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Important Dates for Plein Air–Easton! Artists in March

The deadline to enter the 6th Annual Plein Air–Easton! Competition is March 6, 2010 by 5:00 p.m. Artist’s Prospectus and submission guidelines are available at www.pleinaireaston.com. Entries may be submitted by online upload or by CD mailed/delivered to the address shown below. Accepted artists and alternates will be announced March 27, 2009 via posting at www.pleinaireaston.com. The Plein Air–Easton! Competition & Arts Festival will be held July 19-25, 2010.

This year’s entry jurist is M. Stephen Doherty, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of *American Artist*, *Watercolor*, *Drawing*, and *Workshop* magazines. Doherty graduated summa cum laude from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois and earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in printmaking from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. He has written dozens of magazine articles and several art books. Doherty is an active outdoor painter who travels around the United States and Europe. He serves on the advisory boards of several arts organizations, including the New York Academy of Art, The Florence Academy, and the Portrait Society of America. He has been a judge in various national and international competitions.

Artist groups and paint-outs have sprung up across the country, making plein air painting America’s hottest art movement. Plein Air–Easton! has quickly become the East Coast’s premier plein air festival, attracting artists of high caliber and creating a stir among art collectors. The national Plein Air–Easton! Competition will showcase approximately 60 national artists vying for cash awards totaling more than \$11,000.

This year’s awards judge is Jean Stern, a recognized authority on California Impressionism. Mr. Stern has extensive experience as an author, curator, lecturer, and teacher. He has been the executive director of the Irvine Museum in Irvine, California since its inception in January, 1993, and has produced a number of traveling exhibitions of plein air and impressionists artwork. He further established a national presence for the museum in the field of California Impressionism through a noteworthy international series of books, exhibitions, articles, video documentaries, and national and international lectures and exhibitions.

Artists in the national contest create multiple paintings during the week. Then each artist selects two paintings each to enter in the competition. They may also sell other paintings they bring with them or paint during the week, making available hundreds of pieces of some of the best art in America today.

Paintings will be for sale during the entire festival weekend, including special events such as the Collectors’ Preview Party on Friday evening, the Quick Draw Exhibit & Sale on Saturday afternoon, the Winners’ Paint-Out & Brunch and Live Auction on Sunday, and an ongoing exhibit throughout the weekend at the Academy Art Museum. As paintings sell, replacements created by the competition artists will take their places, so that this exciting exhibit evolves throughout the weekend.

The national competition is complimented by a comprehensive arts festival that draws thousands of artists, collectors, art enthusiasts, and spectators from across the country. Attractions include gallery exhibits, collectors’ preview party, world class speakers, art demonstrations, photography contest, live music, outdoor theater, and the popular, fast-paced “Quick Draw” painting competition held for two hours in downtown Easton. Paintings by artists from the Delmarva region will also be available at the “Local Color” plein air exhibit, a juried and judged show featuring artists from the Delmarva Peninsula, presented Friday through Sunday at the Tidewater Inn.

Despite uncertain economic times, art sales have been consistently brisk during this event. Last year 241 painting sold, totaling almost \$205,000 in gross sales.

Plein Air–Easton! is a project of the Avalon Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide diversified arts and educational programs that improve the quality of life in the Mid-Shore region. The Academy Art Museum provides an accredited museum venue for the competition exhibit. The event is supported by various corporate, media, and community sponsors, including the Talbot County Arts Council. Donations from Friends of Plein Air–Easton! support the event while promoting conservation and tourism through the arts and a distinct sense of place. Strong community support and sponsorships have helped make Plein Air–Easton! one of Easton's largest events and a premier plein air festival in the country.

Again, the deadline for entries in the national competition is March 6, 2010. Competition artists will be announced March 27, 2010.

Another important deadline is March 8, 2010, which is when the prospectuses for the “Local Color” Show and the Quick Draw will be released via the event website, www.pleinaireaston.com.

Information, Artist’s Prospectus, judges’ bios, and digital uploading of juried submissions are available at www.pleinaireaston.com. Submissions will also be accepted on CD sent by postal mail or delivered to: Plein Air–Easton!, c/o The Avalon Foundation, 40 East Dover Street, Easton MD 21601. For more information, email info@pleinaireaston.com or phone 410-822-7297.

CUTLINE:

Crowds of art collectors and enthusiasts swarm to the Plein Air–Easton! Quick Draw Exhibit & Sale, a popular component of the Plein Air–Easton! Competition & Arts Festival. Important deadlines in March are: March 6 deadline for entry into the national competition; March 8 Prospectuses released for Quick Draw and “Local Color” Show; and March 27 announcement of 2010 accepted competition artists who will compete in the 6th Annual Plein Air–Easton! to be held July 19-25, 2010.

Photograph by Richard Dorbin, www.paragonlight.com