

# ART COMMENTARY *With Marion Wolberg Weiss*

## GALLERY HOPPING, HAMPTONS' STYLE

### Part 2

We're still on a Saturday night whirl as we visit art venues which are called "alternate spaces." Linda Stein's home in the Springs is another good example, although galleries established in artists' homes are still pretty uncommon. Even so, Ms. Stein just doesn't hang a few works here and there; she has built a multiple-room display space in her basement which doesn't look very different from a conventional gallery.

While Ms. Stein's older pieces, a series of metal sculptures hanging on the wall, represent considerable workmanship, her current series of watercolors with digital input signifies quite a departure regarding techniques and media. However, Ms. Stein's feminist themes prevail. (In this series, a celebration of diverse female achievers like Margaret Sanger, Flo Kennedy, Virginia Woolf and Billy Jean King.)

We are drawn to the watercolors' subtle, even romantic demeanors, as colors and facial features merge, blur and evolve. Take the montage of Ms.

Sanger as an example: from her portrait covered in white to pictorial representation to replacement by patterns. We wonder if Ms. Stein is simply experimenting with effects or is she also suggesting a connection between her technique and a thematic statement capturing a particular woman or all the women represented.

For instance, there's Ms. Stein's identifying piece for the entire series, "Looking Within." The images are done on a grid and feature bits and pieces of female body parts such as lips and a nose. This fragmentation is certainly symptomatic regarding not only the women's movement, but also individual struggles.

Montauk's Depot Art Gallery represents another alternate venue, a combination rental space and cooperative for the Montauk Artists' Association. As its name implies, the gallery is the former Long Island Railroad Depot with new space upstairs for art classes. Currently on exhibition are Nick Tarr's signature constructions, works that deal with identity issues, as Ms. Stein's also do.

Mr. Tarr's pieces, however, feature personal identity, not Ms. Stein's historical bent: almost all of Mr. Tarr's works have mirrors reflecting the viewer's image, a fascinating idea that has been consistent and coherent with the the artist for the last several years.

As a result, the spectator can take on any number of personae, depending on a particular piece. This is fantasy at its best.

Maura Donahue's raku-fired pots are always a joy to behold as well, her structures and designs evoking a variety of diverse sensibilities: comfort, stability, and delicacy. Stephen Loschen's found object sculptures are fresh and energizing as are John Pomianowski's prints: a series of surfing exploits that seem more like a cinematic montage. Some are sequential and some have no special order according to the artist, but there's adventure and daring in the images.

We'd like to see more, perhaps in a bigger format.

*The show at the The Depot in Montauk will be on view until Sept. 29.*