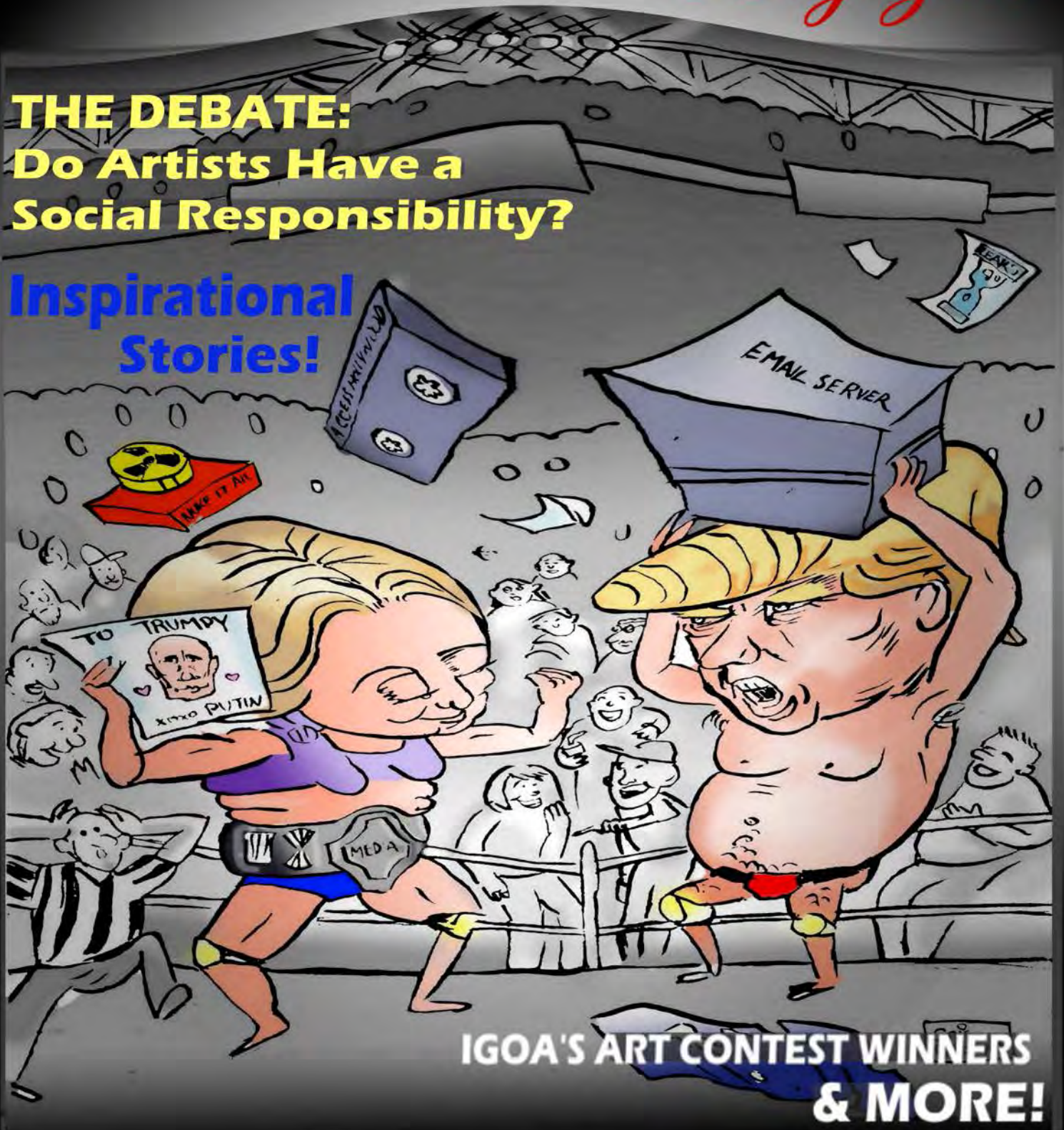


EXQUISITE ARTS

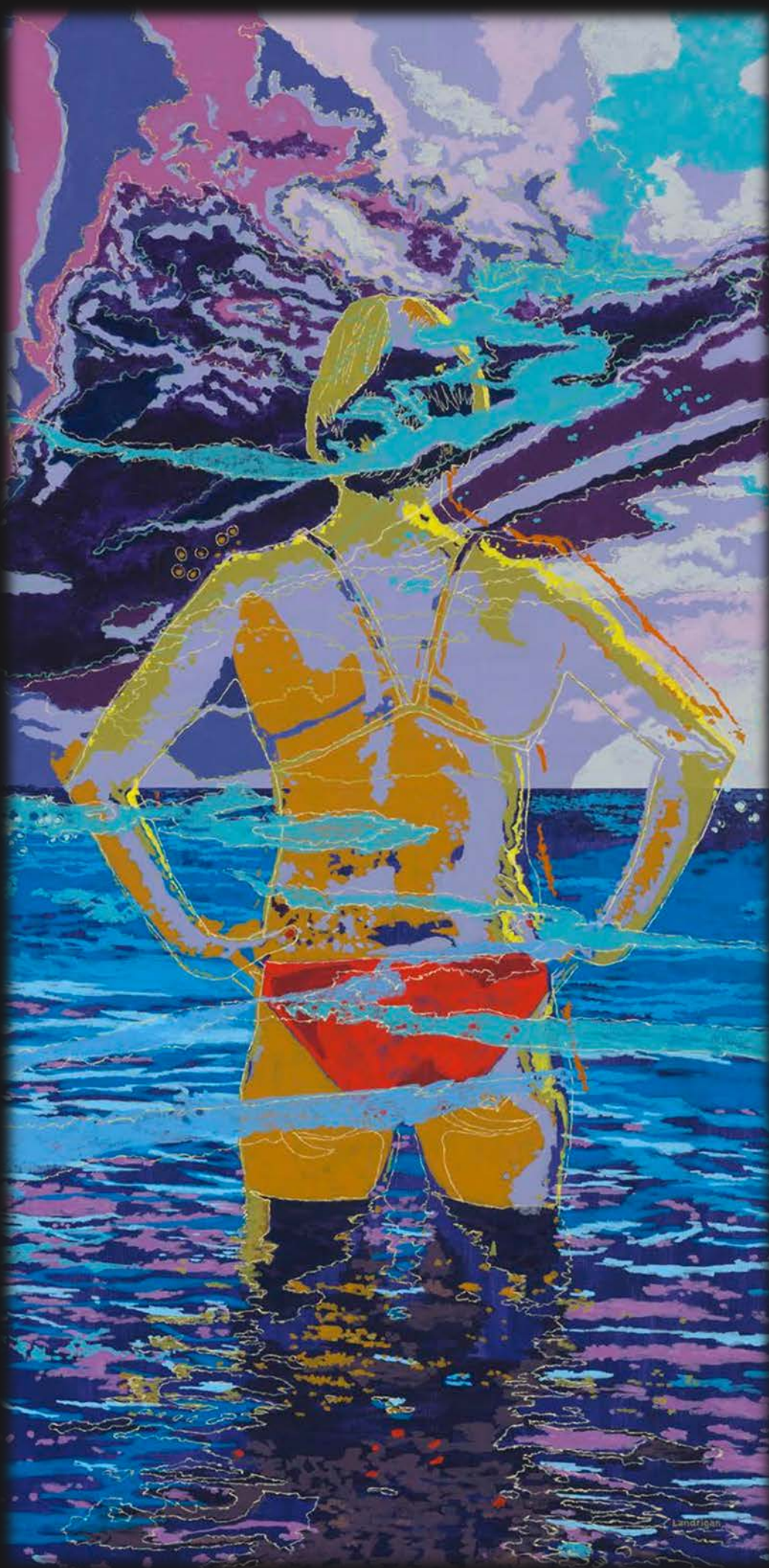
Magazine

THE DEBATE:
Do Artists Have a
Social Responsibility?

Inspirational
Stories!



IGOA'S ART CONTEST WINNERS
& MORE!



Karen Landrigan

United States | Artist | 3rd Place Winner- Painters Art Contest



"I've dealt with a great deal of adversity over the years and even now, at times I feel as though I exist in a strange state somewhere between life and death. For me, everything changed in an instant, yet my life continues. Today, I find myself living an entirely new existence in what seems like in an entirely new universe. Encouraged to paint by a dear friend and mentor who has always admired my creative abilities, this new reality has become the backdrop for my art.

My first painting, called "Soaring", is a close-up of a figure swimming in water with her back to the viewer, taken entirely out of context, and painted in such a way that we really don't know where she's going or how she's getting there. She could be flying; she could be dying. And this is what my art as well as my existence is about—whether to fly or die. I choose to fly."

Acrylic Paintings

karenlandrigan.com

karen@karenlandrigan.com



“I was born in the city of St. John’s on the island of Newfoundland, Canada. I grew up on the shores of a lake and learned to swim at a very young age. All of my fondest memories always include water. If I have a first love it is mathematics. My fascination with numbers and calculation led me into the engineering program at Memorial University in Newfoundland. After two years of studying engineering, I left to attend the Alberta College of Art where I studied Visual Communications. After graduating, I got a job in advertising and went on to earn my living in corporate graphic design, including developing corporate identities for some of the largest corporations in Canada. When I moved to the United States in 2007, I took several classes at the Glassell School of Art in Houston, where I currently live, and focused my studies on designing and producing handmade jewelry. As time permits, I continue to create unique handmade jewelry today. Painting is the current love of my creative life.”

Karen Landigan is an elected member of the Society of Canadian Artists.

Your style of artistry is fascinating and very original. You stated that painting is the current love of your creative life. Why is this, and how/when were you introduced to painting?

I’m extremely fortunate. I have always been able to make a living doing the things I love to do. But after a long career as a graphic artist and jewellery designer I suffered a massive stroke at the age of 50. Life suddenly wasn’t the same. I had a sense I was straddling a line between

life and death. I was unable to express myself because of the aphasia, a side effect of the stroke that causes difficulty with speech and language. I needed a reason to fight, to survive and a way to communicate. Surviving is tough and painting became my way back from the abyss.

I’ve always been a full bore girl. I was a competitive water polo player and swimmer. I have always been happiest in water and so I became the model for my



own paintings. I like the interaction between water and air and clouds and waves. When I finally took a friend's advice to paint seriously, I picked up the biggest canvas I could fit in my car and began my series of acrylic paintings titled "I have something to say...". My art is my voice and my story.

You have a profound passion for mathematics, has this passion played a role in your creative work? If so, how?

What mathematics taught me is the beauty of truth. Mathematics is the purest pursuit of truth that we have ever discovered. I use ratios and proportions instinctively in all my work and a strong background in mathematics helps me achieve a sense of balance in my paintings. But a mathematician and artist are similar in many ways. Both want to discover the essence of things, to understand the universe and ourselves on deeply personal and honest level. I think inside of every mathematician is an artist whispering in his ear to pick up a brush or pen.

Many believe that artists have a social responsibility or that art should convey a deep rooted message. What are your thoughts, what does art mean to you?

I think everyone has a social responsibility and the artist can be a catalyst for the deep feelings we all share. As an artist I don't

begin a work with the intention of accomplishing a goal or painting a feeling; for example I don't begin with the intention of painting 'abandonment'. But if I'm feeling abandoned when I start a piece then that emotion will find its way into the work and the power of the work becomes how strongly others feel that emotion. The artist has the social responsibility to be honest and forthright. I don't hide my emotions or justify them. I just paint as I struggle with them. *Art exposes the artist. It is a deeply personal exploration of yourself and the most amazing thing about my experience as an artist is that so many other people understand my work and feel like I do. When we touch others we connect with them and I want to create art that touches.*

" Art saved me after my stroke. My authentic hope is that my art might assist others in their quest to understand it all."

At this point in your life, if you were offered two extremely high paying jobs; one in the field of mathematics and the other in the area of the visual arts, which one would you choose? Why?

Easy answer- I would choose visual arts hands down. I am an artist. People who have known me for a long time think it is hilarious that in the last year I've said that I have finally come out of the closet. It is only after the age of 50 that I have called myself an artist. I was a designer, a jewelry maker,



a corporate graphics person who created the covers of annual reports and dreamed up logos for industry. But sometimes the person we least recognize is ourselves. Others often see our talents with more clarity than we ever can.

I have always felt the artist's pull but I never followed it until the uncontrollable events of my life forced a decision. Was I going to lay in a bed and die or did I still have something to say, something to add to this collective experience we call life? When I made the decision to fight, to live each day as well as I could, then becoming an artist seemed to be my path back to some sort of meaning.

What are your creative goals for the future?

One of the coolest things about me being an artist is my complete lack of goals or expectations. I will give myself completely over to the process, do what is ever necessary to pay the bills and keep painting. I guess my goal is to wake up tomorrow. I don't think much further out than that.

Is there anything else that you'd like to share with our audience?

Art has saved me. In my darkest moments, it gives me a reason to get up in the morning. It provides me with a purpose. My hope is others can find renewal in art as admirers or creators. Art is our most truthful form of communication and it is where people from very different backgrounds can connect. The most fundamental thing about being human is we are all moved by artistic expression. Only art can save us all.

CONTACT INFO:

www.karenlandrigan.com

karen@karenlandrigan.com

Twitter: LandriganArtist

Facebook: Karen Landrigan Artist

Tel: [281.650.4527](tel:281.650.4527)

