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MAGAZINE

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Kristine Fretheim's Painting Honored at Watercolor USA Exhibition

Local artist gets an invite to elite honor society, and her painting wins the Winsor Newton Award.



Kristine Fretheim's watercolor, Earth Dakini Redux was displayed at an elite national exhibition.

An original watercolor painting by Maple Grove artist [Kristine Fretheim](#), who was [featured](#) in Maple Grove Magazine's April issue, was selected as one of 125 elite works (chosen from 639 entrants) for display at the [Watercolor USA 2011 Exhibition](#) at the Springfield (MO) Art Museum.

The painting, *Earth Dakini Redux*, also received the exhibition's Winsor Newton Award, while Fretheim was honored with a formal invitation to join the Watercolor USA Honor Society, which is comprised of artists who have received awards in Watercolor USA exhibitions or whose paintings have been purchased for the permanent collection of the Springfield Art Museum.

"To have a painting hanging in a museum show of this caliber is awe-inspiring for me," Fretheim says. "Many of the pieces in the show triggered an emotional response as I walked through the galleries. The artists' passion was clearly evident."

Earth Dakini Redux is part of a series of works depicting the profusion of life in a small corner of Fretheim's rock garden. With this particular painting, Fretheim says she wanted to evoke a sense of mystery and awe. "Dakinis, are a female deities— sometimes poetically described as 'sky dancers' or 'she who walks in space,'" Fretheim explains. "Dakini energy can be volatile, changeable, unpredictable. It is an energetic transformational quality that inspires movement and change. There is a drama unfolding in this painting of a simple rock garden. Even the rocks seem to be moving in a swirl of energy as plants and leaves spill over them."

The annual Watercolor USA Exhibition has been a platform displaying some of the finest water media paintings in the country for the past 50 years. Entries were received from 42 states and the District of Columbia, and 30 states are represented in the exhibition. This is the second time Fretheim's work has been selected from hundreds of entries from all over the United States, and it's an honor that she doesn't take for granted.

“Being part of this exhibition is such an honor,” she says. “This particular painting is part of a series that was very challenging for me. The world of art is teeming with millions of paintings and talented artists. Each one has to be true to their own special way of expressing the world as they see it. I feel like my style of painting and artistic vision has been affirmed every time someone sees one of my paintings and ‘gets it’, whether it happens to be acceptance into a juried show or purchase by a collector. There is a fire in the belly of every artist, and those affirmative experiences keep the flame burning brightly.”

Earth Dakini Redux is listed in the Watercolor USA catalog at \$3,000. Those interested in purchasing the painting can contact the Springfield Art Museum (417.837.5700 or [email](#)) through August 7, the final day of the display. [Contact](#) Fretheim at 763.494.4564 regarding giclée prints (30 x 22; Print Edition: 5; \$250 Print).