



Southern Highlands Craft Guild in Asheville, NC, Features Works by Member Artists

The Southern Highlands Craft Guild in Asheville, NC, is presenting *Creating Textures*, featuring works by five Guild members, on view in The Focus Gallery at the Folk Art Center, through Feb. 29, 2024.

This exhibition features the work of five Guild members: Michael Hatch (glass), Valerie Berlage (wood), Joseph Rhodes (jewelry), Barry Rhodes (clay), and Joanna Warren (leather).

The glass face jugs in the exhibit are by glassblower, Michael Hatch, Guild member since 2005. "My Face Jug series is inspired by ceramic vessels made in the Appalachian region for over one hundred years," states Hatch. "When I first started this series twenty years ago there was no one else making Appalachian style face jugs in glass. Each piece in this series begins by blowing and shaping the vessel. The facial features are made by applying and sculpting bits of molten glass. The textures and colors are created by sifting colored glass powders onto the surface during the blowing process."



Work by Valerie Berlage

The wooden landscapes on display are made from assembling blocks of painted or natural wood, cut and crafted by Guild member Valerie Berlage (member since 2015). When asked about her process, she states, "Sometimes the materials dictate the piece. Especially in the case of the natural landscapes. While wood is a renewable resource, I do try to be as sustainable as possible and I source offcuts from other woodworkers. Pieces that are too small for furniture makers are great for me, and it saves them from either going in the dump



Work by Joanna Warren

or the fire. That way I'm not creating a need for as much "new" wood. Because color is a big part of my design, what I have access to (in terms of species and coloring) directly influences the end result."

The jewelry on display is made from sterling silver and features a variety of smooth stones: amethyst cabochon, garnet, aquamarine, and peach moonstones. Artist Joseph Rhodes (member since 2018) began his jewelry-making journey as a dentist with an appreciation for precious metals and fabricating his first piece of jewelry: his wife's wedding ring. "Most of my time is spent in my studio designing precious metal and gemstone jewelry by metal forming and lost wax casting," states Rhodes. "With my family's encouragement, this is a senior's start to a new career."

The utilitarian pottery on display glazed with cool tones of blues and grays are by Guild member Barry Rhodes (member since 2021). Creating textures is something this potter always keeps in mind. "The user of my pottery should be able to feel that the pot was made by a person and not stamped out by a machine. A cup should feel organic emanating from the earth and be comforting to hold," states Rhodes.

The Southern Highland Craft Guild is a non-profit, educational organization established in 1930 to cultivate the crafts and makers of the Southern Highlands for the purpose of shared resources, education, marketing and conservation. The Southern Highland Craft Guild is an authorized concessioner of the National Park Service,

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Department of the Interior. The Folk Art Center is located at Milepost 382 of the Blue Ridge Parkway, just north of the Highway 70 entrance in east Asheville, NC. Items available for purchase online soon. Until then, you can purchase these items

through the Folk Art Center by contacting us by e-mail at (info@craftguild.org) or by calling 828/523-4110.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings.

The deadline each month to submit articles, photos and ads is the 24th of the month prior to the next issue. This will be Jan. 24th for the February 2024 issue and Feb. 24 for the March 2024 issue. After that, it's too late unless your exhibit runs into the next month. But don't wait for the last minute - send your info now. And where do you send that info? E-mail to (info@carolinaarts.com).

Isgett Dittenber Flowers



Upstairs Artspace kicks off 2024 with *Strangers* by Kevin Isgett and *Off The Wall* by Suzanne Dittenber and Mark Flowers.

Jan. 20-March 15

Wed.-Sat., noon-5pm

49 S. Trade St.
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UpstairsArtspace.org



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