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EASTON (July 21, 2019)

THE 15th ANNUAL PLEIN AIR EASTON AWARDS

Plein Air Easton, the largest and most prestigious plein air festival in the nation, just completed its celebrated 15th year. It is widely recognized that a huge part of that success is a result of strong community support for the event and remarkably diverse partnerships between the event's producer, the Avalon Foundation, Friends of Plein Air, a myriad of local organizations and an outpouring of community support. This support, rooted in a deep sense of place, has enabled the event to continue to grow and expand year after year.

The week kicked off with a pre-competition Paint-Out in Tilghman on July 11 where Suzie Baker took home the \$1,000 Artists' Choice Award (sponsored by Tilghman Watermen's Museum). The following Saturday, competition artists could be found at the party of the summer known as the Meet the Artists Party. Art was celebrated in grand style while artists spent the afternoon painting on a private estate in Talbot County, and art collectors perused the formal gardens to watch the canvases in progress. The evening culminated in a gourmet farm-to-table dinner, and an exhibit and sale of the day's work.

Paint Oxford was the next event on the schedule and took place on Sunday, July 14. This popular event hosts the competition artists throughout the day in Oxford and finishes in an exhibit, sale and two Artists' Choice Awards. One award was presented by the Oxford Community Center in partnership with the Oxford Business Association; Aimee Erickson was that winner. New for this year, a WaterWays award (sponsored by Attraction Magazine) was given to Zufar Bikbov.

The competition artists handed in their collected works on July 18 and judge David Levy focused on selecting this year's roster of winning paintings. Plein Air Easton's Collector's Party, July 19, was live-streamed and will remain available for viewing through our website. The Grand Prize: Timothy Dills Memorial Award (sponsored by Ellen Vatne) and Artists' Choice Award (sponsored by Hali and Scott Asplund) were awarded to Aimee Erickson for her painting, "Brunch on the Patio."

On Saturday, July 20, more than 150 artists painted in the blazing heat for the Quick Draw Competition. Nicholas O'Leary won First Place (sponsored by Holly & Gary Townsend) overall, Thomas Bucci won Best Alumni Painting (sponsored by September 1st Partners) and Jill Glassman won First Place in the non-competition artist category (sponsored by Chesapeake Fine Art Studios).

On Sunday, July 21st, the festival culminated with Small Painting Sunday (held in celebration of the life of Suzan Estelle Brice and sponsored by Ellen Vatne) and the Judge's Talk, during which Dr. Levy explained his choices in depth, and bestowed the final round of awards to the 2019 competition artists.

Zufar Bikov took home Small Painting Sunday First Place; the Judge's Talk is available for viewing through our website.

Plein Air Easton is a juried competition, however, winning First, Second, Third Places; Artists' Choice; First Place Quick Draw and this year's Alumni Quick Draw awards also come with the honor of an automatic invitation to the 16th Plein Air Easton competition, scheduled for July 12-19, 2020.

AWARDS PRESENTED AT PRE-COMPETITION EVENTS

Tilghman Island Paint-Out Artists' Choice <i>Sponsored by the Tilghman Watermen's Museum</i>	\$1,000	Suzie Baker Tilghman Island Bridge
Paint Oxford Artists' Choice <i>Presented by the Oxford Community Center in partnership with the OBA.</i>	\$1,000	Aimee Erickson "A Day in the Sun"
Paint Oxford – Water Ways <i>Sponsored by Attraction Magazine</i>	\$250	Zufar Bikbov "Scheduled Twice an Hour"

2019 PLEIN AIR EASTON COMPETITION AWARDS

Grand Prize: Timothy Dills Memorial Award <i>Sponsored by Ellen Vatne</i> Plus an invitation to compete in PAE2020	\$5,000 + ½ page ad in Plein Air Magazine	Aimee Erickson "Brunch on the Patio"
Artists' Choice <i>Sponsored by Hali & Scott Asplundh</i>	\$5,000	Aimee Erickson "Brunch on the Patio"
2nd Place <i>Sponsored by the Academy Art Museum</i>	\$2,000	Charles Newman "Sunny Day Mill"
3rd Place <i>Sponsored by September First Partners</i>	\$1,000	Tim Kelly "Island Girls"
Life on the Farm <i>Sponsored by the Tidewater Farm Club & Talbot County Farm Bureau</i>	\$1,500	John Caggiano "A Hundred and One in the Shade"
Best Representation of Eastern Shore Hospitality <i>Sponsored by Quality Inn, Easton & Holiday Inn Express, Cambridge owned and managed by JR Management</i>	\$1,500	Elise Phillips "Harbor Lights"
Best Figurative Painting in a Landscape <i>Sponsored by Margaret Wrightson & David Bellis</i>	\$1,500	Hui Lai Chong "Washington Street Nocturne"
Best Marine <i>Sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum</i>	\$1,000	Qiang Huang "Cambridge Classic"
Best Architectural <i>Sponsored by the Historical Society of Talbot County</i>	\$1,000	Charlie Hunter "Abandoned Railroad Overpass, Cordova, MD"
Best New Artist to Plein Air Easton <i>Sponsored by Wye Financial Trust</i>	\$1000	Eileen Eder "Cutts and Case Crane"
Worthy of the Met <i>Sponsored by Troika Gallery</i>	\$1,000	Tarryl Gabel "Blackwater Sunset"
Best Nocturne <i>Sponsored by Eric Timsak & Leslie Lobell</i>	\$750	Crista Pisano "One Summer Night"
Best Watercolor <i>Sponsored by The Trippe Gallery</i>	\$500	Russell Jewell "Mist Opportunity"
Best Painting by a Maryland Artist <i>Sponsored by Kate Quinn</i>	\$500	Stewart Burgess White "Mutt and Marti do a 'Full Pull'"
Best Use of Light <i>Sponsored by Betty Huang at Studio B Gallery</i>	\$500	Nikolai Mikushkin "Full Moon"
Honorable Mention (1 of 3)	\$150	Laurie Hendricks "Island Barn"
Honorable Mention (2 of 3)	\$150	Debra Huse "Log Canoe Regatta"
Honorable Mention (3 of 3)	\$150	Richard Sneary "Corn Crib"

QUICK DRAW AWARDS

First Place <i>Sponsored by Holly & Gary Townsend</i> Plus an invitation to compete in PAE2020	\$1,500	Nicholas O'Leary
Second Place	\$750	Alan Brockbank
Third Place	\$500	Laurie Hendricks
Alumni Award <i>Sponsored by September 1st Partners</i> Plus an invitation to compete in PAE2020	\$1,000	Thomas Bucci
Honorable Mention (1 of 3)	\$100	Russell Jewell
Honorable Mention (2 of 3)	\$100	Brenda Boylan
Honorable Mention (3 of 3)	\$100	Nikolay Mikushkin

QUICK DRAW AWARDS FOR NON-COMPETITION ARTIISTS

First Place <i>Sponsored by Chesapeake Fine Art Studios</i>	\$500	Jill Glassman
Second Place Gift Certificate <i>Compliments of JFM Framing</i>	\$250	Andrea Burkom
Third Place Gift Certificate <i>Compliments of Jack Richeson Art Supplies</i>	\$100	Diane Ellor

SMALL PAINTING SUNDAY

HELD IN CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF SUZAN ESTELLE BRICE
Sponsored by Ellen Vatne

First Place	\$1,000	Zufar Bikbov "Find Me in Shadow"
Second Place	\$750	John Brandon Sills "Sunset"
Third Place	\$500	Christopher Leeper "Scossa"
Honorable Mention (1 of 2)	\$100	Greg LaRock "Not in Use"
Honorable Mention (2 of 2)	\$100	Nicholas O'Leary "Skyward"

Donations from Friends of Plein Air Easton support the event while promoting conservation and tourism through the arts.

Plein Air Easton is the work of the Avalon Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster a strong community on the Eastern Shore by creating accessible, uplifting arts, education, and cultural experiences that appeal to the interests of a diverse population and to ensure the long term viability of the historic Avalon Theatre. The event is supported by the Talbot County Arts Council, corporate donors, Friends of Plein Air Easton and strong community support.

Visit pleinaireaston.com for details, upcoming events, recorded events and galleries of competition images.