

# Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, Offers 2 New Exhibits

The Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, is presenting two new exhibits including: *Be One Traveler*, featuring works by Thomas Washington the Younger and *Overwhelmed and Spellbound*, featuring works by Jordan Sheridan, both on view through June 24, 2022.

Thomas Washington the Younger is a Columbia-based multimedia artist who was born in Springfield, MA, and grew up in a restrictive Pentecostal family. Washington has pursued art in one form or another since early childhood. After his father was laid off, the family headed to South Carolina. Washington finished his education at Columbia High School. After that, he joined the military, entered the working life, and eventually started a family. He and his wife, Kenyatta, have two children. Washington's jobs along the way have varied – everything from manual labor and telemarketing to truck driver.

Washington believes that perhaps the most important pursuit of an artist is the facilitation of Escapism. He approaches each painting as a Narnian door...or that lamppost beyond, coaxing a wanderer into another realm. Since his childhood, he has produced works from this perspective – from being hired (out of high school) to illustrate in a local graphic anthology, he strives to tell stories in every medium; to breathe life into the fantastical by imbuing it with the familiar...and to find fun and fulfillment along the way.

Washington entertains all sorts of creative notions - the importance of world peace, an unshakeable belief in fundamental similarities that make Humanity one big family and strong opinions on interstellar travel.



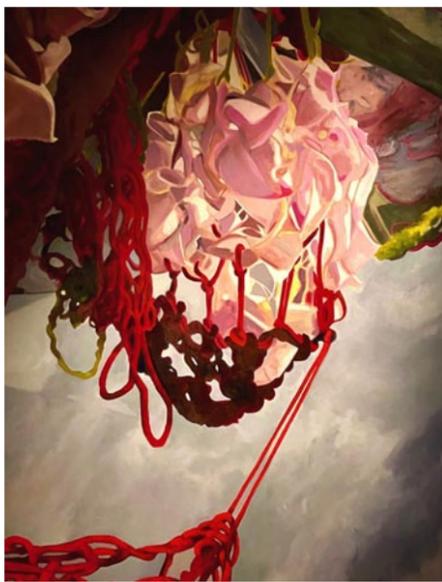
Work by Thomas Washington the Younger

Washington's latest paintings, even his experimentation with watercolor, tend to be very focused pieces of work. Washington the Younger sees his subjects as both mythic and contemporary. Like the knights of old, they are fighting their own battles, but they are also in a present-day reality where the deck is stacked against them.

Moving on from his first medium of colored pencils and paper to the next level came about as a challenge from Kenyatta: "I need you to make a bigger splash this time," he recalls her saying. "Here's your canvas, here's your paint. Do something." The work that has emerged draws from many sources - not just the working life of someone trying to keep a roof over his head, but also someone who's upbringing emphasized that eternal damnation was not an idle concept.

He doesn't sound mournful or melodramatic. For Washington, the paintings are simply a reflection of inner reality. He hasn't completely left his past behind. It's right there in his chosen name, an appellation he likes both because it's archaic and because it's true. "I am a lot like my father," he offers. "I'm the prodigal son, as they would say," he reflects. "I'm Thomas the Younger."

Jordan Sheridan's studio practice unites



Work by Jordan Sheridan

painting, sculpture and installation as she explores the visual dimensions of identity and motherhood. Sheridan received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of South Carolina in 2021, and her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting from the College of Charleston in 2011. Her awards include the Graduate Studio Art Research Award from the University of South Carolina, and a residency at Stormwater Studios in Columbia, SC. Sheridan has volunteered for three years with the Amigo Skate Non-profit; collecting, organizing and transporting skateboard equipment to Cuban youth in Havana. Through this organization she has developed intimate relationships and a deep passion and appreciation for the culture of Cuba.

Sheridan has a three-year-old son, Samuel, who enjoys monster trucks and being outdoors. Her 2021 thesis exhibition at the University of SC's McMaster Gallery, *The Mother*, a painting and textile installation focuses on her identities as a mother and artist. Her woven installations hover over a gallery space like a vibrantly colored spider web. The fibrous mass is meant to represent, in the artist's own words, the "stretching, fragmenting, shifting" nature of the relationship between mother and child. The pieces can also send off danger signals (like a spider's web) warning of a sticky, impenetrable entanglement - such as motherhood.

Sheridan observes: "I imagine the maternal experience as an enveloping, polymorphous mass that is ever stretching, fracturing, and shifting. This body of work documents, communicates, and aestheticizes my personal experience of being a mother to my young son, Samuel. Through painting and installation, I visually communicate the paradox of feeling both overwhelmed and spellbound as a mother, of reconnecting the fragmented pieces of my identity, while the boundaries between Samuel and myself are often blurred. My paintings and installation inform each other, the crocheted installation is a 3-dimensional extension of my painting practice with its own unique and deliberate mark making and form, its woven structure accosts and envelops the viewer to situate them in my position and identity as the mother. My paintings are made through a close examination of the installation and how it exists and behaves in space."

Sheridan currently resides in Columbia, SC, with her partner, Ian and son, Samuel. They recently welcomed a daughter Kora in early March.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Gallery at 803/775-0543 or visit (<http://www.sumtergallery.com>).

## USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center in Lancaster, SC, Offers Exhibition on Lost Tribe

USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center in Lancaster, SC, is presenting the exhibit, *A People Once Lost, Now Found: The Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Indians*, on display in the Center's Duke Energy Page 20 - Carolina Arts, May 2022

Gallery through Feb. 15, 2023.

*A People Once Lost, Now Found: The Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Indians*, the newest exhibit on display at USC Lancaster's

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Native American Studies Center, highlights the arts and culture of the Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Indians through a display of photographs, artifacts, artwork, and more. Curated by members of the Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Indians, this is the fifth exhibit created for the Center by a South Carolina tribe or tribal group. Located in Sumter, SC, the tribe obtained state recognition in 2013. The exhibit will cover the early history of the tribe and will showcase peace pipes, a bow and arrow, a drum, a variety of regalia, and more.



Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Councilwomen Courtney Tice (left) and Tammy Ray Stevens (right) arrange a headpiece for display in the exhibit.

"It gives me great pride to be able to share our history and culture with everyone, especially our youth, for they will carry on our legacy," said Tribal Councilwoman Tammy Ray Stevens. "I hope that visitors will learn that Sumter, South Carolina has a Native American tribe that is state recognized and can appreciate the Native American culture, diversity, and unification." The exhibit also will highlight issues and causes that the tribe is dedicated to today, such as teaching tribal youth about their culture. Tribal Councilwoman Courtney Tice says their youth have raised money and awareness for the Every Child Matters and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women movements, as well as for other domestic



Life Long Chief Ralph Oxendine (middle) and Councilwomen Courtney Tice (left) and Tammy Ray Stevens (right) of the Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Indians record an interview for the Native American Studies Center's new exhibit, *A People Once Lost, Now Found: The Sumter Tribe of Cheraw Indians*.

violence causes.

"We pride ourselves on being able to help others," said Tice. "We're not a huge tribe that's well-known. We're not focusing on the past, but rather moving toward the future. We want to recognize our ancestors, continue to grow, and to promote other Native Americans, because we love all people and all cultures, and want to be able to learn about their cultures as well. We embrace everyone."

In a recording now on the Center's YouTube page, Chief Ralph Oxendine discusses the tribe's history and the significance of the items included in the exhibit, *A People Once Lost, Now Found*. Guests may view the first part of the discussion via the Center's YouTube channel here; other parts of the discussion will be posted to the channel at a later time. A virtual exhibition also can be viewed at this link.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 803/313-7172 or visit ([www.sc.edu/lan-lancaster/NAS](http://www.sc.edu/lan-lancaster/NAS)).

The deadline each month to submit articles, photos and ads is the 24th of the month prior to the next issue. This will be May 24th for the June 2022 issue and June 24th for the July 2022 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](mailto:info@carolinaarts.com)).