

Fine Arts

Competition Handbook

ADULT & SENIOR

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT US!



BY PHONE AT
(813)621-7821

BY EMAIL AT
CREATIVELIVING@FLORIDASTATEFAIR.COM

IMPORTANT DATES

Entry Deadline: Friday, December 5, 2025

Late Entry Deadline: Friday, December 12, 2025

Item Delivery: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Thursday, January 8, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Friday, January 9, 2026 - 11:00am-6:00pm
Saturday, January 10, 2026 - 10:00am-4:00pm

Item Pickup: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Thursday, February 19, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Friday, February 20, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Saturday, February 21, 2026 - 10:00am-2:00pm

ENTRY DELIVERY & PICK-UP

Enter off of Orient Road through the Service Entrance on the west side of the fairgrounds.

A map with directions to the Florida Center is available on the Creative Living Website



ENTRY FEES

Adult Divisions (Ages 18+): \$5 Per Entry
Late Entry: \$10 Per Entry

ENTRY FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

GUIDELINES

- **Artists may enter only one of the three divisions.**
- Only 3 entries per person will be accepted. All 3 can be in the same class or different.
- All artworks must be labeled with the exhibitor's name on the back or bottom of the piece.
- Two-dimensional artwork cannot exceed 36" in any direction, including the frame.
- Three-dimensional artwork cannot exceed 24" in any direction.
- All artwork must be received installation-ready. Most artwork must be framed unless painted on a gallery-wrapped canvas. Painting must continue on all sides or be painted black on a gallery-wrapped canvas. Artwork must be suitably wired using strong screw eyes and wire.
- All work must be original. Artists must disclose if art or artwork was created using AI.
- Each adult exhibitor will receive one (1) admission ticket to the Fair.
- Entries previously exhibited in the Florida State Fair may not be submitted for competition.
- Exhibited work must be completed within the last two (2) years.
- All entries will be displayed at the Fair, regardless of whether they receive an award. In keeping with the Florida State Fair's family-friendly environment, entries containing offensive, controversial, or otherwise inappropriate subject matter will not be accepted.
- Reproduction from Old Masters Class is found in the Decorative Arts Handbooks.

ELIGIBILITY

- **The Fine Arts Adult Division** is open to all Florida residents ages 18 and up.
- **The Fine Arts Senior Division** is open to all Florida residents 60 and up.
- **The Artists with Disabilities Division** is open to all Florida Residents ages 18 and up.
- **Only non-professional artists in the state of Florida can participate.** The non-professional artist is one who does not receive a major portion of their income from the sale of the art or a teacher.

JUDGING & AWARDS

- The Fair selects judges who are experienced and knowledgeable in the categories they are assigned. Judges are expected to be fair and unbiased. They may reassign an entry to a different division or class if they feel it's a better fit.
- All entries will be judged using a scorecard to help ensure fairness and consistency. Judges' decisions are final.
- If the judge feels that an entry does not meet the standards for an award, no ribbon or prize will be given, even if it is the only entry in the class.
- Winners and final displays will be announced during the Fair.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Divisions and Classes in this handbook will be judged by a combination of the following criteria:

Originality & Creativity, Composition/Design, Technical Skills and Presentation.

FINE ARTS DEFINITIONS

Acrylic & Oil Media Paintings are defined as 2D paintings painted on stretched or non-stretched canvas, wood, clay board, or another hard surface.

Acrylic Pouring should be entered under Class 7, unless it is a part of another painting class, for example it is used in a background in a landscape.

Water Media Painting is limited to water soluble water media (no water-soluble oil products or pastels). Paintings may be created on all surfaces specifically for water media (i.e. paper, clay board or synthetic surfaces like Yupo and Tyvek®, illustration board, paper mounted on board, or flat upstretched water color canvas). The paintings can be framed, matted, under glass or Plexiglas or varnished.

Miniature Paintings can be no larger than 24 square inches, ready to display on an easel.

Drawing includes graphite pencil, charcoal, color pencil, etc. on paper.

Pen, Ink & Markers: black & white, color, or zentangle. This includes Alcohol-Based Inks & Markers.

Scratch Art uses cardboard coated with impermeable white clay and covered by a layer of ink that is scratched or scraped in patterns revealing the white surface below. Typically, black & white with limited color added.

Pastel includes soft & oil pastel.

Collage is acceptable if it is created from material created by the artists.

Recycled Art must use at least 80% recycled materials.

Sculpture: The art of making three-dimensional representative or abstract forms. Sculptures fall into four basic categories: molded, cast, carved or assembled.

2D & 3D Mixed Media uses more than one medium.



FINE ARTS DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Fine Arts - Adult Division 45.101

Painting - Acrylic & Oil Media

- Class 1 Painting – People (Portraits & Figures)
- Class 2 Painting – Scene (Land, Sea, Sky, City Scape)
- Class 3 Painting – Still Life & Things
- Class 4 Painting – Flowers, Plants & Trees
- Class 5 Painting – Animals (Wildlife, Pets & Farm Animals)
- Class 6 Painting – Whimsical
- Class 7 Painting – Abstract & non-representational

Paintings - Water Media

- Class 8 Water Media – People (Portraits & Figures)
- Class 9 Water Media - Scene (Land, Sea, Sky, City Scape)
- Class 10 Water Media – Still Life & Things
- Class 11 Water Media – Flowers, Plants & Trees
- Class 12 Water Media – Animals (Wildlife, Pets & Farm Animals)
- Class 13 Water Media – Whimsical
- Class 14 Water Media – Abstract & non-representational

Other Two-Dimensional Art

- Class 15 Miniature Paintings (all mediums)
- Class 16 Drawing (Graphite Pencil, Charcoal)
- Class 17 Drawing (Colored Pencil)
- Class 18 Pen, Inks & Markers (Black & White)
- Class 19 Pen, Inks & Markers (Color)
- Class 20 Scratch Art
- Class 21 Pastel
- Class 22 Encaustic
- Class 23 Printmaking
- Class 24 Collage
- Class 25 2D Mixed Media

Other Three-Dimensional Art

- Class 26 Recycled Art
- Class 27 Sculpture
- Class 28 3D Mixed Media

Fine Arts - Senior Division 45.201

Painting - Acrylic & Oil Media

- Class 1 Painting – People (Portraits & Figures)
- Class 2 Painting – Scene (Land, Sea, Sky, City Scape)
- Class 3 Painting – Still Life & Things
- Class 4 Painting – Flowers, Plants & Trees
- Class 5 Painting – Animals (Wildlife, Pets & Farm Animals)
- Class 6 Painting – Whimsical
- Class 7 Painting – Abstract & non-representational

Paintings - Water Media

- Class 8 Water Media – People (Portraits & Figures)
- Class 9 Water Media - Scene (Land, Sea, Sky, City Scape)
- Class 10 Water Media – Still Life & Things
- Class 11 Water Media – Flowers, Plants & Trees
- Class 12 Water Media – Animals (Wildlife, Pets & Farm Animals)
- Class 13 Water Media – Whimsical
- Class 14 Water Media – Abstract & non-representational

Other Two-Dimensional Art

- Class 15 Miniature Paintings (all mediums)
- Class 16 Drawing (Graphite Pencil, Charcoal)
- Class 17 Drawing (Colored Pencil)
- Class 18 Pen, Inks & Markers (Black & White)
- Class 19 Pen, Inks & Markers (Color)
- Class 20 Scratch Art
- Class 21 Pastel
- Class 22 Encaustic
- Class 23 Printmaking
- Class 24 Collage
- Class 25 2D Mixed Media

Other Three-Dimensional Art

- Class 26 Recycled Art
- Class 27 Sculpture
- Class 28 3D Mixed Media

Fine Arts & Craft - Artists with Disabilities Adult Division 45.601

- Class 1 Painting (Acrylic or Oil media)
- Class 2 Water Media Painting
- Class 3 Drawing
- Class 4 Pen & Ink (includes Scratch Art)
- Class 5 Alcohol-Based Inks & Markers
- Class 6 Pastel
- Class 7 Encaustic
- Class 8 Printmaking
- Class 9 Collage
- Class 10 Digital Art
- Class 11 2D Mixed Media
- Class 12 Recycled Art
- Class 13 Sculpture
- Class 14 3D Mixed Media
- Class 15 Animation, Cartooning & Manga
(Original Design - Digital or hand drawn)
- Class 16 Art Inspired by Cultural Icons
(Digital or hand drawn)
- Class 17 Art Created from Artificial Intelligence

Fine Craft

- Class 18 Ceramics
- Class 19 Glass & Mosaic
- Class 20 Jewelry
- Class 21 Woodworking
- Class 22 Leatherwork
- Class 23 Gourd Craft
- Class 24 Other Not Listed

ICONOGRAPHIC ART, CARTOONING, MANGA & DIGITAL ARTS

DEFINITIONS

Art Inspired by Cultural Icons is artwork that utilizes characters that are not the creation of the exhibitor. This term encompasses artworks that draw inspiration from prominent figures, symbols, or elements deeply embedded in a culture. These icons can be historical, religious, political, or even popular cultural figures.

Cartooning refers to the art of creating cartoons, which are often single-frame or short sequences that use humor, satire, or caricature to convey messages or tell jokes. Cartooning focuses on style, and expression, and often exaggerates features for comedic effect.

Manga is a style of comic book or graphic novel that originated in Japan. Manga is typically serialized in magazines or published as standalone volumes. It has a distinctive art style and storytelling approach, with a wide range of genres and themes.

Art Created from Artificial Intelligence Generator is any form of digital art created or enhanced with AI tools.

Digital Art uses technology to create art.

2D Digital Art: A drawing, painting, or pixel art created using software.

3D Digital Art: 3D painting, modeling, or sculpting art created using 3D software (e.g. Blender, Maya, Cinema 4D, and ZBrush).

Digital Mixed Media: Includes digital collage and integrated digital art.

- Digital Collage: Combines different textures and images from several sources into a collage.
- Integrated Digital Art: Combines two or more art forms, using different software - raster painting, vector drawing, digital photos, and computer-generated vectors.

Computer Generated Art: Known as generative art, it uses a computer program or algorithm to create the art.

- Algorithmic Art: Art in which the design is generated by a computer algorithm.
- Fractal Art: A geometric pattern is repeated to create irregular shapes and patterns.

ICONOGRAPHIC ART, CARTOONING, MANGA & DIGITAL ARTS

DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Iconographic Art, Cartooning, Manga & Digital Arts - Adult Division 45.701

Class 1 Art Inspired by Cultural Icons (Digital)

Class 2 Art Inspired by Cultural Icons (Hand drawn)

Class 3 Cartooning & Manga (Original Design - Digital)

Class 4 Animation, Cartooning & Manga (Original Design - Hand drawn)

Class 5 Art Created from Artificial Intelligence Generator

Digital Arts

Class 6 2D Digital Art

Class 7 3D Digital Art

Class 8 Digital Mixed Media

Class 9 Computer Generated Art



Preparing Entry for Exhibition

Fine Arts (2D)

(Items that can be hung on wall)

Artwork should be framed excluding gallery-wrapped canvases.

- **Framed items** must be ready to hang using secure screw eyes and wire.
- **Gallery-wrapped canvases** should be ready to hang using secure screw eyes and wire.

Gallery wrap is a method of stretching an artist's canvas so that the canvas wraps around the sides of the stretcher bar or strainer bars and is secured to the back of the wooden frame, where the hardware (staples, tacks, etc.) is hidden.

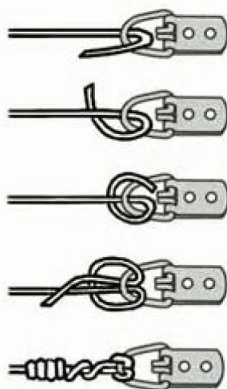
- **All artworks must be labeled with the exhibitor's name on the back of the piece.**

Wiring of gallery wrapped canvases



LARK'S HEAD KNOT

Also called...
Lark's foot, Cow
hitch, Girth hitch,
Ring hitch,
Lanyard hitch,
Bale Sling hitch,
Baggage Tag
Loop, Tag Knot,
Deadeye hitch,
Running eye

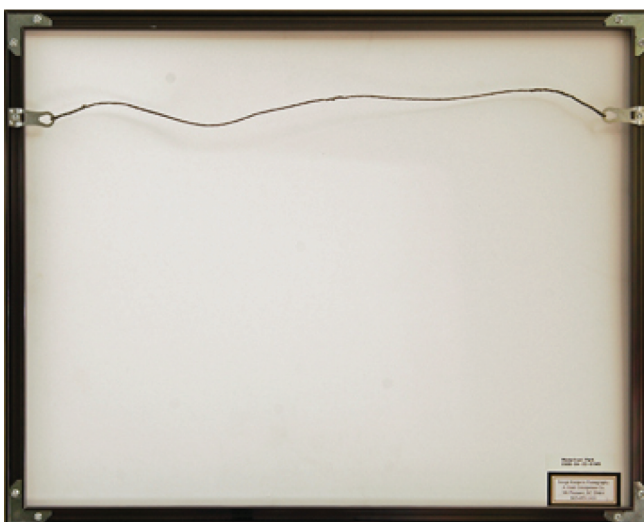


Fine Arts (3D)

(Items that sit on a pedestal or shelf)

- **All three-dimensional artwork must be received installation-ready.** Provide a base if necessary for structural support. The Fair will provide pedestals and glass cases to protect the work.
- **All artworks must be labeled with the exhibitor's name on the bottom of the piece.**

Examples of wire hangers on frames



GENERAL RULES

DISCLAIMER

All entries are submitted at the exhibitor's own risk. The Florida State Fair is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of exhibits even if caused by staff, volunteers, contractors, or visitors. If you want insurance for your entry, you must arrange it through your personal insurance provider before the Fair. Reasonable care will be taken to protect exhibits. No unauthorized people are allowed in the building after closing hours.

DIVISION OR CLASS CANCELLATION

The Florida State Fair may cancel any division or class if there are not enough entries to ensure fair competition. Any affected entries will be returned.

ENTRY ERRORS

Exhibitors are responsible for making sure their entries are correct. This includes online forms and summary sheets. The Fair is not responsible for correcting mistakes, and no awards will be given for entries disqualified due to exhibitor error. If an award is later found to be ineligible, it will be withheld or recovered. You may appeal a disqualification in writing within 90 days of being notified. Include your name, address, full entry details, and your reason for requesting a review.

PREMIUM PAYMENTS

Prizes will be awarded based on the Judging Criteria Record Sheets. **Prize checks are void 6 months after the date on the check. No replacement checks will be issued after that, so please cash them promptly.**

SUBSTITUTIONS

If needed, substitutions must be made within the same department as the original entry. They must be completed by the last day of the entry delivery period. You may not transfer your entry to another person.

PREVIOUSLY ENTERED ITEMS

Entries that have been shown at past Florida State Fairs are not allowed, except for entries in Horticulture and Aquarium Beautiful.

VERIFICATION OF ENTRY

To confirm that your mailed entry form and fees were received, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission. Online entries will receive a confirmation code after submitting.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXHIBITS

The Fair is not responsible for exhibits left behind after the scheduled pick-up time. **Anything left after that time will be treated as abandoned and discarded by April 1st of the same year.**

ENTRY REMOVAL

Once accepted, entries cannot be removed until the official release date listed in the Competition Handbook. Early removal is only allowed in cases like serious illness, emergencies, or at the Fair's discretion.

RETURNED OR BOUNCED CHECKS

A \$25 fee applies to any returned checks. This must be paid with cash, a certified check, or a money order.

MAILING PAPER ENTRY FORMS

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, December 5, 2025. Failure to complete any portion of the entry form may result in disqualification. Late entries must be postmarked before December 12, 2025. If you're submitting a late entry form, you must include the extra \$5 per entry fee. **Make checks payable to: Florida State Fair Authority**

Mail Entry Form to:

Creative Living Competitions – Fine Arts
Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680

SHIPPING ENTRIES

Shipped entries must arrive no later than January 6, 2026. Packages MUST include Shipping form and prepaid shipping label. Entries will be shipped back to the exhibitors after the fair in the same container. Return shipping costs are the responsibility of the entrant.

Ship Entry Form to:

Florida State Fair Authority
Fine Arts Competition
4800 US HWY 301 North
Tampa, FL 33680

RETRIEVING ENTRIES

All entries not claimed by April 1st of the same year will be recycled, disposed or donated through our program department. Entries not picked up on designated dates can be arranged for a special pick-up appointment by emailing CreativeLiving@floridastatefair.com.

EXHIBIT DESIGN & SET UP

The Florida State Fair controls how exhibits are displayed. If your entry is meant to be hung but isn't ready to hang, the Fair will display it as they see fit. No changes can be made once items are on display. Exhibitors cannot handle their entries after drop-off. Fair staff will handle final placement and assembly, using any instructions you provide. If your item needs assembly or disassembly, include clear instructions and diagrams. The Fair may use pins or other tools to secure your exhibit for display. Online entries will receive a confirmation code after submitting.

AWARD PREMIUMS

First Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$40**

Second Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$30**

Third Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$20**

Best of Show - State Fair Ribbon **\$60**

Best of Show Awards will be chosen from the first place winners of each division.

Director's Choice Award - State Fair Ribbon **\$35**

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be awarded at the discretion of the judge(s).

2026 Florida State Fair

Fine Arts Competition Entry Form

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, December 5, 2025.

Late Entry Period: December 6 – 12, 2025 (Double Entry Fees)

Failure to complete any portion of the entry form may result in disqualification

OFFICE USE ONLY

Exhibitor # _____

Late Entry ☐ YES ☐ NO _____

Total Fee _____

Paid ☐ YES ☐ NO _____

Type ☐ Cash ☐ MO ☐ Check _____

Check No. _____

Please print legibly

Exhibitors Name (First, Last)			
Mailing Address		County	
City	State	Zip Code	<input type="checkbox"/> Check if you are a new exhibitor
Phone ()		Email	

What division are you competing in: ☐ Adult (ages 18 +) ☐ Senior (ages 60 +) ☐ Artist with Disabilities (ages 18+)

Entry Fee: Adult Division \$5 per entry | Late entry \$10 per entry

Exhibitors may enter up to three (3) entries for judging.

Late Entry

☐ YES ☐ NO

#	DIVISION #	CLASS #	Enter the Title of the Artwork	FEE
1				
2				
3				
Total Amount Due				\$

I hereby certify that I have read the Florida State Fair General Rules for the Competitive Exhibits Program and the above item(s) is/are entered for exhibition strictly in accordance with these rules, by which I agree to be governed. I also agree that the Florida State Fair may use my name, likeness, or photograph (including, but not limited to photographs of my entry), in any manner relating to my participation in the Competitive Exhibits Program, free of charge and without further notice or consultation.

I understand that the 2026 Creative Living Competitions & Exhibits are held in conjunction with the 2026 Florida State Fair and agree that the Florida State Fair is not liable or responsible for any delay, change of dates, or cancellation of the 2026 Florida State Fair due to the following unforeseeable circumstances: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake; or (c) other potential disaster(s) or catastrophe(s), such as epidemics, pandemics, or explosion.

Signature of exhibitor

Date

Mail Entry Form to:

Creative Living Competitions – Fine Arts
Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680

Make checks payable to: Florida State Fair Authority