

NEWS RELEASE

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Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore, Adkins Arboretum's 2020 Juried Art Show, on View through March 27

Viewers will find both beauty and food for thought in *Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore*, Adkins Arboretum's 21st annual Juried Art Show. On view in the Arboretum Visitor's Center through March 27, the exhibit was juried by Heather Harvey, Associate Professor and Chair of the Art and Art History Department and Studio Art Coordinator at Washington College. Both she and the artists will be on hand for a reception on Sat., Feb. 8 from 3 to 5 p.m. to talk with visitors about the work in the show.



"his own carbon," a mixed media work by Carol Minarick of Easton, received the first-place Leon Andrus Award in Adkins Arboretum's 2020 Juried Art Show. There will be a reception to meet the artists on Sat., Feb. 8.

In reviewing the 137 entries submitted for this show, Harvey chose 24 that she felt were most in keeping with the show's theme and would create a compelling range of work, mood and mediums.

She said, "I was looking for works that reference or evoke nature, landscape, flora/fauna, human versus natural tensions, local histories, etc., whether generally or specific to the Eastern Shore."

The show includes a remarkably wide range of work—from "Yellow Abstract," a vibrant oil painting by John Moran of Chester, to Centreville photographer Kellen McCluskey's spectacular flurry of snow geese, and from the dreamily naïve quality of Easton artist Doris B. Gerlach's watercolor "Deer on the Lawn" to the exquisite precision of St. Michaels botanical artist Lee D'Zmura's watercolor "Jack-in-the-Pulpit/Arisaema."

Many of these works reveal a subtext. Harvey is especially interested in art that stimulates thought and questioning.

She explained, “I am drawn to challenging or distinctive work, work I don’t immediately understand, that requires time to explore and analyze and that yields interesting, complex, multivalent meaning. I am drawn to nuanced work that is contradictory, experimental or exploratory and has a unique voice or perspective.”

Her choices for the annual Leon Andrus Awards reflect this interest. She awarded first place to Easton artist Carol Minarick’s mixed media work “his own carbon,” in which a textured mass of gray appears in a landscape just barely defined by strokes of graphite. The title brings two terms to mind: *Star Trek’s* “carbon units” and the “carbon footprints” we all create.

Second place went to Chris Mona of Annapolis for his lithograph “Joanna Lumley in the Afternoon, Eastern Shore,” a curious image of the well-known actress and activist strangely positioned beside a tangle of vines in a lush woodland.

“It’s funny and dark,” Harvey said. “Some kind of offbeat commentary on the state of our world, our dysfunctional relationship to the natural world, ourselves, each other and the strange pop cultural mash-up we live in today, with the parallel degradation of the environment.”

Harvey’s fascination with looking deeply into the concerns that motivated the artists in this show are also evidenced in Honorable Mentions awarded to Mark Nelson and Joseph Minarick, both of Easton.

These two works capture familiar Easton Shore scenes, but while Nelson’s “Unionville Oak” is a stunningly beautiful photograph of a lonely oak standing in the flat expanse of a snowy field, Minarick’s “Rural Electrification (Trappe - Centreville Road)” is a little bit eerie. It shows a roadside cedar whose uppermost branches have been cut away to make room for electrical lines, turning it into a dark heart shape standing alone in the foreground of a wide-open rural landscape.

Harvey said, “It’s a familiar or clichéd landscape image but also dense, dark, almost ominous. I also see the shadowy undercurrents and think of the social-historical events that have unfolded on the Eastern Shore for centuries, both the beauty and the not so beautiful.”

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum’s ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through March 27 at the Arboretum Visitor’s Center located at 12610 Eveland Road near Tuckahoe State Park in Ridgely. Contact the Arboretum at 410-634-2847, ext. 0 or info@adkinsarboretum.org for gallery hours.

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Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum is the region’s resource for native plants and education programs about nature, ecology and wildlife conservation gardening. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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