

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Lara Hughes • Marketing & Communications Manager • Media Hotline: 651- 288-4321 • Media Email: media@mnstatefair.org

State Fair's Official 2023 Commemorative Art by Crop Artist Liz Schreiber Unveiled

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St. Paul, Minn. – The 2023 Minnesota State Fair's Official Commemorative Art was unveiled at the State Fairgrounds on Thursday, June 8, by Minneapolis crop artist Liz Schreiber. Surrounded by State Fair enthusiasts, she presented her richly detailed mosaic of iconic State Fair imagery made entirely from seeds. Her 22" by 30" crop art with an original frame will be on display in the Fine Arts Center during the 2023 Great Minnesota Get-Together, Aug. 24 through Labor Day, Sept. 4, and can be viewed at mnstatefair.org/commemorative-art/.

Media use: A high-resolution, downloadable commemorative art image is available at the following link: mnstatefair.org/get-involved/media/media-gallery-commemorative-art/.

Over the years, the chosen official commemorative artist has worked in many different mediums from photography to watercolor to screen printing and now, for 2023, the medium is seeds. Crop art is an intricate and unique art form and is thought to have originated on farms, where people had an abundance of seeds and were less busy in the winter, so they glued seeds to boards to make pictures. The crop art competition has been a Minnesota State Fair tradition since 1965.

Schreiber's artwork is made with 29 different types of seeds. A list of the seeds she used can be found at mnstatefair.org/commemorative-art/. Although the Minnesota State Fair crop art competition requires the use of only seeds that can be grown in Minnesota, she opted to use one non-Minnesota seed since the artwork is not for competition. "I was given a giant jug of palm seeds by my friend's mom who had saved them for me and labeled them 'for Nancy's friend,'" said Schreiber. "I thought that was really sweet, and that this would be a good opportunity to use them."

Schreiber focused on her favorite aspects of the fair when deciding what to depict in the artwork. "Looking at the piece, you'll see that 'corn' is a big theme: roasted corn, corn dogs," she said. "Plus, I always loved the antique tractors (Old Iron Show) on Machinery Hill. Cattle and all the animals are also a huge draw for me. And the Ferris wheel is such an iconic symbol of the fair."

To create crop art, Schreiber uses a toothpick and Elmer's glue to affix each seed individually in areas with a lot of detail. For the background, she usually deploys a 'glitter' method, where glue is applied and then seeds are tossed on top, with the excess shaken off. "This year I figured out a new process," she said. "Because the piece was so big and difficult to shake out, I used a mini Dustbuster vacuum to remove the excess seeds. It worked really well." She added, "I worked on this piece full time for six weeks, seven days per week. It took me approximately 300 hours total."

Schreiber has been entering the State Fair crop art competition each year since 2004 and has won 26 ribbons, including seven blue ribbons and one reserve champion ribbon. Her crop art has been featured in several local publications, including Vita.mn Magazine, Edible Twin Cities, Growler Magazine and others. She has taught crop art workshops and classes at The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Hennepin History Museum and Marine Mills Folk School. She worked with the University of Minnesota College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) to design and create an interactive crop art map in the Agriculture Horticulture Building during the 2022 State Fair. She works in a variety of other mediums and her artwork has been included in gallery shows locally at VeVang MPLS, Hennepin History Museum's *Homegrown* exhibit, and most recently, Rosalux Gallery. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she studied sculpture and printmaking, and a Master of Fine Arts in costume and set design from the University of Minnesota.

The commemorative poster and a limited number of signed prints featuring the art are currently available for purchase at mnstatefair.org/commemorative-art/. Proceeds will support the Minnesota State Fair Foundation 501(c)(3) mission to preserve and improve State Fair buildings, the fairgrounds and educational programs. For more information about the Minnesota State Fair Foundation, visit msffoundation.org.

The 2023 Minnesota State Fair Official Commemorative Art is the 19th in a series of artwork created annually by Minnesota artists for the Great Minnesota Get-Together. In past years, artists have included: Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher (2004), Mary GrandPré (2005), Nancy Carlson (2006), Michael Birawer (2007), Edie Abnet (2008), Leo Stans (2009), Deborah Voyda Rogers (2010), Steve Thomas (2011), Joe Heffron (2012), Marie Olofsdotter (2013), Emily L. Taylor (2014), Adam Turman (2015), Michael Sweere (2016), Ta-coumba Aiken (2017), Kristi Abbott (2018), R.J. Kern (2019), Kevin Cannon (2021) and Leslie Barlow (2022).

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Follow along on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok @mnstatefair for year-round Minnesota State Fair updates. The 2023 Minnesota State Fair will run Aug. 24 through Labor Day, Sept. 4. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information.

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