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Friday, January 23, 2009

IN THE HOUSE

By [Kate McGraw](#)
For the Journal

Well-known contemporary art dealer and gallery owner Linda Durham has an annual show that she calls “Houseguests.” It is a show of guest artists who, she explained, “are friends, people you’d like to spend time with, even though they don’t necessarily fit into the gallery all the time.”

“I love being able to create a step for a lot of other artists,” Durham told the Journal. “And this show just sort of made itself. I am so excited about this show.”

“Houseguests 2009,” which opens today, began last summer, when Durham looked over some paintings by Tanmaya Bingham, who grew up in Santa Fe but now lives in Australia. Durham was impressed, and told Tanmaya (the artist customarily uses only one name) that she would be featured in “Houseguests 2009.” “Then I forgot about it for weeks and weeks, until her work started coming in and I thought, ‘Oh, now I have to get this show organized. What am I going to do?’” Durham said.

Intrigued by Tanmaya’s “Offerings” series, meticulously crafted figurative narratives that explore both universal and personal situations, Durham began thinking about artists in northern New Mexico whose work would expand the theme. “I just started to contact people I’ve known over time



whose works I admire and who have some connection with Santa Fe,” she said.



She invited Shelley Horton-Trippe, a local artist whose work she considers “most articulate and prepared,” to show her “Carbon Series,” mostly black oil/wax and mixed media paintings and drawings referencing the oil derricks dotting Horton-Trippe's native Oklahoma landscape.

Durham also is showing Catherine Easton Skinner's luminous oil and encaustic works titled “Tarshi,” a Tibetan word for ice melt. Skinner's “Tarshi” paintings depict the natural beauty of a Tesuque Canyon winter, when the strong high-desert sun melts the snow into icicles. Skinner divides her time between Tesuque and a home in Washington state.

Tim Jag is returning for his third group show at Linda Durham Contemporary Art. Although he lives in Santa Fe, his new paintings in the “Colorband” series take the viewers to other lands. “He does wonderful color, and he's very smart. I like his points of view,” Durham said of Jag, who says this “Colorband” series is his response to the colors and landscapes of Spain.

Christopher Romero was born and raised in Santa Fe, but he currently lives in

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New York City, where he works as a filmmaker. The Romero paintings in “Houseguests 2009” are selected from his “Artifacts” series, based on characters, scenes and incidents from the versatile artist's films, photographs and written narrative works.

Two groups of works

“Houseguests 2009” actually has two parts, Durham noted. She offered space in the gallery to a pair of gallery artists, Susanna Carlisle and Bruce Hamilton, collaborative video artists she admires.

Then Durham decided one video wasn't enough. Carlisle and Hamilton agreed to guest-curate a minifestival of videos that will be shown during the month-long run of the show, Durham said. They invited Mariannah Amster and Steina (who also uses one name) to join the video show.

“The video artists are all up for it, I'm told,” Durham said. “Steina is one of the most remarkable artists working in video anywhere. Susanna and Bruce's video is so beautiful. I had it here in a summer and decided I wanted people to see it again,” she said. The two artists built a beautiful shell of the finest birch plywood in which the video is presented, she said.

“I really have an abundance of riches for this show. I'm as pleased about as I have been for a long while,” Durham added.

“Houseguests 2009” will run at Linda Durham Contemporary Art through Feb. 21.

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