

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rick Worth Painting in Paradise: 25 Year Retrospective has been made possible due to the generous spirit and support of over eighty individuals, many who not only provided access to works from their private collections, but also shared stories, their oral histories. This exhibition encapsulates the time period in Key West life, captured in paint by one man, from the close of the last century to the first decade of our new millennium, and within this span, illustrates that which is timeless and that which has been transformed.

The idea to recognize Rick Worth and the many contributions he has made to the creative and cultural life of our island's legacy was an easy one to arrive at. The scheduled dates determined that not only was he overdue for a solo show, but that a milestone anniversary was to be celebrated as well. The historical importance took hold.

Key West is the end of the road for many, the beginning for those more determined. Now art cars, painted boats, parade floats, fantasy facades, set designs, props, installations, sculptures, and paintings from 'sweet little ones' to major public murals - endless interpretations and reinterpretations of themes and causes now canvas our town in a colorful splendor at the southernmost point- a determined style that is uniquely Rick Worth.

His activism for community causes and non-profit organizations, such as the *M.A.R.C. House*, *Xena Fund*, *Aids Help Inc.*, and many more, has aided not only in improving the quality of life for others, but has served as an example of commitment and kindness. No one could be more deserving of this recognition.

A number of individuals assisted with the monumental task of the project. We owe a great deal of thanks to our brilliant *Board of Directors* and our *Advisory Board* who have ably steered our ship into safe waters, and continue to lead with vision and wisdom. Our Executive Director, **Jay Scott**, was instrumental in building support from over 100 local business partners this season. We are grateful to each, particularly *Island House*, the sponsor of this show.

The challenge was realized due to the work ethics and talents of my colleagues at TSKW. **Elena Devers**, Deputy Director managing Marketing and Media used her resources (and the generous grant support of the TDC) to inform and invite our community to this magical event. **Lauren McAloon**, Facilities Manager skillfully oversaw the hanging and lighting of the show.

Leading the way was **Jane Grannis**, who served as Assistant to the Curator. Jane's good nature simply smiled at the mound of material set before her with the charge to chronicle into visual archives. Her keen sense of space and methodical management added professionally to the installation process, with her wit and humor helping to roll over bumps.

We are grateful for the dedicated efforts of many helpers whose enthusiasm and abilities seemed endless: **Jolly Benson, Bryan Buckley, Nicki DeBiaso, Kathey Fatica, Claire Perrault, Greg Rowley, Emily Sherman, Dean Townsend, and Vera Vasek.**

We remember the late **Michael Feathers** who began the scrapbook process as a gift to the artist, and **Phill Botham**, who created the *3 Legged Dog Art Academy* booklet. We are indebted to *Harrison Gallery* and *Lucky Street Gallery* for sharing their records, and thank them for recognizing and nurturing his promise early on.

Collating 25 years of memorable facts and condensing them into a chronology took certain skills and a dictionary. I thank my mother for having given me both. **Javier Garrido** from *Barrett Printing* was determined to help me fit 1200 two inch letters into 150 linear feet- on time and under budget.

And most importantly we thank the artist, for his extraordinary commitment and contribution to the creative culture of Key West; freely sharing his techniques while instructing and inspiring up to 60 students each week in *Painting Boot Camp* at TSKW. In preparing this retrospective, one of the constants encountered, was the amount of love and appreciation for Rick's presence in our town - a true measure of one's mark and merit.

The Studios of Key West is committed to developing and showcasing the work of established, as well as emerging artists, work which represents a variety of mediums and disciplines. We are honored to have in our trust through healthy relations with the *Historic Florida Keys Foundation* and the *City of Key West* this historic hall. The Armory allows us to provide creative and innovative programs for our regional community and visitors alike.

Martha Barnes

Exhibition Curator

Program Manager, TSKW