

OHIO

July 27&28, Akron Arts Expo, Contact: Penny Bomba (330) 375-2852 or Brittany Schmoekel (330) 375-2854. Website: www.akronartsexpo.org. E-mail: pbomba@akronohio.gov and bschmoekel@akronohio.gov. Space fee: \$200. Exhibitors: 160. Hours: 10-6 Saturday, 10-5 Sunday. Admission: free

By Kristina Malcolm

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Medium: Silversmithing

The Akron Arts Expo is a juried show held at Hardesty Park in Akron the last weekend in July. This outdoor show attracts artists from all over the United States and is highly competitive.

When I first wrote here about Akron Art Expo in 2012, I focused on the festival having a good reputation and in 2013 this has not changed. Part of what attracts artists is all the amenities. This year, artists continued to get large booth spaces and one complementary breakfast along with a great turnout and decent sales.

Even with Ohio's unusually rainy summer, people grabbed their umbrellas and headed to Hardesty Park. Many of the vendors I spoke to agreed that they were pleasantly surprised with their sales for a rainy day. Saturday night, we all went home wet but had expectations for great sales and an even higher turnout for Sunday. Unfortunately, like normal show Sundays, we mostly hosted lookers, not buyers. But overall, most artists claimed to have done better than they thought possible for a rainy weekend.

Set-up and accessibility for the artists is attractive as well. Set-up is as easy as outdoor shows come. Artists sign up for arrival times on Friday and can drive up to their space but must be off the grounds by 5pm (some artists still choose to set-up early Saturday.) Additionally, though far away, the show can accommodate large vehicles and has a parking lot available for smaller cars close to the vendor area.

2013 was the 34th year for AAE and even through their rocky spots; the Expo is well organized and works like a well-oiled machine. Applications are due early so don't forget to apply online in February and March through their website. Also of note is that their jury panel changes every year so don't get discouraged if you're not accepted, try again!