

10x20. 100% outdoor. Exhibitors: 200. Attendance: 60,000. Awards: \$4,000.

Compiled by FastAudit reports.

With perfect weather, patrons and exhibitors alike enjoyed their time at the Covington Three Rivers Art Festival in Covington, La. The festival was held in Nov., 2015 in the lovely Covington Arts District.

Sales at the festival received *FastAudit* scores of 8.2 (on a 10-point scale). "[This is] an outstanding show," praised an artist earning \$5,500 with an average item price (AIP) of \$15. "We love this show. It draws a large buying crowd. The Steinhauer's are people of integrity. [They are] respectable, accommodating and really go above and beyond to make a successful show for their vendors."

The show received high marks in quality of medium (8.8), balance of medium (8.0), and prestige of show (8.6). Attendance was given a score of 9.4, and weather a perfect 10.

Other *FastAudit* average scores were also satisfactory in Covington last fall including those for advertising (8.6), management (9.6), artist treatment (9.6), and artist amenities (8.8), while judging received a solid 8.8.

"[There is] excellent organization, fabulous artist amenities and treatment," said a fiber artist (\$3,800 total/\$150 AIP). "[This is] a profitable and enjoyable event and town."

Exhibitors noted good scores for layout with a 9.6, load-in/out with a 9.6, and parking a 9.0.

"Sales were down this year from past years," commented one artist who reported total sales of \$2,367, with an AIP of \$40. "[It] is still well-attended, but not as much as a buying crowd the past two years."

"They treat their artists with respect," said a 2-D acrylic-on-wood artist. "Covington Three River was a pleasant surprise. This was my

first time showing at this festival and everything from the check-in process, the set-up process and take-down process was great. The crowds and sales were outstanding. I didn't know this quality of service existed in the art festival world."



NEW MEXICO

► **March 11-13, 2016.** Rio Grande Arts & Crafts Festival-Spring Show, Albuquerque. Contact: Ruth Gore, 3709 Westerfield Drive NE, Suite A, Albuquerque, NM 87111. Phone: 505-292-7457. Fax: 505-293-1153. Email: info@riograndefestivals.com. Website: www.riograndefestivals.com. Application fee: \$30. Space fee: \$495. Space size: 10x10 to 10x20. 100% indoor. Attendance: 20,000.

Compiled by FastAudit reports.

Ranked number 46 on *Sunshine Artist's 2015 200 Best* in the fine art and design show category, the Rio Grande Arts & Crafts Festival - Spring Show was a solid performer once again. Held indoors, the festival brings in a large number of locals and tourists alike to enjoy all that Albuquerque has to offer in the art and craft world.

On a 10-point scale, Rio Grande scored a solid 8.0 for sales. An acrylic painter reported bringing in total sales of \$9,000 with an average item price (AIP) of \$20. This artist commented: "[There is] such a great staff ... the show is well attended ... engaged crowd."

A mixed media artist who did not disclose his/her total sales, wrote: "[The show] has a

great following. Each day was well-attended."

The second highest were earned by a wood/mixed media artist with \$4,000 in total sales with an AIP of \$56. An artist working with gourds made \$3,025 in total sales, with an AIP of \$100. "This was our third year, and each year gets better, they said. "Ruth Gore and her staff present high-quality shows. There are plenty of ads to bring customers

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in.”

Attendance numbers were satisfactory, with 9.0, the quality of medium a near-perfect 9.9, balance of medium a 9.4, and prestige of show 9.8.

Other exhibitors agreed with the wood/mixed media artist, and gave management a perfect 10 score. Advertising and artist treatment received scores of 9.9 each, respectively. Artist amenities were also ranked highly, with a 9.4.



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The lowest reported sales were reported by another acrylic painter, who had only one sale of \$185. The second-lowest sales were garnered by a watercolor/acrylic painter (\$1,100 total/\$40 AIP).

Another acrylic painter wrote, “[There were] lots of interested people but [they] did not generate any sales. If I got a dollar for everyone that just loved my art I would have left with a wheelbarrow of money. Seriously, one needed a \$10 or less price point for this show and it had to be shiny.”

“While the show promoters went above and beyond to put on a great show, the general populace does not seem to have the funds to spend on artwork in general,” said the watercolor/acrylic artist.

Also garnering top-scores were those for layout (9.9), Load-in/out (9.4), and parking (9.6).

In all, approximately 80 percent of those sending in *FastAudit* reviews said they would return again to the Rio Grande Arts & Crafts Festival - Spring Show in Albuquerque in the future.



Oklahoma

► April 19-24, 2016, Festival of the Arts, Oklahoma City. Contact: Gilbert Magdaleno, Arts Council Oklahoma City, 400 W. California Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73102. Phone: 405-270-4848. Fax: 405-270-4888. Email: info@artscouncilokc.com. Website: www.artscouncilokc.com. Application fee: \$25. Space size: 16x16. 100% outdoor. Exhibitors: 144.

By Carol Joy Shannon

Eastern and National Reporter

Email: caroljoyshannon@live.com

Medium: Painting and 3-D Mixed Media

Oklahoma City is an unexpected gem in the geographic center of the country. It's surprising because you have a stereotypical Midwestern energy-center in mind, with cowboys and Native Americans to anchor its “gateway to the west” stature, but it's a lot more than that. Its commitment to the arts is one of the surprises.

The city was jolted out of its old oil money complacency 21 years ago when it experienced the country's first domestic terrorism incident. It was that very tragedy that many Oklahomans claim was the catalyst to reimagine their city. They've done a good job, and the long-running Festival of the Arts is evidence of their commitment to excellence. Even at 50 years-old, the festival is still shaking it up and staying fresh.

There is not another more professionally managed municipal art festival around – in my experience. They have a full time, year-round staff and stage many events in other disciplines throughout the year, but this is their premier fundraiser – and they do it right.

The chairpersons, a man and a woman, new each year, shadow the present team throughout the festival. They, along with the director, travel to another urban art show at some point early in the year of their chairmanship, and take notes.

The volunteers that work the festival are all adults, many of them the same year after year, and they take pride in their festival. They care for the artists by offering frequent beverages (water, soda, coffee) and booth sitting. There are a few days and time periods where these folks in the green aprons are harder to find, but for the most part they are ubiquitous.

Oklahoma City is a six-day show, so it's not for the faint of heart, but the show provides the tents, so this is one less item to carry. Load-in is flexible and takes place Sunday afternoon through Monday night, and because of that, it is pretty painless.

This year the event launched its new, and original, site in Bicentennial Park, between City Hall and the Civic