

# SOUTHERN CHARMS: ART IN CHARLESTON

**F**ounded in the 17th century with the support of England's King Charles II, the picturesque seaport of Charleston, South Carolina, has long been renowned not only for well-preserved houses, churches, and cobblestone streets, but also for its cultural sophistication. Although it was even more cosmopolitan in the 18th century, when almost every ship trading along the Atlantic coast put in here, today's Charleston offers art galleries, antique shops, and boutiques well worth exploring. Its inns, bed-and-breakfasts, and cafes are admired for hospitality and quality, with most an easy stroll from the city's many historical sites.

The most prestigious visual arts institution in town is the **Gibbes Museum of Art**, opened in 1905 and now possessing more than 10,000 works, most with a connection to South Carolina or the South generally. The permanent collection is arranged to highlight significant people and themes in Charleston's rich history, including its crucial roles in the American Revolution and Civil War.

On view now at the Gibbes are three important temporary exhibitions. The first celebrates the artistry of the local landscapist West Fraser and is explored in detail on page 70. The second is *History, Labor, Life: The Prints of Jacob Lawrence*, which offers a comprehensive overview of the prints made by this great African-American artist (1917–2000) relatively late in his career (from 1963 onward). Organized and toured by the Savannah College of Art and Design, this project runs from January 28 through April 30. And already underway (through April 23)



is *Painting a Nation: Hudson River Landscapes from the Higdon Collection*, which features 19th-century American masterworks assembled by Ann and Lee Higdon. (Lee Higdon was formerly president of the College of Charleston.)

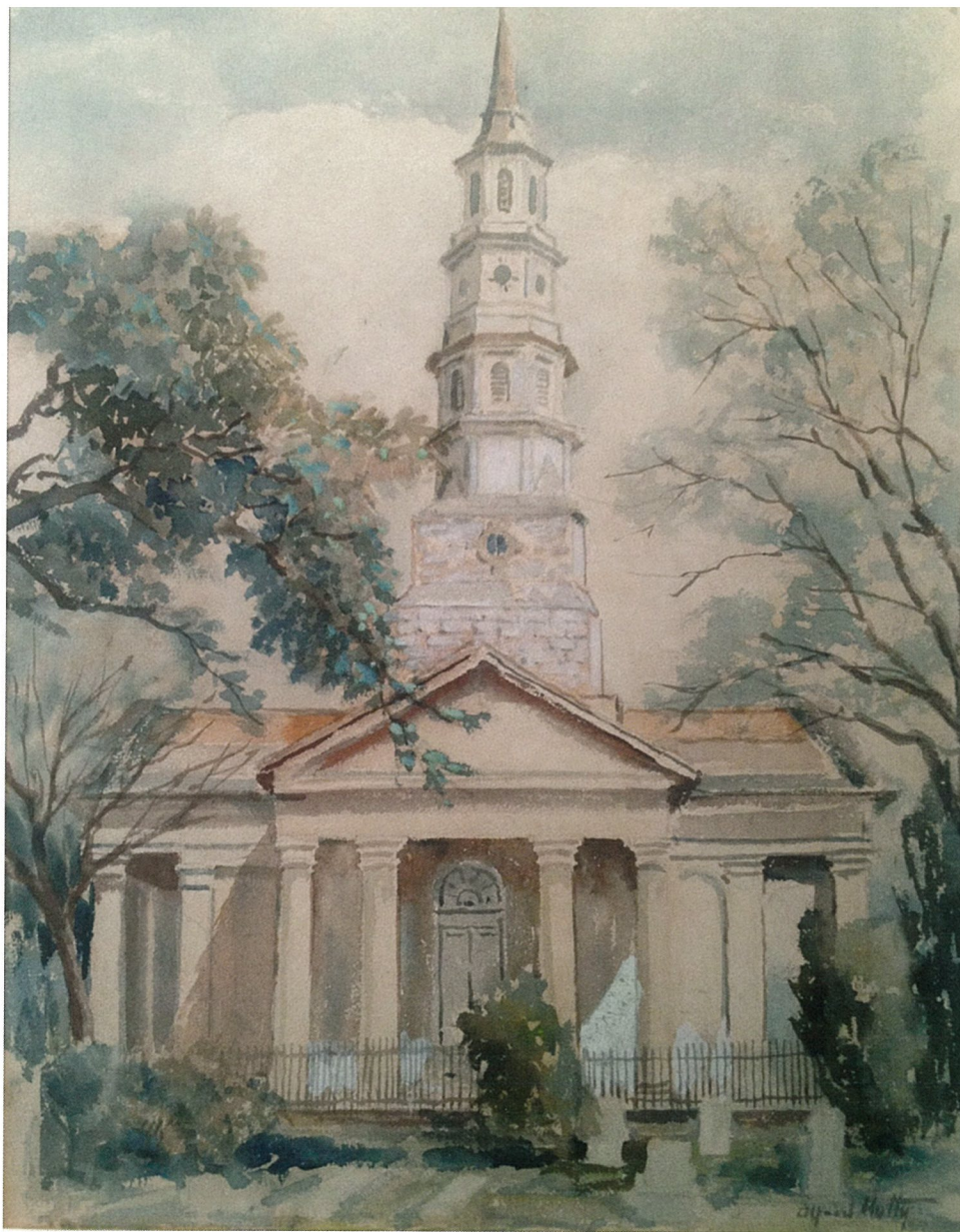
## THE GALLERY SCENE

Most of Charleston's art galleries are located in or near the French Quarter, named for the talented Huguenot community of Protestants who fled Catholic France and contributed significantly to Charleston's prosperity. Although they offer a range of styles and mediums, the galleries

At the Gibbes Museum of Art, ANNA HYATT HUNTINGTON's bronze *Marabou with Fish* (1934) stands before two paintings: at left is EDMUND TARBELL's painting *The Sisters* (1921), and at right ROBERT HENRI's *The Green Fan* (1912). Photo: MCG Photography

here are aesthetically more traditional than the city's best-known cultural project, the *Spoletto Festival USA* mounted annually since 1977. (Tickets go on sale in January for the 2017 performances, which run May 26 through June 11.)





**ALFRED HUTTY (1877–1954), *Old St. Philip's*, c. 1950,** watercolor and gouache on paper, 26 3/4 x 20 1/4 in., Charleston Renaissance Gallery

while **Ella Walton Richardson Fine Art Gallery** features painters like Lindsay Goodwin, Stapleton Kearns, Craig Nelson, and Aleksander and Lyuba Titovets, as well as a unique concentration of modern Dutch masters including Frits Goosen and Frans van der Wal. As mentioned above, impressive scenes of local natural beauty are made by West Fraser, who is represented by **Helena Fox** at her eponymous gallery. Fox also champions such national figures as Kenn Backhaus, John Cosby, Julyan Davis, William R. Davis, Donald Demers, Kathleen Dunphy, Mary Erickson, Jeffrey T. Larson, Joseph McGurl, Billyo O'Donnell, and Joe Paquet, as well as the renowned sculptor Kent Ullberg. **Reinert Fine Art** represents numerous talents, including Jill Basham, Mark Beale, Dan Beck, Mary Gerrish, Calvin Liang, Neil Patterson, William Schneider, and Michele Usibelli.

At **Horton Hayes Fine Art**, visitors will find impressive paintings by Kathy Anderson, Chris Groves, Marc Hanson, and Mark Kelvin Horton, and still more at **Wells Gallery** by Junko Ono Rothwell, Karen Larson Turner, and Stephen Scott Young. **Principle Gallery** offers leading realists like Anthony Ackrill, Michael Lynn Adams, Lynn Boggess, Paige Bradley, Nancy Bush, Rose Frantzen, Greg Gandy, David Hettinger, Jeff Legg, Robert Liberace, Jeremy Mann, Teresa Oaxaca, Sara Linda Poly, Sergio Roffo, John Stobart, and Terry Moore Strickland. **Meyer Vogl Gallery** displays the paintings of its two namesakes, as well as works by Dan Beck, Anne Blair Brown, Quang Ho, and others. Similarly, **Robert Lange Studios** features work

Particularly noteworthy among the galleries is **Ann Long Fine Art**, which represents the classical realist masters Charles Cecil, Daniel Graves, Ben Long, and D. Jeffrey Mims, as well as talents like Jura Bedic, Paul Brown, Kamille Corry, Marc Dalessio, Louise Fenne, Jill Hooper, Elizabeth Leary, Leo Mancini-Hresko, Mario Robinson, Paula Rubino, Jordan Sokol, and Frank Strazzulla. Long also handles superb sculptures by Robert Bodem, as well as the estate of the beloved Charleston painter Alfred Hutton (1877–1954). At the **Charleston Renaissance Gallery**, visitors find unrivaled depth in Renaissance artists of the 1920s through 1950s. Among the key figures from this period are the aforementioned Alfred Hutton, Alice Ravenel Huger Smith, Anna Heyward Taylor, Walter W. Thompson, Elizabeth O'Neill Verner, and Bayard Wootten. Be sure to stop by **Moore House American Antiques** for Charleston Renaissance paintings, drawings, and prints, too.

**Corrigan Gallery** represents such local standouts as John Hull, Gordon Nicholson, Kristi Ryba, and Sue Simons Wallace,

**JULYAN DAVIS (b. 1965), *Cypress Gardens*, 2016,** oil on linen, 20 x 24 in., Helena Fox Fine Art







PAULA RUBINO (b. 1968), *Smyrne Poised under the Glass Ceiling*, 2016, oil on linen, 48 x 36 in., Ann Long Fine Art





(LEFT) MARK BEALE (b. 1962), *The Half Shells*, oil on canvas, 8 x 10 in., Reinert Fine Art ■ (BOTTOM) DAN KNEPPER (b. 1961), *Headed In*, 2015, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 in., Atelier Gallery

by its namesake, plus colleagues including Mia Bergeron, Ali Cavanaugh, and Karin Jurick.

**Anglin Smith Fine Art** offers the sparkling canvases of Kim English and Shannon Smith Hughes, the observant animal sculptures of Darrell Davis, and the black-and-white photographs of Tripp Smith, who deftly captures the flat, marshy “Lowcountry” along the coast near Charleston. An array of outstanding artworks can be enjoyed at **The Sylvan Gallery**, including the sculptures of Glenna Goodacre and Richard Loffler, landscapes by William Berra, Roger Dale Brown, Trey Finney, Michael Harrell, and Joseph Orr, and figure paintings by Huihan Liu. At **Hagan Fine Art**, you’ll find top

works by Dee Beard Dean, Tanvi Pathare, Ulrich Gleiter, Daniil Volkov, and the far-flung members of the collective Realism Without Borders. **Mary Martin Gallery of Fine Art** offers not only paintings and sculptures, but also a wide range of decorative arts, even muralists who can be commissioned. Nearby, **Atelier Gallery** offers contemporary paintings and sculptures by such artists as Tony Gill, Paul Hastings, Dan Knepper, Deborah Newman, and Eric Zener.

Several galleries in Charleston have particular specializations. Most intriguing is **Galery Chuma**, which features colorful artworks reflecting the Gullah culture that arose in the 19th century when African-Americans settled in

the isolated islands and marshlands stretching from Jacksonville, Florida, north to Wilmington, North Carolina. **Dog & Horse Fine Art & Portraiture** has everything for devotees of the hunt and kennel, including works by Marty Whaley Adams, Peter Arguimbau, Lese Corrigan, Beth Evans, Joyce Hall, Ian Mason, Nancy Pellatt, Joseph Sulkowski, and Larry Wheeler. Their rival nearby is **The Sportsman’s Gallery and Paderewski Fine Art**, which handles works by Douglas Aagard, Nelson Boren, Brent Cotton, Mick Doellinger, Jim Eppler, Eldridge Hardie, Ralph Oberg, and Kyle Sims.

### A LIVELY CALENDAR

Charleston’s museums, galleries, and artists work together regularly to engage locals and visitors. The **Charleston Gallery Association** (CGA) coordinates art walks on the first Friday evening of almost every month, allowing opportunities to explore galleries after regular hours. A network of downtown businesses will organize the 12th annual **Palette and Palate Stroll** on a July evening (date not yet set), when galleries open their doors and offer gourmet cuisine prepared by local chefs.

On the weekend of February 17–19, at least 40,000 people will participate in the annual **Southeastern Wildlife Exposition**, the largest event of its kind in America. Full details appear on page 68. Coming up in March is a wave of activities that kick off the month-long **Festival of Houses and Gardens**, during which more than 150 private homes in Charleston’s oldest neighborhoods open their doors to visitors. Also on deck in March is the 9th annual **Charleston Antiques Show** featuring more than 30 dealers. If you are seeking bargains, keep an eye on the sale schedules of **Charleston Auction House** and **Charleston Estate Auctions**, where intriguing antiques and occasionally fine art can surface.

Whenever you visit Charleston, there is bound to be a cultural happening on the docket. Just be sure to leave enough time to wander the city’s atmospheric streets and shoreline: losing track of time is a key reason to visit this seemingly timeless place.

**KELLY COMPTON** is a contributing writer to *Fine Art Connoisseur*.

**Information:** For details, contact the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, 423 King Street, Charleston, SC 29403, 800.774.0006, [charlestoncvb.com](http://charlestoncvb.com)