

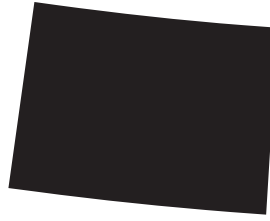
the artists to make sales. However, when food becomes the focal point of the event, it can take away attention and potential sales from the artists, as patron money is instead spent on edibles. I have experienced this while doing a seafood festival in Florida. I had great fun, but below-average sales.

Accordingly, it's somewhat unsurprising that a large majority of artists I contacted reported low to disappointing sales, with just a few indicating that their weekend was a strong economic success. Still, with over 650 volunteers, excellent security and a great weather weekend, the event is very well run, enjoyable to do and could be economically viable if an artist was doing other shows in the area during that time frame. Also, the show is an excellent way to make contact with a large number of discerning people and distribute information about your website for potential future sales.

If you do attend this one, I recommend that you start your day early to get a space in the underground parking garage. (The rates are two hours for \$2 or all day for \$5.) You can then grab the elevator and come up right in the middle of El Presido Park, which houses the largest array of food booths in the festival.

I am off to review two shows this weekend, and I will be stopping along the way at Chef Alishah's Restaurant, which offers Bosnian fare, to pick up more of the fabulous sausages that I sampled at Tucson Meet Yourself. I hope that you are all having a great art show season. Remember to try some different ethnic foods to stimulate both your taste buds and your artistic palette.

COLORADO



(Editor's note: State Reporter David Schneider's review of this show appeared in our October 2013 issue. The following review is compiled from FastAudit responses.)

► **July 27-28, Cheesman Park Art Fest, Denver.** Contact: Liz Gore, Dash Events LLC/Rio Grande Festivals, 200 Poplar Street, Unit E, Denver, CO 80220. Phone: 505-550-2471. Email: cheesmanparkartfest@gmail.com. Website: www.riograndefestivals.com. Application fee: \$25. Space fee: \$350-\$700. Space size: 10x10 to 10x20. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 125.

Compiled from *FastAudit* reports

It's said that the apple doesn't

fall far from the tree. While we're loath to compare show promoters to tasty fruit, reports we've received from the inaugural Cheesman Park Art Fest make it clear that the adage holds true for show-runner Liz Gore, daughter of Rio Grande Festivals' Ruth Gore. In addition to State Reporter David Schneider's glowing review of Liz's first solo outing in our October 2013 issue, every exhibitor who submitted *FastAudit* cards on the show said they'd gladly do it again next year.

Auditor enthusiasm can be attributed in part to management, which earned the highest aggregate score of any category (9.6 on a 10-point scale). "These are the best promoters and show managers in the business," said a photographer, with \$845 total sales from a \$400 average item price (AIP), in reference to both Gores. "We love doing their shows." Artist treatment earned similar if slightly lower scores, and artist amenities drew two average marks while pleasing everyone else.

Of course, it's never a great show without money in the bank. While

HOLIDAY

ART SHOWS

Lexington Art & Craft Show
Nov 23 - 24 • Lexington KY
Weekend before Thanksgiving

Wilmington Art & Craft Show
Nov 30 - Dec 1 • Wilmington NC
Thanksgiving Weekend

Old Town Art & Craft Show ~ Winter
Dec 28 - 29 • St. Augustine FL
New Year's Eve Weekend

Old Town Art & Craft Show ~ Spring
April 12 - 13, 2014 • St. Augustine FL
Palm Sunday Weekend



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Lines of tents and lines of patrons were both features of the inaugural Cheesman Park Art Fest in Denver.

only one exhibitor – a metal artist (\$10,500 total/\$69 AIP) – claimed a hefty payday, all but two auditors assigned sales grades that were above average to perfect, with the holdouts giving the aspect the second-lowest-possible marks. Other reviewers who shared numbers included: an oil/acrylic painter (\$3,000 total/\$175 AIP), a mixed media artist (\$2,600 total/\$60 AIP), a pastel/oil artist (\$2,500 total/\$45-\$65 AIP), a jeweler

(\$2,300 total/\$30 AIP), a second jeweler (\$1,800 total/\$80 AIP), a second photographer (\$1,800 total/\$30 AIP), an oil painter (\$650 total/\$35-\$45 AIP) and an acrylic painter (\$230 total/AIP not listed).

While some of those takes were lower than hoped for, several auditors indicated it's the risk one runs with a brand-new event. "For a first-year show, it was great," said the mixed media artist. Similarly, the jeweler with \$2,300 total said: "We are normally very skeptical of first-year shows, but we decided to try this one anyway. The risk definitely paid off."

Based on these auditors' unanimously high to perfect grades for attendance, it's safe to assume there were plenty of shoppers, and advertising even earned a slightly higher aggregate score than attendance. "It was an excellent-run show with good turnout," said the acrylic painter, while the metal artist said the event was "well advertised." On the other hand, ratings for weather tended to be lower but still above average, presumably due to the severe weather issues in surrounding areas mentioned by David Schneider in his earlier review.

Grades for all other aspects (quality of work, balance of mediums, prestige of show, layout, load-in/-out and parking) were primarily above

average to perfect, although parking did receive one average and one below-average mark. "The quality of the artists and the balance of mediums was the best I've seen," said the jeweler with \$1,800 total, and the pastel/oil artist praised the "great city and location."

It is worth noting that a few different auditors hoped the promoters would keep the overall number of exhibitors on the low side, but otherwise they had no suggestions for improving what looks to become a very solid arts event. The 2nd annual Cheesman Park Art Fest is expected to take place in July 2014.

► **August 17-18, Golden Fine Arts Festival, Golden.** Contact: Krista Barton, Golden Chamber of Commerce, 1010 Washington Avenue, Golden, CO 80401. Phone: 303-279-3113. Email: info@goldenchamber.org. Website: www.goldenfineartsfestival.org. Application fee: \$25. Space fee: \$325. Space size: 10x10. 100% outdoors. Exhibitors: 132. Attendance: 30,000 (source: staff estimate). Hours: 10-5. Admission: Free.

By Cathy Stiers
Colorado State Reporter
 Email: cstiersart@aol.com
 Medium: Silver jewelry

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- Artist hospitality area
- Full day load in/set up
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