

**Concord Art Association
MJ 1 Juried Show 2021
Kirstin Lamb, Juror**

**Award Winners
Juror Statements
Awards - Each \$200**

Nancy Colella “Summer Kitchen”

The exquisite interior of Nancy Colella’s “Summer Kitchen” seems quickly wrought but is deftly limited in palette and scope, we see a space that contains us but continues to inspire in shades of gray, cream and blue. When one has only a corner or room, one paints that room. The roughly scrubbed cleanliness of the kitchen feels quite matched by the scrubby gray brushwork and chalky blue-gray hues of the walls, counters and window. I continued to come back to this work, the inviting space, the squared off and measured corners of the shelf and chairs, the blunted by choppy brushwork in the details of the glassware light and shadow or chair rungs. This work evidences our confinement as it makes a virtue of its limitations. This work revels in the simple pleasures of place, even if it is just the light, inside.

Nick Peterson-Davis “Three Bees”

The delight in viewing Peterson-Davis’ “Three Bees” is a loss of reference point. I am shot into what feels a painting but gets lost in the static. I am positively pushed to avoid reading a landscape by the thingness of the paint, a constant awareness of its bulbous physicality floating above what feels like a classic sienna ground below. It is almost as if the artist applied all the brush-marks to glass first, let them dry, and then applied them by hand to the surface as a collage. We see this at once or twice a remove, looking at paint and the paint looking at itself from the glass. I enjoy the strange floating, hovering sensation of looking at this picture, and find the thickness and richness of the applied color only strengthens the longer you look.

Laurie Simko – “Thank You Youni” and “Thank You Lindsay”

The work of Laurie Simko bristles with compassion, sharing a gaze in solidarity, kindness and grateful joy in her “Thank You..” series. The eyes of Youni and Lindsay are at once named and acknowledged, despite the sitters masked and hidden countenance. This painter has managed to take an image that has become ubiquitous during the pandemic and see it anew, a doctor, nurse or caregiver sharing our gaze in protective gear. Simko’s real strength lies not only in the spare and elegant execution of the bright and clear portraits, but her ability to capture ineffable weight in the stare of her sitter. I do not know if these works were completed over zoom, in person or by photograph, but Simko gives us the immediacy of a personal engagement with a caregiver each time we look at these striking portraits. I feel grateful for the exchange each time I look.

Kay Hudgins – “After De Heem”

Kay Hudgins chose to enter a copy of a masterwork into a juried group show, a brave risk. As a lover of copies and copy work and of De Heem still life paintings, this work of art feels to me a

particularly strong tribute, with its meaty brushwork and stucco-like surface of worked-over oil paint. It is almost as if the ground of the artwork was laid with trowels of cement to impede a more gracious stroke, not allowing for detail, pulling the painter toward more bravura flashes of palette knives laden in coral and olive paint. Each well-known flower is made murkier in its abstraction, distancing the historical painter from the current painter's progress. I feel Hudgins working through and into the paint, a devotional tribute but also something active, a dark and poetic re-statement.

Linda Hefner – “New Hampshire Barn”

Linda Hefner creates a poetic moment with a near blank façade and a moon that acts its partner and mirror in “New Hampshire Barn”. I feel the longing of our blankness in such moments, but also the poetics of being alone. Hefner creates mood and interest with the careful interplay of shadow over the white slatted front of the barn, a study in using minimal means to depict surface texture and interest. The building itself is nearly just a drawing, subtle lines and a slight gradient of grays and creams. And yet this flat façade refuses entry, doesn't give the slight generosity of an angled side exposure or a human trinket left out front. It is a kind of monument to a certain kind of life in New England. The building both invites contemplation and also rebuffs our entry in equal beguiling measure.