

14 contenders for 2014

A pack of potential winners deserving your attention in the new year

By Nate Shelton
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Ring-a-ding-ding, let that new year sing! The changing of the calendar is of course a great time to examine one's life and career — and make plans to improve both as needed. For many craftspeople and artists, that process will naturally include finding new shows to add to an existing schedule or replace events that just aren't working.

But with so many to choose from, finding the right fairs and festivals for your needs can be a challenge. Sure, countless resources exist to help you in that regard — including **SA's** reader-selected *200 Best* — but all too frequently, events that present serious sales opportunities still don't get the attention they deserve. And that's where our annual spotlight on promising yet potentially under-the-radar shows comes in.

The 14 events featured below missed 2013's *200 Best*, but we believe they all deserve a look. Many of them fell off the list after Mother Nature (literally) rained on their parade, while others are lesser-known festivals that have generated good buzz in recent years.

At the same time, we don't guarantee they'll be successful for everyone any more than we do for *200 Best*-ranked shows. Ultimately, *you're* the best judge of which events will or won't

work for you. Do your research (particularly in regard to the suitability of your creations for a specific venue) and talk to exhibitors who are familiar with a given event before making any decisions.

Either way, with so many states and regions being represented by this list, and all of the featured events still accepting applications as of press time, we hope you'll find at least one show within that will fill a gap or replace a dud in your schedule. Best of luck with your 2014 planning, and Happy New Year!

ARKANSAS

TBD (October), Bella Vista Arts & Crafts Festival, Bella Vista. Space fee: \$130-\$170. Space size: 8x12 to 12x24. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 325. Attendance: 35,000 (source: police).

Why It's Worth a Look: We haven't received enough *FastAudit* responses to review 2013's outing yet, but we heard from many exhibitors at 2012's edition, and nearly all of them were pleased with every category (July 2013, pg. 37). Auditors' combined average revenue was respectable, even with somewhat bad weather, and the booth fees can't be beat.

CALIFORNIA

April 4-6, Indian Wells Arts Festival, Indian Wells. Application fee: \$35. Space fee: \$300-\$900 (plus 12% commission). Space size: 10x10 to 10x30. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 200. Attendance: 12,000 (source: gate receipts). **See listing in this issue for more details.**

Why It's Worth a Look: This *200 Best* mainstay fell off in 2013 due to 2012's weather issues and Easter Weekend scheduling, but a majority of auditors at the most recent show went home happy (August 2013, pg. 29). More importantly, most



Colorado's inaugural Cheesman Park Art Fest earned rave reviews.

reviewers were happy with revenue, and nearly all of them praised the event's management.

COLORADO

TBD (July), Cheesman Park Art Fest, Denver. Application fee: \$25. Space fee: \$350-\$700. Space size: 10x10 to 10x20. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 125.

Why It's Worth a Look: This show is new, but the fact that it's produced by Liz Gore — daughter of Rio Grande Festivals' Ruth Gore — speaks volumes. Both *SA* State Reporter David Schneider (October 2013, pg. 33) and auditors (December 2013, pg. 29) loved it, with Schneider advising, "Overall, this was a very strong show and well-attended by patrons who purchased."

FLORIDA

May 2-4, Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival, Fernandina Beach. Application fee: \$30. Space fee: \$225-\$275. Space size: 10x12. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 320. Attendance: 135,000 (source: promoter estimate). **See listing in this issue for more details.**

Why It's Worth a Look: State Reporter Brenda Flynn called this festival "one of my personal favorites" in her review of 2012's outing (August 2012, pg. 35) — a year that was somewhat marred by heat and rain, causing the show to drop off

the *200 Best* in 2013. Word of mouth for the latest edition has been strong, so it's definitely worth a look in 2014.

INDIANA

June 7-8, The Village at Winona Art Fair, Winona Lake. Application fee: \$35. Space fee: \$80. Space size: 10x12. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 225. Attendance: 5,000 (source: random headcounts). **See listing in this issue for more details.**

Why It's Worth a Look: In her review of the latest edition (August 2013, pg. 38), State Reporter Joan Tweedell said she enjoyed increased revenue over 2012 that was "... several times my expenses..." Furthermore, you can't ask for a more reasonable booth fee, prompting Joan to add, "I'll probably come back to this easy, pleasant show."

MAINE

TBD (August 2014), Northeast HarborFest, Northeast Harbor. Application fee: \$30. Space fee: \$295-\$550. Space size: 10x12 to 20x12. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 140.

Why It's Worth a Look: This is a new event run by longtime Bar Harbor Fine Arts Festival promoter Marc Fink and helps exhibitors maximize their time in Maine when participating in the more-established show. Attendance was a little lighter than State

Reporter Carol Joy Shannon would've preferred (October 2013, pg. 4), but she still found a lot to like.

MICHIGAN

July 5-6, West Shore Art Fair, Ludington. Application fee: \$25. Space fee: \$125-\$250. Space size: 14x14 to 14x28. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 190. Attendance: 20,000 (source: chamber estimate).

Why It's Worth a Look: After a disastrous 2012 edition, this show's management underwent a complete changeup, and word of mouth for the 2013 outing was very positive. Now that former East Lansing Art Fair head Corinn VanWyck is in charge (see the feature in our December 2013 issue, pg. 20), look for even more improvements this year.

NEW JERSEY

TBD (October 2014), WheatonArts Festival of Fine Craft, Millville.

Space fee: \$250-\$350. Space size: 10x10 to 10x12. Indoors/outdoors. Exhibitors: 125.

Why It's Worth a Look: Hosted by the WheatonArts glass & craft studio and museum, this event is earning a reputation for helping top-quality craftspeople score solid paydays. Auditors at the 2012 edition made off very nicely, even with some negative impact from weather (March 2013, pg. 53), but bear in mind that we've received no official reports from 2013's show.

NORTH CAROLINA

April 26-27, Kings Drive Art Walk, Charlotte. Application fee: \$35. Space fee: \$260. Space size: 10x10. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 65. Attendance: 25,000 (source: police). **See listing in this issue for more details.**

Why It's Worth a Look: This fes-

tival is just three years old, but it's produced by the same people behind Charlotte's nearly 50-year-old Festival in the Park and has already attracted quite the following. Even with rain shortening 2013's first day and canceling the second day completely, auditors still enjoyed admirable revenue and would return this year (October 2013, pg. 48).

OHIO

September 1, Upper Arlington Labor Day Arts Festival, Upper Arlington. Application fee: \$20. Space fee: \$110-\$185. Space size: 10x10. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 200. Attendance: 25,000 (source: event website).

Why It's Worth a Look: Yet another event that fell off the *200 Best* in 2013 due to weather issues in 2012, this one-day festival was a hit with nearly everyone who audited the most recent outing. (Our review will run next month.) As a 3-D mixed

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Each entry must be accompanied by: 2013 official printed show poster, an electronic image file (300dpi JPEG, TIFF or PDF), plus biographical artist and graphic designer information



Professional art jurors have several categories in which to judge the entries. Winners of each category will be published in the May 2014 issue.

Submission Deadline: February 4, 2014

Address submissions to:

Sunshine Artist — 18th Annual Poster Contest
4075 L.B. McLeod Road, Suite E, Orlando, FL 32811
editor@sunshineartist.com (for electronic images)



Above: Washington's Bellevue Arts Museum (BAM) ARTSfair; right: Ohio's Upper Arlington Labor Day Arts Festival



Left: North Carolina's Kings Drive Art Walk; above: Pennsylvania's Heart of Lancaster Arts & Crafts Show



media artist said in his/her *FastAudit* submission, "I have never done this show before, and I was shocked at how good it was."

OREGON

July 18-20, Salem Art Fair & Festival, Salem. Application fee: \$35. Space fee: \$500-\$1,200. Space size: 10x10 to 10x20. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 205. Attendance: 55,000 (source: promoter estimate).

Why It's Worth a Look: One of the Pacific Northwest's longest-running — and most-respected — art festivals, this event is also a certified moneymaker for many participating exhibitors. Artists and craftspeople who audited 2013's outing were nearly unanimous in praising the event and would happily return in 2014 (December 2013, pg. 45).

PENNSYLVANIA

August 30-31, Heart of Lancaster Arts & Crafts Show, Manheim. Application fee: \$25. Space fee:

\$275-\$620. Space size: 8x10 to 10x20. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 200. Attendance: 20,000 (source: random count). **See listing in this issue for more details.**

Why It's Worth a Look: Like many other events featured here, Heart of Lancaster also dropped off 2013's *200 Best* following a weather-stricken 2012 outing. The good news is, we've heard from a ton of exhibitors who were at the most recent show, and nearly all of them had nothing but praise for revenue and the organizers. (Our review will run next month.)

TEXAS

April 25-27, Denton Arts & Jazz Festival, Denton. Application fee: \$30. Space fee: \$230-\$320. Space size: 10x10 to 10x20. 75% outdoors/25% indoors. Exhibitors: 175. Attendance: 225,000 (source: police department). **See listing in this issue for more details.**

Why It's Worth a Look: Not only is

this one of State Reporter Brad Foster's favorite events, but he reported that his sales were up over recent years at the latest edition (September 2013, pg. 106). "Other artists expressed the same optimistic view after the show," said Foster, "and they were hoping that 2013 might be the sign of a turnaround for us all."

WASHINGTON

July 25-27, Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSfair, Bellevue. Application fee: \$40. Space fee: \$815-\$1,215. Space size: 8x8 to 10x15. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 310. Attendance: 320,000 (source: staff estimate).

Why It's Worth a Look: One of several arts-focused events that take place in Bellevue on the same July weekend each year, this show has produced promising if somewhat mixed *FastAudit* reports for two years running (October 2012, pg. 56 and December 2013, pg. 52). Given some of the reported sales totals, it's clear that artists with the right offerings can do well here. ☺