



"The first impressions I had of Beaufort and its surrounding low lands have given way to something more nuanced. As the first year draws to a close the scent of familiarity comes in with the spring tide but I know I've barely scratched the surface. There's a lifetime of exploration to be had here."

- Jayne Parker

When photographer Jayne Parker left New York to spend a year in the Lowcountry, she knew she couldn't build a proper client base in that brief time – she specializes in portraits – but she wasn't about to sit around twiddling her thumbs, either. Not when her husband Arthur would be spending his days in historic downtown Beaufort, renovating one of the city's most celebrated houses.

Built in 1853, Tidalholm shares a storied past with other mansions on The Point, along with an extra dash of glamour thanks to its appearance in films like the *The Big Chill* and *The Great Santini*.

According to Jayne, “John Tashjian, founder and principal of Centurion Real Estate, bought it as a home for his family, and asked if Arthur would like to oversee the renovation. When Arthur saw the historical and architectural importance of the house, its significance to the local community and stunning location, he knew this would be an incredible project to be a part of.”

So in May of 2017, the couple found a house in Habersham and moved their lives south. “We were excited for this complete change of pace and lifestyle after years in Manhattan,” she says.

A complete change of pace? Great. But Jayne had no interest in ‘just chillin’ while Arthur busied himself with The Big Chill House. She needed a project of her own. Thus was conceived ‘A Year in the Lowcountry,’ the collection of powerful photographs now hanging in Jayne Parker’s Pop-Up Gallery at Habersham. The exhibit isn’t exactly the one she envisioned a year ago. Of course, the Lowcountry isn’t exactly what she’d envisioned, either.

“Coming South for the first time in the late spring I had a head full of images of what this place might be like,” she writes in her Artist’s Statement. “However much research is done on the approach to a new life, books read, movies examined,



Instagram plundered, there is always the moment on arrival when a place suddenly swims into focus and presents as a whole for the first time. I was expecting humid but I hadn’t accounted for the richness of the air and its assault on the uninitiated. I had seen the poetry of the marsh landscape but here was the low-tide revelation of primordial mud punctuated by oyster shells and the white of egret wings. I was intrigued by the trails of moss draped ghoulishly outside my bedroom window, blown to smithereens when Irma came to town. Everything was close to my idea of it and at the same time completely different.”

Jayne, who had a 20-year career in nursing alongside her photography career, has also studied English literature and edited art publications professionally. It shows in her prose. Reading her Gallery Guide is almost as aesthetically pleasing as perusing her photography. And hearing *her* read it is a pure delight. Jayne Parker was not always a Manhattanite, you see, but hails originally from a small village in England. And as we all know, everything sounds better in a British accent. . .

Lowcountry Weekly: In your Artist’s Statement, you say you’ve tried to capture something of the “duality” you see here in your new world. Can you elaborate on that?





HPD Photo of the Fish Sculpture by Jayne Parker, 2015. The fish is a mullet, a species of fish found in the Lowcountry. The sculpture is made of wood and is a representation of the fish's unique shape and patterned body.



www.jayneparker.com Jayne Parker's Year in the Lowcountry, 2015. The figs are a common fruit in the Lowcountry and are often used in cooking and baking. The photograph is a close-up of the figs, highlighting their unique shape and color.