



THE AKRON GARDEN CLUB
P.O. Box 13343, Fairlawn, Ohio 44333
www.akrongardenclub.org

NEWS RELEASE

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AKRON GARDEN CLUB ANNOUNCES 2015 FLOWER SHOW WINNERS

Winners in floral design, horticulture, photography and botanical arts were named after judging of almost 200 entries in Akron Garden Club's (AGC) *Art Blooms – Beauty Reigns 2015*, a Garden Club of America (GCA) flower show held at Akron Art Museum April 17-19.

The flower show featured 23 artistic designs inspired by works at the museum, arrayed throughout the galleries. Donna Bender of Akron received the AGC Edna R. Sewell Bowl for Best in Show in Floral Design for her creation complementing Paul Henry Ramirez's art installation, *Edging into Excess*. Bender's design also garnered the GCA Harriet DeWaele Puckett Creativity Award, recognizing a uniquely skillful and creative response. Another design interpreting the Ramirez work, by Pamela McMillen of Akron, received the GCA Sandra Baylor Novice Floral Design Award.

A floral design by Akronites Candace Grisi and Jan Hutchinson, interpreting a work by Cleveland artist Christopher Pekoc, won a trifecta of awards: the AGC Beauty Reigns Director's Award, chosen by Mark Masuoka, Akron Art Museum executive director and CEO; the AGC True Colors Award for most captivating use of color; and the AGC Duet Award, for a unique and skillful response by a partnership entry. The experienced designer and newcomer created a mass design interpreting Pekoc's *Shadows (The Chinese Room Remembered, in Red)*, *Čimelice Castle, Czech Republic*, 2001.

A design by a member of Shaker Lakes Garden Club, Isa Ranganathan of North Royalton, interpreting an untitled 1965-66 work by Larry Zox, received the GCA Best in Show Award in Floral Design.

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There were 39 classes of horticultural specimens from local gardens, plus container-grown plants, large assortments of plants interpreting museum paintings, an amaryllis challenge class and *pot-et-fleur* entries, displayed in the Beatrice Knapp McDowell Grand Lobby. The AGC Edna R. Sewell Bowl for Best in Show in Horticulture went to a three-foot-diameter cluster of container-grown plants inspired by William Sommer's ca. 1915 *Landscape with Yellow Clouds*, created by the team of Marsha Dellagnese and Susan Lobalzo of Bath Township, Mary Lohman of Hudson and Dedee O'Neil of Seville. Their entry additionally received the GCA Best in Show Award in Horticulture and the AGC Beauty Reigns Director's Award, chosen by Masuoka.

O'Neil also received two major national horticultural awards for container-grown plants. Her trained ivy ring received the GCA Catherine Beattie Medal, which recognizes an entry "distinguished by its vibrancy, prime condition and perfection of grooming," according to the GCA. O'Neil also received GCA's Clarissa Willemsen Horticulture Propagation Award for "prime condition, flawless grooming and difficulty of propagation" for a *Bougainvillea glabra*. The AGC Beauty Reigns Sweepstakes Award also went to O'Neil, the exhibitor accumulating the most points for entries in the horticulture division.

Kathy Reed of Akron received the GCA Rosie Jones Horticulture Award for an amaryllis of "exceptional visual appeal that reflects the spirit of growing with joy and enthusiasm and inspires others to propagate, grow, show and share horticulture," according to the GCA. Judy Nicely of Akron received the GCA Novice Award in Horticulture, for an outstanding entry by an exhibitor not previously winning a first-place award, for her *pot-et-fleur*.

Ryn Clarke of Chagrin Falls, member of Shaker Lakes Garden Club, won the GCA Best in Show Award for the Photography Division for a color cell-phone photograph in the *Windows on the World* class. Her image also received the GCA Photography Committee Creativity Award and the AGC Museum Choice Photography Award, selected by the museum staff. Clarke won the GCA Best in Show in 2011 as well, the most recent prior show.

Dellagnese won the GCA Novice Award in Photography for an Impressionistic interpretation of *Franklinia alatamaha* fall foliage. Evelyn Lorentzen-Bell of Green Fingers Garden Club in Greenwich, Connecticut, received the AGC Botanical Photography Award for her entry in the *First Light, Last Light, Moonlight* class.

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Maribeth Edminister of Bath Township received the GCA Best in Show Award in Botanical Arts for a ballet slipper encrusted with dried plant material. Edminister won Best in Show in 2011 as well. Ginger Hayne of Akron received the GCA Novice Award in Botanical Art for her embellished trinket box. Margie Ranftl of Akron won the GCA Botanical Arts Creativity Award for a tiara of “excellent craftsmanship and creative response to the flower show theme,” according to the GCA, while Barbara Herberich of Akron received the AGC Beauty Reigns Neophyte Award for the most distinctive entry by a first-time exhibitor.

The GCA Ann Lyon Crammond Award, recognizing an outstanding exhibit educating the public about gardens, was presented to AGC for its display educating about pollinators, created in collaboration with The Ohio State University Agricultural Research and Development Center.

GCA flower shows are known for their exceptional floral designs and *avant-garde* use of flowers. Entrants in the show came from GCA clubs in Akron, Cleveland, throughout Ohio and as far away as Houston, Seattle and Maine. The show was judged by 39 GCA-accredited judges from 14 states and 22 GCA clubs located in nine of the 12 GCA zones.

The three-day flower show attracted some 450 visitors. In conjunction with the show, the museum featured *Beauty Reigns: A Baroque Sensibility in Recent Painting*, which included the work of 13 emerging and mid-career abstract painters and celebrated the exoticism, exuberance and optimism found in their work. The Photography Division entries remain on exhibition at the museum in the Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation Gallery until July 5.

The Akron Garden Club is a private nonprofit service organization, founded in 1924. The purpose of Akron Garden Club is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening and to improve and protect the quality of the environment through programs and action in the fields of horticulture, conservation, civic improvement and education. The Garden Club of America is a nonprofit national organization composed of 201 clubs with some 18,000 members who devote their energy and expertise to projects in their communities and across the nation. The Akron Garden Club is one of three Garden Club of America clubs in Northeastern Ohio, along with the Garden Club of Cleveland and the Shaker Lakes Garden Club.

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