

October 5, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Bobby Moore, Interim Curator

(814) 472-3920

Travis Mearns, Public Relations Coordinator

(724) 238-6015

SAMA CELEBRATES AREA'S ARTISTS WITH *BIENNIAL 2012*

Loretto – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto is pleased to announce the opening of *Biennial 2012*, a juried exhibition occurring every two years that highlights the very best in regional artistic talent. The exhibition opens October 26 with 131 works from nearly 100 artists from throughout Pennsylvania. SAMA's Biennial is considered to be one of Pennsylvania's top exhibitions for contemporary local artists, and this year features works in photography, watercolor, wood, oil, clay, steel, bronze, pastel, pencil, acrylic, fiber art, and mixed media, among others. *Biennial 2012* will be on view through January 26, 2013.

Artists' submissions were judged by Jeanne Gleason, Vice Chair of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and SAMA Trustee Emeritus. A resident of Johnstown, Gleason's commitment to supporting the arts has been felt throughout the region for more than thirty years. She has served as Executive Director of the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra and was the Founding Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance. She is a past board member of Bottleworks Ethnic Arts Center and Carnegie Music and Performing Arts and currently serves as a trustee of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. She has received a number of awards and accolades throughout her career, including Carlow University's Legacy Award, YWCA Tribute to Women Award, and WQED's Volunteer in the Arts Award, among many others.

Award judging was done by award-winning photographer, Donald M. Robinson. Robinson, who resides in Pittsburgh, was educated at the University of South Carolina and Harvard Graduate School of Business. He developed two successful businesses and has been deeply involved in humanitarian aid. His photography has been exhibited across the world. In 1991, he was awarded the EFIAP award (Artist of Excellence) by the Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique. He also was awarded the Photograph Society of America's Galaxy Award, and has won 25 gold medals for "Best of Show" in various international photography salons.

Michael Allison of Hollidaysburg was awarded Best of Show for his acrylic oil painting, *Scotch Bonnet #3*. Merit awards were given to Andrew Neil Dierks of Altoona for Best of Photography, J. Andrew Jacobs of Northern Cambria for Best of Sculpture,

Maxine Levin of State College for Best of Crafts, S. Scott Steberger of Lilly for Best of Drawing, and Diana Williams of New Florence for Best of Painting.

“SAMA’s Biennial exhibitions are testimonials to the incredible talents of local and regional artists of Pennsylvania,” said SAMA interim curator Bobby Moore. “The works of these artists are brought together through an invitational and selection process to create an amazing exhibition of experience, skill, and talent in the visual arts. *Biennial 2012* encompasses nearly every art genre. The magnificent body of work will leave the viewer feeling a sense of awe from the endless array of artistic expression. If you are a collector, you will be happy to know that the majority of works in the exhibition are available for sale. I encourage all of you to come to Loretto to view this spectacular, family-friendly exhibition. You will not be disappointed.”

The Museum will host a reception celebrating the exhibition on Saturday, December 1. The reception will begin at 5 p.m., with award presentation to follow. Cost is \$25 per person or \$20 for Museum members and *Biennial 2012* artists. Reservations are required by November 28 by calling the Museum at (814) 472-3920.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto is located on the campus of Saint Francis University. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday. The Museum is open to the public free of charge. For more information, call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.

This project was made possible through the AIE Partnership of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency. State government funding for the arts depends upon an annual appropriation by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and support from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The PCA Arts-in-Education Partner in this region is the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art.