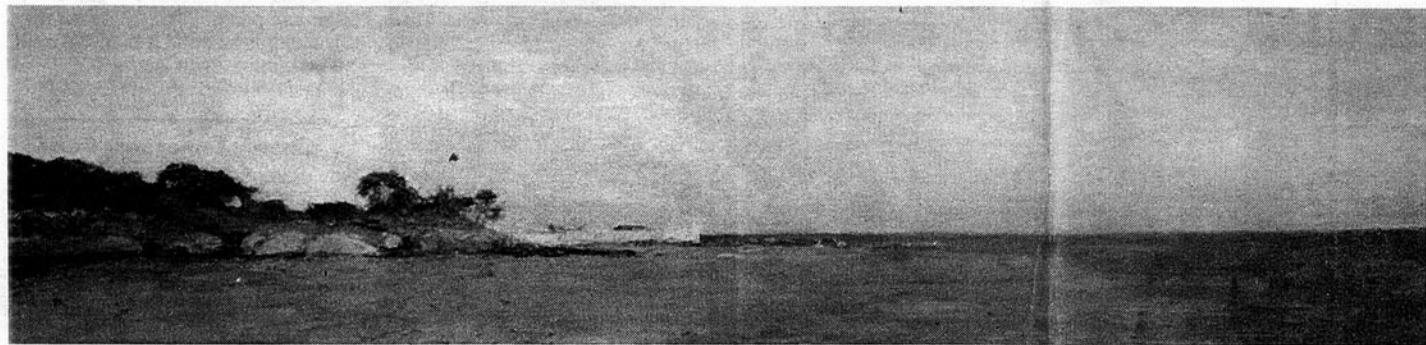


Visual Depths Convey the Mood of a Place



By D. DOMINICK LOMBARDI

THE current show, titled "Summer Places," at the Chappaqua Public Library here, curated by Larry D'A-mico, the director of the library's gallery, features works that go beyond the everyday by transmitting the mood or atmosphere of the places they represent.

Larry Horowitz, who works predominantly with a palette knife, creates alluring vistas, which are thickly painted and heavy on atmosphere. The oil paint, which is applied in a network of smudges, pats and scrapes, runs the gamut from light touches and dabs, to gloppy smears.

"Kennebunkport" (1999) is a panoramic view of one of Maine's more familiar coastlines. Mr. Horowitz controls the visual depth of this piece by employing contrasting techniques. In the upper two-thirds of the canvas, he scrapes back the pale pink sky, which allows the land masses — puckered patches of tan and ochre — to jut out and cross the horizon.

In "Mountain View" (1999), he includes two very important bulges of golden earth at the bottom edge of the composition, which frames the space. In both works, Mr. Horowitz influences the mood of the viewer by anchoring his narrative in the periphery, adding believability to each scene.

Michael Patterson's most compelling works are his quickly rendered preliminary studies. Watercolors of outdoor scenes like these are most often created on site. Then the visual information gathered in these works is used as a reference for creating a

more resolved studio painting. Sometimes these spontaneous studies, which lack detail and design, are more successful than what the artist may consider a finished work. The awkwardly drawn figures, the confusing background and the presence of the overemphasized footprints that run up and across the sand at an odd angle in "Montauk" (1998) are quite charming.

In "Sketch for Oil" (1998), Mr. Patterson plays up the relative similarity in the patterns created by the bands of rippling water that surround the bather, which are mimicked by the lines of stratified rocks and the stripes of a red and white beach towel. He also gives the viewer a very real sense that the rocks are hazardous by capturing the uneasiness of the two bathers as they cautiously navigate across the slippery rocks.

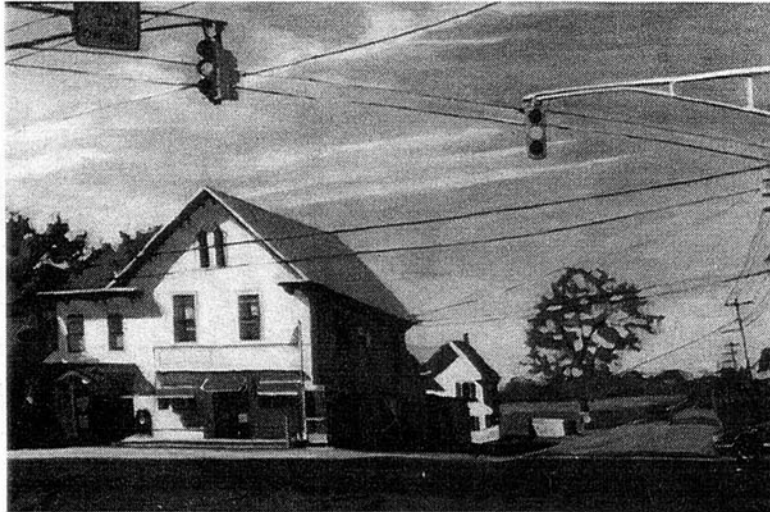
Michael Torlen's series, "Songs for My Father," is dedicated to his late father, an immigrant fisherman. Mr. Torlen's art frequently centers on the very beginning or end of the day, when the sun's extreme angle of light is the most romantic. "Songs for My Father: Red Hori-



zon" (1999) is an oil painting of a shallow cove bathed in the reds and oranges of a fiery sunset.

The companion piece to "Red Horizon" is the monprint "Songs for My Father: Morning Moon" (1998).

"Morning Moon" depicts the exact same view as "Red Horizon." Here, however, we see it as it would appear at sunrise. Competing for attention in the top of the composition is the full moon, as it attempts to overpower



"Main Street, Dusk No. 2," above, and "Post Office," top, both by Sonya Sklaroff. "Kennebunkport," top left, by Larry Horowitz. The works are in "Summer Places" at Chappaqua Public Library. "Dream Deferred" by Robert Spinazzola, whose works are in the Courtyard gallery at the library.

er the effects of daybreak. The odd, out-of-focus quality of this print is the result of Mr. Torlen's use of a digital print as an under-image.

The pixilated computer print gives the undersurface, where visible, a grainy, sandpaper-like texture, which adds mystery to the scene.

Sonya Sklaroff's sunset is of small-town America. In "Main Street, Dusk No. 2" (1998), Ms. Sklaroff focuses on power lines, television antennas and the top of a tin roof to generate a mood.

The key to the success of this oil on wood is the reflected sunlight in the windows along the bottom. Those two rectangles of luminous glass anchor the composition, reminding me of René Magritte's "Empire of Lights" (1953), where he combined a daylight sky with a night-time town-

scape accentuated by lamplighted windows and glowing street lamps.

Ms. Sklaroff's two versions of a suburban street in Essex, Conn., are her best. The smaller of the two, titled "Two Cars, Essex Conn.," (1996) is paler and a bit less resolved, which may mean that it was done first, as an on-site study. The larger version, "Essex with Cars" (1997), is more intensely colored and includes one extra detail: a badminton net, which qualifies it as a true example of suburban bliss.

Outdoors and adjacent to the gallery, in the Courtyard Gallery, which is part of the library but is used only to showcase outdoor sculpture, are the works of Robert Spinazzola. Mr. Spinazzola, a welder of found materials, makes three-dimensional drawings in steel. His subjects are most often animals frozen in mid-leap. His art has a distinctive dynamic, a quality that is amplified by the complexity of the objects used. He fabricates his subjects by welding together a variety of metal debris like pliers, handles, railroad spikes, machinery, gears, heavy-gauge chains, crowbars, bolts, reinforcing rods for concrete and industrial-strength pipe wrenches. Two works, "Sauvage (Year of the Tiger)" (1998) and "Sauvage C.7 (Rabbit)" (1998), were inspired by the Chinese calendar.

Both "Rabbit" and "Tiger" are more lifelike than one might expect from an art comprised of machine parts and tools, a distinction that can be traced to Mr. Spinazzola's attention to detail and the expressive way he positions the heads and paws.

"Summer Places" and Robert Spinazzola's show in the Courtyard gallery end July 17. The information number is 238-4779. ■