

Art and the Natural World at County Museum

The 29th annual Wildlife Art Festival at the San Bernardino County Museum in Redlands will take place on Saturday, November 20 from 9am to 5pm and Sunday, November 21 from 9am to 4pm. Along with featured artist Rob Sutton, prominent wildlife and landscape artists will exhibit paintings, sculptures, carvings, and limited edition prints in the museum galleries. The festival, with platinum sponsorship by the James Ramos Family, is organized by the San Bernardino County Museum Association. Festival admission is \$8 (adult), \$7 (senior and military), \$6 (student), and \$4 (child 5 to 12). Children under 5 and Museum Association members are admitted free.

The festival kicks off on Friday, November 18 between 6 and 9:00 p.m. with “An Evening with the Artists.” This year’s reception will recall adventures in the great outdoors, with décor by Bass Pro Shops and guests invited to dress in Outdoor Adventure-wear. The party, which includes the introduction of this year’s Federal Duck Stamp competition winner, is open to the public. The cost for the event is \$20/person, with Museum Association members \$10/person and festival sponsors invited at no cost. Reservations are required.

The festival also includes an exhibit of the top entries from this year’s Federal Duck Stamp competition and entries from the Junior Duck Stamp contest. Children’s art is also represented by classroom and family projects for the Tom Bennett Children’s Art and Environmental Science Competition. Family Fun Day activities centered around art and the natural world are scheduled on both days of the festival.

Festival History

The Wildlife Art Festival began when top paintings from the Federal Duck Stamp Contest were first shown on the West Coast in 1983 at the San Bernardino County Museum. From

this exhibit of small, exquisitely detailed paintings, the festival has grown and evolved over the years while maintaining its focus on conservation and the natural world. Twenty-nine years ago, the event was called the “Waterfowl West Festival,” and art works featured water birds. As more artists sought to enter their works in the festival, a wider range of wildlife paintings was accepted into the event. This year, participating artists will show subject matters related to the natural world.

Festival Artists

Since 1987, a Featured Artist has been selected annually to produce a work of art as a signature piece for that year’s event. This year, Rob Sutton from San Dimas, California will present a painting created especially for the festival, “Firehole Magic.” Sutton stated, “Drawn to the vastness of the landscape and the incredible critters that inhabit it, my vision as a wildlife artist is to unite these two elements into cohesive, balanced compositions that breaths life into any room that they are hung. I believe this is best done through the pushing of color, form, and texture, while keeping the anatomy of the painting truthful to the wildlife and environment being represented. I am most intrigued by North America's big game but find that I will paint just about anything that moves. Realistic representation is critical to me although I have little desire to paint every hair.”

Other participating artists are Clifford Barnes (Burbank), Keith Batcheller (San Dimas), Ray Brown (Lake Forest), Circe (Fullerton), Pat Gilmore (Vista), Carol Heiman-Greene (Orange), Gary Johnson (Encinitas), Penny Krebs (Morongo Valley), Lee Kromschroeder (Escondido), Arlene Rheinisch (Trabuco Canyon), Dennis Schroeder (Junction City), Robert Steiner (San Francisco), Pam Stoehsler (Klamath Falls), and Dennis Zervas (Lake Forest).

Family Programs

The Wildlife Art Festival is designed for adults and children with museum education division programs and the Tom Bennett Children's Art and Environmental Science competition, during which students learn about wildlife habitats. This year's theme is "Wetlands Conservation."

Wetlands are important habitats for wildlife, the plants they depend on, and people. They provide free essential services including filtering water, modulating the influence of storms by buffering land from floods and water surges, and providing nursery and lifecycle habitat for countless mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, crustaceans, insects and more. Wetlands have been eliminated for development and flood control across the state, leaving people to seek alternative - and expensive - solutions to the benefits that wetlands provided for free.

On Saturday from 9am to 5pm and Sunday from 9am to 4pm, the museum's education division will organize a variety of hands-on art experiences for children and families using paint and natural materials. The Ramona-Country Carvers will provide hands-on instruction in carving, and artist Trudy Wood will teach drawing and pastel classes for children 9 to 15 years old.

Federal Duck Stamp Story

The top entries from the Federal Duck Stamp art competition will be exhibited at the museum during the festival. "Duck Stamps" are not postage stamps; they are revenue stamps called the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp purchased by waterfowl hunters to validate their hunting licenses each year. The proceeds from stamp sales are the single largest source of funding for wetlands habitat conservation and

enhancement. The stamp design, new each year, is chosen through a prestigious, federally-sponsored art contest. This year's winner will be selected in late October. He or she will meet with festival visitors on Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday.

Since 1934, the "Duck Stamp" program has raised \$770 million to preserve wetlands acres within 186 national wildlife refuges. These refuges are used by one-third of our threatened and endangered species, two-thirds of our most important commercial and sporting species of marine fish, and songbirds, shorebirds, and countless other species. Birdwatchers, photographers, fishermen, and others who enjoy wildlife can contribute to the conservation of wildlife habitat by purchasing Duck Stamps at most post offices, wildlife refuges, and many licensed hunting retail stores.

Festival Sponsors

The Wildlife Art Festival is organized by the San Bernardino County Museum Association with platinum sponsorship from the James Ramos Family. Other festival sponsors include Macy's, Bass Pro Shops, Beaver Medical Group, John Biddick and Associates, PrintProPlus.com, the San Bernardino County Fish and Game Commission, James and Marguerite Glaze, Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard and Smith LLP, Ayers Hotel Redlands, and the Ramona-Country Carvers.

Museum Information

The San Bernardino County Museum is at the California Street exit from Interstate 10 in Redlands. Admission is \$8 (adult), \$6 (military or senior), \$5 (student) and \$4 (child aged 5 to 12). Children under five and Museum Association members are admitted free. Parking is free. For more information, visit www.sbcountymuseum.org or call (909) 307-2669.

The museum is accessible to persons with disabilities. If assistive listening devices or other auxiliary aids are needed in order to participate in museum exhibits or programs, requests should be made through Museum Visitor Services at least three business days prior to your visit. Visitor Services' telephone number is (909) 307-2669 ext. 229 or TDD (909) 792-1462.