

# In Very Different Ways, Shows Go for Emotions

By Eric Ernst

For devotees of art that appeals to the emotions as much as the intellect, the current exhibits at the Sarah Nightingale Gallery in Water Mill and the Tulla Booth Gallery in Sag Harbor provide approaches that engage the viewer on the same empathetic level while presenting totally different mediums and striving to strike dramatically disparate responsive chords.

In the paintings of Darius Yektaï (at the Nightingale Gallery) and the photographs of Daniel Jones (at the Tulla Booth Gallery) respectively, the viewer is offered almost a composite of the yin and yang of angst and beauty, both of which surprisingly manage to carry similar tones of wistfulness and sadness. Their very differences, in fact, establish a weird bond between them that—although it seems antithetical to their artistic approaches—is even more clearly delineated by their juxtapositions.

Darius Yektaï's recent paintings offer a decidedly taut surface structure that creates as much emotional tension within the works as his bold and unabashedly aggressive brush strokes. Featuring what would contextually seem essentially bucolic and even romantic themes, the com-

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positional arrangements have an intensity that overwhelms any gentility or overt sentimentality.

Nevertheless, through both his reverent concepts of nature and a loving approach to classical compositional arrangements, Mr. Yektaï is able to express continually an indefinable innocence that is powerful for its more understated qualities. He conjures a landscape that is as anthropomorphized as the figures that populate it and has, in the words of D. H. Lawrence, "its own weird anima, and ... changes like a living animal under our gaze."

In concert with this, his juxtaposition of an occasionally jarring use of coloration and his use of rhythmic devices in the elongation of figuration create an interesting contrast and intriguing struggle between the works' latent romanticism and their assertively energetic and intense use of space.

This is especially true in "Untitled (Backyard)" and "Untitled (On Rug)," both oil on canvas, 2002. The latter also carries with it references to Matisse's Moroccan paintings in

the mixture of landscape and still-life elements, as well as Mr. Yektaï's use of unabashedly contrasting coloration.

Interestingly, "The Skateboard Family" (oil on canvas) also carries compositional relationships to Matisse, but in this case is more influenced in terms of its compositional arrangement of figures, which recall his 1909 first version of "The Dance." With its wildly energetic perception of nature, however, the landscape motif becomes a dominant influence and, much as in Soutine's paintings, the surrounding environment becomes as infused with existential vibrancy as the people within it.

The exhibition of Darius Yektaï's recent work, entitled "White Grass," continues at the Sarah Nightingale Gallery in Water Mill through April 28.

The photographs by Daniel Jones on display at the Tulla Booth Gallery in Sag Harbor, on the other hand, offer visions of nature that, while infinitely more contained and subtle than Mr. Yektaï's, nevertheless are similarly imbued with a vibrancy that is arrestingly animated.

Using a large-format camera to achieve the highest resolution of detail and tonality, Mr. Jones creates an emotional component that is enhanced by nature's latent energy—which, though frozen in the photograph, seems only momentarily arrested.

Heavily influenced in much of his work by both the intimacy of Edward Weston and the majestic visionary grandeur of Ansel Adams, Mr. Jones creates images that are extremely refined yet, as was mentioned in a re-

Darius Yektaï Shows His 'White Grass' Series in Water Mill

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Works by Darius Yektaï are on view at the Sarah Nightingale Gallery in Water Mill through April 27.

view of his work in August of 2002, are imbued "with a hidden feeling of tension that crackles just beneath the surface of the work."

This is especially notable in "Slot Canyon" (silver print) which creates a dramatic sense of motion through its effective contrast in textures. Leaning toward abstraction in its erasure of managed perspective through the absence of a horizon line, it is redolent of some of Man Ray's still-life photographs, in particular his 1936 "Mesure pour Mesure."

Also seemingly influenced by Man Ray are a pair of works entitled "Nude #7" and "Nude #8," which gain their impact through a use of light that expresses an energy and intensity that seems only marginally harnessed.

The exhibit of the photographs of Daniel Jones, entitled "Landscapes, Etc.," continues at the Tulla Booth Gallery in Sag Harbor through April 28.

## East End Arts Council Plans Sculpture Show

"Natural Forces," an invitational sculpture show, will open at the East End Arts Council in Riverhead on Friday, April 18, with a reception from 5 to 8 p.m. Sculptor Bob Berks will give an artist's talk at the opening.

Curated by Elizabeth Malunowicz and on view through May 17, the show will feature the works of Bob Berks, Hap Bowditch Jr., Jim "Slim" Cook, Ellen Nora, Sal Villano, Bob Thorn, Arden Scott and many other sculptors.

For more information, call 727-0900.