



MonmouthNJ 250 Art Competition

Calling all Monmouth County artists!

The 250th Anniversary of the United States of America is coming in 2026. America's Semiquincentennial will be celebrated all across the nation and in the County of Monmouth, New Jersey. To highlight Monmouth County's role in the American Revolution and to showcase the talent and creativity of Monmouth County residents, the MonmouthNJ 250 Committee is hosting an art competition for professional and non-professional artists.

Purpose:

The purposes of this art competition and exhibition are to:

- Encourage the creation of quality fine art that interprets an historic event that took place in Monmouth County, NJ during the Revolutionary War era.
- Showcase the talent and creativity of Monmouth County, NJ residents.
- Enhance the general public's understanding and appreciation of Monmouth County, NJ's role in the fight for independence.

Theme:

“Revolutionary Monmouth County – Freedom’s Battleground”

The Battle of Monmouth was pivotal to the American Revolution. It was the biggest and longest one-day battle of the Revolutionary War. However, Monmouth County's Revolutionary story is more than that. It's a story of families and loyalties divided. It's a story of men and women from different backgrounds attempting to navigate tumultuous and uncertain times. It's a story of strife and skirmish over many years that pitted neighbor against neighbor, friend against friend. Those loyal to “the Crown” organized and worked against the cause of freedom more than in any other county in New Jersey.

Artwork submissions must capture an historic moment in Revolutionary Monmouth County history, between the years of 1775 and 1783. Artists may choose their own subject. Although not required, below are the MonmouthNJ 250 Committee's top-10 historic event recommendations:

Battle of the Navesink - February 13, 1777: The British Navy captured Sandy Hook in 1776 and held it until late 1782. They used this base for defense of New York and to probe the defenses along the Bayshore, culminating in the Battle of the Navesink in the area that is now Rumson, Highlands and Sea Bright, NJ. In this lesser-known battle, British Major Andrew Gordon led a surprise attack on Col. Nathaniel Scudder's Monmouth Militia on a cold winter night, killing 25 and capturing 72 (many of whom later died in prison). Although 40 men escaped, some died during their flight. The Battle of the Navesink was a disaster for the Monmouth Militia.

Destruction of Union and Shark River Salt Works - April 1778: Salt was a commodity essential to the well-being of the American soldiers. In April, 1778, around 150 British Highlanders and Loyalists landed south of Shark River and destroyed the salt-works. They were driven off by around fifteen Monmouth Militia. During the Revolutionary War, the Union Salt Works produced salt, the vital preservative of food prior to refrigeration. Before the war, salt had been imported from England. The salt works were destroyed, and the settlement around the works sacked by Loyalists "refugees", accompanied by British Troops. Despite the raid, the salt works were again operative following repairs. Men and material continued to be shipped from Union Landing throughout the war.

Burrowes Mansion Raid - May 27, 1778: The Burrowes family and the Mansion played key roles in local and state history during the American Revolution. Loyalists attacked Middletown Point (Matawan today) to burn the mills and warehouses owned by John Burrowes, Sr. and to capture Capt. John Burrowes, Jr., who organized and trained the local militia, then later served as Major in the Continental Army.

Battle of Monmouth - June 28, 1778: Evacuating Philadelphia on June 18, British General Sir Henry Clinton marched his army through New Jersey towards British-occupied Sandy Hook. Determined to prevent them from marching through New Jersey unopposed, General George Washington and the Continental Army pursued. Ten days later, the armies collided near Monmouth Courthouse (Freehold Borough and Manalapan today). The Battle of Monmouth was the longest, one-day battle of the Revolutionary War. It is widely viewed as a pivotal moment in the fight for independence because it demonstrated that the Continental Army was no longer a ragtag group of American colonists, but an army to be reckoned with.

Loyalists Raid Pleasant Valley: June 28, 1778: Following the Battle of Monmouth, Sir Henry Clinton led the British soldiers on a march to their ships anchored in Sandy Hook, passing through Holmdel. Along their way the British soldiers plundered the farms and set them afire. A section of Middletown (now Holmdel) was known as the Hornet's Nest (near Longbridge Road and Cross Farms today). Armed Patriots would hide there in the woods waiting for British soldiers. Stings from the Patriots muskets often meant death to the British soldiers. They said it was like getting stung by a hornet.

Razing of Tinton Falls - June 10, 1779: A Loyalist raiding party advanced unnoticed on Tinton Falls. It captured five leading Patriots and plundered many others. Homes and barns were burned to the ground, stores were looted, and livestock driven off. The local militia scattered. During that afternoon, as the raiders loaded their barges, a reinforced militia engaged the Loyalists in a battle with vicious hand-to-hand combat.

Allen House Massacre – June 13, 1779: A Loyalist party led by Richard Lippincott raided Continental Army soldiers staying at the Blue Ball Tavern (known today as the Allen House). After sailing down the Shrewsbury River then marching through the woods, the Loyalists hid behind gravestones in the Christ Episcopalian Church cemetery prior to the raid. Upon bursting down the door, the Loyalists grabbed the soldiers’ muskets (they were stored together) leaving them unarmed. After a brief fight, the Continentals surrendered. Three soldiers were killed and nine were captured.

Capture of Britannia – December 28, 1779: The Monmouth Bayshore was contested ground during the American Revolution. The British occupied Sandy Hook and the Monmouth militia controlled the mainland. During a nor’easter, wind gusts tore the Britannia, a two-masted, 20-cannon British privateer ship from its anchorages along Sandy Hook. As the vessel drifted across Sandy Hook Bay heading for Middletown, word reached the Patriots on the mainland. Within hours, the militia men captured the Britannia using rowboats to quietly navigate the storm and chunks of ice throughout the bay. While it’s unknown how many sailors were aboard the Britannia when it went adrift, the ship was loaded with cargo (food, munitions, and other supplies).

Showdown of Joshua Huddy and Colonial Tye - September 1, 1780: Throughout 1779 and 1780 Colonel Tye led raids into Monmouth County, focusing on known Patriot militia officers and their farms and homes. Patriot leaders were captured and turned over to the British on Sandy Hook. In September of 1780 Tye and his men attempted to capture the Patriot leader Joshua Huddy. Tye and his men were able to get Huddy to surrender after setting fire to his house. Colonel Tye died of tetanus resulting from a musket wound in the wrist during this legendary showdown.

Joshua Huddy Hanging – April 12, 1782: Joshua Huddy was commissioned by the Continental Congress as a privateer to attack British ships along the Jersey coast and in Barnegat Bay. After the British surrender at Yorktown, Captain Huddy was assigned to protect the Block House in Toms River. On March 23, 1782, Captain Huddy was captured by loyalist refugees and imprisoned in New York City, accused of executing Stephen Edwards, a Loyalist from Middletown who was found guilty of treason as a British spy. The British sought revenge against Huddy and the royal governor of New Jersey, William Franklin, ordered Captain Richard Lippincott to hang him. Huddy was removed from prison and taken to Highlands and hanged from a tree. His executioners included the note, “Up Goes Huddy for Phillip White,” in reference to a Tory who had been killed while in Patriot custody. Huddy’s body was buried in an unmarked grave at Old Tennent Church, in Manalapan, NJ.

Dates:

- Registration will open starting at 9 a.m. (EST) on Monday, July 8, 2024.
- Deadline for submission is 3 p.m. (EST) on Friday, April 3, 2026.
- Exhibition dates: May 1, 2026 until the end of 2026.
- Announcement of winners: July 2, 2026

Eligibility:

This competition is open to visual artists who currently reside in Monmouth County, New Jersey, that are at least 18 years old. Valid identification that clearly indicates the artist's full name, complete home address, and date of birth must be provided upon submission. Failure to provide valid identification indicating this information may result in disqualification.

There are two (2) categories: Professional and Non-Professional. Artists must indicate which category they are submitting for.

Professional: Person who meets 2 or more of the following criteria:

- Sells or has sold artwork through commercial channels (galleries, online galleries, craft shows, etc.).
- Exhibited in a professional gallery and/or in professional shows for 2+ years*.
- Had artwork selected in 2 or more juried art or craft shows*.
- Has received 2 or more awards for artwork*.
- Holds (or has held) professional membership in art guilds or associations.

** Exception: These criteria do not apply to artists who only enter their county show and never exhibit artwork in any other show—unless they have won first place in their category three or more times. In that case, the artist should identify themselves as a professional.*

Non-Professional: Person who does NOT meet the above professional criteria.

Registration and Submission:

Artists are to register for this competition beginning on July 8, 2024 at <https://monmouthnj250.org/>. Artists must register to participate in this competition.

There will be a maximum of 50 professional submissions accepted and a maximum of 50 non-professional submissions accepted.

Professional registration will close after 50 registrations are received for this category.
Non-professional registration will close after 50 registrations are received for this category.

Each artist may only submit one entry.

Submission must be the artist's original creation. No giclee prints, replicas, copies or other reproductions will be accepted.

Artwork created by two or more artists will not be accepted.

Artwork must be certified to have been completed after July 8, 2024.

Submissions made on someone else's behalf will not be accepted.

Submitted artwork must be two dimensional and not exceed 30 pounds.

Submitted artwork must be ready to hang on a wall.

Accepted artwork mediums include: Acrylic, Oil Paint, Watercolor/Watercolor Pencils, Pastel, Ink, Markers.

Submissions that include nudes or inappropriate content will not be accepted. Monmouth County reserves the right to determine whether any submission will be rejected without consideration in its sole discretion.

A digital image of the finished artwork to be uploaded to: <https://monmouthnj250.org/>. Artwork does not need to be uploaded at the time of registration.

Artwork must then be submitted in-person by 3 p.m. (EST) on Friday, April 3, 2026, at the Monmouth County Clerk's Office, 33 Mechanic Street, Freehold, NJ 07728. Submissions must be clearly and legibly labeled on the back of the submitted artwork with the artist's personal information, including the artist's legal first name, legal middle initial (if applicable), legal last name, home address including home number, town, state, zip code, apartment (if applicable), daytime phone number, and email address. Any submission with missing, damaged, or illegible information will be disqualified. Monmouth County is not responsible for any information that may be damaged during the submission process.

Submissions may be held for display until the end of 2026.

Criteria:

Judging will be based upon an equal balance of the following:

- Interpretation and clarity of the required theme.
- Creativity, uniqueness, and originality of the theme.
- Quality of artistic composition and overall design.
- Use of color and tone.
- Overall impressions of the art.
- Artwork's capacity to stand on its own as a complete and outstanding work of art.

The decisions of the judges are final and binding. Panel of five judges will be announced in 2026.

Release and Limitation of Liability:

All entrants agree to release and hold harmless the sponsor of the competition and each of their officers from and against any claim or cause of action arising out of participation in the art competition.

The County of Monmouth will exercise all reasonable care with original artwork but the County of Monmouth, its staff, officers, and volunteers will not be held responsible for loss or damage of any submission. It is suggested that artists carry their own private insurance. Monmouth County does not provide insurance.

No compensation will be provided by Monmouth County for submissions.

By submitting artwork to this competition, the artist hereby grants permission for Monmouth County, its representatives, and employees the right to produce and use, without fee, images of the artwork in broadcast, telecast and print media for promotional and publicity purposes. Furthermore, the artist authorizes Monmouth County, its representatives and employees, to copyright, use and publish same, without fee, with or without my name, and for any lawful purpose, including publicity, illustration, advertising, or website content.

At the conclusion of the competition, the winning submissions become the property of Monmouth County. Submissions that were not selected as a winner may be picked up at (address tbd) between Monday, July 27, 2026 and Friday, July 31, 2026, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Any artwork that is not claimed during this time will become the property of Monmouth County, New Jersey. Monmouth County is not responsible for any artists ability to pick up their artwork as outlined above.

Winner Selection and Notification:

Winners will be notified via phone on July 20, 2026. Non-winners will be notified via email with the results by July 22, 2026. Monmouth County is not responsible for any phone call that is unable to be completed due to service disruption or technical problems and any email that is undeliverable due to a technical issue, or an invalid and/or inactive email address.

Monmouth County assumes no responsibility for any winner that is unable to receive, reply, or respond to an email for any reason including service issues.

Monmouth County is not responsible for the inability to notify a winner or participant if an incorrect, illegible, or erroneous email address has been provided. If a winner is unable to be contacted within five (5) business days, Monmouth County reserves the right to name an alternate winner. If an alternate winner is named, the original winner is automatically disqualified and not eligible to receive a prize of any value.

Agreement to Official Rules:

Participation in this competition constitutes entrants full and unconditional agreement to and acceptance of these official rules.

Prize winning is contingent upon being compliant with these official rules and fulfilling all other requirements set forth herein. If any submission is named a winner and then found to be in violation of the official rules will be disqualified and another winner will be named.

The decision of the competition judges is final and binding. The competition judges will be announced by Friday, April 3, 2026.

Prizes:

Three (3) winners in the professional category will be named

- First Place winner will be awarded \$2,026.00.
- Second Place winner will be awarded \$1,976.00.
- Third Place winner will be awarded \$1,776.00.

Three (3) winners in the non-professional category will be named

- First Place winner will be awarded \$2,026.00.
- Second Place winner will be awarded \$1,976.00.
- Third Place winner will be awarded \$1,776.00.

Winners are solely responsible for taxes. A W-9 must be completed before any prize is awarded. Monmouth County is not responsible for any winner's ability to pay tax or to receive their prize. Monmouth County reserves the sole right to name an alternate winner in either category if the original winner is found to be ineligible or is unable to be contacted as outlined above.

Contact

Questions? [Click here](#) to email the MonmouthNJ 250 Committee Executive Director, Ted Maturo.