



Quarterly Newsletter FALL 2024



From NAWA SC Chapter President Meyriel Edge

On behalf of the South Carolina Chapter of The National Association of Women Artists, I recently extended our heartfelt sympathy to all members and fellow artists who have suffered such devastating loss due to Hurricane Helene. And, now, our heartfelt thoughts go out again to our Chapter members in Florida who have sustained damage from hurricane Milton. Our chapter has members from all over the country, and we grieve for the loss of lives and property, not only in South Carolina, but in our neighboring states. Thank you for the many responses you sent to let us know you are managing through this difficult time.

Our thanks go to outgoing Chapter Board Member Sandy Dimke for the huge amount of work she has put into this chapter. She has worn many hats, sometimes balancing them all at the same time. During the time our Chapter was without a President and Vice President, all our Board Members put in extra effort to keep the Chapter running smoothly. Sandy especially helped as exhibition coordinator until Staci Swider came on the Board last year. Sandy personally helped me, beginning with photographing my painting on exhibit at the Burroughs Chapin Museum. Sandy is also heavily involved as VP of the Beaufort Art Association Gallery and is worldwide Chairperson of the Pictorial Print Division of the Photographic Society of America. Her



photo (above) *Botswana Beauty*, was a recent Gold Medal winner in their annual nature print competition. I am happy to know Sandy says she will stay active to help our Chapter when needed.



It is my pleasure to officially welcome Deidre Hayes, NAWA SC Secretary! She is an award winning artist who graduated from USC in Education. She was juried into the SC Artisan Center in Walterboro for her 2D paintings and shell art; is a member of the SC and San Diego Water Media Societies; the Aiken Center for the Arts; Aiken Artists Guild, and the North Augusta Arts and Heritage Center. Welcome, Deidre! We look forward to working with you.

Thank you

Kudos to Susan Irish, Membership Chair, for developing a relationship with and organizing quarterly exhibits at the Department of Commerce State House Building in Columbia, SC. This offers an opportunity to South Carolina resident members of our Chapter to exhibit their work at their new offices at 1201 Main Street, Suite 1600, Columbia, SC. Ten large 2D, abstract, still life, or landscape art pieces are required for exhibits, which change quarterly. If you are interested to exhibit your work at this satellite gallery venue or want more information, contact Susan at: art.nawasc@gmail.com and put 'Commerce' in the subject line.

Welcome New Members

We are delighted to welcome new members Lillie Morris, Appling, GA; Pokey Park, Tucson, AZ; Krystal Hart, Greensboro, NC; Josie Dellenbaugh, Glastonbury, CT; Lindsay Daniel, Charlotte, NC; and Selene Paschoal from Simpsonville, SC. We welcome all members to contact a Board Member at art.nawasc@gmail.com to let us know how you would like to help our Chapter. Your participation in keeping our Chapter active and moving forward is always needed and appreciated.

2024 - 2025 Chapter Dues

NAWA SC Membership Board Member, Susan Irish, recently sent out a reminder that October 1 is time to pay annual Chapter dues for 2024-2025. Dues remain \$30, but NAWA national has requested all NAWA State Chapters institute a \$5 late fee if dues are paid after November 8, with the late fee window closing in December. Dues can be paid by PayPal or by sending a check to our Treasurer: Melinda Welker; 157 Red Cedar Road, Aiken, SC 29803.

Member Feature: Staci Swider, Aiken, SC

Your art includes painting, collage, assemblage, and fiber - How do you describe your art and yourself as an artist?

As an artist, I identify as a fiber and mixed media artist because these classifications encompass the majority of my artistic endeavors and provide ample room for creative expression. I approach my work with a highly experimental mindset, relishing the opportunity to utilize materials in unconventional ways. For instance, I delight in juxtaposing rough, unrefined cardboard with the smoothness of Asian jacquard silk, and I find that these unexpected pairings come together seamlessly to create a harmonious composition.



Photo: Staci Swider with her art, *Unapologetic*. This work was recently displayed during *The Women's Caucus for Art* exhibit, *Meeting the Moment*, at Aiken Center for the Arts.

How is your art of today reflective of your past professional career and your family's ethic heritage?

During my early years, I worked as a professional fabric designer in both home furnishings and apparel. This experience has greatly influenced my art, as I am naturally drawn to textures and patterns. Even when I use painting and drawing to convey my ideas, I still incorporate patterns and chunky textures reminiscent of the coarse textiles and deconstructed fabrics I remember from the basement of our mill. Our mill had a large garnetting machine that would tear up discontinued fabrics so that the fibers could be repurposed. The texture of the fibers and wool fabric as they made their way through the machine looked like a craggy outcropping covered in soft mist. I particularly love the knobby texture and the look of a destroyed piece of canvas.

In addition to my professional background, my Slavic heritage has also influenced my art. From an early age I was exposed to Eastern European folk art such as

embroidery, lace-adorned garments, and Pysanky eggs. I intentionally refer to these influences first when searching for new design elements for my work.

Your art is known for having a feeling of movement. How do you create this and do you represent yourself within your art?

I employ various techniques to convey a sense of movement in my art, including the dynamic use of color, texture, and layering. I often integrate organic forms and flowing lines to lead the viewer's eye across the canvas. The bold sweeping brushstrokes and varied textures, such as collage materials or patterns, further enhance the perception of motion.

My narrative compositions, while abstract, evoke a natural rhythm, such as the movement of water or wind, creating an energetic flowing sensation. The interplay of warm and cool colors contributes to the push-and-pull effect, reinforcing the continuous movement within the artwork.

Last year, you completed an artist residency in Ireland. How did that experience influence your art?

My work focuses on exploring the concept of one's soul journey. I am fascinated by the mythic idea of one's daimon, or spiritual companion, who carries our destiny according to Plato. I refer to the daimon as "the Grandmothers" and wonder how they bear such an important weight both physically and emotionally. How do they manage? Where do they reside? The idea of a boat-shaped vessel gliding effortlessly throughout the cosmos came to me while relaxing in my hammock, and I now refer to these vehicles as soul sleds. They are the agents through which the Grandmothers oversee and guide us. With the Grandmothers guiding me, I embarked upon my residency in Ireland in February 2023. It was there, while exploring the countryside of County Kerry, that I came across what is known as "The Greenville Rookery" and was immediately captivated. Hundreds of rooks, large black birds native to Ireland, were swooping, calling, and building nests; nests which reminded me of the soul sleds, suspended high up in the trees. It felt as if the rooks were beckoning me to build and create alongside them. The energy and spirit of that place influenced my art making and will forever remain in my subconscious, regardless of what is present on the canvas.

Happenings - Looking Ahead

Brookgreen Inspires - Women Create is the theme for our May 3- July 20, 2025 exhibit to be held at one of the prestigious Brookgreen Gardens galleries in Murrells Inlet, SC. The visionaries behind Brookgreen Gardens were Anna Hyatt and Archer Milton Huntington. Anna, a NAWA member in the early 1900s, originally planned Brookgreen Gardens to showcase her sculptures and SC flora and fauna.

Brookgreen Gardens is now considered one of the preeminent sculpture gardens exhibiting American sculpture from the 19th century to the present. It is meaningful to our members to have the opportunity to continue the NAWA sisterhood through Anna Hyatt Huntington's legacy at Brookgreen Gardens. Exhibit Chair is Staci Swider.

The link to apply to this exhibit is on our **nawasc.org** website. Entry is through <https://www.smarterentry.com/CallsForEntry/NAWASC>. **Also see our website for a chronological list of key exhibit dates.**

How to Contact a NAWA SC Board Member:

When you wish to contact a member of the NAWA SC Chapter board, e-mail to: art.nawasc@gmail.com. Please put the name of the department you wish to contact in the subject line of your email, such as Membership, Exhibitions, President, Social Media, Newsletter, etc.



Anna Hyatt Huntington sculpture at entrance to Brookgreen Gardens. Photo by Melinda Welker

By Heart Exhibit

NAWA Florida Chapter invited our members to participate in their show *By Heart* at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts in Valdosta, GA. Awards went to four NAWA SC members. Elizabeth and Fran are also Florida Chapter members.



1st Place: Elizabeth Williams -
Fleur de Joie



2nd Place: Linda McCune -
Stress Series 14



3rd Place - Staci Swider -
Crone's Garden Headdress



Honorable Mention - Fran Gardner
Primary

Member Highlights this Quarter:

Members - please share your good news! We want to promote your art achievements in our newsletters and social media. Please send your information to: art.nawasc.org and put Social Media and/or Newsletter in the email subject line.

Maryann Browning Ford's painting, *Left Behind*, was a finalist in the Ten Moir Gallery Cityscapes online exhibit.



Sandy Dimke's photo, *Misty Morning at Cataloochee Cove*, was recently on exhibit in Gallery Katamsi in Yogyakarta, Java, Indonesia.

Joan E Eckhardt's photo, *Magnificent Frigatebird*, was accepted into the Louisville, KY Shadow and Light Exhibit.



Staci Swider presented a solo exhibit, titled *Vessels of the elder goddess*, at the West Gallery of the Summerville, SC Public Works Art Center. *Crone's Garden*, is a 15' long fiber and mixed media vessel. Staci refers to her artwork vessels as soul sleds and imagines them to be a place of serenity.



NAWASC Chapter President Meyriel Edge, gave a talk at Salusbury Arms in Wales to speak about her journey as an artist and the 30 portraits she painted of people she knew there from her childhood.

Water Lillies, by Deidre Hayes, was awarded 2nd Place in the Aiken Artists Guilds 2024 member Show.



Pamela Urban Moore and Melinda Welker present a joint exhibit this fall, titled *Flora and Fauna*, at Bonboniere, an Aiken Artists Guild satellite gallery.



Impressions, acrylic on canvas,
16 x 20, by Pamela Urban
Moore



Wading Ibis, photography, 11 x 14 , by
Melinda Welker

(Photo at right) *Portrait of Kara Walker*, by
Rhian Swain. Acrylic on canvas, 48" x 60";
Exhibited this fall in *Breaking the Barriers:
Women who have Impacted the Arts*, at the
Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History,
Augusta, GA.



Questions?

NAWA SC is proud to be a part of the National Association of Women Artists and further the national mission in our state of South Carolina - to promote awareness of, and interest in, visual art created by women in the U.S. Contact art.nawasc@gmail.com if you have comments or news to share. Please put "newsletter" in the subject line. To join the NAWASC Chapter and become part of our active membership, visit <https://nawasc.org>.