



4th Annual Plein Air Painters' Auction and Gala Proves a Financial Success for Immediate Release:

On Saturday, September 12, the 4th Annual Plein Air Painters' Auction and Gala netted the event's largest number of sponsorships and highest net income. The proceeds support the event's organizer, the Pacific NorthWest Art School.

Ninety-three artists and 111 patrons attended the Auction and Gala, which concluded the Plein Air Painters' U.S. Open-the nation's largest plein air painting event. Throughout the 4-day paint-out, artists captured Whidbey Island's beauty, finding many lovely venues. They delighted in the main street vistas of Langley and Coupeville, Ebey's Landing, the Captain Whidbey Inn and others.

On the final day of the Open, artists wrapped up their plein air experience at an Artists' Picnic and participated in two product demonstrations by Briana Ball of Gamblin Artists Colors. Then, they attended a private demonstration of award-winning Master Painter and signature member of the American Watercolor Society, Xiaogang Zhu, from Olympia,

At the evening Auction and Gala, Zhu juried the artists' painting and named several winners: The Rookie of the Year award went to Jimbo McCormick, who received a Plein Air French Easel donated by Cheap Joe's Arts. Other awards: Best of Show to James Moore, Awards of Excellence to Jim Lamb and Mike Wise; Awards of Merit to Kathryn Townsend and Glen Oberg; and Juror's Pick to Alfred Currier.

Auction and Gala attendees enjoyed great food and wine as local auctioneer Jim Freeman, accompanied by a bevy of young ladies displaying the paintings and tracking the bids, entertained them.

"I have not seen that many people engaged in a live auction in a long time" said Freeman. "It was great!"