

# McDowell Arts Center

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beads, pearls and clay. Color is applied through various methods including paint, underglazes and attachment of found and hand-made objects.”



Work by Betsy Birkner

“Using the subject of armor, I create the typically metal form of sculpted chest plates with clay,” adds Birkner. “We are protected only to a certain extent as the fragility of the ceramic piece suggests. Growing up in the south, there were expectations about what I was supposed to accomplish as a successful woman. ‘I should be nice’ is the first rule of southern charm school. Being sexy or skinny is dictated by the social media and advertising for women as a goal for success. Balance is brought into question as the goal is sometimes pushed too far, to the point of illness or bizarre surgeries. The reaction to the word ‘should’ is explored in the series.”



Work by Jacqueline Dunford

Jacqueline Dunford’s floor to ceiling installation of 700 hand-folded, encaustic origami cranes ranging from 2” to 20” mimic human growth. Four ceramic crane sculptures with words carved into them represent the characteristics and values one is born with or taught. A selection of her ceramic shoe sculptures is also displayed.

Dunford offers the following artist statement: “My inspirations come from life events, college courses, nature, and movies as evident in a series of ceramic shoe sculptures fashioned after leaves, bark, grapevines and a black feather covered ballet slipper form. A developmental psychology class inspired the room-size installation piece of 700 origami cranes,

while living on Lake Wylie inspired a series of encaustic paintings of the lake. I am an experimenter and have a passion for tools, making many of my own stamps that I use for my equal loves of encaustic and clay. My works span a variety of scale and I strive to create art that tells a story.”

“I am past-president of the Gaston County Art Guild and an initial organizer/consultant/designer of the development of the Arts on Main Art Center located in downtown Gastonia. I now serve on the GCAG Board of Directors and produce art from my studio, Hummingbird Farm Ceramics in Belmont, NC.”



Work by Nancy Carroll Kennedy

Nancy Carroll Kennedy’s sculptures in bronze and Carrara marble were inspired while immersed in Italy’s rich art history, masterpieces, landscapes and culture. Italy infused me with intense purpose and creativity during a summer living in Cortona in the countryside of Tuscany.

Kennedy offered the following artist’s statement: “Visiting Arnaldo Pomodoro’s (‘Il Grande Disco’ in center city Charlotte) studio in Milan, Italy gave me valuable experience for producing bronzes through the Lost Wax process. Inspiration came from memorable experiences and an interest in symbolism. I warmed and worked the dark reddish-brown wax with my hands infusing important influences in my life into my creations. I then traveled to a foundry where they were cast in bronze by the lost wax process. The surface reflects an element of the original wax material created by melting the wax with hot metal. I sculpted *A Climber’s Grasp* in Carrara marble with chisels, sanding screen and sandpaper until I gave it a final polish. It represents relationships juxtaposed of climber, rope and mountain and relays how a climber becomes a part of the mountain, symbolized as the arm and hands, rope are of marble. The arms and hands of are the smoothest surface. My climbing rope, only partially sculpted, remains rough to signify the connection of climber to mountain. The remainder is as it was quarried from the mountain in Carrara.”

“After a career in Commercial Art, I have a studio at Arts on Main in Gastonia where I create figurative works and landscapes en plein and serve as Program Chair and member of Gaston County Art Guild,” adds Kennedy. “I am Program Chair of Matthews Artists Guild and slated for V.P., member of Piedmont Pastel Society who will host the 2014 NC Statewide Pastel Exhibition for which I am Co-chairman of Awards.”

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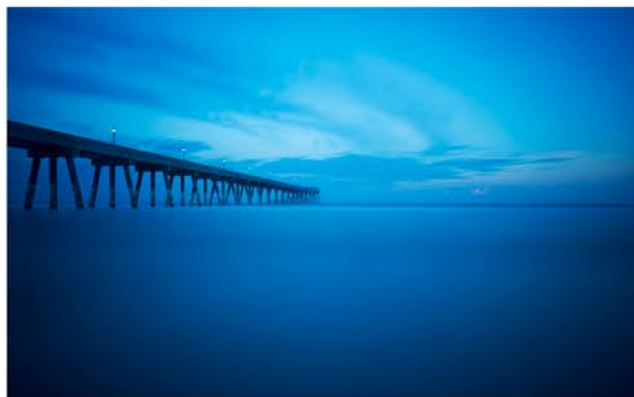
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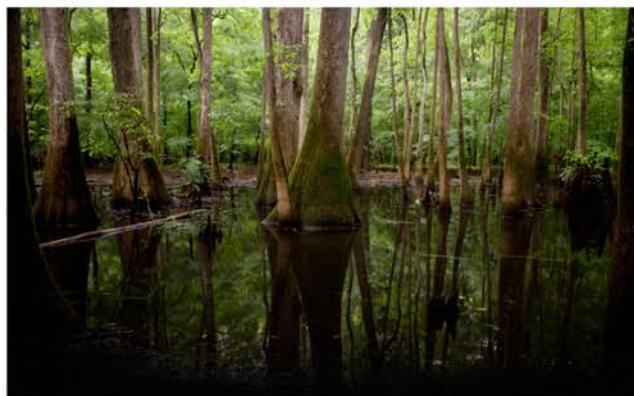
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