

Dan's Papers

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Arts Commentary

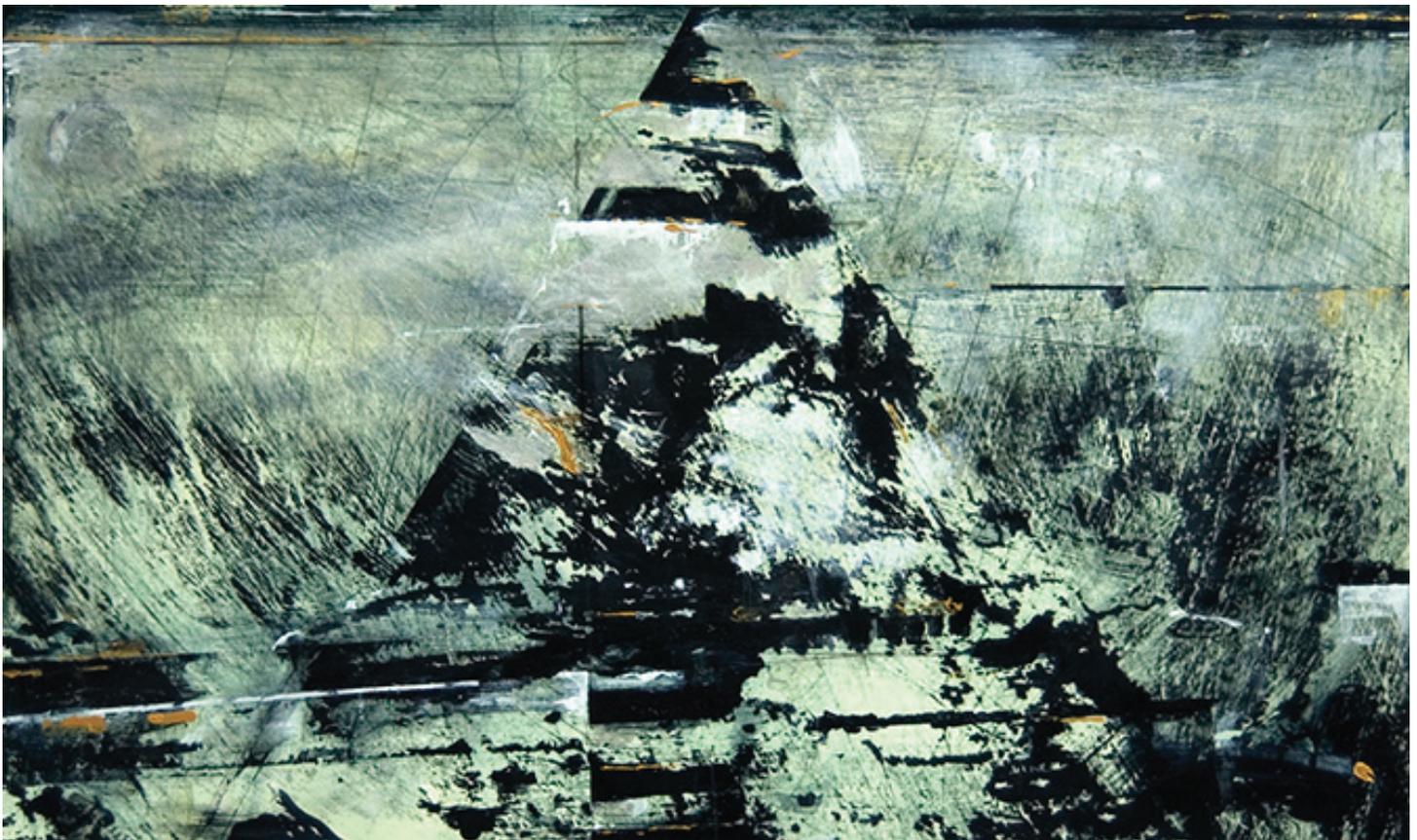
Amagansett Exhibits: Sylvester & Co. And Pamela Williams Gallery

By Marion Wolberg Weiss

Among all the Hampton galleries, Amagansett's can claim the most interesting in terms of venues. Even though there are not too many art spaces in town, the village atmosphere and unique buildings make up for this lack. Consider Sylvester & Co., a design store that complements its offerings with art, and Pamela Williams Gallery across the street, a more traditional exhibit space.

At Sylvester & Co., the current show ("Group Therapy") features many works that celebrate this

same architectural detail. For example, there's Jane Martin's pieces, "Force Majeure XVII" and "journey//mountaintop #1," where shape, space and structure are key elements. This critic is reminded of Martin's film about Manhattan's water towers, *Silent Sentries*, with its use of similar formal traits. Yet the works have additional aesthetic elements, like movement, where the force field seems to both explode and implode simultaneously. There's also a sense of timelessness in Martin's pieces: do her images



"journey//mountaintop #1" Jane Martin

harken back to a prehistoric period or look forward to a postindustrial age? Whatever the interpretation associated with Martin's art, the title "Force Majeure" ("superior force") means an unexpected event, appropriate for the painting's ambiguous nature.

John Haubrich's previous work has also had a connection to architecture and structures; his penchant for domiciles and their interior/exterior design is well-known. The present pieces, however, focus on texture and earth colors, evoking the ambience that exists in the warm tones of the surrounding furniture.

Ann Raymond and Janet Goleas convey structure in a different way. Raymond's bright abstractions play on horizontal design and juxtaposition of color. Goleas' playful patterns often feature forms that resemble tear drops. Yet she alters these shapes with other dynamic yet subtle configurations, like crisscrossing lines and horizontal zigzags.

Elizabeth Dow's does interesting patterns as well, employing arresting vertical shapes in one piece. In her other works, diverse abstract images converge and separate continuously, changing directions at will.

The current show at Pamela Williams's Gallery celebrates landscapes by Ralph Carpentier and Elwood Howell, both using a mystical palette and

sensual imagery. Carpentier's iconic landscapes offer a somewhat different view from what this critic expected: a style that is not always realistic but leaning toward Impressionism. The composition and colors evoke the senses on all levels, from taste to sight to sound and beyond. Each image seems mystical, even though we have seen places like Barnes Hole a hundred times. Is this really where we live, we ask ourselves? Leave it to Carpentier to infuse his settings with a new perspective and beauty.

Howell's paintings are also landscapes, where a sliver of sea is far off into the distance. We find ourselves in the middle of a mystical field, the various senses taking hold as we walk to the ocean. If the sights and sounds blend together so that each is indistinguishable from the other, so be it. We are in Howell's world, yet it becomes ours.

"Group Therapy" will be on view at Amagansett's Sylvester & Co. until March 28, 2012. (154 Main Street. Tel: 631-267-9777.)

Works by Carpentier and Howell at Pamela Williams Gallery will be on view until Nov. 13, 2011. (167 Main Street. Tel: 631- 267-7817.)