New Art in the Square director wants more exposure

BY ANDREW AKERS

The local art community in Gainesville is benefiting from a rising trend. More and more local businesses are choosing to display work from local artists in their establishments.

"Businesses and government buildings are really buying fine art — especially local art — into their place of business," said Fox Gradin, director of Gainesville’s Art in the Square. "I think that is picking up momentum, but I don’t think it is dead.

"It’s not going to get bigger and better, but it is going to be strong in our com- munity.”

The list of businesses with lo- cal art on display includes places such as Peach State Bank & Trust, Regions Bank, Cosa Nostra Italian Kitchen, Stone Park Coffee, Market and the Northeast Georgia Medical Center.

Most of the artists whose works are showcased are found through the Georgia Art League, which holds monthly art sales in the Quinlan Visual Arts Center and the Quinlan Galleries across the street.

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Anne Brodie Hill, marketing offi- cer for Peach State Bank & Trust in Gainesville, said the bank’s business office on Oakridge Road has featured local art since 2007. The bank attract customers and builds a stronger connection between the business and the com- munity, she said.

"The third floor used to be a lot of sandwich servers, women’s groups that used to be there for them. Now, there are local artists there, and they do that, they get to see the art.

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After 10 years of leading the ever-expanding Art in the Square festival, director Anne Brodie Hill headed over to the a new art center and business owner Fox Gradin. The new ensemble was created in January. Gradin has been planning the Art in the Square festivities for the past 10 years. The festival was mentioned in a national or online publication, which led to an increase in attendance. Gradin said the festival is a very good thing to be associated with. The festival is attended by groups of all different sizes and genres. Gradin said he would recommend the festival to anyone interested in Art.