

## **2026 People Power Exhibition**

### **Judge: Jan Guarino, Award winning artist, teacher & author**

Jan Guarino's comments:

The show overall was wonderful to view ... I know what it feels like to enter your best work in the hope of winning and being recognized for your art. Know that just by participating and being in classes and continuing to explore your art - you are a winner! So please don't be disappointed by not having your art chosen, I was grateful to have so many awards to not feel too limited.

#### **First place – Aging**

This piece I found to be designed so well (not to mention painted so well) and kept my eye engaged. I found the facial features to be correct which matters when painting faces. There was strong shapes that I found balanced each other quite well. I also love the use of Turquoise and burgundy/orange - nice complimentary colors and deckled edges of the paper in the framing was lovely to see.

#### **Second place - Connected**

The contrast in this painting is striking! How simple flat plains of paint depict the scarf, her face, fingers, breasts... A riveting piece, bold and confident in every way.

#### **Third place – Carlos Santana, Live at Jones Beach**

I am struck by the use of colors in this painting, I have no idea if Carlos was actually wearing them - I don't doubt it, but either way, it was very good use of colors to bring my eye through the painting. Though not anatomically correct, I simply didn't care... it works exactly as is!

#### **Merit Awards:**

Feeling Blue - Striking composition, excellent shapes for the facial features, drips delightfully placed that make me feel that she has a good reason to be crying. She looks off to the right, what is there that makes her so sad? Makes me wonder.

Brooklyn Scene - I chose this piece for the perspective wonderfully handled, shapes, people and structures taking my eye back and forth.

Mia - this piece has such strong shapes of colors, very bold and though not repeated ... are so powerful and well constructed I don't mind at all. Though the top of the head and the feet are cut off, along with the music stand in the lower left corner, it all works! My eye fills it in so as opposed to having everything there, this painting comfortably trims these parts and I'm asked to accept and know that there is more.

Feeling the Love - and you do in this painting. The cat purrrrrfectly placed in the center surrounded by charming faces. The features of the children are well done - and the cropping works so well - it gives this painting a feeling of cozy love.

Wisdom Comes With Age - this painting has so much white with the figures in black really engaged my eye. The trees, door and foliage balances out the white shapes giving this painting a feeling of connection between these two friends and where they live and meet.

### **Honorable Mention Awards:**

Missing You - The composition on this piece was so engaging, the tonal quality along with the sparks of white completely let my eye flow effortlessly throughout the painting. This takes some bravery on the part of the artist and I acknowledge that.

Melange Des Modeles - this composition is done so very well ... between the figures intertwining and then the beams of light complimenting them. I felt each pose and loved how they remained separate yet connected.

Fred - whimsical and serious at the same time, the flow of lights and darks work together so well. I found the matting and framing enhanced the painting quite well.

Wavy Daze - the colors that shift from the sea to the foam to the beach with the figures standing in front of them and yet their shadow repeats those blues - even the brush marks told me of what the water was like on that day. The pop of orange on the skin and shirt and into the shadow are bold decisions that paid off.

City Rain - The colors moving through this piece and how they are built in, around and on top of each other I found very well done - I felt the light from the buildings and the weather outside and if I keep looking, I even see folks walking with umbrellas - so subtly handled and leaving a lot to my imagination.

If I had a piece of advice to artists it's something I say in all my classes - be painterly, explore unique composition, take chances with colors - find ways to echo that color, if painting a portrait - be sure that it is anatomically correct unless you are pulling a Picasso. Bravo to all of you!

Always stay inspired and continue to learn. Here is a bit of info about my book - though I do watercolors - there are principals that are universal in art...

**Title:** *Thinking Your Way Through Watercolors*: Thoughts to inspire you to be fearless in your art



