

OHIO

December 6-8, American Holiday, Youngstown, Ohio. Contact: Jack Haims, 524 Wick Ave., Youngstown, OH 44505. Email: j_haims@butlerart.com. Website: <http://www.butlerart.com/holidaycraftshow.htm>. Space fee: \$200. Exhibitors: 120. Hours: 6:30-9:30 Friday, 10-5 Saturday, and 10-4 Sunday. Admission: \$7

By Kristina Malcolm

Ohio Reporter

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Medium: Silversmithing

This year my show calendar ended with the American Holiday show at the Butler Institute of American Art. This show is always held the first weekend in December which means Ohioans are starting to experience the first severe weather of the winter season. With temperatures well below normal, 2014 was no exception. I have been traveling to Youngstown for this show for the last five years. This is an exceptionally challenging show for a lot of people including myself. One year I had to drive 70 miles home without a clutch, this year the challenge was the weather on Friday and Saturday. It was the first time in my show history that I had to get a hotel room because I couldn't get home on Friday night. After an exhausting load-in and poor sales for the evening, it was a very difficult decision to make. Attitudes kept plummeting on Saturday with the lack of sales. By the time I spoke with fellow vendors Sunday morning, some commented that they had not even covered their expenses for the weekend. But then the sun came out and so did the customers. I ended up making approximately one hundred dollars less than I had in 2013. Including the additional hotel expense, those aren't terrific numbers but I plan on returning in 2015. Despite all the challenges, this is still one of my favorite shows. One reason is that the Butler Institute is an American treasure that we, as artists need to help preserve. I can't afford to become a member but I can afford to enter their show and donate items to their raffle. The second and more ephemeral reason is it's unique sense of unity among the vendors. After we're done with the stress of load in, we catch up on each other's lives, we smile, we hug, and we stick it out together. Everyone has a different experience at art shows and although some artists will not return in 2014, others will return eagerly.