

Coastal Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island, SC, Offers Exhibit Focused on the Gullah Geechee Story & History

Coastal Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island, SC, is presenting *Return to Nature: Gullah Geechee Story and History*, on view through June 28, 2021.

The exhibition is an exploration of the plight of the indigenous Americans who inhabit the Sea Islands of South Carolina. This exhibition features dynamic bodies of work that examine the evolution of Gullah Geechee art, while chronicling history in relation to nature. While the artists depict aspects of the lives of ordinary people, the layered textures, and rich, vivid colors emanate the celebration of Creole culture, the vitality of the subject, and nobility. Both the art and the objects featured in this exhibition introduce its viewer to a culture, which is dominated by the honoring of ancestors, agriculture, sea island living, spirituality, and cultural heritage memories.

Angela Dore, the guest curator of this exhibition says that she is “thrilled to be launching this extraordinary exhibition at the Coastal Discovery Museum, which features the work of the masters and avant-gardists of authentic Gullah art. I am looking forward to sharing our stories about Gullah and Geechee heritage and engaging in dialogues about the ways in which history is documented in our art forms. It is my desire that this exhibition will broaden and enrich the perspectives of our local and national audience.”

The Coastal Discovery Museum is pleased to present this exhibition that focuses upon the unique Gullah culture. Natalie Hefter, Vice President of Programs, says that “exhibiting works by these artists together is a great opportunity for visitors and locals alike. This exhibit is a manifestation of the museum’s mission ‘to inspire people to care for the Lowcountry.’ These works depict the Gullah connection to the Lowcountry environment, and I hope all our visitors will take away a new appreciation for the history and rich culture of the area.”

While best known as “Ms. Natalie” on Nick Jr.’s award winning television program, *Gullah Gullah Island*, Natalie Daise has been a practicing, self-taught, visual artist for most of her life. Though a professional storyteller for more than 30 years, it has only been during the past decade that she has shared her visual artwork outside her studio. Her paintings and functional art arise from the oral tradition. Daise explores the continuation of telling using acrylic, oil, paper, wood, and ink. Her “Collard Green Series” explores the rich traditions of the African American and Gullah Geechee communities that nurture her own creativity, as well as the process by which creative action shapes the communities themselves. With her husband of more than 30 years, Ron Daise, she has also researched, developed, and presented programming that expanded the understanding and celebration of Gullah Culture.

James Denmark was born into a family of artists. He was exposed to color and form at an early age by his grandmother, a wire sculptor and quilt artist, by his grandfather, a bricklayer noted for his unique custom design molds and his mother, who was gifted with an intuitive feeling for design and a fastidiousness for detail. This rich beginning is the root of Denmark’s creative expression. He earned his Master of Fine Art Degree at the Pratt Institute of Fine Art in New York. While at Pratt, he began experimenting with collage. Denmark has a natural affinity for the difficult and largely improvisational medium of collage and has his own unique, easily identifiable style. With brightly hand colored papers, found papers, fabric and objects, Denmark creates compositions that go beyond the superficial and transitory and focuses, instead, on what is eternal and universal. Denmark’s collages, watercolors, woodcuts, and reproductions are sought after by galleries and collectors worldwide.

Sam Doyle was born in South Carolina on Saint Helena Island where African cultural influences thrived. As a youth, he attended the island’s Penn School, established in 1862 to provide education and vocational



Work by Amiri Farris

training to newly liberated freedmen, until family hardship forced his withdrawal. Doyle first made a painting on cast-off, tin roofing in 1944. He placed the painting in the yard of his clapboard house. Overtime, he added more works to his museum-like display; most were portraits of people and events important to his community, others paid tribute to African American advancement. Using discarded materials - primarily metal roofing, plywood, and house paint - Doyle created a stirring oeuvre of expressive portraits which included two important series: “First” (achievement) and “Penn” (school). The creolized Gullah language was Doyle’s first and his creatively spelled, painted words further enhance his works and inform the viewer. The artist summed up momentous events with poetic simplicity and had a genius for distilling the essence of personality. His paintings are so deftly executed that they often achieve iconic status.

Diane Britton Dunham’s art has been recognized internationally as a genuine illustration of the history and traditions of African America southern culture for decades. Her paintings are well known because of their brilliant coloring, intricate human and landscape forms and themes that represent community life in South Carolina’s Lowcountry region and the bayous of Louisiana with a strong emphasis on women of color. A self-taught mixed media artist, historian, writer and instructor, Dunham has received many honors and awards. As a cultural preservationist and a strong supporter of the arts within the community, she is the Vice Chairperson of the Beaufort Arts Council Board of Directors, the Chairperson of the Gullah African Diaspora Artists, serves on the University of South Carolina Art and Design Advisory Board, a member of the National Association of Women Artists NYC, and SC chapters, as well as serving with many other organizations.

Amiri Geuka Farris is a contemporary, multidisciplinary artist who uses a wide range of work encompasses painting, drawing, video, performance, and installation. Farris received his MFA in Painting, with his BFA in Illustration and Graphic Design, from the Savannah College of Art and Design. Farris’ academic appointments include Professor of Fine Arts Foundations and Graphic Design at Georgia Southern University, at the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art, and Professor of Fine Arts, at the University of South Carolina-Beaufort. Farris’ work has been featured in more than 50 solo exhibitions and juried museum exhibitions across the United States, including the US Capitol in Washington, DC, and the Smithsonian.

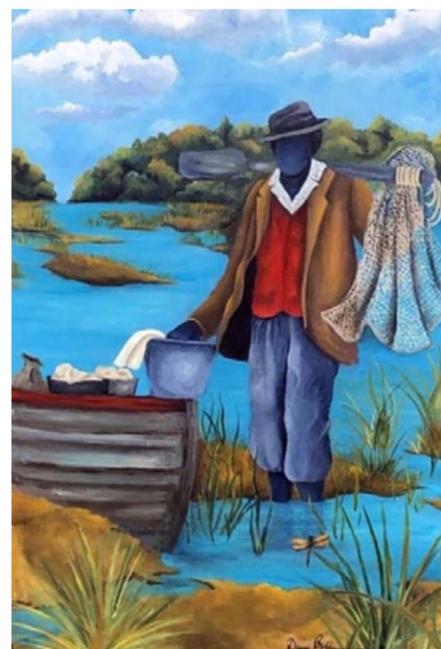
Painter and printmaker Jonathan Green is considered one of the most important contemporary painters of the Southern experience. Green’s artwork is heavily influenced by his Gullah heritage with vividly colored paintings documenting everyday chores in addition to celebrating Gullah life’s rites of passage. Since 1982, Green has participated in various traveling and solo exhibitions throughout the United

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States. His work is in the permanent collections of numerous museums including The Morris Museum, The Afro-American Museum of Philadelphia, The Naples Museum of Art and the IFCC Cultural Center. In 1996 Green received an honorary doctorate from the University of South Carolina, the same year the book “Gullah Images: The Art of Johnathan Green” was published. In 2009 Green received the Key of Life Award for his contributions and achievements in the visual fine arts from the NAACP at its Image Awards.

Hank D. Herring currently resides in Beaufort, SC, where he is the owner of the Green Herring Art and Framing Studio. He learned about art at an early age from watching and being instructed by artistic family members and school art programs. He won numerous science fair awards in school by using wood and metal as his medium. Herring’s 20-year career in the Marine Corps, where his occupational specialty was a machinist, allowed him to learn more creative ways to manipulate metals, plastic, glass, and composite materials into art. Herring’s work has been featured in museums and galleries throughout the United States, to Canada, Great Britain and Ireland and Japan. He uses cultural symbols to create wooden stamps for working in batik, print making, quilting, and ceramics.

Arienne King Comer is a multifaceted artist, who not only produces art on canvas but is a master dye maker and batik artist. She has completed a collection of wearable art for the new Smithsonian African American Museum store, which debuted in September 2016. Her work is in several permanent collections such as the Seeking



Work by Diane Britton Dunham

Indigo, North Charleston’s City Hall, Seltzer, Jonathan Green, Harold Rhodes, and Norma Dotson Collections. Comer is featured in several documentaries and design segments such as PBS, Home and Garden TV, Alternate ROOTS, local broadcasts, and publications. She continues creating textile for ongoing projects empowering culture and virtual panel discussions. Currently, Comer is the Artist in Residency at the Gibbes Museum in Charleston, SC.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call Robin Swift at 843/689-6767, ext. 224 or e-mail to (rswift@coastaldiscovery.org).

Art League of Hilton Head on Hilton Head Island, SC, Features Works by John Gregor

The Art League of Hilton Head on Hilton Head Island, SC, will present *Out of My Head*, featuring paintings by John Gregor, on view in the Art League Gallery, located inside Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, from June 1 - 26, 2021. An artist reception will be held on June 9, from 5-7pm. Two Meet the Artist events will be offered on June 10 & June 22, at 1pm. Please RSVP by e-mail to (gallery@artleaguehhi.org) for any of these events.

Gregor, a transplant from the Pacific Northwest with a background in engineering, draws attention to everyday scenes and ordinary objects using bold edges and saturated colors. While his subjects range from landscapes and waterscapes to still lifes and animals, his goal remains the same: to highlight beauty and provoke thought.

“I particularly like to paint the things around us which have beauty and complexity but which we take for granted, like the way the setting sun shines through a glass of wine, or the collection of shapes, surfaces and colors in everyday tools - a corkscrew, scissors, a can opener. Do we see the beauty of these mechanical marvels?”

Gregor found his love of painting after a 17-year-long engineering career. After dabbling in acrylics, he went on to earn his Master of Fine Arts and teach painting workshops. When not painting, he can be found remodeling his fixer-upper home near Beaufort.

COVID safety: Art League is following all CDC and Town of Hilton Head guidelines.



Work by John Gregor

Art League of Hilton Head is the only 501(c)(3) nonprofit visual arts organization on Hilton Head Island with a synergistic art gallery and teaching Academy. Art League Academy welcomes artists and students in all media at all skill levels, including true beginners. Taught by professional art educators, students can choose from many art classes and workshops that change monthly. Art League Gallery features local artwork in all media created by more than 170 member artists. All artwork on display is for sale and exhibits change every month. Located mid-island inside Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, next to the box office. “Inspiring visual arts for our community and its visitors through exhibitions, education and partnerships” is Art League of Hilton Head’s mission.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the League at 843/681-5060 or visit (www.artleaguehhi.org).

Art League of Hilton Head on Hilton Head Island, SC, Offers History Lesson Through Painting

The Art League of Hilton Head on Hilton Head Island, SC, will present *Hilton Head Island: The Pursuit of Freedom & Opportunity*, a collection of ten canvases illustrating key historical moments in the Island’s history, on view in the Art League Gallery, located inside Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, from June 28 through July 3, 2021. A reception will be held on June 30, from 5-7pm which is free and open to the

public. Attendees should RSVP by e-mail to (gallery@artleaguehhi.org). The historians behind the art will be at the gallery at 11am, Tuesday through Friday to discuss the island’s history.

The project was the idea of Hilton Head Island Middle School’s IB-MYP Coordinator, Kathleen Harper. Harper approached the Town of Hilton Head Island’s Office of

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