

University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, Features Works by the Late Peter Lenzo

The University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, will present *In Memory of his Memory*, featuring sculptures by the late Peter Lenzo (1955-2024), on view in the McMaster Gallery, from June 6 -27, 2025. A reception will be held on June 6, from 6-8pm.

The exhibition celebrates the life and art of Peter Lenzo featuring artwork created in Chicago during his final years and never previously shown in South Carolina.

Lenzo is a widely recognized ceramic sculptor with a national profile. The New York City native, who grew up in Detroit, was selected for the 1995 and 1998 *South Carolina Triennial* exhibitions at the South Carolina State Museum in Columbia. Lenzo is known for sculptures based on traditional southern face jugs. He distorts the facial expressions and sometimes attaches bizarre, fantastical, kitsch, and grotesque objects onto a traditional face jug form. Some of his face jugs are more realistic portraits while others are pure fantasy.

Lenzo took his first clay class when he was ten years old at The School of Arts and Crafts in Detroit, MI. It was not until age 14, however, that he decided to pursue clay seriously after seeing his brother turning a vessel on a potter’s wheel. At the age of 15, he was given a potter’s wheel and one year later dropped out of conventional high school.



Work by Peter Lenzo

earn his diploma and throughout continued to take pottery classes. At age 22 Lenzo was involved in a biking accident that resulted in chronic seizures. His work has been interpreted as a visual expression of the painful experience of having a seizure. Some of the face jugs are covered with found objects including shards stuck into the faces as if



Peter Lenzo in one of his studios, photo courtesy of Mike Brown Contemporary

the head were exploding. From 1991-2001, Lenzo’s work transitioned from resembling stylized traditional Southern face jugs to more realistic self-portraits.

The following is Lenzo’s artist statement, “The impetus for my ceramic sculptures came from traditional Southern face jugs. I had switched to working in clay exclusively in the 1990s. I had been making sculptural assemblages but had to stop because I couldn’t use a table saw any longer as I increasingly suffered from seizures, which are the result of brain damage sustained in a bicycle accident in my youth. Table saws and seizures don’t mix.”

“I always had been intrigued by face jugs, especially those made by Southern slaves,” adds Lenzo. “At my middle school, we tried to develop projects that appealed to our African-American students, and so I decided to have them make face jugs. I had never made any, so I first created several jugs myself. Each batch got better, but more importantly, when I finished a batch, I couldn’t wait to make the next one. It just seemed to be in my bones. It felt like I had made them before - that I was catching up where I had left off. I wanted to let everything go in my current life and go back to a previous one that I had discovered. I once was lost and now was found.”

“From the jugs I came to the current, more elaborate sculptures. It started when my then 4-year-old son Joe started to stick pottery shards, which I used for teeth, in one of my jugs. He went wild and put them all over the nose, eyes and lips. I began to help him and gradually really liked the results. My style was very different, and I had much more respect for the face, but to this day, Joe claims he made me famous.”

Works by Peter Lenzo can be found at Mike Brown Contemporary in Columbia, SC.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, contact Olga Dickey, Gallery Director, at 803/422-4289 or e-mail to (yukhno@mailbox.sc.edu).

City Art in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Tony Scully

City Art in Columbia, SC, is presenting, *Tony Scully: New Paintings*, on view through Sept. 6, 2025.

Tony Scully grew up in Washington, DC. He is a graduate of Boston College and the Yale School of Drama. His plays have been produced on Broadway at the Vivian Beaumont Theatre, by the Yale Repertory Theatre, the Manhattan Theatre Club, the WestBeth Theatre Center, NYC, The Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco, and in numerous staged readings in Los Angeles.

In 2023 he wrote and produced “The Battle of Camden” play for the South Carolina Battlefield Trust.

He has published three books of poetry (400 poems) with Wipf & Stock publishers, and for many years has been a monthly columnist for Camden’s *Chronicle-Independent*.

As a painter, Scully painted portraits on commission for many years, but has recently begun showing his work. Last year, he had a joint exhibition of new paintings at



Work by Tony Scully

the Kershaw County Arts Center with political cartoonist Robert Ariail. He has also exhibited for the last two years at the juried show at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, taking place in Charleston, SC.

He has served on many boards, including continued above on next column to the right

The Humanitas Prize, Los Angeles, Irish Ethos, Los Angeles, and in South Carolina, the Columbia Children’s Theatre, the Upton Trio, and Historic Camden

Scully served as Mayor of Camden, South Carolina from 2012 to 2016, and for several years has been President of the Kershaw County Historical Society.

City Art Gallery is located on Lincoln Street, in the historic Congaree Vista area in Columbia.

For further information check our SC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 803/252-3613 or visit (www.cityartonline.com).



Work by Tony Scully

Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Black Artists From the CMA Collection

Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia, SC, is presenting the exhibition, *Let’s Have a Talk: Black Artists from the CMA Collection*, on view through Aug. 31, 2025

Bringing together a multigenerational group of 15 Black artists working in and around abstraction, *Let’s Have a Talk* pushes against longstanding expectations that work by Black artists must present a clear message about their racial identity and experience, and it celebrates their crucial, yet often dismissed, role in abstract art.

Featuring sculpture, prints, paintings, and photography from the CMA Collection, this exhibition presents a range of abstract styles including Oliver Lee Jackson’s expressive, gestural mark making, Lorna Simpson’s ambiguous forms, and McArthur Binion’s minimalist designs.

Titled after conceptual artist Adrian Piper’s socially provocative print included in the show, *Let’s Have a Talk* is an open-ended invitation to start a conversation about Black artists’ contributions to modern and contemporary art history and the many facets of abstraction. Within these discussions other dialogues may emerge - between artists, between unique objects, between viewer and image, and within ourselves.

The CMA is committed to the concept of the modern museum. We believe in being inclusive and participatory. We believe that art is meant to be experienced, not just seen. Your museum is a place brimming with activity and new ideas.

When the Columbia Museum of Art began 75 years ago, it did more than just open its doors. It created opportunities, sparked conversations, broadened perspectives, and ignited moments of discovery through art. Over the years, we have expanded significantly, moving from the stately house on Senate Street to the iconic building on Main



Sanford Biggers (American, born 1970), “Yo-Yo”, 2019, Antique quilt, textiles, birch. Museum purchase, CMA 2019.6

Street.

The CMA isn’t just a museum - it’s a dynamic hub where art comes alive, and everyone is invited to join the experience. We owe our success to supporters like you. Your contributions provide the solid foundation we need to make bold advancements, to continue growing, and to serve our communities in diverse and inclusive ways. Seventy-five years is just the start. Thank you! We eagerly anticipate what we will achieve together next.

Reminder that admission to the Columbia Museum of Art is free all summer for SC residents thanks to Art Bridges Foundation’s Access for All program!

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 803/799-2810 or visit (www.columbia-museum.org).

Lexington County Public Library in Lexington, SC, Features Works by Ginny Merett

The Lexington County Public Library Branch in Lexington, SC, will present an exhibition of works by local artist, Ginny Merett, on view from June 1 - 30, 2025.

Ginny Merett has considered herself an artist beginning in early childhood. She was raised in Denver, CO, moved from place to place growing up, and made SC home in 1987. Art traveled with her and is the cause for her every success.

Merett offered the following statement about her art, “My work is inspired by a generation of women, like my grandmothers’, whose fashion sense was expressed every day by the chic clothes and high heels they wore, how they embellished their outfits with jewelry and hats, and how they never left home without lipstick.”

“I work intuitively in constructing my art by hand cutting/tearing parts and pieces of pictures from magazines and found papers to create new characters. I create my collage by selecting a particular piece as a jumping off point and build from one part to the next often searching through my picture files of hands, eyes, ears, legs,



Work by Ginny Merett

colors, and textures for the perfect element. As I work, new characters and their personalities emerge,” adds Merett.

“My goal is to create art that makes continued on Page 20