

An Overview of the People's Choice and the Banner Award

At the August general meeting the winner of the August People's Choice and winner of the Banner Award for September, October and November were announced. I received questions after the meeting about how the process works, and this overview is intended to answer those questions and add further clarification how the process works.

Before the People's Choice debuted the Banner Award existed. Voting for the Banner Award took place quarterly and was somewhat of a convoluted process though ably managed by Ed Gorman. At the monthly take-in process, an artist wanting to participate in the Banner Award would sign a release form, and Ed would label each eligible work with a number. Members and guests visiting the gallery during the month would vote by number for the Banner. The winning image was prominently displayed for three months, as it is now, in the courtyard. One rule about the Banner Award is that an artist may only win once in a twelve-month period. There is no monetary award for winning the Banner.

At the April, 2019, board meeting, Juan Cantavella, an active member of the Conroe Art League (CAL) and an instructor of portrait painting at CAL, proposed that he donate earnings from his CAL classes in the amount of \$400.00 per month to a People's Choice Award. Juan described this donation as means of "giving back" in gratitude for his having been blessed. The board accepted his proposal.

As the Show & Exhibitions Chair at the time I was charged with developing the process for the People's Choice Award (PC). The first question I wanted to answer was how often an artist could win in a year. The quick answer was, like the Banner Award, once every twelve months, but there were other opinions, for example, every other month; every quarter; every six months. The rationale, more often than not, was that if there were no limit then the same artist could win every month. To resolve the matter I went to the benefactor, Juan, to ask his opinion. Juan responded there was to be no restriction on how many times a person could win. "Even if the same person won every month?" I asked. Juan affirmed if that was the choice by the vote of the people then that was the case, and that's the way the award is structured.

Another decision made was to streamline the process by making all works in the monthly show eligible for the People's Choice, and to run the quarterly Banner Award vote concurrent with the People's Choice thereby eliminating the need for a signed release form and a separate balloting for the Banner.

This is an abbreviated summary of the People's Choice award process that was presented to and approved by the board:

- The Award will be presented each month that there is not a special show displaying in the gallery, for example, the ART12 and the National Show.
- An active CAL member in good standing is eligible for the award.
- Eligible artwork complies with CAL policies and procedures. Jewelry, to be eligible, is to be one piece per \$10 fee and a docent shift per piece.
- Both guests and CAL members may vote for the Award (one vote per person each month), however, the voting will be suspended at an event in the gallery when the gallery is rented by a CAL member for a personal, private event.
- The \$400 Award will be presented to the top vote-getter. *(I count the votes, and I withhold my vote until the vote tally is completed so that in the event of a tie, my vote is tie-breaker.)*

- The voting for the Award will also serve as a vote for the Banner with these exceptions: the Banner winner chooses not to allow the work to be reproduced and the artist has not won the award in the previous twelve months. In either case, the Banner Award goes to the work with the second most votes. *(We maintained the time-requirement for no other reason than tradition. It is worth a review to eliminate that requirement in order to align with the People's Choice.)*

Ken Roy

President