

I want to thank all the artists in Co-Creation, and the superb staff at GFAA. We live in precarious times; having a community like GFAA, which honors the importance of artists, is soul-sustaining. Upon entering the gallery, I was happily seduced by the impressive artworks made between all the collaborators in this unique exhibition. Kudos to everyone who entered.

It is difficult to choose who gets an award yet “winning categories” have a role to play. They point to exceptional work for all of us to aspire to, in the mastery of materials, execution, presentation, and most of all, vision. And to have two or more people working on a single piece is even more impressive for bringing together differing voices and visions. We need more of this in our everyday world.

With this in mind, “Best in Show” went to Breaking New Ground (Dixie Briggs/Delaine Miller). Using a wool ‘sheltering ground’ combined with exquisitely carved reliefs nestled within it, an oasis-like body emerges that speaks to a new nature and human nature. Strong yet soft, luscious and assertive, each artists’ materials, hands and vision came together in awesome harmony.

Dye-Versa-Tree (Candace McCaffery/Chris Brundige) is so gorgeously realized in balanced form, color scheme, execution, and 2-D and 3-D presentation, that, for this juror who loves trees and fabric art equally, it had to win “Award for Excellence.”

And the “3rd Place Award” goes to Mersojes de la Ayahoasca (Alejandro Vazquez/Dawn Schultz), an expert collage triptych made of paper + bead-embroidery. Florida maps, a rocky beach, surfboard, men, walls, and an excitable woman, all shout a provocative testament to longing and living now. What else is there in the shifting territories of our individual worlds and hearts?

And to the Merit Awardees, thank you for letting me, and us, into your rich, creative worlds.

I wish “long life” and congratulations to everyone at GFAA on its 100th Anniversary Year!

— Carol McCusker, PhD, Curator of Photography, Harn Museum of Art