

Breakers



Mark Tesi

In Goldstein's Latest Work, Layered Themes Run Deep

Artist Julie Goldstein will return to her home beaches of LBI to show her latest body of work, “The Fisherwomen: A Village of Sisters,” at the Ann Coen Gallery in Surf City on Aug. 12. All of the new pieces – woodcuts, mixed media works and a quilt – tell the story of the Ama pearl divers in Japan in the 1920s.

The Ama, a Japanese word that in English means “women of the sea,” are known for diving for pearls. According to Goldstein, whose interest in depicting untold histories of women has led her to discover in herself a passion for research, “The Ama have been diving for hundreds of years. Because of their body fat, women are better at diving in ice cold water than men. So the women dive and the men stay at home with the children.” This social structure allows women divers to live independently or as the primary breadwinner in their families, and fosters a sense of community among the divers. Back in the 1920s, when the divers did not use wetsuits, the women would emerge from the ice cold water and wrap themselves together in a huge quilt, known as a boro quilt, to keep warm.

Goldstein chose to depict Ama divers from the 1920s because “the Ama became sisters. They would laugh and hang out when they weren’t diving.” Also, Goldstein is in awe of the physical prowess of these women. Ama divers “train their lungs to hold their breath for up to three minutes and dive into freezing cold water with no wetsuits.” With the modernization of Japan’s fisheries, Goldstein says that today’s Ama divers are likely one of the last generations to carry on the practice. But “as generations go on a lot of women now are in their 80s and 90s and are still diving.”

As incredible as it may seem – 90-year-olds diving into frigid water, holding their breath for up to three minutes – this kind of physical feat makes the Ama a perfect subject



Artwork by Julie Goldstein

INTO THE WOODS: Goldstein has been making woodcut prints since 2000, when she was a student at Columbia University. The technique comes from a long tradition in Japan, where woodblock-printed books from Chinese Buddhist temples were seen as early as the eighth century, AD.

for Goldstein. She says her “politics stem from gender identity. There is so much pressure on women. Pressure on our body image. I portray women as strong and independent.”

“My philosophy,” Goldstein says, “is that women need women. Women need to talk to each other and support each other.”

Strong communities of women seem always to have been a part of Goldstein’s life. Her 2006 series called “Team Riders,” came to be because Goldstein “was surfing a lot and had a small group of women friends who surfed with me. We were surfing in the cold waters of New Jersey all winter long. I created a series of

woodcuts that ranged from 1-foot by 2-foot to 4-foot by 8-foot that portrayed this group of women playing in the sea, mostly surfing.” This work “focused on women as athletes and was very inspired by gracefulness of the women figure surfing.”

After a 2008 fire at the Pine Surf Shop in Ship Bottom, the shop that she owned and operated with her husband Mark, consumed an entire clothing line as well as all of her woodcuts and art, Julie and Mark moved to California to start over. Two friends she met on LBI, MaryLou Andahazy and her wife Lori, offered their cottage up as a vacation destination. “Once we arrived there,” says Goldstein, “it was a beautiful day

and the waves were perfect. We spent time looking for jobs and a rental property. After a few weeks, we decided to make Cardiff our home.” Having a support system in California helped make the transition from this devastating event manageable for Goldstein. “Today, we feel that MaryLou and Lori are family. They helped make the transition from New Jersey to California an easy one,” she says.

Goldstein grew up summering on LBI, where she was a lifeguard as well as an avid surfer, rower and swimmer. Here, she formed lifelong friendships and nurtured a love for the water and watersports. Subsequently, these themes – communities that

foster strong independent women and watersports – have consistently emerged in Goldstein’s work during her 20-plus-year career as an artist.

“The last time I had a solo show at the Ann Coen Gallery,” says Goldstein, “it was about real women that made huge permanent change when they proved that women could swim with men.” This show focused on The Women’s Lifesaving League of 1901-1911. The subjects of these pieces “started their own league and trained women to swim and save lives in the water.” They raced against men in the Hudson River to gain equal opportunity as athletes. Goldstein says, of The

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a relationship with one of the loners, the short-sighted woman played by Rachel Weisz. The film is long, it is hollow, and it seems fake to me, so I am not the best person to listen to for this one. I'd give it one bag of popcorn, and that's about it. Sorry. I couldn't find anything redeeming about it.

From the vaults: Occasionally I like to dig into the vaults and find a film that we can talk about that is significant, for one reason or another, and this week I unearthed Mel Brooks' "Blazing Saddles." Brooks was in Philadelphia in June, at the Academy of Music, where he screened the film with an audience and then took questions after the showing. The audience's response to the film showed that Brooks has an uncanny ability to get to the heart of what's funny, and despite the film's age — it's 42 years old — what was funny then is still funny now.

Rock Ridge, where everyone is named Johnson (there's Olson Johnson, Howard Johnson, Van Johnson, Anal Johnson, Gabby Johnson, amid many others), sits at a flash point for the

under-construction railroad, which would be going right through the town. "Blazing Saddles" is also the story of Bart (Cleavon Little), a black sheriff sent to the town by racist bad guy Hedley Lamarr (Harvey Korman), who is hoping to drive all the Johnsons out of Rock Ridge so his railroad would have no obstacles.

Lamarr's main henchman is Taggart (a hilarious Slim Pickens). Bart gets help from Jim, who happens to be the Waco Kid (equally funny Gene Wilder). Madeleine Khan plays Lili von Shtupp, a singer a la Marlene Dietrich, who has a passel of German soldiers following her around and who sings an inspired song called "I'm Tired" in the film's second half. Ex-Detroit Lion defensive lineman Alex Karras plays Mongo, a bad guy who rides into town on a steer and, in the climactic fight, punches a horse.

Brooks literally makes fun of every Western cliché, of every racial and ethnic stereotype, and with co-writer Richard Pryor, uses the uneasy racial feelings of the time to generate broad laughter. When Little arrives in town and asks, "Where are all the white women?" the laughter now is very different from the nervous laughter in 1974. But still Brooks was game to try it, and he probably sensed, during the middle 1970s, that the Western as a genre was a dying breed, so he

wanted to send it up once more. The film's tagline says it all: "Never give a saga an even break." Four large bags of popcorn for "Blazing Saddles."

Awesome Auteur: We mentioned Garry Marshall above in reference to "Mother's Day," and I had another director in mind for this segment, but I thought we should talk a little more about Marshall, who was 81 when he died last week. Besides his few films tied in to holidays that we mentioned above, Marshall has 30 films under his director credits. Many were hits, like "Pretty Woman," "Runaway Bride," "The Princess Diaries," "Beaches," an early flick starring Matt Dillon called "The Flamingo Kid" (1984), and one of my favorites from the mid-1980s, an early Tom Hanks film called "Nothing in Common," with Jackie Gleason and Eva Marie Saint. Yes, most of his films had an indelible optimistic streak, but really, there's nothing wrong with that. What's so bad about making people laugh?

Random Suggestions: A few more new seasons in television shows made it to DVD-land, and here are a few of the best: "Blindspot: Season 1," "Blacklist: Season 3," and "The Knick: Complete Second Season" ... The top five DVDs rented from the giant Redbox DVD-renting service during the past week are as follows. At number five, "Kung Fu Panda

3," with voices by Jack Black, Bryan Cranston, Dustin Hoffman and Angelina Jolie; at number four, "Miracles From Heaven" with Jennifer Garner and Queen Latifah; at number three, "Allegiant" with Shailene Woodley and Theo James; at number two, "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2" with twice as much fun from Nia Vardalos and John Corbett; and at number one, "London Has Fallen," with a gun-wielding, solemn-faced Gerard Butler standing in front of a stylized Union Jack.

No sooner does this column show up this week than the next two-week interference in our karmic activities unfolds. The Olympics start tomorrow, giving us maybe one day from when the paper comes out to the opening ceremony in Rio to binge watch a show or catch a good flick. Maybe you can re-watch one of the funniest films ever made, "Blazing Saddles."

That'll do it for us this week. Of course, you will have figured that I was only kidding with most of what I've been saying about our historic political processes that were happening during our two-week hiatus, or about watching the Olympics. Of course you should watch the Olympics, but sneak in a flick or two there as well. We have to be all-inclusive in our viewing habits.

See you in two.



Liquid Lines

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formed indicates that the Atlantic Basin could become an incubator in the next few weeks. Sea surface temperatures continue to be above average to fuel these spinners.

Beyond the tropical wish list, I don't see anything closer to home that would suggest any radical changes. August does tend to be a time when we get those solid summer windswells, but frankly, I am not seeing it. If you want to find a silver lining, it does look like we'll see some variable onshore winds over the back half of

the week, which may stir up some chop. I don't necessarily think we're going to see any clean surf out of it, but even messy surf over 3-foot is welcome this summer.

BAGGING ON US: Yeah! Did you hear the news? Long Beach's elected officials are working to ban single use plastic bags. That's awesome, right? Great news. But is that Long Beach Island, or Long Beach Township?

Turns out, it's neither. In fact when it comes to the plastic bag ban, beach towns all over the country are like fuel-efficient cars whizzing down the highway of progress. Meanwhile, LBI is a gas-guzzler, limping along the Boulevard on a Saturday afternoon in August. Now city officials in Long Beach, New York, out on Long

Island are moving to get rid of both plastic and paper bags, to get people using reusable totes and canvas bags. Not a bad idea for a beach town that makes 100 percent of its revenues on the health of its waterways.

But for some reason, the conversation is at a standstill here. Little towns like New York City and Los Angeles have banned single-use bags. The Outer Banks has done it, and now towns on Long Island are showing they're further evolved than we are. Long Island!

I might add to all the Realtors who always wanted to bill LBI as "the next Hamptons," actually the Hamptons have had bag bans now for five years.

RESULTS AND GOINGS ON: The 8th Annual Island Surf and Sail Ladies Paddle Challenge went off without a hitch last Friday night. The morning weather moved out and it turned into a gorgeous afternoon/evening.

Michelle Dempsey aced the one-mile followed by Ship Bottom's Caroline Unger and Jamie Baulmiller. The three-mile paddle was broken down into the Elite 14-foot division, which went to Andrea Kahikina of Point Pleasant, followed by Lynda Duvall and Claire Cemsie; and the 12'6, which went to winner Michelle Aromando of Ortle, followed by Melissa Saltarelli of Barnegat in second and Marsha Worthington of West Creek in third.

Conditions were not as kind to the Jetty Coquina Jam, which was scheduled for Sunday. With all the thunderstorms and the flat surf in the forecast, Jetty made the good call to postpone

it. So, for competitors, spectators, sponsors and parents bringing kids to the Youth Surf Clinic, the 8th Annual Jetty Coquina Jam has been rescheduled for this Saturday, Aug. 6, still at Hudson Avenue, Harvey Cedars.

Next Friday, Aug. 12, much-loved former local artist Julie Goldstein returns to the Island with her new body of work called "The Fishermen," a heroic and inspiring group of women divers from Japan from 1927-present. The show opens that night at 6 and will hang through September at the Ann Coen Gallery in Surf City.

The following day, Aug. 13, is the Alliance for a Living Ocean LBI Longboard Classic on 16th Street in Ship Bottom. This borough is one of the few stretches of the Island that has not gotten beach replenishment (although I hear there's sand coming in the fall, ummm ... how much sand do we need?) this year and the sandbars are fantastic. Sounds like a lot of people are really looking forward to it.

In other news, Beach Haven West's Steff Mags returned this week from the Outer Banks where she competed in the Outer Banks Skim Jam and took first place in the Pro Women's division.

Boy, you blink and it's August. Traditionally, this coming week is the busiest week of the summer outside the big three holidays. In fact, this week is probably bigger overall than Memorial Day since that's just a three-day banger. Here's hoping visitors can enjoy their vacations, locals can keep their cool with visitors and we can all clean up our beer cans. ♦

LBI QUIZ #1:

- 1) Where was the Mansion of Health?
- 2) Where was LBI's only boardwalk?
- 3) Where was Sea Haven?
- 4) Where was the Great Swamp located on the Island?
- 5) The Engleside Baby Dairy was operated by _____?
- 6) What was Bonds?
- 7) The first bridge to the Island was not for automobiles. What was it for?
- 8) There were ocean fishing piers in which two LBI towns?



9) What legendary LBI nautical landmark burned in 1972?

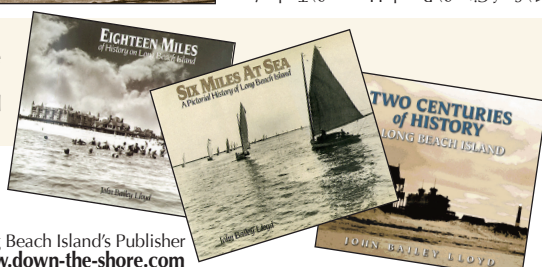
ANSWERS:
 1) Surf City, 2) Beach Haven, 3) Tucker's Beach Haven, 4) the schooner Lucy Evelyn, 5) Ship Bottom and LBI, 6) the railroad, 7) the earliest "hotel" on Long Beach House, the Engleside Hotel, 8) Captain Bonds original Engleside Hotel, 9) the Island, 10) Surf City - North Beach, 11) the Island, 12) Beach Haven, 13) Tucker's



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Goldstein

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Women's Lifesaving League series, that she enjoyed telling the story of these "pioneers that we never hear of."

"These women went against the rules of society," Goldstein says she connects with them because "I am a rebel myself; I like to break rules."

Even the medium Goldstein most commonly uses, the woodcut, is something of a rebellion in western printmaking. "A lot of people think that woodcutting is a dying medium," she says, adding, "it's not like regular printmaking." She says she loves the process, the results and the "handmade-ness" of it, even though these tedious elements are precisely what repel most printmakers.

"I draw everything first," says Goldstein, describing the process. "Then I carve it all out of the wood. The wood allows me to tell the story in a new way. Maybe there's a knot in the wood that might become a moon or a sun." In this way, "the grain and the texture of the wood become a part of the work. It allows the work to come through in a natural way." Even though this process is incredibly labor intensive, more so than other forms of printmaking, Goldstein says "you can't control the wood so it has a life

of its own. I'm like an addict to wood."

Goldstein does not just make woodcuts, though. She also says she juxtaposes the "masculine" and the "feminine" with her use of materials by incorporating fabrics into many of her prints. Goldstein's mother taught her how to sew. The two shared fabrics and sewing techniques when Goldstein was a child. At the Aug. 12 show, the artist will be bringing a large boro quilt she made using the sashiko stitching technique utilized by the Ama divers. This piece will be dedicated to her mother. Guests will have the opportunity to wrap themselves up in the quilt with their friends and family members just like the Ama pearl divers of the 1920s did.

Each of the works at the show will be dedicated to one of Goldstein's "girlfriends from down the shore." She picked names for each of the works that she felt captured something that she admires about her sister, friends from LBI or her artist friends.

"The show is going to travel a lot," says Goldstein, "and I wanted to open it in my home."

An artist reception will run from 5 to 10 p.m. on the evening of the show's opening, Aug. 12 at the Ann Coen Gallery at 1418 Long Beach Blvd. Goldstein's recent prints and apparel will be available for sale and the show will hang through Sept. 5.

— Tim Hone
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