

# COAST GUARD COMPASS

OFFICIAL BLOG OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD

## Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Karen Loew, Coast Guard artist

Posted by PA2 Diana Honings, Friday, July 21, 2017

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Karen Loew, a Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) artist and Salmagundi Club COGAP committee chair, poses next to her painting, “Migrants at Sea” at the Inaugural Exhibition Acceptance Ceremony for COGAP Collection 2017, at the club in New York, July 20, 2017. Loew painted the scene of a migrant rescue performed by the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Kathleen Moore in 2015. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Ashley J. Johnson.

A Coast Guard crew member tightly grips his right hand on the small rescue boat and extends his left hand towards two migrants aboard a makeshift sailboat. The Coast Guardsman’s face isn’t visible but his determination is stretched across his wingspan, and frozen in time.

Karen Loew's "Migrants at Sea" was one of 33 artworks accepted into the 2017 Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) collection. The collection went on display July 16 at New York's Salmagundi Club and will remain on display through July 28. COGAP uses fine art to showcase the Coast Guard's missions to a vast audience.

Loew said she chose to depict the migrant interdiction operation because she has always been drawn to the Coast Guard's humanitarian missions. She hopes her painting embodies the commitment of the men and women in the Coast Guard.

"It's the human touch," said Loew.

In addition to being a Coast Guard artist, Loew is chair of the Salmagundi Club COGAP committee. The club has sponsored the art program since the program's implementation in 1981.



Karen Loew, a Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) artist and Salmagundi Club COGAP committee chair, speaks at the Inaugural Exhibition Acceptance Ceremony for COGAP Collection 2017, at the club in New York, July 20, 2017. COGAP draws in artists from around the country to showcase the Coast Guard's missions through fine art. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Ashley J. Johnson.

The COGAP full collection now comprises of more than 2,000 works of art – all donated by the artists to the Coast Guard. This year's collection explored a myriad of Coast Guard missions including buoy tending operations, a rescue swimmer's last flight, ice rescue training, damage control operations and migrant interdiction operations.

"Fine art can sometimes glamorize a moment," said Loew. "But, you really have to look at the jobs. When Coast Guard men and women are doing their jobs, it's dangerous. That needs to be recognized."

Loew calls her work "patriotic volunteerism." She says she doesn't mind that her Coast Guard artworks don't have price tags; she's delighted just knowing her work is telling the Coast Guard story.

"I want to open the eyes of the public," said Loew. "I want to show how important and valuable the Coast Guard is."

She said she's been called the Coast Guard's #1 fan, and it's easy to see why. When she speaks about her COGAP work, her smile is contagious. (Click [here](#) to see more of Loew's COGAP artwork)

"I'm so lucky," said Loew. "Of all the art clubs to join, I pick the one with the Coast Guard Art Program."

You can learn more about the [Coast Guard Art Program](#) here.

Loew says as chair of the committee she's always trying to recruit new high quality artists, and she's committed to the task. Click here if you would like to [volunteer your time and talents](#) to the Coast Guard Art Program.

After July 28, the 2017 collection will move to the rotunda at Federal Hall National Memorial in lower Manhattan and be on display July 31- September 5.



Robert Pillsbury, president of the Salmagundi Club, stands beside Karen Loew, a Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) artist and Salmagundi Club COGAP committee chair, as she receives a Public Service Commendation from Vice Commandant Adm. Charles D. Michel during the Inaugural Exhibition Acceptance Ceremony for COGAP Collection 2017, at the club in New York, July 20, 2017. COGAP draws in artists from around the country to showcase the Coast Guard's missions through fine