

CONCORD

At McGowan, the sound of regional voices

Three artists' works
joined in singular exhibitBy ELAINE LOFT
For the Monitor

McGowan Fine Art Gallery is presenting three New England artists with distinct techniques and understated voices in its new show, "Trio," opening tomorrow.

The quiet waterscapes of Wendy Prellwitz, the dreamy organic forms of Marisa Dilorio Peters and the subconscious world of John LaPrade all bring us to places slightly beyond our periph-

eral vision.

Prellwitz employs a variety of mediums, but her new works shown in this exhibit are all monotypes. Monotypes are created by drawing or painting on a smooth surface, then transferring the image to a piece of paper by pressing the two together. Prellwitz's abstracted landscapes are focused on water imagery, rendered in quiet colors.

"Under Glow #1" captures the base of an arched bridge abutment, pointedly illuminated by a quadrant of light. The piece is deceptively simple, a study in geometry and contrasting colors, but

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Courtesy image

"First Light #6" by Wendy Prellwitz.

the choice of marine blue and mango brings beauty to a familiar viewpoint. "Strand and Tide" is a bisected diagram of sand and water, with overlaying colors suggesting the incoming tide and an indigo ribbon of blue bringing to mind kelp below the surface. Sand, water and sand covered by water seem to be broken into separate segments, rather as one might perceive the sequence of events carried by the

incoming tide. Prellwitz is subtle but deliberate; her undulating interpretations of water and light are deeper at second glance.

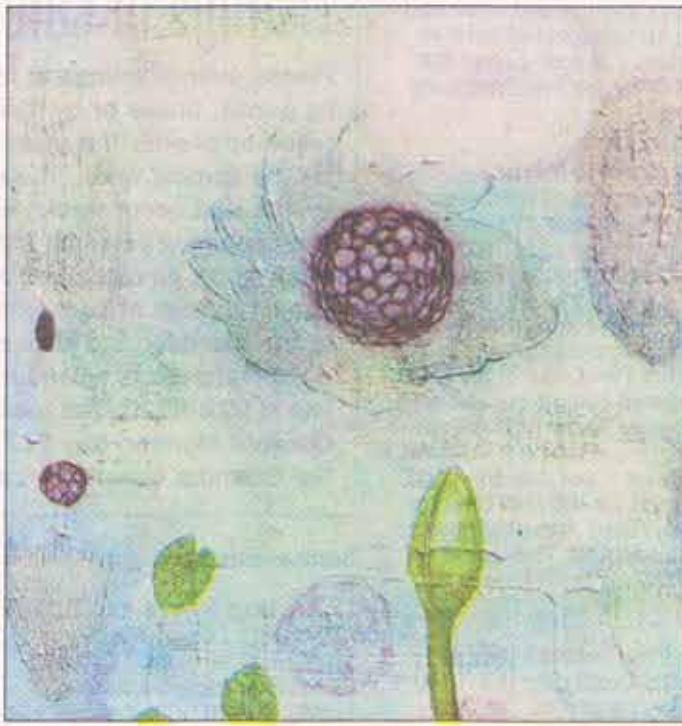
Marisa Dilorio Peters draws you in with her enticing use of color: lime, fuchsia, gray, plum and periwinkle. Her organic forms seem familiar: a lotus, a lily leaf, perhaps a cone or a pod. It is a bit hard to discern what is happening in her tableaux. Are the forms floating in the

air or the water? Are these studies of organic forms or a sequence of events?

At first glance "Thrive" is just a garden scene: bee, flowers, grass, but the details change the story. The bee is heading straight toward the ground, or perhaps it was collected and pinned. There are seeds, a bit like the black, flat watermelon variety, floating downward from an unknown source. The majority of the

painting is soft and dreamy, but the grass in the foreground is rendered in precise detail, and looks like it was lifted from a 19th-century piece. It seems like there is action in this painting, although the source of energy is not quite revealed.

"Emergent" has an Impressionistic Monet water lily overtone, but once you get beyond the colors you



Courtesy image

"Emergent" by Marisa Dilorio Peters

notice the forms are a bit off-kilter. The center of the flower is inky purple and cranial in form. In contrast to the large flower are small, veiny leaves, which may be floating away, or sinking to the bottom. Ghosts of pods, or cones, hover about the edge, while a strident green spear thrusts defiantly upward. Familiarity does not assure understanding.

The third artist, John LaPrade, presents the most enigmatic pieces of this show. Gallery Director Sarah Chaffee notes LaPrade "explores rich subconscious imagery overlaid with memory and nostalgia." Mixed media, in the forms of collage, drawings and sculpture showcase LaPrade's diversity. The most unusual piece is an old, worn, white-washed leather shoe encrusted with

freshwater pearls. The shoe is literally down at the heel, but stoic. The pearls, which LaPrade felt had to be real in order to complete the metaphor, seem like coral attached to a petrified object on the sea floor.

Equally entrancing, in a darker way, are three minuscule bouquets of flowers, constructed of old buttons and bits of metal. Thimbles attached to plain wood blocks serve as vases. Some of the flower parts, like the tiny metal leaves and stems with seed pearls seem like they would be movable in the right breeze.

After peering closely at the impossibly tiny details, you might also wonder if the blossoms are meant to be dead or alive.

LaPrade also fashions complicated collages with

figures cut from postage stamps affixed to backdrops of watercolor and enamel. "Greek Armada" is just that, a fleet of ships fading off into the horizon. In the foreground is an island, populated by a single flowering tree, tended by a winged woman. Upon closer look, some of the ships seem to be on fire, and a female hand with dangerous red nails emerges from the sea, by a large trident. A Greek tragedy appears to be afoot.

Finally there are LaPrade's multi-layered works of colored pencil, watercolor, collage and enamel. The colors are rich and deep and shimmering. Although beautiful abstractions when viewed from afar, only inches away from the surface one discovers hidden letters and tiny figures.

Called the "desktop" series, all of these works were created on an old high school writing desk with a paddle-shaped arm. LaPrade, a onetime seminarian, incorporates religious iconography in some of his work.

"Cathedral," the façade and profile of a church resembling Notre Dame, is constructed on torn edge brown paper, with an iridescent midnight blue sky. "Cathedrals Stained Glass" is a riot of streaming colors, an abstract vision.

"Trio" opens with an artist's reception tomorrow from 5 to 7 p.m. and will run until July 21. McGowan Fine Art is located at 10 Hills Ave. in Concord and is open from Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.