

Art

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ding over the phone, while others expressed interest in buying pieces if they didn't sell during the auction.

P.J. Williams, a former board member who has been collecting art for 20 years, was among the bidders present.

"This is a great auction, and there are pieces that I'm interested in," she said. "It's a great way to support Delta Fine Arts and a great way to get a piece of art."

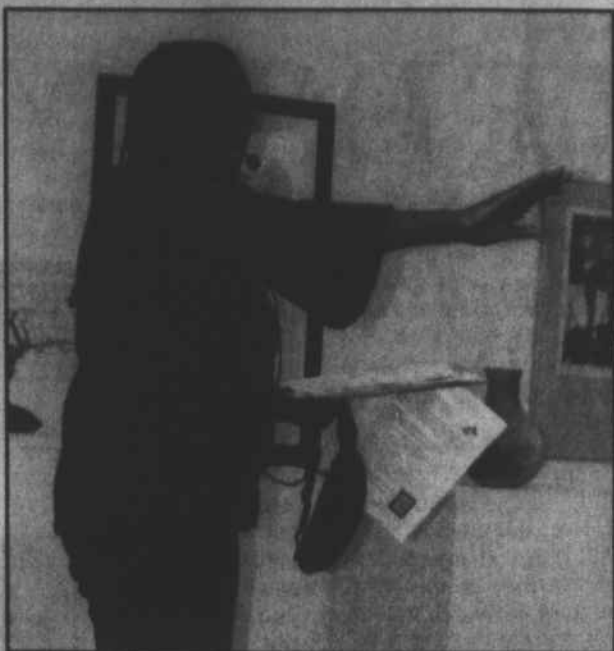
Williams said she started collecting pieces after viewing many different exhibits, including those at the Delta Arts Center, and often meeting the artists themselves. Collecting is an expensive hobby, said Williams, so she can indulge only every so often. Currently, she and her husband have accumulated 50-60 hanging pieces and about 20 sculptures. Her favorites include a painting that local artist Francis Brown Jr. did of his daughter, Valarie, a segmented landscape by Robert Reid and a piece by the renowned Romare Bearden.

The Williamses' collection got slightly larger after the auction. P.J. Williams had the winning bids on a painting by Brown, who displayed her work at the first Delta exhibit in 1972, and a greeting card by Hale Woodward, a nationally-known artist who gave the card to New York art collectors John and Vivian Hewitt. Mrs. Hewitt donated Woodward's card and others by various artists to Delta for its fundraising auction.

Williams advises those just getting into art collecting to buy what they love.

"Love what you buy; put your heart and soul into it and ... buy what you would enjoy," she said.

It was the first auction for longtime art lover Prince Raney Rivers, the pastor of United



Auctioneer Belinda Tate in action.

Photos by Todd Luck



Delta Arts Board Member Dara Silver makes a bid on behalf of a patron.



Rev. Prince Rivers was among the participants.

Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church. During the auction, he consulted over the phone with his mother, who used to work for the Georgia Arts Council.

"I thought it was great. The pieces were quality, the auctioneer did a great job, I hope the Art Center made some money," said

Rivers, who left with two pieces.

The auction brought in thousands, but not anything close to the haul brought in a decade ago. Caesar said she wasn't expecting those type of proceeds in an economy that has negatively affected art sales.

Tate, who has been a licensed auctioneer for more than seven years, said that the auction went "reasonably well." She said with some African American artists growing in national recognition, a few of the pieces, such as those with opening bids in the thousands of dollars that had no had takers, had "outpaced the resources of the community," a community that could've afforded the artists' work before their popularity exploded.

As the auctioneer, Tate researched the pieces, examined them, helped determine prices and find buyers. During the auction, she informed buyers about pieces and tried to fetch the best price for each piece sold. She said she enjoyed seeing people learning about the pieces and, in some cases, falling in love with them on the spot.

"I love artwork," said Tate. "I love helping wonderful works of art find very good homes. There's a match making aspect that I enjoy ... One of the things that I love about arts in general is that 'ah-ha'-moment, that moment of discovery, and I live for that."

The auction was just one of several events that the gallery will hold to mark its anniversary. Other events include a symposium on African American women in art, an art education initiative, exhibits and the culminating event - a masquerade ball in October 2013. Also next year, the gallery plans to start a book club and an online eBay store.

Delta's first exhibit was held at the Benton Convention Center on Oct. 12, 1972. It featured about 100 pieces by 80 black artists. It was without a building of its own before moving into a house on Third Street in 1982.

For more information, visit www.deltaartscenter.org

America's First Couple welcomes Shiloh's First Couple



Submitted Photo

Rev. Paul Lowe Jr., pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church, and his wife, LaGail, pose in the White House in front of a portrait of John F. Kennedy Jr. The couple recently returned from a three-day visit to Washington, D.C., where Rev. Lowe and other noted and loyal Democrats attended a holiday reception hosted by President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama and were briefed by White House staffers on issues important to the president in his second term, including avoiding the so-called "fiscal cliff" and reform of both the health care and immigration systems. Lowe is the chair of the N.C. Democratic Party's Fifth Congressional District and was a delegate at this year's Democratic National Convention in Charlotte.



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