

# Harvey B. Gantt Center in Charlotte

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States today. Her work evokes ancestors, African cultural traditions, the contemporary experiences of women – the significance of their hair – as well as the tropes of women and nature. Saar uses nature as metaphor in imagined intersections with the female body and frequently creates assemblages that transform found objects. Her career as an artist spans more than three decades. In addition, both her parents – Betye and Richard – and her sisters are artists.

Saar's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and her permanent site sculptures can be found across the nation, from Los Angeles to New York. She works primarily in sculpture but also incorporates prints, paintings, and works on paper in her practice, most often with a focus on the female form. Saar grapples with motherhood, the role of women, the intensity of their hearts and their embodiment as nature and its forces. This exhibition of new sculptures, mixed-media works, and prints, mounted by the Harvey B. Gantt Center, illumines these themes.

Curated by Dexter Wimberly, *The Future is Abstract* highlights the work of four multidisciplinary, contemporary artists working in abstract painting and mixed-media. The exhibition includes an array of rigorous, process-driven works made from reclaimed or found materials, as well as classic painting and production techniques. The exhibiting artists use abstraction to address concerns that range from the personal to the political. Their challenging work is a testament to the continued evolution and relevance of abstraction.



Jordan Casteel, *James*, 2015, Courtesy of Anita Blanchard

Rushern Baker's paintings mix traditional media with building materials in complex compositions, evoking landscapes that refer back to the urban and suburban environment. Additional points of reference include the writings of Octavia Butler, Black abstraction, the New York School, and Soviet Constructivism. These myriad ideas shape



Zun Lee, *Jerrell Willis carries Fidel across Brooklyn Bridge* (Brooklyn, NY), 2012, Courtesy of the Artist

Baker's studio practice, characterized by a sense of lawlessness, similar to that of the subjects that fascinate him.

DeShawn Dumas creates mixed-media wall tablets from various remnants of heavy industry and consumerism, including chain-link fences, steel frames, spray paint, and plexi glass. His focus is the use of materials that function socially. Obtaining these materials allows Dumas to explore the relationship between handicraft and what he refers to as art's "relationship to the machine." Deeply inspired by energy, the works are meant to move the viewer.

Torkwase Dyson's paintings, drawings and sculptures are informed by the contemporary and historical conditions in and through which Black people negotiate systems and deeply rooted ideological orders within built and natural environments in the United States. She merges ideas such as site and built environments, nature and culture under the classification of environmentalism. Fascinated with transformations, ambiguities and environmental changes that place these subjects in relationship to each other, Dyson's work revolves around investigating our connections to imagination, materiality, geography and belonging.

Brenna Youngblood explores the iconography of public and private experiences and issues of identity, ethics, and representation. Youngblood freely experiments with aspects of formalism, materials, and processes as part of her rigorous studio practice. With a background in photomontage, Youngblood builds the surfaces of many paintings simultaneously while assessing the relationships between each object in formation. Humor and satire are intuitively interwoven in the choices she makes about composition, line, form, and content.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 704/547-3700 or visit (<http://www.ganttcenter.org>).

## Jerald Melberg Gallery in Charlotte, NC, Features Works by Raul Diaz

Jerald Melberg Gallery in Charlotte, NC, is presenting *Raul Diaz: Poetic Vision*, on view through Mar. 18, 2017.

Jerald Melberg Gallery is pleased to present a new solo exhibition of recent paintings and sculpture by Córdoba, Argentina artist Raul Diaz (b. 1952). Diaz has spent many years perfecting a technique for his two-dimensional works in which he carves thick wooden panels and then paints them. His imagery draws on childhood memories of lake fishing with his father and grandfather. The sight of wooden fishing boats, either dotting the water or stacked on the beach, is indelible in Diaz' memory, and these same vessels frequently appear in the work as a metaphor for life's journey. His compositions are notable for their contrast of dream-like imagery and contemplative silence with technical invention.

As his paintings are almost always bas-relief, it was a natural progression for him to begin making sculpture. Taking the boat and figural images into three dimensions he creates a new experience for the viewer and also expands his own technical prowess, employing both wood and bronze.

The subjects of Diaz' paintings are the topics of life. People and history become part of the things that form us from infancy. His belief is that we all live in a world struggling with conflicts and how to resolve them and that art either reflects this or sublimates it. His recent work is a poetic vision symbolic of our human existence.



Work by Raul Diaz

Diaz is one of the best known and celebrated living artists in Argentina. He has had over thirty-five solo exhibitions, including a mid-career retrospective in 2010 at the Caraffa Museo (of Modern Art) in Córdoba. He exhibits worldwide and has been represented by Jerald Melberg Gallery for twenty years.

Jerald Melberg Gallery is located on South Sharon Amity Road near the intersection with Providence Road.

For more info check our NC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 704/365-3000 or visit ([www.jeraldmelberg.com](http://www.jeraldmelberg.com)).

## Lark & Key Gallery and Boutique in Charlotte Offers Group Exhibit

Lark & Key Gallery and Boutique in Charlotte, NC, will present *Surface*, on view from Feb. 3 through Mar. 31, 2017.

The exhibition features encaustic and mixed media artwork by Janet Eskridge, Bridgette Guerzon Mills and guest Robin Luciano Beaty, Jim Connell ceramics and Alice Scott jewelry.

Encaustic, a mix of beeswax, resin and color pigment, is one of the oldest forms of painting, dating as far back as Ancient Greece. Layer upon layer is applied, each fused with the previous layer, producing an atmospheric quality to the painting. Eskridge, Mills and Beaty work with the versatile medium to explore the concept of surfaces - above, below and within. Through layers, texture, mark making, embedded photos, stitching and found objects, the artists create luminous and tactile pieces that invite the viewer to take a closer look and explore the depths of the work.

Jim Connell creates ceramic vessels that are firmly grounded in traditional pottery making techniques. His uniquely styled vessels are generally wheel-thrown, with the thick walls paddled and carved to produce a secondary, three-dimensional surface. Connell enjoys the interplay and tension of his stoneware and porcelain forms. His carved vessels are finished with a gloss glaze or sandblasted after the final firing to achieve unique textures and highlights of gloss and matte surfaces.

Exploration of surfaces continues with jewelry by Alice Scott, of Symbology Jewelry. She borrows symbols from a variety of spiritual and cultural practices in order



Work by Jim Connell

to create her own world of sacred objects. Pulling inspiration from the symbols of her production jewelry, as well as vintage pieces, Scott creates one-of-a-kind pieces using a variety of gemstones. Her forms and settings thoughtfully showcase the stone colors, inclusions and surface properties - smooth, rough or faceted.

For further information check our NC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 704/334-4616 or visit ([www.larkandkey.com](http://www.larkandkey.com)).

## Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, Offers Society and Guild Member Exhibitions

The Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, is presenting *South Carolina Watermedia Society Traveling Exhibition* and *Sumter Artists' Guild Winners Show*, on view through Feb. 17, 2017.

It's Winter, and after the holidays cabin fever will take over in Sumter. The Sumter County Gallery of Art provides the perfect getaway with two popular, perennial exhibitions: The 39th annual *South Carolina Watermedia Society Traveling Exhibition* and the *Sumter Artists' Guild Winners Show*.

The South Carolina Watermedia Society (SCWS) is the largest statewide visual arts guild with a mission to promote South Carolina artists by providing exhibition opportunities and educational programs. The 2016 SCWS show is an especially vibrant one with more traditional offerings. The juror was Canadian born artist Marc Taro Holmes, the "Urban Sketcher".

Holmes attended Alberta College of Art and Design in design/illustration. He is a sketchbook artist and plein-air painter who works in ink, watercolor and oils. Holmes has worked as an art director and conceptual designer of video games at studios such as Electronic Arts, Microsoft and Disney. His work as a professional sketch artist has inspired teams of digital artists creating interactive adventures in settings as diverse as J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and the science fiction epic *Halo*. Holmes has always based the inspiration for his designs on drawing from the real world, sketching in museums on the street, and traveling to draw exotic locations in Europe and Asia. He is also an accomplished portrait and figural painter.

This year's Winner of the Best of Show award is "The Hands of a Fisherman" by Lynda English. Karen Watson, director of the Sumter County Gallery of Art states that "The South Carolina Watermedia Society show is one of the most popular shows the gallery presents each year; it has been presented by the gallery for over thirty years. This show has a wonderful selection of diverse work by artists, with a little something for everybody. The variety of imagery and subject matter is stunning; from mixed media abstract works to more traditional representational work including landscapes, figural, and still life compositions. The



Work by Genevieve Rath, 1st place in Guild Show

*South Carolina Watermedia Society Show* showcases the incredible talent of South Carolina artists."

The Sumter Artists' Guild continues its growth under new president Michael Duffy – a multi-talented artist and stage actor who wants to expand the Guild's artistic presence in Sumter. He is surrounded by a core of long time, hardworking guild members – Laura Cardello, Carole Carberry, Amanda Cox and Vicki Hagner. SCGA director Watson notes, "This years *Sumter Artists' Guild Winners* exhibition is particularly exciting because the work for the 2016 *Sumter Artists' Guild Show* was so strong and the People's Choice Winner gave visitors a chance to get involved".

This year's *Sumter Artists Guild Winners Show* includes such a broad range of styles and media, with an emphasis on abstraction. Accomplished watercolorist Genevieve Rath's breathtaking painting of her grandson, "Night Swim Buddies" won first place, Carole Carberry won second place with her serene and mysterious "Golden Moment", and Thomas Alexander Blackmon detailed pyrography (wood burning) "Livery Stable Courtyard", won third place. Honorable Mentions include – Sumter Gallery art education director Amanda Cox, "Floral Study II", first time entrant Taylor Mitchum, "Meaningful Colors and Sylvia Pickell, "Scherenschnitte". The winner of the 2016 Sumter Artists' Guild Show People's Choice Award was a close contest, but Connie Brennan's intricate "Tattered Angel", won.

As with all of the gallery's exhibitions, this popular show would not be possible

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