



Daniel O'Sullivan's 'Joan at Acadia'.
Left, Shirley Gorelick's 'Gunny and Lee.'

Saltzman have assembled 61 works by 49 artists to illustrate their point.

The work ranges from examples of the understated poignance of Shirley Gorelick's "Gunny and Lee" through simple-appearing sketches by Alex Katz, the classically structured and restrained "Young Woman" by Aaron Shikler and the complex still-life "Orange Bowls Yellow Pitchers" by Janet Fish.

"There's an extraordinary range of styles," Saltzman said. Nevertheless, in choosing their work from galleries, museums and private collections, Parente and Stigliano almost entirely avoided superrealistic works, preferring to stay with the traditional forms of realism.

"Superrealism can be more overbearing for the viewer," Parente said. "The show has a real contemplative air," Stigliano said. "It's all work we felt really comfortable with."

The museum's staff has not been able to feel really comfortable in two years: ever since the building, the former Childs Frick mansion in Roslyn, was closed to the public in February, 1978, by then-newly elected County Executive Francis Purcell, who called it a firetrap. Saltzman, in fact, is one of the few holdovers from the period before Purcell named Marcia O'Brien to replace John Maerhofer as director of the Nassau County Office of Cultural Development in early 1978.

For much of the time since the building was closed, the museum workers as well as the culture office staff worked in cramped, temporary quarters

A New Era For Nassau Museum

After two years of turmoil, the Nassau Museum of Fine Art is reopening with a show celebrating traditional styles.

By Peter Goodman

Figure painting, still life, landscape, interior: For centuries, those have been traditional subjects for painters. Even during the decades when the major streams of art flowed through the tortuous channels of cubism or abstract expressionism, there have been artists working quietly in time-honored backwaters.

In the past decade, after passing through pop art and into photorealism, the art world is once again taking notice of the virtues of styles that are more comfortable for the viewer. "I think contemporary realism is becoming very important in artistic circles now," said Janice Parente, one of the two curators on the staff of the Nassau County Museum of Fine Art.

Starting Sunday, to mark the reopening of the building in Roslyn after two years of turmoil and a \$500,000 renovation, the museum is presenting a show of "Contemporary Naturalism: Works of the 1970s," to show how artists in the past 10 years have been dealing with the old verities of recognizable form and color.

"Young artists seem to find painting objects more satisfying today, and there are older artists who had been painting realistically even when it was not popular," Parente said.

In an essay written for the catalog of the show, critic Lawrence Alloway said that the exhibition clearly establishes "the range and vigor of the realist art of the '70s." Parente, fellow curator Phyllis Stigliano and newly appointed museum director Tom



Photo by Steve Lieber, courtesy of Pucknath Gallery
"Study for Lower Dactrap" by Neil Welliver.