

# Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

July 1987

Do you remember what you were doing in July 1987? I do. I was delivering the first issues of *Charleston Arts*, a brand new publication covering the arts in Charleston, SC. We started out covering all the arts in Charleston. Just two years later in 1989, our Oct. 1989 issue was sitting at our printer, when Hurricane Hugo came along and blew the roof off that printer's building and our Oct. issue away with it. That was a bummer. Hugo was an all around bummer for the entire Charleston area, its art community, and us. A very large pine tree decided to take a rest on the roof of our newly purchased home at Bonneau Beach on Lake Moultrie, and a large branch came right through the ceiling knocking Linda and our two-year old son to the floor. What a night that was. Our office in downtown Charleston had no damage at all, except for the mess we made trying to protect it from the storm.

We were shut down for a few months - heck - everything was shut down for a few months and more. When we finally came back we decided to just cover the visual arts as they seemed to be getting the short end of the media coverage in Charleston. It was a long crawl back to what I would call normal, but in the 1990's Charleston's visual art community seemed to be booming wide open, and in 1995 we became *South Carolina Arts*.

By 1997, we jumped the border and became *Carolina Arts*. Some folks wanted us to become "Southeast Arts", which was crazy. Our hands were full just covering parts of the Carolinas, even though we were getting ads from museums in Atlanta, GA, and Norfolk, VA. But those were in the days where I was delivering the publication which took a week of driving around North and South Carolina. That was enough driv-

ing and mailing the publication costs a lot.

Then in 2008 came the economic crash and the arts community fell hard. Some galleries closed, some cut back to a bare-bones operation and so we cut back too. Gas prices were rising, shipping costs were rising, printing costs were rising, and revenue was going down and down and down. By 2010 it was almost time to close up shop. We printed our last issue in Dec. 2010.

In Jan. 2011, we decided to take a risk and take the publication online totally, we had been posting copies of the publication, page by page on our website since 2004 and some people seemed to like that, so why not try. Other publications were going online to survive so why not try it. Our first online issue got about 9,000 downloads. At the time, we were only printing 10,000 copies of each issue and 9,000 downloads seemed promising. By the next few months those numbers got bigger and bigger. And, we quickly realized that by being an online publication our issues could be as big as they needed to be and we could also cover the entire area of the two states - anyone could download a copy of our publication right from their home or office. And, it could be all in color, when we were printing the paper at best we could only afford a color cover and that was very expensive to maintain. We had discovered the best of publishing online - no printing costs, no delivery costs, all color, and anyone could download a copy. Of course we did lose some readers who just can't deal without having a printed copy in their hands. And even today, over 9 years later in this digital age, some folks still need to hold a publication in their hands - even though they could hold it in the smart phone, tablet or a laptop computer.

Then we jumped on the social media bandwagon - Blogs, Facebook and Twit-

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## Robert Lange Studios in Charleston, SC, Features Works by Megan Aline and Brett Sheifflee



Work by Brett Sheifflee

Robert Lange Studios in Charleston, SC, will present *Many Long Walks*, featuring works by landscape painters Megan Aline and Brett Sheifflee, on view from July 5 - 26, 2019. A reception will be held on July 5, from 5-8pm.

Sheifflee says of the exhibit, "What makes this body of work truly special for me is knowing that Megan's little painted worlds and my own will come together on the same walls to be something new, to be a kind of conversation we can't have just on our own. I think it's going to be a show where people want to slow down, observe, remember and perhaps plan their next trip out of the daily grind."

"Every time one of Brett's paintings arrives in the gallery I get a ping of joy. They are both the paintings I love to view but also the types of scenes I love to paint. Usually devoid of an overt narrative, his work just allows the viewer to calmly enjoy the scene. I really admire just how soft and peacefully he paints," said Aline, who is both the gallery owner and also an artist in the show.

Aline and Sheifflee are known for their ability to create quiet contemplative landscape scenes. The title of the show is *Many Long Walks* and both artists, like landscape painting in general, felt a connection too.

"A lot of people have a daily ritual of  
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taking a walk somewhere, whether it's for exercise or to just get out in the natural light and experience the sounds and smells of nature," says Aline. "Most of my paintings in the show are derived from reference photos, notes and memories that I have from these walks and hikes of my own. The paintings being panoramic landscape scenes give the viewers eye a distance to traverse and little details to take in along the way, almost as if you are in the scene and are thinking of what lies ahead, or where you will go next. Although these experiences are often comforting, not all of the paintings read as pure love notes to nature, some scenes are shrouded in the fog of night, or depict approaching storms that build tension and create an ambiguous narrative. Like being out in the world, you never really know what you will see or find and that in part keeps you wanting to go back."

Both artists have the ability to tell a story with their paintings without an obvious narrative element; this exhibit's common theme is just that, spaces that leave room for the viewer to create their own stories.

"Growing up in Maine, I spent a good bit of time roaming by myself. There is something that happens when you find yourself alone with your thoughts as a child; your

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[info@carolinaarts.com](mailto:info@carolinaarts.com)

imagination starts to unabashedly flourish. As an adult, through meditation, painting, and adventuring into nature, I've found access to this same magical childhood space. The paintings in *Many Long Walks* embody the idea of adventuring outside of yourself in order to find-out more about who you are internally."

"I am drawn to the outdoors in a barefoot kind of way; I think I need to be physically connected to the earth to feel normal. As I paint and appreciate a tiny leaf on a tree, I feel connected to it as if I'm honoring it by noticing it. This connection fulfills something, perhaps a story or a journal of what I am seeing. As I document the natural world in paint, I relive the adventure I experienced to discover it, and then I get to share this story with the people who see my work. It's very fulfilling," said Aline.

Overall the exhibit is the perfect example of both artists' desire to bring a piece of the outside in but to also inspire the viewer to go outside. Aline says, "This particular body of work I hope is inspiring both on a creative but also on an adventur-



Work by Megan Aline

ing level. Brett and I both speak a language in our paintings with a desire to inspire the viewer to go out and learn the language for him or herself."

For further information check our SC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 843/805-8052 or visit ([www.robertlangestudios.com](http://www.robertlangestudios.com)).



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