

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

On Our Cover This Month

On our cover this month is the work, *Firebird*, by Romare Bearden (1911-1988), part of the exhibit, *Ways of Working: Experiments & Techniques*, featuring works by Bearden on view at the Jerald Melberg Gallery in Charlotte, NC, through June 3, 2023. Works by Bearden are also on view at the Mint Museum Uptown in Charlotte, through May 21, 2023.

Always a Surprise

Every once in a while we get a real surprise at *Carolina Arts* - it's true. The other day Linda called me to come look at something on her computer screen. This happens a lot, mostly to show me some mistake I've made or to see if I like the way she has done an ad for one of our advertisers. I'm always reluctant to come and look as I'm usually in the middle of something myself and don't want to walk less than the ten paces to look. Sometimes it's something stupid she found on Facebook that I've already seen a hundred times. She added that this time it would be worth my great effort to see her computer screen.

So I stop what I'm doing, get up and walk over to take a look at what was so important. Turns out, it was the new ad for the Wells Gallery, one of our longest supporters. It was a still life painting by Junko Ono Rothwell, one of their gallery artists, of a pitcher and some tomatoes on a table. And, there's the joke on me. I have an aversion to tomatoes. I love a lot of the by-products of tomatoes, but can't eat the original fruit itself. Over the years I've learned it's the seeds in tomatoes I can't deal with. I wouldn't call it an allergy, as I can eat ketchup, pizza sauce, spaghetti sauce, even V-8 juice, as long as there are no seeds in

it. Same thing with okra and some mushy pickles or cucumbers.

As a child, my family, who all loved tomatoes, tried to trick me into eating them by hiding them inside other foods, but they learned the hard way, by turning me into a human tomato volcano. After a couple of those events at the family dinner table, they gave up trying to convince me it was all in my head. I can't get that memory out of my head. Now it's in yours.

So like a bull in an arena, all I could see in front of me was a bunch of little round red capes. I was what I call, tomato blind. Linda instructed me to look a little closer at the image, and once I did I saw it - also on the table was an issue of *Carolina Arts* - at least the masthead. Like a snake on a trail it could have bit me as I walked over it. You can see the ad right here to the right of this commentary.

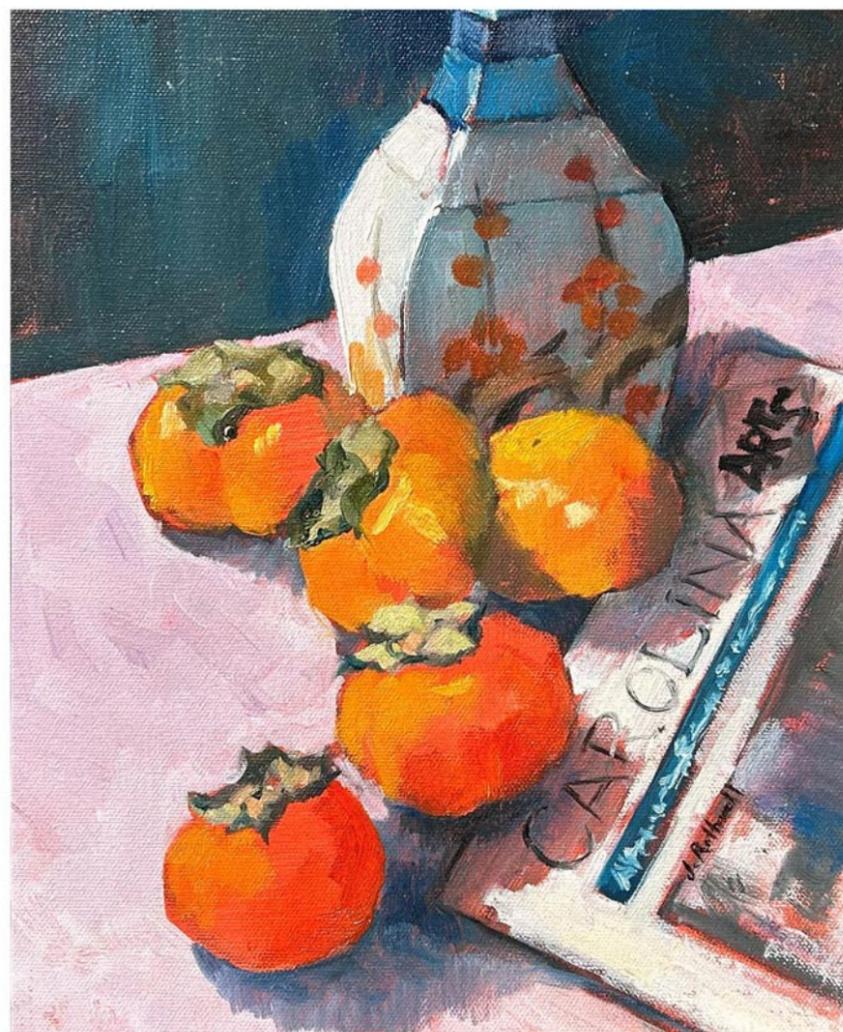
After my blood pressure returned to normal I e-mailed the gallery back to ask a few questions and found out the artist works out of Atlanta, GA, and figured she might have picked up a copy of our publication on a trip to deliver works to the Wells Gallery - and that would have been pre - May 2009, which was our last color cover on a printed issue. That was after the great recession/ depression of 2008. We had to keep making cutbacks and by 2010 we stopped printing the publication all together and went digital.

Also, it turns out the little round things in the painting are not even tomatoes, but persimmons, which I've never eaten, but I'm told might have the same effects on me - they have lots of seeds.

But what a surprise, after all this time, that this painting ends up in the Wells Gallery ad. This kind of thing happens every once in a while. I'm also including my favorite photo of a couple of very young girls

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WELLS GALLERY



JUNKO ONO ROTHWELL
ART LIFE
12X10, OIL ON CANVAS

THE SANCTUARY AT KIAWAH ISLAND GOLF RESORT
1 SANCTUARY BEACH DR | KIAWAH, SC | 29455 | 843.576.1290
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Charleston Artist Guild

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in Big Bear City, California, Jennings is a painter living in Charleston, SC. His artistic process begins with a deep connection to his subject, seeking to understand their character, story, and individuality. He spends time observing their physical features, gestures, and expressions, carefully noting every detail and nuance.

Using oil paints, Jennings aims to bring his observations to life on canvas, layering color, texture, and brushwork to create a dynamic and engaging portrait. Paying close attention to the play of light and shadow. His goal is not merely to create a realistic likeness, but to capture the essence of his subject's personality and inner world. Striving to convey their emotions and spirit through the composition, color, and texture of the painting, creating a work of art that not only captures their likeness but also evokes a powerful emotional response in the viewer.

Ultimately, Jennings' work as a portrait artist is driven by a desire to create meaningful connections between people, using art as a vehicle to celebrate and honor the unique beauty and humanity of each individual.



Work by James Jennings

The gallery is located on East Bay Street in Charleston, SC.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or call the Guild at 843/722-2425.

City of North Charleston, SC, Features Works by Emily Wilson and Jennifer York

The City of North Charleston, SC, will present concurrent solo exhibits, featuring soft pastel drawings by Emily Wilson (Summerville, SC) and papercut artworks by Jennifer York (Charleston, SC), on view at the Park Circle Gallery, from Apr. 5 - 29, 2023. A reception will be held on Apr. 7, from 5-7pm.

Works in the exhibit, *Stare Awhile*, are drawn from photographs, Emily Wilson's

soft pastel and charcoal works focus on realism, while occasionally crossing the line into surrealism. Intrigued by the emotional expressions of those around her, the pieces featured in her exhibit, *Stare Awhile*, explore varied states of mind. Through color, proportion, balance, and movement, Wilson invites the viewer to navigate moments portrayed on paper,

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while pausing and finding those moments in their own perception.

"Light is essential to my work and symbolically in my life," Wilson explains. "I draw the light around people and how it shines on them as a reminder that it is a part of them." This exhibition is funded in part by a generous award from the John and Susan Bennett Memorial Arts Fund of The Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina, as well as a grant from the South Carolina Arts Commission, which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Emily Wilson received her BFA from the Savannah College of Art and Design in 2018, where she discovered her love for charcoal and soft pastels. While heavily influenced by figurative realism, her style is unique in its focus on contrast. Studying light's intimate relationship with shadow brings her joy as an artist, a feeling that shines through in her work. Although *Stare Awhile* is Wilson's first solo exhibition, she has participated in group shows at Public Works Arts Center, The Gap Gallery, and the Savannah College of Art & Design, and has completed many commissions. She currently works from her studio at Public Works Art Center in downtown Summerville, SC.



Work by Jennifer York

In the exhibit, *Homeward*, Charleston artist Jennifer York presents a broad and lively collection of her stunningly intricate papercut art. Featured works include *Carousel Books* encasing collapsible multilayered ink illustrations, her *Shadow Houses* architectural models hand cut on the streets of Bulgaria, Finland, and Greece,



Work by Emily Wilson

her *Paradise Garden* large-scale paper snowflake cut from tyvek housewrap, and her *Cocktail Dress* made of hundreds of drink umbrellas, along with an array of framed papercuts and pen illustrations inspired by her adventures.

"Exploration leads to inspiration, so I wander and draw from direct observation," York explains. "The imagery I collect is then arranged into evocative, thought-provoking new compositions by layering ink illustrations with intricate papercut patterns. I continue to explore and create new histories in this magical world."

Jennifer York (née Swearington) is a lifelong artist and curious explorer. She grew up in rural Indiana, earned a BFA in Sculpture with an Art History minor from Pratt Institute, and an MFA in Fibers from Savannah College of Art and Design. In 2003, she founded Jennythreads Studio in Asheville, NC, producing fine handmade apparel for stylish women, crafting an independent, creative living for 19 years. After traveling to a dozen countries for four month-long international art residencies in 2018-19, York relocated to

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