

# The Artists of RIVAA Welcome Spring With a Show Called *Spring*

review by David Stone

Winter resists loosening its grip on New York, but the Roosevelt Island Visual Arts Association pushes the chill aside with an exhibit called *Spring*. The group's new exhibit opened March 22 in the Octagon Gallery at 888 Main Street. It will run through May 11. Visitors are welcome from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., daily.

A surprising work, Rachel Garrick's *Seagulls At Cherry Blossom Time*, broadens the range of what we have seen from this artist. The painting is a minimalist oil, airy with spring colors, that excludes everything but a small spray of flowers, the gulls and the rails on which they perch. Its balance and simplicity suggests the elegance of Japanese art.

Even abstract expressionist Valeriu Boborelu injects a taste for the season. His acrylic, *New Age Beings*, finds indefinite vibrations of spirit sprinkled with patches of green and red, a playful departure from seriousness, a brightness inspired by the awakening of nature in spring.

In paired photographs, *Leaf and Seed*, Esther Piaskowski studies the intricacies that hide beneath the colorful outer layers of plants, while Mircea Nicolescu takes a different approach. His soaring *Queensboro Bridge* softens the structural grid with cherry blossoms and blue skies that engulf it.

In *Golden Spring*, Deepti Shukla builds a lively creation from encaustic and acrylic. She uses the mix of wax and pigment to lift a floral design so that it radiates warmth from the surrounding canvas. Her work's deep green background is enlivened by sparkles as new life emerges in the season.

Few artists have the sustained versatility of Arline Jacoby. At the Octagon, she delights viewers with a colorograph, *Lovers*. It's a chromatically subtle exposure of two youthful figures as their faces begin to touch.

Ioan Popoiu takes that idea a step farther abstractly with *Kiss*, an acrylic painted on wood that uses beguiling simplicity to express the bright yellows and greens of spring as the break out above an earthy brown.

The show's only sculptural installation, *Starving For Color*, by Tad Sudol, reflects the feelings many have as they wait for the greys of winter to be pushed aside. It's message about the loss of passion is broader, however, one that causes viewers to make a full stop and read its somewhat cryptic inscription.

Rounding out the show, Toshiko Kitano Groner dreams of summers to come in *Sea Shore*, a mixed media assemblage that centers an intense blue among the emerging colors of a sunrise. And Anne-Marie Dannenberg's delicate digital print, *Summer Grass*, deftly poses a fading weed, like a dancer, against a reflected memory of sky.

*Spring* is a small show that is made up of excellent, engaging works that bring out the warmth and colors of this year's slow-to-arrive season. It's a treat for Octagon residents and well worth a walk or a Red Bus ride – now free – to spend a little while appreciating a celebration of spring from our talented local artists.

