



Guild Hall's Artists Members Exhibition Unveils Record Number of Sculpture

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by Pat Rogers

Excitement among artists who submitted work to Guild Hall's 79th annual Artists Members Exhibition is building as the news spreads that the show contains a record number of sculptures in this year's edition. Unprecedented for the open call exhibition, this is the heaviest representation of sculpture in the exhibition's history, according to Stephanie deTroy Miller, coordinator of the exhibition and Guild Hall's Museum Registrar, Curatorial Assistant and Education Associate.

There are around 40 sculpture submissions, making up 10 percent of the approximate 400 works in the show, said Miller. In a sense, the uptick in sculpture could be anticipated as the judge, [Ruba Katrib](#), is the curator for Sculpture Center in New York City. In prior years, there have been few judges with curatorial experience in sculpture, said Miller, and none that specialized in sculpture.

What is a surprise is many artists who are primarily known for painting or two-dimensional work submitted sculpture instead, said Miller.



"How to Rope a Snake" by Jeff Muhs, 2017. Concrete, 30 x 14 x 14 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

"Each year we bring in a new juror, someone not from the area," Miller told Hamptons Art Hub. "The juror history list is quite impressive—ranging from critics and historians like Arthur Danto (1997) to curators like Lisa Phillips from the New Museum (2000) and Marla Prather from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2015)."

"Previous jurors, such as Jodi Hauptman (2009), Curator in the Department of Drawings at the Museum of Modern Art, has curated sculptural exhibitions, but this year's juror, Ruba Katrib, would be the first juror who specifically comes from a background in curating sculpture," she continued. "The exhibition at Governor's Island that Kabrib curated in 2015 was so groundbreaking that we really wanted to bring her vision to Guild Hall as this year's juror."

Artists submitting sculpture include Peter Dayton, Dennis Leri, Jeff Muhs, [Toni Ross](#), Ruby Jackson, Aurelio Torres, Romany Kramoris and [Darius Yektai](#), according to Miller.



Artwork by Dennis Leri. Courtesy of the artist.



“Indi” by Romany Kramoris, 2017. Crystal Clear Hand-cast glass sculpture, 4.5 x 2.5 x 2.4 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

While primarily known as a painter, Yektai won Best Sculpture at the Artists Members Exhibition in 2008. He has won awards three times at the Artists Members Exhibition including Top Honors (2002) and Best Representational Work (2010). Later this year, his work will be part of a family-driven exhibition at Guild Hall featuring the art of Yektai, his father, Manoucher Yektai, and brother, [Nico Yektai](#).

Another change for this year involves the Opening Reception. Historically, the museum held a public reception, after the winners were announced, that was open to all. For 2017, Guild Hall is eliminating all its public exhibition receptions in favor of members only previews, Barbara Jo Howard, Guild Hall Director of Marketing & Communications, told Hamptons Art Hub.

The reception for the 2017 Artists Members show is for museum members only, their guests and invited press with reservations required. The show opens to the public on Sunday, April 9, 2017. It remains on view through June 3, 2017. Public programming will be held throughout the exhibition.

The change was made to provide additional value to members of Guild Hall, which is made up of a museum, a state-of-the-art theater, education center and outdoor sculpture gardens, said Howard. The switch was facilitated by Guild Hall’s ability to offer free admission to the public for all its museum exhibitions, said Howard. Since 2016, admission to the museum has been free due to corporate funding. This allowed the museum to waive the suggested \$7 admission fee for non-members.

“The members-only opening receptions are to provide a benefit to our membership,” she explained in an email. “Now that museum admission is free, private opening receptions are one way we can show appreciation for our members.”

Last year, [Guild Hall](#) held both members only and public receptions for its blockbuster summer shows. The 2017 annual Artists Members Exhibition is the first museum show with no public reception. The switch should also allow for a more pleasant experience for reception-goers who may find they no longer have to vie for space to see the show or to partake in refreshments, added Miller.

While the Artists Members Exhibition hosts some changes for this year, what hasn't changed is the awards given to Top Honors, best in different mediums plus special category awards. Winners will be announced on Saturday during the reception. The winner of Top Honors receives a solo show at Guild Hall.



“CONTINENTS WITHIN” by Will Ryan. 24 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

In this year's edition, there are 89 new artists among the 400 submissions, said Miller. The type of work on view and the artists submitting also remain cloaked until the reception on Saturday. The judge is expected to make her decision today.

Guild Hall's Artists Members Exhibition is the oldest non-juried museum exhibition held on Long Island. All art submitted is accepted into the exhibition with the caveat the artist must be a member of Guild Hall. Each year, the show is judged by an art professional working outside of The Hamptons. Judges have included critics, curators, museum directors and others.



“DRINK ME” by Ruby Jackson. Polymer clay, in acrylic case, 12 x 12 x 12 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

The first Artist Members Exhibition at Guild Hall was held in 1938 and included 55 works, some by the same artist, said Miller. According to the exhibition list, art was curated by medium, with watercolors grouped together, etc.

Artists participating in the first annual Artist Members exhibition include [Zella de Milhau](#), an engraver who first came to Southampton to study with William Merritt Chase at his Summer Art School in Shinnecock Hills, and East Hampton Village residents [John H. Jewett](#) and his wife [Maude Sherwood Jewett](#), the sculptor, among others, according to Miller.

BASIC FACTS: Guild Hall's 79th annual Artists Members Exhibition opens to the public on Sunday, April 9, 2017. It remains on view through June 3, 2017. Guild Hall is located at 158 Main Street, East Hampton, NY 11937. www.guildhall.org.

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