



# MAGIC DIXIE

## THE ART OF HENRYK FANTAZOS

May 11 - June 15, 2025  
Red Springs Artspace



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## Sunset River Gallery

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Staat, among others, the gallery is well known in the area for its selection of oil paintings; watermedia; pastels; photography; hand-blown, stained, and fused glass; pottery and clay sculpture; turned and carved wood; unique home décor items; and artisan jewelry.

There are two onsite kilns and five wheels used by the gallery's pottery students. The gallery also offers ongoing oil/ acrylic and watercolor classes as well as workshops by nationally known instructors.

Artist Becky Steele's acrylic work in the show is, "May I Join You?". From the artist statement, "This plant is growing freely and lovingly sharing her baby plants within the space yet is taking over the room and infringing on the space for others. Growth is inherently good, but does it need boundaries in order to take the correct shape leaving room for other needs and other's growth?"

Artist Sharon Lee Hill's oil work in the show is, "What Draws Us Near". From the artist statement, "My passion for portraiture was ignited by visits to museums and galleries around the world. I believe that portraiture is a conversation between the artist, the subject of the painting, and the viewer. This discourse should move from what is seen to what is felt and back



Work by Sharon Lee Hill

again. Both the artist and the viewer bring their own viewpoint to any work and with it questions about the meaning of the work and the person portrayed. These questions push the boundaries of our understandings and the way we move through the world."

For further information check our NC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 910/575-5999 or visit ([sunsetrivergallery.com](http://sunsetrivergallery.com)).

## Arts Council of Fayetteville | Cumberland County in Fayetteville, NC, Offers Exhibit of Works by Fourth Grade Students

The Arts Council of Fayetteville/ Cumberland County in Fayetteville, NC, is honored to welcome *The Fourth Grade Project*, a traveling exhibit organized by ExhibitsUSA, a national program of Mid-America Arts Alliance. Acclaimed artist Judy Gelles (1944–2020) interviewed and

photographed more than 300 fourth-grade students from a wide range of economic and cultural backgrounds in China, England, India, Israel, Italy, Nicaragua, St. Lucia, South Africa, Dubai, South Korea, and multiple areas of the United States. She asked all of the students the same three questions: Who do you live with? What do you wish for? What do you worry about? The exhibit will be on view in The Arts Center gallery, through May 28, 2025.

The students' stories capture the gamut of societal issues that we face today: violence, immigration, the demise of the nuclear family, global hunger, and the impact of the media and popular culture. The combination of frontal and reverse portraits allowed for the development of both personal and universal stories, and derived from the subject care-taker's reactions to photography in each country. In the US, photographing from the front can be problematic because of privacy issues. In China, it is considered disrespectful to photograph from the back. In India, parents and teachers made no objections to either frontal or back portraits. In all of the portraits across the spectrum of countries, the children are presented as individuals; however, their stories speak to greater pervasive truths and problems within our society.

"A notable commonality across all schools is that every group of fourth-graders has very little contact with or knowledge of people from cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds different than their own. Nine-year-old children are on the cusp of adolescence. They are able to think critically and consider relationships to be very important. They are socially conscious, interested in helping others, and openly curious about the world. It is also a moment in children's development when worldviews start to become entrenched and paths for the future start to become more set. The project allows students to learn about others' lives in a uniquely personal way and to use the project as a catalyst for their own explorations." Judy Gelles said.

"*The Fourth Grade Project* is an exhibit that challenges us to empathize with the views of individuals with backgrounds different from ours," expressed Bob Pinson, President and CEO of the Arts Council. "Judy Gelles' decision to ask



Image from the Fourth Grade Project exhibition

these questions to fourth-grade students offers a wide range of responses that will connect with viewers."

*The Fourth Grade Project* connects viewers locally and globally, bridging cultural differences by fostering a strong, tolerant, and global student community. The project helps to decrease isolation and prejudice while asserting that every person's story matters. The exhibition is accompanied by interactive resources for museum educators and teachers, with lesson plans and programming ideas focusing on global understanding and tolerance.

Judy Gelles received her MFA in photography from the Rhode Island School of Design and her Masters in Counseling from the University of Miami. She had a long-time focus on themes of family and children, with work in major collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She had residencies at the MacDowell Colony, the Visual Studies Workshop, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Awards include a grant from the Lomax Family Foundation, an Individual Artist Grant from the Rhode Island state

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