

ADKINS ARBORETUM 2010 ART COMPETITION EXHIBIT ON VIEW THROUGH MARCH 26—*DISCOVERING THE NATIVE LANDSCAPES OF MARYLAND'S EASTERN SHORE*

An invigorating mix of traditional landscapes and inventive ways of looking at the Eastern Shore is on view through March 26 in the 2010 Art Competition at Adkins Arboretum. The public is invited to a reception to meet the artists Sat., Feb. 27 from 3 to 5 p.m.

From the windswept, grassy sand dune in an oil painting by M. Joyce Zeigler to the sweeping vista of Don Hilderbrandt's watercolor "Blackwater Refuge," these artists celebrate the beauty of Delmarva's familiar landscapes.

But this show also offers some real surprises. Dried grass and seedpods from black-eyed Susans form the bristles in "Natural Brooms: A Family Project" by Jason and Deanna Jacobs, and Marla McLean's mixed media "Raindrops on Asphalt and Feathers on Sparrows" are painted and collaged onto vinyl record albums.

This year's competition was juried by Carla Massoni, director of the Carla Massoni Gallery in Chestertown. She chose 23 works by 18 artists from a pool of 163 entries from the mid-Atlantic region. Massoni will speak about her choices at the Feb. 27 reception and present the annual Leon Andrus Awards, named for the founder of Adkins Arboretum.

Mindful of the show's theme, *Discovering the Native Landscapes of Maryland's Eastern Shore*, Massoni awarded first prize to Tom Bulat for his toned black and white photographs.

"First prize had to go to these," she said, pointing to Bulat's two finely crafted photos of quintessential Delmarva landscapes. In "Sun Worshipper," every needle on a pine tree at the edge of a marshy cove seems to bristle with light and liveliness. In "Happy Hour," a luminous cloud-filled sky towers over a broad, flat field where geese land, and a distant copse of trees shelters an old farmhouse and barn.

Massoni awarded second prize to Martha Spak's collection of tiny paintings, "The Blue Crab Series." Each of its 20 panels is a brilliantly colored vignette in which mischievous crabs swim like dancers in their watery environments.

In addition to the Leon Andrus Awards, Massoni chose two artists, Adam Auel and Frances Borchardt, to receive Juror's Awards.

She was particularly interested in Auel's sensitive treatment of space and texture in his two color photographs. Noting the soft, lush quality of the vivid green marsh in "Chincoteague Waterway," she said, "For a photo, this is so painterly!"

Borchardt's "West River Sunrise" caught Massoni's eye because it's so unusual. The artist inserted rows of rolled-up photographs of a sunrise into the compartments of a printer's type box, making a kind of "sampling" of the bands of color created by apricot, pink and blue light reflected below the shoreline trees.

"I love what she did," Massoni said. "She's given us something new to think about. It asks me to look at it differently and think about the macro and the micro."

She went on to comment, “One of the pleasures of jurying a show like this is in discussing the work and thinking about it and re-looking at it.”

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum’s ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists, supported in part by the Caroline County Council of Arts. It is on view through March 26 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.

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*, the Arboretum will build a new LEED-certified Arboretum Center and 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.