



220-4th Avenue North · P.O. Box 458
Foley, MN 56329

W: 320.968.4290

F: 320.968.4291

www.centralmnartsboard.org

**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

Eight Area Artists Receive CMAB/McKnight Individual Artist Awards

Eight CMAB/McKnight Individual Artist Award (IAA) recipients were announced this week.

The \$5,000 Established Artist Award is designed for artists with a history of exhibition, performances, publications, or other notable contributions to their local arts community through personal creative output. The \$3,000 Emerging Artist Awards recognize and encourage outstanding artists in various stages of their careers.

Established Artists Award recipient:

Mark Conway, Literature and Poetry - Stearns County

Emerging Artist Award recipients:

Marienne Kreitlow, Literary Poetry – Wright County

Mary Opatz-Herges, Landscapes in oil – Stearns County

Shirley Hove, Oil painting – Stearns County

Micki Blenkush, Poetry – Stearns County

Sarah Drake, Abstract Acrylic – Benton County

Rachelle Netland, Abstract painting – Stearns County

Donna Rice, kiln cast glass sculpture – Wright County

To view samples of the winning artists' work, visit the Central Minnesota Arts Board website at www.centralmnartsboard.org.

Artists are invited to apply for this award once each year in February. A panel of six arts professionals review and score each application individually. Applications with the highest average score are recommended to the CMAB Directors for awards. At their March 11, 2015 board meeting, the CMAB Directors accepted the review panel's recommendations.

The 2015 Artist Panel volunteered an average of 15 hours evaluating applications. Those volunteers included:

Charlene Sul, CMAB Director, Bachelor of Science, College of Notre Dame, Human Service Administration; Mast of Arts, San Jose State University, Mexican-American Studies; Juris Doctor in progress, Taft School of Law; Sul & Associates, LLC, Sr. Partner; St. Cloud State University, Instructor; Art Director – Hands Across the World, St. Cloud, MN; Facilitator - Quilt Circle at the American Indian Health Center, San Jose, CA.

Al Hams, CMAB Director, BA Theater/Speech, English Literature, St. Cloud State University; US Veteran; Founder of Al's Music; author; served on the following Board of Directors, Downtown Kiwanis Club, County Stearns Theatrical Company, Minnesota Orchestra of Saint Benedict; David Swenson Foundation, and Central MN Arts Board.

Steven Lemke, Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art from Saint John's University; Program Manager at The Saint John's Pottery; coordinates The Saint John's Pottery and Jerome Foundation Emerging Artist Program.

Lemke apprenticed for five years with artist Richard Bresnahan and is featured in the exhibition tour and documentary "Minnesota Potters: Sharing the Fire." He is the recipient of a 2014 CMAB and McKnight Foundation Emerging Artist Award.

Jennifer Penzkover, Coordinator for the St. Cloud Arts Commission, an arts and culture policy board for the City of St. Cloud; served as a grant panelist for the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Jerome Foundation, and the Central Minnesota Community Foundation; finalized work on the St. Cloud Placemaking Plan and Design Manual for the City of St. Cloud; graduated Summa Cum Laude (BFA Art History, BA Historic Preservation) from St. Cloud State University in 1995.

Peter Velkovich, Photographer; writer; served on arts committees in Littleton Colorado; KVSC DJ and music enthusiast; Former CMAB director. Visual Arts, Media Arts, Music

Sharon Tracey, Coon Rapids High School Humanities and English Teacher, retired; Elk River Area Arts Alliance, director, retired; Minnesota Citizens for the Arts Board Member, retired; Buffalo High School Arts Magnet instructor, retired; Review Panelist for the Minnesota State Arts Board; Former CMAB director.

The Central Minnesota Arts Board supports collaborative and innovative arts opportunities through partnerships and financial investments in Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright counties as one of eleven Regional Arts Councils designated by the Minnesota State Arts Board. We work with community partners to increase access to the unique cultural assets of Minnesota.

For more information about the Central MN Arts Board, visit www.centralmnartsboard.org or call the office at 320-968-4290 or toll free at 1-866-345-7140.