

**PATRICIA LASPINO UNVEILS NEW MASTERWORK
THE FIRST IN A NEW SERIES EXPLORING THE PEONY**

Patricia Laspino, renowned contemporary American painter, unveiled a new masterwork entitled, “**Awakening**”. With 70 translucent layers, the original oil on canvas measures 36” x 36” and is the first oil painting in a new series exploring the peony. The new peony series is an expansion of her oeuvre formally known as, the “*Orchid Alliance Project-Bridging Art & Science*”, where her large-scale paintings use orchids as metaphor to raise awareness for cultural and biological evolution and environmental stewardship. Her floral portraits convey the interconnectedness of humanity and the natural world. Over her forty-year career, the artist developed her signature style which interweaves 60-80 layers of transparent oil color over a textural groundwork of fossilized botanical impressions.

Laspino’s paintings hang in many public and private collections including the Smithsonian Institution, the US House of Representatives and Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale among others. Her self-curated national art exhibitions are engineered to provide participants with a richly layered experience of transformative artworks, educational information and artist lectures. She has collaborated and exhibited with numerous prestigious public institutions, such as the Smithsonian Institution, the Missouri Botanic Garden, the American Orchid Society, and the US Botanic Garden at the Capitol. Her oil painting of the “Michelle Obama Orchid”, which was commissioned in 2014 by the US Botanic Garden and viewed by over 250,000 visitors, is currently under consideration for permanent installation in the Obama Foundation Library, Chicago, Illinois.

View and learn more about “Awakening” online at:

http://orchidallianceproject.com/PLaspino_Awakening.html

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Artist Commentary on “Awakening”:

“Expanding my study of nature's beauty and diversity through the rare and exotic floral species that influence human culture, history and art, I am now working on a new series of paintings that explore the peony. With a similar track record of high esteem, attraction and healing as the orchid, peonies also date back thousands of years, from the imperial palaces of China and Japan to ancient Greece. Regarded as the national flower of China, the peony symbolizes peace and opulence; and in art and literature, alluring female beauty.

”Awakening” is the first peony painting in a series inspired by my many visits to Cricket Hill Garden in Connecticut. Reviving my childhood love of the peonies my mom once cultivated, I am aware again that flowers speak a universal language of beauty - one that creates profound emotions in the heart that last far beyond our physical presence. This truth has shaped my perception of the world and continues to inspire my art.

The painting and subsequent series, is a broadening of the scope of my muse and metaphor, the flower. Through my artmaking process, I am perpetually seeking to understand and convey the nature of beauty. Be it for aesthetics or biological necessity, most humans believe beauty is subjective to highly evolved beings. But what of other mindless plants and organisms with forms that have beautifully evolved to attract in order to survive?

In my oil painting, “Awakening”, I depict both the spirit and the seduction of the peony. I reveal a moment in time in the flower’s ephemeral life cycle, while at the same time illuminating its very essence and purpose. Petals delicately tinted with over forty layers of transparent oil color glaze are animated by light and shadow. Against a backdrop of rich organic textures and forms, the peony entices the viewer forward into its wild yet soothing embrace.

My longtime friend, scholar and collaborator, Thomas Mirenda, Director of Horticulture, Education and Outreach for the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden, in Papaikou, Hawaii, eloquently wrote, ” I totally love your latest work of art...massive but delicate, colorful but such subtlety, compelling...inspiring wildness but also the impulse to possess such wild beauty. You are so masterful in your ability to capture a moment in time...and unfathomable loveliness.”