



COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE

RACHEL KARRAS

Committees: ACADA Executive Sub Committee

Role: ACADA Cookie Industry Representative

Q. How long have you been involved in the cake decorating industry?

Ever since I was small, I have been an avid baker. I got it from my mother, who got it from her Irish Mother, who was an amazing wedding cake decorator. When you come from a big family, you bake. Cakes, scones, biscuits, pies. There was never a time at home when our biscuit tins weren't full of shortbread, or the cake tin filled with sultana cake. The Edmonds recipe book was tattered, and dog eared, with pages missing, but it didn't matter, the recipes were known by heart.

I was familiar with the intricacies of Royal Icing and all the tricky piping bags and nozzles from watching my Nan, but it wasn't until 2008 when I saw a sugar cookie being lavishly decorated. on the Martha Stewart Show, that my interest piqued. I was hooked. I wanted to be a cookie decorator. Nothing could quell my desire to learn. I practiced all the time and searched what I could on the then limited internet content. As a make-up Artist, a balanced hand, eye for colour and small detail has equipped me well with designing cohesive cookie sets and holding a piping bag steady.

Q. What have you achieved in our industry that makes you feel super proud?

In these past 15 years, I have met and learnt technique from cookie idols. I have relished taking decorating classes from visiting international teachers, and gleaned ideas and tips from likeminded cookie and cake artists, and I made lifelong friends along the way. I travelled to Cookie Con 2014, fangirling over cookie idols, (we all do it!)

I was a surprised Cookie Decorating Finalist in the 2021 ACADA Australasian Cake Oscar Awards and won the ACADA Supremo Award in 2022.

Q. What do you love about our industry?

I love everything about it.

Q. What did you do before joining this industry?

I worked as a make up artist.

Q. Why did you join ACADA?

It was because of being a finalist at the Cake Oscars Awards, that I decided to become an ACADA member. I was deeply encouraged that my talent had been recognised by such a respected organization of international note that I wanted to be a part of it all. This encouragement allowed me to believe in myself. I was motivated to push my own limits in decorating. To be more daring and to challenge myself on a personal level and not to compare my abilities with others around me.

The team at ACADA are not swayed by age, popularity, or gender. Not by how many followers on social media you may or may not have. ACADA has a team of highly skilled professional Cake and Cookie experts who show no division between Cake and Cookie decorators but see us all as a creative unit. Who look for and recognise talent in the most unusual of places. A team that wants to push new boundaries in the sugar world of decorating, and to reach out and recognise international talent. Thank you, Joan and Mary, for making ACADA a welcoming place to be a part of.

Q. What do you hope to achieve in your new role?

It has been a joyful journey of growth this past year for me as an ACADA Board Member, and Cookie Ambassador. This coming year I hope to build on the friendships I have made within the industry. I want to encourage and build up fellow decorators in their sweet journey, and to see my peers push their own personal limits to reach their goals and new heights. And I would love to see some amazing collabs.