



## **MEDIA RELEASE – NOVEMBER 5, 2023**

### **Joshua Tree National Park Art Expo 2023 – Awards Announced**

Several hundred art appreciators and artists attended the festivities at 29 Palms Art Gallery on Saturday, Nov. 4, for the 11th annual Joshua Tree National Park Art Expo and awards reception. Art awards were announced for the juried exhibition at the reception Saturday evening.

Eleven artists received awards for their artwork, with awards totaling \$4,000.

Travis Usher of Joshua Tree received the Best of Show award for his large oil on canvas titled “Cholla Collection.”

Other 2-Dimensional awards went to first place winner Bart Baxter of Rancho Mirage for his pencil drawing “Openings.” Second place went to “Long Shadows and Secret Places” by Stephanie Britt of Bellingham, Washington; and third place was “I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry,” an oil painting by Damian Kinsella of Newhall, CA.

In the Photography category, first place was awarded to “Plein Site” by Matt Cauthron of Cathedral City. Second place went to “Cactus Aglow” by Delphine Bordas of Palm Desert; and third place went to “After the Monsoon” by Mark Hannah of Joshua Tree.

In the 3-Dimensional category, first place was “Forever Sunny in Joshua Tree,” a wall sculpture by Linda Shrader of Yucca Valley. Second place went to a ceramic sculpture, “Pictograph by Rabbit,” by Ed Keesling of Yucca Valley. Third place was “La Luna Del Desierto” fiber art by Melisa Rimada of 29 Palms.

The Superintendent’s Award, an honorary award personally selected by Joshua Tree National Park Superintendent Jane Rodgers, went to Sam Sloan Wiechert of Yucca Valley for her framed 2D piece “Sprouting from Within.”

Sixty-four artists from the desert region and across California, the U.S., and Canada were juried into the exhibition, out of 140 artist entries. The exhibition is on display at the gallery through November 26 and features artwork depicting or inspired by Joshua Tree National Park.

The 29 Palms Art Gallery will be open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, at 74055 Cottonwood Drive on the corner of National Park Drive in Twentynine Palms. The artwork can also be viewed online at [jtnpARTS.org](http://jtnpARTS.org).

Judges for this year’s awards were plein-air artist Kathleen Strukoff of Palm Springs and photographer Sant Khalsa of Joshua Tree.

The Art Expo is presented by Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts, in partnership with Twentynine Palms Artists’ Guild, both 501(c)(3) organizations based in Twentynine Palms.

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PHOTO CAPTION: (left to right) Artist Travis Usher of Joshua Tree was presented with the Best of Show award by JTNP board member John Cole at the 11th annual Joshua Tree National Park Art Expo at 29 Palms Art Gallery on November 4, 2023.

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