



PRESS RELEASE

215 SYCAMORE STREET
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CULTIVATE YOUR HOLIDAY SPIRIT AT THE ART CENTER

Handmade ornaments on display, for sale during Art Center Holiday Open House

MUSCATINE, Iowa - Local and regional artists and crafters are sharing their talents for a good cause this holiday season, and everyone is invited to be part of the fun at the Muscatine Art Center. The Heartfelt & Handmade Ornament Competition returned for the first time since 2019 with all entries currently on view.

The first opportunity to purchase ornaments is during the Holiday Open House on December 7. Each ornament purchase benefits Friends of the Muscatine Art Center and its mission to support educational programs at the Art Center.

The Open House is a ticketed event with proceeds also benefiting the Friends organization. The event begins at 5 p.m. with ornament viewing and buying, live music, and hors d'oeuvres with the magnificently decorated historic house as the backdrop. The event wraps up at 7 p.m., and those purchasing ornaments can take the ornaments home that evening.

Tickets to the Holiday Open House are \$25 (or \$20 for members of Friends) purchased on or before December 1. All tickets after December 1 are \$35. The ticket price includes a glass of wine or beer.



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Three guest judges – Mayor Brad Bark, City Administrator Carol Webb, and Tony Loconsole, Director of Communications & Community Engagement for the Muscatine Community School District – reviewed the ornaments in the competition.

Kristy Cox's paper quilling ornament received first place while Gracie Cook took second place with a tree made of button blanks and Marie Latta was awarded third place for her knitted goldfinch.

The People's Choice Award is currently open for voting, and all visitors to the Muscatine Art Center are welcome to vote for their favorite through December 1.

"We are thrilled to bring the Ornament Competition back," Melanie Alexander, Director of the Muscatine Art Center, said. "It is such a delight to unpack the handmade ornaments crafted by local people. This year, there is a little bit of everything from stained glass and felted wool to



Kristy Cox - First Place



Gracie Cook - Second Place



Marie Latta - Third Place



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LEGO minifigures and fairy gardens."

Each hand-made ornament is available for purchase on a first-come, first-served basis. After the Holiday Open House on December 7, the general public can purchase the remaining ornaments.

Sponsors for the 2023 "Heartfelt & Handmade" Ornament Competition are SSAB, HNI Corporation, and Kay L. Chapman, CPA, PC.

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The Muscatine Art Center is located at 1314 Mulberry Avenue in Muscatine, Iowa. Hours are Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Thursday evenings until 7:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free of charge. Donations are appreciated. Visit www.muscatineartcenter.org for more information about programs and events and to download a class brochure.



Front Parlor Tree Decorated with Historic Ornaments



LEGO mini figures and wooden ornaments



Showcase with knitted ornaments, paper ornaments, and painted ornaments