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Jim Licaretz Receives 2008 ANA Numismatic Art Award

Philadelphia artist Jim Licaretz is the 2008 recipient of the American Numismatic Association's Numismatic Art Award for Excellence in Medallic Sculpture. He will accept the honor on Aug. 2 at the ANA World's Fair of Money® in Baltimore.

A medallic artist at the U.S. Mint since 2006, Licaretz was a sculptor/engraver there from 1986 to 1989. He spent a year with The Franklin Mint and was a master sculptor for Mattel, Inc. for five years. In between, he taught life modeling and figure sculpture at Philadelphia's Fleischer Art Memorial, and was a member of the faculty at Otis-Parsons School of Design in Los Angeles (1992-94) and Academy of Art University in San Francisco (1995-2000).

"Although I was familiar with Renaissance and 19th-century French medals, it wasn't until sculptor Eugene Daub introduced me to the American Medallic Sculpture Association (AMSA) in 1985 that I realized contemporary artists were creating handheld art," said Licaretz. "It was quite a revelation to me to see these small, personal statements in various materials that were being recognized as medals."

His involvement with AMSA, which he now serves as president, led to his participation in the Fédération Internationale de la Médaille (FIDEM). In September 2007, Licaretz exhibited three medallic works at FIDEM's 30th Congress and Exhibition, hosted by the ANA's Edward C. Rochette Money Museum in Colorado Springs. His recent work for the U.S. Mint includes the 2008 Bald Eagle \$1 reverse and Andrew Jackson Presidential \$1 obverse.

"The greatest appeal of medallic art is the freedom one has to create his or her own world on a small scale," Licaretz said. "Though there are exceptions, most medallic sculpture has a magic and uniqueness not found in most art forms. I love that with the simplest of materials – clay, plaster and wax – an artist can birth something very personal."

The American Numismatic Association is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to encouraging people to study and collect money and related items. The ANA helps its 32,000 members and the public discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of education and outreach programs, as well as its museum, library, publications, conventions and seminars. For more information, call 719-632-2646 or visit www.money.org.