

Artists from Five States Win Awards in Visions From the Heart Art Show

Artists with disabilities from across the country gathered together on June 18 as The Kennedy Center and the Barnum Festival hosted the third annual Visions From the Heart art exhibit, a juried show at Bridgeport's City Lights Gallery.

The month-long exhibit kicked off with a cocktail party as over 100 patrons and artists packed into the City Lights Gallery to enjoy the music, food and art as jurors surveyed the various works of art.

Over 60 artists participated and contributed over 125 works of art consisting of a variety of styles and mediums. Three cash prizes were awarded to the first, second and third place winners, while three artists were also given an honorable mention and one artist received the City Lights Award for work displaying exceptional artistic ability.

The following award winners were recognized for their stellar work:

Awards:

1st Place- James Goldman, Patterson, NJ, (Girl with the Pearl Earring)

2nd Place- James Graves, Bridgeport, CT, (Home Sweet Home)

3rd place- Ricky Hagedorn, Fairfield, CT, (Cessna Skymaster)

Honorable Mention:

Preston McLain, Bridgeport, CT, (Metro North)

Mari Newman, Minneapolis, MN, (Flower Children of the Lake)

Joan Souza, Cambridge, MA, (Head of the Arts)

City Lights Award:

Shelia Ernst-Bifano, Houston, TX, (Sisters)

In first place, was a colorful and intricate work in stained glass, which took several years to construct. In second place, was an oil painting of a room's interior on a winter day featuring

rich and dark tones and in third place, was a small oil painting of a helicopter made up of bright blues and yellows.

Proceeds from the exhibit benefited The Kennedy Center's Therapeutic Arts Program which uses music, dance, poetry, painting and drawing as a means of therapy. This program has given people with disabilities opportunities for increased expression, socialization and productivity. It has also given artists a chance to participate in juried art shows and have their work published in the "Unique Perspective" Calendar and a line of note cards.

Visions From the Heart was juried by Margaret Anderson, a professional appraiser of fine art for over 25 years; Margaret Bodell, who has owned and run galleries for 20 years in New York City and Connecticut; and Philip Eliasoph, a professor of art history at Fairfield University.

The event's success was due in part to the numerous sponsors who included: Denise Larson Fenton and Dorothy Larson, both of Easton; William and Sharon Carroll of Trumbull, and John Tucker of Westport.

Many of the art works are on sale and range in price from \$40.00 to \$20,000. The Visions From the Heart exhibit will be on display until July 19 at the City Lights Gallery, located at 37 Markle Court in Bridgeport. The gallery is open from Wednesday to Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For more information, please call 334-7748.