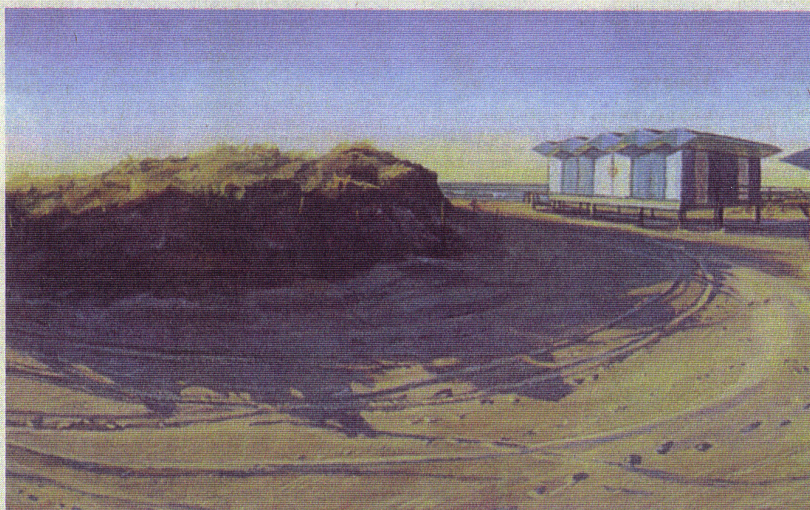


# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



"Diner" by Megan Maloy.



"Items Matching [Art]," by Jody Servon.

By WILLIAM ZIMMER

OCEANVILLE  
**T**HE Noyes Museum of Art is by far the smallest and the southernmost of the museums among which the New Jersey Fine Arts Annual is rotated. But in terms of ambition and good eyes behind it, it is right up there, as evidenced by this year's edition.

The 24 artists were chosen by Hsiao-Ning Tu, the Noyes's curator, and Fred B. Adelson, an art history professor at Rowan University in Glassboro who also covers the arts in southern New Jersey for The New York Times. They each contributed half of the informative short essays about the artists in the handsome catalog. The wall labels, too, are better than most, not least because when a work is made up of many, often unusual materials, instead of being described with the usual befuddling catch-all "mixed media," those materials are spelled out. This is important because many of the inclusions are complex amalgams.

The show turns out to be very entertaining and, in places, poignant or challenging. It is subtitled "Crossing Boundaries" and Ms. Tu means limitations of all kinds, from aesthetic to political. Many of the works are confrontational, but in others the crossing can be translated into a benign something extra.

There is an emphasis, but not an overwhelming one, on artists from southern New Jersey who are often left out when the annual is at other sites. Ms. Tu pointed out that Linwood, where the painter Marilyn Brent comes from, is "right in our back-

ART REVIEW

## Crossing Boundaries in Fine Arts Annual

yard." Ms. Brent's large painting, "Dune on the Beach at Atlantic City," captures perfectly the local beach ambience; the dune is almost round, and bicycle tire tracks and footprints surround it. This way the viewer's eye is led around and through the eight-foot-long painting.

The show has a 50-year age span: from those in their 20's to those in their 70's, and there is an almost even male-female split. Any unevenness lies in the categories of art represented. There's not much painting. Besides Ms. Brent there's Mel Leipzig from Trenton, a representational painter who always sets himself new compositional challenges. His two paintings here continue to be autobiographical. They are set in his studio, allowing him to depict paintings within a painting. The compositions seem to incorporate the spatial distortions resulting from long or wide-angle camera shots.

The painting on paper by Charles McVicker from Skillman is autobiographical, too, but reconditely so. His painting features items from his collection of FiestaWare crockery against a background of lively patterns that represent his interest



Detail of "Dune on the Beach in Atlantic City," top, by Marilyn Brent, and "The Limner," by William Skrips.

CROSSING BOUNDARIES

The Noyes Museum of Art, Lily Lake Road, Oceanville.

Through July 8. (609) 652-8848.

in jazz. These diverse contributions make a sort of self-portrait.

Painting, but a kind that incorporates another step, is practiced by Barbara Klein from Lawrenceville. She makes a wealth of small, quirky abstract paintings, and then proceeds to relate them by making grid compositions. The two here, each consisting of nine units, "Soul Mate" and "Blue-Eyed Blonde," refer by their titles to the lingo of personal ads, a hint that Ms. Klein tends to personify her images.

A lot of the work has multiple parts. Grid compositions by Roslyn Rose from Hoboken harmonize the faces of live people to faces in art. "Close-Up 2000" is a meditation on noses. A mega-multipart work is what Ms. Tu calls the only conceptual work in the show. Jody Servon from South River shows about a third of the 138 items purchased on the eBay Web site on Feb. 29, 2000. She spent as much as \$8 and as little as 90 cents for the objects in what she refers to as her "family." Viewers might dismiss many of the purchases as kitsch but will probably covet others. It's an absorbing slice of American life, and brings the hoary Dada concept of

the "found object" into cyberspace.

The show's other work that physically dominates its space is "A Circle of Women," by Ellen Hanauer from Verona. Thirteen clay sculptures in the tradition of biomorphic Surrealism are arranged in a circle on the floor as if they're having a pow-wow. Each one is an awkward-appearing compound of breasts and buttocks meant to emphasize the inner emotional life of women instead of the accepted standards of beauty.

William Skrips from Blairstown contributes lively personages made mostly of wood in the tradition of Chicago's "Hairy Who" school. "The Limner" is an evocation of an artist who is deep in reverie before he acts. Wood cut with the precision of a furniture-maker, the other profession of James Greenwall from Newfield, is the chief component in his surreal "Stay Back." Something resembling a lobster claw fitted sprouting what look like bristles from a push broom is confined in a cage, and the viewer feels more pity than terror.

The New Jersey art annuals have always had a lot of photography, even before what is now realized as photography's universal parity with painting. Complex digital processes are in evidence, but the straightforward C-print by Megan Maloy from Hoboken is the most winning. "Diner" is inevitably nostalgic as a young man sits alone on a booth in a Belvidere diner looking out the window at the busy-ness of a truckstop. The wistful sensation that such an experience is becoming more and more rare is compounded by the Manhattan-published newspaper in front of the man. The Village Voice threatens to persuade him to cross the river.