

Cecily Hangen Outstanding Service Award

*This award is being given to Cecily Hangen for her service to the Florida Artist Group
this 12th day of May 2012*

Most of us know Cecily Hangen as the tireless worker in all Florida Artist Group functions. She has also held numerous offices in the organization over the years. "I have been a member of FLAG since 1973, President twice and Area chair person since 1997. I was honored to be President for the 40th anniversary as well as the 50th anniversary. What I love most about FLAG is having the annual exhibition/symposium in different parts of the state, meeting the artists, seeing and showing in new venues, savoring the various local sights art and otherwise."

Cecily came to art early, "I can't remember a time when I was not doing art. I thought it was too much fun to be a career. That changed when in high school I went to the Parsons Art School in NYC for a Saturday morning art class in fashion design, then I was awarded another class. This time it was life drawing a little disquieting at age 17. Now I feel every artist no matter what they paint should draw from the live model. I regret that I am not doing that."

This is an impressive beginning for an artist, and Hangen continued to work with top level teachers in excellent schools during her college years, "After high school in 1953 I was accepted to go to Cooper Union Art School, an all scholarship school. I was in the night course and studied with Sydney Delevante, a dedicated and innovative teacher. I remember he said an artist should have a big No and a little Yes by their telephone – good advice. The foundation year emphasized architecture as well as 2 and 3 dimensional design. At that time I wanted to be an architect. Frank Lloyd Wright still is my favorite artist. I continue building my compositions as a construction of many elements."

Her training included some big names among her teachers, "Cooper had a summer program with Yale University Department of Fine Art. I transferred to Yale and spent two years there. Yale was dominated by Josef Albers, a Bauhaus teacher who emphatically insisted that every element in a painting should be there for a reason. There was no saying I felt like doing it. Sometimes I think this a hindrance to me being purely intuitive in my work. In the 50's abstract expression was at its height. Albers said these artists were strangled in their own intestines. But his color class was wonderful, no theory, no wheels, no rules all colors go together. It was just the amount to have the best color interaction. Another thing he said was to use your un-squeezed tubes. Something I don't follow. I definitely favor certain colors."

Hangen was also able to mix travel with her training, and to work with another famous pioneer of modern art, "In the summer between I studied printmaking with Jacques Villon (Marcel Duchamp's brother) at Fontainebleau France. He said every artist creates one masterpiece in their lifetime. He decided mine was a print of an olive tree. Even so, that didn't stop me from painting."

After finishing school, Cecily was able to work in art and design related fields. “The next summer I started as an artist in the display art department in the main offices of the JC Penney Company, and stayed there for two years. The next move was to Washington, DC. Where I worked at WTOP Radio and TV, a Post Newsweek station as an advertising artist. After two years I went on to WTTG. I did promotional art for television on air for another two years. I seem to move or change every two years.”

Eventually, Hangen settled down in a quiet and beautiful area north of Washington DC, though that didn't last for too long, “I wanted to have more time for painting so I started teaching elementary art in Frederick County Maryland. My parents moved to Florida. I came for a visit, loved it, and stayed.”

In Florida Hangen continued to teach, “I was teaching art at the Norton Museum, the Boca Raton Museum of Art and the Lighthouse Gallery.” However, she became dissatisfied with teaching as a way to support her art, “For me teaching inhibits my own painting. For the last 20 years I have been in the art gallery business, 16 years as part owner. Currently I am sales person in 2 galleries.”

All the while Hangen has been making art, “My painting started surrealistic. Coming to Florida I painted huge shells. That evolved in to my current abstraction of organic forms or half circles and arches designed as a color construction like a piece of architecture. I always shade the forms for a 3 dimensional effect like the chiaroscuro of Leger and the Renaissance masters. Then I paint the lines on top in reverse shading and often contrasting color. It really is an arrangement of moving stripes. Also I have painted on cubes.”

Cecily Hangen exhibits her work actively, “I exhibit my work at the Boca Raton Museum of Art Artists Gallery in Delray Beach and in Palm Beach at the S Thompson Palm Beach Fine Art gallery and Duaiv art gallery.”

Looking back on her career of making art and in FLAG, She is happy with her achievements, and with the future of the organization, “I am pleased with the new faces on the board and I know FLAG is in good hands for many years to come.”

*Written by Special Reports Editor
Roberta Morgan.
March 30th, 2012.*

Cecily served for the Florida Artist Group in these positions.

*As president 1989, 1990 and 2000, 2001.
As Area II Chair from 1997 to the present
As Treasurer 2006 - 2008 then again 2012
Parliamentarian 1998 - 2007*