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Chicago's Oldest Juried Art Fair Celebrates 60 Years 57th Street Continues to Draw Serious Artists and Art Lovers

Editor note: Artists available for interview, photos available – call contact

Chicago, IL – Celebrating its 60th year in Chicago's historic Hyde Park on June 2-3, The 57th Street Art Fair is much the same as it was when it began in 1947. It still attracts first-rate artists and people who are serious about buying art.

Some of Chicago's most well-known artists received their start at the 57th Street Art Fair and are still exhibiting there today. After participating in his first 57th Street Art Fair in 1955, Richard Hunt, a well-known Chicago sculptor, began exhibiting in small galleries and local art centers.

"I started with 57th St. as a student and exhibiting with respected artists was somewhat daunting, but it was worth it to get their encouragement and it got me thinking about how to develop as a professional artist," said Hunt. "The first year I had my own space at the Art Fair people started buying my work. One year a dealer bought everything at once. I used the money to buy a welding torch and suddenly here I am 40 years later, making a living doing what I love."

The art fair tradition began because there was no central place for artists to show their work. Started by some of America's most pioneering artists who felt it was important to gather and share their passion with peers and art lovers, the 57th Street Art Fair changed the way many view art when it became the Midwest's first juried art fair.

"The 57th Street Art Fair was such a new idea when it started, people could actually meet the artists creating their work...it was revolutionary," said H. Dean Willis, a Chicago-area artist whose work portrays his interpretation of the Midwestern farming environment. "So many art shows followed in its footsteps but 57th Street never became commercial, it was always about getting people exposed to art, not about the vendors and social scene. Artists at 57th Street take their work very seriously; their booth on the street is their mini gallery."

The 57th Street Art Fair was one of the first art fairs to implement a jury process. Every new artist's application is screened as well as all returning artists on a rotating basis in an effort to maintain the highest level of artistic quality and to provide more opportunities for more new artists to participate.

The 57th Street Art Fair is designed and dedicated to those that create, appreciate and purchase art of all varieties including glass, jewelry, leather, photography, printmaking, painting, sculpture, wood, ceramics and fiber. It is family friendly and one of the only alcohol-free art fairs.

The 57th Street Art Fair is always held the first weekend in June in Hyde Park. "While I buy art at 57th Street each year, my kids know this is the one weekend of they year they can purchase a corn dog. We all look forward to it." said Fama. For more information visit:

www.57thstreetartfair.org or call 773-493-FAIR.

Public transportation options – Metra station at 57th St. or the CTA bus 6 or 28 at Stony Island and 57th St. Parking at 55th and Ellis.