Local talent on display



HEIDI HEILBRUNN / Staff

Artists of the Upstate Awards for a juried exhibition were given out during an Artisphere press conference at Centre Stage on Tuesday.

Artisphere unveils exhibit, fest details

By Paul Hyde
ARTS WRITER
phyde@greenvilleonline.com

Artisphere opened its juried art exhibition Tuesday night, signaling that the big outdoor Artisphere festival is only two weeks away.

The Artisphere festival, a celebration of the visual arts, takes place May 13-15. As always, the three-day outdoor event will feature food, entertainment, activities for children, and 120 artists' booths.

Now in its seventh year, Artisphere is expected to attract tens of thousands of Upstate residents to downtown Greenville.

As a preliminary to the festival, Artisphere is hosting the fourth annual "Artists of the Upstate," a juried exhibition at Centre Stage through May 26.

"It is great that Artisphere has a special exhibit for local artists," said Alan Ethridge, executive director of the Metropolitan Arts Council. "The exhibition at Centre Stage is an ideal platform to showcase the talent and distinctiveness of the artists who add so much to the vitality of the Upstate."

Of 141 applications, 45 artists were accepted to participate in the juried show. Winners of the show were announced Tuesday. They included:

- Best in Show: Caitlin McCullough.
- Second Place: Marty Epp-Carter.
- Third Place: Gail Fischer.
- Honorable Merits: Alix Bernard and Michael Slattery.

Judging the show was Todd McDonald, assistant professor of painting at Clemson University.

Kerry Murphy, executive director of Artisphere, said Tuesday night that 60 of the 120 featured artists at the festival are new to the event. The event also will feature three stages with 19 new musicians, dancers and theatrical performers from New York, Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston and Greenville.

All of the vendors at the festival this year will accept cash instead of the usual food and beverage tickets, which often left patrons with unused tickets, Murphy said.

Artisphere also is trying to be greener this year, with all food vendors using recyclable paper productions. Beer and wine also will be sold in recyclable cups.

Artisphere's opening night gala will be hosted by The Courtyard by Marriott Downtown on May 12.

For more information, see Artisphere's Web site at www.artisphere.us.