

SC State Museum's Art Day 'takes art off the wall and makes it real'

By Katie McElveen

SPECIAL TO GO COLUMBIA

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Visitors were invited to dismantle artist Jonathan Brilliant's sculpture "Building a Universe" at a past Art Day. ROB THOMPSON FILE PHOTO



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If you've stared at a painting, a sculpture or some other piece of art and just not gotten it, the South Carolina State Museum's Art Day is for you.

That's because beyond special behind-the-scenes tours of the museum's art storage areas, which are filled with more than 4,000 works of art dating from 1590 to the present, you'll have a chance to chat with several artists doing their own creating at the event. Art Day is set for Saturday, March 4.

Herman Thompson, a metal sculptor from Jenkinsville with several pieces on display at the museum, will be working in the Lipscomb Art Gallery on "Wild West Town," a massive sculpture constructed entirely from coat hangers.

"Once you have a passion, the art comes on its own," he said. "I see an object and I go for it."

Printmaker Gene Speer, who specializes in collagraphy, a form of printmaking that uses everyday objects like wire and paper to create textured works, agreed.

"I never know how a piece is going to turn out," he said. "I revise as I go. People are always curious about this process. Art Day is great because they can learn by watching."

Painter Alicia Leeke also will be on hand. "I love Art Day because it takes art off the wall and makes it real," she said. "For guests, it's fun and not intimidating. For me, it's a day to do something totally different as an artist, like let people contribute to the painting I'm working on."

In addition to demonstrations, Art Day features the opening of a new exhibition, "Guy Lipscomb: A Centennial Celebration," in the Community Gallery. This exhibit includes highlights of Lipscomb's work in the mMuseum's collection from the 1990s through 2009, as well as material from his archive and celebrates the unique contributions of this artist in the 100th anniversary year of his birth.

If you go

Art Day

WHEN: Saturday, March 4

WHERE: S.C. State Museum, 301 Gervais St.

WORTH NOTING: In conjunction with Art Day, the museum will open its doors to aspiring art students at the third annual College Art Day, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday, March 3. Aspiring art students will meet current students and faculty from colleges around the state and hear from alumni applying art degrees in their professions. Advance reservation required: [\(803\) 898-4999](tel:8038984999) or group_visits@scmuseum.org.

COST: Art Day and College Art Day are included with museum general admission or membership.

INFO: www.scmuseum.org