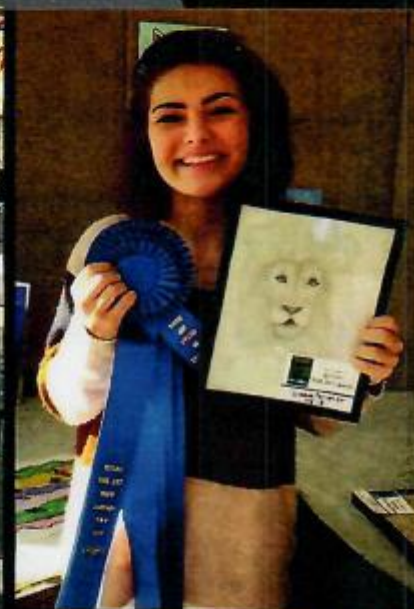


IN THE BOOTH

# INVESTED VIRTUOSOS



Top Left: Young artist, Malim, proudly shows his Youth Art Best in Show award.



Top Right: Middle school student, Ciarra, won a youth art award for her submission at the Estero Fine Art Show in January 2017.

Bottom Left: Middle school student, Kayley, was awarded a Youth Art Award of Excellence at the January 2017 Estero Fine Art Show.



Bottom Right: Sophia, age seven, beams with pride over her Youth Art Award of Distinction.



Hot Works LLC gives back to the art community by nurturing budding student artists

By Stephanie Hintz

Motivating and inspiring young people to carry the torch of the fine art and handmade movements are challenges that many show promoters are recognizing in the industry today. In a high-tech world that predisposes the removal of hands-on creative and problem-solving skills in today's youth, nurturing the future of the fine art world is an endeavor worth tackling.

For Patty Narozny, Producer and Executive Director, Hot Works LLC, highlighting the artwork of budding young artists and recognizing their artistic achievements are two ways that her organization is making a direct positive impact on the future of fine art development.



"The best thing in life is to enjoy what you are doing. I read in the Wall Street Journal that 70 percent of dentists, doctors, lawyers and professionals hate their jobs; 70 percent of artists love their jobs."

—Patty Narozny, Hot Works LLC

### **Reviving a movement**

Ten years ago, Narozny introduced a youth art competition at the Orchard Lake Fine Art Show in West Bloomfield, Mich.; a youth competition was also established in 2011 at the Estero Fine Art Show. "They are now integrated into all Hot Works shows," says Narozny.

She explains the purpose of the program is to encourage students to create original art that will be publicly displayed in the art show all weekend long. "There is \$250 in youth art awards and young artists are exposed to the entrepreneurship of doing art shows for a living." In addition to cash prizes, youth art winners are presented with the same colorful two foot-long ribbons as those given out to the professional artist winners.

Narozny points out that most importantly, the youth art competition brings entire families to the art shows who may not ordinarily attend. "In turn, this hopefully opens new worlds of possibilities for the child and the family," explains Narozny.

### **Why Hot Works reaches out**

After several years of producing fine art shows, Narozny noticed that most of the artist participants were aged 55 and older. She also took note that several articles in magazines began addressing the graying of the industry. "The youth

art competition is just one way we can respond to the 'graying,' thereby helping to ensure that the American art fair will endure and continue to be successful," she cites.

Narozny went on to say that at a national conference with the National Association of Independent Artists (NAIA) years ago, it was discussed whether art shows would be around in 20 years. "Especially with the recession of 2008 when many artists dropped out of art shows," she adds.

Narozny reports that many young artists don't know how to apply to juried events, and she takes significant time giving these artists the direction they need. In addition, the rules of Hot Works' shows are also incorporated into the youth art application. During the youth art presentation, students are also provided with a recent NAIA publication to further bolster their knowledge.

### **Get in and win**

The criteria for the budding young artists are the same as the professional artists in the show, except for the booth display category, which is removed. Judging is based on originality, technique, and execution; the age of the artist is also considered. To date, more than 1,100 students have exhibited in the youth art/budding artist competitions put on by Hot Works. There are typically 50-150 entries per show and the youth art competition area receives premium show placement for all to enjoy.

At the Estero Fine Art Show, the Orchard Lake Fine Art Show, and the Asheville Fine Art Show, the youth art competition is designed for ages 5-13; at the Boca Raton Fine Art Show, the age brackets widen to include those aged 9-19 or grades 6-12. "It is in Boca, in particular, where we want the students to start thinking of entering competitions on a regional, or even a national level," Narozny says.

### **Hot Works gives back**

Narozny organizes the details of the youth art and budding artist programs at all Hot Works shows, including contacting schools and local art communities, reaching out to the media, and presenting the awards. Narozny is president of the Institute for the Arts & Education, Inc., (IA&E) which is a 501(c)(3)

arm of Hot Works events. "Its focus is visual arts, diversity, community enrichment, and fostering art education among youth."

This is an unpaid position for Narozny, as is the case for the rest of the IA&E board. "Unless there is a sponsor, IA&E pays for the youth art expenses associated with the program. Ideally, we would love to have a single sponsor for the program in all our shows, which is something we are working on. The program does not come without time and expense," she says.

If Narozny could offer up some advice to aspiring young artists, she would say this: "If you do not win, do not give up. Even the best artists do not get accepted into all the art shows that they want to, nor do they win a prize in every show they participate. Art is subjective, and if one judge does not like your work, another one might." She also reminds young artists to be thoughtful and congratulate those who do win.

Narozny recognizes the importance of instilling the love of art in today's youth, as well as nurturing the thought process that art can be a viable career choice to get in to. "It's very important," she affirms, "especially as art programs are cut back from schools nationwide. I would encourage all art shows to integrate a program like this into their events."

"We do our best to keep the buy/sell/imports out of Hot Works shows, and one way we can do that is by teaching these budding, young artists, early on, the importance of doing one's own work and being honest about it."

—Patty Narozny, Hot Works LLC



At each Hot Works show, at 3 p.m. on Sundays, the youth art awards are presented. The event is typically attended by the artists, their families, friends — and often other professional artists at the show — especially those artists who share the same philosophy of encouraging art involvement by students. Many times, a professional artist will volunteer to serve as a judge and give a short talk on why

the winning pieces stood out from the others' entries. "Students also receive a printed artist application — a rarity with art shows anymore, now that there are ZAPP and other electronic means of applying to art shows and other competitions," says Narozny.

Students are encouraged to speak with the professional artists during the show and to also inquire about their inspirations. "However, they are also asked not to interrupt if the artist is speaking with a patron and to return when the artist is not busy," she says.

### **Developing future professionals**

There are opportunities for many young artists at any of Hot Works' youth art competitions. Some participants are children or family members of exhibiting professional artists. At the Estero Fine Art Show, this includes Herb Brown's daughter, Nyeema; Mauro Pozzobonelli's children, Gabriella and Guiliano; and Daniela Viteri's daughters, Stephanie and Valentina.

Other area students may also apply. Several Lee County, Fla., art teachers and the director of a Michigan art academy got a group of students involved in Hot Works shows. "Sadly when it comes to academia, some schools and teachers are much more supportive of this effort than others," Narozny says.

When educators do support youth art, the impact is measurable and real. Narozny recently received an email from a Fort Myers, Fla., art teacher, whose seven-year-old student, Leah, won Best Youth Art in the November 2016 Estero Fine Art Show with her mixed-media artwork. This was the second time Leah had won a Hot Works award, and her first Best of Youth Art prize. "Leah was extremely surprised," the teacher wrote. "She was so cute when I presented her with a ribbon and \$100 check on the morning news at school. She definitely needs this. She has a unique style; I'm glad Zaki, the youth art judge saw it as well. Thank you for all that you do for the arts! You are truly amazing! I admire and respect you for bringing the arts to our community — especially for our children."

Another remarkable young artist is Nalim. Nalim has participated in the youth art competition since November 2013, when he was only five. "Nalim has won every time — seven times in a row — each time with different judges," Narozny remarks. "Nalim's mother says that he would love to be famous, like Picasso."

Since Nalim's new art teacher learned of his fine art accolades and the opportunities that exist at Hot Works shows, she has gotten more of her students involved in the shows.