

Artists awed by Winter Festival Show av

By **Peter Lozinski** - February 11, 2019



Peter Lozinski/Daily Herald Artists and community members listen intently as the awards winners are named at the Prince Albe

the Mann Art Gallery.

Of all of the 104 works entered into the 2019 Mann Art Gallery Winter Festival Show and Sale, Michael Peterson the most is rather unassuming at first glance.

Amongst the dozens of large, landscape paintings, photographs and sculptures, there's a small carved wood base.

The felted stumps themselves, though, are full of texture and detail, a perfect miniature for the

The work, created by Meacham-based artist June Jacobs, is called Arboreal Stand.

Jacobs was unable to attend the show's opening gala Friday night due to car trouble but was th

"It feels wonderful. It comes as a huge surprise, but I'm majorly pleased," she said.

"It's a great honour. I feel very proud." The piece didn't just win best of show, it was also purch collection.

During his curatorial talk, Peterson said he could tell the subject matter — the tree bottoms Jac probably from her own yard. He could tell from all the little textural details and imperfections in rings on the top of the piece designed to replicate those found on a stump, that Jacobs was ver

Peterson's presumption proved prescient.

"I'm kind of a tree nut," Jacobs said.

"I plant lots of trees in my yard. I own multiple adjoining lots in the Village of Meacham where I have been expanding my gardens to include plants I use in my felting techniques. Trees have b varieties of trees on my property because I think they're quite magical."

Jacobs said she spent several months on the sculpture. Adding more than one material, in this her artistic practice.

This isn't the first time Jacobs has entered the Winter Festival show. She's an event regular, an exhibition.

"Every year I enter ... pieces. I've always participated," she said.

"I think it's an important exhibition because it exposes lots of new people to the art world, and supported by Prince Albert and area."

Some of those new people also found success Friday night.

That list includes Trudie Ahenakew, who received a prize for accomplishments in the medium of 20 years, this was the first time she entered her work into the Winter Festival show.

"It's pretty awesome, I wasn't expecting it," she said.

When the gallery called Ahenakew to tell her she had won a prize and was invited to the opening gallery was calling to tell her there was an issue with her art.

"I was completely surprised."

The piece she entered is deeply personal. It's titled Kookum, and depicts her grandmother sitting painted in the background.

"I do a lot of commissioned pieces. I very seldom do paintings just for myself," she said.

"It was something totally different for me. For anybody to gain some acknowledgement from th

The importance of that acknowledgement was something many of the prize-winning artists spol

Jim Mason has only been a sculptor for two years. His mixed-media sculpture, Blue Marlin, wo

"it feels very, very good. It's a wonderful little boost. I want to rush home right now and do son

Coun. Dennis Ogradnick announces the winner of the 2019 Mann Art Gallery Winter Festival Sale award for best in show on Feb. 8, 2019. Acting director/curator Lana Wilson, left, piece by artist Mel Bolen. The 2019 winner was June Jacobs, who was unable to attend reception. (Peter Lozinski/Daily Herald)

Mason experimented with many art forms, including stone and jewelry work, before finally settling on wood.

"Nothing seemed to keep my interest over the longer term," he explained. "I did carve duck decoys and didn't do anything. When I came back, I wanted to do something more creative with less time and do it."

He started adding things like copper wire and clock parts to his work and began to have more fun.

"That was the key," he said. "I enjoyed it, and I still enjoy it immensely."

He decided to enter the marlin into the show because it was his newest piece. Outside of some people who have seen the work. It's carved out of wood, with stainless steel, nickel wire and acrylic paint. He's a fan of straight lines.

The finishing aspect, Mason said, is something that just comes to him as he works.

"I never really pre-plan," he said. "I sit down with a blank and a burning pen and do whatever comes out."

For his award-winning piece, Mason scraped all the paint off and started again because he didn't

"I'm very happy," he said.

"I have not shown any work in this area, so it's a brand new kind of adventure."

Hanging on the wall almost right beside Mason's marlin is a watercolour painting by another entrant

Jerome Mrazek won the watercolour award for his piece Spring Thaw 10th Street West, depicting a scene just beyond Central Avenue. The work sparked interest in several local residents, who were curious to see

Mrazek was excited to see the positive response.

"It's quite gratifying,

he said. "You put a fair bit of time into doing these paintings. We don't do this to compete with a certain proficiency a person has obtained at this point."

Mrazek chose the work as his entry because he thought the quality was there and that the subject

"it depicts a scene on 10th Street West that is fairly recognizable to people, with some of the old buildings on 10th Street," he said.

"I thought that would be relatable to people. As far as an artist, it was a fairly successful piece, and it was a good competition and be worthy to be on the wall with a lot of really good paintings. There is a lot of good art out there."

The Winter Festival Show and Sale runs at the Mann Art Gallery until March 23.

Peter Lozinski

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Peter Lozinski is the editor of the Prince Albert Daily Herald. You can reach him at 306-764-4444 or peter.lozinski@paherald.sk.ca or on Twitter @Peter_Lozinski. His latest posts can be found here

