

Artwork on display at Clemson City Hall

THE JOURNAL STAFF

CLEMSON — From batik to oil painting and photography, a group of South Carolina artists have interpreted the rivers of the Palmetto State through various mediums.

Their artwork, displayed in an exhibit entitled "Freshwater Veins," will be on display from Wednesday until March 31 at Clemson City Hall before traveling to Columbia in April.

Curated by Palmetto Curatorial Exchange, the exhibit portrays the vitality of the Congaree, Edisto and Savannah rivers as they run through the land like veins through a body, bringing energy and life to the entire state.

"Many of the artists are South Carolina natives, and each piece reflects a different branch of the flowing life found on these waterways," Arts Center of Clemson executive director Tommye Hurst said in a news release issued by the Palmetto Curatorial Exchange. "From the early glimmer of dawn to the fiery gasp of sunset, the artists show us the living diversity, both glorious and mundane, along our rivers."

During the Colonial era and rise of cash-crop culture, the rivers provided important thoroughfares connecting much of the state and served as convenient locations for many mills and plantations.



SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

"Freshwater Veins," a traveling exhibit composed of artwork from a group of South Carolina artists, will be on display at Clemson City Hall from Wednesday through March 31.

Today, these rivers are still cherished, though more for recreation than transportation. They also support complex ecosystems of plants and aquatic animals. "Freshwater Veins" reflects each artist's appreciation of these waterways.

"The delicate light in Brant Barrett's photographs conjures the freshness of a river morning," Hurst said. "A lone duck floats on a peaceful expanse, reminding the viewer of the serenity to be found in still waters."

The lively abstraction of Jon Holloway's photograph captures the reflected light intrinsic to all waterways, while Rob Shaw's oil painting

reflects the fading brilliance of sunset.

"We also find the fun of recreation in contrast to daily tedium along the rivers," he said. "M.J. King and Brant Barrett breathe life into the recreational activities that the Congaree, Edisto and Savannah Rivers afford — boating fishing and swimming are prevalent along these snaking waterways."

Artists Eliot Dudik and Stephen Whetstone explore the daily life along the rivers, the chores and livelihoods present in the flow of life.

While artists Paul Haynes and Mary Gilkerson were inspired by close-up examinations of the organic matter found within these streaming waters, and artist Mary Edna Fraser offers a colorful bird's-eye view of these rivers that traverse the state.

"Humanity's powerful hand is manifest in the bridges spanning each river," Hurst said. "Rob Shaw and Michael Kolster show the permanence of these structures, both industrial and intricate, where enjoyment of the waterways takes a back seat to the practicalities of travel and accessibility. And Robert Keith gives a vibrant glimpse of life underneath these vital constructions."

An opening reception will be held from 5-7 p.m. Jan. 6 at Clemson City Hall.

For more information, contact pce@curatingandcollections.com.