Artisphere crafts expanded lineup

More artists, ever-increasing variety of works add to festival's reputation

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More artists than ever before will participate in Artisphere, Greenville's award-winning arts weekend to be held May 7-9 in downtown Greenville.

Executive Director Kerry Murphy said 120 artists from across the nation will be featured in the juried show, up from 100 last year. Fourteen of those are local artists.

"As we go into year six, the programming has not changed in a major way," Murphy said. "Instead, we fine-tuned it by listening to what folks through the years said they wanted."

The public can get a sneak peek at what is to come through the Artists of the Upstate Juried Exhibition, which opened Friday at Centre Stage theater as the festival's lineup was announced. It gives the festival advance exposure and "gets folks excited about Artisphere itself," Murphy said.

Steve Brandt, Artisphere's board president and publisher of *The Greenville News*, said, "There is a wonderful symmetry to Artists of the Upstate serving as the lead event for Artisphere 2010, since Artists of the Upstate is a sort of microcosm of the bigger event. It represents a gracious host, Centre Stage; a superb arts advancement organization, the Metropolitan Arts Council; and a generous sponsor, the Greenville Journal, coming to-

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YOU CAN GO
- **What:** Artisphere, Greenville's Arts Weekend
- **When:** Opening Night Gala, May 6; outdoor festival, May 7-9
- **Where:** Downtown Greenville
- **Tickets:** Some ticketed shows but mostly free to the public
- **Information:** 271-9398

manufacturers that have made it easier to shoot low scores with all manner of lighter, faster clubs that improve length.

For as fun as it is to watch a 60-year-old like Tom Watson come close to winning the British Open last summer — and compete for the lead in the first round here — or even for 50-year-old Fred Couples to stay competitive, they wouldn't be playing as well without all the advances in technology that have pervaded the game.

The statistics-heavy Web site www.FiveThirtyEight.com, which generally deals with political forecasting — it came within 1/10 of a percent of an exact forecast of Barack Obama's vote total in the presidential election — devoted space Friday to an analysis of scores at the Masters.

It came away with evidence that, despite Augusta National's efforts, winning scores have continued to creep lower year after year.

The analysis established that "in the first 36 years of competition, through 1972, the average winning score against par was -6.4; in the 37 years from 1973 until last year the average winning score against par was -9.6. The slope for the winning margin during the entire period is -1.8."

In addition to technological advancements, the inclusion of an expanded pool of global talent has helped beat up any attempts to keep scores from dropping.

As the Web site noted, "Of the 37 winners from 1973 until last year, 17 were non-Americans, but in the first 36 years of competition, only one was not an American (South African Gary Player, 1961)."

All these facts can be easily understood. Stop by a place that sells golf clubs and balls sometime and ask a salesperson if there's any difference in what's being sold today as opposed to 10 or 20 years ago.

As for the global influence, all you need to do is look at the Masters leaderboard after two rounds.

Half of those in the top 10 are from foreign countries, including England's Poulter and Westwood, two players from Korea, K.J. Choi and Y.E. Yang, tied for third at 6-under, and Soren Kjelsen, from Denmark, alone in eighth place at 3-under.

With Woods back in the thick of it, the Masters feels like old times again, but when you consider the equipment and the competition, there's really nothing old and traditional about it.

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gether to present exciting artwork in a variety of media for the enjoyment of the community."

The popular Artisphere festival kicks off with an elegant opening night gala on May 6 at the new Courtyard Marriott Hotel's Nantucket Grill, from 6-10 p.m. "It's going to be a fabulous celebration," Murphy said. Tickets are $100 and can be purchased at www.artisphere.us.

The downtown festival will be launched at 4 p.m. May 7. Along with the expanded Artists Row, festivalgoers will see a wide variety of art, including ceramics, drawings, furniture, glass, jewelry, 2D and 3D mixed media, oil, acrylic and watercolor painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture and woodwork.

Artists Row will start at