



Admirers of art filled the Grand Bend legion on Friday, May 1, for the opening gala of this year's Paint Ontario Art Competition, Exhibit and Sale, which runs until Sunday, May 17. PHOTOS: SCOTT NIXON

PAINT ONTARIO GALA OPENS 29TH ANNUAL ART SHOW



The opening gala for the 29th Paint Ontario Art Competition, Exhibit and Sale was held at the Grand Bend legion on Friday, May 1, featuring 224 juried paintings and 38 sculptures. Running until Sunday, May 17, the annual show is hosted by the Grand Bend Art Centre, and features live art demonstrations, workshops and more. More than \$14,000 in prizes and awards are handed out during the two-week art show. Pictured is Kincardine's Tim Kittel with his \$1,000 first-place winning sculpture Wild Atlantic Salmon Swimming Upstream, made of epoxy and wood. It was only the third carving Kittel has ever done, and this year's Paint Ontario was his first entry in an art show.



Colette Begg of Camlachie stands with her painting Curated Chaos, top, which won the mayor's purchase award of \$1,000. It's been a successful run for Begg, who was the grand prize winner last year. This year's winner was Sarah Clarke, who won \$3,000 for her painting Holy Noticing. For a full list of winners, visit paintontario.com/2026-winning-artwork/.



Mark Janeck of Grimsby won the \$750 Ontario Spirit Award and the \$250 Sponsor Choice Award for his work Cedar Symmetry, which depicts a scene from Algonquin Park.



Calgary artist Doug Swinton, right, attended the Paint Ontario gala on May 1, and was scheduled to lead a lecture and demonstration at The Colonial on May 2. He described Paint Ontario as "absolutely stunning," and said he was glad he made the trip east. At left is Grand Bend Art Centre vice-president Barbara Helen Pickett, who said judges looked at more than 600 pieces this year before narrowing them down. Judges this year were Paint Ontario founder Barry Richman, Josie Britton and Joanne Poluch.