**Florida CraftArt,** 501 Central Ave., St. Petersburg, FL 33701

727-821-7391 FloridaCraftArt.org

Contact: Katie Deits, Executive Director

For Immediate Release April 19, 2019

**Florida CraftArt presents:**

***Members’ Show: Contemporary Craft at its Finest***

**Exhibition Dates: April 26 to June 1, 2019**

**Opening Reception: April 26, 5:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Artists’ talks and Collectors’ Circle lecture**

*Members’ Show: Contemporary Craft at its Finest* is a juried exhibition showcasing original art that showcases the best of handcrafted work by Florida CraftArt members. From across Florida, 36 artists created 110 pieces from intricate jewelry to ceramic sculptures. Visitors will have the opportunity to meet the artists at the opening reception on Friday, April 26 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Gallery Manager Liz Rogers points out several ceramic sculptures by Tampa Bay artists Kimberli Cummings, Alan Johnson and Calan Ree. The hefty cactus-like pieces by Johnson are contrasted by the sweet innocence of Ree’s “Star Gazer” and the delicately handpainted vase by Cummings.

Renee Davis (Palmetto) created a contemporary necklace titled “Gold Rush Pendant” using 24-karat gold, crystallized druzy and a faceted Lapis teardrop.

Paying tribute to her late mother, Kim Radatz fashioned “Her Name Was Betty,” a mixed media installation. “With this piece I was inspired by my mom’s struggle with Alzheimer’s,” she says. “Though our experiences were from a different perspective, it was a struggle we shared together. I feel very grateful to have made this piece before my mom died. Although I never showed it to her, the process from conception to completion helped me deal with my grief.”

Award-winning artist Nadine Saitlin (Boca Raton) chooses natural gourds as her canvas on which she paints wildly imaginative and colorful images. “The goal of my artwork is to create seductive surfaces and provocative forms that involve the audience in a visual adventure,” she says.

“The first Members’ Show was held in 1951,” says Florida CraftArt’s Executive Director Katie Deits. “As a statewide, member-supported organization, we display outstanding handmade objects, made by some of the best craftspeople in the country. Half of our gallery on Central Avenue features only Florida artists while the exhibition gallery, as well as our annual CraftArt Festival in November, showcases fine craft artists from around the world.”

The exhibition will be judged by the Morean Art Center’s new executive director, Howayda Affan who will present the awards at the opening reception. The show runs through June 1 when the People’s Choice Award will be presented at the closing reception.

Florida CraftArt is located at 501 Central Avenue in St. Petersburg. For more information, visit [www.FloridaCraftArt.org](http://www.FloridaCraftArt.org) or call (727) 821-7391. 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 curated exhibitions are featured in its adjacent exhibition gallery. Florida CraftArt is the *only* statewide organization offering artists a platform to show and sell their work.

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

**Kimberli Cummings Clean Water=Life.jpg:** “Clean Water = Life” is a handpainted ceramic vase created by Kimberli Cummings.

**Renee Davis-GoldRushpendant\_full .jpg** Renee Davis created “Gold Rush Pendant” using 24-karat gold, crystallized druzy and a faceted Lapis teardrop.

**Alan Johnson\_Flor Fina - Blue Earth\_Full.jpg:** “Flor Fina, Blue Earth” is a ceramic sculpture by Alan Johnson.

**Kim Radatz\_Her\_Name\_Was\_Betty\_full.jpg** Kim Radatz used mixed media for her installation, “Her Name Was Betty.”

**Calan Ree\_StarGazer\_full-white background.jpg** “Star Gazer” is a 13-inch high ceramic sculpture by Calan Ree.

**Nadine Saitlin-Bubble up full.jpg** Nadine Saitlin paints abstract images on natural gourds.