

Tanger Outlet 1 in Bluffton, SC

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an online community whose mission is to promote Lowcountry makers, Lowcountry Made connects them with shoppers, and promotes business-to-business collaboration. In addition to regular community events, Lowcountry Made hosts an online directory of local makers, produces newslet-

ters for businesses and shoppers and offers other marketing opportunities to increase their exposure.

For further information check our SC Commercial Gallery listing or visit (www.lcmade.com).

Society of Bluffton Artists in Bluffton, SC, Features Works by John Meckley

The Society of Bluffton Artists in Bluffton, SC, will present *Egrets in Flight*, featuring one of the Lowcountry's iconic bird species by John Meckley, on view at the SoBA Gallery, from June 1 through July 4, 2021.

Meckley won his first juried art show at the age of 17 in Pennsylvania, and has gone on to earn juried show awards in Maryland, Florida and South Carolina. He even had a painting hanging in the Russian Embassy in Washington, DC.

A self-taught artist, Meckley's inspiration came from the works of Rembrandt and the Wyeth family artists. He likes to incorporate that style with soft, smooth brush strokes and warm, earthy tones.

"I like my subjects to portray a sense of serenity and peacefulness," says Meckley, whose earlier works were mostly snapshots of real-life situations.

In 2019, Meckley moved to Bluffton, and the Lowcountry's scenery left an impression on him. The direction of his artwork was changed as he drove across a bridge while a light rain fell.

"I saw a rainbow appear outside the moving truck and felt as if I could touch it," Meckley said. "I noticed a flock of egrets



Work by John Meckley

in flight across the marsh and thought God was giving me a sign. Since then, 'Egrets in Flight' have been my focus."

The Society of Bluffton Artists is the heart of the flourishing art hub in Old Town Bluffton's historic district at the corner of Church and Calhoun streets. As a non-profit art organization, SoBA offers regular art classes, featured artist shows, exhibitions, scholarships, outreach programs and more.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call SoBA at 843/757-6586 or visit (www.sobagallery.com).

Pickens County Museum of Art and History in Pickens, SC, Features Work by Susan Lenz

The Pickens County Museum of Art and History in Pickens, SC, is presenting *The Big Day*, a solo installation created by Columbia, SC, artist, Susan Lenz, on view through July 23, 2021.

This exhibit was created to mark a special occasion: The artist and her husband Steve Dingman are celebrating their fortieth anniversary later this year!

The Big Day addressing both the joys of marriage and the current socioeconomic pressures facing those currently planning a wedding. Nearly forty donated and found wedding dresses hang along with eleven veils on which crowd-sourced statements of marriage and divorce were machine stitched. The show also includes a circular niche transformed with three mirrors and a suspended gown that functions as a location for visitors' selfies. One wall is covered in the selfies Susan took when attempting to try on every one of the donated and found wedding gowns.

Another wall includes altered and framed, anonymous wedding photographs. Among the collaged phrases are: Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Bride; He Broke My Heart; We Were Made for Each Other; Virgins on our Honeymoon Night; and I Married Four Times. Visitors are asked to sign the altered, vintage photo album made from a mid-century brides wedding organization index cards. This book functions as the exhibition's guest book.



Another view of an installation by Susan Lenz

since the 1940s. Some are bright white, others shows stains of age, and one is electric blue for a second marriage. "As an artist, it is my job to shift perspectives, challenge tradition, and uproot stereotypes. After forty years, I can attest: The dress really isn't that important... nor is the cake or the invitations or the venue or the guest list or the music for the first dance. There's just a lot of pressure now to pull off an expensive, idealized and exclusive event, as if that is the most important reason for 'the big day'."

Another piece in this exhibit is *True Blue*, an accidentally shrunken wool wedding bodice that was donated to the artist. It was transformed with hand-embroidered wedding vows, a combination of traditional phrases from various faiths. It reads: "In the presence of God and these our friends, I take you to be my spouse, promising to be loving and faithful, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, to comfort and honor, forsaking all others, till death do us part; and thereto I pledge to be yours and yours alone. This is my solemn vow."

It is the artist's hope that viewers to the exhibit find a few laughs but mostly some thoughts on the true importance of a wedding day, in the promise of a lasting love that money just can't buy.

For those who cannot see the exhibit in person, Lenz shot a brief video tour which can be found at this link (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jq_y5uXW0aY).

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or call the Museum at 864/898-5963



View of an installation by Susan Lenz

Susan and Steve's wedding picture was printed on fabric and stitched for the show. It hangs in an antique frame under Susan's forty-year-old wedding gown. "Collecting donated wedding gowns and snapping selfies in each was hilarious. Mine was no exception. I couldn't help but to wonder why I even kept it. Like most of the gowns, it is never really going to be in style later!", said Lenz.

The dresses date from every decade

Art & Light Gallery in Greenville, SC, Offers Works by Chelle Gunderson

Art & Light Gallery in Greenville, SC, will present *Bloom*, featuring works by Chelle Gunderson, on view from June 1 - 26, 2021. A reception will be held on June 4, from 6-8pm.

The Knoxville, TN, artist creates splendid floral collection in celebration of flowers and the connections they bring to our lives.

Gunderson explores how each season, flowers bloom and fade, but somehow, whatever life brings, the pattern is the same. Whether we are documenting life's journey or not, flowers seem to do this for us, representing both moments of celebration and sadness. And like the tiny spring buds, slowly our lives unfold and bloom.

Gunderson dives into the idea that just like flowers, there are moments yet to bloom, experiences, bitter and sweet, that are yet to nourish growth. So in these ordinary and not so ordinary moments of life, in the people we meet, the shared life



Work by Chelle Gunderson

experiences, or lonely times, flowers seem to be a part of the journey.

For further information check our SC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 864/252-5858 or e-mail to (art@artandlightgallery.com).

The deadline each month to submit articles, photos and ads is the 24th of the month prior to the next issue. This will be June 24th for the July 2021 issue and July 24 for the August 2021 issue. After that, it's too late unless your exhibit runs into the next month.

But don't wait for the last minute - send your info now.

And where do you send that info? E-mail to (info@carolinaarts.com).

Every once in a while I feel like just filling one of these spaces with a kind of nothingness. You know as if nobody reads what's in these spaces anyway. So if one time I said something like the first person to read this and send me an e-mail to (info@carolinaarts.com) during the month of June, they'll get a free 1/4 ad in our July 2021 issue or the month that is most useful for them. But who reads these space fillers anyway? Not many I bet.

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www.carolinaarts.com



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