

## **Juror's Statement**

It was my pleasure to be the juror for the Aqueous 2024: West Virginia Watercolor Society Exhibit and I would like to thank Debbie Lester for having me serve as juror. I had the privilege of viewing many excellent works by a diverse group of artists.

Watercolor can be an unpredictable medium to work with and that is precisely why I love it. Its fluidity and movement on paper gives life to any subject matter. The drips and blooms create interesting marks that give watercolor paintings that “watercolor feel.” When watercolor pigment touches wet paper, it flows freely without inhibitions. It's often said that watercolor is difficult to control and unforgiving. I've learned over the last decade of painting that watercolor is far from those statements. It's a medium that needs room to breathe: it needs space to work its magic, and one must lean into all the spontaneous qualities the medium has to offer. From viewing the artwork selected for this exhibit, I can see that these artists love and appreciate the medium for all its worth.

As a watercolorist, I was delighted to jury an exhibit in a medium that I love; I was also interested to see how other artists were experimenting with the medium to create expressive paintings. For the jurying process, I selected works that exhibited a strong visual presence, technical skill, composition, and use of value and color. I also chose works that explored watercolor's unique properties such as transparency and the use of water to create movement, texture, and visual interest.

There were elements in the jury process that could not be measured by these criteria. However, some artwork was selected based on emotions evoked—in other words, some paintings were chosen because I felt some form of emotional response. I've always known that art is a form of expression and communication; it's an artist's language when words are not enough. While I do not know the stories behind the paintings in this exhibit, I do know that the works I chose are moments in time, observations, memories, and feelings. It has been an honor to jury this show and see the world through other artists' eyes. ---Jes Reger-Davis