

NEWS RELEASE

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Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore, Adkins Arboretum's 2014 Art Competition show, on view through March 29

No two artists look at the landscape in the same way, as *Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore*, Adkins Arboretum's annual Art Competition exhibit, plainly shows. On view in the Arboretum Visitor's Center through March 29, it includes a wide variety of paintings, photos, prints and sculptures by artists from the Mid-Atlantic region.

From the wildly flapping snow geese in George Drake's photograph, to "Cloud Curtain," an oil painting of a gentle waterscape by Anne Griffith, to two different "Green Man" wall sculptures in which Marita Lupo and Timothy Hoover each depict the ancient god of vegetation, this exhibit is energetic and diverse.

The show was juried by John Ruppert, Full Professor of Art at the University of Maryland, College Park, and currently a Distinguished Visitor at Washington College in conjunction with its multi-disciplinary environmental Sandbox initiative. There will be a reception on Sat., Feb. 15 from 3 to 5 p.m. to meet the artists and the juror.

Now in its fifteenth year, the show's highlight is the annual Leon Andrus Awards, named for the Arboretum's first benefactor. Ruppert chose "Samothracae," by Jack Elliott of Ithaca, N.Y., to receive the First Place Award.

"It interests me because it relates to the human form," he explained. "It's very classical, and he made clear choices about what to leave natural and what to refine."



"Samothracae," an abstract wooden sculpture by Jack Elliott of Ithaca, N.Y., was awarded first prize in Adkins Arboretum's fifteenth annual Art Competition—Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore. The Competition show is on view in the Arboretum Gallery through March 29.

An Associate Professor at Cornell University College of Human Ecology, Elliott studies environmental ethics and aesthetics. His massive abstract wooden sculpture stands five feet high and resembles the "Winged Victory of Samothrace," a well-known Greek statue of the goddess of victory, long missing its arms and head. Elliott fashioned it from a section of a weeping willow that had grown in the F. R. Newman Arboretum at Cornell. One half of the segment was broken and severely weathered. Angled sharply outwards, it recalls the open wing of the famous statue, while the other half, cleanly sawed off, stands in for the statue's body and severed neck.

The Second Place Award went to two impressionistic photographs by Baltimore artist Cathy Leaycraft that Ruppert chose for their strong color and dreamlike quality. A photographer for over 30 years, Leaycraft creates her work on location, photographing through reflective or refractive objects, such as a glass sphere. She works intuitively, allowing elements of the landscape to shift and distort into vividly colored abstract forms. Full of light and rainbow hues, they also retain glimpses of trees, leaves and a beautifully ruffled fungus.

The quiet beauty of the Eastern Shore is found in several works in the show, including Margery Caggiano's oil painting, "Marshlight," with its glowing green marsh grasses and purple-blue water, and photographer Ann Rohlfing's luminous tree, "Beech in Soft Light." The reflections of trees become a lively pattern of line work in Geo McElroy's painting, "Ayres Creek," while contemplation is the subject of Sharon Jones's simple photo of an empty bench facing the water. There's even a glimpse of the area's agricultural history in a lively primitive painting of an abandoned tractor by Carlin McLamb called "But Not Forgotten."

Gesturing from McLamb's painting across the gallery to Elliott's sculpture, Ruppert said, "There's a whole spectrum between those two pieces. I tried to pick strong works from the different genres, so the art is kind of a cross-section, but what's consistent is there's so much of a landscape element to it all. There's almost a horizon line that runs through the show."

The 2014 Art Competition is made possible, in part, by a generous donation from the Fessler Foundation of the Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund. The show is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through March 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. Open year round, the Arboretum offers educational programs for all ages about nature and gardening. Through its [Campaign to Build a Green Legacy](#), it will build the [W. Flaccus and Ruth B. Stifel Center at Adkins Arboretum](#) and a "green" entranceway to broaden educational offerings and research initiatives promoting best practices in conservation and land stewardship. For additional information about Arboretum programs, visit www.adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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