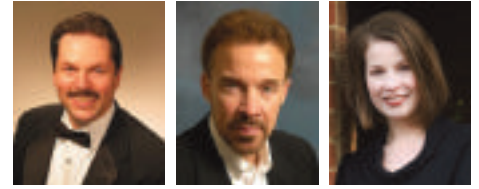
ON STAGE PRODUCTION'S ROBERT HARRELSON (PHOTO BY ROB SPRANKLE)



ON STAGE PRODUCTION IN PROGRESS (PHOTO BY ROB SPRANKLE)



LERNER AND LOEWE PERFORMERS (L-R) WALTER CUTTINO, JACOB WILL, TINA STAFFORD (PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFFREY DAY)



Harrelson has his actors, even the younger ones, write a bio for their character, even if it's a smaller role. "If you learn the character, the lines will come," Harrelson tells performers who may fear memorization. For the upcoming *Second Samuel*, running February 7-16, playwright Pamela Parker shared her own unpublished back-stories for each of the play's characters. Harrelson reaches out to the author of any work he directs, and Parker attended Harrelson's production of her seriocomedy in New York, resulting in her script being picked up for publication by Dramatic Publishing. She will attend the Midlands production, and plans are in the works for a talk-back session with the playwright on opening night. *Hey G*, an adaptation of the film *My Man Godfrey*, will finish out the season for On Stage Productions. For more information on the group, ticket prices or auditions, visit www.onstagesc.com . / AK

METROPOLITAN OPERA AUDITIONS IN COLUMBIA

Gianna Rolandi is proof that a world famous opera singer can get her or his start right here in South Carolina.

It was in 1974 when Rolandi, who grew up in Spartanburg and trained at the NC School for the Arts (now UNC School for the Arts) as well as the Curtis Institute for Music in Philadelphia, auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera, capturing the Minna Kaufmann Ruud competition as one of its youngest winners ever. The next year, Rolandi debuted with the New York City Opera, moving on to the Metropolitan Opera in 1979, and continuing on a stellar career path that now has *Lady Davis* (Rolandi married British conductor Andrew Davis who was ultimately knighted in 1999) serving as the director of the Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ryan Opera Center (formerly known as LOCAA). And to think, the next Gianna Rolandi could be running her scales in Rosewood or practicing resonance in Shandon. All she or he has to do is show up for the Metropolitan Opera auditions at Columbia College on January 26th.

More than 1500 singers from all over the US will come to Columbia to compete in the National Council Auditions, the largest and longest running singing competition in America. Judges include none other than Gianna Rolandi, as well as tenor Anthony Dean

moved into over 4000 sq. ft. of former retail space at 680 Cherokee Lane. Capacity is 125 seats, with room to expand to 200, and Harrelson grins when it's pointed out how many theatre groups would envy his ability to fill 125 seats consistently. He credits the community for embracing On Stage, and the commitment of his volunteers. Harrelson serves as board president, teaches acting classes, and shares directorial duties with others. Now thriving in its fourth season, On Stage offers classes, workshops, and a full season of four plays plus a summer show, including two all-children productions.

Actor/stage dad Rob Sprinkle admires Harrelson's "genuine care for the experience

each young cast member has. I've seen their progress throughout the run, and it's most impressive." For the holiday show, Harrelson used children on his production team, as assistant director and choreographer, «and he really makes them work. They were saddled with a lot of responsibility, and he let them run with it, while providing gentle guidance. (My daughter) has thoroughly enjoyed her experience there, and looks forward to being more involved in future productions." Wattenbarger agrees, saying that the On Stage Performance Center is "made to be a happy place where all can grow and learn the theatre craft, or just have the time of their lives."

THE

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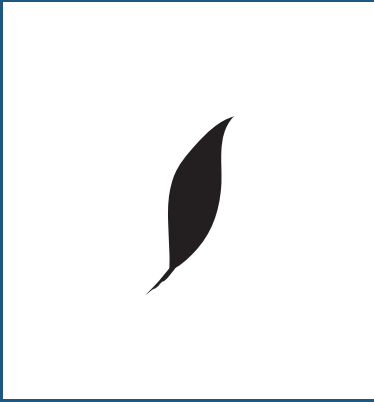
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The Jasper Guild is a group of supporting artists and arts lovers who appreciate not only the vital Columbia, SC arts scene, but the magazine devoted to promoting it. Members of the Jasper Guild recognize the labor-of-love that is Jasper and work to do their parts to ensure that Jasper continues to publish a 100% LOCAL & artist-produced magazine. You're invited to join us in our mission to make Columbia, SC the Southeast arts capitol by becoming a member of the Jasper Guild. And the next time you open a copy of Jasper you'll be able to say,

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MAKE THIS
HAPPEN AND
HERE’S MY
NAME TO
PROVE IT!”***

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“But I’m just a starving artist myself,” you say?

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John Fitz Rogers – New Works and Meanderings

By Tom Dempster

R

Rolling down the hill on Blossom Street toward the Congaree, John Fitz Rogers heard a sunset. On his route home from the USC School of Music a few years ago, “there was this amazing sunset with these pink hues. As I was driving I was trying to keep my eyes on the road, but also watch the sunset. I’ve always been fascinated with sunsets, and this one was incredibly striking.” While the notion of drawing inspiration from a natural phenomenon is the stuff of Romantic legend, composers tend to hear ideas at inconvenient times – half-mesmerized by a wash of auditory luster, half-squinting toward a traffic light lost in the sun, both hands clenching the steering wheel. Rogers admits fascination with numerous affairs of



the everyday, but particularly with sunsets: the slowness, the ephemeral grace, the colors as they imperceptibly slide and shift. Fascination enough with the constancy and change of this particular sunset became the basis for his most recent orchestral work, *The Passing Sun*, which was commissioned by the South Carolina Philharmonic; its premiered on January 11, 2014.

In August, 2000, Rogers began teaching music composition at the University of South Carolina after teaching at Cornell and the Longy School of Music in Boston. His biography is a litany of prizes, world-class collaborations, and premieres at the hands of stellar performers, and his music is variously accessible and challenging, never quite

stepping in the same river twice.

Rogers describes his relationship with the South Carolina Philharmonic in glowing terms, praising how musical director Morihiko Nakahara has managed to both build audiences and champion music of our time. After having programmed two of Rogers’s works – one a previous commission from the SC Phil – Nakahara again approached Rogers as the 50th anniversary of the Philharmonic drew near. Joan Tower’s *Red Maple* and Rogers’s *The Passing Sun* became the two works commissioned for the orchestra’s birthday celebration. “In thinking about the piece,” Rogers says, “I figure there were a couple of ways to go about it – the obvious, fanfarish kind of thing, but I thought

it might be more interesting to pursue the idea of continuity or constancy." This dueling notion of constancy and change – perhaps a variation on a familiar theme in Rogers's work – appealed most. "It's actually kind of a quiet piece," Rogers says of *The Passing Sun*. "Colorful in its own way, but with muted colors, slowly shifting." The greater underlying notions of resiliency and perhaps even dependability are the subtext. "The orchestra has changed over its 50 years, and I wanted to focus on that aspect."

While bands of colors morph slowly during sunset, and as the SC Phil has invisibly changed over its half-century, Rogers's compositional voice and style seem to shift from piece to piece. Asked him about the common perception that many of his works seem to come from different versions of himself, he replies, "That's a comment I hear fairly frequently. In some ways, I understand it. For example, I'll write orchestral music and then I'll have pieces for distorted electric guitars." Listeners as well as musicians tend to connect a composer to some trait of their output, something unique to their work, usually some combination of the trinity of melody, harmony, and rhythm. But, Rogers challenges this complicated notion that a composer should exercise her or his individual voice yet remain glued to one narrow expression. A lot of what we think a composer *is* or *should be* given their voice is bound up with their harmonic language, and while composers who have a specific dialect may be easy to pick out of a crowd, there is nothing amiss with being a polyglot. "Harmony, for me," says Rogers, "has never been something that is always fixed. I like a lot of harmonic leeway in my work. I like to be restless as a composer. I like to move in different directions, but I don't like the idea of some fixed harmonic language." Rather, he expresses, fluency across languages is the most important.

Rogers cites Stravinsky and Ives – both musical chameleons unbound and uncowed by convention – as his primary influences. Both towering musical figures of the 20th Century, Stravinsky and Ives worked through multiple harmonic languages (though, not necessarily simultaneously), formal ideals, and conceptual practices. Rogers makes it clear that unlike Ives (and early Stravinsky), quotation does not figure prominently into his work – but, rather, he cites their fluidity. Elements arising through a musical texture and then disappearing; melodic ideas or colors coming into out of focus before being lost in the mix; devising miniature, controlled, momentary harmonic systems in parallel with something purely tonal or non-tonal. Rogers also points to their pioneering usage of time's mutability: Stravinsky for his

ability to change pacing on a dime or recall small motives in unlikely ways, Ives for his ability to, in effect, break time through unbridled simultaneity and slippage. Rogers holds up Ives's fourth symphony, especially, as a monumental influence. "That kind of fluidity is something I like to think of regarding primarily time and rhythm, but with harmony as well." It can be confusing, perhaps, for some people who really want to pin down Rogers's work but can't. Works that include elements moving at different speeds, with numerous polyrhythmic or poly-temporal devices – from orchestral works down to solo works – have all been native to Rogers's output for the past twenty years.

"One of the things I love about Columbia," Rogers says, "is its support for the arts. For a community this size, not only do we have robust support, but we also have phenomenal talent." To hear Rogers speak about the arts in Columbia is more convincing than any public relations firm, and definitively more genuine. Columbia, while comparatively small, is artistically thriving: the orchestra is doing well, fiscally and in popularity. The visual arts scene is vigorous. Dance is thriving. Rogers states, unequivocally, that Columbia is a terrific place for the arts overall. "I would hate to predict the future," Rogers says, after I asked him to do so about Columbia's artistic soul, "But having lived in large metro areas before I moved to Columbia, it was a wonderful surprise to learn how much support there is" – and not just for traditional arts, either. Rogers is pleased with the level of thought-provoking work and edginess lurking within Columbia's scene. Surely, Rogers himself is partially responsible for that cultivating this success.

Having begun it in 2001, in 2012, Rogers turned over the reins of Southern Exposure New Music Series to bassoonist Michael Harley. Under Rogers's watch, Southern Exposure garnered significant acclaim, including an honor from ASCAP/Chamber Music America for adventurous programming in chamber music. Southern Exposure was the first big push from within the USC School of Music to have a new music ensemble known beyond the region. The series has featured numerous artists and ensembles (Alarm Will Sound, JACK Quartet, ICE, and more) as resident performers, and the series has produced many premieres (or the all-important second or third performances) for over a decade. What started with Rogers as a means to program works composed within the past thirty years quickly became a jewel in the USC School of Music crown. Steady community support with standing-room only crowds, steady promotion, steady student and performer interest, and, perhaps importantly, steady University support

helped make it happen. USC is certainly a driving force for the arts in Columbia – but is it too dominant? Can the arts culture here thrive beyond USC, particularly in concert music?

Rogers seems to think so. I asked him what he would like to see take hold in Columbia that is not already present or barely registering on the radar of residents. "In the thirteen years I have been here," Rogers says, "the arts scene is building and it continues to build." He cites the transformative nature of places like 701 Whaley and Conundrum as venues for the New while highlighting regional talent, and he clearly wants to see more of these kinds of venues and programs. "I would love for Columbia to continue to be known as a hotbed for the arts, and to attract attention nationally and internationally," he says. "It would be great to be known as a destination city for the arts." Acting just not as a means to attract tourism or business dollars but as an industry in its own right, the Columbia arts community should be held up as a strong example of revitalization, growth, and public-private partnerships. Rogers lays out an open challenge to would-be arts entrepreneurs – a challenge that can be condensed to the unprintable trademark of a very well-known athletic shoe company. Want a new music ensemble beyond USC? Start it. We need it. Want an artist's collective or union? Start it. We need it. Want to perform, or show, or exhibit? Find the space and undertake it. We need it. And, of course, we want it here.

Rugged individualism and bootstraps only take artists – who need other people to make their art happen – so far, and Rogers acknowledges this. "I find it's increasingly rewarding to work with people who I know and who care about my work," he says, noting that composers tend to start out writing anything they can for anyone they can, and relationships and synergy take over. "Everyone I've had the fortune of collaborating with is not just a colleague, but someone I consider a good friend." Relationships and building a sense of artistic community, of dependability and mutualism, are paramount. And, perhaps, this is a reflection of the relationship between Columbia and the arts – or ideally, what the relationship should look like. Considering he has lived in Columbia for most of his professional life, Rogers cannot quite answer how living here has shaped or affected his musical voice – but it has, visibly, shaped his career. "I have phenomenal colleagues," he says, beyond USC. "Living in Columbia has been terrific. It has provided many opportunities. I feel really lucky and fortunate."

LOCAL RECORD REVIEWS

BY KYLE PETERSEN



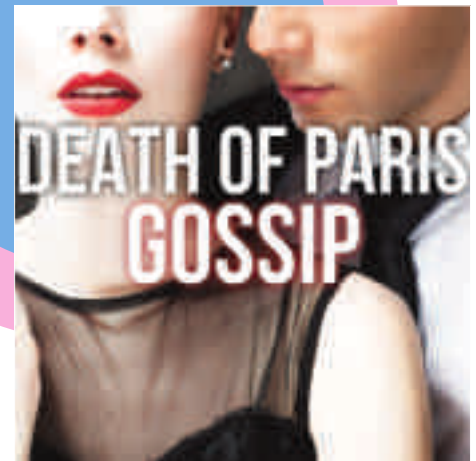
Yosef *Run Wild*

Yosef, the rock moniker for Hunter Duncan, trades in the grandiose Britpop of Radiohead and Muse, a style which depends on an acrobatic vocal presence that can stretch out syllables and lean into a wall of guitars. Fortunately, Duncan is more than up to the task, capable of misanthropic Thom Yorke-style croons in one moment and the swooning romanticism of Keane in the next. And while the gleaming pile of anthemic guitars parts and earnest lyricism might lean a bit too heavily into Coldplay and Remy Zero territory, Duncan's devotion to creating a grandeur and atmospheric sprawl across these seven songs sustains a mood of seriousness and sense of purpose even in those few faltering moments.



Youth Model *All New Scars*

This pop-rock turn from longtime drummer Matt Holmes comes across as an impressive studio collaboration, with Holmes taking songwriting and composition duties but allowing Archer Avenue producer Kenny McWilliams to track bass, guitars, keys, and backing vocals to elegantly flesh out the drummer's originals. The end result is an album that escapes feeling too generic through the fact that Holmes is an able songwriting craftsman and an understated-yet-engaging vocalist who gets McWilliams' hyper-polished treatment. And while Holmes borrows from a host of influences, from The Black Keys and OK Go to The Killers and Kings of Leon, he tends to be a synthesizer rather than imitator, lending Youth Model a pleasant (and surprising) sense of authenticity rather than a crass bid for mainstream success.



Death of Paris *Gossip*

There's probably a natural tendency for music criticism to champion the quirky and oddball, or the adventurous and epic, at the expense of the simple pleasures of surging choruses and indelible hooks. Particularly in a town like Columbia that hosts a relative wealth of indie rock outliers, a band like Death of Paris can feel a bit incongruous in their unabashed affection for Technicolor synth-pop songs that are more Paramore than Passion Pit, as well as their brazen bid for mainstream success. And yet, *Gossip* is a triumph—a six song collection that hits the nail on the head over and over again. From the adrenaline-soaked opening salvos of "Give + Take" and "Shut Up & Kiss Me" to the aiming-for-the-rafters ballads "72" and "Secret," the band demonstrates an extraordinary adeptness for creating the kind of

huge pop moments that would seemingly fit snugly on Top 40 radio or romantic comedy soundtracks.

Although some credit for the shiny sonic sheen should probably go to seasoned producers Zack Odom and Kenneth Mount, the band clearly maintains its own identity. Keyboardist Blake Arambula's touch is present throughout, particularly in the stop-shift breakdowns on "New Blood" and "Shut Up & Kiss Me," and the solid support of guitarist Patrick Beardsley and drummer Bryan Lee Bass gives these songs a distinctly full-band feel that was lacking in the group's two-person self-titled debut in 2010. Still, the nature of the material inevitably puts the onus is mostly on Doyle, who surely has the powerhouse pipes to sell these kind of songs, but can often slide into the muck of cliché in striving for universal appeal. That's about the only knock you can make on this eminently radio-ready batch of tunes.



The Restoration

New South Blues EP

The title track to The Restoration's new EP is a song that has been featured in their set list for a year or two now, and it's one of their best. A jaunty, bluesy melody is tied to lead songwriter Daniel Machado's scathing political critique of the "new South" as he connects the dots between the South of the day and the one he castigates in his more historically-oriented fare. It's full of jaw-droppingly good one liners ("You lie!, Boeing Jets / Don't tread on Neo-Confederates" and "Literary legacy / Bob Jones University" are two of my favorites) as he refers to the South as "the most trusted brand" for ignorance and bigotry. In short, it's a stunner, and it also marks the evolution of Machado as a singer, as he's gotten more surly and irascible since some of the more romantic material on *Constance*. That voice is evident on his other, more tossed-off efforts here, the blues jam

"Keep On Keepin' On" and the cutting acoustic number "Nobody Cares Who You Are."

The EP is rounded out by a richly arranged effort by bassist Adam Corbett, "Possible Country," which narrates a rather odd eavesdropping experience in a bathroom stall, and a 12 minute ambient/field recording expedition called "Sketches of the State Fair" which has some percussion and free jazz-style fingerpicking overdubbed onto the background sounds of the fair. It's an interesting piece that unfortunately marks the dividing line between the more serious efforts here (the title track and "Possible Country") from the odds and sods feel of the other numbers. Still, given the overwhelming concepts that typically accompany a Restoration record, *New South Blues* also has the virtue of presenting the group as "just" a rock band, and a pretty damn good one at that.



Trees on Mars

Self-Titled EP

Trees on Mars easily draw superficial comparisons to fellow local instrumental rockers Pan, largely because they make happy, uplifting instrumental music that goes against the grain of the more dour and serious post-rock groups out there. Trees on Mars isn't as much about building up to epiphanic moments as exulting in the interplay of guitar riffs and rhythm that your standard guitar-bass-drum setup offers. There's quick, stop-start shifts in melody and rhythms throughout each of their short song bursts, almost as if their more desperate to keep themselves from getting bored than they are worried about the audience's attention span. The result is a nice split between an emotionally enjoyable and an intricately engaging listening experience. The group is already at work on a full-length for later in the year, but this is an enjoyable and worthwhile first dose of what they have to offer.



By the Bull

The Witch

By the Bull is a fitting name for this mercurial alt-rock trio, as the five songs on *The Witch*, the group's follow-up to last year's debut effort *Ghosts & Prophecies*, are brawny and bucking, with monstrous riffs that shape-shift and wander across some rather epic arrangements, particularly on the nearly seven minute "Empires." Although largely the project of keyboardist and guitarist Nick Brewer, who in addition to most of the instrumental shredding provides layered, ghostly vocals to the proceedings, the ferocious-yet-technically adept rhythm section of bassist Matt Buck and drummer Jonathan Palanca are absolutely critical for the kind of adventurous alt-rock that Brewer envisions. Buck also offers up some multi-instrumental prowess, playing trombone, trumpet, and tuba to provide orchestral flourishes to the throbbing acoustic number "Three Dreams in the Belly of Anne."

Despite the undeniable sonic might of this record, the underlying appeal of By the Bull stems more from their left-of-center approach to what can often feel like an increasingly staid genre. There are moments where the group can sound like they are trying for straight-up nu-metal angst, but that feeling will always be yanked abruptly and occasionally even violently away, confidently asserting that this is a band that follows its own enigmatic muse alone.



CURTAIN UP

w/ August Krickel

Cooler temperatures outside make for plenty of options for indoor entertainment on local stages. Thankfully, most groups have staggered their schedules, with no more than one or two new shows opening each weekend from early January into Spring, meaning that you can indeed have (and see) it all. Curtain Up!

Only a few days remain to see Nora and Delia Ephron's *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*, as five women navigate relationships armed only with their sense of fashion; the show runs through Saturday, January 18 in the Richard and Debbie Cohn **Side Door Theatre at Trustus**. Jim O'Connor then directs a contemporary classic, Bruce Norris's Pulitzer and Tony-winning *Clybourne Park*. Erica Tobolski, Bobby Bloom, Rachel Kuhnle, G. Scott Wild, and Wela Mbusi portray successive generations struggling with issues of class, race, integration and gentrification. The show runs January 24 - February 8 on the Thigpen Main Stage. Director Chad Henderson promises three nights of "teases, tunes, bawdiness and skin," as the *Henderson Brothers Burlesque* returns February 13-15. Emcee Nauti Boogie (Terrance Henderson) and vaudeville clown Bumbleclap McGee (Hunter Boyle) lead singers, dancers, and a live band in an all-new installment of the naughty Valentine's treat that sold out 701 Whaley last year, and now takes over the Thigpen Main Stage. For information, call 803-254-9732, or visit trustus.org.

Jocelyn Sanders directs Katie Mixon, Erin Huiett, Denise Pearman, Allison Allgood, and George Dinsmore in *Crimes of the Heart*, Beth Henley's Pulitzer-winning, darkly comedic tale of three sisters coping with assorted shootings, affairs, and breakdowns. This Southern Gothic mix of passion, dysfunction and hilarity runs through Saturday, January 25 at **Workshop Theatre**. For information, call 803-799-4876, or visit workshoptheatre.com.

Elvis Has Left the Building, but then disappeared! That's the premise for this wacky comedy from Duke Ernsberger and Virginia Cate, running at **Town Theatre** January 17-February 1. Manipulative Colonel Tom Parker (Andy Nyland) frantically searches for an impersonator as intrepid reporter Mary Miles tries to uncover the truth. Therese Talbot, Charlie Goodrich, and Chip Collins round out director Allison McNeeley's cast. Nyland then plays country star George Jones, as Rebecca Goodrich takes on the title role in *Stand By Your Man: The Tammy Wynette Story*. Musical director Daniel Gainey and choreographer Christy Shealy Mills ensure that Wynette's songs come to life on stage, as Frank Thompson directs Chad Forrister as Burt Reynolds, and Kathy Hartzog, Charlie Goodrich, Bob Blencowe, and Will Moreau

as other figures from Wynette's past. Run dates are March 7-22; for information, call 803-799-2510, or visit towntheatre.com.

Yet another country legend, Dolly Parton, wrote both music and lyrics for the stage musical adaptation of *9 to 5*, presented by the Lexington County Arts Association, and running January 17-26 at the Village Square Theatre. Long-suffering office workers Janice Holbrook, Rachel Rizutti, and Suzie Gibbons turn the tables on their chauvinistic boss (Harrison Ayer), with Janice Holbrook, Robin Saviola, and Gina Calvert also featured in Brandi Owensby's cast. Then grab hold of your golden tickets, as director Debra Leopard and Musical Director Camille Jones bring Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka (Jr.)* to life. Running March 7-23, this children's version features the Newley/Bricusse songs from the film, so expect Violet to turn violet, and Veruca to demand an Oompa-Loompa NOW! For information, call 803-359-1436, or visit villagesquaretheatre.com.

Bark! runs for one weekend only, January 30 - February 2, at the **Fine Arts Center of Kernshaw County**. Directed by Frank Thompson, this charming musical examines the life of man's best friend, as told (and sung!) from a dog's viewpoint. Linda Posey Collins, Andy Wells, Kate-Noel Wells, Cecelia Stevenson, and Zanna Mills are among the denizens of Deena's Doggie Daycare, with choreography by Christy Shealy Mills and musical direction by Kyle Collins. For information, call 803-425-7676, or visit fineartscenter.org.

Stage 5 Theatre continues to introduce audiences to new and alternative theatrical fare, with the world premiere of Chris Griffin's *Us Grown Men*, running January 31-February 2. This original work follows five African-American men as they reflect on relationships during a poker game/bachelor party. For information, call 803-834-1775 or visit <http://www.mbfproductions.net>.

Columbia **Children's Theatre** revives Director Jerry Stevenson's adaptation of *Puss in Boots* with a twist; the timeless tale is now set in the Old South, and runs February 7-16. CCT stalwarts Elizabeth Stepp, Toni Moore and Paul Lindley are joined by Kendall Turner, Darion McCloud, and Bonita Pee-

ples; for information, call 803-691-4548, or visit <http://columbiachildrenstheatre.com>.

On Stage Productions presents Pamela Parker's warm-hearted ode to small town life in the 1940's, as Second Samuel (the first town of Samuel burned down) runs February 7-16. The cast includes Debra Leopard, David Reed, and M.J. Maurer; for information, visit onstagesc.com, and see the profile on page 7 of this issue.

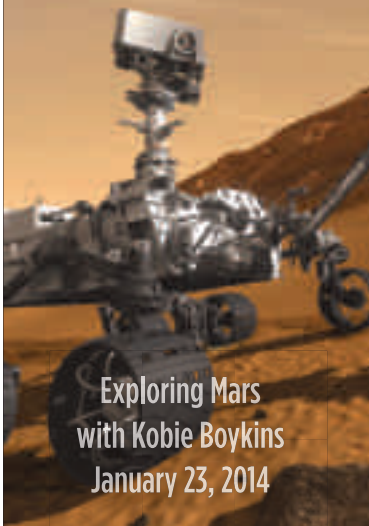
Patrick Barlow's *The 39 Steps* is both an homage to and spoof of Alfred Hitchcock films, with James Costello and Trey Hobbs

portraying dozens of spies, policemen, and rural Scots via lightning-fast changes of costumes, wigs and accents. Josiah Laubenstein plays the stalwart hero, with Melissa Reed as assorted femme fatales. Jim Helsinger and Brad DePlanche direct this madcap romp for USC's Theatre South Carolina in Longstreet Theatre, February 21-March 1. Then graduate student Kat Martin directs her original work *Status Update*; this exploration of life in the digital age of social media runs in the Lab Theatre (at 1400 Wheat Street) February 27-March 2. For information, call 803-777-2551, or visit artsandsciences.sc.edu/thea/2014.

Chapin Theatre Company kicks off their 2014 season at the Harbison Theatre at Midlands Technical College with Scott McPherson's bittersweet *Marvin's Room*. Directed by Glenn Farr, this touching and often amusing drama follows love, reconciliation and family ties, and features Tracy Rice Brown, Perry Simpson, Lou Clyde, Andi Cooper and Mona Lisa Botts. Run dates are March 7-16; for information, call 803-240-8544, or visit chapintheatre.org/.

HARBISON THEATRE AT MIDLANDS TECHNICAL COLLEGE

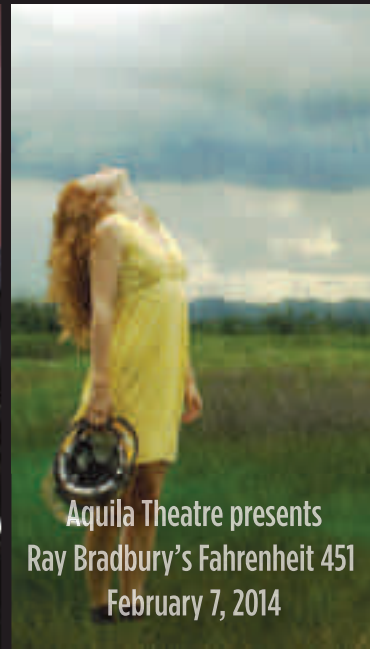
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC *LIVE!*



Exploring Mars
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January 23, 2014



The Second City
February 1, 2014



Aquila Theatre presents
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THE ART OF THE MEAL

WITH



Chef and owner Mike Davis opened Terra in West Columbia in 2006. Back then few of Columbia's independent restaurants listed ingredients from local farms on their menus. The idea of being concerned about food origins was still relatively new here. It would be another year before the Columbia chapter of the Slow Food USA movement would be established in 2007, and a couple years after that when City Roots would have its groundbreaking ceremony in 2009.

Even the restaurant scene down the road in Charleston had not yet reached its current level of international acclaim yet. Sean Brock was relatively unknown then, having just taken the helm at McCrady's. Husk was not yet a seed. Just a couple years prior, *The New York Times* reinforced a commonly held view of Southern cuisine by writing about biscuits, grits, and deep-fried seafood in a 2004 edition of "36 Hours in Charleston."

Since that time, the perception of what Southern food is, and what it can be, has changed significantly—and not just in Columbia. *Jasper* sat down with Terra chef/owner Mike Davis to discuss his views on food, the local dining scene, and what inspires his menus.

Have you seen a change in Columbia's dining scene since you opened Terra?

When we first opened, we were a little esoteric for some people. Some were a little turned off by seeing "steak frites" on the menu when it's really just steak and french fries, but people are scared by what they don't understand. As we built trust and people heard about us, they've become more adventurous. We're happy to be a part of Columbia's growing dining scene and, we feel, to be one of the leading lights here.

Do you feel there's a tension between the dishes you want to serve and the dishes you need to serve to be a successful restaurant?

At this point, I think people trust us to the point I can just do what I want to and I don't so much have to bend to what people want. That's the good thing about a chef owning the restaurant, as opposed to somebody else that's interested in the bottom line. I'm interested in showing people a good experience, and with that comes profit. So we stick to our guns, stay true to the muse and let the inspiration that we see in food come through on the plates. If we're passionate about that, and we sell it to the guests, they feel it. Then they can get excited about it, and tell somebody else.

How do you develop new ideas or challenge yourself as a chef?

The biggest thing is the season. As things come up from the ground, we start asking, what's fresh now, what can I get, what works for this time of year. And we build on past dishes, on new cookbooks, old cookbooks we're reading.

What cookbooks are you reading?

I got a ton of new cookbooks for my birthday. Jon Bonne, *The New California Wine*; Susan Goin's *A.O.C. Cookbook*; Mast Brothers *Chocolate*; Pa-yard *Desserts*; Daniel Boulud's *My French Cuisine*; Anne Quatrano's *Summerland*.

This is a chicken and the egg question: does a town's dining scene change more from the dining room or from the kitchen?

There have to be [restaurants] pushing themselves and the customer to make things really change. Once other restaurants see customers are into that, that's how the trends get set. All of it rolls down from bigger cities, really and truthfully. As people from Columbia will go and work for a while in New York or Atlanta or Charleston, or wherever they go, they see ideas that are being shaped and formed there and ask, how can I bring that back to a place that doesn't have it?



Larry J. McMullen

April 30, 1943 – December 6, 2013

Larry McMullen loved the play *The Adding Machine*, written twenty years before his birth.

Daisy, talking to Mr. Zero:

Them was the times that I would think of blowin' out the gas. But I didn't until you was gone. There was nothing to live for then. But it wasn't so easy to do anyhow. I never could stand the smell of gas. And all the while I was getting ready, you know stuffin' up all the cracks, the way you read about in the paper- I was thinkin' of you and hopin' that maybe I would meet you again. And I made up my mind if I ever did see you, I'd tell you. - Elmer Rice



Larry, you will be missed by our little Trustus Theatre staff who saw you bring new life to the small Side Door Theatre at Trustus, creating a space that does, indeed, feel like sitting in your living room and watching theatre. Whenever I go in there now, you are everywhere. - **Larry Hembree**

On December 6th, 2013, the final curtain fell on the life of Larry McMullen, actor, director, professor, set builder, husband, father and truly “the universal curmudgeon”. Larry attended college in Kansas, but didn't quite manage to finish a degree. It was there that his love of theatre began. He spent time in California in the late 60's where he had the pleasure to study with actor Karl Malden, an experience he so very much valued. He moved to Denver in the early 70's and worked at Dixon Paper Company, where he was a Teamster steward which is hard to believe considering his liberalism. At the same time, he became involved in Columbine Community Theatre in Littleton Colorado and later became a leader of the company. He directed, acted and designed and built sets at that theatre. It was here, in 1972, that he met his future wife, Barbara. Together, they worked at Columbine, Loretto Heights College summer theatre and Theatre Under Glass, all located in Denver. In 1986 Larry so bravely returned to college and finished his Bachelor degree at the University of Nebraska, Kearny. He was accepted into graduate school at the University of South Carolina where he completed his Master of Fine Arts. He soon after began teaching theatre at Midlands Technical College where he taught and influenced so many students until his retirement in 2013. At the same time he began work with Trustus Theatre in Columbia, SC. Here he gave his heart and soul to his art. He continued to exercise his love of theatre and his love of Trustus until his illness took him away. -**Barb McMullen**



Archibald MacLeish once said a poem should “not seem, but be...”

Which always reminded me of Larry, who had no patience with “seeming,” or “kind of.” He demanded that whatever you did or made, or were must be completely true. Art, characters, people, had to be direct and real to satisfy him—perhaps that was because true and real was exactly what he was. He had the vision to see to the heart of things...and to the hearts of the people he loved, The wisdom to know what was actually important, and The courage to act...to choose...to make things happen, rather than just let them. Larry wanted to make his life...and so he did...and it made all of ours so much richer. -**Dr. Thorne Compton**

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Fall Lines a literary convergence

Fall Lines – a literary convergence is a new literary journal based in Columbia, SC and presented by *Jasper Magazine* in partnership with the University of South Carolina Press, Muddy Ford Press, One Columbia, and Richland Library which will make the journal available in a downloadable format, in addition to the perfect-bound print edition.

Fall Lines will accept submissions of previously unpublished **poetry, essays, short fiction, and flash fiction** from January 1 through March 1, 2014. While the editors of *Fall Lines* hope to attract the work of writers and poets from the Carolinas and the Southeastern US, acceptance of work is not dependent upon residence.

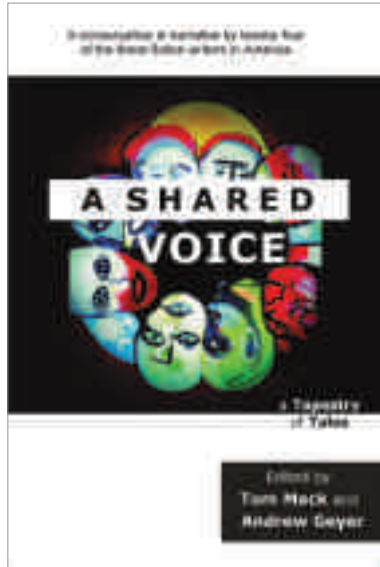
Please limit short fiction to 2000 words or less; flash fiction to 350 – 500

words; essays to 1200 words; and poetry to three pages (Times New Roman 12 pt.) Submit your work via email to Editor@JasperColumbia.com with the words “Fall Lines” in the subject heading along with the category (above) of the item being submitted. While you are invited to enter up to five items, each item should be sent individually as a single submission. Please include with each submission a cover sheet stating your name, age, email address, and USPO address. There is no fee to enter.

Publication in *Fall Lines* will be determined by a panel of judges and accepted authors will be notified in May 2014, with a publication date in June 2014. Accepted authors will receive two copies of the journal.

The Columbia Fall Line is a natural junction, along which the Congaree River falls and rapids form, running parallel to the east coast of the country between the resilient rocks of the Appalachians and the softer, more gentle coastal plain.





REVIEW

A Shared Voice: A Tapestry of Tales

By Brandi Perry

Upon picking up the anthology, *A Shared Voice: A Tapestry of Tales* (Lamar University Press, 2013), one instantly asks what a conversation in narrative is and why the editors, University of South Carolina-Aiken faculty members, Tom Mack and Andrew Geyer, chose to only publish works by writers from the Carolinas and Texas. The answer to the pairing of states is due to historical, cultural, and literary connections that are detailed in the introduction.

The literary conversation, which the editors call a tapestry, consists of twenty-four short stories -- twelve by writers from Texas and twelve by writers from the Carolinas. Of the twelve for each region, six are “anchor” tales and six are “responses” to the “anchor” tales by writers from the other region. This premise makes the collection unique and also exciting as the readers discover the connections between the “anchor” tales and the “response” tales.

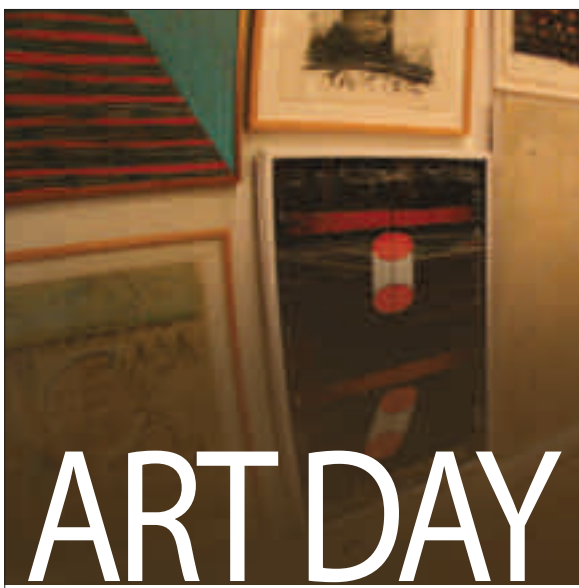
The result of the narrative conversation is certain shared story elements such as geographic locations, characters, imagery, and themes. The shared elements serve to bring the connection between these two places home. There is also plenty to keep the reader occupied as the stories are written in different styles and points of view.

The short stories in the collection are also

gritty and highlight often brutal realities that the characters encounter. For instance, Elise Blackwell’s coming of age story, “Before Texas,” focuses on a young woman named Dee and her troubling manner in which she loses her virginity and tries to cover it up by mutilating herself. Many of the tales have this same harshness that leaves an impact on the reader even though they are often only a handful of pages long.

The chronological arrangement of tales is unique in the anthology is unique. The Texas stories begin with the frontier days and moving toward the present. The Carolina stories begin in the present and moving backwards in time, ending in the Great Depression. Perhaps the only criticism to be made of the collection is a lack of a more detailed table of contents.

For those less familiar with the Texas writers, all of whom have written gripping stories, the collection is worthwhile for the Carolina writers alone. Aficionados of Southern literature will recognize many names including Randall Kenan, Ron Rash, Bret Lott, and Elise Blackwell. Though the introduction gives an idea of the shared history and culture between the Carolinas and Texas, the tales do a wonderful job of really demonstrating the commonalities while highlighting the differences.



ART DAY

appreciate • captivate • inspire

Saturday, March 1, 2014

Join us for a unique look into South Carolina arts and artists.

- Demonstrations
- Music
- Behind-the-scenes Tours
- Hands-on activities and more

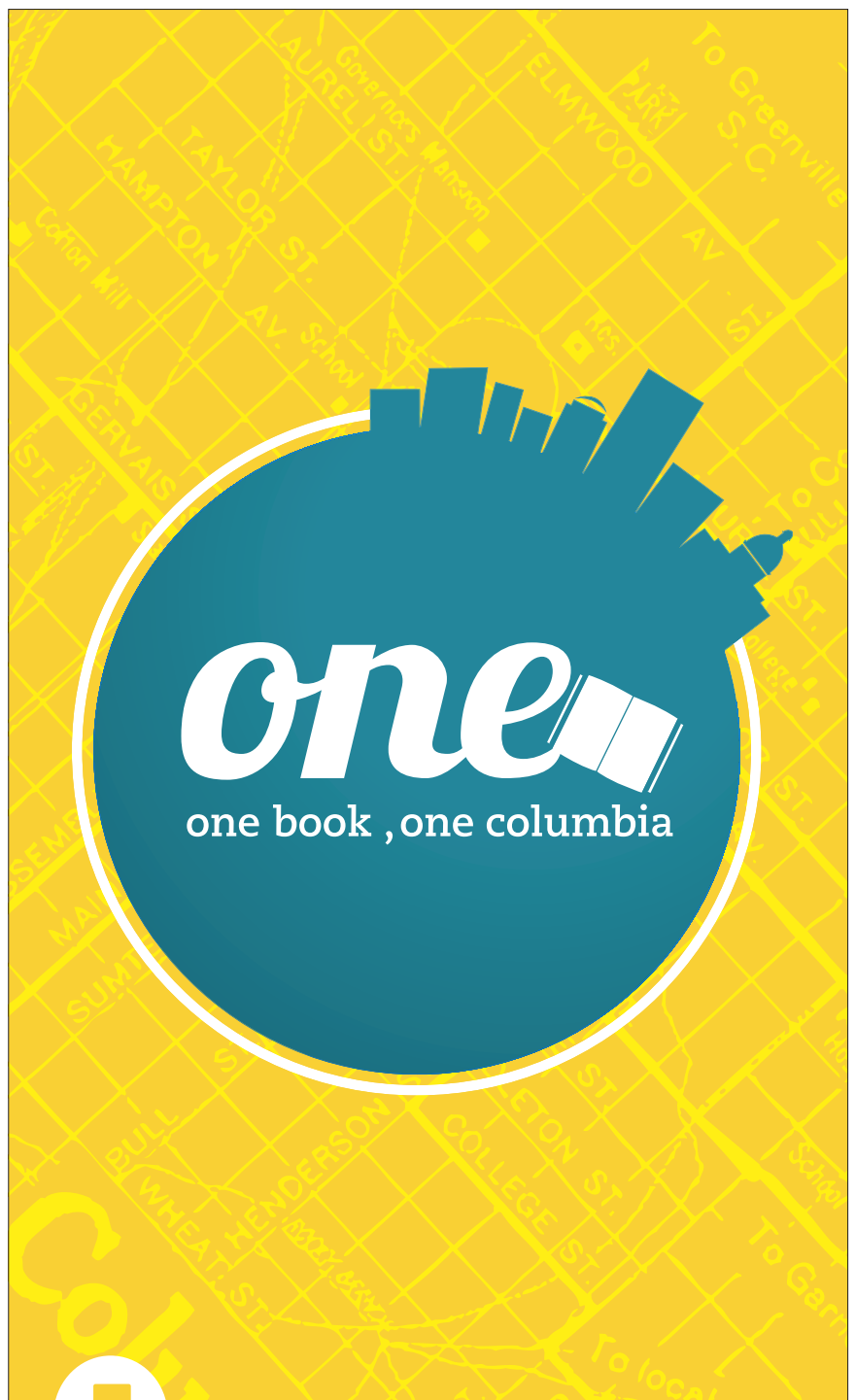
COLLEGE ART DAY

Friday, February 28

Aspiring artists are invited to explore South Carolina College and University Art Departments.

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POLICE
SAY
ROVING
COWS
DRANK
BACKYARD
BREWS

Poem by Marjory Wentworth

A roving group of cows crashed
a small backyard gathering
in a Massachusetts town
where they bullied the guests
for beer. Boxford Police
Lieutenant James Riter says
he spotted them in a front yard
while responding to a call
for loose cows on Sunday.
The herd high-tailed it for
the backyard and then he heard
screaming. When he ran back there
the cows had chased off the young
adults and were drinking their beer
after knocking the cans over
on the table and lapping
up what they spilled. He says
they even started rooting
around the pile of empties
in the recycling bins
for a few extra drops.

South Carolina's Poet Laureate, Marjory Wentworth was educated at Mount Holyoke and received her MA in English Literature and Creative Writing at New York University. She is the author of five books. Her new book will release in Spring 2014.

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Ron Rash says, "*Woman Commits Suicide in Dishwasher* is as poignant as it is humorous ..."

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HOW CAN I NOT BE CONCERNED

Poem by Daniel Nathan Terry

How can I not be concerned

with the overgrown gardens
of ruined and empty houses,
old dogs

and the openness of their hearts,
the ghosts
who tend to them both,

art that is as concerned with beauty
as it is with its absence,
all manner of birds, pale and dark roses

climbing through the rusty diamonds
of a chain-link fence,
this world

and the next, abandoned tobacco field
overrun with the violet tribes
of henbit

and of the golden dusters of the dead
broom sedge as they continue to sweep
the invisible air clean of now?

Daniel Nathan Terry, a former landscaper and horticulturist, is the author of four books of poetry: *City of Starlings* (forthcoming, 2015); *Waxwings* (2012); *Capturing the Dead*, which won The 2007 Stevens Prize; and a chapbook, *Days of Dark Miracles* (2011). His poems and short stories have appeared, or are forthcoming, in *The Greensboro Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *New South*, and elsewhere. Born and raised in Dillon, SC, he says this poem is about a stretch of road between Dillon and his home in Wilmington, NC, where he lives with his husband, painter and printmaker Benjamin Billingsley. Terry participated in Jasper's salon series in 2012.

AS
THOUGH
I BLINKED

Poem by Libby Bernardin

What I wanted to ask, is how are you here
then gone, a shutter clicks and after all the years of being
you're nothing that I can see, yet I get up each morning
drink my coffee, work my crossword puzzle, follow
last night's baseball game in the newspaper
 while you, all dimensions of line
 shape and perspective a wisp in fog
 a dissolve to shade, then no trace
 as though I blinked, as though
I missed the *Jesus saves* sign
on the old barn near the highway
as though I wasn't watching.

Libby Bernardin's chapbook *Layers of Song* (Finishing Line Press) was published in 2010, and another chapbook, *The Book of Myth* (Stepping Stones Press, 2009), was a winner of the South Carolina Poetry Initiative chapbook contest. Her work has been published in *The South Carolina Poetry Society Yearbook*, *The Southern Poetry Anthology, Volume I: South Carolina*, *Southern Poetry Review* and *Notre Dame Review*. She lives in Georgetown but spends much time in Columbia where she raised her family and taught at USC.

An Invitation to Join the Reading Life of Pat Conroy

By Jonathan Haupt

“You may not be aware of this, but before I met you, I used to be a writer.”



This has become the stock greeting I get from southern storyteller Pat Conroy—his jesting retort to the workload now thrust on him as editor-at-large(r-than-life) for USC Press’s fiction imprint, Story River

Books. There is of course no mistaking that Pat is a writer, and indeed one of our finest. An acolyte of the English language, Pat wields the rare and enviable talent to place the right combination of evocative words in just the right order for hundreds of pages in a row, a calling that has resulted in eleven books and a stalwart international fan base now numbering in the millions and spanning three generations. Pat’s newest book, *The Death of Santini: The Story of a Father and His Son*, debuted at number four on the *New York Times* bestseller list. His national tour for the book included stops with a pantheon of extraordinary independent booksellers coast to coast, speaking to hundreds, and signing for throngs of fans for hours each day. Pat’s manuscripts are always handwritten on yellow legal pads. (He is, as he says, a few devices behind.) And he has a handsome, well-worn collection of journals chronicling his ponderings and discoveries from boyhood to the present. Pat is an exceptional writer by vocation and obsession, but he is first and foremost an exceptional reader, living a word-soaked life amid a sea of books that have shaped his being and his writing.

Published in 2010, *My Reading Life* is Pat’s unabashed love letter to great books and great writers, and to the people whom have introduced him to both. As the One Book, One Columbia selection for 2014, the volume

is a capital opportunity to celebrate the power of reading and stories and words to move us to actions and to connect us to others likewise moved. “In a reading life, one thing leads to another in a circle of accident and chance,” says Pat, and *My Reading Life*—in some ways like *The Death of Santini*—maps the circles that have galvanized his experiences.

Just prior to his book tour, Pat judged a high school writing contest for the USC Press and USC Honors College. Twenty-four promising young writers and their unimaginably proud parents and teachers gathered in USC Hollings Library to hear Pat speak before the students undertook the final round of competition. He told the assembly a more animated version of a story from *My Reading Life* about master teacher Gene Norris introducing teenaged Pat to Archibald Rutledge, then South Carolina’s poet laureate and arguably the Palmetto State’s most prolific writer. While Pat has not been a professional teacher since being fired from his job on Daufuskie Island more than forty years ago, he has also never stopped being a teacher in his unparalleled generosity to writers of all ages, a lesson instilled in him that day at Hampton Plantation by Mr. Norris and “Old Flintlock.” At Hollings Library, Pat captivated those wide-eyed high-schoolers. As he spoke, not a text was sent, not a status updated, not a comment tweeted, not a lunch plate Instagrammed—and undivided attention is the highest praise a teenager can give. This was Pat coming full circle, sharing the lessons imparted to him and helping to inspire these young writers to craft the stories that will become part of someone else’s reading life.

I’m sometimes asked how I got Pat Conroy to serve as editor for Story River Books, or judge a high school writing contest, or appear at the South Carolina Book Festival, or do whatever new kindness he has done in benevolent service for USC Press. In truth, I have never motivated Pat to do anything he did not wish to do; no one could. The twelve labors of Hercules would be more easily achieved. What Pat chooses to do, he does out of a deeply rooted fidelity to language and literature, a longstanding relationship to which *My Reading Life* is his heartfelt benediction.

Pat ends every correspondence and phone call with a simple but profoundly held valediction: “great love.” Everything and everyone Pat loves he does so with true and magnanimous affection, and books have long been among his most abiding passions. Although he never says this as overtly in *My Reading Life* as he does elsewhere, books

gave Pat an avenue of escape from an abusive childhood. Books saved his life. The volumes in his personal library now number well over 5,000, the benefits of a lifelong bibliophile’s unquenchable desires for familiar favorites and undiscovered voices. His love affair with reading began in public—in public libraries to be precise. Pat’s mother Peg found on library shelves a wealth of knowledge previously denied to her in a limited education and she instilled in Pat his empowering devotion to the transformative power of language. “A library could show you everything if you knew where to look,” and on the hallowed grounds of public libraries Pat began the quest that he continues to this day in bookshops, in libraries, in his own enviable collection, and in the ambitious manuscripts sent to him by writers looking for a gracious reading of untapped potential. Pat, like all of us with stacks of books by our bedsides, yearns to find and read and love those books that can transport us into landscapes and lives we would otherwise never know and, at the same time, to reveal to us anew that which we only thought we understood. It is a reverential act, a search for the divine. “That’s what a good book does,” Pat promises us, “it puts readers on their knees. It makes you want to believe in a world you just read about—the one that will make you feel different about the world you thought you lived in, the world that will never be the same.”

The reading list that emerges in the chapters of *My Reading Life* includes oft-studied classics such as *A Christmas Carol*, *War and Peace*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Look Homeward Angel*, *Les Misérables*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *A Moveable Feast*, *Anna Karenina*, and Peg Conroy’s favorite, *Gone with the Wind*. Here we find as well the poetry of James Dickey, the magical realism of Jonathan Carroll, the fantastic realms of J. R. R. Tolkien, and a wealth of writers of both genders and many races and nationalities, all too numerous to list, all moving in constellation with Pat, as well-read disciple, at its center.

Our companionable guide through this city of books cannot write about a tome fondly remembered without also recalling the person who introduced him to that book. Through these candid reflections, Pat reveres his mother’s lasting influence and that of his teachers Joseph Monte, Gene Norris, Ann Head, and James Dickey. He also introduces us to a cast representing a host of occupations tied to authorship, from high school librarian Eileen Hunter to venerable bookseller and writer Cliff Graubart to iconic publisher sales rep Norman Berg to a who’s-

who of contemporary writers with whom Pat has enjoyed long friendships, including Anne Rivers Siddons and Terry Kay, and several with whom he has clashed. And then there are the cameos by Michael Jackson and Steven Spielberg, but explaining those would reveal too much in passing.

With each introduction of a book, a writer, a reader, Pat grants us access to the stories behind some of those 5,000 volumes lining the walls of his lowcountry home and he invites us to revisit the conjoined circles that connect our own book-filled lives. "Good writing is the hardest form of thinking," he tells us early in *My Reading Life*, and this is the heart of the unspoken call to action of this volume: to embrace good writing as an active engagement with ideas and with fellow readers, to come through reading and through writing to better know ourselves and one another. There could be no more noble task for a city-wide common read program like One Book, One Columbia than to strive in earnest to bring together readers in a circle of fellowship and a forthright exchange of good ideas. *My Reading Life* is Pat Conroy's invitation for all of us to do just that, one book at a time.



PHOTO BY STEVE LEMBERG

Jonathan Haupt is director of the University of South Carolina Press, a seventy-year-old publishing house with more than 2,000 published books and a 2012 South Carolina Governor's Awards in the Humanities to its credit. Haupt acquires in regional fiction and non-fiction for USC Press and serves on the boards of the South Carolina Book Festival and One Columbia. He does not yet have a personal library to rival that of Pat Conroy, but he's working on it.

"Here is all I ask of a book—give me everything. Everything, and don't leave out a single word. . . . I want everything and nothing less, the full measure of a writer's heart. ***I want a novel so poetic*** that I do not have to turn to the standby anthologies of poetry to satisfy that itch for music, for perfection, for economy of phrasing, for exactness of tone. Then, too, ***I want a book so filled with story and character*** that I read page after page without thinking of food and drink, because a writer has possessed me, crazed me with an unappeasable thirst to know what happens next."

ARTISTS + POETS COLLABORATING IN COLUMBIA BROADSIDE PROJECT

“Getting 40 people to work together is a bit of a logistical nightmare,” laughs Darien Cavanaugh, coordinator for the Columbia Broadside Project, an ambitious venture pairing South Carolina writers and artists in collaborative projects. But if all goes as planned, the Columbia Broadside Project show will open at Tapp’s Art Center on January 17, with an impressive range of original and collaborative writing and art—a type of collaboration, Cavanaugh says, that we haven’t seen here before.

Cavanaugh has long been a fan of broadsides—large letterpress printings of poems, often with original art. Poetry broadsides were popular in the 1960s and 1970s, he says, and

recently a few small and art presses have begun to revive interest in the genre. For him, it’s the connection of visual and verbal arts that works, the combination of poem and image. “I know that for me, poem and image impact me differently together than either would on their own.”

As an editor of USC’s creative writing journal *Yemassee* for three years while a student in the MFA program, Cavanaugh says he had wanted to sponsor an annual broadside contest through the journal, but he graduated before he could make that happen. He had in mind the poetry broadsides produced by Oneiros Press of Chicago, which have featured the work of major modern poets combined

F

SIDE



Death on Sea

ART BY ALEJANDRO GARCIA-LENDOS | POETRY BY JONATHAN BUTLER





This morning, one of them
was discovered dead,
and now, the cruise ship's passengers
are thinking of the depths below,
black depths in which monsters grope
like limbs of a dismembered god,
whose eye, just now, rises
in the window.



ART BY MICHAEL KRAJEWSKI | POETRY BY BRANDI L. PERRY

with striking visual art by graphic designer Shawn Sheehy—including a 2007 printing of “Things to do in the belly of the whale” by Dan Albergotti, a USC graduate and now faculty member at Coastal Carolina University.

After graduating from USC in 2009, Cavanaugh continued to think about broadsides, and in 2012, after a conversation with visual artist Matt Catoe, he began to organize the Columbia Broadside Project. With the help of local artists Catoe and Blake Morgan and writers he knew through the MFA program, he began to recruit visual artists and poets. Despite depending on word of mouth and recommendations for participants, Cavanaugh says he wanted a diversity of writers and visual artists, and he tried to recruit tattoo artists and digital artists. (The digital artists who agreed to participate opted for traditional paintings.)

The original idea was 20 artists and 20 poets, though some dropped out along the way. At the time of this writing, participating visual artists included Allen Anderson, Ashley Berendzen, Matt Catoe, Alex Coco, Thomas

Crouch, Josh Drews, Alejandro Garcia-Lemos, Michael Krajewski, Kristyn Larsen, Whitney LeJeune, Dre Lopez, Sammy Lopez, Lee A. Monts, Rachel Parker, and Stephanie Redmond (somethingRed). Participating writers included Gil Allen, Betsy Breen, Jonathan Butler, Juan David Cruz, Worthy Evans, Will Garland, Keith Higginbotham, Julia Koets, Susan Levi Wallach, Ray McManus, Susan Meyers, Brandi Perry, Charlene Spearen, and Nicola Waldron. All are from South Carolina or have lived here recently, almost all from the Columbia area.

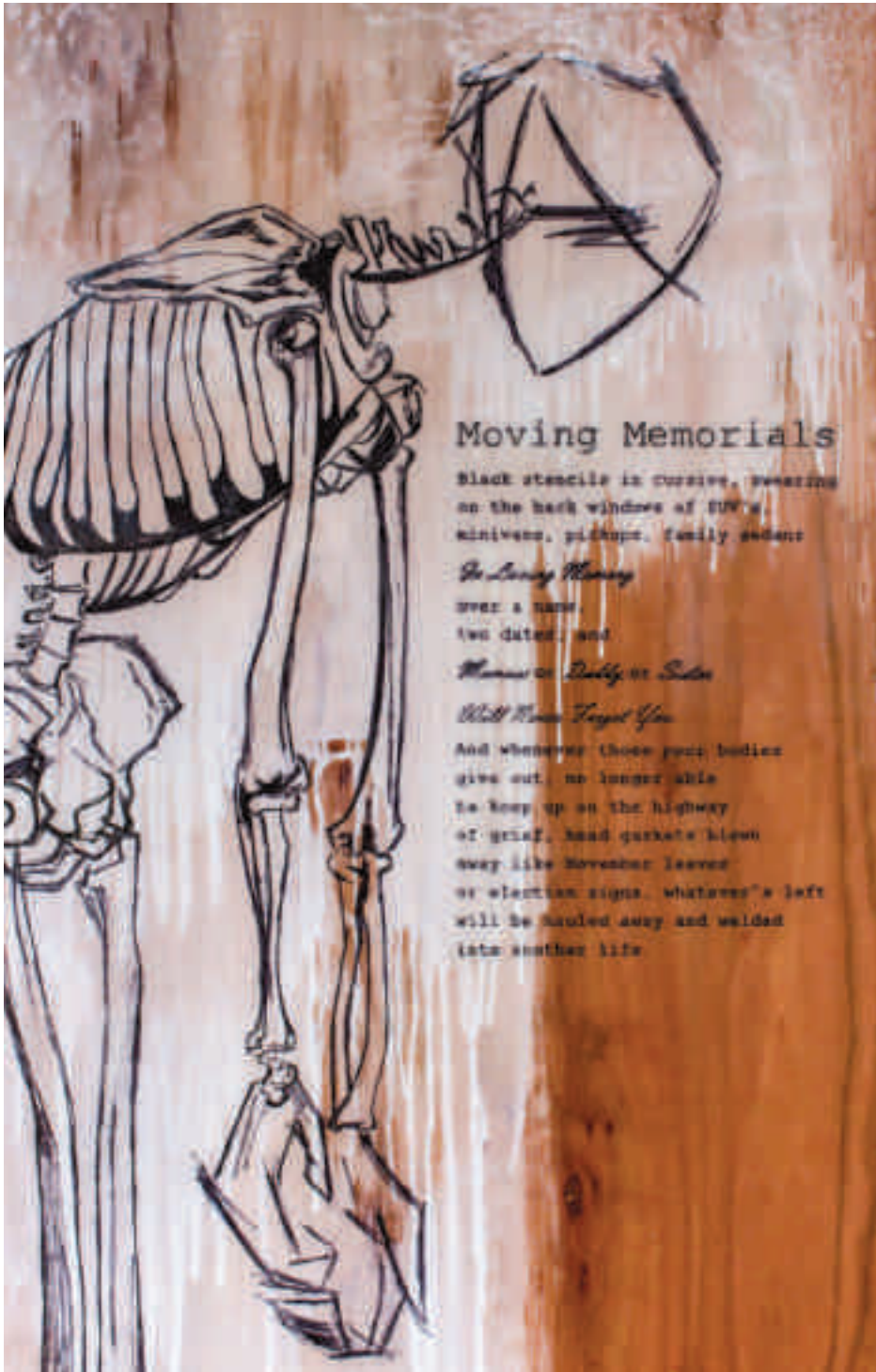
Cavanaugh decided to make the pairings arbitrary rather than let people choose partners or assign them himself, so names were drawn from two empty beer pitchers at an organizing meeting at Delaney’s in June. It was, he admits, “an awkward project”—“a lot of people were paired up with people they’d never met before.”

Each pair was asked to produce an original poem and an original work of art that somehow complement each other. Neither was to “respond” to a particular work already

created by the partner, Cavanaugh explains, but to discuss themes and images they might share or see in each other’s work, then create a new collaborative work based on a shared vision. He says the idea was “people starting together and feeding off each other” in a collaborative creative process, “poet to artist, artist to poet.” Collaboration was the key.

“The most difficult thing,” according to poet Betsy Breen, “was knowing where to start.” She says that she and her partner, Ashley Berendzen, tried at first talking about what they were each working on individually. “While that helped us to get better oriented, it didn’t seem to generate any new ideas.”

As they talked about their work, however, Berendzen told Breen about an experience painting in the Congaree Swamp at night. “It really stuck with me,” says Breen. “I realized that I wanted to respond to the intensity of that experience,” she says, to respond to the “dark energy” of that story. “From there,” she says, “we shifted away from worrying about how to match up my words directly with her art and move towards both of us trying to



ART BY SOMETHINGRED | POETRY BY GILBERT ALLEN

translate a specific energy into our respective mediums.”

Rachel Parker says the project pushed her as an artist: “It changed how I normally approach my work.” She embraced the change, “from how I visualized what to paint (it was based on imagery from my partner’s experiences) to the medium I used (acrylic instead of the usual watercolor), to how I actually painted (quick and splashy instead of my

more usual measured and slower approach).”

Poet Nicola Waldron says she was thrilled to be paired with Lee A. Monts, whose work she knew, and whom she describes as “a landscape artist who uses color and form and light so fluently and poetically.” She says it was “a perfect match,” in part because both are inspired by landscape. “The natural world, and its ‘scapes’ are often what inspire me to write,” says Waldron, “helping me con-

nect the outer world with the inner human landscape—landscape to portrait, as it were.”

About their collaboration, Waldron says, “I love responding to other art forms. It makes the whole artistic process feel connective and universal—an act of living response—rather than some moody venture in solipsism.”

Like Waldron and Monts, Jonathan Butler and Alejandro Garcia Lemos found they shared some common themes and images. “Alejandro and I started by sharing examples of our previous work,” says Butler. “We quickly found that we had some images and subject areas in common—we’re both interested in monsters and the logic and imagery of dreams.”

As with Breen and Berendzen’s collaboration, however, it was a story that the artist told the poet that impelled their work. “While we talked,” says Butler, “he told me a story about a cruise he had been on and the strangeness of being delayed in a port because one of your fellow passengers has died unexpectedly during the night. All of these things came together in a very rough draft of a poem I presented to him, and he began making sketches while I went about revising and editing. Everything grew out of the first conversation. The story about the cruise and some paintings of his featuring mythological creatures were the stimulus for the rest.”

Garcia Lemos says he based his work on an Argentinian style of drawing called *Fileteado Porteño*, a colorful and stylized visual culture that originated on decorated vehicles in the early twentieth century and become part of the graphic design and popular culture of Buenos Aires.

Tellingly, Garcia Lemos says his work was meant “to illustrate—or maybe the right word would be—to *illuminate*” Butler’s short poem, “Death on the Sea.”

“Most artists don’t really spend enough time understanding other people’s work,” Garcia Lemos adds, “how they develop their ideas and turn them into art. We are so used to the immediacy that we don’t make a conscious effort to get into other artists’ minds, feelings, and approaches.” The collaboration, then, was more than just the piece itself. “Soon enough we realized that taking the time to meet, share ideas, have a glass of wine and explore connections is probably as important as the final broadside.

The January 17 opening will include a reading of selected poems and a panel discussion about the collaborative process. Copies of the collaborative broadsides (12” x 18” each) will be available for sale, as well as the original visual art (mostly 24” x 36”). A small chapbook with all of the images and poems will also be available.

Steve D



Artifacts

The Old Columbia Speedway sits off Highway 321 in Cayce, South Carolina. Overgrown brush and trees hide the old asphalt track from plain view. A disjointed array of old Big Wheels and tricycles are strewn throughout the brush. They are painted and rigged to look like the bastard plastic and metal children of post-apocalyptic automobiles. Next to the three-wheeled destruction machines are a mish-mash of weapons; golf balls with nails glued to them to look like road spikes, machetes, axes. An old suitcase sits open on the ground, holding a variety of Super 8mm film cameras. To the right, a variety of snacks, crackers, and candies are spread on top of a fold-out table. A cooler sits open, full of ice, bottled

By Wade Sellers | Photos by Alexis Schwedler



water, and sugar free Red Bulls. A low rising, cement wall, newly painted with black and white racing checkers, divides the brush from the old asphalt track. Filmmaker Steve Daniels stands on the track, holding a Super 8mm camera. He turns, then walks back towards the make shift camp of his new film, *M is for Marauder*.

Daniels grew up in Seneca, SC. His father, now retired, was an Agriculture Education Professor at Clemson University. His mother stayed at home to raise Daniels and his younger brother, David Jack Daniels. At an early age, Daniels got his hands on a RCA VHS video camera and started making back yard films with his brother "volunteering" to take part. Daniels would edit these films in camera, planning each shot in his head or on paper, then recording each shot chronologically. It was a crude way of recording, but it reflected his affinity for Rube Goldberg type comedic situations, where one action leads to another and then another.

"I grew up loving monsters and horror films" says Daniels. "I also loved the Three Stooges and Zucker Brothers films (*Airplane*, *Kentucky Fried Movie*)." *Evil Dead 2*, from future *Spider Man* director Sam Raimi, was the first time he remembers being affected by a film. "*Evil Dead 2* was the first time I became aware of the camera and technique. The audacious camera moves blew me away. It (*Evil Dead 2*) was a horror film, but a comedy too," Daniels explains. He remembers thinking "I want to do that. I want to make people feel that."

On the asphalt track of the Old Columbia Speedway, Daniels lies flat on an aluminum equipment cart. He looks through the tiny eyepiece of the super 8 camera, framing a shot of Emily Olyarchuk, one of the stars of *M is for Marauder*, gripping the handlebars of a tricycle spray painted black and battle ready. Local filmmaker and ETV producer Lynn Cornfoot stands ready to push the makeshift dolly on Daniels command. Daniels yells, "Go!" Olyarchuk begins peddling and Cornfoot pushes the cart alongside parallel to her. Daniels moves his camera fluidly towards Olyarchuk and then back. He yells, "Cut!" slides off the cart and then stands. Daniels rapidly explains the next series of shots to Cornfoot and Olyarchuk, but first, he explains, they will break for a lunch of pizza and salad.

Daniels bought a guitar and started playing music in college. He grew up listening to late '80s punk and hard core bands. His brother was a very good drummer and the two would write songs together. "It's like filmmaking," Daniels says. "You created something that didn't exist. That's what attracted me to punk, other than just the energy and the speed. It is the whole 'Do It Yourself' ethos. You didn't have to take guitar lessons and wank like Jimi Hendrix. You could play four chords like the Ramones. So that attitude and that idea that you can pick up an instrument and play it was fascinating to me. Just like super 8 film.

It was simple; low-tech. Just grab a guitar like you grab a camera."

Growing off of his early experiences of editing in camera on a VHS camcorder, this freestyle approach to music and film appealed to Daniels. He graduated the USC Media Arts program in 1996 and continued to make short films. One of his first films after college was *Just the Kiss of the Hops*. The film features two rednecks sitting on a porch arguing about which beer is better; PBR or Schlitz. All of the early influences on Daniels can be seen; the hyper quick editing, obscure camera angles and gut busting comedy. Viewing the film is like watching a punk rock song in motion. It would introduce Daniels' name to the indie film community around the country.

The Flicker Film Festival started in Chapel Hill, NC. Filmmakers would gather at the music venue Cat's Cradle and share their small gauge short films for each other. In the early 2000s, the festival began touring to various cities and one of the stops was in Columbia at a pre-renovated 701 Whaley. Daniels went to the screening and was excited at what he saw. "It really sparked a competitive nature in me," he recalls. These were films that were, primarily, edited in camera and after the screening, Daniels thought, "I can do this." Daniels completed *The Flying Squirrel* for *Attack of the 50ft Reels* for the Los Angeles branch of the Flicker Festival. The short documentary was edited completely in camera. A technique with which Daniels was very comfortable.

Daniels followed *The Flying Squirrel* with *The Stash* and *Strings of Death*, a collaboration with Lyon Hill and the Columbia Marionette Theater. Around the same time, he also began his collaboration with current Toro Y Moi frontman Chaz Bundrick in Bundrick's previous band The Heist and The Accomplice by shooting their music video for "More Control." He continues to collaborate with Bundrick today, completing a music video for Toro Y Moi's "Never Matter" in 2013. In 2004, Daniels entered a short film into a contest for sneaker company Converse. "The Amazing Russell" starred local actor and frequent Daniels collaborator Lee Smith and was aired internationally after being selected as one of the top entries. "I'm a total contest whore. Nothing sets a fire under your ass like a contest," Daniels says. With his next film *The Gibbering Horror of Howard Ghormly*, Daniels gained significant notoriety in the horror community. The film was included in Fangoria Magazine's Blood Drive II DVD, drawing the attention of noted horror director Stuart Gordon (*Re-Animator*).

In 2011, Daniels won a short film indie grant by the SC Film Commission. With that award and a budget of \$10,000, he produced the award winning short film *Dirty Silverware*. It gave Daniels the largest budget he had ever worked with and the opportunity to surround himself with a solid group of SC film professionals. "It allowed me more

access to professional resources for the very first time. I was able to create more ambitious special effects, create an animatronic arm, things like that. The main challenge was that I was answering to someone for the very first time," Daniels recalls. *Dirty Silverware* went on to receive the award for Best Short Film both at Indie Grits and at the prestigious Sitges Film Festival in Spain.

Olaf Wegner leans on the cement barricade that surrounds the Old Columbia Speedway track. He holds a small digital camera with a film projector lens roughly mounted to the front. He is taking macro digital photographs of leaves hanging from tree limbs hanging over the track. Wegner is responsible for creating the many elements of destruction Daniels is using in his current film. Katherine Perry, Daniel's wife of seven years, puts out pizza boxes on the craft services table. Perry, a photographer and filmmaker of her own, is hands on with the production as well. Bits of paint can still be seen on her hands from spray painting the three wheeled killing machines the day before. Daniels paces nearby, frantically searching for his shot list. He can't remember where he placed it and production can't continue until he finds his notes.

Daniels has always kept a log of his ideas. "If any idea I had kept coming up and resonating I would write it down. It's the same process now," Daniels explains. "I



don't create storyboards, just a shot list in chronological order." When he is shooting a film he just checks off the shots as he goes. "It's a small miracle to have everything line up, especially when you're not paying ... that people even show up. I remember that when I watch other people's work."

Mad Monkey, a Columbia based creative agency, hired Daniels as an editor on 2005. Mad Monkey is recognized as one of the top creative agencies in the country and introduced Daniels to a more formal approach to production. "It was interesting to see a bigger animal work. Certainly more professional, the polar opposite of my scrappy productions," Daniels says. "I am definitely more efficient now, but (my approach to filmmaking) hasn't changed much."

With all of the recognition Daniels has received for his films, the thought of leaving for bigger pastures has never entered his mind. "The main reason I never moved was because the film I absolutely loved growing up, horror films especially, were groundbreaking in the genre and were outsider, independent regional filmmaking: *Texas Chainsaw* (Texas), *Night of the Living Dead* (Pennsylvania) *Evil Dead 2* (Minnesota and Tennessee). To get these films made you have to be a force of nature, you call in favors

and plead and beg. It helps to have talented friends. Now I have the added challenge of time." Daniels and his wife Katherine have two children, ages four and one. "Katherine is so supportive. She calls me on my bullshit, I run ideas by her. She's keeps me in check. I'm so thankful for my support group."

The cast and crew are finishing up lunch. Daniels drains a sugar free Red Bull, flips to his recently recovered shot list for *M is for Marauder*, calls out to one of the actors and explains the next series of shots. Cornfoot

and Wegner follow Daniels out of the shade and back to the track to begin the second half of their production day. Daniels grips his Super 8mm camera of choice comfortably by his side.

Daniels states, "So many people get bogged down with having the latest gear, but it's just a distraction. I'm down with new tech, whatever makes filmmaking easier, but it's a trap. It's just storytelling."



The Things Bob Ross Never Taught Me: Working with Palette Knives, Red Wine, & Rob Shaw

Story and Photos by Will Garland



If I'm being truthful here, this story begins with the discovery of green paw prints on my dining room table. Up until that moment, I couldn't figure out the angle that I'd take for this piece. I'd gone to a painting class. I drank the wine and shot the preverbal shit with the other patrons. And I had walked in there with zero expectations on what my finished product could possibly look like. In fact, I assumed that I would be impressed with myself if I managed to paint anything that extended beyond crudely drawn stick figures.

But that wasn't what happened. I left the class that night with an overwhelming sense of pride. Hell, I was downright giddy when I got home and held up my painting for my wife's admiration. I knew that it was good. And I knew that I couldn't wait to sit down at my laptop and try to recreate the whole experience for this piece. But I couldn't fully appreciate how invested I was until I saw those paw prints, and then allowed my gaze to follow them to our befuddled little cat, who was perched in the corner, frantically licking her

oil-soaked green paws.

It'd be easy to tell you that I was speechless. But I wasn't. There were more words there than I'd care to admit. They were clear. And they were precise. But they weren't laced with the anger that I imagined they would be. Instead it was just a moment of sincere sadness. Our cat was confused. She jumped onto our dining room table (where she knows she is not allowed) and found herself sliding across a sunset-soaked marsh. And, in doing so, she allowed me to fully re-

alize that Rob Shaw's class had become more than a night where I drank wine and tried my hand at the art of knife palates and oil paints. It was the chance for me to realize how quickly I could go from: have fun and make a mess, to focus in and create something that I want to hang on my wall.

When I first walked in to Havens that evening, I was greeted to a round of warm welcomes from a handful of the people who I would later discover were regulars. Some of the folks setting up had their own paints and brushes. Some didn't. But they all had this aura of confidence about them. It wasn't their first rodeo. That much was clear. (I later discovered that several of them had some of their prior work hanging on the gallery walls.) They had a procedure in place for how to prep their stations and where they wanted to be. But even with all of that confidence, they were all still overly hospitable to me and the other two newcomers that walked in shortly after I arrived. We were easy enough to spot. We were the ones with that deer in the head-

lights look about us that couldn't decide how to arrange anything without looking over at a minimum of three other stations for validation.

When Rob walked up from the back, he got us set up and made sure we were right at home, before walking around the room to hand out the photograph that we'd be working with, and starting the presentation. I had never worked with oil or palette knives before. In fact, I hadn't even worked with any paints since I was a little kid and my mom discovered one of my cat drawing that "showed great promise," and sent me over to the nearby community college for an intro to art class. I sat there that night trying to remember at least one of the lessons from that class, but the only thing that came back to me was how I'd always look for this igloo-styled house on stilts that we used to pass just before we turned off to go to the college. And that was the image that was in my head when Rob began showing us all how to mix the paints and create realistic color palettes.



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He'd already moved into his spiel about the ways that we could manipulate the paint with our knives before I'd convinced myself that the exact shape of that igloo house wasn't going to help me out at all. Maybe that's why my start was so slow. My sunset was off, and my trees weren't happy little trees. They looked more like the Green Monster at Fenway, and I didn't think there'd be much of a chance for salvaging them. Discouraged, I decided that it was time to walk around and see what other people were doing.

Everyone was even nicer than the opening receptions had indicated. The room was filled with professors, lawyers, pediatric

heart surgeons, salesmen, technical gurus, and retired saints. Some of them lived in town. Others lived more than an hour away. During the day, they worked in their various jobs and went on with their various responsibilities, but when Wednesday nights rolled around, these people all gathered together and painted their masterpieces.

Not everyone was painting the same marsh scene. Some people had their own projects and visions. One man was painting a peacock. A woman was painting a boat scene. A few of the students painted with an amazing preciseness and realism. Others had more of an impressionistic flair. But they all had their

own style. And it was clear that they loved every second of it. "It's a hell of a lot cheaper than therapy," one of the more animated students proclaimed. And then in a more hushed tone he added, "And I haven't found a single therapist yet that will bring wine to our sessions."

He had a good point. The process was therapeutic, even if I felt like my painting was already a lost cause. It was just nice to be in the room with so much laughter and support. No one was anyone's critic. Instead, it was a gallery filled with: "Wow! That's amazing!" and "Are you sure this is your first time here?" and "Your colors are just so perfect. You always

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WILLIAM STARRETT
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

manage to see the pink that none of us can pick up on." And if someone ran across something that was in dire straights (like mine), they'd simply say: "You should've seen my first painting." It was all just one big group hug. But my painting was still in a state.

I'd about given up on it, and decided to just keep drinking my wine and chatting up the rest of the crowd, when one particularly kind elderly woman told me, "Don't you worry, just wait till Rob gets over here, he'll Shaw it up for you."

"Shaw it up" was apparently a common phrase that referenced any manner of things, but its most common usage was a reference to Rob's ability to walk over to your painting, look at it for a second, tilt his head to the side, look at it again, and then walk you through a few simple palette knife maneuvers that transformed your entire perspective on your work. The true brilliance of this talent was how he could make these suggestions and demonstrate them ever so briefly without having you feel as if he took over your painting and saved it himself. I have no doubts that he did. There was some type of serious black magic in those quick wrist strokes. But he made you feel as if you were the one making

the turn and saving the trees from ruin. And I think it came from his understanding of how each painter required a different technique. For me, he needed to take some of the paint off the canvas and move it around. For others, it was allowing things to get a little sloppier. But whatever the remedy may be, it became clear that we all had a teacher that knew how to place a personal touch on the whole process. He gave individual instruction to everyone in the room, and he kept the class going until everyone that wanted one had a finished a painting. By the time the evening was over, I had overheard plans for a group trip to Italy, I had learned the life stories of several of the class members, and I had made multiple promises to come back and to keep in touch. But what was most amazing was that I had a painting that I wanted to hang on my wall—or give to my mother. (Those two desires are always tough to differentiate. Call it a Freud thing.) My marsh scene looked like a marsh scene. There were creek beds, sunset reflections, and a stream of reeds faded off into the sunset like a John Wayne movie that I never actually saw. That's what I brought home. And that's what my befuddled little cat destroyed.

As I stood there in my dining room, staring at the cat's slippery paw prints, I tried to imagine how they could actually add to the painting—show movement. But I knew that it wasn't the case. The scene was over. There wasn't any amount of "Shawing it up" that could make it look natural again. At best, it was a psychedelic acid trip gone awry, and I'd have to wait until my next class to give it another shot.

This is the first in a series of exercises and essays written by Jasper staff member Will Garland. Bob Ross was an American artist, art instructor, and creator and host of The Joy of Painting, an instructional art show that appeared on PBS in the US, Canada, and Europe until a year before Ross's death in 1995.

For more information on Rob Shaw's Palette Knife and Oil Painting classes, please contact Havens Framemakers & Gallery at (803) 256-1616 or visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/havens.framemakers>.

JAPAN AND THE JAZZ AGE

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The exhibition is drawn from The Levenson Collection and is organized and circulated by Art Services International, Alexandria, Virginia under the title *DECO JAPAN: Shaping Art and Culture, 1920-1945*. Support has been provided by The Chisholm Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation. Image: Artist Unknown, *Songbook, Literary Song, The Trouble with Bright Eyes* (detail), 1929, Color lithograph, 10 3/8 x 7 7/16 in. Courtesy of The Levenson Collection.



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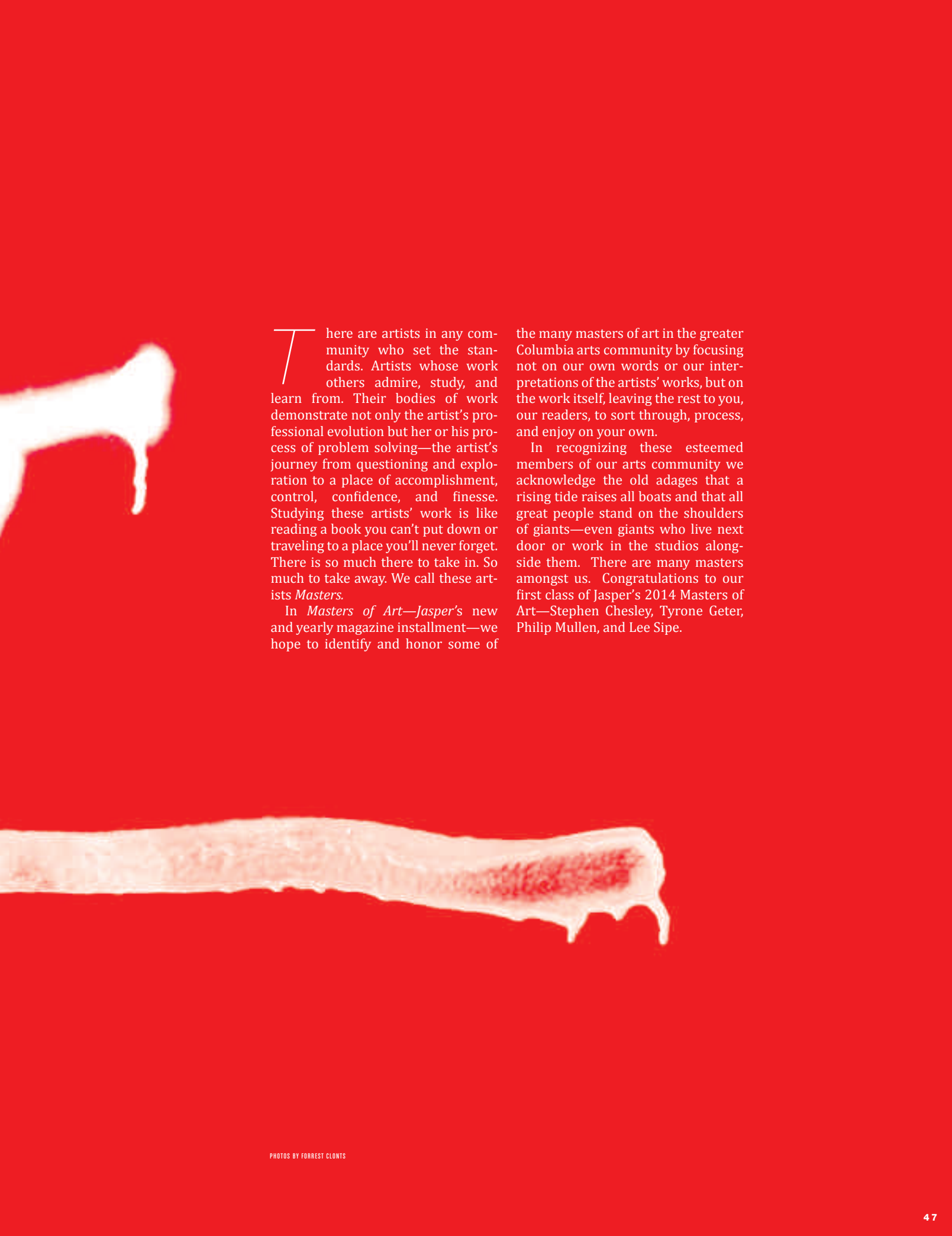
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Masters of





There are artists in any community who set the standards. Artists whose work others admire, study, and learn from. Their bodies of work demonstrate not only the artist's professional evolution but her or his process of problem solving—the artist's journey from questioning and exploration to a place of accomplishment, control, confidence, and finesse. Studying these artists' work is like reading a book you can't put down or traveling to a place you'll never forget. There is so much there to take in. So much to take away. We call these artists *Masters*.

In *Masters of Art*—*Jasper's* new and yearly magazine installment—we hope to identify and honor some of

the many masters of art in the greater Columbia arts community by focusing not on our own words or our interpretations of the artists' works, but on the work itself, leaving the rest to you, our readers, to sort through, process, and enjoy on your own.

In recognizing these esteemed members of our arts community we acknowledge the old adages that a rising tide raises all boats and that all great people stand on the shoulders of giants—even giants who live next door or work in the studios alongside them. There are many masters amongst us. Congratulations to our first class of *Jasper's* 2014 Masters of Art—Stephen Chesley, Tyrone Geter, Philip Mullen, and Lee Sipe.

LEE SIPE

Born in Masan in the Republic of Korea, Lee Sipe showed a proclivity and passion for art from an early age, but it was not until after she came to Columbia and the youngest of her four children had grown up that she became serious about her art. It was a 1983 class on weaving and pine needle baskets that clearly demonstrated Sipe was a natural at multi-dimensional art forms. She immediately began winning local awards and soon after was offered representation out of state.

Sipe soon moved on to study pottery and merge her basket weaving skills into this new medium. Again, her work met with acclaim. Copper wiring was next.

Sipe's wire vessels were added to the permanent collections of the South Carolina State Museum and Alabama's Huntsville Museum of Art, while other pieces won awards and were juried into shows throughout South and North Carolina. Juror and noted New York art critic Mario Naves says of one example of Sipe's work, "Though small, the piece generates a large space around it. The piece stated its case as a unique object in terms of its crafting and in terms of the vision being put forth." Local artist and art critic Mary Bentz Gilkerson named Sipe "one of the top two artists in the state working with the basket as a fine art form."

Sipe cites fellow multi-dimensional artist Clay Burnett as an early influence and works to stay true to the values of her Korean culture—hard work, order, precision, and family. Sipe says she seeks "the pleasure of creating, and that "every piece is a new adventure. Looking forward to creating new art adds excitement to my life." She adds that she is "extremely honored to have been selected as one of Jasper's Masters of Art and to have been included with these other accomplished artists." *By Cynthia Boiter*









PHILIP MULLEN

Cola. Wall was Philip Mullen's introduction to the South Carolina arts scene. Mullen, who had just arrived here three months earlier to teach at USC, won first prize for the mixed-media piece depicting an African-American woman in the Guild of SC Artists' 1969 exhibition. The piece was never meant to be a political or social statement, but it quickly became the focus of controversy. The Columbia Museum of Art purchased the winning artwork, and soon received a petition demanding Mullen's work never be shown again. Thankfully, the museum did not acquiesce, and most recently, showed the work again in 2011 as a part of *The Artist's Eye*, curated by artist Sigmond Abeles, to a much different reception—perhaps showing the

evolution of southern attitudes.

Over the last forty some years, we've gotten to witness Mullen's evolution, as well. We've seen him become a successful, internationally known artist and have seen his work progress and change. At 71, he believes wholeheartedly in reinvention. His work has become mysterious, bright, airy and softly electric. He builds layer upon layer of paint, beginning with human figures or representational forms that are hardly, if at all, visible in the finished works. The actual *art* is in the process for Mullen. A trained Yogi, Mullen's paintings have become a meditation in patience and control while letting the piece unfurl upon the canvas in the way it will. There seems to exist a dichotomous relationship

in the work—one that is built on stringent discipline and a Zen-like attitude of letting it go and letting it happen

Mullen works large in order to engage the viewer, but also so he can fully investigate *space*—space above, below and around, but also between us and the subject matter. And not just space as physical distance, but the investigation of the content of that distance itself. What resides there? What is its color, consistency, texture? It's here that Mullen's work takes us into the incorporeal, out of our everyday perceptions, out of the mundane. It's here that we see the mystery between the interaction of these two states of being, and the uncommonness of the common.

By Kara Gunter







TYRONE GETER

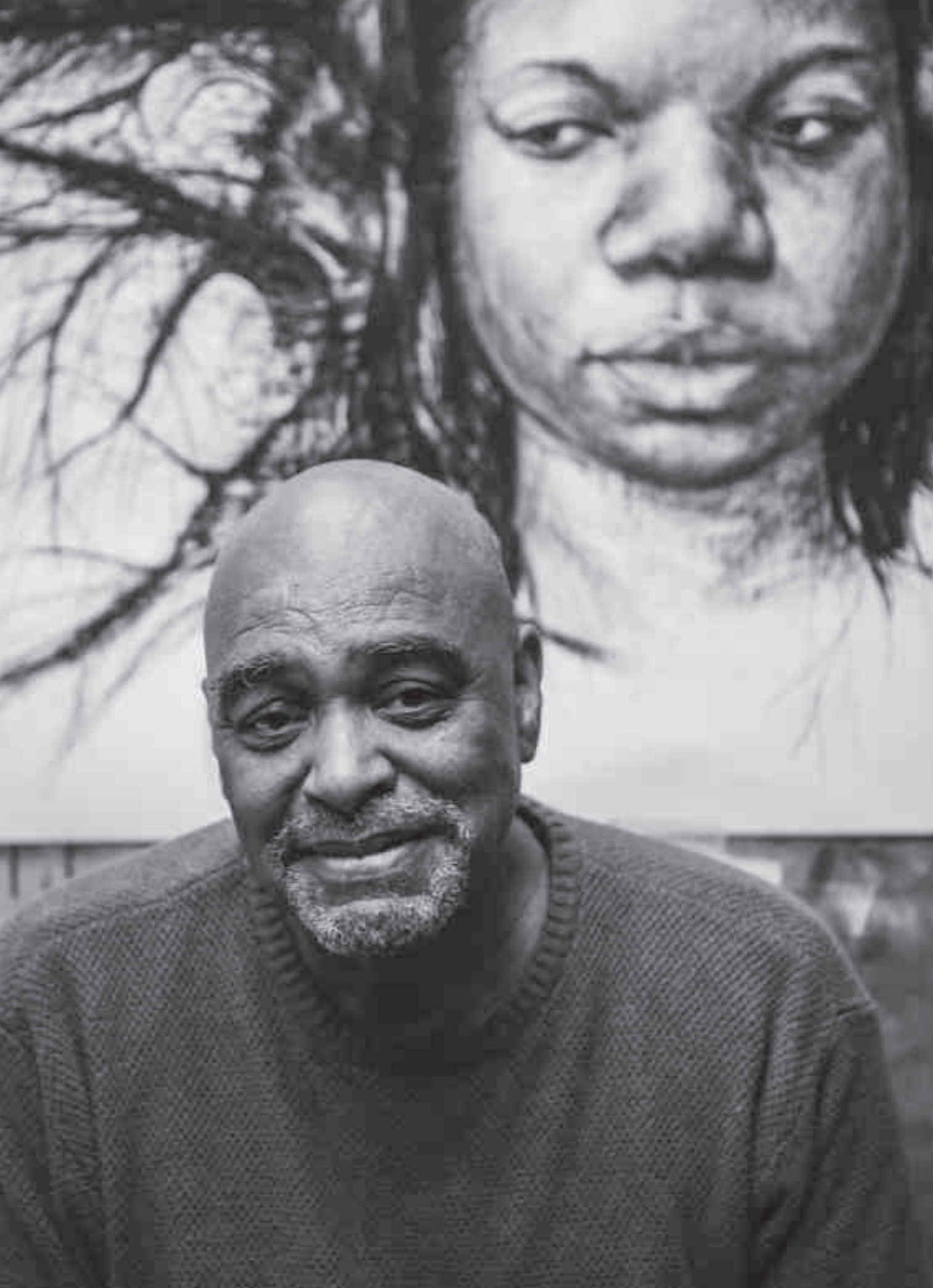
Artist and Benedict College professor Tyrone Geter believes that the creative process is the closest a man can get to his creator. That spirituality is evident in Geter's multifaceted works, from charcoal drawings and ceramics to collages and assemblages with torn paper and found objects. Born in Anniston, Alabama, and raised in Dayton, Ohio, Geter received a master's in fine art from Ohio University. His life's journey led him to Boston and later to his late wife Hauwa's native Zaria, Nigeria, where he taught at Ahmadu Bello University. That experience abroad, combined with the grounding formative influence of his mother, most profoundly impacted Geter's ongoing work. Prevalent themes are African-American survival and perseverance amid the struggles created by poverty, discrimination, and illiteracy. Many of his pieces have a surreal and even mystical quality about them.

Upon returning from Nigeria, Geter taught at the University of Akron. Since 1999, he has taught at Benedict and curated its acclaimed Ponder Fine Arts Gal-

lery. Geter keeps a home and art studio in Easley. He embarks on every new piece without agenda. Until a work is sold, it is never complete. Geter will continue to contemplate and revise as long as the piece remains in his possession. Only when someone else owns it is it truly finished.

Geter's work has been exhibited in galleries around the world, and he has illustrated nearly a dozen children's books. He has produced two murals on display at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati and one at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center celebrating "The Big Apple" dance craze. Last spring, the North Carolina Central University Art Museum hosted a lifetime retrospective of Geter's art. And while critics praise Geter's complex works, they unequivocally gush over his simple charcoal drawings, which exquisitely capture both the pathos and joy of African culture. Geter has never considered the commercial merits of his work; he creates what he is moved to create with the confidence that its integrity will prevail. *By Kristine Hartvigsen*









1875

STEPHEN CHESLEY

Like a documentary filmmaker, Columbia artist Stephen Chesley has devoted much of his work to preserving images of the Earth's landscapes and seascapes in stunning, semi-abstract majesty. Chesley believes that, under the modern crush of humanity, these pristine natural places one day will disappear forever. His thoughtful brushstrokes pay homage to the quiet solitude of trees and the whisper of retreating tides. They capture on canvas a sadly impermanent beauty for all time.

The New York-born artist, 61, grew up in Virginia Beach and later earned a master's degree in architecture from Clemson University. Chesley worked in the field of urban planning before abandoning the nine-to-five for introspective explorations of wide-open spaces – mostly brooding sea islands and meandering southern rivers and swamps. It was during this roughly five-year journey that Chesley decided to live and work deliberately as a full-time artist. A fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts confirmed that resolve.

Perhaps most haunting about Chesley's landscape paintings are the dramatic juxtapositions of light and dark, a virtual yin and yang of greeting and farewell, fullness and emptiness. The varying degrees of shadow hint at the subtle layers of human emotion, from love to loss.

A multidisciplinary artist, Chesley over the years has varied the subject matter of his paintings with botanical-themed, still-life compositions, and he sometimes veers from his signature medium (oil) by creating abstract metal sculptures, usually vertical in orientation, that seem to join geometric forms while retaining organic, figurative elements. In 2012, Chesley illustrated a limited edition chapbook of the short story "Ashes" by Pulitzer Prize-winning SC author Julia Peterkin. And in May 2014, USC Press will release *Claws* by the state's first poet laureate, the late Archibald Rutledge. Chesley illustrated the adventure story about a young boy lost in a swamp prowled by a bobcat. *By Kristine Hartvigsen*









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