

# The University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Marius Valdes and David West

The University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, is presenting two exhibitions at the Koger Center For The Arts including: *Joyous Creatures*, featuring painting by Marius Valdes, on view in the Koger Center Upstairs Gallery, through Mar. 11, 2024, and featuring works by David West, on view in The Nook, 2nd Floor Rotating Gallery, through Jan. 16, 2024.

The Koger Center for the Arts is proud to exhibit Marius Valdes' new body of work, *Joyous Creatures*, in our Upstairs Gallery.

Valdes offers the following artist statement, "*Joyous Creatures* aims to make you smile or laugh if only for a moment. I celebrate characters and creatures from the imagination whether they are dogs, frogs, blobs, or aliens. Character-based art has the capacity to create memorable and engaging visual language that speaks to people of all ages and nationalities. I use my characters to educate, inform, and entertain."

Marius Valdes is a Professor at the University of South Carolina. He teaches graphic design and illustration in the GD+I program in the School of Visual Art and Design. He lives in Forest Acres with his wife, Beth and their daughter, Emma. Mary, the dog, is always around for a good laugh.

David West is a member of the Vista Guild Association and the Koger Center for the Arts is proud to partner with the Jasper Project to feature a different artist every month with an opening reception on the Third Thursday of the month.



Works by Marius Valdes

leave me with limited time and attention for artmaking. I yearn for the day when I can "retire" from teaching and devote myself entirely to exploring my artistic potential."

"My current artistic endeavors are sporadic, but I have discovered a particular passion for woodcuts. Despite never having a formal printmaking class in high school or undergrad, my pursuit of an art education degree compelled me to explore various art forms, eventually leading me to the realm of printmaking at the University of South Carolina. Here, I uncovered my love for this medium."

"In this show, there is work from my past, examples made for high school art lessons, and some of my current work," says West. "My work often draws from the canvas of my own life experiences, weaving personal narratives into universal themes. I aim to create art that resonates on an emotional level, avoiding overt or blatant expressions of ideas. Instead, I encourage viewers to bring their unique feelings and experiences to my work, connecting my artistic expression to their own life stories. In this way, my art becomes a bridge, inviting others to explore and reflect on the shared human experience, while my own artistic journey continues to evolve and inspire."

"My formal education in the arts includes a year of Commercial Art training in a vocational school, a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting, and a Masters of Arts in Teaching with a focus on Art Education. For 13 years, I worked as a graphic designer, relishing the challenge of crafting designs that met the needs of diverse clients. In addition to my painting and graphic design endeavors, I also dabble in photography, from creative works to street photography, to documenting the special moments of weddings and corporate events," adds West.

"My journey into teaching art began when I took on the role of organizing and conducting figure drawing sessions for the 'About Face' figure study group at the Columbia Museum of Art. Encouragement from fellow art educators within the group led me to explore a career in art education. For the past 12 years, I have had the privilege of teaching beginning through advanced levels of a range of Art and Photography classes."

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Works by David West

West offers the following artist statement, "Art has been a constant companion throughout my life, an enduring source of inspiration and fascination. My journey as an artist was shaped by the influential figures in my family, each leaving an indelible mark on my creative path. My mother's love for painting, a memory of her brush strokes bringing landscapes to life while I was still in diapers, ignited the enchantment of art within me. My grandfather, a true Renaissance man, with a formal background in architecture and a talent for designing, engineering, drawing, and painting, further nurtured my artistic curiosity."

"I consider myself an artist to the core, deeply immersed in the creative process, the labor of love, and the profound expression of art," adds West. "However, the demands of life, including full-time work, sharing the upbringing of two children, and maintaining a relationship with someone special, often

# Midlands Technical College in Irmo, SC, Features Works by Laurie Brownell McIntosh

Midlands Technical College in Irmo, SC, is presenting works by Laurie Brownell McIntosh, presented by the College and The Jasper Project, on view in the Harbison Theatre, through Feb. 29, 2024. On Jan. 6, at 6:30pm, McIntosh will speak briefly about her work.

Laurie Brownell McIntosh offers the following statement, "I was raised in an environment that supported and encouraged the creative process."

"I have discovered through the years that I don't work like many artist do. I don't have an exact style or medium that defines me. I work in large bodies of work that usually take years to explore. These large bodies are many times divided into series

within the body. Most of these bodies of work are driven by line and shape trying to express ideas and stories through mark making, color, shape and texture."

"Several times it has been a true calling from within myself... sounds corny but it's true," adds McIntosh. "This is the work that can't be denied. Or I find something that intrigues me, something I want to explore, and then I research and pursue that avenue until I have exhausted my curiosity and then I move on. The medium I use is the one that solves the problem presented before me."

"In my head I compare it to a writer who writes novels. The idea.. the reserch.. the execution.. the editing... the chapters... the

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final execution and the presentation of the finished pieces. Once this is done, onto the next. Almost always, within the present body of work I stumble on the next path. Almost..."

"I have also discovered that the quickest way to become dissatisfied with my work is to create art for people I do not know. I have to trust my gut and follow my own lead and my own truth. If I make art with the thought of what others might like, or buy, I've sold myself out. I will have left none of myself behind when I'm gone if I've spent my time trying to please others and by guessing what strangers might want."

"In my newest body of work in linocut is a result of studying a new medium, navigating the isolation of the past three years and celebrating our coming out of it. My family enjoyed being together during that time, spending time gathering crabs and fish, growing tomatoes, and doing the things outdoors that we love. It kept us busy."

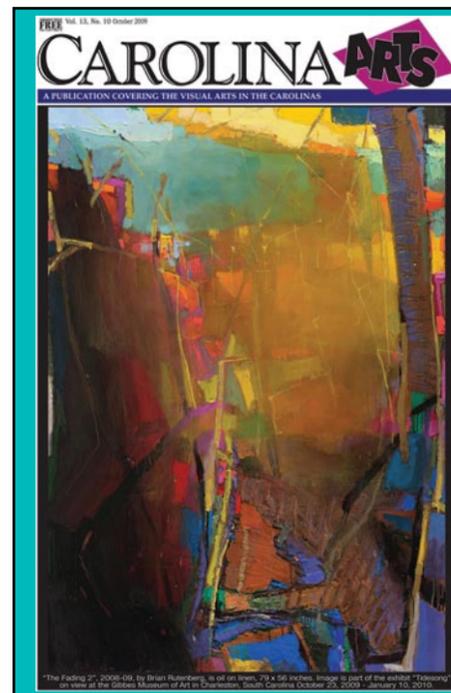
"My family's most treasured times are sharing that bounty with dear friends, which is reflected in the collection. Being able to gather with people again and enjoy home-



Work by Laurie Brownell McIntosh

grown and home-caught food, tell some tall tales, drink a cold beer, and have a laugh is what my family is all about. I hope that love of people and the land comes across in this body of work," says McIntosh.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings or call 803/407-5011.



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