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Excellence in Artistic Scholarship

Annette Taylor
University of Dayton, ataylor1@udayton.edu

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Excellence in Artistic Scholarship

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University of Dayton assistant professor of photography Glenna Jennings has been recognized with a Culture Works grant, Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award and Ohio Online Visual Artist Registry Juror's Choice Award. Department of Art and Design Chair Judith L. Huacuja said the honors signal Jennings' "excellence in artistic scholarship."

Jennings was one of 12 artists to receive the Culture Works Artist Opportunity Grant, announced in January and funded by the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District. Jennings used the grant to travel in April to the Photolucida Portfolio Reviews Festival, an internationally-known event in Portland, Oregon, that connects artists with publishers, gallerists and other professionals. Jennings was looking for publication and exhibition opportunities for her photographic series *At Table, 2004-2018*. The series takes a documentary approach to food culture and how people around the world connect, collide and converge in a familiar place — the table.

It was a successful trip. New York-based *Float Magazine* agreed to post some of Jennings' work on its website beginning in mid-June. Another organization offered Jennings a book proposal, which she is considering. A book would allow the *At Table* visual work to be complemented with writings on the conceptual and social themes, she said.

The Ohio Arts Council Award, which recognizes an artist's body of work, was also for Jennings' *At Table* series. She was one of 13 statewide winners in the photography category. Winners each receive \$5,000 to experiment and explore their art forms, develop skills and advance their career. The judges noted the coherence and consistency of theme and style in Jennings' photos, despite the diversity of subjects and locations. Judges also appreciated the humor evident in many photographs.

"I am an active participant at the tables I photograph, and I think this lends an intimacy to the images," Jennings said. "Viewers who appreciate the aesthetic style can also connect with the emotional tone of the work. After all, everybody eats."

The Juror's Choice Award at the 12th Online Visual Artist Registry Juried Exhibition was for Jennings' archival pigment print called *At Table #47* (Dayton, Ohio), which depicts a post-Thanksgiving get-together at a Dayton home. The exhibition, featuring works of 37 artists with three juror's choice winners, was held in January at the Columbus Metropolitan Library, a sponsor of the online registry along with the Ohio Arts Council's Individual Artist Program.

Jennings said her winning piece was inspired by the exhibition theme, "My Treasures are Within," and what it means to be invited into someone else's space. She said home, families, friends and finding familiarity in difference are all important aspects in her work.

"In this way, the series often feels collaborative while still having a foot in the realm of documentary practice or even visual anthropology," she said.

Jennings described photography, art and her specific work, both artistically and in the classroom, as being inherently interdisciplinary. Her recent awards provide opportunities for meeting across disciplines and demographics, she said.

"At this point, various aspects of food culture, transnationalism and immigration permeate my research, teaching and service," Jennings said. "I have worked hard to tie these threads into a holistic art-making experience. Just as Marianist teaching seeks to educate the whole person, art-making can benefit from integrating the roles of creator, learner and citizen."

To see Jennings' work in *Float Magazine*, please visit the [magazine's website](#). To see her Juror's Choice Award photograph, please visit the [OhioArts Blog](#).

The Roy G Biv Gallery in Columbus will exhibit *At Table* as a solo show Nov. 8-Dec. 7. In addition, Jennings' Art and Social Practice students will organize the fourth annual Dinner in the Desert Kitchen on Dec. 6 at Index Project Space at the Front Street Building in Dayton,

with community partners Gem City Market, Welcome Dayton and Latinos Unidos.

- *Annette Taylor*



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At Table #98 (London, England)