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Eclectic show spans coasts and styles

By Cate McQuaid

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Photo: Cape Ann artist Erma Wheeler's *Quarried Waters* shimmers.

GLOUCESTER - Call Jane Deering peripatetic. Affiliated with London's Purdy Hicks Gallery, she stages winter shows in the Santa Barbara, Calif., area and summer shows in her home here. This year's fresh, eclectic exhibit, "CA{-2}UK," spotlights artists from California and Cape Ann (hence the "2" after "CA") alongside a handful of British artists. (It's open on Saturdays, otherwise by appointment.)

The works are as wide-ranging as Deering's travels, encompassing painting, photography, studio furniture, and styles as diverse as Cape Ann artist Erma Wheeler's watercolor "Quarried Waters," a shimmer of a rock-and-water landscape, and British artist Rana Begum's sharp, untitled screen prints sporting bold bands of color buzzing against one another intensely. Organized loosely by palette, the works together read like a rich

conversation filled with surprises.

California photographer Christina Seely's haunting large-scale color series "Lux Portfolio" was inspired by NASA maps of regions of the world at night; the largest consumers of electricity glowed. Seely has traveled to those cities and photographed them at night from a distance, capturing their spooky illumination with long exposures. "Lux Metropolis 35°00'N 135°45'E" shows Kyoto, Japan; the eerie shine of a pocket of forest in the foreground depicts lit pathways to the temple from which Seely shot the city, which spreads out in the distance enveloped in a purple aura. Her photo of Boston, taken over Dorchester Bay from Squantum, catches colored slivers of reflective light in the dark water.

British art star Cornelia Parker's "Beyond Belief" looks like spun gold; it's actually a former crucifix drawn into wire, a glittery tangle casting an inky shadow, asking what's left when the symbols we pour our faith into are gone.

Cape Ann furniture maker Jeremy Adams applies a wry twist to his beautifully crafted objects. His pair of end tables based on a design by the late modernist architect Gerrit Rietveld sport rectangular wooden inlays that suggest a grid but lack a grid's ho-hum regularity; there's a clever, offbeat rhythm to the tabletops. Jim Gaylord, a California artist, offers a cryptic, rich gouache drawing, "Blessing in Disguise," that moves from wooded landscape to black-blotted abstraction to elements of textile design with strange, satisfying logic.

Finally, Deering has turned a tool shed into an art space with several small, square abstract paintings by Gloucester artist Juni Van Dyke, who is the dealer's sister. They read like a diary, each a thought for the day. Some are vivacious, coated with resin, and pop off the wall; others sport softly toned veils and tracings; they pull you in. Deering's summer shows make me wish she exhibited in Massachusetts year-round. If she did, she'd never have brought this wild mix of artists together.

CA{-2}UK

At: Jane Deering Gallery, 18 Arlington St., Gloucester, through Aug. 23. 978-271-8051, www.janedearinggallery.com