



## Jason Strickland Juror Statement

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**Dear Masters, Grasshoppers, and viewers of the show,**

First, I would like to thank all who took their valuable time to make this show a success. This show is a very special one indeed, as both teachers and students get to display their work in the same space for all to see, in a gallery setting. This allows for a very unique and exciting perspective for the viewers. A big thank you to Mr. Cobb for making this wonderful show happen every year.

Making placement choices from the twenty-eight student works was not an easy task. In reading the Artist statements first, I was able to get an idea of the student intent, artistic vocabulary, and relationship of each teacher to student. It was exciting to read about how the masters inspire the grasshoppers, yet on another level, the grasshoppers motivate and inspire the masters. With this dynamic, there is a great flow in the classroom, and it creates a stellar art program. One unexpected observation that became evident was that some of the art was very personal to the point where it must have taken great courage to put oneself out there for all to interpret. It is hard enough to put art out there for all to see and have the viewer make their own inferences and judgments about it, but another to explain in detail why the artist made the decision to do what they did, especially if it was very raw and personal.

**In-person walk-throughs:** Upon the initial walk through I was overwhelmed with the decisions I would have to make, as all the art was very eclectic in styles, media, approach... you name it. The works were even more than what I anticipated from the digital photos I had to look at. Many digital art shows are curated in this very way, and it was a prime example of how important it is to take quality images of one's work, as close as possible with adequate lighting. What was an enjoyable first impression was how well the artwork was displayed in the space. I could have picked almost every piece in the room. Every single work kept me in awe of the talent and hard work involved. My jaws dropped more than a few times, and I was intrigued at almost every stop. The placing decisions I made were personal, and very much made with every twenty-seven years of my teaching experience. I chose awards based on a number of criteria from writing skills, technical prowess, or the application of the elements and principles to create a harmonious balance that spoke to me.

I would like to congratulate the recipients of this year's awards as you have certainly earned them. I would also like to congratulate all the teachers for dedicating their time and effort in preparing all of the work that was exhibited. Please remember: All in all, the reward should not be the award, it should be your process and the relationship you have developed with your teacher. This relationship will be remembered for a long time, and that is the ultimate reward.

*About me: I began my formal education at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania majoring in Art Education with a concentration in ceramics. I first taught ceramics through the Erie Art Museum. I was then hired full-time at Towanda Area School District as a middle school art teacher, and am now currently teaching high school. I received my Master's Degree in Ceramics from Marywood University, and my Masters as a Technology Integration Specialist through DeSales University. I have been teaching for 27 years. I am a ceramic artist and have an in-home studio in Towanda where I built my wood kiln. I have two children and a wife who is also an art teacher.*

Sincerely,

Jason Strickland, Towanda Area Jr./Sr. High School