

Critics Picks: The best visual arts in town during Spoleto

Here's what to check out between shows

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Provided

Laurie Adams' *Conversations with the Figure* opens at the Ellis-Nicholson Gallery on Fri. June 1.

Charleston Museum | *Unfurled: Flags from the Collections of the Charleston Museum*

The Charleston Museum's latest exhibit, *Unfurled*, opens on June 1 in the Historic Textiles Gallery, presenting flags that span from the early 19th to the late 20th century. Many of the pieces on display have rarely been shown before, and this collection spans both functions and styles. Highlights of the exhibit include Civil War flags, like an early version of the national flag of the Confederacy, a bloodstained South Carolina militia unit flag, and a battle flag captured at Antietam in 1862. There's also a printed handkerchief, featuring 108 flag images, likely those flown by ships as signals for pilots; a Carolina Rifle Club banner from 1869, displaying a palmetto tree with crossed rifles; and a 48 star American flag, which hung over the front door at 37 Legare St. during WWI.

Opens June 1. Ongoing. \$12/general admission, \$10/youth ticket, \$5/child ticket. Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St. Downtown. charlestonmuseum.org

Gibbes Museum of Art | *Vanishing Charleston*

Eight artists examine the evolving — and disappearing — landscape of our city in the Gibbes' current exhibit, *Vanishing Charleston*. In a recent interview with *City Paper*, participating artist Julyan Davis said, "A lot of what I paint is actually faded glory. It's already at some point being gentrified, then it's fallen into disrepair. That has to me a certain pathos ... Change is inevitable." Dive deeper into the exhibit with a special artists' talk, held in conjunction with Piccolo Spoleto, on Thurs. May 31 at 1 p.m. Gibbes curator Pam Wall will moderate a discussion between Davis and artist West Fraser. Tickets are \$25 for nonmembers (\$15/members) and can be purchased online.

May 25–Oct. 21. \$15/adult, \$13/senior, military, \$10/student, \$6/youth. Gibbes Museum of Art, 135 Meeting St. Downtown. gibbesmuseum.org

Miller Gallery | *Art & Light*

Art & Light's collaboration with Miller Gallery in Charleston started last summer with a plan between Teresa Roche and Sarah Miller to produce pop-up events in both cities in 2018. Miller Gallery showcased an unprecedented collection of contemporary work at *Art & Light* in January of this year. Now, *Art & Light* will bring 10 of their artists to Miller Gallery in May. The month long exhibit on East Bay Street will feature a grouping of fine art in a number of artistic styles and mediums. *Art & Light* gallery lives in the Village of West Greenville, S.C.

Opening reception: Fri. May 25, 6–8 p.m. Open through June. Free to attend. Miller Gallery, 149 1/2 East Bay St. Downtown. millergallerychs.com

Trager Contemporary | *Love Letters to My South*

Kelly Chelena's *Love Letters to My South* is a new show of works that reflects the artist's experiences in Southern states between the ages of 6 and 12, and the influence of nature on the recollections of youth. Chelena says that she became a process painter when "the background of my work became more important than the subject I was painting. Layering, scraping, and adding hidden text are some of the signature in my oils. I have become an expressive mark maker with my large watercolors. There is a relationship between one mark and another."

Opening reception: Fri. May 25, 5–9 p.m. Open through July 1. Free to attend. Trager Contemporary, 577 King St. Downtown. tragercontemporary.com

Ellis–Nicholson | *Conversations with the Figure*

Artist Laurie Adams "intends to raise thoughts and questions about the conversations we have and how that translates into communication" with her new Ellis–Nicholson Gallery show, *Conversations with the Figure*. Adams creates on oil and canvas, with a focus on abstraction with and without the figure, emphasizing the light and dark that falls between shapes and colors. In an artist's statement she says, "I am interested in who we bring forth and present in our conversations and how honest are we in revealing ourselves. My paintings represent that which I see as the very essence of the figure, so as to start a conversation of beauty, mystery, the female body unashamed, mother and child, communal efforts, and strangers, unconnected, yet searching for a connection. It is my intent through this body of work to ask a larger question, that I believe looms over us both individually and collectively, and that is: What conversations still long to be spoken?"

Opening reception: Fri. June 1, 5–8 p.m. Through June. Free to attend. Ellis–Nicholson Gallery, 1.5 Broad St. Downtown. ellis-nicholsongallery.com

Tags: Ellis–Nicholson Gallery, Laurie Adams, Trager Contemporary, Love Letters to My South, Miller Gallery, Art & Light, Gibbes Museum of Art, Vanishing Charleston, Charleston Museum, Unfurled: Flags from the Collections of the Charleston Museum
