MEDIA RELEASE – SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

Joshua Tree National Park Art Exposition 2019 – AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The seventh annual Joshua Tree National Park Art Exposition in Twentynine Palms enjoyed significant visitor traffic on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 14 and 15, in spite of triple digit temperatures, with more than 1,000 visitors attending the Art Market on the lawn at 29 Palms Inn, the juried exhibition at the historic 29 Palms Art Gallery, and other activities at the Oasis of Mara.

On Saturday night, nearly 400 people attended the awards reception at the 29 Palms Art Gallery, which featured the juried exhibition of artwork inspired by Joshua Tree National Park.

Out of 137 artists from the desert and across California and the U.S. who submitted entries for the juried exhibition, 57 artists were selected for the show, which remains on display through September. Eleven artists received awards for their artwork, with awards totaling $5,000.

In the 2-Dimensional Art category, first place went to artist Marcia Geiger of Joshua Tree for her oil painting “Ohlson Ruins, JTNP.” Second place went to William Casolara of Sheridan, MT, for his wood marquetry piece “Skull Rock Landscape.” Third place was given to artist B.E. Baxter of Palm Desert for his pencil and chalk drawing “Quiescence Solitude.”

For 3-Dimensional Art, first place went to Valerie Birkhoff of Grass Valley, for her clay sculpture “Praeservare.” Second place went to Laurie Schafer of Yucca Valley for her fabric art piece “Desert Vista from My Screen Door.” Third place was given to artist Nichole Vikdal of Yucca Valley for her crystalline glaze porcelain ceramic vase “Joshua Tree in Bloom.”

In the Photography category, first place went to Mitch Miller of Joshua Tree for “Upload.” Second place went to Rick Strobaugh of Yucaipa for “Storm Over Joshua Tree.” Third place went to Robert Miramontes of Desert Hot Springs for “Mysterium.”

A new Best of Show award was included in the prizes this year. The winner was Whitney Gardner of Twentynine Palms for her oil painting “Ocotillo Sky.”

And finally, the Superintendent’s Award, a non-monetary award personally selected by Joshua Tree National Park Superintendent David Smith, was presented to Mark Robben of Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, for his black-and-white photograph “Eastern Outpost.”

Judges for the awards were artist and architect Ann Congdon of Twentynine Palms and Sky’s The Limit Observatory, Michael McCall of Yucca Valley Visual & Performing Arts Center, and award-winning landscape astrophotographer Wally Pacholka.

The exhibition will remain on display at 29 Palms Art Gallery through Sunday, Sept. 29. The gallery is open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, and is located at 74055 Cottonwood Drive at the corner of National Park Drive in Twentynine Palms. (760-367-7819)

The Art Exposition is presented by the Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts, a 501(c)(3) organization based in Twentynine Palms. All the artwork and winning pieces will be posted soon on their website at www.jtnpARTS.org.

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