

This year's submissions show a dominant focus on the secular delights of the southeast, from lush landscapes and agrarian scenes, to portraits of the faces we hold dear, to arrangements of our regional flora and objects that speak of a time and place. We were all impressed by the skill with rendering, naturalism, and depth, as well as the technical variety on display. This was no easy choice, and it was made even more challenging due to our variety of opinions as to the top works. However, there were four works that stood out to all of us, each for different reasons, and from these we debated their merits, finally deciding on the top three works.

We all felt an honorable mention to Mike Everidge for "Alden" was needed. This poignant portrait captures a young boy in a moment of inward joy that shines outwardly on his face. The mark and gesture seen in the approach to rendering the space and figure were what we all enjoyed as we could clearly see the methods of creation by the artist's hands.

Third place "Bryson City Train Tracks" by Mike Sandlock set itself apart from the other pieces immediately by its medium and monochromatic palette. The fine details found in the line work of the wood burning speak of craft and pride found in the creation of this work. The perspective pulls us rapidly into the space as we are transported to the artist's vantage point.

The second place "On Watch" by Sharon Ball captivates us as two birds perch as sentinels overlooking the dawn of a

*new day as it breaks over the mountains.
Silhouettes contrast the landscape and the colors invite us
to admire this vista from our own perch on the ridge,
alongside our feathered companions.*

*As to the first place "Country Charm" by Monica Byinton, all
of us gravitated to the hyper-realism of the figure, vibrancy
of the colors, the close crop of the subject, and her
asymmetrical placement in the landscape. We recognize an
air of nostalgia in this piece, from the woman's dress and
habits, to the rural scenery serving as her backdrop, to the
way she is captured slightly twisting to glance back, maybe
hinting at a desire to go back to these simpler times. As to
exactly what or whom her gaze is directed, we cannot see,
but her expression of serenity and peace reassures us. We
all marveled at the fine details found within this intimate
piece that was somehow both personal and private, yet
universally appealing.*

*To all artists, please know that we spent a lot of time
closely admiring each of your works. Thank you for sharing
your passion for art and creation with us. We all walked
away inspired by the beauty of each work and the diversity
in technical skill.*

*AP Art & Design students
Morristown East High School
Jennifer Stoneking-Stewart, teacher*
Jennifer Stoneking-Stewart
Instructor of Art
www.stoneking-stewart.com

Morristown-Hamblen High School East
One Hurricane Lane
Morristown, TN 37813
ph: 423.586.2543