



Easel

Supporting and Informing Coast Guard Artists

Summer 2017

COAST GUARD ACCEPTS 2017 ART COLLECTION

Thirty-three works by 29 artists were accepted into the Coast Guard Art Program's (COGAP) permanent collection during the annual acceptance ceremony and opening reception July 20th at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. Admiral Charles Michel, vice commandant of the Coast Guard, accepted the new works on behalf of the service. Capt. Michael Day, commanding officer of Sector New York, served as the evening's master of ceremonies.

Ken Smith, an associate professor of graphic design at Radford University near Roanoke, Va., was the recipient of the George Gray Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement. His painting, "Lifeline," shows two female service members coiling rope in preparation for a rescue at sea.

The 2017 collection vividly portrays the service in action: from rigorous training exercises and daring search and rescue cases to drug and migrant interdictions in the Western Hemisphere and buoy tending around the country.

On behalf of the Coast Guard, Admiral Michel said, "I am truly honored to accept these artworks into the collection." He noted, that the 2017 collection highlighted the heroism of service members as they executed their daily missions. He also extolled the contributions of Coast Guard artists, observing that they were all volunteers who gave of their time,



COGAP artists attending the July 20 opening reception at the Salmagundi Club in New York were presented Public Service Commendation Awards. Front row from left are COGAP artists Anne Kullaf, Susanne Corbelletta, Chuck Van Horn and Karen Loew, U.S. Coast Guard Vice Commandant Admiral Charles Michel and Salmagundi Club President Robert Pillsbury. Back row from left are COGAP artists Crissie Murphy, James Consor, Charles Gilbert Kapsner, Paul Smith, John Ward, Tom Hedderich, Ken Smith and MK2 Jasen Newman.

talent and vision. They are passionate he said "because they believe in this country and they believe in the Coast Guard." Through their contributions, he pointed out, COGAP artists "become part of the Coast Guard family."

The admiral was joined in thanks by Master of Ceremonies Capt. Michael Day. "We honor the 29 artists' whose works so stunningly depict our myriad missions," said Capt. Day.

Karen Loew, Salmagundi Club

Art program committee chair and COGAP artist said that while it was easy to admire the beauty of the art, the work itself "is really about a dangerous job." In speaking of art showing a rescue swimmer, she noted: "This is not about an extreme sport but about life saving." She pointed as well to art on buoy tending, work she characterized as among "one of the most dangerous" in the nation. Artists, she said, use art not to "glamorize" but to "immortalize"

(Continued page two., col. one)



Ken Smith's oil painting "Lifeline" won the 2017 George Gray Award. The artist is an associate professor of graphic design at Radford University, near Roanoke, Va.

(continued from page one)
service members and their missions.

In his remarks, President of the New York Council of the Navy League Col. Charles Blaich exhorted viewers to remember that the art depicted "ordinary people doing extraordinary things." The council hosted the reception, an act it has repeatedly performed over the years.

Among other Council members attending were its former president, retired Rear Adm. Bob Lunney and Jessica Hitchen, executive secretary.

Contributors to this year's collection are Daven Anderson, St. Louis, Mo.; Juliette Aristides, Seattle, Wash.; Bob Blevins, Elizabethton, Tenn.; Dennis Boom,

Hillsboro, Ore.; James Consor, New York, N.Y.; Susanne Corbelletta, Glen Head, N.Y.; Louis Stephen Gadal, Los Angeles, Calif.; Frank Gaffney, Mountlake Terrace, Wash.; Tom Hedderich, Westtown, N.Y.; Kristin Hosbein, St. Joseph, Mich.; Charles Gilbert Kapsner, Little Falls, Minn.; Dick Kramer, Leesburg, Va.; Anne Kullaf, Lebanon, N.J.; Karen Loew, New York, N.Y.; Steve Lush, N. Andover, Mass.; Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Sequim, Wash.; Crissie Murphy, Lowell, Mass.; MK2 Jasen Newman, Port Angeles, Wash.; Hugh O'Connor, Grosse Pointe, Mich.; Mara Sfara, Farmington, Conn.; Dino Sistilli, Woodbury, N.J.; Ken Smith, Pulaski, Va., Paul

Smith, Philadelphia, Penn.; Jim Stagner, Johnson City, Tenn.; Jeanne Tubman, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.; Leendert van der Pool, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Chuck Van Horn, Glen Head, N.Y.; John Ward, Saranac Lake, N.Y.; and Ron Weil, Tualatin, Ore.

The 2017 collection is now on view at Federal Hall National Memorial through Sept. 7, 2017. The memorial is located just across from the New York Stock Exchange and draws a very large audience. It is on the site where Alexander Hamilton had an office when he was Secretary of the Treasury. The Revenue Cutter Service, created under his leadership, is considered the forerunner of today's Coast Guard.

Coast Guard Auxiliarist Chaplain Donna Cole's Blessings

Invocation

O God of creation, we invoke now your blessing on the artists and Coast Guard members we honor this day and who by their gifts call forth wonder and awe in the selfless acts of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Through their labors they enable all to see more clearly the courage, efforts and sacrifices of our Coast Guard family.

By their vision and dedicated service they remind us that life is holy and that sacred is the duty of those who keep the watch.

May we, gathered here, celebrate their accomplishments and take pride in their achievement.

We ask all of this through the God who leads us from the storms of darkness into the dawn of calm seas.

Benediction

Eternal God, as we end this day we thank you for your presence with us this evening.

In that gratitude, we ask now for your blessing on those who create art that their inspiration may be a reflection of all that is right and true.

Bless always those who keep the watch this and every day with courage, integrity and the will to be Semper Paratus, Always Ready, to respond to every new challenge.

And may the Lord God bless us all, grant us grace and lead us into peace.

The *Easel* is edited and produced by the Community Relations Branch of the Office of External Outreach and Heritage (CG-09232), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., S.E., STOP 7103, Washington, D.C. 20593-7103, (202) 372-4643.

Community Relations Branch

Joshua Buck, Chief

Mary Ann Bader, COGAP Coordinator

Photos courtesy of Paul Backalenick, New York City
Philippe Debeusscher, Arlington, Va.
PA2 Ashley Johnson, U.S. Coast Guard District 7, Air Station Clearwater, Fla.

Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Ken Smith Wins 2017 George Gray Award

Written by Petty Officer 2nd Class Diana Honings

Two women in operational dress uniforms and life vests stand on the bow of a Coast Guard response vessel, holding lengths of yellow rope attached to a bright orange ball. Their faces are steely-eyed in determination – they know the line they handle is a lifeline for someone in distress; a connection, a hope for survival.

It is this image Coast Guard painter Ken Smith captured that earned him the 2017 George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. His “*Lifeline*” painting was inspired by his time spent with crew members from Coast Guard Station Emerald Isle in Beaufort, North Carolina, last summer.

“The young women in the painting demonstrated, for me, the coiling and tossing of the yellow lifelines from the deck of their boat,” said Smith. “I was impressed with their obvious focus and dedication to a task that is at once somewhat mundane but also very important. I was also impressed with their youth, and the fact that the Coast Guard, like all the services, expects ordinary people to learn to do extraordinary things.”

Smith, a graphic design professor at Radford University, isn’t new to the Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP); this is his fourth time winning the coveted award.

“It’s a huge honor to win the George Gray Award, and the fact that I’ve won four times is still astounding to me,” said Smith. “I’ve always been interested in the military and



Adm. Charles Michel, Coast Guard vice commandant, (left) and Robert Pillsbury, Salmagundi Club president (right) present the George Gray Award to its winner Ken Smith (center) July 20, at the Salmagundi Club in New York City.

military imagery, both modern and historical.”

Smith now has five pieces in the Coast Guard Art Collection.

“I really appreciate that the Coast Guard cares about art and understands the impact that an image, a painting, can have on both service members and the public at large, especially in this world of everything governmental being stripped to the barest bones possible,” said Smith.

Smith also said he was encouraged that art and culture is supported by Coast Guard leadership.

Adm. Charles Michel, vice commandant of the Coast Guard, attended the COGAP 2017 Reception and Acceptance Ceremony at the Salmagundi Club in New York City and served as one of three jurors for the award. Other jurors included Salmagundi Club president Robert Pillsbury and watercolor artist Frederick Brosen who is also a teacher at The Art Students League of New York.



Ken Smith takes photos for his painting inspirations at Coast Guard Station Elizabeth Isle in Beaufort, N.C.

Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Karen Loew, Coast Guard Artist

Written by PA2 Ashley Johnson

A Coast Guard crew member tightly grips his left hand on the small rescue boat and extends his right hand towards two migrants aboard a make-shift 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.

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



In addition to being a Coast Guard artist, Karen Loew is chair of the Salmagundi Club COGAP committee. The club has sponsored the art program since the program's implementation in 1981. Here she is shown with her 2017 painting "Migrants at sea," based on a photo by PA2 Johnson.



Karen Loew 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.

The July 20th Acceptance Ceremony and Reception in Pictures

The Salmagundi Club's upper gallery is filled to capacity during the acceptance ceremony the evening of July 20. The club is located on Fifth Avenue in New York City in a century-old town house.



Guests mingle during the 2017 inaugural opening and acceptance ceremony held at the Salmagundi Club in New York City.

Life imitates art as two members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Band (Flotilla 22-7, First Southern District) perform during the reception near Chris Demarest's painting, "The Music Lesson" (painting second from right). Musician Jeffrey Kazzaz (right) is on clarinet and Musician Frances Piazza (left) is on flute.



Distinguished guests welcome remarks during the July 20th ceremony at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. From right to left first row are Mrs. Kristina Day, wife of Sector New York Commander Capt. Michael Day, Coast Guard Auxiliary Chaplain Donna Cole, Chief of Coast Guard External Outreach and Heritage Capt. Sean Carroll and Vice Commandant Adm.



Master of ceremonies
Capt. Michael Day welcomes guests.



Chaplain Donna Cole delivers the
invocation.



New York Council President
Col. Charles Blaich gives remarks.



Karen Loew, Salmagundi Club
COGAP committee chair and COGAP
artist talks about the contributions of
service members.



Salmagundi Club President Robert
Pillsbury offers the 2017 collection to
the Coast Guard.



Vice Commandant Adm. Charles
Michel accepts the works in the 2017
collection on behalf of the Coast
Guard.

Artists receiving Public Service Commendation Awards July 20th

Admiral Charles Michel, vice commandant of the Coast Guard, presented COGAP artists attending the opening with a Public Service Commendation Award. Salmagundi Club President Robert Pillsbury joined him in the presentation. The award is given in recognition of personal and beneficial contributions to the Coast Guard's responsibilities. It can be signed only by a Flag officer and the civilian equivalent. Twelve of the 29 artists contributing to the 2017 collection were present at the opening and a family member accepted the award on behalf of an artist not present. Public service awards for artists not attending were sent to Daven Anderson, Juliette Aristides, Bob Blevins, Dennis Boom, Louis Stephen Gadai, Frank Gaffney, Kristin Hosbein, Steve Lush, Hugh O'Connor, Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Mara Sfara, Jim Stagner, Dino Sistilli, Jeanne Tubman, Leendert van der Pool and Ron Weil.



COGAP Artist James Consor receives his award for his paintings *"Ready to replace"* and *"Releasing the crane."*

COGAP Artist Susanne Corbelletta receives her award for her painting *"No step."*





COGAP artist Tom Hedderich receives his award for his painting "*Focused to rescue.*"

COGAP artist Charles Gilbert Kapsner receives his award for his painting "*Friday afternoon.*"





Representing her father, Suzanne Torsiello accepts the award on behalf of Dick Kramer who was unable to attend the opening. Mr. Kramer contributed two drawings: “*Fire drill on the Eagle*” and “*Smoke eater*.”

COGAP artist Anne Kullaf receives her award for her painting “*Delivery at sea*.”





COGAP artist and Salmagundi Club art program committee chair Karen Loew receives her award for her painting "*Migrants at sea.*"



COGAP artist Crissie Murphy receives her award for her painting "*Looking to the future.*"



COGAP artist and Coast Guard service member MK2 Jasen Newman receives his award for his painting “Arctic drop.”

COGAP artist and winner of the 2017 George Gray Award Ken Smith receives his public service award for his painting “Lifeline.”





COGAP artist Paul Smith receives his award for his painting “*On patrol.*”



COGAP artist Chuck Van Horn receives his award for his painting “*In good hands.*”



COGAP artist John Ward receives his award for his painting “*Last flight.*”

While works by Louis Stephen Gadala (left) and YN1 Jared Dunn (right) stand guard, the covers of Coast Guard officers and enlisted and auxiliary members wait for reunion with their owners at the evening’s end .

