

Thursday, August 5, 2010

The Inquirer and Min

## Subtle patterns inspire artist



Photo by Nicole Harnishfeger

Artist Gay Held with her painting "Tree Spire," one of the pieces in her East End Gallery show.

### Gay Held exhibition opens Friday night at East End Gallery

By Joshua B. Gray  
I&M Staff Writer

There is a line traveling through the work of artist Gay Phillips Held, both in a literal and figurative sense.

This abstract landscape artist has found the proportional dividing line of the horizon to be the consistent element in her oil paintings through the years. It is present in her early, mostly abstract work and still present today in her more representational pieces. Examples of this dynamic can be found in a new exhibition of her work opening tomorrow evening at the East End Gallery on Old North Wharf.

"I saw a kind of interesting combination of realism and abstract qualities and her unique use of color," said gallery owner Karen Pehrline of her initial attraction to the artist's work. "She has an unusual usage of these beautiful vibrant greens and oranges that may not normally be found in nature, but she is able to include them in a very special way."

Originally from Chicago, Ill., Held has summered her entire life on Nantucket. A trained printmaker who spent her career in textiles, she said she was drawn to oil painting after she retired.

More than a decade later, her canvases often reveal thick coats of paint with layers and representational elements found in per-



Courtesy of Gay Held

Artist Gay Held's "Boat Mast 5," one of her new boat-mast studies.

 An advertisement for WORTH featuring a woman standing in front of a brick wall. The ad includes contact information for the trunk show and the website worthny.com.
 

**WORTH**  
For your personal shopping  
please contact:  
Jennifer Sleeper (617)519-3000  
Eye of the Needle (508)228-1923  
  
Fall 2010 Trunk Show  
Eye of the Needle  
24 Federal Street  
  
Friday, August 6th 10am-10pm  
Saturday, August 7th 10am-10pm  
Sunday, August 8th 10am-7pm

worthny.com

HELD, PAGE 4C

Page 4C

The Inquirer and Mirror, Nantucket, Mass.

## Writers share their stories in Hays lecture

On Friday, Aug. 6 at 8 p.m., the Nantucket Atheneum will present its fifth Constance Laible Hays Memorial Lecture in the library's Great Hall, featuring three authors sharing their stories. Mary McDonagh Murphy will talk about the 50th anniversary of "To Kill a Mockingbird." Janet Elder will discuss the lost puppy that taught a family and a town about hope and happy endings, and New York Times London correspondent Sarah Lyall will speak on the British people at their best, worst

and funniest. The conversation will be moderated by *New York Times* assistant managing editor Glenn Kramon.

Constance Laible Hays was a longtime *New York Times* reporter and the author of "The Real Thing: Truth and Power at the Coca-Cola Company." She shared in a 2002 Pulitzer Prize given to the *Times* for its "A Nation Challenged" coverage of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. She began visiting Nantucket as a child and considered the Atheneum one of her fa-

vorite places in the world.

After Hays died in 2005, her family and friends established an annual lecture in her honor as a way to support the work of both new and established writers. Past speakers have included Katie Couric in 2006, Calvin Trillin in 2007, Samantha Power in 2008 and David Sanger in 2009.

Murphy's book, out this summer, is "Scout, Atticus & Boo: A Celebration of Fifty Years of To Kill A Mockingbird." A former CBS News producer and a Sconset

summer resident, she made a documentary film commemorating the 50th anniversary of Harper Lee's seminal work first and then decided to write a book as well.

Elder is a writer for *The New York Times*, and her first book is "Huck," to be published in September. Lyall, another *New York Times* writer, published "The Anglo Files: A Field Guide to the British" in 2009.

Tickets for the lecture are \$25 and available at [www.nantucketatheneum.org](http://www.nantucketatheneum.org) or at the library on the second floor, 1 India St.

## Held: Artist inspired by subtle patterns, vibrant colors

(Continued from page 3C)

spective and color.

"The geography of the landscape has always been a great source of information for my work," she said. "Over the years, I continue to be drawn to the subtle patterns and the geometry of the various settings that I find surround my existence. The vastness of the Midwest prairie or the expanse of an island out in the ocean provide that source of inspiration to move beyond my surroundings."

One landscape was recently named one of the top five pieces at the Artists Association of Nantucket's Juried Exhibition judged by long-time island artist and gallery-owner Reggie Levine. While Levine did not make a specific reference to the Held's painting (and was not available before press time) he said, "I was truly impressed by the overall quality of the work. Ultimately a juror makes objective choices. I consider each selection to be a peak accomplishment for the artist."

Held also pursues a peaceful, meditative quality in her work. Several years ago while sailing, she found herself staring up at the clear blue summer sky dotted by clouds and was impressed by the sounds and the tranquility of the mast and their rigging. Inspired so much, in fact, that she painted an extensive series on the subject, a subject that has evolved over the past view seasons, culminating in a series of works to be



Courtesy of Gay Held

**Gay Held's "Rest Away,"** one of the pieces she'll be showing in an exhibition at East End Gallery opening tomorrow.

shown this week that illustrate her fascination.

"Boat Mast #5" is a water-scape of sailboats on a tranquil harbor. This and other images are complemented by shoreline and marsh scenes that combine elements of the artist's perception with a unique representation of color.

"It's a language I have had with me for a long time. I have been making images for a long time and you collect a vocabulary, like a writer who loves certain words. At my age I have certainly learned to love certain marks – how I break up a picture plane, how I compose a composition – I feel something, I

look at something, I get inspired and then I digest with my own set of vocabulary, because every artist certainly does develop their own sets of marks."

This, however, can present one of the more significant challenges to the artist: The opportunity to evolve. Held draws from a visual memory, but continually looks to be inspired, and believes she may even head back into abstraction based on her current series.

"I'll continue my landscapes and my boat-mast series. I will continue to abstract the subject matter. There are still hints to figurative work in the classical sense,

but will head back to the full abstraction," she said. "There is a constant struggle, though, about how to express it with your own mark of how to tell a story and how to convey a message to your viewer. I love color and may try to change my palette and try something new. That would be a challenge, because artists often get comfortable with a certain formula, and you've got to push yourself to constantly move in a new direction. It is easy to stay in something safe, but I continue to push the medium and the experience of what it means to be an artist painting and evolve in myself."

Held, who spends about half the year on-island these days (and the rest in Chicago), finds the greatest challenge in moving away from some of the familiar landmarks, while finding endless inspiration in the ocean and landscape that has so long been a part of her life.

The cousin of another island artist, though Fraker, Held has a long history with the island and a close relationship with creativity, one that she plans to continue.

New works by Guy Phillips Held will be shown at the East End Gallery, 3 Old North Wharf, beginning tomorrow evening with a reception from 6-8 p.m.

INTRODUC

\$10 Tali

we offer a 15 m  
and a 13 min  
thru Wedn



RADIESSE<sup>®</sup>  
Wrinkle Filler

LIFT Your Face.....  
REFRESH Your Look

In less than an hour,  
you can look rested and refreshed  
with minimal to no downtime

Call for details or a complimentary

FACE OF NANTU

A Cosmetic Skin Care I

508-228-46

By Appointment

BOTOX, JUVÉDERM, RESTYL

Egan Maritime Ins

Monday Night Class  
Maritime Movies At the

Join us on August 9 at 7:00 pm for M  
real events, Wind takes place during  
Cup races of the mid-1980s. When W  
the greatest race in sailing to the Au  
determined to try to beat them aga  
but on his own terms. Starring Matt

Admission is Free.

Donations are Gratefully Accepted.

4 Winter Street, Nantucket, MA

For more information, please call 508-228-46

eganm

SUMMO

NANTUCKET AIDS N

BREAK  
THE RU

2010 FRIENDSHIP GAL  
Saturday, Septe



Your presence is REQUIRED  
NAN Gala. Failure to attend  
in missing out on some SEI

**ERES** Erica Wilson



Trunk Show  
August 8 & 9

Come and pre-order  
next season's swim suit.  
Or pick one from the  
current collection.