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“Friendsheeps”

Artist from Budapest Wins "People's Choice Award"

At 2024 Embracing Our Differences' Exhibits

Ruth Schmidt's work, "Friendsheeps," was voted "People's Choice Award" by visitors to the exhibit. The artist received a \$2,000 cash award.

(May 2, 2023) “I have found myself in symbolist paintings,” notes Ruth Schmidt from Budapest, Hungary, whose work “Friendsheeps” won the People’s Choice award at Embracing Our Differences’ 2024 outdoor exhibitions celebrating kindness, respect, and inclusion at Sarasota’s Bayfront Park and St. Petersburg’s Poynter Park. “My wish is to achieve paintings that speak the unspeakable. My goal is not only copying the visible world, but also capturing the intangible world, including affection, child-like faith, human cooperation, God-to-human relationship, grief, hope, love, loss, pain, and humor. They are based on my own experiences, situations, and concepts, and because each of them is a small piece of my soul, these are the closest to my heart.” Schmidt received a \$2,000 cash award for her work.

Sarah Wertheimer, executive director of Embracing Our Differences, says that the People’s Choice award is determined by a survey that was available to the nearly 425,000 visitors who attended this year’s exhibits, which ran January 21 through April 14.

"Friendsheeps' serves as a compelling representation of respect for differences, beautifully showcasing the beauty of individuality within a harmonious collective," says Wertheimer. "By highlighting the unique characteristics of each sheep while emphasizing their shared bond, the artwork poignantly promotes acceptance. It reminds viewers that despite our differences, we can come together, support one another, and form meaningful connections based on mutual respect and understanding. In a world where acceptance of differences is essential for fostering inclusive communities, 'Friendsheeps' sends a powerful message of solidarity and harmony."

Embracing Our Differences' annual outdoor exhibits are the heart of a year-round program of activities designed to use art as a catalyst to create awareness and promote diversity.

For more information, call 941-404-5710 or visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.

About Embracing Our Differences

Embracing Our Differences is a nonprofit organization that uses the transformational power of art and education to celebrate and promote the diversity of the human family. It accomplishes this through an annual, large-scale outdoor juried art exhibition and a comprehensive series of educational initiatives, programs and resources designed for teachers and students. Visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.