

Criteria for Judging Art Exhibitions
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Begun when Covid was making it difficult to judge art exhibitions in person, my co-juror colleague and I resorted to judging the **Bayside Historical Society** art competition online and this year my colleague from LIU, Professor Dan Christoffel and I once again judged the exhibit online. Having reviewed all the artwork, we are cognizant of what is entailed in the creative endeavors we saw presented in this year's online exhibition submissions and want to compliment everyone's efforts from the artists to Laura James and the BHS Interim Executive Director Brita Kube, who rose to the challenge admirably, helping continue this annual exhibition.

There are certain judging criteria, which I would like to share with those artists who are participating in this particular exhibit, especially those who have not participated in this exhibit before. As a practicing artist and professor for a full four decades, I feel strongly that creating art is intrinsically linked to interpretation. All visual artists become inspired by something, which is generally motivated by visual stimuli, and then interpreted as well as communicated visually. Regardless of the medium or whether the art is abstract or representational realist in its approach, my colleague Dan Christoffel and I try to be as objective as possible while judging an exhibition. Certainly, we value skill and technique, however, ultimately, we look for an honesty and truth in the artwork. During a careful analysis, in the best art there is a transcendence, whereby the viewer is emotionally moved or taken to another place by the artist's interpretation. We think it is important that the artist's intention is communicated as well. If we as viewers sense or recognize an inconsistency in intent or approach then the work suffers. Sometimes the artist's idea is better than the execution because of lack of skill or technique. Other times the skill is visually apparent, but there is no transcendence beyond merely copying a photograph or even photographing something that doesn't transcend the obvious, while still other times the end result is cliché or mimics other artists and there is nothing original in the interpretation. Recognizing that in this particular exhibition there are artists with more years of practice and or education than others, nevertheless certain artworks stand out over others and therefore are singled out, worthy of recognition in a variety of categories ranging from drawing, oil and acrylic painting, watercolor, mixed media, 3-D, and photography including digital. As with last year, we noticed that several artists submitted quilts which we have included under "Mixed Media". In each category one artist has been judged the BEST of category and if warranted, other artists received HONORABLE MENTION. Additionally, this year artwork from high school students was submitted online, therefore that artwork will be reviewed and commentary will be submitted separately.

DRAWING

Sharon Whinston “Piercing Wings” Best Award, Drawing

The artist is very adept at drawing with a confidence in Ink, an unforgiving medium if a mistake is made. The imaginative bird-dragon-like creature of this competent illustration calculatingly fills the format, just touching the top and bottom edge of the format and the line quality strategically varies from light and delicate to thicker and heavy within the wings and body creating the maximum effect of energy and movement in this stylized winged creature.

Chih-Ping Tsen “Childhood” Honorable Mention in the Drawing Category

An endearing drawing in color pencil telling its own story. All the focus is purposely on the child concentrating on his task at hand while the surrounding sand selectively recedes softly and faintly into the distance. The selection of the color pencils appears most apropos to convey what the artist wants the viewer to see.

Jill Susser “Zentangle Whimsey” Honorable Mention in the Drawing Category

This aptly titled drawing embodies a strong graphic impact in which there is an effective balance of areas of obsessive congestion verses areas of relief.

3-D Category

Giovanni Gelardi “Creation” Best Award, 3-D Category

A unique approach to the tradition of a religious triptych, only in this case the artist skillfully arranges and then juxtaposes religion with science, and the conflict that often occurs between the two, thereby creating a thought-provoking social commentary for all that view this piece carefully.

Fred Adell “Snowshoe Hare” Honorable Mention in the 3-D Category

This sculpture appears to embody a childlike quality in the spontaneous handling of the clay to create this rabbit. Correct proportion and attention to detail are not as important to this artist as the visceral fresh manipulation of the clay. It’s very personal to this artist for whatever reason and his honesty is so very evident in the object.

PAINTING in both OIL and ACRYLIC

Geoffrey Atkin “Old Vanderbilt Motorway” Best Award, Painting

This most intriguing oil painting juxtaposing Nature verses Manmade urban blight is visually captivating and somewhat surrealistic even though the manner in which the composition of the two opposing forces of Nature and Urban congestion appears to be plausibly linked in that space, yet one cannot help but wonder if the artist is inventing this scene to create and emphasize his social commentary. The figure, which maybe a self-portrait, squatting next to his upended bicycle seems to be staring out into the urban blight as if he’s perplexed by where he perhaps escaped from into the quietness of nature without the cacophony and congestion of the urban blight below. It’s a great narrative painted with genuine conviction.

Luis Caraos “Where is Mother?” Honorable Mention in the Painting Category

This tender and poignant narrative scene, in which helpless baby birds are calling out frantically for their mother because of the threatening forest fire below, is very apropos in this age of climate change. The artist appears to be making a heartfelt commentary for a most important issue that urgently needs to be addressed by mankind who have over the past couple hundred years of overdevelopment from the industrial revolution going forward, caused the world as we know it to become severely threatened and potentially irreversibly changed forever.

Sarah Case “The Satin Palace” Honorable Mention in the Painting Category

A well-executed traditional still-life painting that transcends the ordinary because of the inventive balanced composition in which the rope circulates cleverly around and through the disparate objects that helps the viewers eye move easily throughout the composition.

Aislinn Feldberg “A Frown is a Boy?” Honorable Mention in the Painting Category

A very expressionistic powerful painting in which a boy is staring in a confrontational manner, at the viewer, questioning something that remains elusive and the abstract foreground shapes only add to the overall mystery.

Renie Morris “Spirit of the Wild” Honorable Mention in the Painting Category

An abstract configuration of horses in which noticeable contour lines integrate and define the horse forms, that coupled with the complimentary color scheme of orange and blue create an overall unified abstract design reminiscent of The Blaue Reiter group active between 1911-1914 in Germany, which was eclectic both in its influences and its output, although the core of the movement was based around the desire for a new Renaissance in Art, dedicated to expressing inner emotional and spiritual states, rather than simply reproducing the outer appearance of material objects.

Ian Zdatny “Water Garden 2” Honorable Mention in the Painting Category

A very well controlled acrylic and gouache painting of lily pads in which the disciplined artist really shows the subtle nuance between the handling of the lily pads leaf veins and interaction between the lilies casting shadows on the water with is equally subtle shifts in value indicating the reflective surface. The technique is striking and appears unique to this particular artist.

Stacy Carner “Glaciers” Honorable Mention in the Painting Category

This artist through careful manipulation of pouring acrylic paint onto canvas creates essentially a pure abstraction that nevertheless suggests glacier ice reflected in water. The image is captivating for what is created in the mind’s eye.

WATERCOLOR

Denis Ponsot “M. Galway Bay” Best Award, Watercolor

The artist’s drawing ability in laying out this well controlled complicated composition is reminiscent of the Realist, Charles Sheeler, in how the architectonic elements are handled with great attention to accurate rendering as well as correct perspective and proportion of the

various objects on deck including the doors receding on the left. Additionally, the rectilinear composition can be subdivided into unifying squarish quadrants that further enhance the solid satisfying composition. An artist friend of Degas who occasionally painted fashionable Victorian people onboard ships named James Tissot, would be recommended to look at how he handled not only the marine elements of the ship, but also the atmospheric color of the various objects portrayed within the scene.

Inna Kupchenko “Portrait of Tabby Cat” Honorable Mention in the Watercolor Category

This traditional watercolor of a cat is deceptively simple upon first glance. However, upon closer inspection the scrupulous attention to the handling of the hypnotic eyes is particularly arresting, capturing the feline mystery. That coupled with the overall handling of the watercolor technique from sharp focus in the eyes, nose and whiskers to soft fuzzy fur and background indicates a sensitivity to this specific medium, well suited for the subject being portrayed.

Janice Gordon, “Northern Parula” Honorable Mention in the Watercolor Category

A well-executed illustration in which the artist focuses on the bird with subtle nuances of soft feathers juxtaposed to the thorny branch, upon which the bird is perched.

Jill Susser “Rose Medley” Honorable Mention in the Watercolor Category

As stated in the title, the medley of flowers flow freely from one flower to the next in a well-orchestrated composition that keeps the eye moving all about. It would appear that the overall design essentially is the reason for the artist to create this configuration of different positive and negative space and shape relationships instead of simply illustrating various roses.

Elizabeth Diaz “Looking Out the Window” Honorable Mention in the Watercolor Category

The conceptual idea of having the structure of the window grid reiterated in the grid of each pane, in which the artists carefully and with great subtlety interweaves the organic patterns of nature with the manmade structure of the window grid structure is really well conceived!

Elizabeth Sheehan “Concrete Canyon” Honorable Mention in the Watercolor Category

Even though the perspective of the street below appears a bit awkward, it nevertheless helps emphasize the feeling of the deep concrete canyon flanked by the buildings. The overall atmosphere created through subtle shifts in mostly gray values is effectively counterbalanced with the nuance of warm reds acting as accents to the black, gray and white impasto build up.

MIXED MEDIA

Stephen Taylor “The Castle” Best Award, Mixed Media

This large 54" acrylic painting has the unusual distinction of being both drawn and painted on hand tooled tanned leather, creating the most amazing textures that are not necessarily evident when viewed from afar, however upon closer inspection the viewer can fully appreciate the subtle nuance of the unique texture that results in the leather's nips, tucks and bumps creating a sort of bas-relief. The perspective of the Castle as well as the distant building, the sidewalk and also the street curving away as a counterbalance to the buildings' architecture is

very convincing and contrasts as well as complements the multicolored bushes and trees that in the upper left corner appear to be breaking out of the pictures plane overlapping the frame. Even the lawn has an effective mix of warm and cool colors that harmoniously add to the overall atmosphere of this masterful piece of unique art, celebrating while also documenting the Bayside Historical Society Building!

Marilyn Hamilton-Jackson “Paying Homage to Jacob Lawrence’s ‘The Seamstress 1946’”
Honorable Mention in the Mixed Media Category.

A consummate handling of the material. Every aspect of creating this quilt from the composition to the color and patterning to the stitching technique is excellent and although she has interpreted another artist, Jacob Lawrence, whom she admires, this artist has chosen different colors for her quilt...shall we say cut from a similar but different cloth and “stitched” according to her own meaningful manner.

Diane Larrier Collier “Lady Bits” **Honorable Mention in the Mixed Media Category**

The message conveyed in this marvelous quilt is a whimsical celebration. The floral background of the two central panels both competes and compliments while also supporting the narrative theme.

Lisa Gindi “Remembering Princess Diana” **Honorable Mention in the Mixed Media Category**

The bold red dress of Diana captivates the viewer initially, however the counterpart of the surrounding montage of multiple images of Diana helps to define her story and the overall handling of the dark contour lines create a feeling of stained glass, which adds another delicate dimension of this princess the artist so admires.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Willy Airaldi “Montauk from the Air” **Best Award, Photography**

Conceptually the abstract composition created from above helps the photograph transition from pure photographic scenery into something more extraordinary, an abstraction comprised of varying bands of color, shape and texture derived from Nature.

Suzanne Abruzzo “Great Blue Heron at Oakland Lake” **Honorable Mention in the Photography Category**

What makes this photo so captivating is not just the beautiful scene of a couple of birds in a lake, but instead it is the fact the artist recognizes the “painterly” aesthetic inherent within the scene.

Emerson Chen “Tempest” **Honorable Mention in the Photography Category**

A stunningly beautiful yet powerful scene capturing the turbulent sea crashing upon a manmade structure. The takeaway is Ultimately Nature Wins eventually!

Robert Wong “Color on the Beach” **Honorable Mention in the Photography Category**

A large impressive photo of Nature surrounding and overpowering diminutive mankind.

Terri Will “Icy Pier” Honorable Mention in the Photography Category

A quiet contemplative scene of several manmade piers devoid of mankind. Selecting black and white for this particular image only reinforces the sense of cold winter weather.

Shelia Golden “Widows Behind the Wall” Honorable Mention in the Photography Category

The elegant arched windows behind the barrier wall create a subtle conceptual idea of inviting the viewer to go beyond the wall as barrier. The diagonal tree limb also strategically counterbalances the subtle diagonal of the top of the wall and only strengthens the composition.