

# 53<sup>rd</sup> Founders Juried Awards Exhibition

*Exhibition Jurors*

John Loscuito • R.W. Lovejoy • Erin Palmer Szavuly

December 6, 2019 - January 9, 2020

Founders exhibitions are a long-held Naples Art tradition honoring the artists who came together in 1954 to create the first non-profit visual art organization in Collier County. Founders exhibitions are held in even-numbered years and serve as a platform for Florida artists to share the spotlight with their peers at the national level. For artists living outside of Florida, Founders exhibitions provide the opportunity to exhibit, demonstrate success and compete for nine cash prizes.

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Founders Juried Awards Exhibition was open to all artists residing in the United States. In July 2019, Naples Art issued a call-for-artists encouraging artists to upload one or two digital images of their art along with an artist's statement. All entries were received and compiled by the digital jury service CaFE.org in Denver, Colorado. After the October 7, 2019 entry deadline had passed, CaFE.org had cataloged entries from 40 States and the District of Columbia by 479 artists. All entries were viewed and scored by the jurors.

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Founders Juried Awards Exhibition is on view on the ground floor and second level in the Frederick O. Watson, Elizabeth & William Barrick, Millicent & Charles Marshall, Elizabeth & Alan Harris, John H. & Lucile Harris Foundation and Minnesota Lobby Galleries. The exhibition is sponsored by the Florida Department of State-Division of Cultural Affairs, Florida Weekly and Spotlight Magazine. Artwork shipping and receiving is generously provided by ARTMove, LLC.

The States listed below are represented in the exhibition.  
The number of artists representing each State are noted in parenthesis.

Arizona (1) . California (2) . Colorado (1) . Florida (24)  
Idaho (1) . Kansas (1) . Maryland (1) . North Carolina (1)  
New York (1) . Texas (6) . Utah (1)

# Erin Palmer Szavuly

## Juror's Statement

It was such a pleasure to be one of the jurors for the 2019 Founder's Exhibition! First and foremost, ...my initial response to viewing the 900+ entries, was that of excitement. I had a window seat (along with my fellow jurors) to view what excites people across the country to create. This is always interesting to me. My curiosity about what makes something memorable enough or stimulating enough for the act of creation is always present.

As artists we may be caught by the way light falls on a flower petal or how a texture can stimulate both our tactile and visual senses. We notice color in a shadow where others see black, and how a tiny insignificant item can generate symbolism. We see the spirit in people, as well as in inanimate objects, and we notice humor in life's everyday moments. These are some of the aspects that make us respond to the world around us through the creation process. These pieces of curiosity all contribute to the stimulation and motivation for artists to act.

In my opinion, this exhibition supports this premise. Some approaches are playful and fantasy filled, while others represent purpose to capture an essence, whether it be of fleeting light or a contemporary twist on an old favorite. Through a variety of works we see the colors of tropical climates, surfaces from the softness of human skin to the roughness of a sculptural form, and patterns that create a different view of texture when applied to fabric compositions. Works depicting emotions can be seen through obvious references of love, tension, and discovery. We also see that mastery over technique and materials is a motivator for some, while others prefer a loose approach, again going back to the capturing of an essence whether with detail or loose brushstroke. Last, but not least, are the layers and depth of non-objective pieces that rely on the elements of art to tell their story.

These pieces all represent artistic approaches across the spectrum, some that tip their hats to artists and works of the past, some that display a realism of subject matter and thought, others that reflect creatively active imaginations, and newcomers developed out of a contemporary technological society where computers are back seat drivers, if not co-pilots.

This variety of approaches, styles, compositions and materials made it incredibly enjoyable from this juror's perspective. Works crossed over regions and boundaries to reflect a slice of what the creation of art looks like to a broad spectrum of people. Here we glimpse a reflection of the artist's eye and heart...what speaks to them, what grabs their attention-what excites them...gets them or pushes them. We see that determination and the love of creation, along with all of its challenges, is the motivating factor!

Congratulations to all of the artists. *Erin Palmer Szavuly*

## About Erin Palmer Szavuly

Erin Palmer Szavuly is Associate Professor and Chairperson of the Art Department at Lourdes University in Sylvania, Ohio. She studied at Bowling Green State University and received a Master of Fine Arts degree in Drawing and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Painting and Drawing.

She has been on the faculty at Lourdes University since 1990. In addition to teaching, she is on the community boards of the Toledo Area Cultural Leaders and The Toledo Federation of Art Societies (past President). She is a past President of the Medici Circle Advisory Council at Bowling Green State University and is a member of the Athena Art Society, the Toledo areas oldest women's invitational art organization. She curates exhibitions at the Canticle Center Gallery at Lourdes University and has more than 15 year's gallery experience working with the former Spectrum Gallery at Toledo Botanical Gardens and the Lourdes Gallery Loft.

# John Loscuito

## Juror's Statement

The Naples Art 53<sup>rd</sup> Founders Juried Awards Exhibition provided an incredible opportunity for me to review a wide range of contemporary art from national artists. The submissions were quite varied in their concepts, materials and techniques, and the quality of work across the range of mediums was a pleasure to see. As I viewed each piece over and over, and read the descriptions, I was reminded of how powerful artistic expression is in its ability to tackle the most difficult subjects, while also celebrating the simplest ones.

I often speak about an artwork's ability to engage the viewer and provoke further inquiry. What was wonderful about this jury process was that I was surprised by which works did that. On many occasions throughout the process an artwork would stand out for an inexplicable reason, requiring me to rethink my own assumptions and criteria as a juror. These moments of pause happened as often around the subjects being depicted as they did with the pure handling of materials. I was pleased to see that a variety of artists were engaging current events in the work and finding an urgency to communicate about social, political and environmental issues. There was also a wealth of artworks that offered an opportunity to look inward and reflect on our emotional and mental well-being. Other works employed humor and childlike joy, while others offered complex and sometimes dark narratives. It was a joy to be asked to navigate each of the twists and turns throughout the variety of artistic visions.

It was my hope to celebrate all of these varied aspects of human expression and offer forward those artists who excel in their craft. We are privileged to have so many artists offering their work to be held up against each other and for Naples Art to support this endeavor. Thank you to everyone who submitted your work to be juried and to the other jurors who took part in the process.

*John Loscuito*

## About John Loscuito

John Loscuito is the Florida Gulf Coast University Art Gallery Director, overseeing both the Wasmer Art Gallery in the Arts Complex and the ArtLab in the Library. He also teaches Professional Practices, preparing students for a career after graduation. Loscuito earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in Painting and Drawing from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a Master of Business Administration from Marquette University in Milwaukee. During his six years at Florida Gulf Coast University he has curated over eighteen exhibitions featuring nationally recognized artists that explore a broad range of themes and materials.

Prior to coming to Florida Gulf Coast University Loscuito taught a variety of studio courses at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. He was the Registrar at the Haggerty Museum of Art for seven years as well as an independent curator and producer of art events. He currently serves as an Executive Committee Member on the United Arts Council of Collier County's Board of Directors.

# R.W. Lovejoy

## Artist's Statement

Art is a visual statement that brings form to concepts and experiences and communicates at a level beyond the boundaries of text. In considering the submissions for this exhibition, I was as deeply impressed by the range of human creativity as I was by the diversity of subject matter explored by the artists. Realism and abstraction, formalism and human nature, art and ideas expressed through a variety of media from the traditional tools of the artist to the new technologies of the modern world. Many submissions referenced the history and processes of art, others explored the transitory movement and still others investigated new areas of visual form. Each artwork offered an opportunity to see the subject from a new perspective.

I wish to thank Jack O'Brien for selecting me to act as juror for the 53rd Founders Juried Awards Exhibition. In reviewing the nearly 1,000 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional submissions for this exhibition, I looked for visually compelling and challenging artworks that combined unique expression, technical skill, and realization of concept. As this exhibition demonstrates, these characteristics are in abundance and flourishing.

*Dr. R.W. Lovejoy*

## About R.W. Lovejoy

R.W. Lovejoy is a professor at American University where he teaches courses on graphic design history. He has an Master of Arts degree in art history from the University of South Florida and a Doctorate in History from the University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom. He is a founding member of the History of Illustration project and a contributing author to the first textbook on the *History of Illustration* (2018) for which he wrote chapters on European eighteenth- and nineteenth-century print culture, the prints of José Guadalupe Posada, pulp magazine illustration, the art of alternative periodicals and newspapers, rock posters and underground comix. Dr. Lovejoy has also taught the history of illustration, sequential art, and the history of political art and persuasive imagery for Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota.

