

# A WALL WITH A VIEW

Candace Lovely's "The Edge" brightens up theater lobby



For two years now, visitors to the Elizabeth Wallace Theatre have enjoyed a breathtaking view of the marshes of Dolphin Head thanks to a painting created by renowned impressionist artist Candace Lovely.

Like a picture window, the huge 6-foot by 10-foot canvas captures the peaceful panorama seen from Lovely's own backyard in Hilton Head Plantation. The painting, titled "The Edge," covers a wall in the Hargray Lobby.

"It's a beautiful scene overlooking Pine Island and Skull Creek," Lovely said. "There are a couple of deer and wading egrets in the landscape. It's what I see from my yard."

The painting was on display in the Hilton Head Island Airport for 12 years before Lovely loaned it to the Arts Center in 2009. Valued at more than \$100,000, it is the largest piece the award-winning artist has ever painted.

A student of the Boston School, the Vermont-born and Boston-bred artist has been acclaimed as the reigning Grand Dame of American Impressionism. After winning her third award from the Copley Society of Boston – the oldest art association in America – she was honored with the designation "Copley Master" in 1988.

One of the highlights of her career was painting the official portrait of First Lady Barbara Bush in 1990.

"I got a call one day from Mrs. Bush's secretary asking if I paint dogs," Lovely recalled. "Mrs. Bush wanted her dog Millie in the painting."

The "sitting" took place over a week in the White House. Before her meeting with the First Lady, security officers squeezed each of her paint tubes and checked all of her brushes and equip-



Candace Lovely – "The Edge"

ment to ensure she was not carrying contraband.

"It was very exciting going to the White House," Lovely said. "When I confessed to Mrs. Bush that I was nervous, she told me not be nervous and to call her Barbara. She was as gracious as she could be. She even told me jokes."

Two years after painting the portrait, Lovely moved to Hilton Head Island to be closer to her parents who had retired here. Over the years, she has painted dozens of Lowcountry land-

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scapes and images of events in the area. Her most recent commission (a \$40,000, 32-inch by 48-inch painting) features three girls dancing with a yellow ribbon on the beach – her response to the ongoing wars.

She recently began painting every Saturday on Calhoun Street in Bluffton. The subject of her paintings has included a dress shop, The

Store and the Church of the Cross.

You can find her work in Camelia Art on Hilton Head Island, Copley Society of Art in Boston and Rockport Art Association in Massachusetts.

“I love to paint,” Lovely said. “I have been known to sell a piece right off the easel for \$350. What’s a painting without an audience?”