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Color and Light at Plein Air Grand Marais

**Outdoor Painters of Minnesota announces 2023 awards at
Plein Air Grand Marais competition and festival of outdoor painting.**

GRAND MARAIS, MN. September 22, 2023

Fall color and September light were on spectacular display at the 2023 Plein Air Grand Marais event, which drew over 100 painters to this year’s Competition Week. Daily workshops, artist socials, and paint-outs kept painters busy, culminating in an Open Class reception on Wednesday, Birney Quick Paint and hootenanny on Thursday, and final Competition Class reception on Friday. A hands-on workshop with juror Kim Casebeer was added this year. Top awards for paintings of exceptional merit, or POEMs, increased with the addition of a POEM for Color & Light in memory of Cynthia S. Kath, a gifted painter and past PAGM instructor who passed away in July of this year.

Plein Air Grand Marais is a joint enterprise of Outdoor Painters of Minnesota, which organizes the event, and JHP Art Gallery operated by the Cook County Historical Society, which mounts the Competition Exhibit. Sponsors include Visit Cook County, a tourism bureau in Grand Marais; Wet Paint, a locally owned art materials and framing store in Saint Paul; Joy & Co., a gift shop offering fine art supplies in Grand Marais; logo, banner and print design by Kim Gordon’s Open Cupboard Designs; and featured advertising and magazine subscription awards from Streamline Publishing, the publisher of PleinAir Magazine.

In 2023, Plein Air Grand Marais drew painters from across the United States, as far away as Alaska, New Mexico, Kansas and the east coast. Plein Air Grand Marais is unique in its emphasis on artists’ education and camaraderie. The event proudly welcomes painters with a wide range of experience, from those who are new to plein air to dedicated amateur and professional painters. The event also celebrates artists in the Arrowhead region with a North Shore Invitational class of the Competition.

Painters find an exhilarating range of painting locations and subject matter in Cook County, from the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness to the Superior Hiking Trail, Lake Superior,

historic sites managed by the Cook County Historical Society, and scenes from downtown Grand Marais. A range of media are employed, from oil and pastel to watermedia including gouache, acrylic and watercolor. The exhibit at Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery is displayed through the second Sunday in October.

2024 Plein Air Grand Marais is scheduled for September 6-14, 2024. The deadline for Competition and Invitational applicants to register is May 1, 2023. Interested artists and collectors should visit OPM's web site for the event at <https://www.outdoorpaintersofminnesota.org/plein-air-grand-marais.html> and subscribe to the PAGM newsletter for announcements and updates.

Here are our 2023 awards for Plein Air Grand Marais:

Juror: Kim Casebeer, Manhattan, Kansas

[Open Class Reception on Wednesday, September 20, 2023:](#)

Best in Show (\$200)	Michael Zirbes <i>Good Night</i> Oil
Three top awards for Paintings of Exceptional Merit (POEMs) (\$100)	Kim Jore <i>Boat Landing at Camp Menogyn</i> Watercolor Jean Larson <i>Temperance Gap</i> Watercolor Kat Nottingham <i>The Other Side</i> Gouache
Three honorable mentions:	Charlene Ridlon <i>Solitude by the Onion River</i> Pastel Jasmin Strevel <i>Rolling Pigeon Bay</i> Oil Susan Seaborn <i>Early Dawn</i> Watercolor

[Birney Quick Paint on Thursday, September 21, 2023:](#)

Grand Prize (\$300)	James Turner Watercolor
Three POEMs (\$200 each)	David Becker Watercolor Kami Mendlik Oil Kathie Wheeler Oil

[Competition Class Reception on Friday, September 22, 2023:](#)

Grand Prize for Best Body of Work (\$1,000)	Brock Larson Oil
Six Top POEM Awards (\$500 each):	David R. Becker , Cynthia S. Kath Award for Exceptional Color & Light: <i>Morning Customs Check</i> Watercolor David Pettibone , Nocturne: <i>Night View from Downtown</i> Oil

Carl Bretzke, *Being Bob* | Oil

Kami Mendlik, *Wild North Shore* | Oil

James Turner, *Heading Out* | Watercolor

Kathie Wheeler, *Raven's Call* | Oil

Special Categories (\$250 each):

Best Sense of Place **Renee St. Leger, *Sunlit Waters* | Oil**

Beauty of Watermedia **Julia Jaakola, *Love* | Watercolor**

Beauty of Oil **Kelly Schamberger, *Destination Unknown***

Beauty of Pastel **Lisa Stauffer, *A Silvery Day***

Best Historic Site **Mark Daehlin, *Echoes in Time* | Oil**

Artists' Choice Award for
Best Body of Work **Kathie Wheeler | Oil**

Honorable Mentions (\$100 each)

1. **Logan Hudson, *Menogyn* | Oil**

2. **Dan Mackerman, *90 Minutes* | Oil**

3. **Christine Tierney, *Java Moose* | Oil**

4. **Bob Upton, *Ready to Board* | Oil**

5. **Stephen Wysocki, *Lake Superior Trail Giant* | Oil**