

Yadkin Arts Council 2025 Juried Exhibition Juror Bios



STEVEN DUNN

Steven Dunn's art is inspired by his background in horticulture, and his landscape designs benefited from his artistic education. "Since a young child, art has been my inner life."

Dunn grew up in a family that ran a garden nursery. His parents were creative, and his mother was a fine seamstress. He majored in art at East Carolina University, and he took some short courses in horticulture at N.C. State University. He worked in the family landscaping business, a fourth-generation horticulturist, and

designed landscapes for many years until eventually deciding to focus on art full time. For years, he was represented by Hampton House Art Gallery, and he worked as the gallery manager for 11 years.

Dunn said he doesn't have a single style. He creates images with pen and ink, graphite, acrylic paints, oil paints and watercolors. Sometimes he writes Haiku about his art, simply for "the joy of creating... Most of my work comes from nature in some form," Dunn said. "I'm sure that comes from my love of the earth and growing. I see a leaf; I see a tree; I see a landscape. Any parts of these things can inspire me to do something. It may be a color on a leaf; it may be form within tree branches or just the feeling when the sun's at a certain light, and you get a feeling. As an artist, we can interpret the emotional reaction to what is around us."

He also creates "functional and decorative painted tapestries" and has been an exhibiting member of Piedmont Craftsmen since 2001. For these paintings, he paints on a heavy canvas and protects the paintings with multiple layers of varnish. His patterns are inspired by studying his sketches from plants, animals, geological formations and landscapes.

He moved to Arbor Acres in the early 2000's and started teaching classes and now serves as their Curator.



TONY LEONARDI

Tony Leonardi was born in New York City where his interest in art began when he attended New York High School of Art and Design. He continued studies in graphic arts, earning a Bachelor's degree. After a career in Publishing and Marketing, Leonardi returned to his life-long love of art, currently working from his studio in Pfafftown, Forsyth County, North Carolina.

In 2013, his interest shifted from paint on canvas to carving hiking sticks. Most sticks are made from Bass Wood, but many carved pieces utilize the unique shape of the shaft wood found locally. The bases are made from reclaimed wood from the 18th century Dobson homestead. Each stick is titled, numbered, signed and dated.