

PRESS RELEASE

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## 2017 Dominion Riverrock Holds First-Ever 'RVA Plein Air Paint-Off' Andras Bality wins first prize; Ed Trask and Hamilton Glass round out the top three

RICHMOND, VA – Though 2017 saw Dominion Riverrock enter its ninth year, the three-day outdoor sports and music festival continues to innovate. This year's event launched the first-ever 'RVA Plein Air Paint Off,' both a nod to Richmond's thriving art scene and a celebration of Richmond's downtown waterfront and natural beauty. In the Paint Off, 10 popular Richmond artists had four hours on Saturday to create a work of art that was judged and showcased before going on sale to the public on Sunday. Those who purchase the finished paintings will not only take home unique works of art, but also pieces of Riverrock history.



This year's field was made up of Ed Trask, Matt Lively, Hamilton Glass, Greig Leach, Andras Bality, Amy Smith, Nico Cathcart, Linda Hollett-Bazouzi, Vincente Gonzalez, and Mickael Broth. Bality took first place in the Paint Off, followed by Trask in second and Glass in third. Dominion Riverrock partnered with Glave Kocen Gallery and Matt Lively to put on the event, and Lively created a custom trophy for the victor.

Scattered around the festival grounds, artists brought blank canvases to life, and final paintings embodied the upbeat festival spirit of Dominion Riverrock. Though the 30"x40" canvas size provided a challenge, as plein air artists typically work on a smaller scale, competitors rose

to the occasion and captured scenes ranging from flowing rivers, to lounging dogs, to moss-covered rocks, to pedestrian-packed bridges.

For attendees, the competition added a splash of color to Dominion Riverrock and provided an opportunity to learn more about talented Richmond artists and the plein air painting process. "Onlookers who didn't have prior knowledge of the competition were surprised and immediately wrapped up in watching the paintings take shape," said Bj Kocen of Glave Kocen Gallery. "It was a unanimous success with artists and spectators!"

The plein air format also provided plenty of opportunities for interaction between artists and festival attendees and was beneficial for all. "People were genuinely interested in what I was painting and how I was going about it," said Matt Lively. "I had a crowd around me most of the time which made it very social and upped the challenge."

The Plein Air Paint-Off proved a popular addition to Dominion Riverrock. Like all of the festival's events, it approached a well-established activity with a unique perspective, in this case by incorporating challenging canvas sizes, time limits, and crowd interaction. "What can I say but everything was fantastic from the ground up," said Andras Bality, "starting with the idea, organization, fellow artists to work with, the fantastic volunteer assistants, and last but not least the weather!"



### **About Dominion Riverrock**

Dominion Riverrock, organized by Venture Richmond and Sports Backers, began in 2009 and is now the nation's premier outdoor sports and lifestyle festival, bringing athletes, spectators, musicians, and even dogs to Brown's Island for a three-day festival against the backdrop of downtown Richmond's urban riverfront. The festival features a variety of outdoor sports including trail running, kayaking, biking, bouldering, slacklining, stand up paddleboarding, and dog jumping. The event was designed to promote Richmond's unique riverfront, downtown trails and whitewater rapids to outdoor enthusiasts. As a result of the creation of Dominion Riverrock, there is a stronger appreciation for the value of outdoor recreation throughout the entire Richmond region.