

A Magical Mix

The award-winning pastels in the Pastel Society of New Mexico's annual exhibition demonstrated high-level achievement in a wide range of genres.

The Pastel Society of New Mexico (PSNM) has staged a national juried exhibition every year for nearly 20 years, making it one of the most well-known and anticipated events of the pastel year. PSNM president Fred Miller reported that this year's exhibition showcased 75 artists and awarded \$12,000 in prizes. The 139 pastel paintings on display featured a diverse range of subjects—everything from pastures to people to plums—and the award selections reflected this variety.

Jurying the show were artists Patti André, Aaron Schuerr and Sally Strand. Awards judge Clive Tyler remarked on the impressive quality of the selections: "I enjoyed so many works of art, and was glad to see a rebirth of expressionism and impressionism."

Colorado artist Teri Gortmaker earned the top prize for her pastel landscape, *Bear Creek in Winter*. "Bear Creek," she says, "is part of the Boulder Open Space network very close to my home, so I paint this landscape in every season."

Although it was too cold to paint the piece on site, the artist did make several studies on location. "The cold moodiness of this winter evening was what drew me to the scene," she says. "I wanted to contrast that feeling with the sliver of warmth at the end of the day that lingered on the distant hills."

Gortmaker also took the fourth place award for her figural piece, *Eye on the Ball*. Second place went to Bill Baker for his figural work, *Rocks With Green*, and third place was awarded

to Margi Lucena for *Evening Light, Laborcita*, a New Mexico landscape.

Visit the PSNM website (www.pastelsnm.org) to view all the award-winning pastels and to learn more about this flourishing society. "To say that we're enthusiastic about pastels and art would be a gross understatement," says Miller. "And New Mexico is truly an artist's paradise." 

For more on Teri Gortmaker, see **Anne Hevener's** article in the February 2011 issue of *The Pastel Journal*.



Bear Creek in Winter (16x20) by Teri Gortmaker