

'Winter Salon: Women's Work' — nine women artists exhibit at Artspace 129 through March 31

"Winter Salon: Women's Work," the artwork of nine women artists, is on view through March 31, at Artspace 129, located in the McDonough Building at 129 Valley Road.

The artists include Susan Baker, VS Block, Sheila Grabarsky, Donna Grande, Janet Kolstein, Diane Lachman, Linda Ray, Nancy Tobin, and Carolyn Lee Vehslage. A reception for the artists will be held on Saturday, March 18, from 6 to 8 p.m.

The show includes a variety of media including collage, quilting, sculpture and painting in many forms.

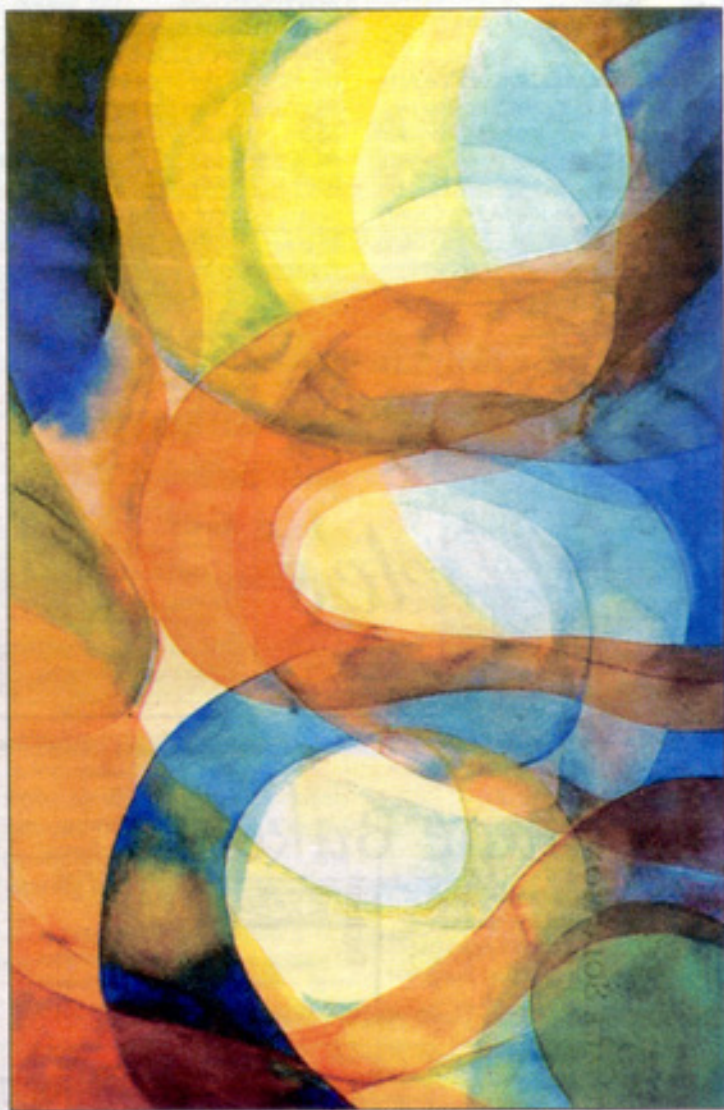
Lynda Ray, an artist who shares her time between New York City and Richmond, Va., is featured with delectable abstract encaustic paintings that boast surfaces, which have a distinct relationship with cake icing and ice cream. One can't look at these works without thinking Wayne Thiebold, even though they are small works, largely geometric in composition and quite abstract.

Painters Sheila Grabarsky, Donna Grande and Diane Lachman work in varied media, but each to create a distinct mood and subtle paintings, which explore colorful abstraction. Lachman, a Philadelphia watercolorist, is featured exhibiting brilliantly colored fluid watercolors with a distinctly modernist bent. Okeefesque and evocative while at the same time really about rich, saturated color. Montclair artist Grande, known for her landscapes, here demonstrates her capacity for simple elegant and seemingly effortless ink renderings.

Collage takes the stage in several ways, as a number of the artists work with found materials. Susan Baker the featured sculptor and VS Block appropriate objects and seamlessly unite them in order to give these discards new found stature.

Block's meticulous compositions, and perfectly balanced restrained palette display immense control and elegance. On the other hand, New York artist Baker's small sculpture is pure fun and whimsy. Whether created with machine parts, plastic throw-away pieces, sticks and found objects with modeling clay, or pencil, paper and paint, she creates playful images that become part of an eloquent, funny and surprising whole which she finds reflective of what life is all about. Janet Kolstein's collages are more nostalgic and mysterious, this no doubt because they are filled with stamps and mementos from past experiences.

Nancy Tobin's paper quilts incorporate bright colors, rich patterns and ornamentation often



Courtesy of Artspace 129

"BIORHYTHMS 2," a watercolor and gouache on Arches paper, by artist Diane Lachman, is part of the group exhibition "Winter Salon: Women's Work," the artwork of nine women artists, on view through March 31, at Artspace 129, located in the McDonough Building at 129 Valley Road. A reception for the artists will be held on Saturday, March 18, from 6 to 8 p.m.

associated with the traditional "women's work" of quilt making. This contemporary artist brings an age-old craft into the 21st century by incorporating references to modern art, cartooning and drawing while making these woven paper concoctions. There is a distinct freshness to her work making it at the same time hip and cool with an edge while being just beautiful.

Then there is the quilt maker Carolyn Lee Vehslage, who has developed an entire body of work — inspired by her previous career as a computer network engineer. Pieces titled "Fried Circuits," "System Overload," "Keyboard Lock-up," "Motherboard Meltdown," "Mixed Media," and "Terminal Eyestrain" dealt with the extremes and the in-betweens of psychological episodes.

Artspace 129, an alternative

exhibition space in Montclair, is curated by Christina Saj, and shows contemporary art in comfortable contexts where people live and work.

"The aim is to achieve environments where people can get familiar with contemporary art, enjoy it and learn about it," stated Saj in an e-mail to The Times. "Good art makes us think; it can beautify our surroundings and be a forum for sharing ideas or creating dialogue.

Artspace 129 is dedicated to featuring the work of established and emerging visual artists in real environments with the aim of introducing their work to collectors and art lovers in Montclair.

Gallery hours are Mondays through Fridays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or by appointment. For more information, call (973) 964-5310, or visit online at www.artspace129.com.