

THE Canvas



The Newsletter of the Mouth and Foot Painting Artists
in North America



Artists Celebrate 60 Years of MFPA

The celebrations were the highlight of the organization's General Assembly meeting that is held with senior international artists every three years.

Formed in Europe in 1957, the MFPA was the brainchild of mouth painter Erich Stegmann. His idea was to build a global co-operative of disabled people that would empower them to achieve financial independence and self-fulfillment through art. The group soon expanded into North America and today there are more than 800 artists commercially active in around 80 countries.

Two days were devoted to official meetings where the group's financial status, new ideas for future marketing and a Q&A session were presided over by artist President, Serge Maudet; Director, Mario Famlonga and the international board of artists. Two new artists were also voted to the board during the proceedings: Grant Sharman (New Zealand) and Soon Yi Oh (South Korea).

A major feature of the event was a public exhibition of international paintings, held at the magnificent Museu Marítim and was officially opened by Serge Maudet with Barcelona Mayor, Laia Ortiz; MP, Maite Fandos; and Culture Minister, Santi Vincente.



MFPA President Serge Maudet with Spanish dignitaries opening the exhibition.

Among the highlights, the artists enjoyed a 60th gala dinner which profiled the many accomplishments of the MFPA since its launch and were treated to a sensational dance performance by Italian artist, Simone Atzori and her supporting troupe.

Convoys of coaches were on hand to transport with military precision, the artists, carers and guests to view the many sights of Barcelona, which included Gaudi's Sagrada Familia Cathedral, which moves ever closer to completion.



Artists' General Assembly Meeting in Barcelona

The farewell event was held in the grounds of the beautiful Codorníu winery, located in the famous Penedès wine region, outside of Barcelona. The venue was blessed with fine, late afternoon weather and the artists and guests were able to enjoy great folk music, train rides through the extensive underground cellars, and acrobats (adults and children) who performed a spectacular creation of a tall, human tower that is traditional in this region of Spain.

The evening concluded with a dinner held in a cavernous, converted brick cellar at the winery, where the diners were entertained by flamenco dancers. Serge Maudet and Mario Famlonga closed proceedings by thanking the artists and all of the people who had helped to make the celebrations a successful and fitting tribute to the vision of Erich Stegmann, 60 years ago.



Mariam Paré having fun with masked entertainers, while fellow US artists, Brom Wikstrom and Robert Thome look on.



Nancy Kept Busy

The last year was a busy one for Nancy Hall based in East Aurora, NY. She participated in numerous art shows and won a prize for her watercolor of a canal side in Buffalo.

Nancy was guest speaker at Trocaire College, where she donated three of her prints, which was followed by an interview about the inspiration of her work and her life, on the local news station. The artist was also involved in a short film titled 'When Life Gives You Lemons' which featured her mouth painting.



What The Artists Say

"It's amazing the MFPA can take someone with an unbelievably severe disability and help them to work and earn a living and we're showing through our work that we can be a benefit to the entire world". Robert Thome, Los Angeles, CA.

"I think the MFPA has always been ahead of its time when it comes to disabilities and one's quality of life. You can't underestimate the dignity of being able to work and our motto 'Self Help, Not Charity' has helped provide a direction for my life". Mariam Paré, Chicago, IL.

"It's much more than an international organization; we've become a fraternity that help each other; actually it's more like a family. It's incredible to be celebrating 60 years; incredible because we are not a charity and make a profit like any commercial business from the products we create". Brom Wikstrom, Seattle, WA.

"The MFPA gives me hope and joy and a reason to live. Painting was not something I thought I could do but now I'm so happy and thankful to be part of such a great organization". Sara Jane Parsons, Austin, TX.

"It has been life changing and boosted my self-esteem. I don't feel sad about my life and the MFPA has been a big part of my independence and motivation". Alana Tillman, Santa Rosa, CA.

"It is good to be involved with people with the same passion for painting, who have experienced many of the same difficulties I have. It gives me a great feeling of stability to have a monthly paycheck coming in to support myself". David Nolt, Leola, PA.

CINDI HONORS VETERANS

Mouth painter Cindi Bernhardt was invited to be keynote speaker at an annual Veterans Day event held on November 2016 at the Brookdale Veterans Center, in Torrance, CA.

Cindi was delighted to pay special tribute to retired service people and to talk with them after her presentation. During her visit, the artist signed over 30 prints of her 'Crying Eagle' poster, which were handed out to the veterans at the Center. "I was honored to be able to witness first hand these amazing men and women who served our country so well", said Cindi.



Artist At Harlem Show



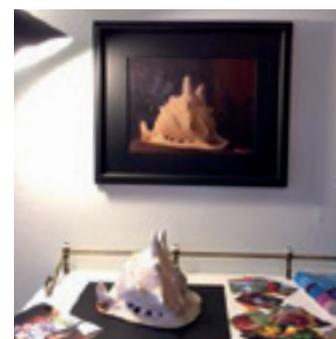
Chicago artist, Antonio Davis, was invited to New York to stage an exhibition of his work at the Harlem Fine Art Show, held in February 2017.

The four-day exhibition paid tribute to physicians and artists who have overcome medical issues and featured a program that highlighted the power of healing through art.

Maria's Work On Tour

Maria Huppi from Aloha, Oregon, participated in the Washington County Open Studios Tour, which is designed to enhance community vitality through art.

The annual event has been running for seven years and from small beginnings, the latest event featured 17 artists. More than 2,000 people visited the studios over the Tour weekend and were able to see work ranging from the traditional to contemporary art, aimed at showcasing the neighborhood's artistic talent.





Alana Reaches Out

Alana Tillman staged a six-weeks long art exhibition at the Center Gallery, in her home town of Santa Rosa, California, which opened in May 2017. The artist donated proceeds from her exhibition to the Center's Outreach in the Community fundraiser for the homeless and recovering drug addicts.

In early May she visited the Santa Rosa Elementary School to engage with young people through her art and also gave mouth painting demonstrations to students at the local Art and Soul Music Company. Alana also featured in a radio interview with Senator Bill Bradley on XM Radio, which had 'inspiration' as its theme.

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At our website you can discover more about the goods we offer and the artists who painted the original images from which they are reproduced.

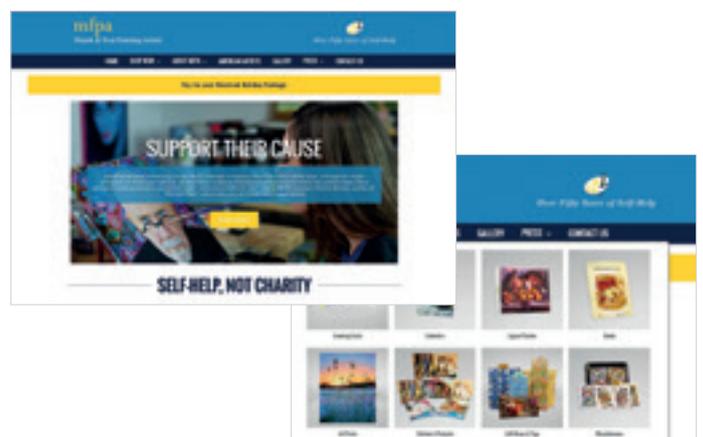
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Importantly you can now purchase all of our goods online using most major credit cards.



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To purchase any items or for further information on the MFPA, its members, their paintings or exhibitions, please contact:



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Memories of Barcelona

"Our trip to Barcelona was amazing. Not just the city itself but also the trip gave us the chance to meet a lot of fellow artists we had never met before. We talked about our art and it was interesting to know what it is like for people with disabilities in their own countries, especially, as here in Canada, we are very fortunate to live in such a disability accessible and accepting place.



The convention itself was very good and well organized and we were treated extremely well. The tour and dinner at the Codorníu Winery in the Penedès wine growing area was incredible and to see all of our work hanging in the Museu Marítim Gallery in Barcelona, was very exciting and inspiring".

Cody Tresierra, Vancouver

"I had a wonderful time in Barcelona, seeing artists and staff from around the world and to have the opportunity to meet the new ones as well. It was great to catch up with each other.

The meetings were informative and the tours and activities planned, like the visit and dinner at the winery, were well organized and very enjoyable. Seeing the famous historical sites in the beautiful city of Barcelona, like the Sagrada Familia Cathedral, was unforgettable.



I felt very fortunate to be given this opportunity and to be a part of such a wonderful organization. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to Head Office staff for such a memorable experience and to congratulate all on the 60th anniversary celebrations".

Susie Matthias, London, Ontario

Amanda In Demand

Toronto-based mouth painter Amanda Orichesky was in big demand for interviews by television stations as part of the National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October 2016.

Born disabled, Amanda appeared on CBC News Toronto and the CTV network's 'Your Morning' show where she talked about her life and the difficulties she faced, adding "I had to prove to everybody that I could do what they were doing, just differently". She also felt that employers could do more to integrate people with disabilities into their workforce.

Amanda also held a small exhibition and made a presentation at the Ministry of Community and Social Services - Ontario Disability Support Program, when they officially opened their new offices. At the event the artist also presented a framed print titled 'A Moving Art Story' that was produced by seven different Canadian MFPA artists across the country and depicted iconic images from their region. The painting now permanently resides in the reception area of the Ministry.



Canadian artist Amanda Orichesky on CTV's 'Your Morning' Show.

In Memoriam

It is with great regret that we announce the death of MFPA Full Member artist Michel Guillemette of Sainte-Foy, Quebec, who passed away on 22 April 2017. At age 19 the young athlete dove into the St Lawrence River at low tide and broke his spine. With the help of therapists he produced his first painting by holding the brush in his mouth. Michel said, "My first landscape was not bad at all" and from there, he did not look back. In 1987 he joined the MFPA, which helped him to develop his creative talent, and he became a full member artist in 2004.

Michel will be greatly missed by us all.

Visit the MFPA website

Products reproduced from the artists' original paintings include greeting cards, calendars and a wide range of gift items.

Importantly, purchases can now be made with most major credit cards. To purchase, or for further information about the MFPA, visit our website at www.mfpacanada.com

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