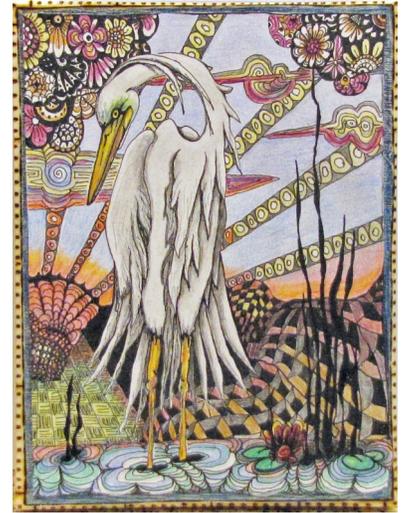


## ***Experience, Explore and Enjoy***

### Seeing the Art in Nature at the ***Old Florida Celebration of the Arts in Cedar Key***

March 28 & 29, 2015

For decades, artists have been inspired by the natural beauty of Cedar Key, a small island community located in the center of Florida's Nature coast. Each spring, the town welcomes art enthusiasts to join them at the annual Spring Arts Festival, which was recently named as one of America's top 50 fine arts festivals in a nationwide survey administered by ArtFairCalendar.com. This year's festival design contest theme, *Seeing the Art in Nature*, captures the essence of Cedar Key and all there is to Experience, Explore and Enjoy, if you choose to get off the beaten path and follow SR24 to its western end, for the Old Florida Celebration of the Arts, March 28 & 29, 2015.



*Daybreak*, by Joni Hoffman, 2015 Old Florida Celebration of the Arts Design Contest Winner

Your experience begins as you cross what locals call the Number 4 Bridge, the last bridge connecting the small archipelago of islands to the mainland. The need to slow down, take a deep breath and connect with the environment fills your senses and you know you are somewhere special. As you drive toward "downtown," you get a sense of the tranquil working community whose economy is closely tied to the water through aquaculture and tourism. But, things are a bit different on festival weekend when most everyone is involved in transforming Historic 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and City Park into an inviting venue for visitors. The festival benefits local non-profit organizations who sell seafood, homemade goodies and other treats in the park; and the Cedar Key Arts Center whose mission is to promote the arts in Cedar Key and serves as coordinating sponsor of the event.



Organizers work hard to create an experience that is unique for both the artists and visitors. In contrast to larger events, the Old Florida Celebration of the Arts only invites 120 fine artists and craftsmen focusing on quality of the art, balance of the disciplines and uniqueness of the work to offer a truly different experience. Booths are spaced generously to allow artists and art lovers to interact and art demonstrations are presented both afternoons along the venue. Hospitality is a priority at this free, family & pet friendly event open from 10 am – 5 pm both days.

In addition to the festival, you can expand your art experience by visiting the Cedar Key Arts Center and two Art Co-ops featuring local artists, all right on 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Also within walking distance are numerous restaurants, shops, beachfront City Park and the Cedar Key Historic Society that can provide maps for a walking tour of the adjacent Historic District. Throughout the community you will find murals done by local artists, including the newest mural located at the town's only gas station, entitled *See the Art in Nature*, which invites visitors to get out and enjoy their surroundings.

To explore the Art in Nature on your own, you may want to plan time to walk one of the nature trails on the island maintained by local volunteers. Or visit the expansive Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge that surrounds Cedar Key and offers numerous hiking and kayaking trails, a butterfly garden, bat house, and allows you to totally immerse yourself in the discovery of nature. Don't forget to plan time to watch as nature's biggest palette is painted every day at sunrise and sunset. So come experience, explore and enjoy Cedar Key at the 2015 Old Florida Celebration of the Arts, March 28 and 29.



For more information: [www.CedarKeyArtsFestival.com](http://www.CedarKeyArtsFestival.com) (352-543-5400); [www.CedarKeyArtsCenter.org](http://www.CedarKeyArtsCenter.org), or [info@cedarkey.org](mailto:info@cedarkey.org) (352-543-5600)

Photographs by Ann Kamzelski