



Claudia Wilburn is an associate professor at Brenau University, where she is the chair of the Art & Design Department, studio art program director, and director of the Center for the Arts & Design. She received her Master of Fine Arts from the University of South Carolina and her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Clemson University. Professor Wilburn was awarded Brenau University's Ann Austen Johnson Outstanding Faculty Award for excellence in teaching in 2018 and the Master's in Teaching Award from Featherbone Communiversitry & Brenau University, March 2020.

In addition to teaching, Professor Wilburn is a practicing mixed-media artist. She grew up in the low country of South Carolina and has lived throughout the South. Her artwork draws on the connections, paths, family and community present in the Southeastern American experience. Her academic research and art have been presented internationally, and across the U.S. Professor Wilburn's current artistic research is a series of large-scale, figurative woodblock prints and mixed-media compositions titled *Navigate By Reckoning*. The majority of the works are developed from old family photographs and translated into blackline woodblock prints. The images created are printed on a variety of paper types and styles and collaged onto framed panels. She includes old family films, which provides an audio element with samples of oral histories from family members about the relatives shown in the pieces. Her work is currently on display in the Jack & Sandra Bailey Gallery at the Quinlan Center for the Arts as part of the Winter Exhibition.

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### **Juror Statement:**

It was an honor, even if a last minute surprise, to be asked to jury this excellent photography exhibition. I have to admit, when I first saw the work going up on the walls I was impressed with the quality of the images and the variety of subject matter included. I even discovered a few new (well new to me) methods for printing and displaying photographs. I wanted to say thank you for the opportunity. In the document below I hope to explain my reason behind the choices I made during the jurying process. As well all things when it comes to art, a juror brings his or her own perspective to the conversation. I would like to begin with the piece I chose for Best in Show.



When looking at photography, there are a few key items many of the great photographers strive for and I found many of them in this piece. The subject is in clear focus, in this case it is a very wide depth of field that keeps the details in the highlights of the white clouds. The dark shadows of the cottage also hold many details and that also caught my attention. The colors are vibrant without being over saturated, and the image has presence. I was attracted to this piece no matter where I was in the main gallery and kept looking back at it throughout the afternoon.



### **Open Category: 1st Place**

This photograph may be simple, but it has great clarity of focus on the subject, it reminds me of a time when I had peace of mind. I feels like it has been so long since I have remembered to truly take time for myself and be at peace without being concerned about the state of the world. It seemed appropriate to give this piece first place in the open category, not just on technical skill, but also to remind us to all to take a deep breath and remember to relax from time to time.

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### **Open Category: 2nd Place**

This is another technically beautiful photograph. The focus range is fantastic, the print quality is radiant, the colors are vibrant and the subject helps to draw attention to the natural world around us. This is another piece that visibly radiates across the room and draws the viewer in from many angles.

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### **Open Category: 3rd Place**

There were quite a few train photographs submitted as part of this exhibition and I wanted to make sure one of them was chosen for an award. This turned out to be a very difficult choice to make as many of them were excellent. My decision to choose this piece over the others came down to composition. This demonstrates an excellent use of the rule of thirds in several capacities. Not only in the placement of the subject matter and focal point, but also in the number of trains visible in the composition.

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### **Landscape: 1st Place**

As I mentioned with the photograph I selected for Best in Show, this photograph also holds true to the excellent presence of details in both the highlights and shadows. The composition is dynamic with the many diagonals of the mountains and turns of the river. The wide focal range extends for miles and no matter how many times you come back to look at this landscape, your eyes will always find something new to discover.

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### **Landscape: 2nd Place**

This piece is technically beautiful but I have to admit, it falls a bit into the subjective category as well. I grew up in Charleston, SC and spent many afternoons sitting on a screen porch watching storms roll in off the water. Like the photograph of the coffee cup I found comfort in this image.

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### **Landscape: 3rd Place**

It is important to select a few black and white photographs in a photography exhibition. The ridges in the sand created by the wind, are seen converging for miles into the distant desert. The patterns and repetition lead the eye and strengthen the composition.

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### **Urban: 1st Place**

When I was thinking about “Urban” the first thing my mind went to was people. People are what make a place urban and the people provide the character of a place. If you have spent any time in the city of New Orleans you will remember the energy of the people, the sounds, the smells, the colors.... These kids are comfortable in their city, they have an outlet with music and this photograph captures a moment with rhythm, and unity.

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### **Urban: 2nd Place**

This work reminded me of a piece by famous photographer Margret Burke-White and if I am not mistaken it is an Atlanta landmark, taken from inside of the Georgian Terrace Hotel. Urban is such a wide topic but a focus on architecture is a large part of the concept.

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### **Urban: 3rd Place**

Urban areas are known to have a certain amount of danger associated with them, and the broken chain link fence helped me make that connection in this piece. It is not just an image of the Marta tracks or the ATL skyline, but it also hints at other things that remain unspoken.

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### **Macro: 1st Place**

The neutral colors of this photograph are vibrant and the shallow depth the field is very strong. The micro focus of the gears appeals to many different people from the farmer and mechanic used to getting their hands dirty to the computer savvy into steampunk imagery. This is a well printed, well composed, dynamic image.

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### **Micro: 2nd Place**

A micro focus on a super-fast shutter speed is a difficult thing to do, this kind of shot requires much practice, plenty of problem solving and quite a bit of dedication. I enjoy the monochromatic color choice and the motion that is brought to a stop in this image.

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### **Micro: 3rd Place**

This tigerlily was well chosen for its vibrant and varied colors and shapes. The lines of the petals move the eye around the form and the focus is kept simply on the flower. It is similar to the photograph of one of the landscapes I mentioned above, you can look at this piece again and again, finding something new and beautiful each time.