

PRESS RELEASE

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2024 Water in the Desert Art Expo winners announced

APPLE VALLEY, CA — As the sun set over the arid expanse of the Mojave Desert on Sept. 6, the High Desert Cultural Center’s Joshua Tree Gallery of Contemporary Art was drenched in creativity when the Mojave Water Agency’s (MWA) Water in the Desert Art Exhibition opened to the public.

This year’s exhibition is a breathtaking exploration of the profound relationship between water and the desert landscape, captured through the eyes of more than 40 talented artists from across the Southwestern United States. Art is available for purchase while the exhibition is open to the public from 2 to 6 p.m. daily through Sept. 22 at 58325 CA-Highway 62.

MWA is a water wholesaler that was formed in 1960 to address the critical overdraft of the region’s groundwater. The art exhibition is an outreach program designed to create a top-of-mind awareness about water conservation in a community known as an art enclave.

“This region of the Agency’s service area attracts so many talented artists. We tailored our outreach efforts to their interests to promote the conservation of the desert’s most precious resource...water,” said Mojave Water Agency Division 2 Director Marina West. “Last year’s inaugural event was such a success, we knew we had to bring it back this year, and the results did not disappoint.”

The exhibition was awash with entries in three categories: Photography, 2-Dimensional art, and 3-Dimensional art. An independent panel of judges evaluated each category to determine first, second and third place winners; and Agency board members and staff conferred to designate one entry as the Best in Show.

In the photography category, this year’s winners were Bill Leigh Brewer (1st), Jennifer Ruggiero (2nd), and Mark Hannah (3rd). In the 2D category the winners were Laurie Schafer (1st), Tobias Tovera (2nd), and Colleen Moran (3rd). In the 3D category the winners were James Bowden (1st), Deborah Ammar (2nd), and Thomas Alban (3rd).

Lucy Gonzalez was awarded Best in Show for her ink drawing entry “Oasis Unveiled: The Tortoise’s Triumph” that best captured the essence of the theme.

Other artists featured in this year's exposition include: Shawnta Akins, Elaine Bron, Hannah Campbell, Matt Cauthron, Janis Commentz, Kristin Czech, Sharon Davis, Petra Deeter, Spelman Evans Downer, Sunrise Endo-Markey, Amy Harper, Terry Hastings, Cheryl Hunter, Kathy Jones Bret Langford, Edwin Liew-Ferguson, William Makuta, Cynthia Merino, Kathy Miller, Mitch Miller, Tami Roleff, Dr. Pushpa Sah, Shiela Sasek, Esther Shaw, Sahba Shere, Karin Skiba, Gillyan Thorburn, Cher Townsend, Juan Varela, Juliette Vos, Krista Wargo, and Steven Wybenga.

For more information about Mojave Water Agency's conservation and outreach efforts, or the Water in the Desert Art Exhibition visit www.MojaveWater.org or follow us on social media @mojavewater.

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