

Purple Isles Art Guild 43rd Annual Member's Judged Exhibit

The Purple Isles Art Guild is celebrating its 43rd Annual Member's Judged Exhibition at the Key Largo Library Community Room, Tradewinds Plaza MM 101.4 from March 7 through March 15, 2009. The show will be judged by a professional jury and also by each visitor, who has the opportunity to vote on "The Best of Show". The public has the opportunity to meet individual artists during the show hours and inquire about their visions. All exhibits are originals, painted by the members of the Purple Isles Art Guild. The exhibition is categorized in different segments: Watercolors, Oil, Acrylics, Drawings, Photography, Mixed Media, Sculpture and Digital Art. The show also prominently displays artwork of Coral Shore High School and Island Christian School Seniors in all categories.

The Purple Isles Art Guild has had a long tradition of attracting many artists over the years. This artist's association was "spawned" from a workshop held by the Miami Artist and Teacher Bernice Shambaugh in the fall of 1966. Bernice's studio became a meeting place for painters to gather twice a week at the "Gate House" on Upper Matacumbe. They drafted a constitution in the early 1970's and the name Purple Isles was adopted. The Guild held meetings twice a month. These meetings took place at Burton Memorial Church where they provided interesting programs for the members. In the 1980's a contest was conducted to design a logo. Mecal Doyle won with her entry. The continuing purpose of the Purple Isles Art and Crafts

Guild is to promote an interest in and appreciation of art, sponsor educational opportunities for the development of members' talents, provide means for displaying and marketing their work, and encourage new talent.

A quote from Geraldine Green, who has been a long time member, describes how the guild has grown during her membership: "Not only has the number of members increased but so has the quality of work, not only for others but for me as well. Many of us have been able to document the history of the Keys through our paintings".

Some early members still honor the guild with their active participation. There are members in their 80's who continue to inspire the younger members through their youthful attitude, energy, and expertise that has made the Purple Isles Art Guild a success.

One of the Keys most celebrated watercolor artists, Millard Wells has left his brush strokes as part of the Keys history. Into his 80's Millard was painting and giving back to the community. Robert Cunningham wrote in 2003: "Millard Wells had painted over 4600 masterpieces". "Painting is a part of my Life", Millard said. "It takes me places I never would have been. He moved to the Keys in 1966 to dive and to explore the Upper Keys. In a phone conversation one day his wife asked: "What is there?" And Millard replied: "Nothing, there's no libraries, no shopping - it's just a little place by the sea. You wouldn't like it". "Try Me"! His wife responded.

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"I am humbly honored to have won in the best of show category at last year's Annual Purple Isles Art Guild Member's Judged Exhibition. Proud member and artist of this organization."

- Carmen Sotolongo-Kelley.

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Artists Invited to GLEE Expo

Artists Invited to Participate in GLEE Expo Artists Village In the spirit of collaboration with local artists, Green Living & Energy Education (GLEE) is establishing an Artist Village at this year's Green Living Expo, to be held Saturday, March 28 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Marathon High School, 350 Sombrero Beach Road.

The village will be specifically for the exhibit and sales of works made from sustainable or recycled materials by local artists. "Our goal is to inspire the local artist population to help educate the public about sustainability through art, and at the same time provide them exposure and possible income" said GLEE Expo Coordinator, Bridget McDonald. "On our part, the addition of the Artist Village adds a new and welcome

cultural aspect to Expo that we hope will draw an even larger audience."

There will be no registration fee, but participating artists will be asked to either donate a piece of work to the Expo silent auction prior to the event, or provide GLEE with a 20 percent commission on sales made at Expo. The latter will be on the honor system.

Artists can register for a space at the exhibit and get more information by contacting the coordinator for the Artist Village, Andrea Comstock, at the Florida Keys Council of the Arts 305 295 4369 or info@keysarts.com.

For more information about Green Living & Energy Education (GLEE) and this year's Expo, visit www.keysGLEE.com.

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