



Where Land Meets Art

Jul 5, 2002 - Oct 6, 2002

Selections from our Historic Landscape Collection and New Works by Jack Stuppin *Curated by Phil Linhares*

Selections from the Historic Landscape Collection

Curated by Phil Linhares, chief curator of the Oakland Museum of California, Selections from the Historic Landscape Collection will feature works by such famed painters as Maynard Dixon, Thomas Hill, William Keith and Ludmilla Welch. Vitrines displaying the historical significance of these artists within the context of California "boosterism" will further illuminate the work.



New Paintings by Jack Stuppin

New Paintings by Jack Stuppin is a dramatic display of new large-scale oil paintings by Sonoma County's much beloved plein-air artist Jack Stuppin. Originally one of the 'Sonoma Four' plein-air artists, Jack Stuppin continues his investigation of the Northern California landscape--specifically Sonoma county hills, rivers and coast. In this exhibition, he works inside the studio, using his plein-air images as source material.

Apple orchard paintings

One room will be filled with paintings of apple blossoms from Sebastopol orchards, and accompanied by a display of historic artifacts from local orchards highlighting the history of the apple industry in Sonoma County. Art Historian and critic John Fitz Gibbon wrote about these paintings, "I think his spring orchard canvasses are going to travel well through time, both forward and backward too. The transcendentalist in Thoreau would recognize the almost astral field their energies set up - as if the stars came out in daylight."

A state-of-the-art approach

Stuppin's massive new canvases employ a state-of-the-art hybrid approach to painting. Starting with a series of digital scans of smaller paintings that he had previously executed (the earliest being from 1993), these digital images were re-scaled via computer manipulation and then output on pre-sized canvas by a large format digital printer. These digital prints were then stretched onto stretcher bars built to the exact proportions of the larger image. With these 21st century under-paintings in place, Stuppin then painted subtly fantastical variations right on top of the shapes and motifs featured in the earlier images. In so doing, he managed to bring each work across the wide chasm that separates real artistic embodiment from the illustrative re-presentation of pictorial information.

Powerful impact

This new process adds to the immediacy and impact of these powerful landscapes. The bold use of color and form and the sheer magnificence of scale, some measuring up to 6 feet by 7 feet, envelope the viewer. Catalog essayist Mark Van Proyen states, - in all of Stuppin's paintings, we see the landscape in a state of primal respiration captured at the point of maximum inhalation, pitch-perfect and undulate "the landscape is revealed as an event, rather than something that is marked by events. In other words, Stuppin's paintings reveal the essential convulsing character of nature as it is mirrored in the struggle and momentary triumph of all living things. That is the aspect of visual experience that they seek to reveal, the aspect that is called the vital essence of things."

In an earlier critique of Stuppin's work, nationally renown critic and professor of art, Donald Kuspit writes "Jack Stuppin has found nature conducive to wonder not analysis, a nature that seems to contain our own lost innocence rather than a nature ripe for exploitation." It might be best said by one admirer of Jack's paintings, "I can no longer drive north on (hwy)101 without seeing your landscapes!"



SONOMA COUNTY MUSEUM



Artist biography

Jack Stuppin was born in 1933 in Yonkers, New York. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Columbia College in New York and studied at the San Francisco Art Institute between 1966 ◆ 69. He served in the US Marines in the late 50s. His work has been the subject of numerous solo and group exhibitions, critical reviews, and is well represented in both private and public collections. He lives in Sebastopol, California.

An illustrated catalog accompanies the exhibition.

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