



Pelham Art Center

March 2010

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Pelham Art Center 155 Fifth Avenue, Pelham, NY 10803

NINA RIZZO

2011 Alexander Rutsch Award and Exhibition for Painting

May 6 – June 25, 2011

Opening Reception and All-Age Art Workshop

Friday, May 6, 7-8:30pm



NINA RIZZO, *Thaw*, oil on panel, 48 x 48, 2009

Pelham Art Center is pleased to announce **Nina Rizzo**, of Chicago, Illinois, as the winner of the 2011 Alexander Rutsch Award in Painting. This is the 6th year that Pelham Art Center is presenting the award. Rizzo was picked from amongst almost 400 applicants from all over the nation. As the winner she will receive a \$5,000 cash prize and a solo exhibition at Pelham Art Center, from May 6 – June 25, 2011. She was one of eight finalists including Susan Klein, Philadelphia, PA; Jon Lee, Syracuse, NY; Beth Livensperger, Ridgewood, NY; Katherine Mann, Washington D.C.; Danielle Mysliwicz, Washington D.C.; Charles O'Neil, Stockbridge, MA; Livia Stein, Oakland, CA.

Rizzo received her B.F.A from The University of Texas of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and her M.F.A from The University of Texas at Austen. She is currently the Assistant Professor at the School of Art, Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. In 2010, she received the Summer Research and Artistry Grant from Northern Illinois University and completed a residency at SIM, the Center for Icelandic Visual Artists in Reykjavik, Iceland. In 2010-2011 Rizzo participated in ten group exhibitions, including *The Ambiguous Object*, a Cantanker Magazine Exhibition in Austin, Texas and *Art Chicago*, with Linda Warren Gallery, in Chicago, Illinois. This exhibit at Pelham Art Center will be Rizzo's first solo exhibition.

Rizzo's paintings are both fact and fiction. She draws from actual experience and incorporates new realities in painted space and form. From her residency in Iceland she has produced a series of glacial landscapes, while her residency in at the Jentel Foundation in Banner, Wyoming has inspired a series of cactus portraits. She uses exaggerated color and fluid brush strokes to develop sensual environments that blur the boundaries between fantasy and actuality. During her solo exhibit at the Art Center, Rizzo will present 17 works from 2008 – 2011 ranging in size from 12" x 12" to 48" x 48".

Prior Rutsch Award winners are: 2001, Frank Trankina, painting; 2003, Mitchell Marco, drawing; 2005, Dorothy Robinson, painting; 2007, Liang Guo, painting; and 2009, Tracy Miller, painting.

Pelham Art Center is proud to sponsor the competition and award to honor the memory and artistic achievement of Alexander Rutsch (1916 – 1997), an artist who actively supported Pelham Art Center for more than 25 years. After his death, friends and supporters of Alexander Rutsch and his family established a generous and significant fund to support a bi-annual, open, juried competition in a range of mediums.

The Alexander Rutsch Award and Exhibition program continues Rutsch's belief that art transcends all of our humanity. Rutsch saw art as "the stone in the water sending ripples throughout the universe." His extraordinary work, rich in the celebration of life and our shared human experiences, is included in many of public and private collections throughout the US and Europe.

About Alexander Rutsch

Alexander Rutsch was born in Vienna, Austria. After studying voice in Austria he became an opera singer like his parents, but after WWII, Rutsch's love for visual expression propelled him to change careers. He was a painter, sculptor, philosopher, musician, singer and poet. His life as a romantic is reflected in his work, as he sought to perfect his soul and humanity, "I paint my dreams," said Rutsch. "My dreams are color and life. They soar in my head like millions of symphonies. I can never stop building dreams."

For high-resolution images please contact Gallery Manager, Christine Milo, cmilo@pelhamartcenter.org
Visit www.alexanderrutsch.com for further information about the artist and www.pelhamartcenter.org for further information about the exhibition.

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Pelham Art Center 155 Fifth Avenue, Pelham, NY 10803 914-738-2525 info@pelhamartcenter.org

Hours: Tuesday- Friday, 10-5pm Saturday, 10-4pm

The Gallery is free and open to the public and ADA accessible.

Directions: Located 5 blocks from the Hutchinson Parkway exit 12 and 2 blocks from the Metro North Pelham stop

Pelham Art Center receives funding from ArtsWestchester, through county government; Public funds from New York State Council on the Arts, celebrating 50 years of building strong communities in New York State's 62 counties; Westchester Jewish Community Services; The Countess Moira Foundation; Nurse's Network of America; Town of Pelham; New York State Department of Education through State Senator Jeff Klein; Brewer Family Fund, Lifetime Arts; Strypemente Foundation; Junior League of Pelham; Broadway Electric; New Rochelle Campership Fund; Bistro Rollin; Robin's Art+Giving; Members; and Annual Fund Donors.