

“Lee and Banks at the Courthouse Gallery” (excerpt)

By Richard Stout

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The acrylic paintings by Deanna Lee and the assemblages by Diane Banks share a fascination with nature. Neither artist pre-conceives their work. They allow the work to evolve, employing their intuitive and instinctive spirit to guide them through the creative process. Both artists are inspired by the natural world and their relationship with it and they are both superb craftsmen.

Deanna Lee describes her abstract acrylic paintings as controlled doodling. That description doesn't do her work justice. These are profound interpretations of an internal exploration of her relationship with nature. Organic shapes suggesting landscapes painted with primary and secondary color, superimposed with black and white linear forms, flow, float, and blow across the surface. I couldn't help but feel and hear the movement. “Waves, wind, hair, muscles, topographical maps, and geographical strata, are all metaphors for emotional states, social and environmental relationships”. Her Asian heritage, music and science background have all influenced how she distills these experiences. Like many abstract painters, “automatism” comes to mind. “Terra Nova”, reminds me of looking down on a pond, collection of lakes, or a savannah. The artist's inspiration was a topographical map, but I like to think of it as something else (we are allowed to do that). The blue and green shapes suggest to me something wet and organic, while the orange line that connects, intersects, and overlaps the shapes reminds me of roots and shoots, a spring lily pond about to bloom.

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