

Maple Grove Artist One of Few Selected for Fine Art Show at Minnesota State Fair

Kris Fretheim is a local artist with a flair for watercolor painting. She entered one of her pieces in the 100th annual Fine Arts Exhibition at the Minnesota State Fair this year.

By Lisa Furgison

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Kristine Fretheim— Chill Your Monkey 21 x 27 Watercolor

Kris Fretheim can't remember a time that she wasn't an artist.

She has always enjoyed all kinds of art, and works as a full time painter from her Maple Grove home. She was one of 413 artists selected from 2,330 applicants for the fine arts exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair. Maple Grove Patch caught up with the artist for a question and answer session.

While Fretheim did not win an award this year, this talented artist in her early 60s, hopes everyone stops by the fair to see her work.

Maple Grove Patch: How long have you been entering art in the state fair?

Kris Fretheim: I've entered every year for quite a long time, since 1997 actually. That first year I got an honorable mention and I have been entering ever since.

Maple Grove Patch: What is the process to enter a painting in the state fair?

Kris Fretheim: Recently they started an online entry application which is little different than it was in 1997. Back then you took your artwork in and a judge would select a certain number of pieces into the show, now the preliminary step is online. I found out through email that I was selected so then I took the piece in to be judged.

Maple Grove Patch: What's the story behind your watercolor entry this year?

Kris Fretheim: This years piece is called "Chill your Monkey." It's a composition of an artistic young man on a street corner. I just

imagined this young man using the word “chill” in his vocabulary. And the “monkey” refers to all of the crazy thoughts that jump around in our heads like monkeys, so the guy in the painting is really saying calm down and enjoy life.

Maple Grove Patch: Why do you enter the state fair competition each year?

Kris Fretheim: The fair is a great way to get noticed, since so many people go to the fair. All of the art work is displayed in the Fine Arts Building and artists can decide if they want to sell their piece, which I am doing this year.

Maple Grove Patch: How did you get started as an artist?

Kris Fretheim: I just kind of grew up in an artistic family. I always had paper and drawing utensils around me. My father was a portrait artist and ever since I was a little girl I knew I wanted to follow in my father’s footsteps.

Maple Grove Patch: Where can people take a look at more of your work?

Kris Fretheim: I love to have people come to studio and buy work from me, but I also have a [website](#) that showcases some of the my work.