

Artisphere issues call for entries

Artists can apply in 18 categories

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Artisphere, Greenville's big three-day visual arts festival, is inviting artists to apply for the eight annual event in 2012.

Artists in 18 categories can submit digital applications through the Artisphere Web site at www.artisphere.us or at www.zapplication.org.

Paper applications are available at the Artisphere Web site as well.

Artists must submit four images of their work, along with an image of their planned booth space and an artist's statement.

Digital applications are \$30; paper applications are \$80.

Deadlines for the applications are Oct. 6 for paper applications and Oct. 21 digital entries.

A jury of four art professionals will choose 120 visual artists to participate in the festival, which takes place May 11-13, 2012, in Greenville's West End and downtown.

Artisphere director Kerry Murphy expects about 900 applications this year—100 more than last year—thanks to the festival's growing reputation as a venue for visual artists.

Over the course of this year's three-day event in May, artists enjoyed average sales of \$5,005, a significant increase from last year's record high of \$4,215.

Those increasing revenues will attract more artist applications nationwide, Murphy said.

"Artists really want to go where people are buying art," Murphy said.

Artisphere created a new category this year: The Emerging Artist Scholarship program, available only to artists in Greenville County.

"This is an opportunity for someone who's up-and-coming, trying to break into the art world for a career," Murphy said.

Fees will be waived for the Emerging Artist Scholarship. At least two local artists will be chosen for the scholarship.

"Artisphere will make it possible for artists who have never exhibited in an outdoor art festival to experience one of the ways that professional working artists earn a living," said Alan Ethridge, executive director of Greenville's Metropolitan Arts Council.

Other artist categories include ceramics, furniture, glass, mixed media, watercolor, photography, sculpture, jewelry (precious and semi-precious) and more.

As the competition to participate in Artisphere increases, the variety and quality of art works available for patrons of the festival should continue to grow as well, Murphy said.

"With a wider pool of applicants, you're going to have a great deal of quality work to choose from," she said.

In a survey of almost 70 percent of the artists who attended Artisphere this year, the event earned high marks not only for sales but for hospitality, scoring 4.6 out of 5.