Palm Beach Watercolor Society Member Exhibit 2023

I want to thank the Palm Beach Watercolor Society for inviting me to judge the member exhibit. I found that the work represented the high level of technical proficiency of the guild members, and a well-rounded variety of subject matter and styles. To differentiate among such an array of proficient work, I view the art through set of criteria to determine which works I feel best exemplify the medium, subject and compositional qualities.

After viewing the entire exhibit, I go through a second time and take note of pieces that stood out, either for a compelling subject, an interesting composition, or an innovative use of the medium. I use a numeric score to weigh the pieces, based on *Composition, Original Concept, Technical Skill, Innovative use of Media, and Compelling Theme or Subject.* Basically, I'm looking for work that goes beyond precise reproduction and technical skill; that shows some risk-taking or pushing boundaries.

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The pieces that I felt met those criteria the most are as follows:

1st: Thomas Rebek; *Uncorking the Wine:* the subject shows a very complex composition that had a strong focal point, yet balanced with several interesting areas. The use of the watercolor showed a wide range of techniques employed to convey the various textures and surfaces of the objects illustrated. The figure looking away from the viewer, and the flash of light behind the bar created an interesting narrative beyond a static pose.

2nd: Lee Krull; *Variegated:* The clustering of the dense foliage as the overall composition was a welcome change from a traditional still life or manicured garden scene. Each leaf was a unique opportunity to use a variety of watercolor techniques to keep the repetition interesting. The similarities kept the composition unified, yet slight variations keep your eye moving from one leaf to another, discovering that there are actually several different types of plants represented in this painting.

3rd: Lynn Holland; *Coconut Garden:* Limiting the palette to the complimentary colors of yellow-orange and blue creates a unified composition, yet gives the painting a vibrant contrast. The graphic style of this piece is eye catching, and uncommon in watercolor painting. The subtle layering of washes to create shadows shows a strong command of the medium.

HM: Sally Accetta; *Strange Feelings:* this painting demonstrates a unique approach to abstract painting, alternating between the well-defined focal point and the loosely painted areas of the composition. The layering of different techniques creates a sense of realistic depth that is often overlooked in abstract work. The range of techniques used in this painting shows a command of the medium that keeps the work interesting and vibrant.

HM: Camille Rosano; *The Charmer:* Initially drawn in by the eyes of the subject, I found so much more to observe when I looked more closely. The skillful layering of washes was used to "sculpt" the face, giving it depth, and adding to the sentiment portrayed in the eyes. The cool colors used to create shadows as well as the texture of the hair both demonstrate a confident use of the medium. The blue background serves as a subtle balance for the boldness of the blue eyes that dominate the composition.

JR: Pauline Runkle; *Holidays in NYC:* The non-traditional use of the paint was an effective way to create a mood and a narrative in this painting. The contrast of light and dark values was very well done, emphasizing the silhouetted figure and the reflection of light on the wet ground. Though quite different, the scene reminded me of Hopper's *Nighthawks.*