



Amagansett Applied Arts

Although summer session is well underway at Amagansett Applied Arts (A3), the classes — drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, digital media, video, bookbinding, papermaking, textiles — actually constitute the center's inaugural run. Housed in a big red antique livery stable, and spectacularly renovated, A3 makes an inviting addition to the East End art scene as both an exhibition area and studio-workshop space.

Proud of its successful outreach program with local schools, A3 is essentially a sophisticated artists' collaborative, providing resources and continuing education for professionals (would you believe \$10 for a Thursday evening open drawing session?), and sequential levels of instruction, from beginner through specialist, in the applied arts.

The place is sunny and spotlessly clean. A3's three floors, designed by owner and director Lara Lerner with her husband Randy, make it instantly clear that, in the words of Jim D'Andrea who coordinates the drawing program, A3 is a "serious" enterprise.

D'Andrea does not point to his own superb figure drawings (some of which have been recently sold at auction by Sotheby's) but instead directs a visitor's attention to the large, ingenious, wickedly witty, off-kilter perspective paintings of Royal Academician Stephen Farthing's, "The Modern Affair," on view in A3's upstairs gallery. Farthing, when he is not in attendance at Oxford University, where he holds a tenured post as the eighth Ruskin Master of Drawing, is on the A3 faculty. It is the applied arts programs, however, that particularly distinguish the center.

Well-appointed computer and photo labs occupy the ground floor. Upstairs, it's all hands on. "You think tie-dye means T-shirts?" the young, dynamic Lerner playfully prods. Voila! A huge multi-use silk screening room opens to a variety of gorgeous fabric, dyes of 80 different colors, and pattern blocks. As for papermaking, forget simple. Substitute elegant, at least in Ethan Shoshan's hands. Exotic, aromatic fibers appear, then pulp basins, presses, sculpture. No ceramics, stained glass or silversmithing at A3 . . . yet. Amagansett Applied Arts is located at 11 Indian Wells Highway.