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Art exhibition, sale to benefit painting scholarship

NOVEMBER 17, 2017



Patricia Walker Oysters in Morning Light pastel and gouache 18x24

Patricia Walker "Oysters in Morning Light"

"Meaningful Painting: The Legacy of Pat Walker," an exhibition showcasing the works of Pat Walker, professor emeritus in the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art (BFSDoArt) at Georgia Southern University, will be on view Nov. 27 – Dec. 15 at the Center for Art and Theatre's University Gallery. An opening reception, silent auction, and gallery talk will be Nov. 30 beginning at 5 p.m. in the Center for Art and Theatre.

Walker (1949-2015) was a professor of painting and drawing at Georgia Southern for 27 years and was awarded professor emeritus status in 2014. During her tenure, Walker influenced hundreds of students, many of whom went on to be distinguished artists and art faculty. Throughout her career, she exhibited her work both nationally and internationally and received many awards, grants and scholarships. Her work also was included in numerous art publications.

This exhibit will feature works from Walker's studio that span more than 35 years of her artistic lifetime, including work that has not been exhibited before. It will include a range of mediums, from large oil paintings and drawings to

very affordable small studies, along with Giclees (high quality copies of work printed on canvas) of one of her most celebrated works, "Oysters in Morning Light." Additionally, two current BFSDoArt Master of Fine Arts students, Zak Kelley and Jessamy McManus, will exhibit paintings at the reception and discuss the impact Walker had on their aesthetic development at Georgia Southern.

"Pat was an award-winning painter and pastel artist; above all, she inspired art students in the department with her sustained commitment to hard work in the studio," said Elsie Hill, associate professor of Painting and Drawing and Foundations in the BFSDoArt. "The establishment of the Pat Walker Scholarship in Painting as well as the Student Resource Center in the Visual Arts Building, which houses all of Pat's art books, makes her legacy ever present in the department."

The exhibit, gallery talk and opening reception are free and open to the public, and all proceeds from the silent auction sales of Walker's work will help endow the Pat Walker Scholarship in Painting, which will provide needed financial support for painting students in the BFSDoArt.

For more information, contact Elsie Hill at elsiehill@georgiasouthern.edu.

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) is the largest of the eight colleges that make up Georgia Southern University, and it plays a central role in every student's core of knowledge. CLASS, also described as the University's College of the Creative Mind, prepares students to achieve academic excellence, develop their analytical skills, enhance their creativity and embrace their responsibilities as citizens of their communities, their nations and the world. CLASS offers more than 20 undergraduate degrees and several interdisciplinary minors from its 11 departments and five academic centers. CLASS offers eight master's degrees, two graduate certificates and one doctoral degree. For more information, visit class.georgiasouthern.edu.

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Connecting us to the past: Georgia Southern anthropologists bridge gap between past, present Native people

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(Photo by: Scott Clark) Georgia Southern is home to these Kirk regional corner-notched points dated in the range of 10,000 – 8,000 years ago.

What can we learn about practices of Native people thousands of years ago and connect it to our culture today? Georgia Southern anthropologists seem to think quite a bit.

From early agricultural practices to eating habits and social gatherings, research by professors at Georgia Southern shows many connections to present day. Studying historical artifacts like pottery, animal bones and even petrified seeds can help anthropologists tell the story of these connections.

“As anthropologists, we’re fascinated by these artifacts, but beyond that, one of the ultimate goals we serve is to help tell about that patchwork and fabric of humanity all around the world,” said Jared Wood, Ph.D., assistant professor of anthropology at Georgia Southern.

Telling the story of Native peoples from an anthropological perspective is important because it provides scientific insight to life hundreds or thousands of years ago, Wood noted. It is also important to remember the cultural perspective, especially with Native American history, because there are many descendants still alive today.

Pointing to preserved arrowhead points, Wood said, "If you asked me what these points tell about these peoples, I'd have a scientific story for you that talks about quarrying of resources, using these to hunt game or technologically as knives or scrapers. As anthropologists these are among the stories we tell.

"But if you asked a Native person, 'What does this mean to you?' they could give a story about the meaningfulness of materials they made and used, and how it tied into the complex structure of their culture," he continued. "Both of these stories would be true ... it is just different ways of looking at human behavior."

Associate Professor of Anthropology Heidi Altman, Ph.D., agreed.

"What we do as anthropologists, is look at what makes humans the same, and also what separates us," Altman said. "We are trying to figure out the connectedness between then and today so we see social structures and cultural features that were present then and today. It helps people relate to the past."

Altman has helped connect past and present Native American generations in a number of ways, most notably by helping communities who are working to preserve the Native language of the Cherokee Nation in North Carolina and Oklahoma. A small percentage of Native speakers are still alive today, she said.

"For about 10 years, I worked on helping them develop community programming to revitalize the language," said Altman. "We started an immersion school, made community programs for elders and speakers, and began a whole process of culture of linguistic revitalization that is long and complicated."

Archaeological Curator, Matthew Compton, Ph.D., who specializes in zooarchaeology, the study of animal remains, has studied the contents of pits from Native American archaeological sites. He said researchers have found animal remains, charred seeds, sherds of pottery and other artifacts at Hartford, an archaeological site in Pulaski County, Georgia. These artifacts, thousands of which are stored at Georgia Southern's [R M Bogan Archaeological Repository](#), tell a lot about the daily lives of Native Americans who inhabited the site and even how the inhabitants interacted with other groups in different regions of the state.

Compton said researchers have collected items like deer antlers that not only indicate Native Americans were hunting and eating deer, but also what time of year the deer were harvested. Additional findings like catfish, bass, duck, and squirrel bones, as well as charred acorns, persimmon seeds and hickory nuts show they relied on a diverse array of plants and animals for their diet.

One very interesting find, Compton said, was a tooth from a black drum.

"The black drum is a coastal fish, and this site is just south of Macon [Georgia], so this tooth is from a fish that doesn't live around that area," Compton said. "Just like our evidence from the pottery that shows interactions between groups from different areas, this shows an interaction with the coast either through trade or travel."

"I think people have a real misconception that Native peoples were simple and they weren't very advanced, but they're just as intelligent and complex and adaptive as people anywhere in the world," said Wood.

The best way to avoid these misconceptions, according to Wood, is to continue to study and learn. He says south Georgia is the perfect place to do so.

"I stayed in the southeast for a reason," said Wood. "We have access to so many sites, surveys and opportunities that I will die happily never having gone to all of the places in south Georgia that I want to study. That's a good problem to have, and a tremendous boon to our students who can actually go out and do meaningful archaeology research and contribute to larger questions of human complexity in really unknown areas."