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Florida CraftArt presents:

Contemporary Fiber in Florida 2017

April 28 to June 17, 2017

Florida CraftArt

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Florida CraftArt opened the Contemporary Fiber in Florida exhibit with a weekend celebration of fiber that included a visit from beloved actress and artist Jane Seymour, lectures and workshops. It is a juried exhibition that showcases original artwork with contemporary approaches to fiber art, pushing the boundaries and/or traditions in media and execution. The exhibition features fresh interpretations of traditional types of fiber art including surface design, weaving, basketry, felting and wearable art and includes work created with nontraditional materials and innovative technologies.

The opening reception and awards ceremony was held Friday, April 28. The show was judged by Florida CraftArt's previous executive director Diane Shelly. Best of Show was awarded to Sarah Knouse (Lake Worth) for "Cerement," a black, crocheted figure that seems to float in the air. Awards were presented under categories. Wall Works First Place: Marianne Williamson (Miami), "*Dressed for Fall*," Second Place: Jane Jennings (Port Orange), "*The Shadow Caster*," Honorable Mentions: Cindy Wilson (Elkton), "*Heron over Paines Prairie*," Andrea Huffman (Weston), "*Moon over the Night Sea*" and Fabricio Farias (Jacksonville), "*The Gospel of Willis*." 3D Sculptural First Place: Liliana Crespi (Weston), "*Safe Nest*" and Honorable Mention: Judy Polstra (Tamarac), "*You're Too Sensitive*"

Baskets/Vessels First Place: Carole Hetzel (Tavares), "*Brendan Basket #413*" and Honorable Mention: Emily Stehle (Clearwater), "*Rings of Purple*." Wearable Art First Place: Leeann Kroetsch (Tampa), "*Silk Felted Kimono*" and Honorable Mention: Susan Vazquez, "*Yellow Fish in Blue Water*." Exhibition Honorable Mentions were also presented to John Mahorney (Palmetto), "*Virtual Fiber*," Stephen Sidelinger (Venice), "*Skull and Bones*," Karen Swing, "*Summer*" and Patricia Trow (St. Petersburg), "*Medusa in Sight*." *The Curator's Award* was presented to Kianga Jinaki (West Palm Beach), "*Spirit of the Cloth*."

The statewide exhibition was curated by Cindy Bartosek a well-known artist, photographer and curator from West Palm Beach. "Fiber art has been defined as fine art that is primarily natural or synthetic fiber in content and/or executed using traditional fiber techniques such as weaving, knitting, crochet, knotting, felting," says Mrs. Bartosek. "Its focus is on the materials and manual labor of the artist as part of the works' significance, prioritizing aesthetics over functionality. This exhibition includes innovative work rooted in traditional fiber materials, processes and history, as well as art that explores the relationships between fiber and other creative disciplines and non-traditional materials."

"Florida CraftArt is a nonprofit organization that features Florida's fine craft artists," says Executive Director, Katie Deits. "There are 45 artists in this exhibition from as far north as Tallahassee and Jacksonville and many from South Florida, the west coast and the center of Florida. I am amazed at the large number of fiber art groups and organizations in the state."

"For example, Florida CraftArt Past President Sarah Butz is a member of the Tampa Bay Surface Design Guild that has more than 115 members. In addition to the statewide Florida Tropical Weaver's Guild, every area of the state has local guilds focusing on one or more aspects of fiber art and regional groups affiliated with international organizations such as the Studio Art Quilt Associates and the Surface Design Association."

The exhibition was inspired by and builds on *Perspectives in Fiber: Moving Beyond Tradition*, a juried exhibition mounted by the South Florida Basket and Fiber Guild in January 2017 in Lake Worth Florida. Half of the work is by invited artists from that exhibition, the other half was chosen from submissions from Florida CraftArt's call to artists. This joint showing gives broader statewide representation and a greater diversity of work.

"The artists are a remarkable group of men and women of different generations, backgrounds and experience levels with a wide range of ideas, inspirations and personal stories," Mrs. Bartosek adds. "Regardless of the techniques and materials used, each brings a unique perspective to his or her work. Yet all are building on tradition to take the fiber arts into a new era, bringing a modern sensibility to time-honored practices. It is our hope that those viewing this exhibition take away a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the diversity of the use of fiber as an art medium."

The exhibition is sponsored by fiber artist Jeannine Hascall, Laura Militzer Bryant, President of Prism Yarns and Beacon 430 Apartments. The exhibit will run through June 17.

For more information, visit www.FloridaCraftArt.org or call (727) 821-7391. Exhibition admission is free. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m.

Florida CraftArt is a nonprofit organization founded in 1951 and headquartered in St. Petersburg. Its mission is to grow the statewide creative economy by engaging the community and advancing Florida's fine craft artists and their work. Fine craft art is presented in its 2,500-square-foot retail gallery and a large gallery features curated exhibitions. Florida CraftArt is the *only* statewide organization offering artists a platform to show and sell their work.

SIDEBAR

Florida CraftArt presents *Contemporary Fiber in Florida*, April 28 to June 17, 2017

CUTLINES (More images of work available on request. Photo and video opportunities available.)

1-FCA-Deits-2996 Contemporary Fiber in Florida award winners: From left: Kianga Jinaki (West Palm Beach), "Spirit of the Cloth"; John Mahorney (Palmetto), "Virtual Fiber"; Fabricio Farias (Jacksonville), "The Gospel of Willis"; Curator Cindy Bartosek (West Palm Beach); Leeann Kroetsch (Tampa), "Silk Felted Kimono"; Liliana Crespi (Weston), "Safe Nest"; Emily Stehle (Clearwater), "Rings of Purple"; Patricia Trow (Tampa), "Medusa in Sight"; and Andrea Huffman Weston., "Moon over the Night Sea." Photo by Katie Deits

1-FCA-Deits-3032 Actress Jane Seymour is pictured in Leeann Kroetsch's "Silk Felted Kimono" which won First Place in Wearable Art.

1FCA-Deits-6811 Best of Show was awarded to Sarah Knouse (Lake Worth) for "Cerement," a black, crocheted figure that seems to float in the air. It is fashioned from dollies made by Knouse's grandmother that are molded over a body cast of the artist.

1-FCA-Deits-3000 "Spirit of the Cloth," a 33" x 30" art quilt by West Palm Beach artist Kianga Jinaki received the Curator's Award. It was created using traditional African textiles and artist dyed and stamped fabrics, embellished with African beads and cowrie shells. The piece is hand sewn with metallic thread. Photo by Katie Deits

1-FCA-Deits-6845-s Contemporary Fiber in Florida 2017 exhibit at Florida CraftArt in St. Petersburg.

1-FCA-Deits-6966 Carol Hetzel, from Tavares, won First Place in Baskets for her painted reed and stainless-steel cable sculptural basket.

1-FCA-Deits-3010 Clearwater resident Emily Stehle received an honorable mention for her basket "Rings of Purple."

1-FCA-Deits-3012 "Medusa in Sight," by St. Petersburg artist Pamela Joy Trow received an honorable mention. It is fashioned from vintage wool, acrylic yarn, metallic thread, silk thread, sea pearls, seed beads, stone beads including garnet, howlite, quartz, bugle beads, beads in glass, ceramic, coral, shell, vintage and contemporary jewelry parts and metallic-colored wire on needle point canvas. Photo by Katie Deits

1-FCA-Deits-6844 Florida CraftArt Gallery Manager Liz Rogers is pictured with Venice artist Stephen Sidelinger (Venice) who received an honorable mention for "Skull and Bones" created with embroidery floss. Photo by Katie Deits