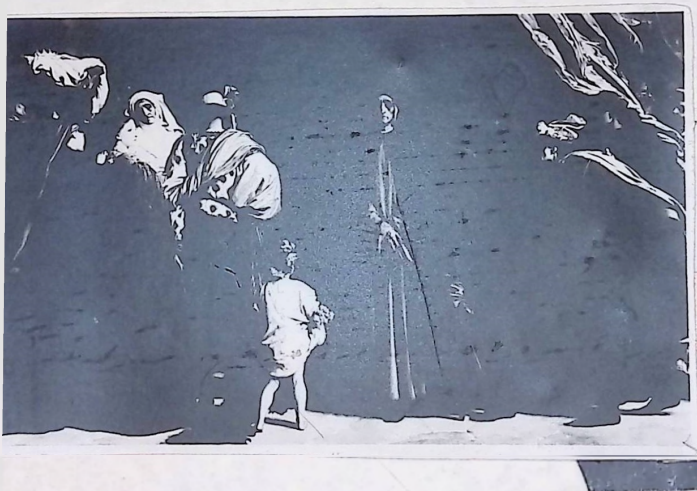


ARTnews

Memorandum from:
DANIELLE MAILER

The



A Mailer's Language Is Visual, As Goshen Opening to Show

By ABIGAL LEAB MARTIN

GOSHEN—Locally, the most dazzling bursts of colors and motion won't be seen in the night sky on Independence Day, but instead will appear just one day later on the walls of a new gallery in West Goshen.

The Danielle Mailer Gallery, a

welcoming and cozy space showcasing her artwork, can be found in an historic mill building at 331 Sharon-Goshen Turnpike. The opening reception runs from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. tomorrow.

The very first thing about Ms. Mailer's current paintings that engages the viewer is their sense of motion.

"To me motion is just an essential part of the work," the artist explained in a recent interview. "I like to make the figure more abstract, by putting the figure upside-down or bent backwards, so it becomes less about the individual figure and more about a shape. ... I want the figure to be another element in the piece, not just the only element."

The vibrant colors that Ms. Mailer utilizes are what next draws the eye. For the artist, color has always been important: "I was always



"Cat Dream," by Danielle Mailer.

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Goshen Artist Stretches Into New Gallery Space

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particularly drawn to Matisse for the color, for the motion, the vibrancy. The celebration of color always attracted me ... [I] just [like] having colors that I find exciting, beautiful and balanced."

Other influences she cites include Marc Chagall, Emile Nolde and Frida Kahlo, as well as her own family. "There was always art everywhere in our homes and color ... My mother [painter Adele Morales] was really a colorist and loved patterns,

doing figures with dots. And I felt it somehow was abstracting the female, but within the dots I was telling these little narratives. ... I guess what comes to mind is more archetypal, more of the female essence. And then, within that, I try to personalize the story so it's not just 'woman' but it's very specific to me, yet somebody else could look at it and identify with the imagery."

Though painting with acrylic on canvas, Ms. Mailer is also working with a mixed media technique. The artist utilizes what she calls "painted female elements" which are subtly raised pieces of plastic that have been baked and shrunk down. Each of these pieces feature complex designs and add a barely perceptible extra dimension to her work. Of those pieces, she says, "I love mixing the mediums and I like having the textures be apparent and yet not hit you over the head."

Ms. Mailer describes her journey as an artist in phases. Though she has been pursuing art since she was a child, what she calls her "painterly phase" began at Bowdoin College in Maine with more traditional painting such as still lifes. After graduation, she continued at the New York Studio School, but a combination of financial pressures and her school experience found her moving into the world of graphic design instead, working for several years at the magazine ARTnews, eventually as associate art director.

Graphic design was the next phase, and one useful to her work. "All those years of training, thinking about borders and patterns—at the moment, that's really something I

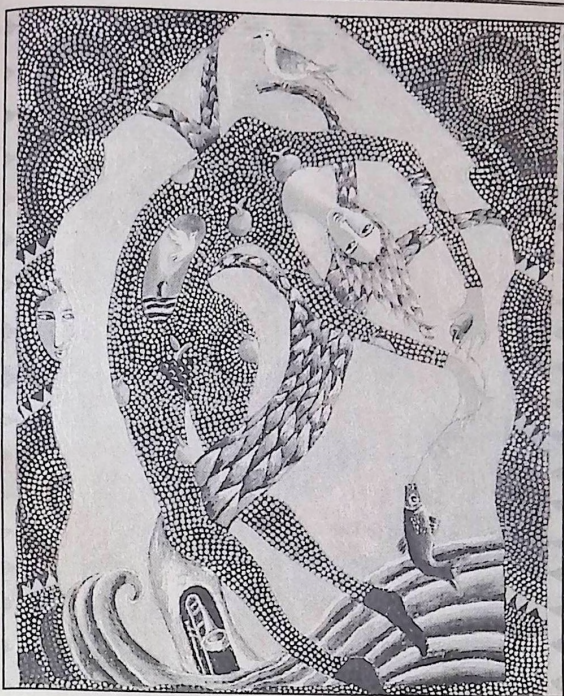
'It's not even a choice. I paint because I have to paint.'

—Danielle Mailer,
Goshen artist

so from my earliest memories, that was my world. ... And my father [author Norman Mailer] would take my sister and I to the Museum of Modern Art and the Met and we would look at and talk about Picasso."

While additional touches of those influences into her current work, Ms. Mailer finds an original style with which she depicts women in an abstract way, incorporating all kinds of striking patterns and symbols—including leopards, artichokes and blackbirds—into her female figures.

As the artist explains, she is documenting a private landscape: "I wanted them to have individual stories. I wanted to personalize them, but I also wanted to universalize them. And so, for example, I started



"Mourning Dove," 2000, by Danielle Mailer.

am able to draw upon," said the artist, who also emphasizes that her current work has allowed her to merge those phases.

Ms. Mailer and her first husband moved from New York City to Cornwall in 1992 when their daughter, Isabella Mailer Moschen, was 3. It was through teaching at Litchfield Country School, by working at home on mock-ups to bring into the children to demonstrate their next day's in-class project that her early artwork, cutouts made with rice papers and colored papers, came into being.

Creating those pieces finally gave her "the sense that this [work] was worth putting out there," and her first show, featuring a collection of those collages entitled the Night Studio Series, followed shortly at the Cornwall branch of the National Iron Bank in June of 1996. Ms. Mailer explains that the work with collage, and the positive response to it, "somehow that helped me transition into this new phase. It legitimized this departure point."

In fact, by 2000, Ms. Mailer felt that she had explored collage fully and was missing "the tactile feeling of paint" and so she took up painting again—but did so by working in the untraditional style she now favors. In the meantime, she had already begun a successful string of showings at galleries in the area. These galleries included the Bachelier-Cardonsky Gallery in Kent and the Washington Art Association, where a particularly successful show in 1998 sold out and helped to develop an appreciative audience of collectors.

And it is not only her art that has been evolving. Five years ago, Ms. Mailer split amicably with her husband, and last year she moved to a new position as chairman of the art

department of the private Indian Mountain School in Salisbury, a job she loves.

The move to Goshen preceded that by a year, as in 2001 the artist and her daughter relocated to be closer to Ms. Mailer's partner, musician Peter McEachern. It was he who suggested that she rent space in the mill building and try showing her own work on her own terms. While Ms. Mailer is quick to recognize her good fortune in terms of the galleries approaching her and even quicker to praise those galleries for being "very together and doing] a beautiful job," she strongly feels that there will be a greater satisfaction and freedom in having her own space: "I can just explore and paint anything I want and not have anybody dictating the style."

When describing how her works will be arranged at the gallery for the opening, the artist makes it clear that while there will be a lot of new work featured, the show will also give people a sense of how her art has progressed—how she has worked through to where she is as an artist. Ms. Mailer labels it "a real composite of different phases of my art development."

Even though she is tremendously excited about her new gallery, Ms. Mailer will remain an artist first and foremost. She will continue to paint because she feels that "there is nothing else I do that gives me the same pleasure and enthusiasm. It's not even a choice. I paint because I have to paint." That's something for which her expanding audience is grateful.

For further information on the Danielle Mailer Gallery, please call 1-800-960-8919. After the July 5 opening, hours will be by appointment only.



"Cutting Ties," acrylic on canvas, by Danielle Mailer.