Why I chose these Award Winners.
2026 Fall Show & Sale
Juror Frank Spino 110726

Artist / Title:

Deborah Conn, *But is it Art?*
I was tasked with giving only one award per artist and that made choosing a painting for Deborah extremely difficult. In the end, I chose *But is it Art?* for it's originality - I've never seen anything like it before. A virtual frame within an actual frame. And a woman inside that double frame with a gaze part contemplative, part challenging. Beyond that it is so well handled, the hands and face and eyes are so beautifully rendered. This is a masterclass in imaginative and original portraiture.

Craig Wright, *Shirt and Clown Tie*
This was unexpected. I wonder what was going on in Craig's mind when he produced this painting? A pin-striped business shirt juxtaposed with a loosely knotted, clown tie. Could this be a statement about his work life? The result is an engaging, thought-provoking work that is not only enjoyable but also quite well painted.

Mark Murphy, *Intimate Moment*
Such an touching piece and so well executed! Mark has captured a primary human experience with this impactful father and child scene. Beyond the compelling narrative, I find myself drawn to his wonderful handling of textures, notably in the child's cap and blanket, the father's jacket and in particular, his hair and beard. In addition I find the subdued tones of the piece enhance the intimacy the artist was seeking. This painting succeeds on many levels.

Sandy Yagel, *Spent*
One word comes to mind when I see this - casual. But there is nothing casual about the handling here. Beneath the laid-back mood, comes solid painting points, most notably in the strong feeling for anatomy. One senses solid mass under those T-shirts and shorts, not everybody can pull that off convincingly. I also admire the wonderful, and convincing light she has captured of this interior space. This is fun and well executed.

Gloria Tseng Fischer, *Breaktime with Grandmother*
I love the way Gloria uses her whites to hold her paintings together. Along with that she gives us a breadth of values, wonderful patterns, and a sprinkling of vivid color, which all together amounts to a delightful, light-filled work. She uses a delicate, minimalist approach which allows a freedom for the eye to dance all round the work. I

am taken by her confident, spontaneous brushwork in everything but especially the china. Gloria told me later that she used her Grandmother's own tablecloth. A delightful piece.

Marsha Brown, *Mill*
I found myself being drawn back to this painting again and again. With shape, line and color Marsha has captured an energy which causes in me a strong emotional response - and it's hard to say exactly why. Bold shapes, loose washes, off-kilter verticals and horizontals make it somehow solid and moving all at the same time. There are soft warm tones against a neutralized cool sky with harsh dark areas. It's an aggressive approach, confidently laid down, on the verge of abstraction yet producing a strong emotional experience more than a subjective reality. A very engaging piece.

Robert Henry, *Whispers of the Bocage*
Here is a fun 'outside-the-box' mixed media piece. I am attracted to it by its looseness and the feeling that Robert reached for any tool that would convey his feelings onto paper. As an outdoorsman myself, I felt a desire to walk into the setting and rest in the cool grass beneath the dark trees while I gazed out on the warm scene beyond.