

EMBARGOED UNTIL 9 A.M. SUNDAY, JUNE 26

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Media Contact:
Colleen Murphy @ cmurphy@desmoinesartsfestival.org
Or (515) 416 - 6281



Des Moines Arts Festival® Announces 2022 Visual Arts Award Winners

North Carolina mixed media artist Jaana Mattson takes "Best in Show," the Festival's top honor

(Des Moines, IA) – Officials from the Des Moines Arts Festival presented by [Nationwide](#) recognized winners of the 2022 juried visual art fair at a private reception held this morning prior to the opening of the last day of the Festival.

The awards are a key aspect of festival traditions. As of Saturday night, thousands of guests have visited the 25th anniversary event, which runs through 5 p.m. Sunday in Western Gateway Park in downtown Des Moines, with vigorous sales reported by artists and vendors.

The centerpiece of the nationally-recognized Festival is a highly competitive, industry-noted juried art fair, which occupies multiple blocks surrounding the John & Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park in downtown Des Moines. More than 800 artist applications were submitted for the 2022 Festival. The 190 artists selected to participate represent 34 states (including Iowa) and Nova Scotia in a range of mediums, such as: ceramics, digital, drawing, fiber, glass, jewelry, metalworks, mixed media, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, and wood.

"It's always intriguing to learn which artists the jury selects for special recognition, but there is an added layer of excitement this year," said Stephen King, the Festival's Executive Director. "Not only because it's our 25th anniversary, but because we had a significant increase in the number of artists participating in this year's event. So, the honor of being singled out by the jury is especially meaningful."

"Collectively, all the artists who show at our festival are members of an elite class," he added. "They're among the best independent artists working in this region and across the U.S., and they're a huge part of why the Des Moines Arts Festival is one of the premiere arts events in the country."

2022 Des Moines Arts Festival® Visual Art Award Recipients

Presented by [Nationwide](#)

Best In Show: Jaana Mattson – Mixed Media (Marshall, NC) Booth #LN7. Artist [bio](#).

Jaana Mattson is an artist, author and instructor working with landscapes in wool and wood. She has been developing her layered, painterly style of needle felting and mixed media sculpture over the past 10 years. Her book "Jaana Mattson's Landscapes in Wool: the Art of Needle Felting" was released in 2021. She now travels from her home and studio in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina to show her work and offer workshops around the country.

Best Emerging Iowa Artist: Megan Rohr (Oskaloosa, IA) Booth #EIA3. Artist [bio](#).

Awards of Excellence:

Deborahmae Broad – Printmaking (Twin Valley, MN) Booth # GN41C. Artist [Bio](#).

Adam Crowell - Wood (Bonneau, SC) Booth #GS17. Artist [Bio](#).

Joachim Knill - Paint (Hannibal, MO) Booth #GS24C. Artist [Bio](#).

Thomas Tyers – Wood (Omena, MI) Booth #GN57. Artist [Bio](#).

Alicia Velasquez – Jewelry (Iowa City, IA) Booth #GN9. Artist [Bio](#).

Juror Awards:

Evan Abrahamson – Drawing (Waconia, MN) Booth #GS25C. Artist [Bio](#).

Clifton Henri – Photography (Chicago, IL) Booth #GN1C. Artist [Bio](#).

Katie Musolff – Paint (Fredonia, WI) Booth #LS20. Artist [Bio](#).

Best Booth (staff award):

Anna Bailey and Nathanael Bailey – Wood (Duluth, MN) Booth #LS19C. Artist [Bio](#).

2022 Festival Jurors:

Sue Mersman, Nicario Jimenez, Ann Priftis*, Lee Running*, and Kaleb Stevens*

**Indicates awards jurors*

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About the Des Moines Arts Festival. The [Des Moines Arts Festival®](#) is committed to strengthening a vibrant and creative community. Dedicated to the principles of collaboration and creative expression, Des Moines Arts Festival inspires engagement with the arts, fosters and celebrates inclusion, values professionalism and quality, and champions new and emerging ideas.

The Des Moines Arts Festival produces an annual outdoor festival celebrating arts and culture, provides programming and support to artists and arts organizations, advocates for a “arts first” leadership model, and inspires individuals to find their creative voice.

The mission of the Des Moines Arts Festival is to Impact Lives through the Arts.

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