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**ART FOR THE HEALTH OF IT ON DISPLAY NOW**  
*Works shown February-April at Southeast Missouri Hospital*

**Cape Girardeau, MO** – The healing benefits of art will be the focus of the 18<sup>th</sup> annual *Art for the Health of It* exhibition jointly sponsored by the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri and Southeast Missouri Hospital.

*Art for the Health of It* provides a way to utilize art as a calming agent in a stress-laden environment, while demonstrating the health and healing benefits of artistic images and expression. An opening reception for the exhibit will be held February 24, 2013 from 2 pm to 4 pm in the Surgical Waiting Room Corridor at Southeast Missouri Hospital. Artwork will remain on display until April 25.

The juried show was open to all area artists 18 years and older living within a 175 mile radius of Cape Girardeau. Cash awards will be given for the Best of Show piece and four Juror's Awards to be designated by the juror. Awards will be distributed at the exhibition opening reception. Awards are sponsored by: the Cape Girardeau County Area Medical Society Alliance, the Cape Girardeau County Area Medical Society, and SoutheastHEALTH.

"I have found myself in this setting more than once waiting for an outcome from surgery and not knowing what the results would hold. Art indeed, can be a distraction, a vehicle for escape. An image can create a release of tension and anxiety for those patiently waiting for the ones they care for," said juror, Caroline Kahler, who currently serves as professor and head of the Art Department at Southeast Missouri State University. She stated, "I chose artwork that I felt would appeal to people from all walks of life and who might find themselves in this setting."

The Arts Council of Southeast Missouri is located at 32 N. Main Street in Cape Girardeau, Mo. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.