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Juried art show celebrates local photographers

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By Joel Hall

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Pleasant sunsets, wild horses grazing in a wind-bleached landscape, a staged-murder scene featuring a woman wearing runny mascara, clutching a teddy bear, next to a recently fired gun.

These are some of the images at the Arts Clayton 2009 Juried Photography Competition. Altogether, 56 of the most interesting and inspiring photographs, taken by artists from the metro-Atlanta area, are on view at the gallery.

Dozens of people gathered for the premiere of the juried competition and exhibit on Thursday night at the Arts Clayton gallery in Jonesboro. The exhibition, which will be on display until Oct. 30, is one of several photography events taking place throughout metro Atlanta this month, during the 2009 Atlanta Celebrates Photography Festival.

Arts Clayton Gallery Manager Karen Powers said this year's competition was highly selective. She said local photography experts chose the photos in the exhibition from 170 entries.

"This year's show was incredibly competitive, and you can see the result of that here," Powers said. "I think the range [of pictures] that was selected by the jury represents the entire spectrum of art, from the very traditional, to

Photo by Joel Hall/// McDonough photographer, Jason Morrison, won best-in-show for his edgy piece, "Sacrifice," featuring a runny-make-up-wearing woman clutching a teddy bear at the scene of a murder. The Arts Clayton 2009 Juried Photography Competition features a wide range of experimental and traditional works.

digital photography. I think having an opportunity for a juried show definitely works to inspire the great local photographers we have in the Southern Crescent."

This year's "Best-in-Show" award went to photographer Jason Morrison for his work, "Sacrifice." Photographer Donna Rosser won first place for "Fork #1" and the "Patron's Award" for "Adopt a Shelter Dog." The second place award went to Anne Fields for "Luna Moth," and the third place award went to Larry McDonald for his photograph, "Underfoot."

The first-, second-, and third-place winners were awarded checks for \$100, \$75, and \$50, respectively. The work of the "Best-in-Show" winner was purchased for \$250 to become a part of Arts Clayton's permanent collection.

Morrison, a McDonough resident, who works as a communication designer for the Henry County Board of Commissioners, also owns Studio 42, a photography studio in Locust Grove. He was surprised that his avant-garde piece, "Sacrifice," took away "Best-in-Show."

"I kind of had second thoughts about entering this in the show," Morrison said. "Everything here is so inspiring. I didn't want to just shoot flowers. I wanted to do something with emotion, and kind of push the edge a little bit. It's great when you see work, and it can evoke a feeling."

Cathy Gore, a photographer from Marietta, said the event is great for emerging photographers who want to become better. "There is a lot of quality work here, and what you want to be associated with is quality work," Gore said. "I've seen, from people to landscapes, to animals, to abstract [pictures]. I've learned stuff from other photographers. I have things to add to my resume."

Ella Stoessel, a Fayetteville resident, came to support her husband, Vincent Stoessel, who has been actively working as a

photographer since 2006, She said the juried competition helps local artists take their skills to the next level.

"I think it gives them a great forum for their work, and lets other people appreciate it," she said. "It's nice to be in the same space with people, and get feedback. It just encourages him to go out and capture the next great shot."

For more information about the Arts Clayton 2009 Juried Photography Competition, visit www.artsclayton.org. For information about other events taking place during the Atlanta Celebrates Photography Festival, visit www.acpinfo.org.

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