

ON MY OWN TIME
Awards Ceremony - November 3, 2021

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the 24th biennial *On My Own Time* City-wide Exhibit.

I'm Sheila Walk, Executive Director of the Springfield Area Arts Council. The Arts Council is marking its 45th year, and its mission is to 'enrich the community through the arts.'

The Springfield Area Arts Council is pleased to sponsor *On My Own Time*. We thank all the state agencies, businesses, and educational institutions that joined us this year as participating organizations. It is always a wonderful opportunity to recognize efforts of artists in our community. We are indebted to the professional and amateur visual artists who enhance our lives through the color, texture, shape, and design of their work. I thank each artist who participated in this program.

This year's exhibit is supported by the Illinois Arts Council Agency and through entry fees paid by the artists and registration fees paid by the employers who are represented here tonight.

We must acknowledge the Springfield Art Association, its executive director Betsy Dollar, her staff, and the gracious volunteers for hosting the exhibit and tonight's reception. This is a wonderful space, and we are fortunate to have this organization in our city.

Since the Arts Council has a staff of one, I am ever-grateful that Rosemary and Rod Buffington, themselves visual artists, volunteered for the third time to coordinate the 2021 *On My Own Time* program. They both dedicated many hours managing the details which make this program successful. I thank you, Rod and Rosemary, for your time, energy, and enthusiasm. Truly, it is a pleasure to work with you.

The *On My Own Time* program has two components. At each participating business, state agency, or educational institution, an In-house Exhibit is organized by the In-house Coordinator, and the works are judged by a panel of three working artists. Based on a city-wide standard, artwork in thirteen different categories can receive first, second, third, or honorable mention at the In-house Exhibit. The art that receives first-place there qualifies for this City-wide Exhibit.

All this art then is judged again by category and selected for additional awards. It is those City-wide awards that are being presented this evening. One-hundred eighty-six artists submitted their work for In-house competitions!

I'd like to thank our judges. We had an outstanding panel composed of professional artists and educators: Bryon Hartley, Mary Ellen Strack, and Roger Williams. Each volunteered to judge twelve In-house Exhibits plus these pieces in the City-wide Exhibit. Given the level of excellence seen in the artworks here, you'll agree that the judges had difficult decisions to make. Please join me in a round of applause for our judges.

Rod and Rosemary designed our event program. Please pick up a couple of copies. Note the names of the directors and coordinators from each organization that participated.

I have certificates for each In-house Coordinator which I'll award now, with gratitude. Coordinators, please come forward when I say your name. If the Coordinator is not here, then would a

representative of that organization please come forward? Audience: Please hold your applause until all certificates have been distributed.

Chatham Area Public Library – Amy Byers, director
– Alanna Sablotny, coordinator

City of Springfield – James Langfelder, mayor
– Jessica Sheppard, coordinator

Illinois Department of Revenue – David Harris, director
– Abigail Rennolds,
coordinator

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency – John Kim, director
– Hope Wright,
coordinator

Illinois State Board of Education – Carmen Ayala,
superintendent
– Shawn Backs,
coordinator

Illinois State Museum – Cinnamon Caitlin-Legutko, director
– Tracy Peirceall and Elizabeth Bazan,
coordinators

Illinois State Police – Brendan Kelly, director
– Robin Timm, coordinator

Lincoln Land Community College – Charlotte Warren,
president
– Misty Hagstrom and
Lindee Hall, coordinators

Illinois Healthcare and Family Services, Office of Inspector General – Brian Dunn, inspector general
– Missy Block, coordinator

Office of the State Appellate Defender – Catherine Hart,
deputy director
– Susan Wilham,
coordinator

Springfield Public School District 186 – Jennifer Gill,
superintendent
– Lynn Gilmore,
coordinator

The Wardrobe – Sami McElwee, owner
– Kim Dixon, coordinator

A word about one of our awards: The People's Choice Award will not be presented this evening since the exhibit has not been open long enough to give visitors a chance to vote. We'll allow voting for the entire run of the exhibit; you should vote tonight! After the close of the exhibit on November

20th, we will tally the ballots then announce the winner the following week. Presentation of the ribbon will take place at the winner's place of employment.

Now, we'll award prize ribbons. As each award recipient is announced, that artist should come forward and receive a ribbon from Rosemary and Rod. If that artist is not here, I ask that a representative from that workplace accept the ribbon. Please stay up front until the entire category is announced and a picture has been taken.

After the ribbons in all categories plus the Best of Show have been awarded, artists should attach ribbons near their work.

Artists, please do not take your ribbon home with you tonight; leave it with your artwork for the run of the show.

Audience, again, please hold your applause until all ribbons have been presented in a category.

The final award is the "Peg Lonson Best of Show" Award. This award is named for Peg Lonson who served as president of the Arts Council Board of Directors from 1984 to 1986. She then served on the state Arts Council staff as Deputy Director. Peg developed the *On My Own Time* program here in Springfield and coordinated it until her retirement from the Arts Council. After Peg passed away, the "Best of Show" award was named in her memory.

Rod and Rosemary...

This exhibit is a meaningful way to celebrate the arts in our community. We encourage these artists to keep creating and to promote this opportunity to other artists in their workplaces. We hope to have all of you, and more, join us for *On My Own Time* in 2023.

Before you leave tonight, please vote for your favorite piece of art and greet the *On My Own Time* participants and award-winners. Take a program or two home with you.

If you'd like to know more about the Arts Council's work, then talk to me. Check our website and social media to learn about upcoming events like *Friday Night Jazz* and *First Night Springfield*.

Thank you for coming tonight to celebrate the arts!