



# Easel

Supporting and Informing Coast Guard Artists

Summer 2021

## COAST GUARD ACCEPTS 2021 ART COLLECTION



Coast Guard Art Program artists, Coast Guard and Salmagundi Club officials gather for a photo at the 2021 COGAP reception and art acceptance ceremony, July 1, at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. They are (left to right) Leon Wescoat III, Crissie Murphy, Coast Guard Rear Adm. M.W. Joe Raymond, Debra Keirce, Don Sturdivant, Amy DiGi, Tom Hedderich, Susanne Corbelletta, Ken Stetz, Karen Loew, Kirk Larsen, Leendert van der Pool, Salmagundi Club President Jacob Collins, and Coast Guard Capt. Zeita Merchant.

Thirty-two works by 26 artists were accepted into the Coast Guard Art Program's (COGAP) permanent collection during the annual acceptance ceremony and opening reception July 1 at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. Rear Admiral M.W. Joe Raymond, Coast Guard acting director of governmental and public affairs, accepted the new works on behalf of the service. Capt. Zeita Merchant, commanding officer of Coast Guard Sector New York, served as the evening's master of ceremonies.

The exhibition of Coast Guard art at the Salmagundi Club marks the first such exhibition to take place since early 2020 when the COVID virus pandemic struck the nation.

Frank Gaffney of the Seattle, Wash. suburb of Mountlake Terrace, was the recipient of the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. His oil painting "*Fast rope insertion: demonstrated*" shows a Coast Guard service member executing a fast rope insertion from a rope suspended from a heli-

copter down to the deck of the Cutter Steadfast. This best in show work provides a breathtaking perspective of the insertion along with masterful attention to detail and the expressive use of oil paint. The painting reflects Gaffney's long career as an artist and as a recipient of numerous awards.

The 2021 collection vividly portrays the myriad missions of the Coast Guard. Among these are the service's response to the devastation of hurricanes and severe flooding, (Continued page two., col. one)



Frank Gaffney of Mountlake Terrace, Wash., a suburb of Seattle, won the 2021 George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. His best in show oil painting *"Fast rope insertion: demonstrated"* depicts a Coast Guard service member executing a fast rope insertion from a rope suspended from a helicopter down to the deck of the Cutter Steadfast.

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heroic life-saving rescues, illegal drug interdictions, daunting patrols and the rigors of training demanded of service members. The art was on display at the Salmagundi Club from June 27 through July 9, 2021.

Rear Admiral Raymond accepted the new works on behalf of the Coast Guard and expressed his profound thanks to artists and the program's many supporters including the Navy League, the Salmagundi Club and the Coast Guard itself. He noted that 2021 marked the 40th anniversary of COGAP. "Since the program's inception," he said, "artists have volunteered their time and talent to capture the vital contributions the U.S. Coast Guard makes to our nation in their stunning artworks."

He also paid homage to the invaluable contributions of deceased COGAP artist Terrence Maley who died last year. Maley's daughter Annemarie Maley Crowe and son Brian Maley and grandsons Dylan and Colin Crowe were in attendance. Several works by the revered artist were on view.

The admiral was joined in praise of COGAP and its artists by Salmagundi Club President Jacob Collins and emcee Capt. Zeita Merchant. The captain noted that Coast Guard art was on display at Sector New York and often exhibited for special events.

President of the New York Council of the Navy League Capt. Frank Russo, U.S. Navy (ret.) added his thanks to COGAP's talented corps of artists and underscored Navy League support of the program and the Coast Guard. The council hosted this year's reception, an event it has generously sponsored over the years.

Karen Loew, Salmagundi Club COGAP committee chair and member artist, said that when missions and training were at the hardest, "the Coast Guard was at its best." Likewise, she said, "this impressive art shows

the Coast Guard artists at their best." She noted that because of COVID, "the idea of a 2021 collection exhibition seemed like Mission Impossible. But here we are tonight with Mission Accomplished."

Contributors to this year's collection are C. R. "Bob" Bryant, Cape Neddick, Maine; Susanne Corbelletta, Glen Head, N.Y.; Amy DiGi, Yorktown Heights, N.Y.; James Dyekman, Chesapeake City, Md.; Louis Stephen Gadal, Los Angeles, Calif.; Frank Gaffney, Mountlake Terrace, Wash.; Sandra Hart, Arlington Heights, Ill.; Don Hatcher, Newport, Wash., Tom Hedderich, Westtown, N.Y.; Kristin Hosbein, St. Joseph, Mich.; Debra Keirce, Broadlands, Va.; Anne Kullaf, Boulder, Colo.; Kirk Larsen, Hicksville, N.Y.; Karen Loew, New York, N.Y.; Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Post Falls, Idaho; Crissie Murphy, Marlborough, Mass.; Oscar Romero, Sacramento, Calif.; J.C. "Jim" Smith, McMinnville, Ore.; Ken Stetz, Neptune, N.J.; Don Sturdivant, Mount Pleasant, S.C.; MST3 Thomas Unger, New Bern, N.C.; Leendert van der Pool, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Chuck Van Horn, Glen Head, N.Y.; Emily Waldman, Pittsford, N.Y.; John Ward, Saranac Lake, N.Y.; and Leon Wescoat III, Absecon, N.J.

The 2021 collection will be on display during the month of September at the Union League Club on 37<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue. This organization boasts an illustrious history and was addressed in 2012 by then U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Robert Papp. Visits to the exhibition will be given on Thursday from 1 to 5 pm and will accommodate up to 10 people. For more information on viewing please contact Jules Vachon, at [gjvachon@gmail.com](mailto:gjvachon@gmail.com).

COGAP artists' works from previous collections were also on view at the Salmagundi Club. The artists were Frank Walsh, Santa Clara, Calif.; Chris Demarest, Bainbridge Island, Wash.; Dino Sistilli, Woodbury, N.J.; James Consor, New York, N.Y.; Jim Stagner, Johnson City, Tenn.; Del-Bouree Bach, Mystic, Conn.; MK1 Jasen Newman, Kodiak, Alaska; Dennis Boom, Hillsboro, Ore.; and John Deckert, Santa Rosa, Calif.; and with residences as noted above, C.R. "Bob" Bryant, Amy DiGi, Frank Gaffney, Louis Stephen Gadal, Tom Hedderich, Karen Loew, Leendert van der Pool, Susanne Corbelletta, Kristin Hosbein, Chuck Van Horn and John Ward.

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**Photos courtesy of:**  
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## Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Frank Gaffney Wins 2021 George Gray Award for “Fast rope insertion: demonstrated”

It comes as no surprise that Frank Gaffney has been an artist nearly all his life. He grew up in Northern Idaho where he went to school and nurtured his lifelong love of art with study and practice. After graduating from high school he moved to Seattle, Washington and enrolled in courses in advertising and design at the Cornish School of Allied Arts. It was shortly after graduating from Cornish that the artist had his first solo exhibition.

He also attended the University of Washington in Seattle where he studied portraiture, sculpture and graphic design. He further developed his talent in portraiture through courses at the Scottsdale Artist’s School in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Gaffney began his career in the graphic arts field as a corporate designer and illustrator. During this period, he also painted numerous portraits and other fine art commissions and operated a gallery and studio part time with a fellow artist.

The artist is signature member and past president of the Puget Sound Group of Northwest Painters, a signature member of the American Society of Marine Artists and a member of the Oil Painters of America. His work has been juried into shows and galleries nationally. He is the recipient of numerous awards.

Since 2009, the artist has been a COGAP member. The program sought him for his outstanding skills and to send on deployment. That year, he was sent to Alaska to view the service assisting local communities. He created two works of the mission Operation Arctic Crossroads and both were accepted. In 2012 he again was asked to deploy, this time to the Cutter Kukui in Hawaii. Two works resulted from this deployment and became part of the permanent collection: “Prepping the Number Two” in 2012 and “Set the Buoy” in 2017 collection. Since becoming a



Artist Frank Gaffney appears at a marina in England with paint brush and portable easel at hand. The winner of this year’s George Gray Award, Gaffney has been inspired by art since childhood. He paints full time and his work is widely collected and exhibited.

member, Gaffney has contributed every year without fail to the collection. Today his contributions total 13.

The jury this year for the George Gray Award--COGAP’s highest honor—was Rear Adm. M.W. Joe Raymond, Coast Guard Governmental and Public Affairs Acting Director; Nick Dawes, Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board and CEO; and Alasdair Nichol, Chairman and Director of Fine Art for Freeman’s Auction House.

In learning that he had been selected for the award the artist said: “The Coast Guard art program holds a collection of phenomenal works, and each year, the quality of art is heightened. It is an honor to be a recipient of the 2021 George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence.”

## The July 1st Acceptance Ceremony and Reception in Pictures



The jurors faced a formidable task in deciding which work from the 2021 collection would win the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. Shown here conferring are jurors (left to right) Rear Adm. M.W. Joe Raymond, Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board and CEO Nick Dawes and Alasdair Nichol, Chairman and Director of Fine Art for Freeman's Auction House. On the wall to the left of the jurors are works by and in remembrance of deceased COGAP artist Terrence Maley.

Members of the Coast Guard Color Guard arrive for the opening of the 2021 ceremony. They wore masks as a precaution imposed by concerns about the COVID virus.



Coast Guard Rear Admiral M.W. Joe Raymond (right) holds the George Gray Award plaque in front of COGAP artist Frank Gaffney's 2021 winning work, "Fast rope insertion: demonstrated." Salmagundi Club President Jacob Collins is on the left.



Guests listen to welcoming remarks during the July 1 ceremony at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. The well attended reception and exhibition drew a capacity crowd. It was the first held event and display held at the club since early last year when the COVID virus pandemic struck the nation.

**Speakers at COGAP's opening reception**



Master of ceremonies  
Capt. Zeita Merchant welcomes  
guests.



Chaplain Keith Connor delivers the  
invocation.



New York Council  
of the Navy League President  
Capt. Frank Russo  
offers remarks.



Karen Loew, Salmagundi Club  
COGAP committee chair and artist  
addresses guests



Salmagundi Club President Jacob  
Collins offers the 2021 collection  
to the Coast Guard.

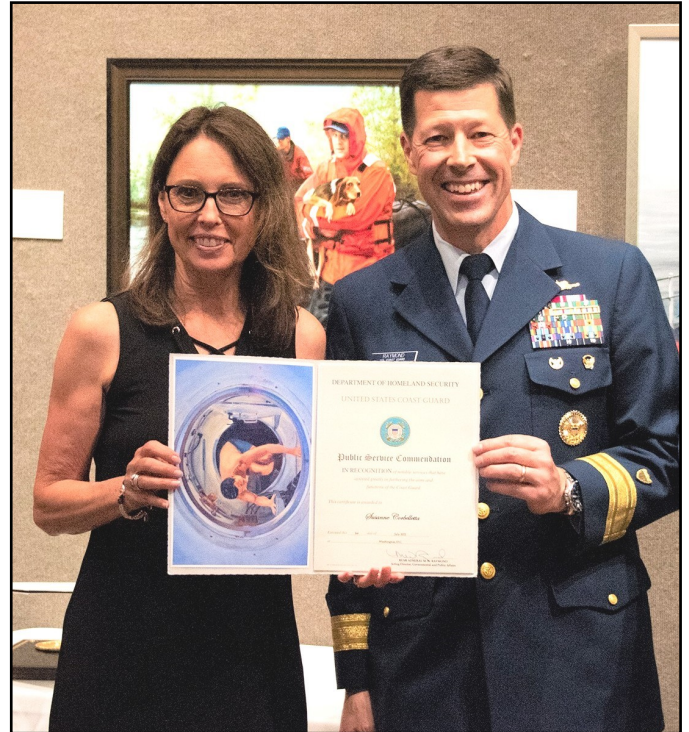


Rear Admiral M.W. Joe Raymond  
accepts the 2021 collection on  
behalf of the Coast Guard.

## Artists receive the Public Service Commendation Award July 1

Rear Adm. M.W. Joe Raymond, acting director of Coast Guard governmental and public affairs, presented COGAP artists attending the opening with a Public Service Commendation Award. 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 or the civilian equivalent. Eleven of the 26 artists contributing to the 2021 collection were present at the opening. Public service awards for artists not attending were sent to C.R. "Bob" Bryant, James Dyekman, Louis Steven Gadal, Frank Gaffney, Sandra Hart, Don Hatcher, Kristin Hosbein, Anne Kullaf, Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Oscar Romero, MST3 Thomas Unger, J.C. "Jim" Smith, Chuck Van Horn, Emily Waldman and John Ward.

COGAP artist Susanne Corbelletta receives her award for her oil painting "Decompressed."



COGAP artist Amy DiGi receives her award for her oil painting "Sling load operations."



COGAP artist and Salmagundi COGAP Committee Membership Chair Tom Hedderich receives his award for his watercolor painting “*Safe in his arms.*”



COGAP artist Debra Keirce receives her award for her oil paintings “*Friends,*” “*Hoisted,*” and “*Semper Paratus.*”



COGAP artist Kirk Larsen receives his award for his acrylic painting "Clearing the way."

COGAP artist and Salmagundi Club COGAP Committee Chair Karen Loew receives her award for her oil painting "Heaving the towline for a rescue."







COGAP artist Crissie Murphy receives her award for her acrylic painting "Greeting at sea."



COGAP artist Ken Stetz receives his award for his oil-painting "Keeping a watchful eye."



COGAP artist Don Sturdivant receives his award for his oil painting “Cutter Valiant conducts flight operations.”

COGAP artist Leendert van der Pool receives his award for his oil painting “The search for hurricane victims.”





COGAP artist Leon Wescoat III receives his award for his oil painting “Evening patrol.”

*The 2021 art installation at the Salmagundi Club owed its elegance to the tireless efforts of many members of the Club’s COGAP Committee. Pictured here (from left) are committee members Tom Hedderich, Gloria Sampson-Knight, Steve Margolis, Annie Patt, Dale Irwin and Karen Loew. Coast Guard Sector New York Commanding Officer Capt. Zeita Merchant holds a book presented to her by the COGAP Committee.*

