Got six minutes? Brian Olsen will paint for you a 4-foot, 6-inch picture of Bob Marley while the reggae legend’s music surrounds the bouncing crowd. If you tend toward the slower pace, head down to the booths of artists such as Ray Jones, who shapes ancient and exotic woods into intricately designed boxes, filled with incredible detail. Ceramics? Textiles? Photography? Watercolor? Acrylics? Sculpture? Jewelry? Dance? Music? It’s all here—in an approximately seven-block area that made downtown Greenville a most fascinating place to experience the arts.

Artisphere’s subtitle, “The International Arts Festival of Greenville, “ is an accurate description of this three-day celebration of all that is art. And in its debut it, as they say in baseball, knocked one out of the park. By combining local talent with international talent, the festival gave everyone a feel for what was going on in the large, local art scene as well as a perspective on international talent. It had everything a successful festival needs….

Location: Greenville’s downtown continues to be a most wonderful destination. Artisphere chose the area known locally as the West End with all its beauty. The Falls Park on the Reedy River is perfect for open-air venues with its rushing water, waterfalls and plentiful gardens, and the new Liberty Bridge with its surrounding steps offered great vantage points to music, dance and visual arts. Local restaurants brought out their international fare so that festival-goers could enjoy the arts and the cuisine. At the end of the festival, festival Executive Director Mary Ellington surveyed the artists and the crowd with the same result, “They’ll be back! It was absolutely amazing. We were very pleased.” And so was the crowd. “We’ll be back!” That was the overwhelming response of artists from across the country. They loved the quality of the art, the crowd, the atmosphere and the sales. And you will too. So mark your calendar for Artisphere—April 21-23, 2006.