

FULL CONTEXT OF JUDGE'S STATEMENT

I was pleased to have been invited to judge this year's competitive exhibition of the Miniature Art Society of Florida (MAS-F) as it gave me an opportunity to visit with the artists who first introduced me to miniature art. It was this gregarious and talented group of artists and supporters who showed me around an exhibition in January of 1982, acquainted me with the challenges of miniature painting, and introduced me to some of the other regional organizations promoting the concept of miniature art.

Now that I have judged exhibitions in Washington, D.C., Montana, and Florida, I have an even better understanding of what is going on in the field on a national basis. I can speak with some authority when I say that some of the most talented artists at work in the country today are intrigued with the challenge of working in a miniature scale, and are satisfied with the intimate nature of their artistic expression.

The various societies of miniature artists have given thousands of artists an opportunity to share information and exhibit their artwork. A few commercial galleries have also started to exhibit the work of individual miniaturists. All of this suggests that a number of artists involved in miniaturism will continue to grow and the work being produced will continue to meet high standards.

In selecting the winners in this year's MAS-F exhibition, I was impressed with both the recent work of nationally recognized artists, and with the pieces submitted by artists who have only recently begun to enter these various competitions. There were also a couple of extraordinarily talented painters (who only exhibit with the Florida society) and it was a pleasure to see their pictures again. It is a credit to the MAS-F that their shows continue to interest both the well established as well as the unknown miniaturist.

This particular show seemed to attract more outstanding work in the category of drawing and in the category of graphics than the other shows I have judged. As a result, I awarded a number of prizes to prints, drawing, and pastels. Some might think I did this because my own background is in the field of printmaking. On the contrary, I am probably a tougher judge of prints than of other media.

I was asked by several members of the society to offer any negative comments I might have on the work being exhibited, and I responded by pointing out that a number of pieces in the show suffered from the problems which are common to many pictures done in a realistic style. There are certain subjects for realistic paintings which have been used so often that any new presentation is likely to seem trite. For example, any artist who wants to offer yet another painting of sail boats, crashing waves against the shore, or daisies has to go out of his or her way to find a fresh, original way of presenting these subjects. If I had to identify any weakness in the MAS-F Show, it would be in those dozen or so pictures which focused on these kinds of trite subjects without offering a new and original interpretation. Considering the large number of paintings in the exhibition, these represent a very small percentage of the total show.

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M. STEPHEN DOHERTY - SHOW JUDGE

The Board of Directors chose as Show Judge for the Tenth International Miniature Art Show, Mr. M. Stephen Doherty, editor of AMERICAN ARTIST magazine. A graduate of Knox College with honors in art, he received a Masters in Fine Arts from Cornell University. A printmaker, Doherty had several year's experience teaching art before joining AMERICAN ARTIST in 1979.

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Doherty said he felt he had an even better understanding of what is going on nationally in the field of miniaturism after having judged miniature shows in Washington, Montana and Florida.

"I think I can speak with some authority when I say that some of the most talented artists at work in the country today are intrigued with the challenge of working in a miniature scale, and are satisfied with the intimate nature of their artistic expressions," stated Mr. Doherty.

The young editor spent an entire day examining and studying the 800 works selected by the Jury of Selection and chose 47 pieces for awards.

"He did an outstanding job," said Doris Liverman, President of MAS-F, "and we can never thank him enough for having taken time to come down from New York to do this important job for us."