

THE JURY PROCESS by BARBARA NECHIS

It was my pleasure to judge the work for the 2010 Hawaii Watercolor Society exhibit. I am impressed by the care that went into organizing the files and clearly labeling each piece. Not only did it make my job much easier, but it showed each digital image to best advantage for viewing.

I selected this exhibition by initially viewing all of the images. I look for work that appears to be the artist's creation rather than a generic rendering and that displays interesting content, color and design. Those that I included showed aesthetic and visual appeal combined with technical competency. Other considerations were drawing and compositional skills, control of paint, shape and edge when necessary, an understanding of the proportions of figure or landscape, and works that exhibit intent rather than accidental results.

I then view the work a second time and start by dividing it into two groups in separate folders in my computer. I group together those whose level of work seems to be consistent with that of its partners so that the remaining works develop a consistency among themselves. Then in viewing each group separately some pieces will appear not to belong to the group to which I assigned them. I move those pieces back and forth until I am satisfied that the quality of the work is as consistent as I am able to select.

Sometimes if a piece I am in doubt about is small, I may accept it. If it is very large I may exclude it over concern that its flaws will be overly apparent and it may overpower the show. Sometimes the opposite is true and I may choose a piece if it is large but consider the content of a small piece to be too minimal to enhance an exhibition.

It is always difficult to make choices. Invariably, a work of quality may not be chosen by one juror but accepted by another. Some competent work does not view well by jpeg image. Other pieces can be enhanced when viewed in small format. Sometimes I have given awards to work that I have initially hesitated to select by slide.

There is no way to have a perfect selection process. If you believe in your work, have faith and keep submitting it. I remember having four paintings that I submitted for exhibitions. Each piece was rejected the first time I submitted it. I thought enough of each of them to resubmit. Each was accepted the second time by a different jury.