

# Studio Visits

Darius Yektai, a Southampton native who recently exhibited at Tripoli Gallery

BY CHRISTINA FLOYD PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC CAHAN

"I WAS BORN IN SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL. I came out here every summer of my youth, and I wanted to give my children that same experience," says Darius Yektai. The Hamptons-based artist tried working in San Diego, Paris and New York City, but, he says, "I was a salmon swimming up river; I needed to get back to my roots. I grew up on Sagg Pond, I like fishing in the bays, I like fishing in the ocean; this is my five-mile radius, my bubble."

Yektai built his studio on Sprig Tree Path in Bridgehampton, adjacent to the properties of his father, Abstract Expressionist painter Manoucher Yektai, and his brother, Nico, a furniture designer. Now he lives and works here year-round. "It is a long winter, but I have figured out how to do it now," says Darius. "A lot of traveling and going surfing in different places."

Despite the seasonal wanderlust, it is here in Bridgehampton that he finds inspiration. "I step outside my studio and the sky is mine, and it is my energy



*That is a 1952 Silver Cloud Airstream. We got it through the doors with one inch to spare. I use it as an office or private space in the studio.*

"Dummy quote here Usessectem zrriliquat autem dolor sasdent am vullum euguer sed dolore ads endit augiam dignim ing ex erotisim zrrit praesequam diamcon sequam dolore ming eu facilit do euguer irit la faci."



*Dummy copy here Em del illandi onsequat atum nos nostie eu faccumsan utem inisim*



reflected from around me, and I can breathe at peace because there are no sounds or expectations from the city agitating me," he says. "I tried keeping two studios, one in New York City, but I could not work there because right outside my door was this hum, this buzz."

His workspace is a 1,200-square-foot studio attached to his home, with 14-foot ceilings that let the Hamptons light seep in from all different directions. The only noises are the wind blowing and the birds singing. This is where he creates his large textural paintings of figures that incorporate cutouts and his series of landscapes, which he calls Hierarchies.

But it is not just the landscape that motivates his work, which is part of the permanent collection at Guild Hall. (Yektai has also been featured in solo exhibitions as well as group shows at the Sara Nightingale Gallery, Salomon Contemporary, LTMH Gallery and Tripoli Gallery.) The 38-year-old finds inspiration in "the lives of artists that are poetic," including masters such as Paul Cézanne, Pierre Bonnard, Alberto Giacometti, Lucian Freud and Pablo Picasso. "I look at the life of these artists and their dedication to their work," he says. "The city is there for me when I need it, but the home where I live promotes me forward." *dyektai.com*

*Darius Yektai's work was recently on view at the Tripoli Gallery as part of the "Flip Flops and Popsicles" exhibition. 30A Jobs Lane, Southampton, 377-3715; triplogallery.com*



*Dummy copy here Em deldsa andi onsequat atum nos nosti eu faccumsan utem inisim*

