

Grosse Pointe News

MICHIGAN NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Sean Cotton, Owner • Anne Gryzenia, Publisher • Jody McVeigh, Editor In Chief • Meg Leonard, Associate Editor

16980 Kercheval Pl. • Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48230 • 313.882.6900 • Monday-Friday 9am-4pm

HOME NEWS FEATURES SPORTS OPINIONS & LETTERS OBITUARIES CLASSIFIEDS E-EDITION GIFT SHOP **SUBSCRIBE**

And the winners are ... FREE ACCESS

Open Audio Article Player

WINNERS, RUNNERS-UP SELECTED BY JUDGES, READERS

By Jody McVeigh on May 17, 2023



THE GROSSE POINTES – The winners of the third annual Grosse Pointe News “Finer Pointes” art contest have been selected. After much deliberation, artists Joe Gall and Eric Lowry – professionally known as Camera Jesus and El Cappy, respectively – selected their favorite and a runner-up in each of two categories – photography/digital art and sneaker art.

Photography/digital art

Gall's winner in the photography/digital art category was Brittney Colantonio, who submitted the piece, “Time with Jerry.”

“I wanted to enter the contest with a piece that was emotionally meaningful to me and that would touch people in a certain way with nostalgia,” the City of Grosse Pointe resident said.

The subject of her photograph, Jerry, is a formerly homeless man who took Colantonio on a tour through his newly acquired home. He was most eager to show her his “prized possession.”

“It was his garage,” she recalled, “and all the cool things he'd collected from the street. We were looking through old yearbooks of people we didn't even know. It was cool to see his face light up every time he looked at something.”

Colantonio said she had hoped people would see the emotion in her work; it was easy for Gall to spot.

“I deemed the photo as an authentic capture of a genuine and unposed moment,” he said. “This is a standout quality I looked for as a juror of the competition. Secondly, the use of natural light was a contributing factor to the photo's success. Natural light can add depth and warmth to an image, and can also help to convey a sense of realism and authenticity. Thirdly, the location and subject of the photo were important factors in my selection. A compelling location and strong subject can help to tell a story or convey a message. Overall, the winning photo was chosen for its ability to capture a genuine, emotionally resonant moment, while also utilizing strong lighting, location and subject matter.”



Courtesy photos Brittney Colantonio's "Time with Jerry."

Gall's runner-up in the photography/digital category was Bloomfield resident Summer Benton, who submitted the digital work, “Morning Routine.” She said she was stunned when she heard Gall's comments on her piece.

“I was blown away by how on point his interpretation was,” Benton said. “He put into words what I never could. I was flattered.”

In Gall's words: “The character illustration in my opinion depicts an original conviction of our daily mundane reality vs. our inner potential. The wide-open third eye speaks to the struggle against conformity and the true soul within. I also loved the use of bold unnatural color and large character features giving this figure a very unique and nondescript appearance. Overall, this illustration stood out to me as not only visually striking, but also thought-provoking and inspiring.”



Summer Benton's "Morning Routine."

According to the artist, “I was thinking about how, when I'm trying to be more self-aware or more aware of the world, I want to open my third eye and have a revelation, but it doesn't work because I'm forcing it. But those in-between moments – when I'm brushing my teeth or washing my hair or vacuuming my apartment – the unimportant moments can be the greatest moments for growth and awareness.”

In addition to Gall's selections, Grosse Pointe News readers were invited to vote for their favorite among finalists in the photography/digital category. They selected St. Clair Shores resident Ethan Allen, who managed to capture the Northern Lights at their peak in his photograph, “Pointe aux Barques Aurora.”



Ethan Allen's "Pointe aux Barques Aurora."

“I'd seen the Northern Lights once before, but that was before I got into photography,” said Allen, who started taking the hobby more seriously after getting his first real camera around five years ago. “I always wanted to get a good photo of the Northern Lights. I saw on social media people posting that there was a good possibility of seeing them ... so I immediately dropped everything.”

He knew of an area far enough north, near Port Austin, to see the storm. His timing was impeccable.

“Right when I got there, they were at their peak,” he said. “Ten minutes after I took the photo, they kind of faded out.”

excited.

Of his Readers' Choice win, Allen said he was surprised and

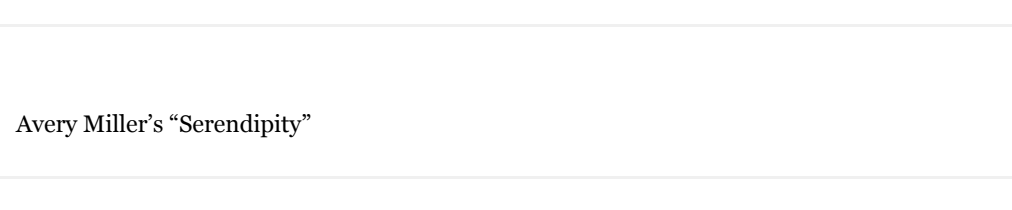
“I'm not a professional photographer; it's more of a hobby,” he said. “I submitted it as a long shot.

“... I'm really grateful to the Grosse Pointe News for putting on this contest. It's great for photographers of any level to submit and get their work out there.”

Colantonio will receive \$1,000 for her first-place win. Benton and Allen each will receive \$500 prizes.

Sneaker art

Lowry said he felt honored to judge the sneaker art portion of the contest and called all of the submitted artwork “amazing.” He selected Avery Miller's “Serendipity” for first place.



Avery Miller's "Serendipity"

“I chose this shoe as the winner based on the concept and cleanliness of the design,” Lowry said. “I felt like every part of the design complimented the entire piece of work; the color palette in tandem with the design placement reflected meticulous planning and execution. My favorite aspects of the shoes are the inverted floral pattern on the fronts and backs, how the moon placement on the inside swoosh sits perfectly and the floating of the koi fish through the colors of the different panels.”

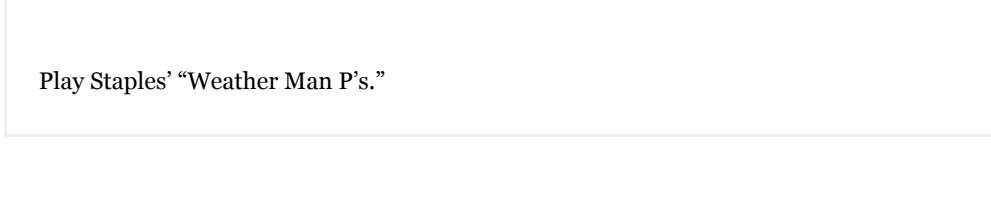
Miller, who this week completed her high school career, began painting sneakers for fun in 2018. The graduating senior from Orchard Lake took inspiration from Grosse Pointe to paint her entry.

“When I first heard about the contest, I thought, ‘I gotta make something really cool,’” she said. “Looking around the city, I saw how beautiful it is and, looking at the people who live in it, I saw a small representation of Asian heritage. I wanted to prompt that more. Every person is so important to the world in general. I wanted to show how important everyone is, so I used that heritage.”

Miller said she's grateful for the opportunity to participate in the contest, which was brought to her attention by her art teacher.

“I honestly worked for this talent,” she said. “It was hard to cultivate and help grow. The Lord blessed the work in my hands. I feel very encouraged and blessed.”

Detroit artist Play Staples earned a nod as Lowry's runner-up in the sneaker art contest and was declared the winner of the Readers' Choice Award for “Weather Man P's.”



Play Staples' "Weather Man P's."

“I'm expressing myself one canvas at a time,” Staples said. “My whole objective was to connect with people. It worked out. I am so thankful to be acknowledged.

“Being an artist, I like trying new things,” he added. “I'm

happy to be able to express myself.”

Staples' sneaker art was inspired by summertime and his 4-year-old daughter, who helped him select the colors.

“She's a ray of sunshine in a dark room,” he said.

A relatively new artist, Staples has been painting since 2016, when he caught an episode of “The Joy of Painting” with Bob Ross on TV.

“In the community where I'm from, there are not too many outlets,” he said. “I'm sitting in a room and I got a lot on my mind. I was 26. I was watching (Ross) and thought, ‘I'm going to try that.’ I did it that night and the next day I woke up and felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders, so I kept going.

“This is one of the best things I could possibly wish for in my early career,” he continued. “It's an honor. Thank you to everybody that voted for me. Expect more art from me. I hope to inspire the next young man or young lady to pursue art and express themselves.”

Lowry said he was particularly taken by Staples' entry.

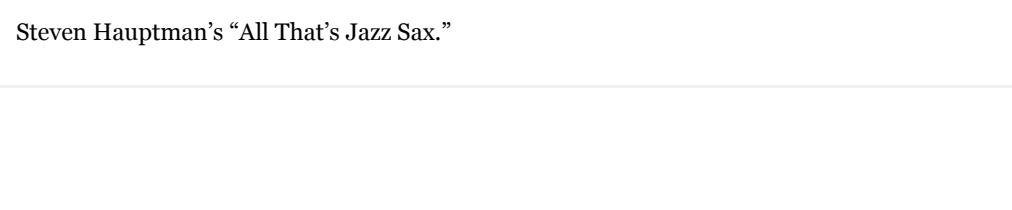
“I chose this shoe as the runner-up, which was a very hard decision due to both of these entries being amazing pieces of work,” he said. “In my opinion, there is nothing better than a clean pair of customer Air Force 1s. My favorite part of this shoe was the color palette and the tie-dye look that was achieved. I enjoyed how the color-blocking on the shoe was used. Using the white toe box and white swoosh made this pair not overbearing and a true statement piece.”

Miller will receive \$1,000 for her first-place win. Staples will receive \$500 for as runner-up and an additional \$500 for his Readers' Choice award.

Gretchen Valade Spirit Award

Also recognized with a prize was Royal Oak photographer Steven Hauptman, whose piece “All That's Jazz Sax” was selected as the Gretchen Valade Spirit Award winner. His entry is part of a series of photos of jazz musicians shot in black and white.

“I'm very humbled about it,” he said, noting he's enjoyed photography since the 1970s and especially enjoys street photography. Though these days most of his work is done digitally and in color, Hauptman said he loves going back to his roots.



Steven Hauptman's "All That's Jazz Sax."

“I was brought up in the black-and-white era,” he said. “I love black-and-white photography.

“... I have done some photo work for the Detroit Jazz Festival the last few years and that's where this is from,” he added. “... It was a planned photograph. I decided it had a very interesting background and wanted to experiment with the settings on the camera. I wanted the instrument and the hands in focus, and I wanted the musician a little bit out of focus. I got what I wanted.”

As the Gretchen Valade Spirit Award winner, Hauptman will receive \$500.

Grosse Pointe News MPA NEWS PAPER OF THE YEAR To The Pointe – Newsletter Sign Up Email Subscribe to our newsletter

Where Families Find FUN FOR GENERATIONS

Topsoil, Mulch and Much More! Bulk Material Deliveries RUSSELL LANDSCAPING INC. 25305 Little Mack Ave. Saint Clair Shores, MI 48081 (586) 343-8253 Residential & Commercial

Real Estate Resource 83 Kercheval Avenue Grosse Pointe Farms Michigan 48236 313 886 3400 www.higbiemaxon.com

103 YEARS BELDING CLEANERS 313-822-5800

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1979 JOE RICCI AUTOMOTIVE 313.806.7848 Free Home Delivery Taylor • Marlette • Clinton Twp. • Madison Hgts. Shelby Twp. • Bad Axe • Pigeon

LATEST EDITION Grosse Pointe News And the winners are ... More school closings coming for GPPSS? May 18, 2023

YOURHOME YourHOME Real Estate • Exteriors • Interiors • Decor • Gardens IN THIS ISSUE: FOR SALE 122K 122K 122K 122K