

Islanders Win BRIO Awards

By KAREN NANI

Three City Island artists have been named as 2007 BRIO award winners (Bronx Recognizes its Own) for their photography, paintings and crafts. The Bronx Council on the Arts will present the awards to Islanders Ron Turner, Lois Weingarten and Reina Brill on June 6 at the Longwood Art Gallery.

Mr. Turner owns the Focal Point Gallery and is celebrating his 33rd year on the Island. He submitted some of his wedding pictures and is very excited to be recognized with a BRIO. "I figured that some of my wedding work crossed over the commercial line into fine art," he told *The Current*. "Apparently the judges thought so, too."

Mr. Turner's work can also be seen this month at Focal Point Gallery, along with 30 artists from all over the New York area in the annual "Calling All Artists" exhibition.

Ms. Weingarten has lived on City Island for 19 years but has been an artist for even longer. "I can't remember when I didn't paint," she told *The Current*. She was a member of CIAO (City Island Arts Organization) and regularly displays her paintings at the Chamber of Commerce Arts and Crafts Fairs. She studied at Brooklyn College and received her B.A. and M.B.A. from Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey.

She describes her work in this way: "There are few drawn images in my work. I use blocks of color to form shapes and boundaries. I am interested in the illusion of an image—somewhere between abstraction and realism, where the image is recognizable but not structured."

Reina Mia Brill is a former New York Foundation for the Arts award winner. Her work has been featured in two major exhibitions: "Needle Culture" in Flagstaff, Arizona, and "Twist and Shout: The New Needle Arts," which opened at the Florida Craftsmen Gallery in St. Petersburg and will continue to travel to museums across the country through 2007. She was one of five Americans invited to participate in the 12th International Triennial of Tapestry in Poland for 2007.

The work of all these artists will be featured in "BX1: The Second Bronx Artist Biennial." The exhibit will showcase the talents of Bronx artists who are featured winners of the borough's BRIO Individual Artist Fellowship, which is part of the mission of the Bronx Council on the Arts. The BX1 Festival is a celebration of these artists' continued dedication to excellence as well as a way of honoring those who have continued to live, work and produce art in the Bronx.

Since its inception in 1989, the BRIO Awards program has continued to provide support for the artistic development of Bronx artists. Over the years, more than \$500,000 has been awarded to 185 artists. The selection of the awardees is based solely on the artistic excellence of the work submitted and judged anonymously by a panel of professional artists (different panelists each year) from outside the Bronx and working in each respective field. BRIO awardees must complete a one-time public service activity to receive their complete cash award.

The council acknowledges another City Island friend on their Web site (bronxarts.org): "In today's day and age, with all the cutbacks, the arts are put on the back burner, but NYC Council Members Maria del Carmen Arroyo and James Vacca continue to support the arts and the work we do in our beautiful borough of the Bronx."

The Longwood Art Gallery is located at Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse at 149th Street in the Bronx. The ceremony starts at 5:30 p.m. For more information, go to their link <http://www.longwoodcyber.org/>.



Ron Turner's wedding photography (shown above) earned him a BRIO award in June from the Bronx Council on the Arts, along with the paintings and crafts of Islanders Lois Weingarten and Reina Mia Brill (shown below).

