

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Listing Information:

Flights of Fancy

December 9, 2006 thru January 31, 2007

gallery hours | M-F 10-5 or by appointment **FREE ADMISSION**

Montclair NJ – artspace 129 is pleased to present **FLIGHTS OF FANCY**. The show consists of painting and sculpture by regional and gallery artists interpreting birds. Each of the artists takes a unique approach at addressing birds as symbols, some ominous, some spiritual and some whimsical. Birds are motifs that a variety of cultures have varied meanings for and many artists depict them in their art. Some artists make casual comment while others make the investigation of birds the focus of much if not all their work. Several of the artists in this show, **Ellen Reinkraut, Nancy Nikkal and Irene Gennaro** include works which have become critical elements of their personal vocabulary. Some of the other artists included make subtle references to these only on occasion.

Ellen Reinkraut's style, is expressive. Her canvases use drawing, scratching and scumbling to reveal her subject beneath. Birds emerge from a haze of elusive shapes. Her creative process focuses on the layering of symbols, brushwork and color, and the scraping out what is not essential. The art has a loose improvisational spirit that is subtly centered at the same time. The images are expressive, deeply personal and suggestive. They invite multiple interpretations. **Ellen Reinkraut** lives and paints in Bergen County, NJ. Reinkraut's artworks have traveled nationally with important exhibitions in universities and museums, Reinkraut received a BFA in Art Education at the University of Cincinnati and studied at the Art Student's League, New York City, as well as with professional artists Bruce Dorfman, Norman Lewis, Hugh Mesibov, and Montclair artist Miriam Beerman.

Irene Gennaro A sculptor born and raised in New York City, has been exhibiting nationally for 20 years. As a second generation carver, Gennaro bears witness to a unique cultural history that she has reshaped and made her own. "The sculptures I create arise from my dreams or day dreams. These images are, I believe harvested from the subconscious. It is a method of realization that surprises and delights me while generously nurturing my work." The works included in the exhibition are carved hardwood wall hung pieces from her series "*Spirit Messengers*" They are evocative, brightly colored and loom in the gallery's lobby area. **Gennaro** received a degree in graphic design from The City University of New York, and has studied at The School of Visual Arts, The New School for Social Research and The Brooklyn Museum Art School. She has had almost 20 solo exhibitions and her work can be found in private and public collections throughout the US, and she currently has a gallery in Japan.



Changling
Irene Gennaro



Curious OWL
George Saj



William Skrips

Nancy Nikkal, an artist who has been showing with the gallery since it opened is primarily a collagist. The collages and drawings in the exhibit are primarily from her TALK TALK series. These were humorous commentaries on TV and our media culture, and featured a semi abstract and fictional turtle and bird standing and arguing, their noses in each other's faces. She holds an undergraduate degree from Hunter College of the City University of New York (CUNY) Post-graduate studies include printmaking at Pratt Manhattan Graphics in NYC, the Center for Contemporary Graphics in Norwalk, CT, and the Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, NY. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, The Republic of Singapore, India and Japan, in galleries, in solo and group exhibitions, and is included in private, corporate and museum collections.

George Thaddeus Saj, a local retired physician turned artist who has often entertained the public through his humorous depictions of familiar and fanciful characters has created a series of owls. Owls, are known as creatures of deception, wisdom, clairvoyance and sometimes even magic. Though they have become familiar in contemporary mythology in examples like Harry Potter's Hedwig, our opinion of them is also formulated through a rich heritage of the ritual place they hold in American Indian Culture and animal folklore. Saj's brightly colored wood constructions depict a range from silly, to serious, and judgmental owls, thus depicting the variety of types and personalities. Saj is a prolific artist who tends to work in series and actively shows regionally.

Bill Skrips, a new artists to the gallery, grew up in Verona, NJ in a house filled with stuff for which he had plenty of imagined uses for. His father was however, not willing to part with anything. With the lack of space, the few objects that he "collected" were miniscule—and now as a working artist he makes up for it by filling up the large building that he calls his studio in NW New Jersey. The studio is just a wonderful tumble of raw materials. He considers it a part of his head—literally, a creative space. Re-using discards and found objects has always had an appeal. Not only does he have a penchant for collecting things, but the gratification that comes from giving reclaimed materials. His works allow the objects to take on a new life which is unique at times The sculptures are playful and very approachable, often reminiscent of folk art, though Skrips was formally trained at SVA in New York .

Mary Justine Kolba is a native NJ artist who received BA and MA degrees from Montclair State University. Her background includes work as an actress and a visual artist. Her artwork ranges from design to printmaking especially where her explorations encompass intaglio and chine colle. Her works have been widely exhibited and she is also member of the Viridian Print Studio in Livingston.

NY and Connecticut resident artist **Susan Baker's** small sculpture is always pure fun and whimsy. A regular at the gallery, her newest works incorporate fiber – giving a softness and humanness to the pieces. Whether created with machine parts, sticks and found objects with modeling clay or pencil, paper and paint create playful images that become part of an eloquent, funny and surprising whole which she finds reflective of what life is all about.

Christina Saj, artist and gallery owner features a just a few vividly colored depictions of birds in context of a landscape. Her pieces, executed in her characteristic, abstract colorful style on ceramic tile are found in the galleries conference room, alongside her father (George Thaddeus') constructions. Demonstrating the family proclivity to bright color and flat shapes juxtaposed to create rhythmic composition inspired by modern masters. Saj holds an MFA from Bard College and a BA from Sarah Lawrence. Her work is widely exhibited. She now splits her creative time running Artpace where she curates 4-5 shows annually.

artspace 129, is located in a law office in Montclair, NJ. The gallery shows work by regional contemporary artists in familiar environments, with the aim to inspire the appreciation of art in everyday life. artspace 129 is dedicated to featuring the work of established and emerging visual artists in real environments and occasionally does so outside the context of it's normal exhibition location with the aim of introducing their work to collectors and art lovers in Montclair, NJ. For more information about the gallery or to make an appointment please visit <http://www.artspace129.com> (artspace 129). *pegs available on request.*