Artisphere's renown spreads

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As it looks toward its 10th anniversary, Artisphere is celebrating several milestones.

Downtown Greenville's big celebration of the visual arts was again rated in the Top 10 of arts festivals nationwide by Greg Lawler's influential "Art Fair Sourcebook."

"We've now been named a Top 10 festival in the country for two years running," said Artisphere's executive director, Kerry Murphy, speaking at press conference Wednesday.

As another indicator of its growing national prestige, Artisphere received more applications from artists than ever before — a total of 934.

Of those, 125 artists were chosen to participate in the event's Artist Row. Fifty-seven of those artists are new to the festival.



Kerry Murphy, executive director of Artisphere, said the festival has once again been rated in the Top 10 in the influential "Art Fair Sourcebook." HEIDI HEILBRUNN/STAFF

"The 10th anniversary Artist Row is loaded with amazing artists from all over the country," Murphy said.

The artist roster includes 15 local artists, the most in the history of the event.

This year's Artisphere takes place May 9-11. In addition to visual art, the outdoor festival features food, live music and activities for children.

The large number of applicants allows Artisphere to be highly selective in terms of both the talent and diversity of participating artists.

Artisphere jurors seek to ensure the festival offers artworks in a variety of media — from painting to woodwork, ceramics, sculpture, photography, glass and jewelry.

Artisphere also announced record sales by artists. Last year's participating artists earned an average of $6,200 over the three-day event. That was up from $5,865 the previous year.

Strong sales and Greenville's reputation for hospitality also encourage talented artists nationwide to apply for Artisphere, Murphy said.

Local artists chosen to participate in the festival include Kent Ambler, Beth Andrews, Joseph Bradley, Chris Bruner, Janina Ellis, Lynn Greer, Marie Gruber, Signe & Genna Grushovenko, Danielle Miller-Gilliam, Ray Mosteller, Stephanie Shuptrine, Llyn Strong, Judy Verhoeven, Katie Walker and Jaryd Walley.

David Lominack, market president for TD Bank, said high-profile events such as Artisphere contribute substantially to Greenville's economy. TD Bank is Artisphere's presenting sponsor.

"We are proud to play a part in this great event that puts our city in the national arts spotlight," Lominack said.

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