

Juror's Statement

for Delaware Watercolor Society's Show at the Art league of Ocean city

It was an honor to jury and judge the DWS exhibition sponsored by the Art League of Ocean City. I spent several hours on a large desktop computer making my selections and choosing the paintings that would receive awards. In order to be as objective as possible, I first gave each painting a score from 1-10 based on the overall quality of the painting. Then within each numbered score, I ranked the paintings further. This resulted in a complete ranking of all the paintings. I then skimmed off the top paintings for the show and assigned the awards based on my rankings. My assessment of the paintings was based on technical skill, composition, use of color and value, and originality

Let me talk about the award winners and why they were chosen. **First Prize** went to *Sunlit Crab Shanty*, an acrylic by Dale Sheldon. This is a bold and striking painting for its use of color and division of space. One might think the bold yellow would be overpowering, but the artist captured the feeling of light on this field so well that it still feels serene. The sense of perspective from the grasses diminishing in size back to the distant land is wonderful, along with the variety of color in the grasses. I like the square format and placement of every object—very well done. The other painting by this artist (the sea turtle) was also excellent.

Second Prize went to *Dreamer*,” a watercolor by Steve Cole, another example of a bold composition and good division of space. I like the cleanness and simplicity of this painting and also the restrained use of color and detail. The artist was daring in what he left out: no waves on the water, no distant boats, no shells in the sand, all preventing it from becoming trite. There is a strong feeling of what I call “intentionality” in this painting: the artist knew what he wanted to do and then did it. The touch of red/orange in the hat and shorts is a nice complement to the teal blue of the sea.

Third Prize went to a painting that is much busier, but works for other reasons--*Hawaii 5.0*, a watercolor by Gail Zinar. Crashing waves are a tough subject in watercolor and these are done very well. How in the world do we convey all the colors and shapes of water? You just have to try your best to capture the essence of it, and this artist did an excellent job. The variety in size and shapes of the rocks is good, and the decision to let the distant sea and sky be a simple yellow was a good choice.

The two **Merit Awards** are in no particular order. *Kayaker's Delight*, a watercolor by Cheryl Wisbrock, is a delight to behold. It is a classical watercolor painted in a classical way. It looks like the artist used lifting techniques to get some of the effects in the water, and perhaps in the trees—always a useful approach. It has a nice sense of perspective and I like the dead wood sticking out from the tops of the trees.

My other choice, *The Green Dresser*, a watercolor by Christine Heyse, is a complicated scene rendered simpler by abstracting the image a little. I like the way the same colors bounce around in the painting. It is painted cleanly, with good control of edges, and a nice distribution of small and large shapes. It perfectly captures the feeling of an old-fashioned beach cottage.

Have a wonderful show!
Susan Avis Murphy, AWS, NWS
Sandy Spring, MD

1st Prize: *Sunlit Crab Shanty*, acrylic on canvas

2nd Prize: *Dreamer*, watercolor
3rd Prize: *Hawaii 5.0*, watercolor
Merit Award: *Kayaker's Delight*, watercolor
Merit Award: *The Green Dresser*, watercolor