

## **“SMALL WORKS” – December 2009 National Juried Exhibit**

**JUROR: N. Elizabeth Schlatter**

### **AWARDS**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – “Sweet Sacred Flesh 1” by Kim Truesdale
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – “Puppy in Motion” – photography by Sandy Leigh Skipper
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – “Face Scrubber Study 2” by Corey Ackelmire

- HM – “Electrified 4” – silver gelatin by Robert T. Greene
- HM – “Sighting” – ink on paper by Jenny Zoe Casey
- HM – “The Looker” – Yupo watercolor by Sue Henderson
- HM – “Lemon Meringue” – oil on board by Shirley Whelan

### **JUROR’S STATEMENT**

So the tricky thing about a “small works” exhibition is that the art is, well, small. This can change the playing field substantially. Some artists rely on size as a crutch, as in, if it’s good at 12 inches it will be fantastic at 36! And a healthy sized work can often hide mistakes.

On the other hand, larger artworks can pack a visual punch in a way that smaller ones cannot. And being too little can render an image “precious,” which is not an adjective many artists like to have applied to their work.

It’s particularly challenging to tackle “big” themes in small work. Try to imagine a pint-sized Mark Rothko or, even more ridiculous, a Michelangelo sculpture that fits in your hand. Oh wait, you can buy those at tourist stands in Italy.

Anyway, for this juried exhibition, I tried to pick works that were not only suitable for their small stature but had qualities complimented by the size limitations. This meant looking for art that might have compressed compositions, as in Sue Henderson’s “The Looker” and Shirley Whelan’s “Lemon Meringue” or small components combined in new ways, like Corey Ackelmire’s assembled pieces.

For the prizes, I chose artworks that had something either besides or in addition to verisimilitude that makes the viewers look twice to question what they are seeing. I can’t quite figure out what’s going on in Jenny Zoe Casey’s “Sighting” but I feel like there’s a visual code that needs to be cracked. The same is true with Robert T. Greene’s small examinations of electrical wires and poles—why is he focusing on what many consider blights on the contemporary landscape?

Finally, in the first and second prize-winners, Kim Truesdale’s “Sweet Sacred Flesh” and Sandy Leigh Skipper’s “Puppy in Motion,” the mundane is rendered anew by choice and medium. The subjects of both images couldn’t be more simple and straightforward, but the artists’ slight manipulations make for puzzlingly incomplete presentations. Which is a good thing—to tease the viewer down multiple paths.

It’s a lot to ask of a small work of art.