

# Laguna NEWS-POST

## Sue Greenwood heralds abstract painters

Thursday, January 17, 2008

**T**he Sue Greenwood Fine Art Gallery heralds the month of January with exhibiting some of its best artists. This includes a diverse array of abstract paintings by Sally Chiu, Joseph Maruska and Scott Yeskel, and classic pottery/sculpture by Bennett Bean. Greenwood chose the four artists because their abstract art has a Zen quality, something of an Asian timeless feel, a soothing, non-chaotic sensibility to start the New year on a positive note. Besides serenity, these artists commonly create nonfigurative work that evoke in their enigmatic shapes and compositions, the possibility of the emergence of the figurative. In each of their paintings there is a sense of place, land, sky and water. Chiu's art seems to make the viewer look through veils. With strata of colors on canvas, her work evokes a delicate enigmatic quality, a subtle mist, a hushed calm. Interlaced within these tonal layers are images created from stencils. To fully appreciate Chiu's art, the viewer enters the painting's world and explores its topography, roaming through hidden images and mes-sages and meandering around



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swatches of exuberant color as the beauty of Chiu's mysterious vistas are discovered.

Maruska's canvasses are more sensuous with graceful earthtones of gold, oranges, browns, reds and yellows set against calming blues that seem like water and sky. Maruska has a different painting process.

He works on Masonite panel and coats the surface with a clay emulsion giving the final work of art a sculptured, three-dimensional layered look as if he is actually carving out landscapes; and yet he is not. Then Maruska punctuates the surface with elegant undulating marks that play off each other, giving the final painting a dream-like romantic Asian presence that is both real and unreal.

As he can easily create in both genres, Yeskel's paintings are both abstractions and representational art.

When he paints abstractly, as in this exhibition, inevitable we perceive sky,

clouds, land, sea and horizon line, even when it is not his intent. Somehow Yeskel's nonfigurative paintings always have a story and always are infused with emotions. Thus, his non-figurative work leans toward the figurative. Yeskel works slowly, building the dynamics of the surface, allowing him to direct the image rather than he directing the image. In this way, he is not tied down to the expected, but can anticipate the serendipitous, the playful, yet hidden aspect of his art.

Being a ceramic artist, Bean's art is unlike the work of the other three artists. You can call him a potter as he works with clay and creates a form of pottery; but Bean's work is not functional, but more sculptural.

He begins the creative process with the traditional wheel throwing of clay to achieve a pot-like shape; but then the process moves in an unlikely direction. Bean opens up the form, bends it, to arrive at an abstracted, hollow undulating interlocking configuration. His artistic strength is in the glazing process. Bean sands the form and paints it with white lay slip (a liquid binder). After being polished and bisque fired, the work resembles something



Scott Yeskel, "Commute," 30" x 30" oil on canvas with collage, 2008. Photo courtesy of SGFA.

like a pure white ostrich egg.

It is at this time that Bean adds his superb individual touch: tape to delineate patters, marks and colors and an amazing surface of glazes. The form is fired again as it resists the tape and abstract patterns begin to appear. In the second firing, the tape burns off and the work takes on its final metamorphosis. It is now decorative, colorful and elegant. A regal appearance from gold leaf placed

around its surface gives each object great beauty.

Meet the artists and see the art from 6 to 9 p.m. during today's First Thursday Art Walk. Visit Sue Greenwood Fine Art is at 330 N. Coast Highway., 949-494-0669 or online at [www.suegreenwoodfineart.com](http://www.suegreenwoodfineart.com).

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