

NEWS RELEASE

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For more information contact: Tom Banks at (256) 543-2787, ext. 38 or tombanks@culturalarts.org
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Hardin Center Opens New Art Exhibits with Free Admission

GADSDEN, AL: It is now free to view art exhibitions at the Hardin Center. Two new exhibitions opened Monday and mark a change in a 30-year-old policy.

The Hardin Center has always combined its admission with Imagination Place Children's Museum admission. That is no longer the case according to Executive Director Tom Banks. "We feel that folks need as many opportunities as possible to see beautiful and interesting art, now more than ever. Thanks to support from the City of Gadsden, the Alabama State Council on the Arts, and our donors, we are able to offer our art exhibitions at no charge to the public."

The two new exhibits are a pairing of landscape painters. New York artist Martin Weinstein uses acrylic paint on layers of floating acrylic sheets that are stacked to form a single of image of great depth. The perspective of the image changes as the viewer moves. Maryland artist Stephen Estrada uses oil on canvas to capture coastal scenes. His work features spectacular images of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts as well as the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The exhibitions are on view in the Chan Gallery until December 30.

The hours have also changed slightly for art exhibitions. Visitors may visit the art exhibitions and the Hardin Center's 72-foot-long model railroad of Gadsden in the 1940s for free Monday through Thursday from 10 am to 5 pm and from 10 am to 1 pm on Fridays. The art gallery and model railroad are closed on the weekends.

Regular admission still applies to Imagination Place Children's Museum which is open each day except Sunday. The cost is \$8 per person for children and adults, free for children under 24 months, and free for Hardin Center members. A special admission rate of \$2 per person is offered for families with valid EBT cards. Imagination Place is open Monday through Thursday from 10 am to 5 pm, Friday from 10 am to 1 pm, and Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm. The children's museum closes each day from 1 pm to 2 pm to fully sanitize the space. Imagination Place birthday parties for children 10 and under have resumed and reservations are available Monday through Saturday. Booking information can be found at culturalarts.org.

"We are very happy to be open and providing cultural opportunities and fun family outings for the community. We cannot express our gratitude enough to the City of Gadsden, the Alabama State Council on the Arts, and all of our donors and members for their ongoing support.

Without that support our programs would not be possible,” said Banks. “We’ve made modifications to everything we do to ensure safety and we are very pleased to see visitors and participants returning.”

In addition to Imagination Place and the Hardin Center’s art exhibits, the Gadsden Cultural Arts Foundation also offers instruction for all ages in art and music through the Gadsden Community School for the Arts, classical and contemporary ballet through the Downtown Dance Conservatory, and both in-school instruction and after-school performing ensemble orchestral programs through the Etowah Youth Orchestras. Scholarships are available for those who qualify.

For more information on any of the Foundation’s programs, visit culturalarts.org or call (256) 543-ARTS. The Hardin Center and Imagination Place are located at 501 Broad Street in downtown Gadsden.

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