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**SAMA CELEBRATES REGION'S TALENTED ARTISTS WITH
*BIENNIAL 2014***

Loretto – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto is pleased to announce the opening of *Biennial 2014*, the Museum's juried exhibition occurring every two years that highlights the very best in regional artistic talent. The exhibition opens October 24 with 116 works from more than sixty artists throughout Pennsylvania. SAMA's Biennial is considered to be one of Pennsylvania's top exhibitions for contemporary local artists, and this installment features works in photography, watercolor, wood, oil, clay, steel, glass, bronze, pastel, pencil, acrylic, and mixed media, among others. *Biennial 2014* will be on view through January 24, 2015.

Serving as both selection and award juror was J. William Meek, III, director and owner of the Harmon-Meek Gallery in Naples, Florida since 1978. Meek earned a Master of Arts degree in museum studies from Johns Hopkins University and has curated more than 300 exhibitions at 80 museums in 27 states. He was a recipient of SAMA's *Service to the Arts Award* in 2012 and the Distinguished Service to the Arts Award presented by the New York Equity Association in 1999, the first art dealer ever to receive both awards.

John Rita of Altoona was awarded Best of Show for his oil painting, *Raphael Master Study*. Merit awards were given to Kathleen Kase Burk of Ebensburg for First Place in Drawing, Allen Capriotti of Altoona for First Place in Painting, Andrew Neil Dierks of Altoona for First Place in Photography, and Earl W. Elliott of Catonsville, Maryland for First Place in Sculpture.

Presented with Second Place awards and Honorable Mentions were Robert Bender of Stillwater, Robert L. Bowden of Pittsburgh, Peter Calaboyias of Pittsburgh, Andrew Neil Dierks of Altoona, Alexis Dillon of Greensburg, Brian Dumm of Ebensburg, Joy Fairbanks of Blairsville, Marianne Fyda of Troutville, Eric Gaston of Roaring Spring, Dave Hammaker of East Freedom, Yongsook Kim-Lambert of Tyrone, Mary F. Lessard of Ebensburg, John A. Mayer of New Alexandria, Brice Miller of Woodbury, Cynthia Nixon of State College, Nancy Sarangoulis of Reading, Amie Sheehan of Gallitzin, Jeanne Stevens-Sollman of Bellefonte, Richard A. Stoner of

Latrobe, Robert Wertz of Johnstown, Hisham Youssef of Smicksburg, and Annette Zalanowski of Altoona.

“As with previous Biennials, *Biennial 2014* is a show marked by diversity and high quality,” said SAMA Curator for Visual Arts Dr. Scott Dimond. “The range of style and expression is wonderful to see, and is a testament to the artistic vitality of this region.”

The Museum will host a reception celebrating the exhibition on Friday, December 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. Cost is \$25 per person or \$20 for Museum members and *Biennial 2014* artists. Reservations are required by December 2 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.