

OHIO

August 4th, Lakewood Arts Festival, Contact: Vicky Warden (216)529-6651. Website: www.lakewoodartsfest.org. E-mail: lakewood.arts.festival@gmail.com. Space fee: \$100 plus a \$10 non-refundable screening fee for CDs; \$20 fee for slides. Exhibitors: 160. Hours: 10-6. Admission: free.

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Medium: Silversmithing

As has often been the case in Ohio, temperatures soared over 100 degrees at the Lakewood Arts Festival. By this point in the summer there were many less heat related incidents as the artists had learned to deal with the hazards. Staying healthy was important for the over 160 participating in the show as people were out buying. I spoke with Vicky Warden, a chair of the board in the festival and she agreed “this year our crowd was down because of the heat, but interestingly the vendors did just as well as ever, and everyone I talked to was very pleased with their sales. Although the ‘lookers’ may have stayed home in the air conditioning, the ‘buyers’ were out to spend their money.” With the exception of one artist, every vendor I spoke with did better than they expected.

A common concern among the artists was the difficulty in getting accepted to the show. With that in mind, I asked Warden about their application process. She explained “artists send in four slides (three of their work and one of their booth) or digital images, early in the year with their application. A judging panel of several artists and several LAF Board members then screen the slides/images on a very long, full day. They are judged by medium, looking for originality, price point, consistency, etc.” In its 35th year, the festival accepts almost all media from artists who travel in from as far as Florida and Georgia.

This was my first year at the festival and I was very pleased with the organization and the sales. The festival was set-up along a six-block area of Detroit Avenue in Lakewood. Although I do not usually like to set up on the street, this show was an exception. The organizers did a great job of directing traffic flow and most artists were courteous during set-up and teardown.

This festival is a great example of what can happen when a community comes together. Warden reaches this supportive community by advertising “through newspapers and radio primarily. Our Cleveland-based classical music station always has an interview with a Board member prior to the show. We also advertise on a more contemporary radio station. We do the local newspapers, Cleveland Magazine, various web-based artist organizations, and several other smaller venues.” She adds “the Lakewood Arts Festival is designed to highlight artists and the various Lakewood non-profit groups who set up their booths on the sides of the streets, including the Beck Center for the Arts. In addition, the Festival organization gives out a \$4,000 scholarship to a Lakewood resident who will be a first year college student majoring in art. We also give a \$500 scholarship to the Virginia Marti School of Design in Lakewood. With entertainment and music, it is really intended to be a community celebration.” So even though this one day, juried art show is on the street during the hottest part of the year, I would highly recommend it to any artist who can make a strong showing.