

NEWS RELEASE

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Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore, Adkins Arboretum's 2022 Juried Art Show, on View Through April

Full of light and atmosphere, the artworks in *Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore*, Adkins Arboretum's 22nd annual Juried Art Show, tell of the astonishing and ever-changing beauty of our region. On view in the Visitor's Center through April 29, this exhibit was juried by Teddy Johnson, a painter who serves as the director of Anne Arundel Community College's Cade Gallery and an assistant professor of visual arts. He will speak about his choices at a reception on Sat., March 12 from 2 to 4 p.m.



"Autumn Pond," an oil painting by John Eiseman of Hebron, Md., received the First Place Leon Andrus Award in Adkins Arboretum's 2022 Juried Art Show, Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore.

In jurying this show, Johnson was excited by the diverse ways artists found to approach its theme. From a record 158 entries, he chose 22 artworks in a variety of mediums, including painting, photography, prints, ceramics and mixed mediums. Tracing the changing seasons, there are sultry sunsets, towering thunderclouds, golden marshes, winter grasses tinged luminous cinnamon brown and glittering ice sheathing the branches of a waterside tree.

For the annual Leon Andrus Awards, named for the Arboretum's first benefactor, Johnson gave First Place to "Autumn Pond" by John Eiseman of Hebron, Md. Aglow with colorful fall foliage reflected in the deep blue of a pond, this large, impressionistic oil painting shows a quiet stretch of water surrounded by trees and a solitary man fishing from a small boat.

“It transports me to a specific place,” Johnson explained. “It’s the atmosphere, time of day, season, and how the light changes as you move through the picture. It feels like an intimate experience of nature. It feels very personal.”

For Second Place, Johnson chose three wintry photographs of quintessential Eastern Shore landscapes by Benjamin Tankersley of Baltimore: “Spriggs Island, 2013,” “New Year’s Eve Milkweed Pods, 2020” and “Sandy and Molly on Wye Island, 2009.”

Speaking of the woman standing with her dog at the edge of a lonely shoreline in “Sandy and Molly on Wye Island, 2009,” he said, “I enjoy that she doesn’t feel posed. It’s a quiet moment when she’s able to reflect internally while also experiencing the environment. The natural spaces around us affect us internally. It’s part of the benefit that nature is so healing.”

Johnson awarded three Honorable Mentions. One went to “Thunderhead,” a tiny monoprint by Easton artist Maire McArdle in which a strange dark mass hovers above what may be a horizon line between green-blue water and an ochre sky.

“It’s open for interpretation,” he said. “I like a piece of artwork that doesn’t spell it all out for you, that you can bring yourself and your experiences to.”

Another Honorable Mention was awarded to Chestertown ceramicist Chris Neiman for his sculpture “Reflections.” Inspired by a walk along the Arboretum’s Blockston Branch creek, Neiman stained a twisted piece of driftwood with a horizontal “waterline” and dangled a row of slim ceramic tiles from it. Etched with intricate smoky patterns left from raku firing, they evoke the ripples and reflections he saw in the woodland creek.

Johnson said, “It projects a really beautiful internal quality and a very specific voice. It’s the artist trying to make sense of a personal connection to nature, which is something that drew me to a lot of the pieces here.”

He also awarded an Honorable Mention to two encaustic paintings by Cathy Leaycraft of Parkville, Md. Titled “Planetary Lines: Earth,” both are extremely simplified waterscapes in which the artist painted encaustic (a mixture of beeswax, resin and pigment) onto photographs, adding layers of lush, translucent texture until the photographs nearly vanish.

“The wax has a luminosity, and it’s creamy and just really gorgeous,” Johnson said. “I like how these are a little nebulous. You can’t really tell where you are in that space. It’s a very unusual abstraction where you have a landscape that almost disappears. There’s the feeling that you’re inside of the space instead of just looking at it from the outside.”

For Johnson, experimentation and exploration are crucial to creating exciting, engaging art.

“I do like an artwork that has an openness to it,” he explained, “that doesn’t necessarily nail everything down for us. When you hold off from depicting everything, it can bring you in to have a more broad and profound experience of the piece.”

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through April 29 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. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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