

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

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St. Paul Artist Chosen to Create 2012 State Fair Commemorative Art

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MINNESOTA STATE FAIRGROUNDS – Joe Heffron of St. Paul has been chosen to create the Official 2012 Minnesota State Fair Commemorative Art. For the second year, the State Fair put out a call for submissions asking Minnesota artists to apply to create the commemorative art. Heffron was selected as one of the five finalists from nearly 50 submissions and was just named the Official Artist. Other finalists were Christine Dyrud, Keith Grove, Michael Jacobsen and Bruce Nygren. Heffron's piece will be unveiled at the State Fairgrounds in June 2012.

Heffron is a native of West St. Paul and now lives with his wife near Como Park. The two visit the State Fair together each year. With a 20-year career in graphic design and illustration, Heffron has also designed residential and commercial stained glass windows. He believes in using traditional materials, hand-rendered images and unusual inspirations.

"To be selected as a finalist in this competition was an incredible honor. Then to find out my submission won was surprising and thrilling," Heffron said. "I am especially proud to know that my artwork will be included within the amazing group of past commemorative artists and their posters - that is the greatest honor. The art to be unveiled captures the Great Minnesota Get-Together with whimsical realism, and I look forward to sharing it with everyone in June."

The commemorative poster, a limited number of signed giclee prints and other merchandise featuring the art will be available for purchase after the June unveiling. Proceeds will support the Minnesota State Fair Foundation 501(c)(3) mission to preserve and improve State Fair buildings, grounds and educational experiences. The original art will be on display in the Fine Arts Center during the 12-day run of the 2012 State Fair.

The 2012 Minnesota State Fair Commemorative Art will be the ninth in a series of artwork created annually for the fair. In past years, Minnesota 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) and Steve Thomas (2011). A gallery of past artwork is available at http://www.mnstatefair.org/art/commemorative_art_gallery.html.

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world, attracting nearly 1.8 million visitors annually. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is always 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Visit www.mnstatefair.org for more information. The 2012 Minnesota State Fair runs Aug. 23 - Labor Day, Sept. 3.

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