

STATE REPORTS & REVIEWS

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Colorado

► **July 21-22, 2018, Pearl Street Artfest, Boulder.** Contact: Anna Salim, Downtown Boulder Partnership, 1942 Broadway, Suite 301, Boulder, CO 80302. Phone: 303-449-3774. Email: anna@downtownboulder.org. Website: www.DowntownBoulder.org. Application fee: \$45. Space fees: \$340 to \$440. Space sizes: 10x10; double booths are available. Exhibitors: 105. 100% outdoors. Attendance: 80,000 (Source: staff estimate). Hours: Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

By Cathy Stiers
Colorado State Reporter
Email: cstiersart@aol.com
Medium: Silver jewelry

This was the 40th year of the Pearl Street Artfest in Boulder. The name of the show has changed several times over the decades, but the location is always the same – the beautiful and fun downtown pedestrian mall.

Coordinator Anna Salim has been the vice president of events for many years and does a fantastic job.

It has been a long time since we have exhibited here, primarily due to a conflict with another show we participate in; however, it is always very hot in mid-July and I melt when the temperature exceeds 85 degrees. If I am in town, I make it a point to go visit the event; this year I visited both Saturday at dinnertime and again on Sunday morning.

There are two locations for booths and most are located along tree-lined Pearl Street. A side street, 14th Street, is also an option for artists. I think it is preferable in several ways. First, the booth fee is \$100 less on 14th Street. Secondly, set-up along 14th Street is on Friday and artists report it is a leisurely set-up. Pearl Street artists must set up very early on Saturday morning. Foot traffic is much heavier along Pearl Street, but you also get many “lookers” there – folks that are visiting downtown simply to be entertained.

The artists I spoke with along 14th Street reported less crowds with a higher proportion of attendees buying. Accepted artists can request a specific booth location for an extra \$100. Electricity is available to 14th Street artists for an extra \$65.

There were 350 applicants; of those, 105 were selected to exhibit. Colorado artists made up 40 percent of the mix and the quality was superb. I saw no buy/sell at all. The atmosphere was upbeat and friendly. The event truly is a “juried celebration of the visual arts.” Artist amenities included booth sitters, a Sunday awards breakfast, booth signage, and awards.

This year is the first year that this event broke into *Sunshine Artist's 200 Best* fine art shows, debuting at number 80. Look for it to get even better in future years. I spoke to coordinator Anna Salim after the show and she said, “We look forward each year to hosting artists in our summer outdoor gallery on the Pearl Street Mall. This year's selection represented some of the most talented artists we've had in years – and made our judges' job of selecting just three award winners extremely challenging. Even in the height of Boulder's tourist season, we were thrilled to see so many locals coming out to shop – and so many large pieces of art being sold!”

I recommend this show to any fine artist or craft artisan. Applications are available on zapplication.com; the deadline to apply to the Pearl Street Artfest is Feb. 21, 2019.