



Supporting and Informing Coast Guard Artists

Summer 2022

COAST GUARD ACCEPTS 2022 ART COLLECTION



Coast Guard and Salmagundi Club officials and Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) artists gather for a photo at the 2022 COGAP art acceptance ceremony on July 7 at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. They are (left to right) Coast Guard Rear Adm. John Mauger, COGAP artists Debra Keirce, Daven Anderson, Kirk Larsen, Karen Loew, Coast Guard Capt. Zeita Merchant, and Rear Adm. Megan Dean, COGAP artists Ken Stetz, Susanne Corbelletta, Kathleen Denis, Amy DiGi, Elizabeth Whelan, Stephen Roberson and George Cavallo and Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board Nick Dawes.

Thirty-eight works by 27 artists were accepted into the Coast Guard Art Program's (COGAP) permanent collection during the annual acceptance ceremony July 7 at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. Rear Adm. Megan Dean, Coast Guard 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.

Debra Keirce of Broadlands,

Va., was the recipient of the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. Her oil painting "*Debris cleanup in Hawaii*" shows a Coast Guard service member removing fishnets and debris that cause damage to the ecosystem and marine life and pose safety hazards to ships.

.....This best-in-show work, an exceptional piece among the many outstanding works in the 2022 collection, also heralds the Service's underreported work in remediating damage to marine life. As well it

reflects Keirce's devotion to 17th century art and classical realism.

The 2022 collection vividly portrays the myriad missions of the Coast Guard. Among these are the many training exercises that make the Coast Guard *Semper Paratus*—always ready, illegal drug interdiction, environmental and marine life protection, aids to navigation, working dogs of the Service and daring search and rescue missions including ones of stranded canines.

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The art was on display at the Salmagundi Club from July 5 through July 15, 2022.

Rear Adm. Megan Dean accepted the new works on behalf of the Coast Guard and expressed her profound thanks to COGAP artists and the program's many supporters including the Navy League, the Salmagundi Club and the Coast Guard itself. She noted that 2022 marked the 41th anniversary of COGAP. "Since the program's inception," she said, "artists in their stunning works of art have volunteered their time and talent to capture the vital contributions the U.S. Coast Guard makes to our nation."

She also paid homage to the invaluable contributions of deceased COGAP artists John Deckert, Dr. Myron (Mike) Mazer and Sharon Way-Howard who passed away earlier. Deckert's son and Way-Howard's husband and son were in attendance. Several works by these revered artists were on view. Rear Adm. Dean also noted the passing of Chris Nunnally, Salmagundi Club's director of operations and retired Rear Adm. Robert Lunney, a leader of the New York Council of the Navy League. Both were esteemed supporters of the Coast Guard and COGAP.

The admiral was joined in praise of COGAP and its artists by Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board Nick Dawes 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, advised those attending to take a close look at the art. She pointed out that it "embraces the essence of the Coast Guard which is that of service to our country and those who live here."

Contributors to this year's collection are Daven Anderson, St. Louis, Mo.; C. R. "Bob" Bryant, Cape Neddick, Maine; George Cavallo, Renton, Wash.; Susanne Corbelletta, Glen Head, N.Y.; Kathleen Denis, Palm Beach Shores, Fla.; Amy DiGi, Yorktown Heights, N.Y.; Frank Gaffney, Mountlake Terrace, Wash.; Sandra Hart, Arlington Heights, Ill.; Don Hatcher, Newport, Wash.; Tom Hedderich, Westtown, N.Y.; Kristin Hosbein, St. Joseph, Mich.; Richard Johnson, formerly of Mt. Airy, Md., and now in Aberfoyle, Scotland; Daniel Coolbrith Jones, Arroyo Grande, Calif.; Debra Keirce, Broadlands, Va.; Kirk Larsen, Hicksville, N.Y.; Karen Loew, New York, N.Y.; Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Post Falls, Idaho; Jim Richards, Salem, Ore.; Stephen Roberson, Arlington, Va.; J. C. "Jim" Smith, McMinnville, Ore.; Ken Smith, Pulaski, Va.; Ken Stetz, Collegeville, Penn.; MST2 Thomas Unger, Key West, Fla.; Leendert van der Pool, Brooklyn, N.Y.; PO1 Jorge Vega, Juneau, Alaska; John Ward, Saranac Lake, N.Y.; and Elizabeth Whelan, Edgartown, Mass.

COGAP artists' works from previous collections were also on view at the Salmagundi Club. The artists were Del Bourree Bach, Mystic, Conn.; James Consor, New York, N.Y.; James Dyekman, Chesapeake, Md.; Louis Stephen Gadal, Los Angeles, Calif.; PA2 Cory Mendenhall, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Dino Sistilli, Woodbury, N.J.; and Chuck Van Horn, Glen Head, N.Y.; and with residences as noted above, Daven Anderson, C.R. "Bob" Bryant, Susanne Corbelletta, Amy DiGi, Tom Hedderich, Debra Keirce, Kirk Larsen, Karen Loew, Ken Smith, Leendert van der Pool, and John Ward.

The 2022 collection will be on display at Federal Hall National Memorial from July 19 through September 12, 2022 and then from mid-September through October at the Union League Club. Both venues are in Manhattan..

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Photos courtesy of:
PA2 John Hightower, Coast Guard Padet NY
Philippe Debeusscher, Arlington, Va.

Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Debra Keirce Wins 2022 George Gray Award for “*Debris cleanup in Hawaii*”

Debra Keirce had two passions: science and art. The Detroit born artist, winner of this year’s George Gray Award, received her bachelor’s degree in biochemical engineering from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. But while working as a scientist in New England in the 1980s, she also was painting fine art. In 2010, she turned her passion for the visual arts into a full time career.

Today, she paints from her Northern Virginia studio. Her work involves three themes: traditional renditions of still life, landscape and portraiture; vintage and surreal work embracing aging, broken people and oddities; and vistas of America in its land and people.

Upon learning that she had received the George Gray Award, the artist noted she was honored to be chosen “because there are so many worthy pieces in this year’s collection.”

“My work really speaks to our concerns about the planet and environmental issues,” Keirce added. “The art depicts the dangerous and unsung work of the Coast Guard removing tons of debris from the reefs around the Hawaiian Islands.”

This year’s jury for the award — COGAP’s highest honor — was comprised of Coast Guard Rear Adm. Megan Dean, and artists Robert Pillsbury, a president emeritus of the Salmagundi Club; and Antonio Masi, president of the American Watercolor Society.

“This work tells the story of our efforts at conservation and helping mitigate climate change,” said Rear Adm. Dean. “Once hauled to shore, these nets are recycled into electricity. Protecting our reefs and the ocean is a vital mission for the Coast Guard, but many people are unaware of this important work and this



Artist Debra Keirce holds the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence which she was presented July 7, 2022 by Coast Guard Rear Adm. Megan Dean. Nick Dawes, Salmagundi Club Chairman, joins in recognizing the artist.

art will help better tell our story to all those who see it.”

Keirce’s work is held in private, museum and corporate collections across the globe, including the U.S., Japan, Belize, France, and England. She holds signature memberships in over a dozen major artistic societies. Largely self-taught, the artist is both an author and the subject of numerous publications.

Keirce has been a COGAP member since 2021. During that brief period, five works of her art have been accepted into the permanent collection.

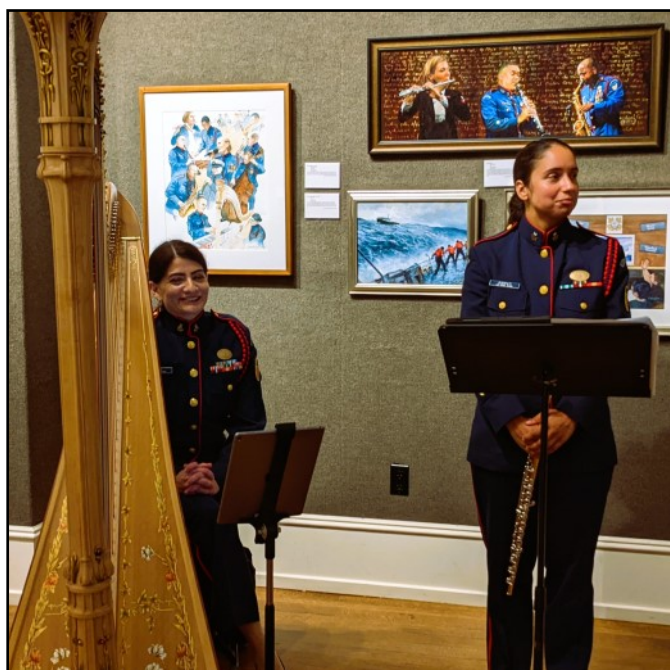
She plans to continue using her extraordinary talent to depict many other vital missions of the Service and some that may also be little known. “Through my work,” she said, “I hope to aid in enlightening the public on the many contributions of this great Service.”

The July 7th Acceptance Ceremony and Reception in Pictures



The jurors faced a formidable task in deciding which work from the 2022 collection would win the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. Shown here are jurors (left to right) Coast Guard Rear Adm. Megan Dean, Salmagundi Club President Emeritus and artist Robert Pillsbury, and President of the American Watercolor Society and also an artist, Antonio Masi.

Members of the Coast Guard Sector New York Color Guard arrive for the opening of the 2022 ceremony.



Coast Guard Band Musician Chief Megan Sesma on harp and Musician First Class Meera Gudipati on flute provided music at during the reception. The duo also performed the National Anthem during the Presentation of Colors. On the wall behind the musicians are two paintings of the Coast Guard Band by COGAP artists in a case of art imitating life!

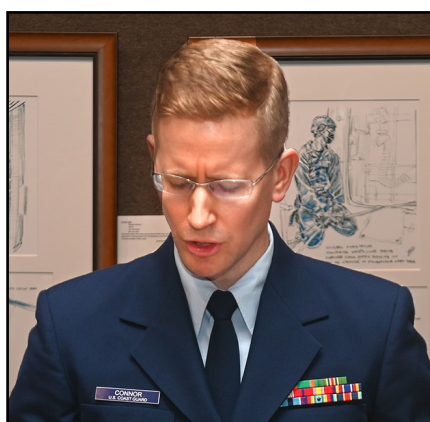


Guests listen to welcoming remarks by Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board Nick Dawes during the July 7th ceremony at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. The well attended ceremony and exhibition drew a capacity crowd.

Speakers at COGAP's acceptance ceremony



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 Chairman and CEO
Nick Dawes presents the 2022 collec-
tion to the Coast Guard.



Rear Admiral Megan Dean accepts
the 2022 collection on behalf of the
Coast Guard.

Artists receive the Public Service Commendation Award July 7th

Rear Adm. Megan Dean, director of Coast Guard governmental and public affairs, presented COGAP artists attending the ceremony 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. Nick Dawes, Salmagundi Club Chairman is shown at right. Eleven of the 27 artists contributing to the 2022 collection were present. Public service awards for artists not attending were sent to C.R. "Bob" Bryant, Frank Gaffney, Sandra Hart, Don Hatcher, Tom Hedderich, Kristin Hosbein, Richard Johnson, Daniel Coolbrith Jones, Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Jim Richards, J.C. "Jim" Smith, Ken Smith, MST2 Thomas Unger, Leendert van der Pool, PO1 Jorge Vega and John Ward.

COGAP artist Daven Anderson receives his award for his oil painting *"Ice training off the HEALY."*



COGAP artist George Cavallo receives his award for his oil painting *"Helicopter rescue hook."*



COGAP artist Susanne Corbelletta receives her award for her oil painting *"The observer."*



COGAP artist Kathleen Denis receives her award for her acrylic painting *"Wrapping it up."*



COGAP artist Amy DiGi receives her award for her two oil paintings, *"Safety hazards"* and *"Oil spill inspection."*

COGAP artist Debra Keirce receives her award for her two oil paintings, *"Debris cleanup in Hawaii"* and *"The Colors."*





COGAP artist Kirk Larsen receives his award for his oil painting *"Answering the coldest call."*

COGAP artist and Salmagundi Club COGAP Committee Chair Karen Loew receives her award for her oil painting *"Keeping watch."*





COGAP artist Stephen Roberson receives his award for his oil painting *"Compassion."*

COGAP artist Ken Stetz receives his award for his oil painting *"Vertical delivery with canine."*





COGAP artist Elizabeth Whelan receives her award for her oil painting “Suited up for a rescue.”

Chaplain Connor’s Invocation and Benediction Blessings

Invocation

Gracious God,

We ask for Your blessing on this 41st anniversary of the Coast Guard Art Program at the Salmagundi Club. We are grateful for all the Coast Guard Artists, Judges, and Members, that make this event possible. During our busy operational schedules, we pray that there is time for art, and especially for the self-reflection, peace, and happiness it brings.

...May our service members have the inspiration they need each day as they go about their duties to safeguard our ports and rescue those in need. May we see reflected in each painting, the Coast Guard Core values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty. May this evening’s COGAP artwork be a window revealing the incredible tasks our Coastguardsmen perform on a daily basis, as well as the skills of our artists in capturing them.

May we spend tonight seeing Your hand draw in the lives of all Coastguardsmen, providing the buoyancy they need, and giving them the qualities of grit, toughness, and grace under pressure, which often are so evident in the scenes depicted around us. In Your holy name we pray.

Benediction

Almighty God,

We ask for Your blessing as we close this year’s Coast Guard Art Program. We are grateful to

be here tonight in this atmosphere of creativity, and to appreciate all the artists and their works. We are grateful for the Coast Guard Art Program and may it continue to flourish in its 41st year. We pray that our family of Coast Guard Artists is blessed in their dedication to bringing to life the variety of scenes that comprise the daily duties of a Coast Guard service member.

We give thanks for the Salmagundi Club and all that it has done in supporting the various Coast Guard art programs and countless other art programs during its over 151-year history. May this beacon of creativity in New York City continue to let its light shine.

We also pray that the constant sacrifice of our military families is blessed and rewarded. May we appreciate in each artwork the many family members and friends that are not pictured, but are behind the scenes, supporting and cheering their loved one on. May all who are a part of our wider Coast Guard Family feel the blessing that comes from supporting a service whose purpose is to save lives, ensure maritime safety, and protect our home waters. May our service members be blessed in the work they do for their country and never forget the appreciation our country has for each one of them.

In Your holy name we give thanks,
Amen