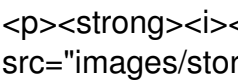


## New Book Preserves Vanishing Culture

Written by Editor

Wednesday, 06 July 2011 15:22

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***Halftide Publishing, Okatie, South Carolina, announces the publication of a new book, *The Gullahs of South Carolina*. The book is a work of art as well as a work of history, which tells an urgent and important story about the Gullah people and their vanishing way of life and culture. Many Americans are unaware that here, along the South Carolina coast, was a culture more strongly rooted in African ways than any other in America. It was a time when most sea islanders were black and understood the importance of tucking Spanish moss into a shoe, painting window trim blue, and running like mad from a coachwhip snake. The rivers and ocean was theirs for fishing; the salt marshes theirs for shrimping, crabbing and oystering; and the woods theirs for hunting. They sang spirituals and spoke their native tongue without shame. They wove baskets without worrying that the sweet grass might vanish from the swamps someday. They delivered their own babies, made medicine of herbs, and knitted their own fishing nets. They danced and clapped when they worshiped, told stories, and adorned graves with life's necessities and pleasures so the departed could pass easily and amiably between material and spiritual worlds. In quiet self-sufficiency, the Gullahs lived off the water and the land and their unique culture thrived in isolation for centuries on the remote sea islands until the outside world discovered those islands and started paying millions to own them and new ways began forcing out the old.***

*The Gullahs of South Carolina* is a pictorial journey through the sea islands and Lowcountry of South Carolina, with artwork by the author that conveys the great love of the Gullah people for the land and the water in peaceful times gone by. The images and text in each section provide historical information and interesting facts about the Gullah people, their way of life, and their culture. The book also creates public awareness of the Gullah language, lifestyle and culture so that Gullah Children and future generations will know and recognize the significant contributions the Gullah people have made to South Carolina and to America's heritage.

"The Gullahs of South Carolina" is now available from [Createspace.com](https://www.createspace.com/3605666) (<https://www.createspace.com/3605666>) and Amazon.com and it will be available in bookstores soon.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ARTIST**

The special talents of self-taught artist, Pearce W. Hammond, combine in his primitive paintings that utilize bright primary colors, pen and ink, and mixed media. From his studio overlooking the tidal waters and marshes of the Chechessee River in Okatie, SC, he draws inspiration, mood, color and subject matter, captured in his unique paintings depicting African Americans from the Gullah culture in peaceful times gone by shrimping, fishing, crabbing, gathering oysters and living off the land along the sea islands of South Carolina. Hammond attributes his putting brush to canvas to his famed Savannah, Georgia-born Uncle, Johnny Mercer, who was famous for his prolific song writing career and winner of four Academy Awards. Mercer was also a talented painter. One Christmas when Mercer was visiting family in Savannah, a young Hammond showed his uncle some of his work and Mercer said he was good at it and should pursue the craft. In addition to art, Hammond is also an accomplished writer, editor and photographer and his work has been featured in many local and regional publications.

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