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REVIEWS/Helen A. Harrison

All About the Delicacy and Energy of the Line

'Linear Investigations'

Alpan Gallery, 2 West Carver Street, Huntington, (631) 423-4433. Through Nov. 30.

Whether two- or three-dimensional, painted, drawn or photographed, discovered or invented, line is the common denominator of the four artists in this group show.

Hyungsub Shin's clever "Centipede," slithering up a boxed-in utility duct, dominates the gallery space. The creature's articulated shape is fashioned of umbrella spokes and perforated plates from vegetable steamers, which make convincing legs and body segments. Without disguising the nature of the components, the artist has transformed them into an undulating creature balanced on delicate linear filaments, like an armored dancer on tiptoes.

Burrowing organisms created the lines that Chris Coffin has captured in his "Organic Tidal Gestures" photographs. In Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula, Mr. Coffin recorded the delicate tracks they make in wet sand, presumably in search of food. Zeroing in on these apparently random patterns, the camera robs them of scale and context, so that they might conceivably be as huge as the Nazca lines on the Peruvian plateau, as seen from hundreds of feet in the air.

Serena Bocchino allows drizzled paint to weave linear motifs in her lively canvases. Lines accented with brilliant colors have a playful character. In "Zooms and Booms," for example, the zigzag rhythm plays off against clouds of soft yellow, while in "Right Away," loops and coils of color are sometimes buried under broad strokes of tan, only to re-emerge assertively.

For pure linear intensity, Il Lee's drawings cannot be bettered. They demonstrate how pen and ink can be used to build complex forms that seem held together by some sort of adhesive energy. But around the edges, the line breaks away from the gravitational force that pulls it back in on itself, creating auras that complement the density of the bundles. With a ballpoint pen on meticulously prepared surfaces, the artist has achieved remarkably sensuous results.