Pelham Art Center Announces:
11th Biennial Juried Competition
Alexander Rutsch Award and Exhibition for Painting

Call for Artist Entries Opens September 1, 2020
Visit www.pelhamartcenter.org/rutsch for details and to apply

Pelham Art Center is pleased to announce a call for entries for the 11th biennial Alexander Rutsch Award and Exhibition for Painting. This juried competition is open to U.S.-based artists aged 19 and older. The winner is awarded a $7,500 cash prize, a solo exhibition and printed catalog at Pelham Art Center. Pelham Art Center is proud to sponsor this competition and award honoring the memory and artistic achievement of artist Alexander Rutsch (1916 – 1997). Rutsch actively supported Pelham Art Center for more than 25 years. After his death, friends, family and supporters established a generous fund to support a biennial, open, juried competition in painting. The 10th Rutsch Award recipient was Colorado-based artist Sarah McKenzie. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Pelham Art Center, the 2021 Rutsch Award prize was increased to a total of $10,000 in artist stipends, with the winning artist receiving the $7,500 prize. The landmark stipend sum is also a response to the financial hardship affecting many artists at an exceptionally challenging time.

Alexander Rutsch’s daughter Alexi Rutsch Brock shared the following statement: “My family and I are thrilled that the occasion of the 11th Alexander Rutsch Memorial Award is coinciding with the Pelham Art Center’s 50th Anniversary celebration. My father truly believed that "art transcends all of our humanity". He and my mother Katherine filled the lives of my sisters and I with visual art, music, dance and theatre, and that influence continues today. My parents were very proud to support Pelham Art Center and its mission to share the Arts with everyone in the community. We are delighted that the award, created by Pelham Art Center friends in his memory, is increased and continuing during this...
challenging time. My father always said, "Smile and the world will smile back." We need that sentiment of love and community now more than ever."

The judging panel for the 11th Biennial Rutsch Award is comprised of members of the Rutsch family, Pelham Art Center affiliates, and four guest jurors: Krista Scenna, Owner of Ground Floor Gallery; Shazzi Thomas, Director of The Painting Center; Larry Ossei-Mensah, Senior Curator at MOCAD; and Steve Locke, Professor of Painting at Pratt University.

Those interested in submitting work for the 11th Alexander Rutsch Award and Exhibition can find the prospectus and entry form beginning September 1st at www.pelhamartcenter.org/rutsch. For questions, contact shilpi@pelhamartcenter.org. Deadline for entries: December 15, 2020

For Listing Purposes
2021 Biennial Competition - Alexander Rutsch Award and Exhibition for Painting.
Open for US based artists, 19 years of age and older. All work submitted must be available for exhibition and be categorized as paintings. Entries must be received by December 15, 2020. Download prospectus and apply online beginning September 1, 2020 at www.pelhamartcenter.org/rutsch. Questions: shilpi@pelhamartcenter.org

Previous winners of the Alexander Rutsch Award represent a diverse range of styles and subject matter—from abstract to hyperrealism, the playful and the politically poignant—within the rich tradition of painting. The ten previous winners continue their successful careers in painting, and speak to the breadth and prestige of the Rutsch Award.

Alexander Rutsch Award Winners:
2019: Sarah McKenzie
2017: Sammy Chong
2015: Lindy Chambers
2013: Siobhan McBride
2011: Nina Rizzo
2009: Tracy Miller
2007: Liang Guo
2005: Dorothy Robinson
2003: Mitchell Marco
2001: Frank Trankina

Sarah McKenzie. Projection (James Cohan with Bill Viola, 2018), 2018, oil and acrylic on canvas, 36 in x 54 in
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.”

In 1952, after studying under Josef Dorowsky, Josef Hoffmann, and Herbert Boeckl at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, Alexander Rutsch received a scholarship to study in France, where he made contacts and began collaborations with his contemporaries Picasso and Dali, among others. In 1954, he exhibited his work at the Salon Artistique International de Saceux and won first prize for abstract painting, the first of many awards during his prolific career.

During the 13 years he lived in Paris, Rutsch exhibited in many prominent galleries there and throughout Europe. In 1958, the City of Paris awarded him with the prestigious Arts, Science and Letters Silver Medal. In 1966, Jean Desvilles presented his prize winning film “Le Monde de Rutsch” at the Cannes Film Festival and the Venice Biennial. In 1968, Rutsch moved to Pelham, New York, where he continued to work in his studio and exhibit in galleries and museums worldwide.

Rutsch’s work, as seen through his mastery of various art forms – sculpture, painting, print-making, and drawing – has been described as “vibrating showers of lines, bold geometries, wounded anatomically rambling scrap-wood skeletons, enigmatic totem figures, and congregations of fetishized, domesticated, and recycled rubbish heaps [that] conspire to a fantasy of Expressionism, Cubism, Dada, Fauvism, Cobra, and Primitivism.”

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 public and private collections throughout the U.S. and Europe. Pelham Art Center is proud to sponsor a competition and award to honor the memory and artistic achievement of Alexander Rutsch. Visit www.alexanderrutsch.com to learn more.