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39th Annual Raymond James Gasparilla Festival of the Arts Announces Winners
Nationally Renowned Juror Selects Art and Artists to Receive Cash Awards

TAMPA, FLA. (March 7, 2009) – Selecting from a field of more than 300 acclaimed artists displaying their works, juror Martha Connell, owner and director of Connell Gallery/Great American Gallery in Atlanta, has named the recipients of 39th annual Raymond James Gasparilla Festival of the Arts cash awards. This year, the Raymond James Gasparilla Festival of the Arts awards total \$75,000, the highest amount ever awarded in a single year.

Awards include the coveted \$15,000 Raymond James Financial Best of Show Award, Board of Director's Award, Mayor's Award, Anniversary Award, Friends of the Arts Award, Awards of Merit (30 selected) and Emerging Artist Award. New this year, the Festival is also presenting the Roddy Brownlee Reed Award of Excellence.

"The art is of excellent quality this year, truly connecting the viewer with what the artist is expressing", said this year's juror Martha Connell. "Gasparilla Festival of the Arts should be commended for supporting the artists through the numerous opportunities to be recognized with monetary awards."

Connell has selected the following pieces as to be recognized and the artists to receive the cash awards:

Raymond James Financial Best of Show Award (\$15,000)

Presented by Geoffrey Simon, Senior Vice President, Raymond James Financial
"Wearable Art," a sculpture by Nancy Cervenka of Gulfport, Fla. (Booth #180)

Board of Director's Award (\$7,500)

Presented by Gasparilla Festival of the Arts Board President Mac McCoy
"Coconut Basket," a fiber work by Jean Yao of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. (Booth #184)

Roddy Brownlee Reed Award of Artistic Excellence (\$4,500)

Presented by Andy Maass, trustee of Reed's estate and ex-officio member of the Festival Board
"Dreams of His Father," a painting by James Michaels of Palm Harbor, Fla. (Booth #40)

Mayor's Award (\$3,500)

Presented by Santiago Corrada, Neighborhood Services Administrator, City of Tampa
"They'll Greet You With Flowers," a mixed media piece by Carolina Cleere of Tampa, Fla. (Booth #298)

Anniversary Award (\$2,500)

Presented by Festival Founders Don Clark & Jim Turner
"Kiva Jar," a ceramic work by Marvin Blackmore of Dolores, Colo. (Booth #36)

Friends of the Arts of the Tampa Museum of Art Award (\$2,000)

Presented by Friends of the Arts President Jacque Griggs
"Bar Cabinet," a wood piece by Lance Munn and Vicki Munn of Bloomfield, Ind. (Booth #174)

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Awards of Merit (\$1,300 – 30 awarded)

Presented by Board President Mac McCoy and Festival Co-Chairs Kenya Reddy, Shaka Scott and Allison Shamblin

- "Amboyna Burl," a wood piece by James Barnes of Woolwine, Virg. (Booth #20)
- "Gerabera Blanco," a photographic work by Daryl Bunn of Jacksonville, Fla. (Booth #27)
- "Split Vase, Gears #7," a glass piece by Todd Cameron of Minneapolis, Minn. (Booth #29)
- "Virginia," a mixed media work by Kimberly Chalos of Evansville, Ind. (Booth # 201)
- "Untitled," a wood piece by Lloyd Chaney of Palm Bay, Fla. (Booth #32)
- "To Purity," a mixed media work by John Cheng of Coram, New York (Booth #119)
- "Mile Marker #131," a mixed media piece by Chris Dahlquist of Kansas City, Mo. (Booth #240)
- "Mia Series," a mixed media work by Ummarid Eitharong of Orlando, Fla. (Booth #102)
- "Fox Sphere XIII," jewelry by Pam Fox of Sarasota, Fla. (Booth #266)
- "Language Cannot Do Everything," a mixed media piece by Benjamin Frey of Montreal, QC (Booth #84)
- "Untitled," a painting by Charles Gatewood of Phenix City, Ala. (Booth #195)
- "Anfora de Lineas," a ceramic piece by Luis Enrique Gutierrez of Zebulon, NC (Booth #89)
- "American Saint," a mixed media piece by Aaron Hequembourg of Monticello, GA (Booth #112)
- "Bird on Bed of Leaves," a ceramic work by John Herbon of Saint Ignace, Mich. (Booth #91)
- "Adam and Eve," a mixed media piece by Nicario Jimenez of Naples, Fla. (Booth #125)
- "Rosebud Necklace," jewelry by Wiwat Kamolpornwijit of Alexandria, VA (Booth #100)
- "Pedestal Bowl," a ceramic piece by William Kidd of Miramar, Fla. (Booth #28)
- "My Garden After Glass," a glass work by Duncan McClellan of Tampa, Fla. (Booth #275)
- "The Patch," a photographic work by Marius Moore of Gulfport, Fla. (Booth #205)
- "Chalice," a glass piece by Stephen Nelson of Schillington, Penn. (Booth #140)
- "Train Upa Child," a mixed media work by Mary Proctor and Tyrone Proctor of Tallahassee, Fla. (Booth #213)
- "Lake Marion," a photographic work by Paul Shatz of Charleston, SC (Booth #154)
- "Red/Black Elegance," jewelry by Alexa Smarsh of Key Largo, Fla. (Booth #273)
- "Ferns-3Some," a ceramic work by James Spiroff of Deltona, Fla. (Booth #263)
- "Table," a mixed media piece by John and Camille Staropoli of Port St. Lucie, Fla. (Booth #90)
- "Visit to Galipoli," a watercolor by Gergory Strachov of Floral City, Fla. (Booth #75)
- "Space Jewelry," jewelry by Luran Sundin of Concord, NH (Booth #214)
- "5 Drawer/Oddly Stacked," a wood work by Greg Thomas-Moore of Deltona, Fla. (Booth #226)
- "Merrit Island," a photograph by William Underwood of Pinellas Park, Fla. (Booth #46)
- "Fresh Eggs," a watercolor by Michael Weber of Port St. Lucie, Fla. (Booth #109)

SkyPoint/Intown Group Emerging Artist Award (\$1,000)

Rudolph Lopez, a woodturning artist, of Tampa, Fla.

The award-winning art will be displayed at the Collector's Showcase on Sunday, March 8, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at TECO Plaza Atrium, 702 North Franklin Street in downtown Tampa. The winning artworks will be displayed in the atrium in the morning and then returned to the event for viewing at the individual artists' booths on Sunday. Admission to the Collector's Showcase is free and open to the public.

In addition, the Raymond James Gasparilla Festival of the Arts provides middle and high school students from five Tampa Bay Art Magnet School programs with the opportunity to display their work in a juried exhibition through the Young Artist Showcase sponsored by Verizon. The Showcase presents eight awards: one Best of Show, three Awards of Excellence for high school entries, three Awards of Excellence for middle school entries and Rio Grande Award of Excellence in Jewelry, plus accompanying awards to the winners' teachers.

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Jurors for the Young Artist Showcase have selected the following pieces to be recognized and the student artists and their teachers to receive awards:

Best of Show (\$150 art supply gift certificate)

"Day Dreaming," a mixed media piece by 7th grade student Cheyenne Couch at John Hopkins Middle School and her teacher Julie Smith

Rio Grande Award of Excellence in Jewelry (\$150 art supply gift certificate)

"Liquid Tranquility," by 11th grade student Alison Baltzell at Blake High School and her teacher Lonni Hopkins

Award of Excellence for high school entries (\$75 art supply gift certificate)

"Levitate," a digital ink jet print by 12th grade student Matthew Young at Blake High School and his teacher Linda Galgani

"King of the Jungle," a glass mosaic by Blake High School student Deidra Meysembourg and her teacher Lonni Hopkins

"Balancing Act," a mixed media piece by PCCA at Gibbs High School 11th grade student David Ramos and his teacher Dara Vance

Awards of Excellence for middle school entries (\$25 art supply gift certificate)

"Chinese Treasures," a tempera and watercolor painting by Progress Village Middle School eighth grade student Adrienne Meyer and her teacher Dr. Cathy Battle

"Rose of Winter," a mixed media piece by John Hopkins Middle School seventh grade student Auriana Wilcher and her teacher Julie Smith

"Fernando the Dino," a paper mache and acrylic piece by John Hopkins eighth grade student Makenzie Burrows and her teacher Julie Smith

Plans are already underway for marking the 40th Annual Raymond James Gasparilla Festival of the Arts, which will be held March 6th and 7th, 2010.

About Martha Connell

Atlanta-based Martha Connell is the owner/director of Connell Gallery/Great American Gallery, which represents artists working in clay, glass, fiber, metal and wood. Since 1985, the gallery has presented approximately 150 solo and group exhibitions and has participated in both the Chicago International New Art Forms Exposition and SOFA Chicago. In addition to her gallery role, Ms. Connell has a curated museum exhibitions of art quilts, figurative ceramics, studio furniture and woodturning, including an exhibition of turned wood that traveled in Europe as a cultural presentation of the United States through the USIA Arts America Program. She has served as juror and judge for many arts festivals and craft shows, including the Philadelphia Craft Show, Smithsonian Craft Show and Winter Park Arts Festival. The Connell Gallery/Great American Gallery is located at 158 Rumson Road in Atlanta. Additional information about Ms. Connell and the gallery can be found at <http://www.connellgallery.com>.

About the Gasparilla Festival of the Arts

The Gasparilla Festival of the Arts is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation dedicated to producing an annual, premier juried outdoor art festival for the enjoyment and education of patrons, artists and guests as well as for the enhancement of the Tampa Bay area's cultural arts. The non-profit organization relies on support from sponsorships, on-site retail sales and corporate and individual gifts to fund its programs and events. The Tampa-based organization is staffed entirely by volunteers. For more information, visit www.gasparilla-arts.com or call (813) 876-1747.

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