



Cotuit's "Color" show will send you over the rainbow

Succeeds as an introduction to art's variety

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Ready to see the world through rose-colored glasses? How about lime green, sea blue or buttercup yellow ones?

It's easy to try all of them on at the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod's *ROYGBIV: Exploring the Color Spectrum*, showing at the Cotuit Center for the Arts.

The show, named in a nod to the mnemonic device used to aid children in learning the colors of the rainbow, reflects deeply the variety of artists and styles Cape Cod has to offer. In almost equal measure, *ROYGBIV* is the perfect way to introduce art to even the Crayola-users and stick-figure drawers among us.

Certainly not a straightforward study of the color spectrum, the installation instead focuses on the almost limitless colors, inspirations and mediums being explored by the more than 50 local artists featured.

While some do choose to see their art through single-color spectacles, nothing here is one-faceted. The gradated blues, whites and blacks of Robert Roark's "Moonglow," an ethereal nature scene using only shades of those colors, stray from dark and spooky into moon-lit and introspective; it all depends on where you look.

In others, such as James Wolf's "Cool Air at Dusk," colors from all edges of the spectrum flit and flash across the canvas in shapes and shades limited only by the viewer's imagination.

Equally colorful are the artists' choices of mediums, a mix of

traditional watercolors, oils and clay with quirkier items including modeling paste, construction foam and broom straws.

Creativity in mediums was encouraged, said Arts Foundation President Maggie Van Sciver, to show visiting student groups that art isn't limited to expensive products and paintbrushes. The table-salt-and-watercolor images of Elizabeth Pratt's "In Salt Water" – a cute hint at both the artist's medium and the painting's subject – and the spray paint-and-Sharpie work of Osterville artist J. Vincent Diggs testify that art, if it's anything at all, is what each person makes of it.

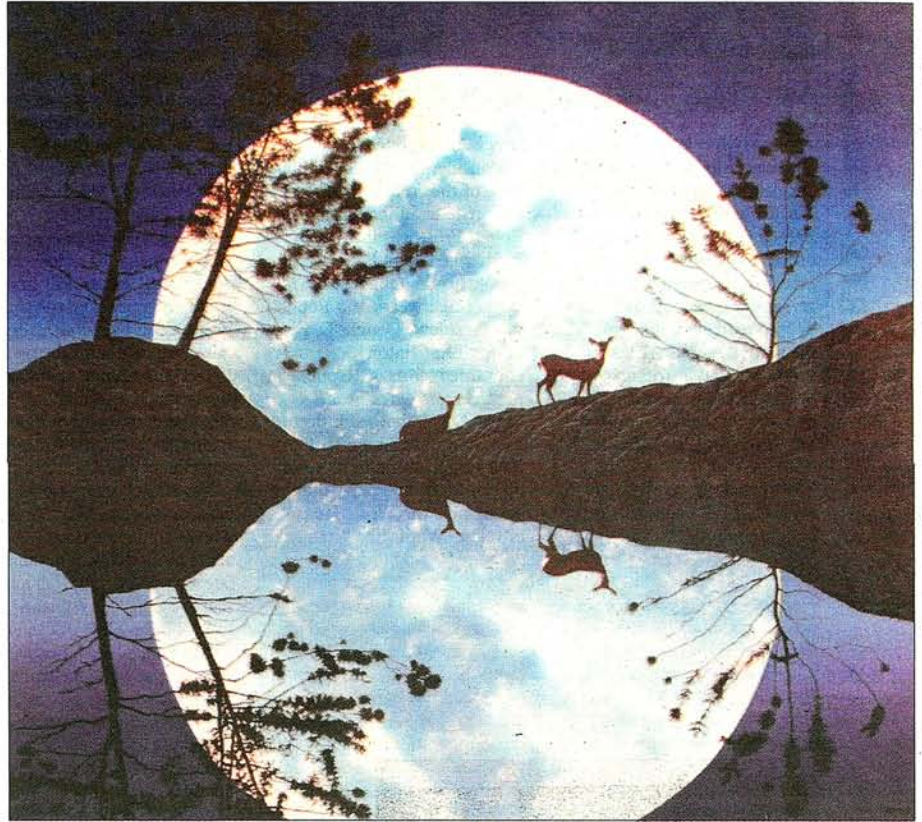
Somewhat disappointing to connoisseurs could be some artists' almost slavish devotion to their artistic inspirations. Perhaps stymied by the limitless creativity an exhibit like *ROYGBIV* allows, a handful of creators choose to pay direct homage to famous predecessors.

While John Tunney's Technicolor "Four Lobsters" is cute, quirky and very Cape Cod, the artist's tribute to Pop creator Andy Warhol allows for none of Tunney's own creativity to show through. Though gorgeously colored and detailed, the Dutch realism of Jan Van Eyck shows through too clearly in Peter Quidley's "The Sketch."

For art purists or those new to the study of art history, however, pieces like this are the perfect teaching tools.

What stands out most amongst the bursts of color lining the walls and peppering the brightly lit gallery is a lack of any sort of connecting principle between the works. Casual viewers would be hard-pressed to find anything, besides the mandatory use of color, that could create a semblance of organization.

But, like the first rainbow after a violent thunderstorm, that's what makes *ROYGBIV* so vi-



HEATHER WYSOCKI PHOTO
SHADE AND FREUD – Robert Roark's uses shades of blue, white and black to create an introspective mood.

brant. More so than a show with one central theme or subject, the idea of "exploring the color spectrum" can be so broadly interpreted as to create a wonderful, wild jumble of works that nearly anyone will find appealing.

For those new to the art world, or those willing to forget the "rules" of art, the Arts Foundation's show will be a true delight. Positioned at four feet above the ground, works are right at a kid's-eye view – but certainly still acces-



ROB SENNOTT PHOTO
SMILES OF A WINTER NIGHT – Sarah Dineen seems to share a smile with her work at the Cotuit Center for the Arts.

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sible to those of the tall persuasion – and are accompanied by simple, short story-like descriptions of the work and artist.

All this kid-centered placement and

information, said Van Sciver, serves a purpose for the close to 30 school groups that are expected to visit. Students are a main focus for the Arts Foundation, she said, and their visits are accompanied by age-tailored activities to introduce them to the show.

ROYGBIV is a simple and effective way of displaying works for any and all, the grown-up artistic equivalent of a children's museum, with all of the fun and none of the pretension of many shows.

The show is a study in the universal appeal of art, like a colorful LEGO set that tiny kids and willing adults can enjoy in equal measure. It's flouncy

and fun, more a study of the artists' imaginations than of their talent, the perfect way to bring a bit of color to an already dreary Cape Cod winter.

The Arts Foundation of Cape Cod's *ROYGBIV: Exploring the Color Spectrum* will show at the Cotuit Center for the Arts, 4404 Route 28, through Feb. 7. Hours are Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information, contact the Foundation at 508-362-0066 or www.artsfoundationcapecod.org.