

Submissions open for Sooke Fine Arts Show



By Sooke News Mirror

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Artists across B.C.'s many coastal islands are heeding the Call to Artists for the 2015 Sooke Fine Arts Show, with work being accepted online now through June 8 for the jury panel's consideration. Online submissions opened mid-February for the community-delivered show and sale, which features 375 pieces of juried original fine art in a wide variety of mediums—from oil painting and wood sculpture, to intricate fibre weavings and hand-formed jewellery.

Now in its 29th year, the Sooke fine Arts Show will take place from July 24 to August 3, in the SEAPARC Complex, transforming 16,000 square feet of space into a world-class gallery complete with live artist demonstrations, special events and live music daily.

"We've seen quite a lot of new artists submitting in the past few years," said Catherine Keogan, Executive Director of the Sooke Fine Arts Society, a registered charity that organizes the acclaimed art show. "For the past two years running fully a third of exhibiting artists were first-time submitters, each bringing new perspectives and fresh sensibilities to the show.

"It's a great reflection of the jury process, as well, in that each submission is completely anonymous and judged solely on its own merits. This levels the playing field for emerging and established artists alike," she noted.

This year's jurors are familiar figures in the provincial art scene, covering a wide span of genres and mediums between them, from wood-carving and jewellery to contemporary painting and installations:

Chief Rande Cook, a multidisciplinary artist from Alert Bay, whose work can be found in galleries and private collections around the world.

Meghan Hildebrand, a contemporary artist living in Powell River, with work ranging from abstract expressionism to bold representationalism, and recently featured on the cover of FOCUS Magazine.

Craig Sibley, a multidisciplinary artist and founder/director of Trench Contemporary Art in North Vancouver, whose sculptures investigate minimalism and organic constructivism.

"We're very excited about this jury panel," said Janet Rayner Thorn, volunteer team leader for the Adjudication Committee and a director on the society's board. "It can be quite difficult to put together a trio with the backgrounds to represent the very diverse artistic mediums that are submitted, and this group between them have quite an extraordinary breadth of expertise and experience.

"Furthermore, they bring a real sense of both the very traditional and the cutting edge to the table—it will be fascinating to see how that translates in their selections this year."

This year's Call to Artists came hard on the heels of the annual volunteer Kick-off Meeting, where more than 70 volunteers gathered to plan for the coming season, with some teams' activities already well under way. In total, some 300 volunteers will devote countless hours to producing the annual event, in a labour of love of art and community.

Some volunteers were singled out for recognition, thanks to their extraordinary contributions over the years. Community Spirit Awards were given to long-time volunteers Glenda and Ron Bilinsky; Judy Gilligan; Kenny Jones; Sally Manning; Janet Rayner Thorn; and Linda and Myron Teneycke, for their hard work and outstanding commitment to the show.

Group discussions allowed members and volunteers to weigh in on critical planning initiatives, generate innovative dialogue and brainstorm creative ways the Sooke Fine Arts can help Sooke achieve widespread recognition as a vibrant, thriving, cultural destination, in step with its natural offerings.

"Our volunteers have told us time and time again that the Sooke Fine Arts Show is as much about Sooke as it is about art — that it's a way to give back to and be proud of their community. Our goal is to build on that and form the kinds of collaborations that will strengthen this community in every way possible," said Keogan. "There are very few towns this size that accomplish what we do, and we want that spirit recognized far and wide."

Important Dates for Artists

Deadline for Submission:

Monday, June 8 Online Submission: www.sookefinearts.com

Accepted Works Announced: Tuesday, June 16

Show Dates: Friday, July 24 – Monday, August 3

About the Society

The Sooke Fine Arts Society is a non-profit organization and registered charity created to encourage and promote a greater understanding and appreciation for the arts by organizing an annual art show, as well as hosting public learning opportunities to demonstrate artistic technique and expertise. The annual art show, held the end of July and early August of each year, is Vancouver Island's premier adjudicated art show. It brings artists, volunteers, visitors and art patrons together in an 11-day celebration of the arts.

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