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the event.

"The artists like to go where people are buying art," Murphy said.

For the 2013 festival, 854 artists applied from 41 states, and 120 were chosen to participate by a panel of judges.

Thirteen of the 120 are local artists while 56 will be appearing at the festival for the first time.

Artisphere, now in its ninth year, draws tens of thousands of Upstate residents to downtown Greenville to browse for artworks and enjoy food, live music and activities for children.

This year's festival takes place May 10-12.

Participating artists work in a variety of media, from painting to woodwork, ceramics, sculpture, photography, glass and jewelry.

Local painter Joseph Bradley said being chosen for Artisphere is a strong validation for an artist.

"It's very exciting because it's so competitive," said Bradley, who exhibits his work in his Pendleton Street gallery. "Artisphere is a completely elevated level of visibility."

In addition to Bradley, local artists chosen to participate are Beth Andrews, Chris Bruner, Dainelle Miller-Gilliam, Diana Farfan, Janina Ellis, Judy Verhoeven, Kent Ambler, llyn strong, Lynn Greer, Marie Gruber, Signe & Genna Grushovenko and Tami Cardnella.

Artisphere also garnered plaudits from other respected rankings, placing No. 31 in Sunshine Artist Magazine's "100 Best Fine Art & Design Shows," and being named a Top 20 event in the Southeast by the Southeast Tourism Society.

Murphy said Artisphere earns high marks from artists nationwide not only for sales but also for Greenville's hospitality.

"We hear it over and over again that artists get treated better here than anywhere else," Murphy said. "Patrons will tell me that artists say how friendly and generous everyone is here. It is a real testament to the community and the importance placed on the arts and our quality of life."

Speaking at a press conference Tuesday, Greenville Mayor Knox White gave credit to the Artisphere board, sponsors and the community for fully embracing the arts festival and ensuring its success.

Returning for a second year is an emerging artist program that provides an up-and-coming local artist with free booth space and professional development assistance. Beth Andrews and Diana Farfan are the recipients of the Emerging Artist Scholarship.

■ Follow Paul Hyde on Facebook or Twitter: @PaulHyde7.

Artists profit from festival's popularity

Artisphere sets new sales record while earning more accolades from authorities

By Paul Hyde
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Artisphere, Greenville's big visual arts festival, earned record sales last year for participating artists and won top accolades from nationally recognized publications, executive director Kerry Murphy said Tuesday.

In 2012, the 120 artists involved in the outdoor festival reported an average of $5,865 in sales over the three-day event.

That represents an increase from 2011 of about 16 percent, or $800 on average for each artist.

The festival placed No. 7, meanwhile, in the Fine Art category in Greg Lawler's annual Art Fair Sourcebook, a ranking of the top 600 art shows across the nation.

THE BIG PICTURE
Artisphere Executive Director Kerry Murphy describes the positive impact the arts show has had on the community at GreenvilleOnline.com.

The event also placed No. 10 in the Fine Craft category. Those rankings were based largely on artist sales.

"Those rankings are definitely something the artists and the art buyers look to when the artists are applying to shows and the buyers are seeking shows to visit throughout the country," Murphy said.

Strong sales results encourage accomplished artists nationwide to apply for the festival, potentially boosting the quality and variety of artworks available every year at

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