

JUROR'S STATEMENT

Niagara Frontier Watercolor Society
Richard Stephens, Juror 2020

Selecting the paintings and awards for the Niagara Frontier Watercolor Society Show has been a unique experience in that selections were made without seeing the actual paintings. High quality digital images give us a pretty accurate feel for the paintings. But they do not account for framing and overall presentation. That is one of the five categories I consider. And although the size may be listed that doesn't replace the impression of standing in front of the real painting.

That being said. It is always both a privilege and a challenge to jury an art show or exhibition. Because I have so often been on the "other side", as an artist presenting my work for the juror to consider, I take on the job of juror with great respect and responsibility. It has always been hard and stressful work for me. It is very important to be fair to each and every artist showing, to give each work a true appraisal and not discount any painting without genuinely looking at the work with certain guidelines in mind.

Those guidelines for me are both objective and subjective. I have created a Juror's sheet listing 5 categories' that I deem important. This is my objective view of the work and serves me well in making my final decisions. Those categories are: Mastery of Medium, Design and Composition, Creativity and Originality, Narrative and Overall Presentation.

It is impossible, and would be dishonest, for the juror to be totally objective. The reason someone is asked to jury a show is, at least in part, the very personnel knowledge and experience they bring to the assignment. So the juror's subjective response to a work is just as important and valid as their objective analysis.

As a juror my job is to select the best show from the work available. Keeping in mind the viewing public, I want to select a show that has something for everyone. The show should not be limited to particular "isms", subjects or painting styles. I also see my job as an opportunity to educate. I am always willing to visit with the artist about what I see positive in their work and share what they might consider to push themselves to the next level.

In conclusion, I know not everyone will be happy or agree with my selections for the show and award winners. But please know it was my honest and seriously considered opinion on the particular day I judged the show. Please keep in mind that I, or another juror, on another day, might well have selected a different show.

Yours, Truly,

Richard Stephens