MEDIA RELEASE – NOVEMBER 8, 2026
Joshua Tree National Park Art Expo – Awards Announced

More than 400 artists and art appreciators attended the festivities at 29 Palms Art Gallery for the opening weekend of the 14th annual Joshua Tree National Park Art Expo on Nov. 7 & 8. Art awards for the juried exhibition were announced at a reception on Saturday evening at the gallery.

This year's Best of Show award went to Melisa Rimada of Twentynine Palms for her fiber and textile wall hanging, "Joshua Tree Night Sky."

In the 2-Dimensional category, the first-place winner was Esther Shaw of Yucca Valley for her acrylic painting "Sandstone Canyon at Dusk." Second place was an oil painting by Damian Kinsella of Santa Clarita, and third place was a woodcut by Mollie Doctrow of Camarillo.

In the Photography category, first place was awarded to Kathy Miller of Joshua Tree for her photograph "Redtail Hawk Food Drop." Second place went to Fred R. Hoerr of Joshua Tree; and third place went to Robert Klewitz of Woodland Hills.

First place in the 3-Dimensional category was presented to Joey Bebar of Yucca Valley for his assemblage "Mohave Hidden Gold." Second place went to Cher Townsend of Yucca Valley, and third place was awarded to Jim Federico of Yucca, Arizona.

This year's Superintendent's Award was "The Birth of Joshua," a stoneware sculpture by Tejaswini Kumar of Irvine, personally selected by Joshua Tree National Park Superintendent Jane Rodgers.

The juried exhibition is on display at the gallery through November 29 and features artwork inspired by Joshua Tree National Park. A total of 60 artists from the desert region and across California, the U.S., and Canada were juried into the exhibition, out of 143 artist entries. Visitors to the gallery are encouraged to vote for the People's Choice award, which will be announced at the close of the show.

The 29 Palms Art Gallery is open from 11 am to 3 pm, Friday 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.

Judges for this year's awards were artist and CMC art instructor Chloe Allred of Joshua Tree; 3D artist Linda Shrader of Yucca Valley; and artist, arts activist, and Mojaveland owner Anna Stump of Twentynine Palms.

The 14th annual JTNP Art Expo was sponsored in part by grants from Visit 29 Palms and the Public Arts Advisory Committee of the City of Twentynine Palms.

The JTNP Art Expo is presented each November 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 by Mike Bedilion for JTNP Council for the Arts (caption info below)

Some of the juried exhibition award winners during the JTNP Art Expo at 29 Palms Art Gallery on Saturday, Nov. 7, were (left to right) Robert Klewitz, Joey Bebar, Melisa Rimada, Esther Shaw, Jim Federico, and Kathy Miller.